



Director of  
Central  
Intelligence

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# Soviet Military Support to Angola: Intentions and Prospects

Special National Intelligence Estimate

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October 1965

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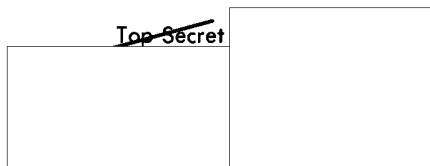
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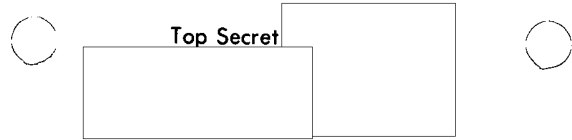
SOVIET MILITARY SUPPORT  
TO ANGOLA: INTENTIONS  
AND PROSPECTS

Information available as of 24 October 1985 was used in the preparation of this Estimate, which was approved by the National Foreign Intelligence Board on that date.



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**THIS ESTIMATE IS ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.**

**THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS.**

*The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the Estimate:*

The Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the intelligence organization of the Department of State.

*Also Participating:*

- The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army
- The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy
- The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force
- The Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, Marine Corps



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### SCOPE NOTE

The recent offensive in Angola by the MPLA regime against the UNITA insurgents attained some notable success. This Estimate will examine whether the improvement in the MPLA military's performance is attributable to increased Soviet material support and greater involvement by Soviet military advisers. It will assess prospects for combat over the next 12 months and examine likely outcomes and the Soviet military role. The possibility of a Soviet-South African military confrontation will be examined in these scenarios.

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### KEY JUDGMENTS

We believe that the improved performance of the Angolan Army against UNITA insurgents this year probably reflects in part an increased Soviet role in the planning and direction of the recent offensive as well as the effects of large amounts of Soviet arms delivered since 1983. Although comprehensive evidence is lacking to substantiate UNITA and South African allegations of this expanded role in the recent offensive, we believe that this upgrade in Soviet military activity is logical on the basis of the failure of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAPLA) to perform credibly in offensives over the last nine years.

The probable increase in Soviet military involvement in the Angolan war should be kept in perspective. We believe it represents:

- A logical expansion of the long-established advisory role played by the 1,000 to 1,200 Soviet military advisers in Angola. [redacted]

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[redacted]

The increase probably amounts to greater involvement of Soviet advisers in planning operations as well as more demanding supervision of FAPLA-executed combat and logistic operations.

- A sense of impatience with Cuban and MPLA surrogates and clients, who for nine years have failed to inflict a serious reverse on UNITA, which until recently had been increasingly successful in the field.
- A Soviet judgment that the risks and costs of an increased role in the planning and direction of the offensive were low.
- The determination of the present Soviet leadership to continue to protect the Soviet investment in Angola's Marxist-Leninist regime.

The enhanced Soviet role does not represent, in our view, a takeover of the direction of the counterinsurgency effort, nor is it intended to gain some short-term advantage in East-West negotiations. We do not believe allegations of actual Soviet—particularly pilot—participation in combat beyond a possible episodic occurrence [redacted]

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During the recent offensive, the Angolan Army was able to penetrate insurgent-held territory, overcome UNITA forces in battles, and take positions defended by insurgents—goals it had largely failed to achieve in previous offensives. The Angolan Army attacks were halted by UNITA counterattacks and unprecedented South African airstrikes. Angolan Army military gains, however, do not presage the demise of UNITA—which is far from beaten—but they will improve the government forces' morale and heighten Luanda's confidence that it can, over the long run, handle the UNITA challenge.

Although the chances of a Soviet-South African confrontation rose during the offensive, we do not believe the Soviets attempted to interdict South African aircraft. The Soviets seem to have underestimated Pretoria's willingness to use its airpower to halt the Angolan advance. They apparently chose not to challenge the South Africans, judging that perhaps they did not have air supremacy.

FAPLA will probably use the next few months to consolidate its gains, rest its troops, and prepare for next year's operations. The Soviets will assist them in assessing the results of the recent offensive, implementing necessary changes, and improving training and recruitment. Moscow is also likely to replace weapons lost by Luanda, provide additional arms aid, including air defense weapons intended to deter South Africa from future activity over Angola, and may provide additional advisers.

The political relations between Moscow and Luanda are not likely to constrain current or projected Soviet military assistance. While differences exist between the MPLA leadership and the USSR and periodically flare up, we have not seen these differences affect the military relationship. The MPLA is likely to continue to pursue the military option against UNITA over the next 12 months, thereby enhancing this relationship.

We believe the preferred Soviet counter to South African air involvement will be a southward and eastward expansion of the integrated air defense line running from Namibe to Menongue. This combination of modern surface-to-air missiles, antiaircraft artillery, radars, and airfields with high-performance fighters has already had a deterrent effect on South African operations. As a result, we expect to see continued improvements around Cuito Cuanavale in southeastern Angola as this area is incorporated into the air defense network, perhaps to include the permanent assignment of advanced fighter aircraft there.

