Angola: The Road to Peace

by Shawn McCormick

On May 31, 1991, more than three decades of anticolonial and civil war in Angola came to an end ("Some Key Dates in the History of Angola," pages 6-7). On that date, the leaders of the governing MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola) and UNITA (União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola) met in Lisbon to sign an agreement formally mandating a cease-fire, integration of the country's two armies, and late 1992 multiparty elections. This historic event culminated six rounds of peace talks beginning in April 1990 brokered by Portugal's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation José Durão Barroso, with the supportive participation of the United States and the Soviet Union.

The December 1988 New York accords that ended the direct involvement of Cuba and South Africa in the Angolan war and launched the process leading to Namibia's independence raised expectations that a settlement of Angola's debilitating civil war could be achieved quickly. The complex interplay of superpower hesitancy, MPLA-UNITA interests, and clashing egos led to a series of dead ends before these hopes were realized. This issue of CSIS Africa Notes is devoted to an analysis of the mix of forward and backward steps that seem to have brought this resource-rich country of southern Africa to the threshold of peace for the first time since the early 1960s.

1988: The "De-Linkage" of Angola's War

Following a series of major battles in 1987 and 1988 pitting MPLA and Cuban troops against UNITA and South African forces, the governments of Angola, Cuba, and South Africa each decided that it was in its own interest to cooperate with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker's seven-year effort to craft a negotiated settlement.

The eventual result of these shifts in attitude was the signature in New York on December 22, 1988 of a tripartite agreement by Angola, Cuba, and South Africa, as well as a bilateral agreement between Angola and Cuba. The accords called for the removal from Angola of all Cuban forces by July 1, 1991 in exchange for South African termination of assistance to UNITA and cooperation with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 435 guidelines for Namibia's transition to independent statehood. Angola also agreed to the departure from its territory of members of the African National Congress military wing and other exiles.

The accords rendered moot the Reagan administration's controversial "linkage" of the Cuban troops issue to Resolution 435, a position based on the
premise that an independent Namibia unprotected by the South African military would be threatened by the Cuban presence in next-door Angola. Now that the remaining Angolan problem—the MPLA-UNITA civil war—could be addressed directly rather than as part of a tangle of regional issues, many in the international community hoped that peace would soon come to Angola. This assumption did not, however, take into account the fact that the elements that made the New York accords possible (notably the existence of any framework for negotiations analogous to Resolution 435 and the availability of a relatively neutral party to drive the process) were completely lacking in relation to Angola per se. Moreover, there was little evidence as yet that either the MPLA or UNITA was prepared to make the concessions necessary to reach a settlement.


In the long transition period that followed the election of George Bush as president in November 1988, attention was focused on problems associated with implementation of the New York agreements rather than on devising a formula for ending the Angolan civil war. (See “Keeping Namibian Independence on Track: The Cuban Factor” by Gillian Gunn, *CSIS Africa Notes* no. 103, October 1989.)

Significant changes also emerged in the decision-making styles of the Reagan and Bush administrations, especially on southern African issues. Whereas Crocker had worked closely with Secretary of State George Shultz and had a direct role in policy-making at the highest levels, his successor, Herman J. Cohen, has input, but is not part of Secretary of State James Baker’s inner circle of decision makers, comprised of less than a half-dozen individuals who served with the secretary during his previous incarnations in the Department of the Treasury, the Reagan White House, and/or the Bush presidential campaign. Another difference is that President Bush and Secretary Baker opted to give greater priority than did their predecessors to working with Congress in pursuit of a bipartisan policy on southern African issues.

One of several developments that initially weakened Washington’s potential role in helping bring the warring parties in Angola to the table occurred before the new administration took office. Working through one of the key figures in what was to become Baker’s inner circle, a member of Washington’s powerful UNITA lobby (Black, Manafort, Stone & Kelly) was able to get President-elect Bush to sign and publicly release on January 6, 1989 a letter committing the incoming administration to supporting UNITA with covert aid until peace in Angola was achieved. This letter signified that future U.S. policy would be predicated on sustaining Savimbi’s military capability rather than on fostering a climate conducive to negotiations. It also represented a shift in the rationale underlying U.S. military aid to UNITA. Previously, the assistance had been given to help UNITA counter the presence of Cuban troops in Angola.

**The Changing Soviet Perspective**

As the Soviet Union’s domestic economic and political difficulties became more burdensome, the military commitment to the Angolan government began to decline. Military assistance dropped from a 1987 peak of $1.2 billion to $800 million in 1988. The treaty of friendship and cooperation signed with the Luanda regime in 1976 remained in effect, however, and abandonment of a longtime ally was not an option in the face of continued U.S. aid to UNITA. The Soviets now wanted to see a peaceful end to the civil war, but had neither the capacity nor inclination to assume a central mediating role. (See Leonid L. Fituni’s “A Soviet Analyst’s View of Angola’s Relevance in the 1990s,” *CSIS Africa Notes* no. 116, September 1990, and “New Soviet Priorities in Africa,” *CSIS Africa Notes* no. 123, April 1991.)

**Prenegotiations: January-March 1989**

In early 1989, the MPLA government in Luanda began to reconsider its options. Faced with the renewed U.S. commitment to UNITA, the imminent loss of the Cuban troop presence, and signals from Moscow urging an end to the war, President José Eduardo dos Santos and his colleagues became more receptive to the idea of a negotiated settlement. Although factional differences within the ruling party blocked consensus on such specifics as cease-fire details or the choice of a mediator, there was a growing recognition that some form of accommodation with UNITA had to occur before the United States would normalize relations (i.e., establish diplomatic ties) with Angola, become a significant source of the investment badly needed for economic reconstruction, or tolerate Angola’s admittance to membership in the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

UNITA, meanwhile, assessed its position as relatively strong despite Pretoria’s pledge in the 1988 accords to cut off support. President Bush’s preinaugural letter of commitment to continuing material assistance, combined with the
sympathy for UNITA in key segments of Congress, relieved UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi of any concern that he might have had about a new executive-legislative branch struggle over continued covert aid. Within Angola, the scheduled withdrawal of Cuban forces provided UNITA with a new strategic advantage. Castro’s commitment to disengage from the Angolan conflict meant that, barring the virtual collapse of the MPLA, Cuban troops would strictly abide by the phased pullout agreement and avoid initiating future engagements with UNITA.

When President dos Santos publicly proposed in January 1989 a general amnesty program and a peace plan that called for the integration of UNITA into the existing government and Savimbi’s temporary exile, the initial UNITA response was to reject the offer and threaten a general offensive in the north. Although the MPLA can be credited with having made the first attempt to end the civil war, it showed no inclination to pursue a negotiated solution that would end its monopoly on power.

