

# CAUSES AND BACKGROUND OF DISPLACEMENT

## Background to the conflict

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### 30 years of war since independence (1963-1994)

- Independence war (1963-1974)
- Post-independence war (1974-1992)
- Post-multiparty election war (October 1992-November 1994)
- Post-multiparty election war is most devastating to Angolan people

"Angola has known little peace in the past 30 years. It has experienced three wars, the independence war (1963-1974), the post-independence war (1974-1992) and the post –multiparty election war (October 1992-November 1994) when UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) rebels rejected electoral defeat and returned to conflict.

[...]

The post-multiparty election war (October 1992-November 1994) was the most devastating: the UN estimates that more than 300,000 died, 3 per cent of the population. At its peak in 1993, as many as 1000 people were dying daily from conflict, starvation, and disease – more than in any other conflict in the world at that time. By September 1994, the UN Secretary General reported that there were 3,7 million Angolans, mostly displaced and conflict-affected, in need of emergency supplies, including essential medicines, vaccines and food aid. [...] Th[is] war was notable for widespread systematic violations of human rights by both the government and the UNITA rebels. In particular, indiscriminate shelling of starving, besieged cities by UNITA resulted in massive destruction of property and the loss of untold numbers of civilian lives. Indiscriminate bombing by the government also took a high civilian toll. The US deputy assistant secretary for African affairs noted at that time that: 'This type of warfare bears mainly, cruelly and disproportionately on the populace, which is caught between the warring parties'." (Vines 1998, pp. 89-90)

*For a detailed review of the conflict in Angola see chapter III "Background" of the Human Rights Watch report "Angola Unravels - the Rise and Fall of the Lusaka Peace Process" (September 1999)*  
[\[External link\]](#)

### Signature of the 1994 Lusaka Peace Protocol fails to end violence (1994-1997)

- Persistent reports of banditry, obstruction of free movement, continuation of fighting, human rights violations, and acquisition of arms
- Government and UNITA continue to acquire new arms
- Despite monitoring by the United Nations Peacekeepers (UNAVEM III), demobilization process of UNITA troops remains incomplete
- Civil war in Zaire is significant factor in power struggles

"Following the signing on 20 November 1994 of the Lusaka ceasefire protocol between the Angolan government, led by the Movement for the Popular Liberation of Angola (MPLA), and the UNITA rebels, Angola has been on a tortuous path to reestablish peace and security. Although a new Government of Unity and National Reconciliation (GURN) was inaugurated on 11 April 1997, sporadic fighting continues,

including the laying of landmines by both sides. Widespread human rights abuses by the government and UNITA continue, including conscription of child soldiers and the intimidation and detention of journalists. Movement around the country is difficult. By September 1997, as confidence in the peace process deteriorated, old checkpoints had been reactivated and new ones set up on both government and UNITA areas. Acts of banditry have also escalated. The government in 1997 continued to acquire new arms in contravention of the Lusaka Protocol, the 1991 Bicesse accords and UN Security Council resolutions.

The civil war in neighbouring Zaire was a significant factor in the power struggle in Angola during 1997. UNITA had been supporting President Sese Seko Mubutu of Zaire in return for supply lines for arms and a marketing route for diamonds. In February and March the MPLA sent two battalions of Katangese Angolans (originally from Shaba province in Zaire) to help Laurent Kabila, the leader of the rebel forces in Zaire. In June 1997, Kinshasa fell to the rebel forces and Zaire became the Democratic Republic of Congo. The immediate impact on Angola was that UNITA became more vulnerable as the Kinshasa government shifted its alliance to Luanda. In May and June, Angolan government forces invaded 10 per cent of UNITA-held diamond areas in Lunda Norte in order to reduce UNITA's power base in the northeast and to expand the diamond-producing areas held by the government." (Vines 1998, p. 90)

"In 1995, a nearly 7,000-strong UN military force, known as UNAVEM III, entered Angola to monitor implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, including the disarmament and demobilization of UNITA troops. During 1996, thousands of UNITA troops assembled at UN sites throughout the country. However, many were only part-time soldiers or civilians whom UNITA forced to pose as soldiers, according to observers. Only about half of the UNITA 'troops' who arrived at assembly areas carried weapons, and tens of thousands subsequently deserted. Many observers contended that UNITA still possessed significant military capacity 'including an estimated 15,000 to 25,000 troops' in Angola's northeastern Lunda Provinces and in neighboring Zaire (later renamed Democratic Republic of Congo). . .

[...]

[International observer mission] MONUA also confirmed the existence of armed UNITA soldiers, verified forced recruitment of new UNITA troops and 'remobilization' of demobilized UNITA troops, and reported other irregularities in the demobilization process." (USCR 1998, p. 50)

*For a detailed review of the Lusaka process and its failure, see chapter IV "The Lusaka Peace Process" and chapter V "Undermining the Lusaka Peace Process" of the Human Rights Watch report "Angola Unravels - the Rise and Fall of the Lusaka Peace Process" (September 1999) [\[External link\]](#)*

### **All-out war resumes in Angola by end 1998**

- Demobilization of UNITA troops as well as civilians sympathetic to the government is unsuccessful
- Fighting intensifies in the north and east of the country
- 200,000 persons newly displaced as result of fighting at end of 1998/early 1999
- UN decides to pull out MONUA observer mission in February 1999

"During 1998 the Angolan peace process unravelled. The União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, had failed to comply with the Lusaka Protocol (1994) requirements to allow the state to extend its authority over UNITA-controlled territory and to stand down and disarm its estimated 20,000 to 30,000 troops. The government had failed to fulfill its task of disarming civilians who had been given arms during previous periods of conflict and militia groups, banned under the peace agreement, increased in numbers. From March 1998 the security situation began to deteriorate. Fighting between government and UNITA troops increased, particularly in the north and east and in the central highlands, and armed attacks on villages and ambushes occurred in many other parts of the country. In December, government aircraft attacked UNITA's strongholds of

Andulo and Bailundo in the central highlands and UNITA attacked the cities of Kuito, Huambo and Malange. As a result of the fighting in December 1998 and January 1999 hundreds of people were killed and over 200,000 displaced." (AI February 1999)

***By 1999, security situation is so unstable that UN pulls out all peacekeeping forces:***

"In a report to the Security Council on 24 February [1999], the Secretary-General stated that the humanitarian situation had 'attained the devastating proportions which could be compared to the humanitarian catastrophe in Angola during the fighting in 1993 and 1994'. He added that 'in the prevailing situation, the humanitarian principles of unrestricted access to affected populations, independent assessment and monitoring, and safety and security of humanitarian personnel, are not being met. In order to achieve these objectives, a clear and unequivocal commitment is necessary by all concerned to respect the provisions of international humanitarian law'.