We believe the extensive Soviet advisory involvement will continue as Luanda renews its offensive against UNITA in the spring or summer of 1986. Luanda may well again target Mavinga, and it may also

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attempt to retake UNITA-held areas of Moxico Province. Moscow, which believes its essential interests are served by Luanda's continuing military dependence on the USSR, will probably perceive no need to intervene directly in the conflict and risk a wider war, as long as FAPLA is doing reasonably well, and it may counsel the Angolans to forgo operations near the Namibian border to avoid provoking South Africa.

If the government forces do directly threaten UNITA's survival, the South Africans are likely to respond with airstrikes and possibly commit some of their unconventional or reconnaissance forces. Angolan pressure on Moscow for more direct assistance would be certain to increase. We believe the USSR would prefer to avoid direct confrontation with South Africa, but the Soviets would consider taking a more direct role in operations if they believed the South Africans posed an immediate threat to the viability of major FAPLA units. We believe the Soviets would countenance use of Cuban-flown combat aircraft to defend against expanded South African air operations. Beyond episodic actions, however, we do not believe Moscow would allow Soviet pilots to become regularly engaged in combat operations.

UNITA could abandon semiconventional warfare and rely more on guerrilla tactics, as the South Africans are advising. Such actions could at least reduce the effectiveness of FAPLA's next offensive and might set the stage for a UNITA reversal of this year's losses. A more active Cuban role in air and ground operations and increased Soviet advisory involvement in coordinating counterinsurgency operations would become more likely in this eventuality.

The Soviets will seek to gain propaganda advantage from Luanda's military successes and will continue their efforts to discredit UNITA as a puppet of South Africa and imperialism. Moscow is likely to seek to isolate Angola from substantive discussions in East-West diplomacy, repeating its assertion that the United States and the USSR have no vital interests there and that southern African questions should not be allowed to complicate more important issues in the bilateral relationship.



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## DISCUSSION

### The Soviets and Angola

#### Moscow's Longstanding Commitment

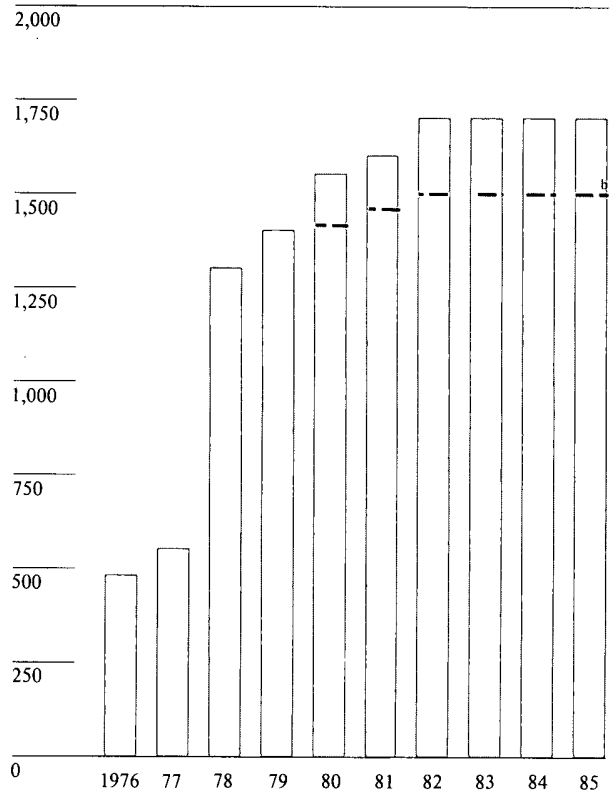
1. Moscow has been the primary source of external support for the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) since the early 1960s, when it began funneling arms to the MPLA for actions against the Portuguese. Since Angolan independence in 1975, the Soviet Bloc has supplied Angola with over \$4 billion in military aid, along with about 1,500 to 1,700 advisers and 35,000 Cuban military personnel (see figure 1). In addition, the Soviets have provided, by their own standards, a high level of economic aid and have extended extensive political support to the MPLA. In return, Moscow has gained access to military facilities, obtained a reliable supporter of Soviet positions in international forums, and acquired a Third World model of Soviet-style "socialist oriented" development.

2. This generally close relationship has not been without strains. Issues such as the extent and quality of Soviet development assistance, the terms of repayment of Angolan financial obligations to the USSR, the need to open Angola to greater Western aid and investment, and the advisability of participating in US-brokered regional negotiations have produced tensions. Nonetheless, the MPLA's need for continued military support and Moscow's intention to play a role in southern Africa have underpinned the relationship and prevented these tensions from developing into more serious divisions

#### 1983-84—A Military Turning Point

3. In spite of substantial Soviet Bloc aid since 1976, including the assignment of Soviet military advisers [redacted] Angolan military forces have not enjoyed great success in recent years. Beginning in 1978, South African forces staged several incursions into Angola against Southwest Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) guerrillas and held a "buffer zone" of Angolan territory between 1981 and 1985. The Soviets responded by initiating a long-term

**Figure 1** Number  
**Angola: USSR and East European Advisers, 1976-85<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Yearend data.  
<sup>b</sup> Spread reflects a degree of uncertainty in the exact number of advisers.