On March 13, 1989, UNITA presented an eight-point counterproposal that included a four-month cease-fire, noninterference with the reconstruction of the Benguela railroad, and an agreement not to include Savimbi in a two-year government of national unity that would be followed by nationwide elections. According to UNITA sources, Savimbi bowed to pressure from Côte d’Ivoire’s President Félix Houphouët-Boigny to give the negotiation process a chance. He may also have been influenced by widely publicized allegations of serious human rights violations that included the detention and torture of several of UNITA’s own senior members.

Despite these overtures, both organizations as of early 1989 remained unprepared to focus on developing the context necessary for negotiations. dos Santos was not able to exert the same degree of leverage in the MPLA as President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique could bring to bear in his country’s ruling party. (See “Conflict Resolution in Mozambique: A Status Report” by Witney W. Schneidman, CSIS Africa Notes no. 121, February 1991.) As he had demonstrated since the founding of UNITA in 1966, Savimbi was content to wait for the internal Angolan situation to shift in his favor. (See “The Politics of Survival: UNITA in Angola” by John A. Marcum, CSIS Africa Notes no. 8, February 1983.)

As for external actors, Washington’s new administration had no concept or strategy that could serve as a diplomatic “road map”—i.e., setting a context for a series of trade-offs between the MPLA and UNITA leading to a cease-fire. And, as noted above, the Soviet Union’s interest in African issues was on the wane.

The Search for a Mediator: May-June 1989

An important step was taken in Luanda on May 16, 1989, when President dos Santos hosted a meeting with seven other African leaders. The assembled presidents of Zaire, Congo, Gabon, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia, and São Tomé and Príncipe endorsed, with some changes, the January MPLA peace proposal. Features included an end to U.S. support for UNITA, maintenance of the existing Angolan constitution and one-party system, and the permanent exile of Savimbi. It was further agreed that UNITA would be invited to a follow-up meeting.

The African leaders at the Luanda summit undertook to fill the mediation vacuum by selecting Zaire’s President Mobutu Sese Seko to broker negotiations between the two Angolan parties. Mobutu’s mandate derived more from his status as a senior African leader and his past intimate involvement in Angolan affairs than from any record as a negotiator. The MPLA had reason to question the choice on the grounds that he continued to allow Zairian airfields to be used by the United States for transshipment of covert aid to UNITA. On the other hand, it was reasoned, his perceived influence with both the United States and UNITA could be a plus. The MPLA also saw this as an opportunity to weaken Mobutu away from his tacit support of UNITA through his ties with the United States. Savimbi, who assessed Mobutu as possibly the most sympathetic leader to UNITA in the region, did not object to his selection. Mobutu eagerly accepted the role, which he saw as a way of enhancing his own prestige and shedding off U.S. criticism (principally human-rights activists) during a visit to Washington scheduled for the week after the MPLA-UNITA meeting.

The MPLA wanted the Mobutu-hosted session to focus on the framework developed at the Luanda summit. UNITA refused to negotiate the Luanda proposals and demanded that the talks center on defining the terms of a cease-fire, the formation of a government of national unity, and the holding of democratic elections.

The Gbadolite Fiasco: June 1989

On June 22, 1989, the heads of state of 18 African nations (Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Zaire, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) met in Gbadolite, Zaire. Tanzania’s vice president and the speaker of the Moroccan legislature also attended. The meeting produced one official document—a public statement calling for a cease-fire beginning at midnight on June 24 and the establishment of a committee to oversee its implementation. dos Santos and Savimbi met for the first time and shook hands in public after agreeing to these points.

In order to guarantee the presence of the two leaders at what essentially turned out to be an expensive photo opportunity, Mobutu apparently had told both the MPLA and UNITA that their respective platforms would be the basis of discussion at Gbadolite. At the summit, Mobutu placed the two Angolan delegations in separate rooms of his palatial estate and personally walked back and forth between the two rooms to receive and deliver their points of view on various aspects of the agenda.

In the course of this unusual dialogue, Mobutu erroneously informed the MPLA that UNITA had secretly agreed to a document calling for the recognition of the Angolan constitution, integration of UNITA into the MPLA, an end to all outside support for the war, and Savimbi’s temporary exile from Angolan politics. This led the MPLA to believe that the essential purpose of the Gbadolite meeting
was to formalize the conclusions of the Luanda summit. On the other hand, Mobutu apparently assured UNITA that the MPLA had finally accepted its conditions.

It did not take long for word to leak out that Savimbi had “agreed” to a secret accord. Following a briefing by Mobutu, Zambia’s President Kenneth Kaunda told reporters after the conclusion of the Gbadolite meeting that the UNITA leader had accepted the points outlined in the unofficial document. Gabon’s President Omar Bongo, also relying on information supplied by Mobutu, said that both sides had indeed agreed to a cease-fire as well as the “total integration of all the former assets of UNITA within the Angolan government, the army, and in the administration.” Savimbi vociferously denied that he had ever seen, much less agreed to, such an accord. In this connection, he later posed the question: “Why are we going to surrender? What is the reason? When we are strong, why should we say I am going into exile?”

Post-Gbadolite Ambiguities
Mobutu’s apparent objective was to produce an agreement that was open to differing acceptable interpretations and thus would enhance his image as a peacemaker. The result instead was a breakdown in the cease-fire after only a few days and a hardening of attitudes on both sides. Fighting erupted between the MPLA and UNITA at the end of June 1989 and escalated into large-scale attacks by mid-August.

Mobutu’s failed mediation efforts also led to new ambiguities in Washington. On July 18, 1989, Assistant Secretary Cohen said on Cable News Network that the eventual political outcome in Angola would “have to be negotiated among the Africans themselves. . . . I think it will be a typical African situation, probably a one-party government, with a parliament. But the two parties, UNITA and the MPLA, will probably merge into something new.” On September 12, following a UNITA-lobby-inspired letter from a group of 13 senators to Secretary of State James Baker claiming that “the State Department has remained strangely silent” about the Angola peace process, the administration came out publicly in support of Savimbi’s interpretation of what had transpired at Gbadolite.

The negotiation path was further muddied on August 22, 1989, when a special meeting chaired by Zambia’s President Kaunda in Harare, Zimbabwe of the Committee for Reconciliation (leaders of eight [mostly southern] African nations among the 18 heads of state that had attended the Gbadolite talks) endorsed both the public and private declarations made at Gbadolite.

