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**ANGOLA: CIVIL WAR AND HUMANITARIAN CRISIS –
DEVELOPMENTS FROM MID 1999 TO END 2001**

By Anna Richardson

Independent Researcher, UK

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E-mail: writenet@gn.apc.org**

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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
CP 2500, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland

Web Site: <http://www.unhcr.org>

1 Introduction

On the military front the last three years have been among the most distressing in Angola's sad history. The latest phase of the country's civil war, between the governing Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola - MPLA), and the rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola - UNITA) which began at the end of 1998, has dragged on with no end in sight. Millions of people have been uprooted, millions of lives destroyed. Most of those who suffer from the fighting no longer support the war, or even understand what it is about. Yet, they feel powerless to stop it. After three years, the fighting appears to have reached a stalemate. The government holds the upper hand, but UNITA is still strong enough to put up serious resistance, and cause considerable disturbance. Neither party has shown itself willing to compromise for the sake of the Angolan people, and so they carry on fighting, rather than negotiating. Meanwhile, the international community, having presided over two costly, failed United Nations peace processes in the 1990s, has adopted a non-interventionist approach during the most recent fighting, and has made little attempt to bring the war to an end. The outside world's engagement in Angola in recent years has been governed largely by self-interest and a desire to secure a role in the country's booming oil exploration industry. Against this gloomy backdrop, perhaps the most hopeful development of the last three years has been the awakening of Angolan civil society. Confronted with a military deadlock, intransigent belligerents, and a disengaged international community, Angolans have gradually begun to realize that if they want lasting peace they will have to impose it themselves, on their own country and leaders. To this end, a number of grassroots peace movements have emerged since 1999.

2 Developments in the Military Situation

2.1 At Home

The latest phase of Angola's civil war is generally agreed to have started in December 1998, when the Angolan Armed Forces (Forças Armadas Angolanas - FAA) launched an offensive in the country's central highlands to capture UNITA's headquarters: the two small towns of Bailundo and Andulo. The offensive followed a year long deterioration of the military and political situation, during which UN-sponsored peace talks broke down,¹ while widespread armed attacks, generally attributed to UNITA, sparked a new flood of civilian displacement.² Upon launching the offensive of December 1998 the Angolan government declared itself to be embarking upon Angola's "last war for peace". The Angolan public (and the international community) were lead to believe that within a few months UNITA would be defeated and dismantled, and that any temporary disruption would be made worthwhile by the long term benefits. Unfortunately the subsequent war has not gone according to the FAA's plan.

The FAA offensive of December 1998 quickly foundered in the face of determined, well organized resistance from UNITA. The rebels proved to be much better armed than Angolan military intelligence had believed.³ The FAA offensive was shown to be ill thought out and

¹ See Human Rights Watch, *Angola Unravels: The Rise and Fall of the Lusaka Peace Process*, New York, 1999, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/angola/> [accessed 31 January 2002]

² See Richardson, A., *Internally Displaced Persons in Southern Africa: Focus Angola*, WriteNet for UNHCR/CDR, April 1999

³ *Comercio Actualidade* [Luanda], João de Matos admite serias dificuldades no teatro de guerra, 31 March 1999

rushed. After sustaining heavy casualties, and abandoning considerable quantities of weaponry to UNITA, the FAA withdrew. In response, UNITA reasserted control over virtually all of rural Angola, leaving the Luanda government in control of little more than the provincial capitals and a few isolated towns.⁴ An estimated 70 per cent of the country's population was believed to be crammed into these tiny, government-controlled areas.⁵

From its position of strength in the countryside, UNITA proceeded to wage a debilitating war against these government-controlled enclaves. Villagers believed to be loyal to the government were forced off their land, and into the towns and cities, by murderous dawn attacks.⁶ The bloated populations of the urban areas were then forced to make the unenviable choice between slow starvation, or sudden violent death. UNITA cut off the towns and cities by launching a campaign of ambushes against road traffic travelling to and from the government-controlled areas. Road travel became so hazardous that only the truly desperate attempted it.⁷ Commercial and humanitarian aid convoys ceased, and food supplies in the cities dwindled. Meanwhile UNITA's heavy artillery shelled key cities like Malange, Huambo and Kuito, rendering even aerial access difficult.