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upgrading of Angola's air defenses and helping Luanda establish a defensive line along the southern railway. At the same time, the Angolan Armed Forces (FAPLA) still had serious difficulties in countering the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola insurgency. In 1982 and 1983, UNITA, with South African assistance, greatly expanded the territory it dominated in southeastern Angola. In August 1983 it captured the FAPLA garrison at Cangamba and ex-

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panded its guerrilla operations in the central and northeastern regions of Angola. UNITA's gains and its threats to carry the battle to urban areas shook the MPLA government, which looked to the Soviets for help. Angolan President dos Santos visited Moscow in May 1983, and a high-level military delegation followed in September. We believe that expanded Soviet military aid was at the top of the agenda in both cases.

[redacted]

6. Through 1984, Soviet advisers in Angola assisted in planning FAPLA operations but largely left the execution to Angolan and Cuban officers. Cuban troops were used primarily to man defense lines and key base areas, freeing FAPLA troops for offensive operations against UNITA. Additionally, the Cubans helped the Angolans operate advanced Soviet-supplied systems, such as fighter aircraft, attack helicopters, and air defense systems.

[redacted]

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4. The Soviets apparently agreed during these visits to increase arms assistance to Luanda to reverse the deteriorating situation on the ground. Military agreements totaling more than \$2 billion were signed in early 1984 (see figure 2). Moscow's decision was probably based on its evaluation of the growing UNITA challenge and the threat that it posed to longstanding Soviet objectives in Angola, which include:

- Preserving the pro-Soviet character of the MPLA regime.
- Preserving access to Angolan military facilities.
- Preventing any Namibian settlement that jeopardizes the security of the MPLA regime in Luanda and does not result in SWAPO's coming to power in Namibia.

UNITA's threat to the MPLA also challenged Moscow's credibility as a reliable supporter of its major African clients, all of whom faced insurgent threats.

[redacted]

5. Soviet arms deliveries to Angola rose sharply in late 1983 and continued at relatively high levels into 1984. Included in the Soviet-supplied equipment were:

- Initial deliveries of MIG-23 and SU-22 fighter-bombers, as well as additional MIG-21 fighters and MI-25 attack helicopters.
- Substantial quantities of antiaircraft equipment, for example, SA-2, SA-6, and SA-8 surface-to-air missile systems.
- Large numbers of tanks, armored personnel carriers, and artillery pieces.

Moreover, Cuba added about 5,000 combat troops to bring its complement of military personnel to about 35,000. A variety of reporting indicates that the Angolans themselves undertook a series of steps to improve command and control of their forces and coordination of military and civilian resources in the counterinsurgency effort as well as to expand the size of the Army to 70,000 (see table).

[redacted]

[redacted]

8. Soviet advisory assistance and increased Soviet, East European, and Cuban military aid was not sufficient to reverse MPLA fortunes during 1984, as FAPLA again demonstrated that it could not on its own make effective use of the massive aid provided by the USSR and its allies. Two government offensives attempted to dislodge UNITA from positions in the eastern and southeastern parts of Angola but failed to achieve any meaningful gains.

[redacted]

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#### FAPLA's 1985 Offensive

9. In the latest offensive, government forces dealt UNITA its first significant reverse since the rebels expanded their operations in 1982. Since July, FAPLA has captured Cazombo and threatened Mavinga—300 kilometers northwest of UNITA's headquarters in Jamba—although the drive was blunted in late September to early October by UNITA counterattacks and unprecedented South African airstrikes (see figure 3). UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi told the press that his forces were under severe pressure from the offensive and noted the use of sophisticated weaponry by FAPLA forces.

[redacted]

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10. FAPLA's gains from this offensive do not pre-empt the demise of UNITA or indicate that a military solution to Angola's decadelong war is at hand. The government's territorial gains are limited and far from secure, and FAPLA still faces substantial logistic, training, and operational problems. However, FAPLA did show that it could penetrate UNITA-held terri-

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[redacted]