On 26 February, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1229 (1999), which took note that the mandate of the United Nations peacekeeping force in Angola expired on that day. At the same time, the Council endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendation for the liquidation of MONUA and decided that MONUA's human rights activities should continue through the liquidation period." (OCHA 4 March 1999)

***For a detailed review of the actions of the United Nations in Angola, see Chapter X "The United Nations" of the Human Rights Watch report "Angola Unravels – the Rise and Fall of the Lusaka Peace Process (September 1999) [External link].***

***Please find at UN website the full text of the 24 February 1999 report of the UN Secretary General [External link] and the UN Security Council Resolution 1229 (1999) [External link].***

### **UN Monitoring Mechanism on Angola Sanctions established to prevent violations by UNITA (2000-2001)**

- International sanctions imposed against UNITA since 1997
- UN Monitoring Mechanism on Angola Sanctions established in April 2000
- Members of Mechanism visited Angola in November 2000 and again in February 2001
- Mechanism recommended a permanent capability to ensure on-going sanctions monitoring

"The Monitoring Mechanism was established by the Security Council on 18 April [2000] to collect information on violations of the sanctions against UNITA and recommend ways to improve their implementation. Its members were Ambassador Juan Larrain of Chile (Chairman), Ambassador Lena Sundh of Sweden, Ms. Christine Gordon of the United Kingdom, Mr. James Manzou of Zimbabwe and Mr. Ismaila Seck of Senegal." (DPI 28 December 2000)

"The Mechanism was formed in July 2000, with the mandate to follow up leads initiated by the Panel of Experts, collect new information and investigate leads, and develop a mechanism to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of sanctions on UNITA.

It got off to a slow start due to wrangling over its role, but in the final months of its investigations it made considerable headway in uncovering links between UNITA and the international trade in diamonds and arms." (Action for Southern Africa 5 January 2001)

"Members of the sanctions-monitoring mechanism established under Security Council resolution 1295 (2000) visited Angola in November 2000 and again in February 2001. They met with several senior Government and State corporation officials, including some former UNITA generals, as well as members of the diplomatic community. As confirmed by the Government of Angola (S/2001/123), the sanctions seem to have contributed to efforts aimed at eroding the military capability of UNITA. However, there are worrying indications that some unidentified planes have been violating Angola's air space in the Cuando Cubango province to deliver supplies to UNITA, and that representatives of UNITA continue to raise funds through the illicit sale of diamonds." (UNSC 11 April 2001, para. 12)

"The Security Council this afternoon [19 April 2001] extended the mandate of the Monitoring Mechanism on Angola Sanctions until 19 October and requested it to provide a supplementary report by that date [it submitted its first report in December 2000].

[...]

As it unanimously adopted orally revised resolution 1348 (2001) today, the Council also requested the Secretary-General, acting in consultation with the Security-Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning Angola, to appoint up to five experts to serve on the Monitoring Mechanism and to make the necessary arrangements to support its work." (UNSC April 2001)

***The Mechanism recommended the establishment of a permanent monitoring body in its supplementary report of October 2001:***

260. The experience of the Monitoring Mechanism on Sanctions against UNITA has shown that there is a need for establishing a permanent capability of the Security Council to ensure ongoing monitoring of targeted sanctions regimes and illicit trafficking in high-value commodities in armed conflicts.

261. Such a new unified facility under the authority of the Security Council would maintain the political momentum gained in recent years on the question of sanctions enforcement and in the fight against the illicit trafficking fuelling armed conflicts. It would be cost-effective, and would avoid duplication of tasks and overlapping of investigations and ensure the preservation of a comprehensive database as well as its systematic and continuing processing. It would also permit the establishment of permanent and fruitful working relations with technical and regional organizations such as Interpol, ICAO, SADC, ECOWAS, OAU, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the World Customs Organization, all of which are essential partners in an effective implementation of sanctions.

262. In the case of Angola, a monitoring capacity has been in place since July 2000. Any gap in the monitoring process would afford a respite to sanctions violators and would be detrimental to the effectiveness of sanctions. The monitoring of illicit trafficking in high-value commodities involved in armed conflicts of which the Security Council is seized is intrinsically related to the question of sanctions monitoring. The lack of enforcement of sanctions and embargoes and the perpetuation of illicit trafficking have the same negative impact on the perpetuation of conflicts. Experience and data accumulated by the various panels of experts appointed in the past two years have shown that sanctions violations and illicit trafficking involve the same patterns of illegal activities and similar criminal networks.

263. A permanent monitoring capability will also strengthen the enforcement of sanctions, because it will act as a deterrent to potential violations. In this regard, the Mechanism has been able to appreciate the importance of this function and its positive effect. This also sets the ground for obtaining the cooperation of States in complying with the sanctions." (UNSC October 2001)

***For more detailed information on UNITA sanctions enforcement, see the first report of the UN Monitoring Mechanism on Angolan Sanctions issued in December 2000 [\[External link\]](#) as well as UN Security Council draft resolution 1348 extending the Mechanism's mandate to October 2001 [\[External link\]](#). Refer also to the Mechanism's Supplementary Report of October 2001 for details on UNITA structures and trafficking mechanisms [\[External link\]](#).***

## **Arms to UNITA allegedly provided by Bulgaria, Ukraine and Romania via Togo and Burkino Faso (January 2001)**

- UN Monitoring Mechanism exposes arms sales to UNITA via Togo and Burkino Faso
- End-user certificates forged in many cases

*The following information comes out of the UN Sanctions Monitoring Mechanism report of December 2000:*

"The [UN] Monitoring Mechanism found that Bulgaria and the Ukraine had been major suppliers of weapons to UNITA, but appears to accept that some weapons were sold in good faith on the basis of the end-users certificates to Togo and Burkino Faso.

However, the Mechanism's report does not tackle the issue of why these countries were prepared to sell Togo and Burkina Faso such large quantities of weapons, which on the face of it do not meet their current military needs – for example, Bulgaria shipped 6,300 RPG-7 anti-tank rockets to Togo.

The mechanism points out that Bulgaria, Ukraine and Romania have wide-ranging legislation governing various aspects of the export of arms.

However, Bulgaria exported \$14 million worth of weapons between 1996 and 1998 on the basis of forged end-user certificates, with Togo as the stated destination. Forensic examinations carried out on these certificates on behalf of the Mechanism found that they were forgeries, but the Mechanism concludes that the forgeries were based on a legitimate end-user certificate issued by Togo to one of UNITA's senior arms procurers, Marcelo Moises Dachala 'Ambassador Karrica'.