Assistant Secretary Cohen was dispatched to meet with Savimbi in Côte D’Ivoire and urge him to attend a September 18 meeting with dos Santos to be hosted by Mobutu in Kinshasa. This would have been the first face-to-face encounter between the Angolan leaders since the conclusion of the Gbadolite talks. Savimbi rebuffed Cohen, taking the position that Mobutu was “not neutral” and a new negotiator would have to be found if the peace process were to move forward. Piqued at the collapse of his final chance to restore his credibility as a peacemaker, Mobutu terminated the use of Zaire’s airfields for U.S. assistance to UNITA.

With the African mediation process on hold, and the State Department essentially on the sidelines, UNITA held an Extraordinary Congress in Jamba on September 26 to draw up a new peace proposal and to demonstrate rank-and-file support for Savimbi on the eve of a trip to the United States. Through the Extraordinary Congress, UNITA insisted on direct negotiations with the MPLA, a cease-fire tied to the release of all political prisoners, the formation of a transitional government, and the scheduling of multiparty elections.

On September 27, 1989, Senior Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Warren Clark offered the following outline of U.S. policy toward Angola before the Subcommittee on Africa of the House Foreign Affairs Committee: “The administration believes that lasting peace and national reconciliation can take place only in a scenario in which there are no losers, only winners. This can be accomplished only if political negotiations proceed with no preconditions and without prejudice to the positions of either side. Following a cease-fire agreement, all topics should be open for discussion at the negotiating table. . . . We will be continuing our efforts to enhance confidence in the mediator and the peace process, to stop the fighting, and to move toward genuine national reconciliation in Angola.”

On October 4, 1989, one day before his scheduled meeting with Savimbi, President Bush met with Mobutu at the White House in an effort to revive the Gbadolite peace process. The administration opted to support the Mobutu mediation effort because (1) Washington was not prepared to assume any direct responsibility for the mediation process and (2) implementation of congressionally mandated assistance to UNITA depended on restored access to Zairian airfields. In his subsequent meeting with the UNITA leader, President Bush expressed support for Savimbi’s position of “free and fair elections” in Angola, but also urged a return to Mobutu’s negotiating table.

President Bush’s talks with Mobutu and Savimbi won the administration the reopening of the Zairian airfields. The conversations also injected a superficial momentum into the stalled negotiation process. A series of meetings involving the Zairian president and representatives of the MPLA and UNITA took place at a Mobutu retreat in southern France in mid-October 1989, albeit without direct contact between the two Angolan groups. Cohen and his senior advisers also attended these sessions. But nothing of substance had changed between the MPLA and UNITA to induce them to begin negotiating in good faith.

UNITA now indicated its desire for Mobutu’s floundering peace efforts to continue, in part because the meeting with President Bush had renewed Savimbi’s confidence in the U.S. commitment to his organization. He had concluded that UNITA could only benefit in terms of its relations with Washington if it agreed to remain in the U.S.-supported peace process and the MPLA walked out. Another reason UNITA was inclined to stall for time rather than engage the MPLA in new military encounters was that the guerrillas were low on some categories of supplies, having received no new U.S. shipments since June 1989.

Leaders of the MPLA, on the other hand, felt that Savimbi had violated the agreement made at Gbadolite,
which, they maintained, must be the basis for any negotiations. The MPLA also had come to perceive Mobutu to be a duplicitous mediator abetted by the United States, which they viewed as having obstructed progress by supporting Savimbi’s denial that he had agreed to the MPLA’s proposal at Gbadolite. In addition, UNITA’s military successes during mid-1989—most notably the sabotage of Luanda’s power supply facilities on June 29, the downing of a transport plane on July 25, and the defeat of a government attack in southeastern Angola in late August—had a serious psychological impact on the MPLA and made it reluctant to enter talks with UNITA from what would have been perceived as a position of weakness.

In a final effort to break the stalemate, Mobutu presented another cease-fire plan to both the MPLA and UNITA in late November 1989. As expected, Savimbi accepted the proposal, but the MPLA, after weeks of claiming it had not received a copy, said that the new plan was unacceptable because the document “omits the most important principles approved in Gbadolite.”

**Mavinga: The Final Offensive**

With Mobutu’s mediation efforts at a standstill, the MPLA decided to unleash a coordinated military offensive against UNITA. From Luanda’s perspective, the impending November 1989 withdrawal of South African military forces from Namibia under the terms of the New York accords meant that UNITA would be without South African personnel support for the first time in 14 years. This would happen at a time when more than 20,000 Cuban troops were still in Angola and could protect strategic towns from UNITA attacks. After years of labeling Savimbi’s organization a “puppet” of South Africa, MPLA ideologues pushed dos Santos to turn their propaganda into reality and undertake to defeat UNITA decisively.

On December 23, 1989, Angolan forces launched a major attack (code-named “Final Assault”) against the symbolically strategic UNITA-controlled town of Mavinga in southeastern Angola, with the objective of achieving a military solution to the conflict. By mid-January 1990, UNITA’s situation was desperate. MPLA forces had crossed the Lomba river north of Mavinga and were threatening to take the town. By the first week of February, the MPLA claimed to have captured Mavinga and routed UNITA, but these assertions were not independently confirmed. In a speech delivered on February 6, dos Santos said: “This victory . . . demonstrated the old thesis presented by the leadership of our country, according to which UNITA and their so-called liberated zones were just a fiction maintained only by the army of Pretoria. It is now easier to evaluate the true dimension and the military and political importance of UNITA and nobody, I believe, will again have the pretension to place this group on equal footing with the government and the People’s Republic of Angola in the process of resolving this internal conflict.”

Intelligence sources report that Mavinga was not controlled by either army; rather, parts of the town had become a battlefield. At the airfield, where the fighting was particularly intense, the two armies initially clashed across the airstrip. Although the MPLA forces drove UNITA back, the guerrillas were still close enough to bombard the tarmac daily with their artillery. This prevented the MPLA from using Mavinga as a base from which to launch regular air strikes against the main UNITA stronghold of Jamba (such strikes were carried out for the first time in March from a position farther north).

The first U.S. attempt in five months to resupply UNITA had taken place in late November 1989 but was delayed when the covert flight crashed en route to UNITA territory. Sources say that difficulties in finding an available aircraft and trained crew prevented another attempt until late January 1990. South Africa, however, provided material assistance to UNITA during the critical interim period. The eventual arrival of U.S. military assistance stalled the MPLA’s conventional assault and turned the conflict into a stalemate with casualties on both sides reportedly climbing into the thousands. The MPLA had overstretched its logistical capabilities and was unable to provide full support to its troops fighting in Mavinga. UNITA had also increased the costs of war to the MPLA by launching what Savimbi called on December 28, 1990 a strategy of “defense-offense” in which UNITA forces intensified their attacks on targets in the northern part of the country, including the capital city of Luanda.

