

MALMIERCA ISSUES STATEMENT WITH ANGOLA ON TROOPS

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[Text] Cuba and Angola have reiterated that Namibia's independence cannot be conditioned to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angolan territory as South Africa and its allies and backers, the imperialists, would wish. In a joint statement signed in Luanda by Foreign Ministers Isidoro Malmierca of Cuba and Paulo Jorge of Angola, the two governments note that the arrival of Cuban forces in Angolan territory is not related to the Namibian conflict and responds instead to external threats against the Angolan process.

The document notes that in order to liquidate the Angolan revolutionary movement, the Yankee imperialists pushed the South African Army against Angola on 14 October 1975. In less than 20 days, those troops almost reached the capital. It was at this time, the declaration stresses, that President Agostinho Neto requested the military cooperation of Cuba. This assistance and the resistance of the Angolan people were able to prevent South Africa's occupation of Angola and expel its forces from Angolan territory on 27 March 1976.

The Cuban-Angolan statement says that in 1976 and 1979, attempts were made to implement a gradual reduction of Cuban forces in Angola, but renewed external threats against Luanda prevented the execution of this plan. Some of the threats cited in the statement are South Africa's aggressions against Cassinga in May 1978, against Cunene and Huila in 1979 and a recent invasion in August 1981 which led to the occupation of parts of southern Angola, a situation which still exists.

The document stresses that the danger to Angola and other countries in southern Africa is greater than ever. Concerning the plan to condition Namibia's independence to the withdrawal of Cuban troops, the governments of Luanda and Havana reiterate, for all the above-mentioned reasons and in keeping with article 51 of the UN Charter, the presence of those troops constitutes an absolutely sovereign and legitimate act on the part of the two countries and has no connection with the decolonization process of Namibia, which South Africa is illegally occupying.

PARTY DELEGATION OPENS TALKS IN ANGOLA

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[Text] Delegations of the parties and governments of Angola and Cuba began talks in Luanda today on bilateral relations and important international issues. The Cuban delegation, headed by the member of the politburo and secretariat of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC], Jorge Risquet, arrived in Luanda on Wednesday following a tour of several other African countries.

Opening the meeting, Lucio Lara, a member of the Politburo of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola [MPLA], Labor Party, hailed the militant solidarity with Angola of the Cuban party and people. The leader thanked President Fidel Castro and the PCC in particular for always responding satisfactorily to the needs of the young revolutionary process in Angola. Cuba's help in consolidating Angolan independence against constant aggressions has been sealed by the blood of internationalist combatants from the brother nation, Lara said. He then referred to the visit of the high-ranking Cuban delegation at a time when international tension is growing. Lastly, he conveyed greetings to Fidel Castro and PCC leaders and members in behalf of President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and the MPLA-Labor Party.

For his part, Risquet conveyed greetings from the party and the leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, to President dos Santos and the Angolan people.