Romania provided the Mechanism with evidence that it had exported \$776,000 worth of weapons to Togo and Burkino Faso between 1996 and 1999. Burkina Faso denies ever issuing the end-user certificates, but the forensic examinations found that 'the end-user certificates featuring Burkina Faso as the country of origin were authentic'." (Action for Southern Africa, 5 January 2001)

## **UNITA forces move from guerrilla to terrorist warfare in 2000/2001**

- UNITA returns to guerrilla tactics after losing ground to government troops early in 2000
- Guerrilla warfare results in greater overall insecurity for Angolan people
- By 2001, UNITA is targeting civilians in terrorist attacks and mass kidnappings

*2000:*

"One of the most important factors affecting the humanitarian operation in 2000 was a change in military tactics, with a shift early in the year to guerrilla warfare. In 1999, shelling occurred frequently in major provincial capitals including Huambo, Malanje and Kuito. During 2000, the most common form of attack was rapid infiltration, usually involving looting, followed by immediate withdrawal. Insecurity in the countryside increased, particularly in prospective resettlement sites. In a disturbing trend, several previously secure locations, where recovery activities were either underway or scheduled, were attacked." (UN November 2000, 2000 in Review, para. 2)

"[T]he report states that 'before the Government offensive in September 1999, it was possible to talk about UNITA-controlled areas, this is less relevant today, in a situation where UNITA is operating as an

insurgent force. To speak about Government-controlled areas and areas not under Government control does not seem to give a good description of today's situation, because areas under Government control still exist where UNITA is able to operate." (Action for Southern Africa 5 January 2001)

"During the first quarter of 2000, the government appeared to be in the ascendance on the battlefield and UNITA appeared disoriented, its actions limited to sporadic guerrilla attacks. As the year progressed, this changed, with UNITA adapting back to guerrilla attacks and high-profile hit-and-run ambushes on main roads...

The level of UNITA violence against civilians increased significantly as UNITA's tactics changed during the year. In January, as the FAA approached Chinguar town, UNITA embarked upon a killing spree, aimed at ensuring that residents would not be captured by government forces. Some 140 soldiers and civilians were reportedly killed. UNITA was also reportedly responsible for extrajudicial executions in localities such as Camaxilo in Lunda Norte, Katchiungo in Huambo, and Quimbele in Uige.

Deliberate mutilations have not been commonplace in the Angolan conflict, but the number of incidents increased during the year, with UNITA forces reportedly cutting off ears and hands. The purpose appears to have been to send a warning to others not to betray UNITA, or to attempt to flee to areas controlled by government forces. It was a response to the rebels' greater isolation and battlefield losses." (HRW December 2000, Human Rights Developments)

#### **2001:**

"The number of kidnappings and murders by Jonas Savimbi's UNITA movement increased sharply in May [2001], drawing widespread condemnation both inside Angola and internationally. The recent attacks have indicated that the remnant of UNITA is shifting away from classic guerrilla tactics towards unashamedly terrorist warfare.

The most publicised atrocity took place on 5 May, when two hundred UNITA soliders attacked the city of Caxito, 60km north of Luanda. It is not clear how many civilians were murdered during the attack. Some reports put the number at 79, whilst the African Church Information Service puts the number at around 200. [...]

Straight after the attack on Caixito, one group of fifty soliders attacked an orphans' home run by the Danish agency Development Aid from People to People (ADPP). The rebels sacked the orphanage, and took 60 children hostage, along with a teacher. Two teachers are reported to have been killed. Also murdered during the attack was an Angolan doctor from the Italian NGO, the Committee for the Co-ordination of Volunteering Organisations.

[...]

The attacks on civilians have continued to grow, leading senior Angolan military figures to point to a change in UNITA's strategy.

The operational commander of Bie province, Brigadier Eugenio Figueiredo, told Radio Ecclesia on 23 April that the strategy was to seize weapons and food using small mobile units to attack poorly defended villages: "This is not like the old guerrillas – rather, these are ones who are trying to find means of survival and material goods to sustain themselves. The old guerrillas were more compact because they had the assistance of the people who worked on the farms. They do not have such assistance, and therefore they have to steal to survive" said Figueiredo

[...]

While terror has always been a central feature of Jonas Savimbi's approach – both for internal control and external objectives – latest events highlight that the remnants of UNITA's military units are now acting in a purely terrorist manner. This is for a combination of practical military and logistical reasons (a lack of food and diminishing local civilian support) and a desperate attempt to, paradoxically, strengthen the widely held opinion that they must be dealt with at the negotiating table.

The change in strategy is away from Jonas Savimbi's belief in the doctrine of Maoist guerrilla warfare, which puts the central emphasis on the belief that 'the revolutionary war is a war of the masses; it can be waged only by mobilising the masses and relying on them.' (Action for Southern Africa 7 June 2001)

"8. UNITA has increased its terrorist attacks on innocent civilians. It has attacked schools, buses and trains. It has shot at people fleeing to escape from the flames of a burning explosion. It has shot at World Food Programme planes carrying not weapons but desperately needed food and humanitarian supplies. Sadly, such instances are far too numerous to cite here." (UNSC October 2001)

### **UNITA attack of civilian train is strongly condemned by international community (August-October 2001)**

- Civilian train derailed by anti-tank mine in Cuanza Norte province
- Over 400 persons killed, some of who were murdered by UNITA forces when jumping from the train
- U.N. has condemned the "terrorist" attack in the strongest terms

"There has been widespread condemnation of an attack by Jonas Savimbi's UNITA rebels on a civilian train on 10 August, which left over 250 [later confirmed at 422] people dead and another 160 [later confirmed at 229] injured.

The train was an ordinary scheduled service from Luanda to Dondo, consisting of four passenger carriages, two freight trucks and two oil tanks. It was derailed when it hit an anti-tank mine near Zenza do Itombe, Cuanza Norte province. Witnesses state that UNITA rebels were lying in wait, and many people were murdered as they jumped from the train." (Action for Southern Africa 5 September 2001, Revulsion over train massacre)

"The number of people murdered by UNITA during the attack on a train on 10 August is now reported to be 422 confirmed deaths, with 229 people still missing and unaccounted for.

The train had been travelling from Luanda to Dondo when it was attacked near Zenza do Itombe, Cuanza Norte province. UNITA has admitted that it attacked the train, but denies that many civilians were killed.