**March-April 1990: A Sobering Reassessment**

By early March 1990, the MPLA had concluded that Mavinga could not be held and that the civil war could not be resolved by military force. At the same time, the near loss of Mavinga apparently convinced Savimbi that UNITA could not risk another battle of this magnitude. Thus, the battle for Mavinga effectively persuaded both sides that negotiations were the only option for resolving their differences. For the first time in 15 years, both sides seemed prepared to make the types of concessions necessary for initiating a substantive negotiation process. This fundamental reassessment by both the MPLA and UNITA created the opportunity for a new mediator to come forward to broker negotiations.

On March 5, Savimbi offered a cease-fire if the MPLA would abandon its recent military gains. On April 6, an editorial appeared in the Luanda newspaper O Jornal de Angola proclaiming the government’s willingness to seek direct talks with UNITA. This was reconfirmed the same day during a three-hour minisummit on the Angolan peace process hosted in São Tomé and Príncipe by President Manuel Pinto da Costa. Dos Santos, supported by his host and the presidents of Congo and Gabon, restated the MPLA peace plan that had been put forward on December 31, 1989 as the government forces were attacking Mavinga. This eight-point proposal essentially reiterated earlier demands, but for the first time also allowed for freedom of “associations” and for participation by members of UNITA in future elections as “independent” candidates. The modest new measure of constitutional flexibility in the proposal did not extend, however, to any provision for the establishment of new political parties or any mention of the role Savimbi could play in a future government. Dos Santos stated that “only the one-party system realistically serves our country.
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Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé & Príncipe, and Cape Verde) are officially incorporated into the Portuguese state.

December 1956. The Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) is founded.

1951. Portugal's five overseas territories in Africa (Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé & Príncipe, and Cape Verde) are officially incorporated into the Portuguese state.

On February 4, an organized attack on the main political prison in Luanda marks the beginning of open resistance to colonial rule. The outbreak of widespread insurrection in the north on March 15 elicits a massive response from the Portuguese. As many as 20,000 Africans are killed in the following six months.

March 1962. Two northern-based parties merge to form the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA) under the leadership of Holden Roberto.

March 1966. Jonas Savimbi forms the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA).

April 25, 1974. After 13 years of dealing with armed insurrection in Portuguese-ruled Africa, an Armed Forces Movement led by war-weary officers overthrows the authoritarian Caetano regime in Lisbon and subsequently undertakes to wind down the Portuguese presence on the continent.

1975. On January 15, the new Portuguese government signs an agreement with leaders of the MPLA, UNITA, and the FNLA at Alvor (Portugal) providing for a transitional coalition government comprising the three groups and setting November 11 as the date of Angolan independence. In late January, the U.S. National Security Council's "40 Committee" authorizes covert assistance in the amount of $300,000 to the FNLA. In the following months, Soviet arms deliveries to the MPLA increase. The agreement reached at Alvor breaks down as conflict among the MPLA, UNITA, and FNLA forces escalates. Assistance from external sources (the United States, Zaire, and South Africa for UNITA and the FNLA; the Soviet Union and Cuba for the MPLA) becomes an increasingly important factor. On October 14, a South African-led motorized force enters Angola from Namibia in support of the FNLA and UNITA. On November 11, following the departure of the Portuguese high commissioner and his staff from Luanda, the MPLA, backed by Cuban troops, proclaims the establishment of the People's Republic of Angola with Agostinho Neto as president.

Early 1976. Between January and March, South Africa (whose troops had stalled in mid-November some 120 miles south of Luanda in the face of an entrenched MPLA force with Cuban reinforcements) withdraws to Namibia. In February, the MPLA achieves an apparent military victory, having ended the FNLA's role as a serious contender and driven the remnants of UNITA's army into the southeastern bush.


June 30, 1976. President Gerald Ford reluctantly signs into law legislation passed by Congress (the "Clark Amendment") that prohibits any security assistance to groups in Angola "unless and until Congress expressly authorizes such assistance by law."

October 1976. The MPLA government signs a treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union.

May 27, 1977. A coup attempt by Nito Alves, the reputedly pro-Soviet leader of a dissident MPLA faction, is thwarted. Soviet complicity in the takeover bid is charged; Cuban troops help defeat the rebellion.

December 1977. At its first national Party Congress, the MPLA proclaims itself a Marxist-Leninist party oriented toward "scientific socialism."

1978. South Africa begins a series of military incursions into Angolan territory, targeting SWAPO guerrillas seeking to end Pretoria's control over Namibia.

September 10, 1979. President Neto dies of pancreatic cancer in a Moscow hospital and is succeeded by Minister of Planning José Eduardo dos Santos.

March 19, 1981. The Reagan Administration formally submits to Congress a proposal that the Clark Amendment be repealed, but the request is soundly defeated.

August 1981. "Operation Protea," which commits as many as 11,000 South African troops some 75 miles into Angola, signals an escalation of South African cross-border action—action now aimed as much against MPLA as against SWAPO targets. Meanwhile, UNITA (with considerable assistance from South Africa) is reviving as a military threat to the regime.


February 16, 1984. Representatives of the Angolan and South African governments, meeting under the chairmanship of Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda, sign the U.S.-brokered "Lusaka Accord." South Africa agrees to withdraw its military presence from southern Angola; the MPLA undertakes to restrict SWAPO activities in the area bordering Namibia.

May 21, 1985. An Angolan military patrol captures a South African commando unit near oil storage tanks in the Cabinda enclave. Its leader subsequently admits that the unit had planned to blow up the tanks and leave UNITA propaganda at the scene to make it appear that UNITA was responsible. He also indicates that South Africa is responsible for some past sabotage that UNITA has claimed.


July 10, 1985. The U.S. House of Representatives votes 236-185 to repeal the Clark Amendment; this step follows a 63-34 repeal vote in the Senate on June 11. The Reagan administration is now free to renew U.S. assistance to UNITA.

January 30, 1986. President Reagan meets with Savimbi at the White House and reaffirms support for UNITA.

February 18, 1986. Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker acknowledges that the Reagan administration has decided to give covert military aid (including antitank weapons and antiaircraft missiles) to UNITA. "The process is in motion," he says.

1987. The MPLA launches the largest offensive to date against the UNITA stronghold at Mavinga, but is repulsed by South African and UNITA forces.

December 22, 1988. More than seven years of wide-ranging negotiations orchestrated by Crocker culminate in the signature in New York of a tripartite agreement by Angola, Cuba, and South Africa, as well as a bilateral agreement between Angola and Cuba. These agreements provide, inter alia, for the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola over a 27-month period and the withdrawal of South African troops from neighboring Namibia. On the basis of the New York accord, Namibia's transition to independence in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 435 is completed on March 21, 1990.