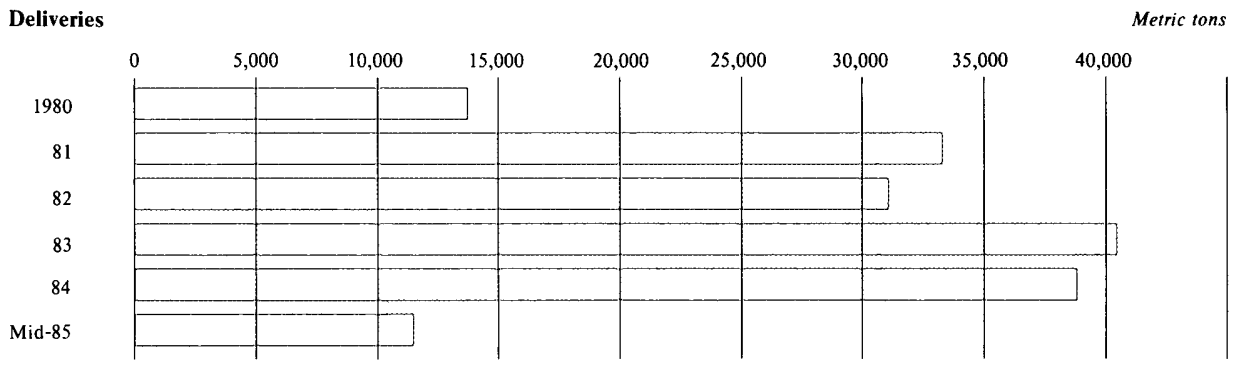
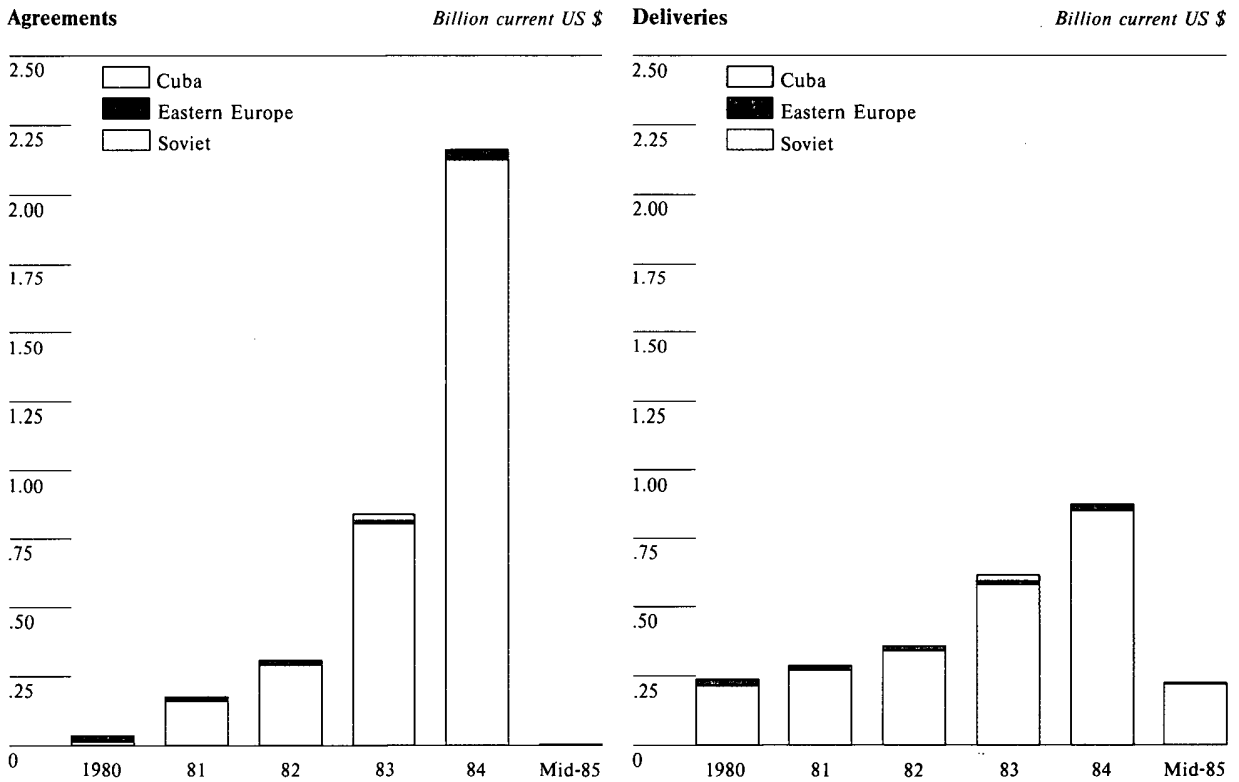
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**Figure 2**  
**Angola: Soviet Bloc Military Agreements and Deliveries**

*Note change in scales*



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**Angola: Major Soviet Equipment Deliveries**

	1983		1984		Mid-1985	
	Quantity	Type	Quantity	Type	Quantity	Type
Combat aircraft	3	MIG-21	19	MIG-23	8	MIG-23
	4	AN-26	70	MIG-21 (variants and trainers)	4	MIG-21
			8	SU-22	4	SU-22
			6	AN-26		
Helicopters	12	MI-24/25 Hind	12	MI-24/25 Hind	2	MI-17 Hip H
	22	MI-8 Hip	2	MI-8		
Ground Forces (armored vehicles/tanks)	118	BTR-60P	18	T-34	6	T-34
	15	BRDM-2	46	T-55	7	BTR-60
			43	BTR-60P		
			15	BRDM-2		
ADA	8	SA-9			4	SA-13 LCHR
	16	SA-6			76	Styx SS-N-2 shipboard missiles
	8	SA-8				
	15	SA-3				
Naval	2	OSA-II			21	SA-2 LCHR

[Redacted]

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tory, meet and overcome UNITA forces in battle, and take positions defended by the insurgents despite sustaining heavy casualties. We believe that the results of the 1985 offensive, after several years of reverses, will improve FAPLA morale and heighten MPLA confidence that it can, over the long run, handle the UNITA challenge. FAPLA's improved performance is, in our view, attributable to a number of factors, including improved training, organization, and integration of Soviet-supplied arms; better use of tactical airpower; and possible Cuban participation in combat.