However, in the current climate UNITA's terrorist attacks have rebounded on themselves. A statement by the President of the United Nations Security Council on 20 September (S/PRST/2001/24) warned that 'the Security Council condemns in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks by UNITA forces on the civilian population of Angola. It stresses that such attacks are unacceptable and cannot be justified by any political goals. The Council reminds their perpetrators that such acts are in violation of international law and may have further implications'." (Action for Southern Africa 5 October 2001, Train massacre toll rises)

*For details of the U.N. Security Council Presidential Statement on Angola, please refer to original document [\[External link\]](#).*

### **Chronology of the conflict since independence (1975-2000)**

- UNITA, MPLA and FNLA already at odds at time of independence in 1975
- Country is wracked by fighting until 1994 when ceasefire accord signed
- UNITA fails to respect ceasefire; international sanctions imposed in 1997
- Continued fighting fueled by UNITA diamond revenues since 1998

"Key events of the conflict that has left at least 500,000 people dead are as follows:

### **1975**

*Nov 11:* Angola wins independence from Portugal but is already wracked by conflict between the pro-Soviet People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), both backed by the United States and Zaire.

Apartheid South Africa had in October sent troops to back UNITA against the MPLA, which had major support from Cuba.

### **1979**

*Sept 20:* Jose Eduardo dos Santos succeeds the late president Agostinho Neto.

### **1984**

*Feb 16:* Angola and South Africa sign a deal calling for a South African withdrawal to be completed in 1988.

### **1988**

*Aug 8:* South Africa, Cuba and Angola agree on ceasefires in Angola and in Namibia as part of a regional peace pact.

*Dec 22:* The largely US-brokered New York treaty among the same three parties opens the way to Namibian independence and agreement between Cubans and Angolans on the withdrawal of Cuba's 50,000 troops in Angola.

### **1989**

*July:* Fighting resumes, despite a June 22 ceasefire between the government and UNITA.

### **1991**

*March 26-30:* New laws introduce multi-party politics and guarantee civil liberties.

*May 30:* The UN Verification Mission (UNAVEM), in Angola since late 1988, is extended to monitor the ceasefire and organise general elections.

*May 31:* The government of Dos Santos and the rebels of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi sign peace accords to end the civil war.

### **1992**

*Sept 29-30:* General and presidential elections take place under UN supervision and are carried by the MPLA.

Dos Santos fails to carry the presidential poll in the first round. Savimbi refuses to admit defeat at the polls and renewed war breaks out.

### **1993**

*March 6:* UNITA takes control of Angola's second city Huambo, after battling since January in a campaign that left 12,000 dead.

*May 19:* The United States, which backed UNITA between 1975 and 1991, recognises Dos Santos' regime.

*Oct 6:* UNITA recognises the 1991 peace deal and the elections' outcome.

*Nov 15:* Direct negotiations between government and UNITA begin.

### **1994**

*March 31:* UNITA agrees to a second round of presidential elections as fighting continues.

*Nov 20:* Government and UNITA representatives in Lusaka sign another ceasefire agreement.

### **1995**

*Feb 8:* UN Security Council agrees to send a 7,000-strong peacekeeping force to Angola.



*May 6:* First summit between Dos Santos and Savimbi in Gabon.

*May 18:* Savimbi declares that he accepts the September 1992 election results and in June he announces "the end of the war in Angola."

#### **1996**

*Nov 13:* Parliament abolishes the post of vice-president after Savimbi refuses to take it up.

#### **1997**

*April 11:* Formation of a national unity and reconciliation government.

*Oct 30:* The UN imposes sanctions against UNITA for failing to respect the ceasefire.

#### **1998**

*March 11:* UNITA is officially recognized as a political party.

*Sept 2:* Influential UNITA members split from Savimbi, prompting the government to end its dialogue with UNITA and to recognize only the splinter group.

*Late 1998:* All-out warfare resumes.

#### **1999**

*Jan 29:* Dos Santos extends his presidential powers.

*Feb 26:* United Nations ends its observer mission in Angola due to resumed fighting.

#### **2000**

*March 10:* A UN report accuses some African leaders of fueling the war through diamond and arms trading in violation of sanctions.

*Aug 18:* Intense fighting breaks out in eastern Angola.

*Oct 2:* MPLA calls off elections due in 2001 because of ongoing fighting, angering opposition parties." (AFP 9 November 2000)

### **Angola President dos Santos announces he will not run in next elections (August 2001)**

"Angolan President José dos Santos announced on Thursday [24 August 2001] that he would not stand as a candidate in the next presidential election. Addressing the central committee of the ruling MPLA party in Luanda, Dos Santos said the party should prepare to find a candidate for the next electoral contest, which he said could take place in 2002 or 2003. 'It is clear that the name of that candidate will not be José Eduardo dos Santos,' he said." (IRIN-SA 24 August 2001)

"In a step that could offer Jonas Savimbi an honourable exit from political life, the President of Angola, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, has announced that he will not stand in the next presidential elections.

[...]

The government is keen to go ahead with elections in 2002, but there is growing debate over whether the conditions will exist for voters to freely express their will." (Action for Southern Africa 5 September 2001, President to step down)

### **Savimbi's death adds new impetus to peace process – leading eventually to ceasefire agreement between the warring parties (April 2002)**

- Jonas Savimbi, veteran leader of the UNITA rebel movement, is killed by Angolan government troops (FAA), in the eastern Moxico province, on 22 February 2002
- Hopes are raised for an end to the fighting - although some fear that UNITA might split into many factions and that fighting would continue

- President dos Santos calls for a ceasefire on 13 March 2002
- Peace talks between Angolan government and UNITA commanders take place in Moxico province in March, but ongoing fighting forces more civilians to flee their homes
- Aid agencies reiterate warnings that their resources are already overstretched and that they do not have the capacity to deal with further large influxes of IDPs
- Ceasefire agreement is signed by Angolan government and UNITA in April 2002

"The death of veteran Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi has added new impetus to the search for a settlement to the country's long-running civil war, analysts told IRIN over the weekend.

Savimbi was killed on Friday by Angolan government troops (FAA) after a fierce gun battle near Lucusse, about 700 km east of Luanda, the capital. His 'column', hunted by the FAA, was reportedly headed for the Zambian border. State television on Saturday showed the body of the 67-year-old guerrilla chieftain, who had led the UNITA rebel movement since 1966, sprawled on a makeshift table. The authorities said his corpse would be publically displayed in Luanda.

'I'm so optimistic. The nightmare has ended and the future has just begun,' Dinho Chingunji, spokesman for the anti-Savimbi UNITA-Renovada faction in the United States told IRIN.