January 6, 1989. In a letter to Savimbi, President-elect George Bush says that the United States will continue its support for UNITA until national reconciliation is achieved in Angola.

January 27, 1989. In a sharp break with past policy, the MPLA indicates that it is prepared to seek a political solution to the war.
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March 13, 1989. Savimbi calls for direct dialogue with the MPLA and offers to exclude himself from the negotiations and from a subsequent transitional government as it prepares for elections. He also proposes a four-month cease-fire.

May 4, 1989. Ambassador Herman J. Cohen, testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on his nomination to succeed Crock in Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, says that there will be no change in the U.S. policy of providing support to UNITA or denying diplomatic recognition to the MPLA government until Angola’s warring parties reach a political settlement.

June 22, 1989. Dos Santos and Savimbi agree to a cease-fire at a meeting hosted by Zaire’s President Mobutu Sese Seko in Gbadolite. The agreement is subsequently derailed, however, when UNITA learns that Mobutu erroneously informed the MPLA that Savimbi had also agreed to several additional conditions, including the incorporation of UNITA into the MPLA and his exile for an unspecified period. Matters are further confused when it surfaces that Mobutu told UNITA that the MPLA had agreed to the guerrillas’ platform for negotiations, including cease-fire terms, formation of a government of national unity, and the holding of elections.

July 18, 1989. The International Monetary Fund admits Angola as its 152nd member by a vote of 136 to 1. The United States casts the only negative vote.

December 23, 1989. With Soviet military assistance, the MPLA launches a large-scale assault against the UNITA-controlled town of Mavinga in southeastern Angola. Although Savimbi’s forces are almost dislodged at the outset, the battle grinds to a stalemate with heavy casualties.

Early April 1990. Both the MPLA and UNITA publicly state their desire for a negotiated solution to the war.

April 24-25, 1990. Portugal’s Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation José Durão Barroso convenes near Lisbon the first in a series of face-to-face negotiating sessions between representatives of the MPLA and UNITA.

October 17, 1990. By a vote of 207-206, the U.S. House of Representatives passes an amendment to the annual intelligence Authorization bill proposed by Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-New York). The amendment would have suspended covert lethal aid to UNITA if the MPLA agreed to a cease-fire and proposed a “reasonable timetable” for elections. President Bush subsequently vetoes the legislation.

November 1990. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and then-Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze agree to become actively involved in furthering Portuguese mediation efforts after a fifth round of peace talks fails to yield concrete results.

December 6, 1990. UNITA says it will agree to a cease-fire if the MPLA approves a multiparty system at its third Party Congress.

December 10, 1990. The MPLA Party Congress votes to revise the Angolan constitution to allow for a two-phase (rather than an immediate) transition to a multiparty system. This action falls short of UNITA’s demand for endorsement of a multiparty system.

December 12, 1990. Baker meets with Angolan Minister of External Relations Pedro de Castro dos Santos Van-Dünem (“Loy”) at the State Department while Shevardnadze meets with Savimbi at the Soviet Embassy in Washington. The following day, the participants in these conversations, joined by Portuguese officials, meet at the State Department and draw up a set of peace “concepts” around which the timing of a cease-fire and a date for elections can be worked out.


February 8, 1991. Following three days of intensive consultations by Portuguese diplomats with both sides, the decision is made not to convene the planned sixth round of peace talks because of an unexpected announcement by the MPLA that it is unwilling to sign the “concepts” agreement until UNITA agrees to a date for a cease-fire.

April 4, 1991. The sixth round of Portuguese-mediated talks between the MPLA and UNITA finally gets under way, ushering in an open-ended series of meetings aimed at finding a negotiated solution to the war.

April 28, 1991. At the end of a special five-day Party Congress, the MPLA approves a change in the Angolan constitution that replaces the designation “Marxism-Leninism” with “democratic socialism.”

May 1, 1991. MPLA and UNITA representatives meeting in Portugal initial a peace agreement.

May 15, 1991. Although sporadic fighting continues, a de facto cease-fire between UNITA and the MPLA begins.

May 25, 1991. Cuba withdraws the last of its 50,000 troops from Angola, more than a month ahead of the departure date specified in the December 1988 Angola-Namibia accords.

May 31, 1991. The agreement initiated on May 1 is formally signed in Lisbon by Jonas Savimbi and Angola’s President José Eduardo dos Santos.
and it will encourage the expansion of democracy."

Despite the previously rejected "one-party system" stipulation, UNITA responded the next day by offering an immediate cease-fire and direct talks without preconditions. In addition, the guerrillas stated on April 9, 1990 that they would recognize the state of Angola (but not the legitimacy of the MPLA regime), the government, and its institutions.

Angola's Minister of External Relations Pedro de Castro dos Santos Van-Dunem ("Loy") said that the UNITA statement had "positive aspects."

**Portugal Moves to Center Stage**

Several countries had been working with both the MPLA and UNITA in efforts to succeed Mobutu as a mediator. During a visit to Luanda on March 1, 1990, South African Minister of Foreign Affairs Roelof ("Pik") Botha told MPLA leaders that Pretoria was prepared to play a supporting role in negotiating an end to the Angolan conflict. Namibia's President-elect Sam Nujoma had previously stated his willingness to act as a mediator and Congolese President Denis Sassou-Nguesso also showed interest in taking the lead role. The choice, however, continued to reside with the two warring parties because each had to trust whoever was selected.

On March 19, U.S. Secretary of State Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze met in Windhoek to participate in Namibia's independence ceremonies and to discuss superpower relations in southern Africa. In a formal announcement following their discussions, Shevardnadze said that he and Baker would renew efforts to encourage reconciliation in Angola and Mozambique. In a private meeting with Baker, dos Santos reportedly said that he was willing to return to the negotiating table with a new mediator. In Kinshasa a few days later, Baker briefed Savimbi on his meeting with dos Santos.

In the following weeks, the United States and the Soviet Union worked together to co-sponsor direct talks between the MPLA and UNITA in Geneva, Switzerland. Savimbi was initially receptive to this proposal, but the leaders of the MPLA, aware of Moscow's increasing desire to disengage from the Angolan conflict (especially in light of the Mavinga debacle), were wary of the superpowers' initiative.

The prospects for negotiations improved significantly when Portugal began to show a limited but genuine interest in aiding the peace process. After Angola and Mozambique emerged from Portuguese rule in the mid-1970s, a succession of governments in Lisbon had tried to define new relationships with these countries. With limited material or financial resources to pave the way, and facing lingering resentments generated by nearly 500 years of repressive colonialism, Portugal frequently was frustrated with the substance of its ties with Angola in particular. Now, after many years of less-than-satisfactory relations, Lisbon was clearly committing itself to a more substantial role in Angolan affairs.