[Redacted]

**The Soviet Role in the Offensive**

11. We believe that the improved performance of the Angolan Army against UNITA insurgents this year probably reflects in part an increased Soviet role in the planning and direction of the recent offensive as well as the effects of large amounts of Soviet arms delivered since 1983. Although comprehensive evidence is lacking to substantiate UNITA and South African allegations of this expanded role in the recent offensive, we believe that this upgrade in Soviet military activity is logical on the basis of FAPLA failure to perform credibly in past offensives over the last nine years.

[Redacted]

12. The probable increase in Soviet military involvement in the Angolan war should be kept in perspective. We believe it represents:

- A logical expansion of the long-established advisory role played by the 1,000 to 1,200 Soviet military advisers in Angola.

[Redacted]

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They remain sensitive to risk of capture. The increase probably amounts to greater involvement of Soviet advisers in planning operations as well as more demanding supervision of FAPLA-executed combat and logistic operations.

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- A sense of impatience with Cuban and MPLA surrogates and clients, who for nine years have failed to inflict a serious reverse on UNITA, which until recently had been increasingly successful in the field.
- A Soviet judgment that the risks and costs of an increased role in the planning and direction of the offensive were low.
- The determination of the present Soviet leadership to continue to protect the Soviet investment in Angola's Marxist-Leninist regime.

[Redacted]

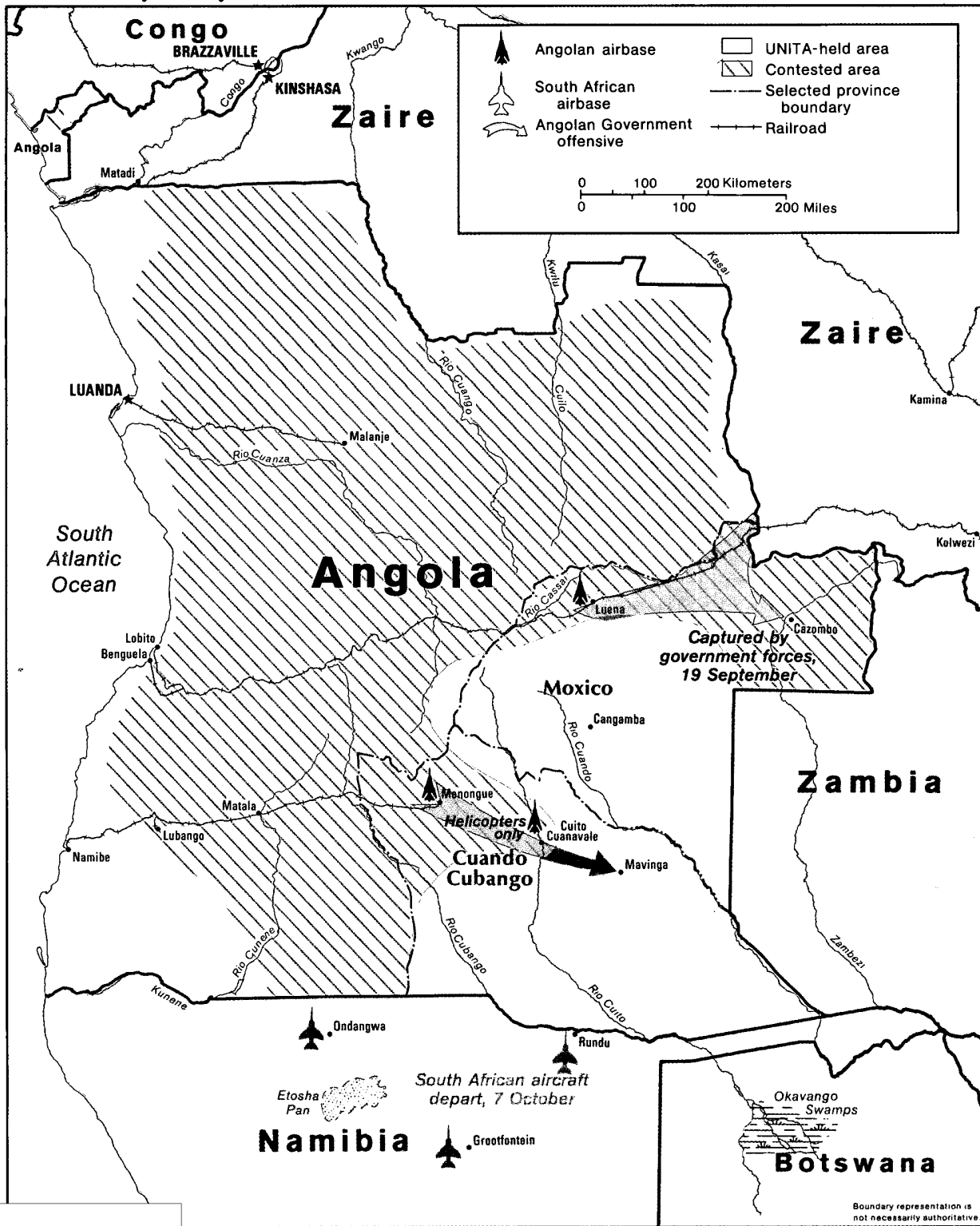
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**Figure 3**  
**Recent Military Activity**