There are, however, question marks over whether UNITA commanders in the bush will continue fighting, or if Savimbi's death could clear the obstacles to a peace agreement." (IRIN, 24 February 2002)

"While the international community has called for a rapid cessation of hostilities in Angola, on the ground the conflict between government forces and UNITA rebels has continued.

On Wednesday US President George Bush, after a meeting with his Angolan counterpart Jose Eduardo dos Santos in Washington, said 'we agreed that all parties have an obligation to seize this moment to end the war', and that 'Angolans deserve no less than peace'.

The European Union (EU) presidency, Spain, said in a statement this week that in light of the recent death of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi, 'it is the strong conviction of the EU, that the end of the Angolan conflict can only be achieved through an effective engagement of all in peace and national reconciliation, on the basis of the Lusaka protocol'. While the EU 'welcomes the positive signals from the government of Angola to date and looks forward to the early publication of the announced detailed programme leading to a definitive end of all the hostilities in Angola', some humanitarian officials on the ground believe Angola's suffering could continue for some time yet.

One aid worker told IRIN it is expected that the government, sensing it may finally have the upper hand militarily, will intensify their efforts to wipe-out UNITA. 'I expect this will lead to more IDPs (internally displaced persons) and an unpredictable response from UNITA. The worst case scenario is that we will have a Somali situation with (UNITA splitting into) many factions.'

Supporting the sentiments of the EU, the official said: "The best move for government now is to try and pull UNITA together, though I'm not sure they'll do that. The military solution is what the military wants, the heads of FAA (Angolan Army) are saying they want a military solution, lets hope wisdom prevails.'

On Monday, dos Santos called for a ceasefire, shortly thereafter a UNITA attack killed several people and dashed hopes for an immediate peace." (IRIN 28 February 2002)

"Peace talks between the Angolan government and rebel UNITA commanders continued on Friday in the eastern province of Moxico as on-going skirmishes force people to flee their homes.

A diplomatic source told IRIN that the UNITA commanders were being kept under close watch in the city of Luena. 'They [UNITA delegation] can walk in and out of their houses but they are being closely monitored and they won't be able to just leave,' the source said.

Information on the content of the talks has thus far been slow to trickle out. 'Not even high-ranking government officials know anything about it at all, there's no information coming out about the peace talks,' said the source.

UNITA member of parliament Jaka Jamba said: 'All we can say now is that the talks are aimed at [reaching agreement] on a cessation of hostilities. UNITA has reinforced its delegation [led by General Abreu Kamorteiro] with its secretary for information, Marcial Adriano Dachala. The government delegation is headed by FAA's [Angolan Army] deputy chief of staff, General Geraldo Sachipengo Nunda.'

The World Food Programme (WFP) has meanwhile warned that the influx of internally displaced persons (IDPs) into cities would further stretch aid agencies already limited resources." (IRIN, 22 March 2002)

"Welcoming the recent signing of a ceasefire agreement between the Government of Angola and the rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the United Nations envoy to the country has reiterated the UN's support in helping to establish peace in the war-torn nation.

The ceasefire accord 'concludes a first phase of a process, which we all want to be irreversible and which we all want to bring peace to Angola,' Mussagy Jeichande, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's Representative to the country, said in a statement to the signing ceremony on Saturday in Luena.

'Peace is a process, which requires an open and sincere dialogue,' Mr. Jeichande said. 'It is the only way to achieve the true reconciliation of the Angolan family.'

Mr. Jeichande also reiterated the UN's readiness to 'help that peace, democracy, progress and social welfare become realities available for the Angolan nationals.'

Meanwhile, Mr. Annan's Special Adviser for Africa, Ibrahim Gambari, is set to arrive tomorrow in Angola on a fact-finding mission to examine the current peace process and clarify the UN's role in it, a UN spokesman said Monday in New York.

Mr. Gambari will also seek to encourage the parties to take full advantage of the recent positive developments in Angola to move the peace process forward under the Lusaka Protocol." (UN News Service, 1 April 2002)

### **UN Security Council extends mandate of sanctions monitoring mechanism – but subsequently suspends travel restrictions on UNITA (April-May 2002)**

- Sanctions monitoring mechanism extended in April 2002 for 6 months
- In May 2002, UN Security Council suspends travel restrictions on UNITA in order to advance the peace process and national reconciliation

#### **"Resolution 1404 (2002) Adopted Unanimously:**

Welcoming the 4 April ceasefire agreement in Angola and determining that the situation in Angola continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region, the Security Council this afternoon extended until 19 October the mandate of the monitoring mechanism created in April 2000 to investigate violations of the sanctions placed on the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

By unanimously adopting resolution 1404 (2002), the Council requested the monitoring mechanism to provide a detailed action plan for its future work to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) within 30 days, in particular on financial measures and the measures concerning the trade in diamonds and arms, against UNITA.

The Council further requested the Secretary-General to appoint four experts to serve on the monitoring mechanism, in consultation with the Committee.

Pursuant to resolution 864 of 15 September 1993, the Council placed sanctions on UNITA and created a committee to monitor sanctions violations concerning, among other things, the sale or supply of weapons, petroleum and petroleum products.

In May 1999, the Council established an independent panel of experts "to trace violations in arms trafficking, oil supplies and the diamond trade, as well as the movement of UNITA funds". In April 2000, after considering the final report of the panel, the Council adopted resolution 1295 (2000), by which it tightened existing sanctions, established a new monitoring mechanism, and put into place a process whereby the Council would consider appropriate action in relation to States suspected of violating the sanctions." (UN Security Council, 18 April 2002)

"The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning the situation in Angola wishes to inform that the Security Council decided on 17 May 2002 by its resolution 1412 (2002) to suspend the travel restrictions imposed in paragraphs 4 (a) and (b) of resolution 1127 (1997) on UNITA senior officials and adult members of their immediate families, as designated by the 864 Committee\* for a period of 90 days commencing on 17 May 2002.

By suspending the above travel restrictions, the Security Council recognized, in particular, the need for the facilitation of travel by UNITA members for the peace process and national reconciliation to advance. Prior to the end of the suspension period, the Security Council will decide whether to extend the suspension of the measures referred to above, taking into account all available information on the continuing progress of the process of national reconciliation in Angola." (UN Security Council, 20 May 2002)

*For the 26 April 2002 report of the Monitoring Mechanism on Sanctions against UNITA, [click here](#)*

### **Disarmament and demobilisation of UNITA troops begins across Angola – but the process is less than smooth (May 2002)**

- Angolan government sets up 33 quartering areas for UNITA troops in various parts of the country
- MOU between the army and UNITA provides for the demobilisation of up to 50,000 UNITA troops as well as provision for 250,000 family members
- In May 2002, conditions in the quartering areas are described as an 'emerging humanitarian crisis'

"UNITA troops have begun to gather in the 33 quartering areas set up by the Angolan government as part of the re-launched peace process. As of 25 April, over 9,000 soldiers had already reached the cantonment areas, with several thousand additional troops awaiting transportation from the bush.