During a January 10-11, 1990 visit to the United States, Portugal's Prime Minister Aníbal Cavaco Silva met with President Bush and reportedly asked him to receive the Angolan president in Washington before the end of the month. Bush indicated that such a meeting would only be held after peace in Angola was achieved. Two weeks later, Savimbi was granted a visa to visit Lisbon, the first trip to Portugal by the UNITA leader in nearly 30 years. Savimbi was well received, but his trip had to be cut short due to the deteriorating military situation at Mavinga.

Following up on reports of the MPLA's cool reception of the U.S.-Soviet proposal to co-sponsor talks in Geneva, Lisbon floated to Luanda the possibility that Portugal might take the negotiating reins. By mid-April 1990, both the MPLA and UNITA had tacitly given a green light to the Portuguese initiative. After consulting with Washington and Moscow, and receiving both superpowers' endorsement of the notion that Lisbon move to the fore in the mediation process, the government of Portugal hastily arranged a face-to-face meeting on April 24 and 25 at Evora between representatives of the MPLA and UNITA—the first of six Portuguese-hosted rounds of negotiations in 1990-1991.

Portugal's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation José Durão Barroso was designated to undertake the central role of mediator. To avoid a second Gbadolite, he sought (and received) a commitment from both sides to a gradual process of face-to-face negotiations during which all matters would be discussed behind closed doors and without preconditions. His primary condition for involvement was that both the MPLA and UNITA agree to continue working with him until a mutually acceptable solution could be reached.

At the conclusion of this first round, Barroso described the talks as "very preliminary" and said that "there are deep differences, and fighting is continuing. . . . they are far from a cease-fire."

**Concerns of the MPLA and UNITA**

Portugal was not the primary choice of either the MPLA or UNITA to become the new negotiator. Indeed, each side harbored considerable suspicion of the Portuguese and distrust of their intentions. The MPLA's misgivings focused in part on President Mário Soares's outspoken support of UNITA. UNITA was wary that the existence of strong business ties with the Angolan government might predispose the Portuguese to favor the MPLA and its concept of integration. There was also uncertainty about the relatively unknown Barroso, especially his possible political biases and his ability to orchestrate such a difficult series of negotiations. UNITA was particularly concerned that Barroso underestimated and would not be able to understand the deep gulf that stood between the two combatants.

**A Shift in MPLA Objectives**

Exactly what the MPLA wanted in a postwar environment was not initially clear, but began to evolve early in 1990. International events, including the political upheavals in Eastern Europe, had an impact on the MPLA that was first reflected in the final communiqué of a Central Committee meeting held in mid-January.

Dos Santos personally had come to favor changing the constitution to allow for a more pluralist society (as his December 31, 1989 peace plan indicated), but was constrained by party ideologues who wanted no deviation
from the Marxist-Leninist line. In an effort to promote his agenda, dos Santos convened a series of Central Committee meetings beginning in January 1990 to convince the party hierarchy that peace could only be achieved through a willingness to make concessions on constitutional issues. The president received significant support from former Prime Minister Lopo do Nascimento, a key moderating force.

At a follow-up meeting of the Central Committee in late February 1990, dos Santos gained unofficial support for the principles of abandoning Marxism-Leninism, accepting a multiparty system, and separation of the state and party. Once the Portuguese-hosted peace talks began in late April 1990, he moved decisively to isolate ideologically rigid elements of the party and promote handpicked pragmatists who would support his objectives.

In early July 1990, after the second round of the Portuguese-hosted talks (where little progress was made), dos Santos won the support of the MPLA Central Committee, which publicly affirmed the government's intention to “evolve toward a multiparty political system within the framework of the constitutional revision to be approved by popular referendum.” The MPLA continued to insist, however, that it could not meet one of UNITA’s central demands—explicit recognition—until it held its third Party Congress in December 1990 and altered the constitution to permit multiple parties. Although UNITA refused to sign a cease-fire without such recognition, the impasse was viewed as temporary. It became implicit over time that the negotiations would be guided by the understanding that a multiparty system would eventually come into being.

**Slow Progress to Round Three**

Dos Santos’s reforms—and his growing influence over party ideologues—helped to move the Portuguese mediation ahead, but major differences continued to separate the two sides. In an August 5, 1990, interview published in _O Jornal de Angola_, Minister of External Relations Loy discussed the UNITA recognition impasse. “It is necessary for UNITA to be recognized at once,” he said, but “it is [also] necessary for UNITA to renounce its armed branch, for it is not practical or normal for a country that hopes to achieve democracy to have armed parties.” UNITA subsequently reaffirmed that it was unwilling to take the risk of disarming until internationally verifiable mechanisms were in place to ensure that the formation of a national army could be concluded. Meanwhile, fighting between the two armies continued throughout the country.

In mid-1990, both the MPLA and UNITA were confronted with the near-perennial issue of food shortages, which overshadowed the negotiating process. This time the situation was exacerbated by a fourth straight year of crop failure due to insufficient (or in some areas excessive) rainfall; an estimated 1.9 million people were at risk of famine. UNITA seized upon the concept of “corridors of peace,” through which food would be transported to civilians in both MPLA- and UNITA-held areas. According to senior relief officials, the International Committee of the Red Cross had been discussing with the MPLA a massive airlift program organized from MPLA-controlled territories to feed people on both sides of the war. The MPLA was therefore apprehensive about the “corridors” notion. Among other concerns, some MPLA officials found distasteful the idea of supporting any proposal favored by UNITA. In addition, there was concern that the United States might use the food shipments as a cover to transport weapons to UNITA.

Washington responded by stating that food transport would be handled by the United Nations and the ICRC. Eventually, both the MPLA and UNITA yielded to international pressure and agreed to a cease-fire along designated food transportation routes.

**A New Role for the Superpowers**

Mutual mistrust, sharpened by the “peace corridors” squabble, prevented the third round of talks in late August 1990 from yielding any concrete results. In an attempt to alleviate this problem and others, Barroso invited the United States and the Soviet Union to send representatives to future negotiating rounds.

The fourth round of peace talks in late September made incremental progress on various issues, but the most critical development was an idea introduced by Barroso—the creation of a Joint Political and Military Commission (JPMC) comprised of the MPLA and UNITA with the United States, the Soviet Union, and Portugal as observers. Its purpose, as explained by Barroso, would be to serve as an umbrella structure to oversee the transition to a multiparty system. Although the JPMC’s function would be primarily administrative in nature, it would also arbitrate any disagreements that might arise between the two organizations.