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13. The enhanced Soviet role does not represent a takeover of the direction of the counterinsurgency effort, nor is it intended to gain some short-term advantage in East-West negotiations. We do not believe allegations of actual Soviet—particularly pilot—participation in combat beyond a possible episodic occurrence.

[Redacted]

However, Soviet advisers appear to have underestimated South Africa's willingness to use its airpower to counter FAPLA's drive on Mavinga

[Redacted]

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While the South African airstrikes raised the specter of a direct confrontation between the Soviets and the South Africans, Moscow apparently was not inclined at this time to take on South African aircraft, despite sufficient opportunities. As far as we know, MIG-23 interceptors based at Menongue did not challenge the South African strikes. Moscow may have judged that its prospects for successfully engaging South African Mirages in an area outside effective ground-controlled intercept radar coverage were unfavorable.

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**Soviet Relations With the MPLA**

14. Moscow's political relations with the MPLA regime have at times been troubled. The USSR was particularly annoyed in 1984 when President dos Santos pursued negotiations with the United States on Cuban troop withdrawal without prior discussion with Moscow. We believe that the Soviets may have stepped up the pressure on dos Santos to resume close consultations on the Cuban troop issue, but Moscow did not interrupt its military assistance to the MPLA during this period. The Soviets and MPLA apparently agreed, during a subsequent trip to Moscow by dos Santos in March 1985, not to make further concessions on Cuban withdrawal. This suggests that Moscow successfully brought dos Santos to appreciate the need for closer consultation without having to resort to altering the military relationship. The MPLA, presumably with Moscow's blessing, suspended formal participation in the talks with Pretoria after the May South African raid on Cabinda, and prospects for a quick agreement on the Cuban troop issue waned.

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17. The near-term possibility of Soviet-South African conflict has dropped off substantially now that the Angolan offensive has come to a halt and the South Africans have moved most of their fighter aircraft away from southern Angola. But the Soviets are certain to factor South Africa's response to this year's offensive into planning for future Angolan operations.

[Redacted]

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**Outlook: Six to 12 Months**

**Hold, Consolidate, and Prepare for the Next Round**

18. We believe that FAPLA is unlikely to press a new attack during the rainy season (November-March). As long as it is able to resupply and defend its forward positions, FAPLA is likely to spend the next few months consolidating its hold on Cazombo and Cuito Cuanavale. Alternatively, if FAPLA considers its forward position untenable, it may decide to pull back to its main garrisons at Luena and Menongue. In any event, FAPLA will probably use the next several months to rest its troops, refurbish its equipment, and prepare for new offensive operations next year. For its part, UNITA can be expected to conduct harassment operations and to prevent FAPLA from enhancing its forward positions.

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15. Although there may be differences between Moscow and Luanda on Cuban troop withdrawal, the two sides are agreed not to implement an agreement that would jeopardize the stability of the MPLA regime. There are those within the MPLA who take a harder line in opposing Cuban withdrawal than President dos Santos's dominant group, and we believe dos Santos will seek a consensus on the issue before making further concessions. We do not envision new MPLA policies in the next 12 months that would violate what the Soviets perceive as fundamental interests. We anticipate a strengthened MPLA commitment to the armed struggle against both UNITA and South Africa, which in the MPLA's view is not inconsistent with participation in the Cuban withdrawal talks.

[Redacted]

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**The South African Dimension**

16. [Redacted] the Soviets have been concerned with the possibility of South African incursions into Angola since the late 1970s.

