"George Washington could not have freed the British colonies of America by fighting from a base of exile against an army superior in numbers and equipment."[10]

In March 1966, UNITA was born at a meeting in the town of Muangai, 250 kilometers inside Angola from the border with Zambia. Attending the meeting were 67 village chiefs and other delegates. A constitution was adopted which called upon UNITA to educate "all Angolans living outside the country to the idea that real independence for Angola will only be achieved through an armed struggle waged against the Portuguese colonial power inside the country."[11] Savimbi, who was still abroad, had had a hand in writing the constitution.

In October 1966, Savimbi crossed into Angola, setting foot on his native soil for the first time since he had set sail for Portugal eight years earlier. There were 50,000 Portuguese soldiers in Angola. Savimbi and what were called his Chinese Eleven had only knives, machete-like *pangas* and one Soviet pistol. The first attack by UNITA was launched on 4 December 1966 against Cassamba, a small outpost protected by several hundred Portuguese soldiers. Savimbi later admitted that the attack was "a failure, it was a disaster."[12] He said:

> It was the first time we had come under real fire, and the bullets had several colors - red, yellow, blue. We were really in a mess. One of our men was killed and we had to leave him. Two were wounded. We took them with us. We were all lying flat and had to crawl out through the (barbed) wire.[13]

The war was on and would continue until the Portuguese were finally driven from Angola.

Savimbi had been taught Maoist guerrilla warfare tactics in China. He learned in Angola, however, that every guerrilla commander must adapt tactics to the conditions in the country in which he is fighting. Of what he had been taught in China, Savimbi later said: "Real war was very different. It was just luck that UNITA did not die in that first attack, because half the commanders trained in China took part in it."[14]