In mid-October 1990, the U.S. Congress took a more assertive stance on policy toward Angola. An amendment offered by Congressman Stephen J. Solarz to the annual Intelligence Authorization bill (through which U.S. aid to UNITA is channeled) stipulated that covert assistance to UNITA would continue but be subject to termination in March 1991 if the MPLA undertook the changes necessary to bring about peace in Angola. The Solarz amendment, with some modifications, narrowly passed the House of Representatives (207-206) and was added to the bill, but was subsequently nullified when President Bush vetoed the overall legislation in December 1990 for other unrelated reasons. State Department sources say that the administration nevertheless chose to follow the “spirit” of the amendment.

In spite of the Bush veto, the congressional vote sent a strong message to Savimbi that open-ended U.S. support had almost reached its limits. During a trip to Washington just prior to the vote, the UNITA leader was told by some of his key congressional supporters from both parties that negotiations were the only solution to the war and that, absent an MPLA walkout from the talks, Congress (including these influential members) would not approve covert funding for UNITA in FY 1992.

Meanwhile, the Portuguese mediation effort continued to be plagued by distrust between the two participants as well as their mutual distrust of the intentions of Washington and Moscow. In an unusual display of public pique, the head of the Soviet delegation to the fifth round of Portuguese-hosted
Shevardnadze in Houston, Texas. Cohen and his Soviet counterparts were more interested in promoting a comprehensive settlement in Angola. It became increasingly apparent that the superpowers would have to do more than simply send observers to the talks if there were to be any significant breakthroughs.

During a meeting with Shevardnadze at the United Nations in late November, Baker proposed that the Soviet foreign minister meet with Savimbi in an effort to convince UNITA that Moscow was committed to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Shevardnadze concurred, but recommended that Baker also meet with Loy to underscore U.S. resolve.

The two Angolan protagonists agreed to the proposals and scheduled the two-way meetings for mid-December in Washington, following a meeting between Baker and Shevardnadze in Houston, Texas. Cohen and his Soviet counterpart, Yuri Yukolev, met in London in early December to lay the groundwork for their superiors' respective talks with the combatants and also to begin an unprecedented trip together to both Luanda and Jamba to discuss the Washington meetings. The latter effort proved a logistical and political impossibility, however, and was canceled.

In the meantime, Savimbi announced on December 6, 1990 that UNITA no longer demanded explicit recognition as a political party by the MPLA. If the MPLA were to approve a multiparty system at the Party Congress then under way in Luanda, UNITA would sign a Portuguese-negotiated cease-fire agreement that was reportedly "80 percent complete." Bypassing presidential guidance, the MPLA Party Congress chose not to opt for immediate transition to a multiparty system but rather for introduction of such a political system in two stages lasting into 1992. The first stage would conclude in March 1991 when the political process would be opened to multiple parties. Even though dos Santos did not receive the full support necessary to alter the constitution immediately, he now had for the first time an agreement in principle from the MPLA's ruling body to negotiate a transition from one-party domination to multiparty rule.

Because the MPLA decision did not go as far as was expected, the upcoming Washington meetings were accorded higher priority as the best chance to prevent the gap between the two sides from widening. At the Baker-Shevardnadze meeting in Houston the day before the Baker-Loy and Shevardnadze-Savimbi meetings in Washington, the two leaders agreed that, in addition to the two-way meetings, the Portuguese should also be included in a special five-way meeting of all the parties. On December 12, Shevardnadze exchanged views with Savimbi at the Soviet embassy while Baker met with Loy and do Nascimento at the State Department.

Representatives from all five entities met the following day in a five-and-a-half-hour session at the State Department that yielded a six-point understanding including agreements that (1) postwar Angola would be a multiparty nation; (2) the international community would supervise the cease-fire (all parties accepted that the United Nations should undertake this role); (3) elections would be monitored by the international community; (4) signature of a cease-fire would be linked to agreement on a date for elections; (5) all outside lethal military assistance would end upon the signing of a cease-fire; and (6) a national army would begin to be formed immediately after the cease-fire began and would be completed before elections. The MPLA representatives did not have the authority to initial the Washington points as a basis for future negotiations, but it was agreed that the sixth round of talks in early February would focus on these principles.

The Aborted Sixth Round

In an effort to ensure that the next round of Portuguese-led talks would be successful, representatives from Portugal, the United States, and the Soviet Union held a tripartite meeting in Lisbon on January 10, 1991 to synthesize the points agreed upon in Washington into three documents: an agreement on political principles, a cease-fire, and a set of concepts that would serve as a basis for future negotiations. These three documents were presented to the Lisbon representatives of the MPLA and UNITA and by late January had been endorsed by both sides. In early February, the MPLA and UNITA seemed to be on the verge of initialing documents setting forth the framework hammered out in more than two months of Portuguese-Soviet-U.S. effort.

But it was not to be. The MPLA delegation unexpectedly announced that the Luanda government was not prepared to sign the proposed framework unless UNITA first agreed on a cease-fire date. UNITA countered with its long-standing position that a cease-fire must be tied to an election date. The MPLA delegation refused to agree to a date for multiparty elections. Three days of intensive consultations by Portuguese diplomats with both sides failed to resolve the impasse, and the Portuguese government decided that the sixth round of talks could not be convened. A subsequent joint statement by Portugal, the United States, and the Soviet Union "deplored that, due to new elements introduced by the GPRDA [Government of the People's Republic of Angola] which placed preconditions on the previously agreed agenda, it was not possible at this time to initial [the framework documents]." Why did the MPLA take such a position? By February, the Luanda government was increasingly constrained by a number of factors, including the rapidly deteriorating military situation throughout the country. In the northern region and central highlands where it had previously exercised relative control, the MPLA was quickly losing ground to Savimbi's forces but found it difficult to admit that the military balance in the country had begun to shift in favor of UNITA.

Elements in the MPLA, including some in the military, are said to have pressured dos Santos not to sign the sixth-round agreements on the grounds that this act would cause the virtual collapse of the army, which, after the 1989 Gbadolite cease-fire statement, had simply left the field with the misguided perception that the war was over. There was reportedly little disagreement over the substance of the principles that were to be signed; the debate within the
MPLA focused on the military ramifications of signing the principles without a cease-fire date.

**Back on Track**

Even as the sixth round foundered, it was apparent that the negotiating process had moved beyond discussion of principles and advanced to the questions of cease-fire and election dates. It was clear that once an election date could be arranged, a cease-fire would follow quickly. Because the concepts agreed to in Washington by the MPLA, UNITA, Portugal, the United States, and the Soviet Union on December 13, 1990 linked the cease-fire date to an election date, designation of an election date suddenly became the most troublesome issue. UNITA was proposing a one-year timetable and the MPLA a three-year sequence, but there were signals that the MPLA was willing to consider a two-year plan.

The pace of mediation efforts soon began to quicken. On February 20, Barroso met with Cohen in Washington. In the following days, UNITA Vice President Jeremias Chitunda arrived to hold meetings with various administration officials. On February 25, Senior Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jeffrey Davidow made a 24-hour trip to Luanda to meet with dos Santos just days after Vladimir Kasimirov, director of the Africa department of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, held similar talks with the Angolan president urging a negotiated solution.

On March 6, another tripartite meeting was held in Lisbon between representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union, and Portugal to discuss recent events and to plan for a new round of talks between the combatants—talks which, they agreed, would end only when agreement had been reached on all of the elements necessary for a cease-fire. Concrete proposals dealing with the modalities of a cease-fire, the formation of a national army, and the organization of elections were formulated and presented to the MPLA and UNITA. It was also agreed that a representative of the United Nations would be invited to the next round of talks to pressure the two sides on a cease-fire.

On April 3, the day before the newly constituted sixth round of talks began, the MPLA's do Nascimento said on his arrival in Lisbon: "We intend to discuss everything that is left to discuss to reach a cease-fire agreement. I have even brought a pen to sign the cease-fire agreement." UNITA was highly suspicious of the MPLA's intentions before this new sixth round began, but its leaders' worries were gradually allayed at the conference table. After two days of negotiations, a spokesman for Barroso said that "the mood here is excellent. . . . There is a big commitment by both sides to take effective measures to build trust between them."

Over the next week, solid progress was made on the principles of a multiparty election (including the ground rules for establishing an electoral roll and providing access to the media) and the formation of a national army. When the issue of an election date arose, however, the gulf separating the two sides continued to impede progress. The MPLA formally stated its willingness to move from a 36-month interval between the signing of a cease-fire and the holding of elections to 24 months, and UNITA relaxed its demand on the maximum period it would accept from 12 to 15 months. This left a nine-month gap on which neither side was willing to compromise.

At that point, Assistant Secretary Cohen made a propitious stopover in Lisbon on his way to Paris. After taking note of the impasse and consulting with all sides, Cohen, through Barroso, proposed that the elections be held between 15 and 18 months after the signing of a cease-fire. On April 14, do Nascimento and Chitunda returned to Angola to consult with their respective leaders on the new proposal.

Do Nascimento, the first to return to Lisbon (April 17), informed Barroso that the MPLA agreed to the 15-to-18-month time frame for elections. UNITA, upon learning of the MPLA's acceptance, sent Chitunda back to the talks on April 20 with a brief insisting that a list of 15 newly created points be addressed before the proposed time frame could be approved.

Sources close to the talks said that UNITA's new discussion points included the role of police during the period leading up to the elections, the administration of the areas controlled by UNITA, and the possibility of holding elections earlier in the time frame to avoid the excessive rains of October and November which could hamper the turnout of UNITA's rural supporters at the polls. When U.S. officials agreed that the points raised were relevant but took the position that dealing with these specifics should not preclude the signing of a cease-fire, UNITA relented.

On April 28, a special MPLA Party Congress formally ended the government's adherence to Marxism-Leninism, changing its official ideology to "democratic socialism" and endorsing multiparty democracy. This step removed one of the remaining obstacles by opening up the political process to all parties, including UNITA.

On May 1, do Nascimento and Chitunda initialed the agreements relating to a political settlement and cease-fire, but reserved final approval until the end of May, when dos Santos and Savimbi could meet in Lisbon and place their official signatures on the documents. It was agreed that a de facto cease-fire would come into effect on May 15.

Even as it became clear to both sides that the war would soon be coming to an end, fighting continued across the country, especially in the eastern province of Mexico where UNITA had been virtually laying siege to Luena since April 1 in an effort to capture a provincial capital from the MPLA for the first time. Hundreds of civilians and soldiers on both sides were reported killed in the fighting, which continued for a few hours beyond the May 15 cease-fire deadline. Sporadic firefight were also reported in various parts of the country until the end of the month. Meanwhile, the last of the 50,000 Cuban troops stationed in Angola departed on May 25, five weeks ahead of the schedule set out in the December 1988 accords.

**The War Officially Ends**

On May 31 in Lisbon—in the presence of United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, and Portugal's Prime Minister Anibal Cavaco
Silva—MPLA President José Eduardo dos Santos and UNITA President Jonas Savimbi signed the documents officially ending 16 years of civil war in Angola.

Prior to the May 31 ceremony, the United States and the Soviet Union committed themselves to a cessation of all military supplies to both sides following signature of the agreement. U.S. and Soviet military representatives will serve, however, as joint observers with Portugal on the Joint Political and Military Commission to be established in Luanda on June 15. The JPMC, which will include representatives of the MPLA and UNITA, will oversee the transition leading to multiparty elections scheduled for late 1992 and the integration of the UNITA and MPLA armies into a single, neutral national force of 50,000. The formation of a new national military (40,000 army, 6,000 air force, 4,000 navy) will begin on August 1, 1991 and is scheduled to be completed one year later. It will be comprised equally of MPLA and UNITA personnel. A Joint Verification and Monitoring Commission (JVMC), assisted by a team of 600 United Nations representatives, will monitor the cease-fire and the redeployment of the forces of the two armies. The International Committee of the Red Cross will be responsible for management of the exchange of prisoners of war.

With the political process now underway, Savimbi is scheduled to relocate UNITA's headquarters from remote Jamba to the capital city of Luanda on July 1, 1991. The competition between the MPLA and UNITA for support from the electorate could be fractious over the next 15 to 18 months, but the entry of new political elements into the fray suggests that the contest will be truly multiparty rather than two-party in nature.

Shawn McCormick, a member of the CSIS African Studies Program research staff, is project coordinator for the Program's Study Group on Angola, a 38-member roundtable of distinguished members of Congress, executive branch officials, senior corporate executives, and scholars who are meeting periodically throughout 1991 to examine this controversial country's past and possible future through a range of prisms. Senator Nancy Kassebaum, former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker, and Maurice Tempelsman are cochairs of the Study Group. Guest speakers at various sessions have included Portugal's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation José Durão Barroso, MPLA Minister of Finance Aguinaldo Jaime, and UNITA Secretary for Foreign Affairs Tony da Costa Fernandes. The next session will focus on Angola's economic potential and prospects. Mr. McCormick's preparatory work for the Study Group on Angola project included August-September 1990 visits to Luanda and to UNITA headquarters in Jamba.

His previous contributions to CSIS Africa Notes have included "Who's Who and Where: A Guide to Key Personnel in U.S.-African Relations" (coauthor), issue no. 106 (December 1989) and "In Search of South African Analogies," issue no. 99 (June 1989).