The troops entering the camps are reported to be genuine soldiers and handing in real weapons. This is in stark contrast to the quartering process which took place in 1995 when - under the watch of the United Nations - UNITA sent boys and old men, carrying obsolete guns, as part of its charade of abiding by the Lusaka Protocol.

The quartering process is to take place within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which was signed by the head of the Angolan army, General Armando da Cruz Neto, and the Chief of Staff of UNITA's armed wing, General Geraldo Abreu Muengo 'Kamorteiro' on 4 April in Luanda. This was the document agreeing to the end of the fighting and the completion of the outstanding items of the Lusaka Protocol.

Under the MOU a Joint Military Commission has been set up to oversee the quartering and demilitarisation of UNITA's military forces. The first meeting was held on 10 April in Luanda, attended by General Geraldo Satchipengo 'Nunda' of the Angolan army and General Kamorteiro. The meeting was witnessed by the United Nations Secretary General's Special Advisor on Africa, Ibrahim Gambari and the ambassadors from the Troika of Observer nations (the United States, Russian Federation and Portugal).

The section of the agreement dealing with quartering provides for shelter for up to 50,000 UNITA troops, with UNITA's 12 generals and 47 brigadiers being housed in nearby towns. Each quartering area is to hold up to 1,600 men with security and easy access. Provision will also be made nearby for the families of UNITA soldiers, totalling up to 300,000 people.

The Angolan government is to provide, with the help of the United Nations, emergency assistance for family members as well as promoting their reintegration through rapid income generating projects in areas such as agriculture and rural trade.

Upon arrival at the camps the soldiers are required to hand over their weapons, which are subsequently to be destroyed.

The MOU sets out a timetable for the completion of all outstanding military matters. It expects UNITA's military forces to be quartered and demilitarised within 47 days of the signing of the MOU on 4 April." (ACTSA, 1 May 2002)

"The Angolan government is flagging as a success its demobilisation programme, but diplomatic sources told IRIN on Wednesday there are concerns over Luanda's ability to keep UNITA troops and their families fed in the quartering areas, and the risk that could pose to the peace process.

Angola's Joint Military Commission, set up under the 4 April ceasefire to oversee the demilitarisation of an estimated 55,000 UNITA soldiers, said this week that more than 30,000 former rebels had already been quartered. Some 42,000 family members out of an estimated 300,000 had also been received.

'These numbers are an indication of the serious work for the consolidation of peace,' the Portuguese news agency Lusa quoted Angolan army spokesman General Francisco Furtado as saying. The general said UNITA troops were being quartered in 31 out of 35 cantonment areas established by the government, and more were heading for the remaining four sites which had not yet received military personnel.

But a US Agency for International Development (USAID) report on Tuesday described conditions in some of the quartering areas as an 'emerging humanitarian crisis'. Diplomatic sources told IRIN there had been unconfirmed reports of UNITA soldiers arriving in poorly provisioned cantonment sites and returning to the bush with their weapons." (IRIN, 8 May 2002)

## **Main causes of displacement**

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### **Guerrilla ambushes and small-scale attacks have forced millions from their homes (1999-2001)**

- Both UNITA and FAA counter-insurgency measures responsible for displacement
- Indiscriminate shelling and banditry by both sides have been main causes of displacement in 1999 and 2000

**1999:**

"In early January 1999, between 30 and 40 people were killed in Malange when UNITA forces shelled the city in broad daylight. Observers reported that this mortar shelling, by mobile units based less than 21 kilometres away, appeared to deliberately aim at the city's heavily populated market places in an attempt to force civilians to flee. The killing and wounding of unarmed civilians through indiscriminate shelling is a breach of Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions." (AI February 1999, "Human rights abuses in the context of the fighting since beginning of December 1999")

"A spokesman for the UN Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit (UCAH) told IRIN that growing instability in Angola was forcing people to flee their homes creating new influxes not only in the besieged government-held provincial capitals, but in the capital Luanda, itself. He said people had been fleeing mainly to the Central Highlands cities of Huambo and Kuito, Benguela further south, Malanje east of Luanda, Cuito Carnavale in the southeast, Luena in central Angola, and the northern city of Uige.

[...]

An analyst in Luanda said people were fleeing not only from regular skirmishes between government troops and UNITA rebels, but because they knew both sides were preparing for the dry season offensive." (IRIN 14 May 1999)

"UNITA attempted to prevent civilian populations from fleeing some areas under its control while successfully forcing hundreds of thousands in other areas to flee to government-held towns. UNITA's strategy of forced population displacement seemed designed to burden the government with humanitarian responsibilities and to detract from the government's military response." (USCR 2000 Annual, p. 65)

**2000:**

"28. ...[I]t is important to note, as did the inter-agency mission, that the responsibility for displacement falls on both the government Armed Forces of Angola (FAA) and UNITA. The Government and the FAA are reported to displace forcibly the civilian population as a counter-insurgency strategy or as a short-term security measure to protect civilians. Other reports indicate that indiscriminate shelling by the FAA and the circulation of false information have resulted in the displacement of civilians. Allegations of similar practices have been levied against UNITA. There are also reports that UNITA forcibly displaces civilians to Government-controlled areas in order to increase pressure on government resources.

[...]

82. Displacement results from civilians fleeing their villages as a result of, or in order to avoid, such practices as those above [human rights abuses, forced conscription and the like]. Often the displaced will spend several days hiding in the bush before attempting to move to safer locations such as major towns or provincial capitals. Displacement also results from civilians being deliberately forced from their homes and having to carry the very items which have been looted from them. It also results from families fleeing or sending their children to government controlled areas in an effort to protect them from forced recruitment by UNITA. The Representative was particularly alarmed by reports that children are being abducted and traded by UNITA to work as forced labour in salt mines in Malanje province. Local NGOs and church groups who may have access to salt mines are encouraged to collect additional and more detailed information which should be brought to the attention of the national authorities and the international community.

