

Angola -

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United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

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Peace Support Operations

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UNITED NATIONS ANGOLA VERIFICATION MISSION III

FUNCTION:

Established to assist the Government of Angola and the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) in restoring peace and achieving national reconciliation on the basis of the Peace Accords for Angola, signed on 31 May 1991, the Lusaka Protocol signed on 20 November 1994, and relevant Security Council resolutions. Among the main features of UNAVEM III's mandate are: to provide good offices and mediation to the Angolan parties; to monitor and verify the extension of State administration throughout the country and the process of national reconciliation; to supervise, control and verify the disengagement of forces and to monitor the cease-fire; to verify information received from the Government and UNITA regarding their forces, as well as all troop movements; to assist in the establishment of quartering areas; to verify the withdrawal, quartering and demobilization of UNITA forces; to supervise the collection and storage of UNITA armaments; to verify the movement of Government forces (FAA) to barracks and the completion of the formation of FAA; to verify the free circulation of persons and goods; to verify and monitor the neutrality of the Angolan National Police, the disarming of civilians, the quartering of the rapid reaction police, and security arrangements for UNITA leaders; to coordinate, facilitate and support humanitarian activities directly linked to the peace process, as well as participating in mine-clearance activities; to declare formally that all essential requirements for the holding of the second round of presidential elections have been fulfilled, and to support, verify and monitor the electoral process.

BACKGROUND:

UNAVEM I (January 1989--May 1991) verified the total withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. UNAVEM II (June 1991--February 1995) verified the peace arrangements agreed by the Angolan Government and UNITA, in accordance with the Peace Accords for Angola, and was later called upon to observe and verify the elections held in September 1992. After renewed fighting broke out between Government and UNITA forces in the aftermath of the elections, UNAVEM II continued its presence in Angola at reduced strength.

The signing of the Lusaka Protocol on 20 November 1994 marked a new stage in the Angolan peace process. The Protocol consisted of a number of documents, each relating to a particular issue on the agenda of the peace talks, covering legal, military, police and political issues, as well as the role of the United Nations.

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On 1 February 1995, the Secretary-General recommended to the Security Council that UNAVEM III take over from UNAVEM II to help the parties restore peace and achieve national reconciliation. On 8 February, the Security Council authorized the establishment of UNAVEM III with a maximum strength of 7,000 troops and military support personnel, 350 military observers, 260 police observers and some 420 internationally recruited civilian staff, 300 locally recruited staff and 75 United Nations Volunteers. The date envisaged by the Council for the completion of the UNAVEM III mandate was February 1997.

Notwithstanding many positive developments, the implementation process fell substantially behind schedule, and the lack of mutual trust between the Government and UNITA jeopardized the attainment of lasting peace. In its resolution 1075 of 11 October 1996, the Security Council emphasized that continuing delays and unfulfilled promises, in particular on the part of UNITA, in implementing the successive timetables for the completion of key military and political issues were no longer acceptable.

After UNITA submitted a list of tasks which it had to fulfil by 15 November 1996 (later extended to 20 November), UNAVEM III prepared a comprehensive implementation timetable, encompassing all pending military, police and political tasks to be completed by both parties. In his report to the Council of 19 November 1996, the Secretary-General stated that the agreement on a consolidated timetable for the completion of the pressing tasks had brought the most urgent issues into focus. Some progress had been made, but the implementation of the timetable was still lagging behind.

In the meantime, in light of the envisaged date for the completion of the mandate, plans for the start of the orderly and phased drawdown of UNAVEM III were finalized. Those plans include the withdrawal by the end of December 1996 of four United Nations infantry and support units, with a total strength of between 600 to 700 personnel.

On 30 June, the Security Council decided to establish, as of 1 July, the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA). The new follow-on mission would replace UNAVEM III. In a unanimous vote on Monday, the Council also decided that the initial mandate of the new mission would end on 31 October 1997. The Council strongly urged the Government of Angola and, in particular, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) to complete without delay the remaining political and military aspects of the peace process, including, among other things, the normalization of State administration throughout the territory of Angola, the transformation of the UNITA radio station into a non-partisan broadcasting facility, and the transformation of UNITA into a political party. Appealing to both parties to refrain from any use of force which could obstruct the full implementation of the peace process, the Council "strongly urged the parties to complete the registration and demobilization of all remaining military elements, the elimination of all obstacles to free circulation of people and goods, and the disarmament of the civilian population".

LOCATION: Angola

HEADQUARTERS: Luanda

DURATION: February 1995 to 30 June 1997

STRENGTH as of 30 June 1997: mission total of 4,220 military personnel, composed of: 283 military observers, 3,649 troops and 288 civilian police

SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND CHIEF OF MISSION: