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TALKING POINTS FOR THE DCI

STATUS OF THE NAMIBIAN NEGOTIATIONS

After gaining rapid agreement from South African and the Frontline States/SWAPO on principles for a Namibian constitution, the negotiations have been stalled since about January over the issue of how a constitutional assembly would be elected.

- South Africa agreed to the Contact Group's combined system of proportional representation and single-member constituencies.
- The Frontline States/SWAPO rejected this electoral system, holding out for either proportional representation or single-member constituencies.
- SWAPO feared the combined system would deny them the required two-third majority to ratify the constitution.

In meetings with US officials in May, however, South Africa demonstrated surprising flexibility on a number of contentious negotiaton issues and proposed a stepped up timetable for a settlement, which called for a ceasefire in August and elections in March 1983.

- South Africa also agreed to abandon the combined electoral system, but asked to defer selecting alternative electoral procedures until later in the negotiations.

The Contact Group has subsequently held talks with SWAPO and the Frontline States to inform them of the South African proposals.

- SWAPO continues to insist on chosing an electoral system now and resists monitoring of its bases in Angola and Zambia.
- The Frontline leaders appear encouraged by the South African flexibility.
- We will have a better idea of their attitude when we get the results of their meeting in Dar es Salaam yesterday (14 June).

Despite the signs of progress in the negotiations, several key issues remain unresolved:

- South Africa insists on a total withdrawal of Cuban combat troops from Angola, something the weak Angolan government will be hard pressed to obtain. Pretoria, however, may ultimately settle for less than total withdrawal and a cosmetic formula that would allow it to claim progress on the issue.
- The question of the Angolan government reconciliation with UNITA has yet to be resolved.

If the Cuban combat troops are not withdrawn from Angola, Pretoria threatens to pursue a unilateral settlement that would exclude SWAPO but not end the insurgency.