83. Displacement of the civilian population is also reported to result from the FAA 'mopping up' and counter-insurgency operations, which are expected to increase in intensity. Reports indicate that FAA troops employ many of the same tactics as UNITA, such as looting villages and forcing the inhabitants to carry the food and other possessions which have been looted from them. Accounts from internally displaced persons suggest that villagers who refuse to comply with such demands risk being beaten or killed. The Representative was informed on a number of occasions that part of the problem in this regard is that the FAA troops often receive neither their salaries nor sufficient supplies and are thus inclined to prey on the local population. A senior government official readily conceded to the Representative that this was a problem. In an effort to prevent such practices, the Government needs to ensure that its military personnel

receive regular salary payments and supplies of food and basic equipment." (CHR 25 January 2001, paras. 28, 82, 83)

### **Floods in early 2001 have led to displacement of thousands of families (April 2001)**

- UN estimated that nearly 10,000 persons were displaced by torrential rains in southern provinces of Benguela, Namibe and Cunene
- State media puts number of those displaced by floods at 20,000
- Government later noted that as many as 38,000 persons were displaced in Benguela province

"Floods caused by torrential rains in southern Angola have forced 9,500 people from their homes, a UN report released Friday [20 April 2001] said.

State media had put the number at about 20,000. The displaced people had to flee their villages in the southwestern province of Namibe, where the Bero and Giraul rivers burst their banks and flooded several neighborhoods of Namibe town and several outlying villages.

An assessment team sent by the United Nations and aid groups said regions in Cunene, Huila and Namibe provinces could face a food crisis because floods have destroyed huge swaths of farmland, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

[...]

The floods have compounded Angola's long-standing humanitarian disaster caused by the unrelenting 25-year civil war." (AFP 20 April 2001)

"Heavy rains and flooding during April caused extensive damage in Benguela, Namibe and Cunene provinces affecting over 70,000 people. In Benguela province, the authorities reported 9,300 houses destroyed and over 38,000 people displaced." (UNICEF 21 June 2001)

### **Government development plans lead to forcible evictions from Luanda inner-city district (July 2001)**

- Forced removals from Boavista began on 1 July 2001
- Several hundred members of community now living in tents 30 km outside Luanda
- Evidence that Boavista has been earmarked for redevelopment by a subsidiary of the state oil company, Sonangol

"Forced removals from Boavista began on Sunday 1 July, in an operation accompanied by hundreds of armed police, and have continued every weekend since then. Several hundred members of the 50,000 strong community are now living in tents at Viana, 30 km outside Luanda. The government intends to continue with the removals until Boavista has been completely evacuated.

Many of those who were forced to move have had to give up their jobs in central Luanda, since their return bus fare to the city would cost 20 kwanza (about US\$1) – almost an entire day's wages for some workers. The wealthier residents had invested tens of thousands of dollars in their homes, and received no compensation when they were destroyed.

The government has promised land and building materials for the construction of new houses, but many residents are sceptical about this. The tents have been set up supposedly as a temporary measure. In the absence of any other source of income, the residents of the camp have little choice but to work on the

building site where their new houses are supposedly to be constructed. They receive no payment for this, and are dependent on staple foods handed out by the authorities.

The authorities say the removals are being carried out because landslides have made the Boavista houses unsafe. Although some structures close to the cliff edge did indeed collapse during rains earlier this year, residents argue that most of the houses are safely built. There is evidence that the Boavista site, which enjoys a central location and spectacular sea views, has been earmarked for redevelopment by a subsidiary of the state oil company, Sonagol." (IRIN-SA 24 July 2001)

"For city authorities, the standoff over Boa Vista has degenerated into a mini-conflict in this war-ravaged nation, after police tried to forcibly evict residents last week and ended up killing two people how refused to budge.

The city has tried to lure residents away, noting the squalid living conditions in Boa Vista and the environment dangers they face from the chronic mudslides caused by unusually heavy rains during the last two years.

[...]

The tent city is 45 kilometers (25 miles) outside the city center, making it closer to the town of Catete, which has suffered several UNITA attacks already this year." (AFP 6 July 2001)

### **Terrorist warfare by UNITA and "cleansing" operations by FAA forces cause fear and displacement (June-October 2001)**

- Terrorist tactics and kidnappings by UNITA puts civilian populations on alert
- Government "cleansing" operations force still inhabitants from their homes

#### ***UNITA troops:***

"The number of kidnappings and murders by Jonas Savimbi's UNITA movement increased sharply in May [2001], drawing widespread condemnation both inside Angola and internationally. The recent attacks have indicated that the remnant of UNITA is shifting away from classic guerrilla tactics towards unashamedly terrorist warfare." (Action for Southern Africa 7 June 2001)

"Throughout September there have been sporadic attacks by UNITA around Angola. Whilst some of these attacks were acts of banditry aimed at stealing clothes and food, other are acts of terror to deny any normality to the Angolan population." (Action for Southern Africa 5 October 2001)

***For a list of reported attacks by UNITA in the last two months, see Angola Peace Monitor Issue No. 1, Vol. VII [External link].***

#### ***FAA troops:***

"A human catastrophe is under way in the war-torn central highlands of Angola, amid claims that the government of Eduardo dos Santos is deliberately 'cleansing' large areas of its village population in order to starve Jonas Savimbi's Unita rebels out of existence.

In recent months, tens of thousands of villagers have been displaced in Unita's heartland Bie province by the Angolan army as part of a policy of denying Unita access to the food it levies from villages under its control.

[...]

The claim by aid workers in the field and by Western diplomats in Luanda that the government is encouraging the crisis is supported by dozens of displaced villagers. It also comes as large numbers of



starving villagers continue to be displaced daily by heavy fighting in Bie province and gathered into massive camps without sufficient food or shelter.

'Government troops are rounding up whole villages when they reach them and forcing the inhabitants to leave Unita areas so that they cannot feed the Unita soldiers. Then we are being expected to feed them.' Said a humanitarian official based in Kuito, Bie province's regional capital.

For its part Unita has responded to the accelerated government programme of *limpieza* – or 'cleansing' – by redoubling its attacks on villages and government positions, often to steal food and clothes, hampering the aid effort and sending thousands more villagers fleeing." (Mail and Guardian 20 August 2001)

### **Civilians fleeing intensifying fighting head for government-controlled towns (October 2001)**

- Major government offensives in Bie, Moxico and Cuando Cubango provinces cause civilians to flee
- Widespread insecurity causing population movements elsewhere in the country
- Increase in number of IDPs also indicated by rise in number of reported landmine accidents

"Civilians continue to seek safety in government-controlled towns across the country as they flee intensifying fighting between rebel UNITA forces and Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) troops, according to humanitarian officials.

An aid worker in Kuito, capital of the central Bie province, told IRIN on Wednesday there were large influxes of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in area where there had been attacks, but that there continued to be a 'steady movement (of IDPs) into Kuito and Camacupa', also in Bie.