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copters that have proved so useful in the recent offensive. In addition, the Soviets will probably continue expanding and improving Angolan air defenses in a bid to deter South Africa from future air operations over Angolan territory. Soviet efforts will probably focus on improving radar coverage of southern Angola and continuing pilot training, and, possibly, will include the installation of a ground control intercept network in the region [redacted]

**The 1986 Offensive**

20. Its confidence buoyed by the results of this year's operation, FAPLA probably believes that its performance can be repeated, and we believe that the Angolans are likely to renew offensive operations in the spring or summer of 1986. They may move against targets similar to those attacked this year, perhaps in the direction of UNITA headquarters at Jamba. Alternatively, they might concentrate on other areas that appear vulnerable where the chance of direct confrontation with South Africa appears lower. For example, Luanda may try to retake more UNITA-controlled areas in Moxico Province, a region brought largely under UNITA control in late 1982 and early 1983. [redacted]

21. The Soviets will continue to provide arms and advisory support for Luanda. Direct Soviet advisory involvement in planning and directing Angolan combat operations is also likely to continue next year. However, as long as strategic MPLA/Cuban positions—which may change during the course of the war—are not in immediate danger of falling, Moscow is unlikely to intervene more directly in the conflict and risk a wider war. Indeed, the Soviets may counsel the Angolan military to avoid action near the Namibian border if they believe that it would provoke a harsh military response from Pretoria [redacted]

**Implications of Future FAPLA Success**

22. It is possible that the absorption of additional Soviet-supplied weapons, further training on existing systems, integration of the lessons learned in this year's offensive, and continued Soviet advisory support will enable FAPLA to score further gains next year, especially if UNITA chooses to engage FAPLA in relatively large-scale conventional actions. The implications of any such advances for expanded outside involvement and escalation depend on the extent to which Pretoria believes they threaten UNITA's viability as an effective fighting force and deems it necessary to expand its own role in the conflict. If FAPLA concentrates its

efforts in the Cazombo and Moxico regions, the immediate threat to UNITA will be relatively limited, and Pretoria is unlikely to commit its air assets to the battle, especially in areas where a Soviet-supplied air defense network is effective. If the government forces move toward UNITA headquarters at Jamba, however, and defeat significant concentrations of UNITA troops, South Africa is again likely to use its air assets and increase material support to UNITA to reverse the tide of the offensive, and may involve its battalion of black expatriates (the 32nd "Buffalo" Battalion). [redacted]

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23. Should the South Africans inflict serious damage on FAPLA, Angolan pressure on the Soviets and Cubans for expanded involvement in air-to-ground and air-to-air operations would almost certainly grow. We believe Moscow would prefer to avoid direct confrontation with South African-piloted aircraft, given the limitations of Angola's radar net in the southeastern part of the country. However, we cannot rule out a more direct Soviet combat role in air operations if Moscow believes that South African activity poses a direct threat to the viability of FAPLA as an effective fighting force. If such a threat does not materialize, the Soviets are not likely to expand their involvement to include direct participation in combat actions, except in isolated instances where leadership of Cuban-FAPLA forces is desirable and risks are judged small. [redacted]

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**Prospects for UNITA**

24. UNITA is unlikely to remain passive during the current rainy season and may be able to inflict losses on government forces in Cazombo and the southeast, especially if it avoids further large-scale conventional engagement with FAPLA formations. In addition, UNITA could intensify its guerrilla activities throughout northern and central Angola. UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi could adopt strategic and tactical changes, which we believe his South African supporters are likely to urge on him, such as cutting back on semiconventional operations—especially above the battalion level—in favor of guerrilla tactics, hitting FAPLA logistic lines, and giving ground rather than taking on FAPLA in major pitched battles. UNITA may also step up sabotage operations, probably with South African help. Such actions could at least reduce the effectiveness of FAPLA's next offensive and might set the stage for a UNITA reversal of this year's losses, especially if FAPLA's recently heightened morale suffers. [redacted]

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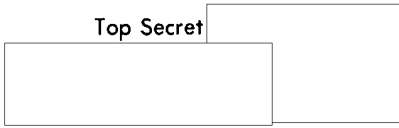
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25. If UNITA thwarts a FAPLA spring offensive in southeastern Angola without direct South African sup-

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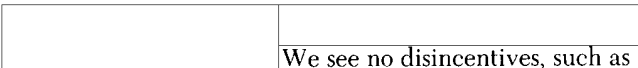
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port, the prospects for a widening of the war would be limited, as neither Moscow nor Pretoria would see a direct threat to the side each is backing. In the less likely event that UNITA not only blunts FAPLA attacks but threatens key FAPLA base areas, we believe the Soviets would propose a more active Cuban role in air and ground operations and might increase their own involvement in coordinating defensive operations. We do not believe that other contingencies that might provoke substantially increased direct participation by the Soviets in air and ground operations—large-scale South African offensive operations against FAPLA bases or a direct UNITA threat to MPLA control of Luanda—are likely to occur in the span of this Estimate.



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We see no disincentives, such as a significant rise in Soviet risks or costs in the short term, that would make the Soviets receptive to a change in their policy of extensive military support to the MPLA.

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29. Reporting from several sources indicates that Soviet officials have been more confident in recent months that Luanda—now more militarily dependent on the Soviets than ever—is not likely to pursue seriously a negotiated agreement with South Africa that could jeopardize Soviet interests in Angola. The prospect of an MPLA regime more confident of its ability to deal with UNITA, yet still dependent on the USSR for military support, is probably sufficient to limit Soviet concern on these questions. If Luanda renews its participation in regional negotiations, Moscow will repeat its warnings to Angola on the dangers of any deal with South Africa and its alleged US backers.

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### Implications for the United States

#### The 1985 Offensive

26. The timing of this year's offensive was not, in our judgment, directly connected to considerations of East-West diplomacy. This year's action follows a standing pattern of dry-season offensives, and planning for the operation appears to have begun at least as early as last year.

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27. The Soviets do stand to gain some "side benefits" in the international arena. We would expect the Soviets to use the next few months to play up the South African involvement in the fighting as "proof" that UNITA is no more than a South African puppet. Perceived Angolan gains could contribute to outside impressions of momentum for Moscow's policy in Africa and improve Moscow's image as a reliable backer of its clients. Also, Moscow and Luanda might believe that UNITA's setbacks will make it appear less attractive to some potential outside supporters. The relative success of this offensive will almost certainly strengthen the hand of those in the MPLA leadership who oppose negotiations with UNITA. War strategy is a major agenda item at the upcoming MPLA Congress in December.

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30. The continued buildup of Soviet-supplied arms in Angola will help further Moscow's long-term objective of ensuring a Soviet role in southern Africa. The Angolan buildup, especially of air defense systems, could also, over the long term, hamper South Africa's capacity to carry out military operations against SWAPO and on behalf of UNITA.

#### Further FAPLA Gains

31. Should FAPLA make substantial military progress next year, certainly UNITA and possibly South Africa will call for Western help, calls that will intensify if Soviet/Cuban-South African clashes are a possibility. Zaire may attempt to exploit the Angolan threat to obtain Western military aid.

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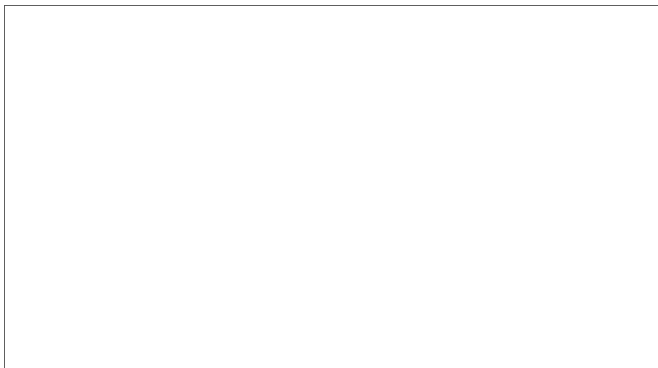
32. For their part, the Soviets would probably intensify their campaign to castigate UNITA as a "tool of Pretoria," while drumming up Eastern Bloc and nonaligned support for Luanda's campaign against "South African-backed bandits" and warning against any outside attempts to "interfere" in Angola. Privately, Moscow would probably look to reassure Angola's neighbors of Luanda's intentions, and reassert to the West its claim that southern Africa should not be an arena of East-West conflict. If the Soviets were genuinely concerned about the prospect of an undesired escalation involving themselves and South Africa, they might attempt to communicate with Pretoria.

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#### Future UNITA Gains

33. Minor UNITA gains are not likely to have much short-term impact on Soviet relations with Angola or



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its other client states. Luanda will have little alternative to continued military dependence on the USSR, and Soviet relations with its other clients will not be affected significantly by the military and political exigencies in Angola. [redacted]

means to gain some diplomatic insurance against expanded outside aid to UNITA. Intensified UNITA pressure notwithstanding, however, it is unlikely that during the span of this Estimate the Angolan leadership will abandon its preference for a military solution to the UNITA insurgency in favor of negotiations with Savimbi, or be willing to forgo the protection of most of the Cuban troops currently stationed in Angola.

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34. Sustained improved UNITA performance might lead Luanda to show more active interest in the US-sponsored regional negotiating process if only as a [redacted]

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ANNEX

THE SOVIET MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP IN ANGOLA

In-Country Responsibilities

1. Soviet advisory involvement in Angola is controlled by the Military Advisory Group (MAG) in Luanda, which includes, we believe, 1,000 to 1,200 Soviet personnel headed by a three-star general and at least six other general officers. Soviet advisers, [redacted]

[redacted] are assigned to virtually all command and staff offices within the Angolan Ministry of Defense, to at least the five most threatened of Angola's 10 military districts, and to Angolan brigades and apparently some battalions. [redacted]

[redacted] at least eight to 10 Soviets have been assigned to individual Angolan brigades since at least 1984; [redacted]

[redacted]

2. Soviet advisory responsibilities in 1985 cover the full range of Angolan military activity: from recruitment, training, and political indoctrination through administrative and quartermaster functions and maintenance of sophisticated equipment to planning and conducting combat operations. Day-to-day duties, [redacted]

[redacted] range from [redacted] meetings with the Angolan Minister of Defense to the detailing of Soviet mechanics to change a tire on an Angolan armored personnel carrier. Although the Soviets, in general, are careful to observe protocol in dealing with Angolan officials, we believe apparent frustration with Angolan inexperience has led the Soviet advisers on occasion to intrude directly in what would appear to be Angolan responsibilities. [redacted]

[redacted]

Moscow's Control

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