Large numbers of Angolans have fled into Zambia, Namibia and Angolan towns in recent weeks to escape a major government offensive in the provinces of Bie, Moxico and Cuando Cubango. Humanitarian sources who spoke to IRIN attributed the large displacements to military activity in the region, but added that population movements elsewhere in the country indicated widespread insecurity.

World Food Programme (WFP) spokesperson in Angola, Cristina Muller, told IRIN: 'I think during this week there has been a high number of IDPs (internally displaced persons) arriving in places where WFP is present.' The number of people would be determined after everyone was registered, she said.

Muller added, however, that there was a stabilisation in the number of IDPs entering therapeutic feeding centres, especially in Bie, indicating an improvement in their nutritional status compared to about six months ago.

She said another indication that the number of IDPs was rising was an increase in the number of landmine accidents reported in the past week. The victims were usually IDPs who went in search of firewood on arrival at a new area or camp without knowing the area was mined, she said." (IRIN 31 October 2001)

### **Poverty in the midst of plenty: the case of IDPs in diamond-rich Saurimo (November 2001)**

- UNITA attacks near Saurimo, in Angola's northeast diamond zone, have forced thousands of civilians to flee to the provincial capital

- An estimated 88,000 Angolans live in six camps surrounding Saurimo
- Saurimo itself is considered safe since government garrisons are protecting one of the country's largest diamond mines nearby

"There is plenty of diamond wealth in the ground around mineral-rich Saurimo, but war-displaced Angolans living in temporary camps in the remote area don't see any of it.

'We are displaced people. We don't have enough food and we are getting thin,' said 52-year-old Alberto Tchipatulo, in the Sumulonda camp outside Saurimo city in Angola's northeast diamond zone.

The rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), led by the elusive Jonas Savimbi, has been fighting Luanda since independence from Portugal in 1975.

Recent UNITA attacks on Dala, 180 km (112 miles) south of Saurimo, to capture food and conscripts have forced residents to flee to the provincial capital. 'They killed a lot of people,' Tchipatulo said.

The camp has housed 7,000 people for 14 months, including Tchipatulo, his two wives and five children.

Saurimo is relatively safe and has never been attacked by UNITA despite lucrative diamond zones to its north. Some 88,000 Angolans now live in six camps surrounding Saurimo, just some of the three million people who have been forced to flee their homes to seek shelter from the war.

But while they are safe from the fighting, Saurimo citizens treat them with hostility, regarding them as lucky interlopers who get aid agency support while they have to scramble for food and medical care.

'They call the people in the camps the governor's pigs because they are accused of stealing food from local fields,' said one aid worker.

Lying on a bushy plain with hardly a tree in sight, the city is easier to protect than some others in Angola's more lush areas.

Government garrisons protecting Angola's largest diamond mine 35 km (21 miles) north, also discouraged rebel incursions, aid workers said. 'The Angolan army has good control around Saurimo,' said one.

The most recent vehicle ambushes occurred in September outside a safety perimeter that extends 20 km (12 miles) east and west of Saurimo and 17 km (10 miles) south and 50 km (31 miles) north." (Reuters 13 November 2001)

### **Both UNITA and the Government of Angola are intentionally and forcibly displacing populations, says MSF (March 2002)**

- Forced displacement of civilians by both sides to the conflict in Angola is widespread and systematic, with devastating effects on civilians' wellbeing
- UNITA has forcibly displaced civilian populations in order to get human and material support
- Government forces have moved civilians in order to isolate UNITA
- Civilian populations remain continuously displaced, often in acute distress but isolated from humanitarian aid

"The intentional and forced displacement of populations by UNITA and the Government of Angola, in furtherance of their military strategies, is taking place in many locations throughout the country.

UNITA has over the past years forced civilian populations to move with its troops in order to maintain a human and material support. This policy has been further expanded since the end of 1999, when UNITA increasingly lost control over territories and had to become more mobile, particularly in Moxico, Huambo and Bie provinces. Civilian populations remain continuously displaced under insecure conditions and with no access to healthcare or sufficient food. Gradually their health and nutritional situation deteriorates to the point where many, including adults, become severely malnourished. Patients arriving in our health centers have also reported alarming levels of mortality among the populations under UNITA control. Humanitarian organizations have absolutely no access to them.

In large parts of the country, Government forces have moved populations to isolate UNITA, cutting it off from the rural population which supplies it with food, labor, and potential recruits. In 2001, a large proportion of newly registered IDPs were displaced as a result of this increasingly widespread Government strategy, with dramatic consequences on the people's health and nutritional status.

Families are obliged to find shelter in displaced sites where overcrowding, an absence of medical care, and a lack of food has led to the outbreak of epidemics and other major health problems. Many of these IDPs are concentrated and kept in locations where international humanitarian organizations cannot be present.

In addition, Government authorities rarely provide any food assistance or health care following the displacement. Displaced populations no longer have access to their villages or fields to cultivate food. In most cases, these populations are only authorized to leave these locations once they have become seriously ill or severely malnourished, and then become dependant on international organizations.

A large proportion of the 50,000 people who arrived in Camacupa (Bie Province) last year were displaced as a direct result of the Government's strategy. Many patients recounted how villages and houses were burned by Government forces to compel them to leave. A survey conducted in Camacupa's IDP camps indicates that mortality rates have reached emergency levels. Under five and crude mortality rates were recorded at 4.8 deaths per 10,000 children per day and 2.9 deaths per 10,000 persons per day, respectively. The results of a nutrition survey conducted in the same camps indicate severe and global malnutrition rates of 1.6 and 13.3 percent, respectively. Malnutrition levels were found to be highest among IDPs who have arrived since mid December 2001.

In Huila Province, the level of displacement of populations in the north-eastern part of the province increased considerably during the second half of 2001 and continues today. According to IDP accounts, people are forced to leave their villages and are escorted on foot by Government armed forces to towns such as Caconda, Chipindo, Cuvango and Matala.

Since the second half of 2001, in Moxico and Cuando-Cubango provinces, large numbers of people have been brought by Government army helicopters and trucks to Luena and Menongue. Although some of these people are in search of security and assistance in the provincial capitals, many patients in MSF programs explained how they were forced to leave their villages. In Luena, the admissions in the therapeutic feeding centers have increased considerably during the last two months.

Forced displacement justified under international law by 'imperative military reasons' only applies to specific locations, a limited time and with the condition that assistance and security be provided to these populations by the authorities. The widespread and systematic forced displacement occurring in Angola and

the failure to assure proper conditions for IDPs is responsible for devastating the health and nutritional status of large civilian populations." (MSF 5 March 2002)