In March 1999, after a brief military build-up, and a reassessment of UNITA's strategic capabilities, the FAA launched a second offensive to capture Andulo and Bailundo. Despite the intelligence gleaned in December, the FAA made the same mistakes as during their earlier offensive, over-stretching their supply lines and allowing UNITA to encircle and cut off their forces. Thousands of government troops were reportedly slaughtered in Andulo, and further heavy weaponry was lost to UNITA.⁸ The FAA again withdrew.

For the next six months UNITA dictated the terms of the war, controlling access to most of Angola and hitting FAA targets and government-controlled areas at will. Financed by signature bonuses from three ultra-deep-water oil exploration concessions,⁹ the Angolan government embarked on a major military build-up, investing particularly in intelligence gathering and aerial warfare capabilities. From May 1999 onwards a FAA dry season offensive was rumoured to be imminent. In fact, the offensive, dubbed "Operation Restoration" by the Angolan authorities, did not begin until the dry season was almost over, in September. Given that, during the two previous offensives, FAA commanders had prematurely boasted of their victories over UNITA, only to have their forces trapped and massacred by the rebels, a complete information blackout was imposed until Operation Restoration had achieved its major goals.¹⁰ On 20 October 1999 a FAA statement announced that Bailundo, Andulo, and a string of other towns in the provinces of Malange, Kwanza Sul, Huambo, Bie and Moxico had been captured. According to the statement the FAA took

⁴ Human Rights Watch, Angola, in *World Report 1999*, New York, 2000, http://www.hrw.org/wr2k/Africa.htm#P288_98792 [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁵ Vieira de Mello, S. (UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator), Briefing to the Informal Security Council on Angola, 23 August 1999, unpublished document

⁶ For personal testimonies of IDPs see: Nilstam, D., *Témoignages recueillis auprès des déplacés de Kaala*, September 2000 (unpublished MSF report)

⁷ *The Independent* [London], Killing Machine Turns on Children, 13 May 1999

⁸ Human Rights Watch, Angola, in *World Report 1999*.

⁹ Global Witness, *A Crude Awakening: The Role of the Oil and Banking Industries in Angola's Civil War and the Plunder of State Assets*, London, 1999, pp. 11-12

¹⁰ *The Economist* [London], Angola: Snapping the Backbone, 30 October 1999

control of Bailundo on 24 September, and of Andulo on 17 October.¹¹ While the battle for Bailundo lasted around two weeks, the capture of Andulo was, reportedly, a rout.¹² UNITA, taken by surprise by the rapid advance of the FAA from three different directions, abandoned most of their conventional weaponry in the town, and fled into the surrounding bush. These victories led the Angolan Government to declare that the conventional war in Angola was over. The FAA's successes were compounded on 24 December 1999, when government forces entered UNITA's former headquarters, Jamba, in Angola's far south east, for the first time since its founding in 1979.

By the end of 1999 UNITA was said to be at its weakest in at least twenty years. It was the first time since the mid 1970s that the movement had had no fixed headquarters. UNITA's troops and leadership were reduced to hiding out in the bush, in small groups, sleeping in tents and moving on every couple of nights.¹³ The movement had lost most of its heavy weaponry and, with it, the capacity to defend fixed positions. Its communications network was also severely disrupted. On several occasions in late 1999 and early 2000 Luanda was swept with rumours that the UNITA leader, Jonas Savimbi, had been captured or killed by the FAA. In the eyes of many, this all time low in UNITA's history was seen to be a good moment for the Angolan government to initiate renewed peace talks with UNITA, from a position of strength. At a rare press conference in December 1999 FAA Chief of Staff, General João de Matos, a man not usually given to public declarations, sent this barely disguised message to his political masters when he announced that "the conventional war in Angola is over. However there are still bandits all over the country. We need a concerted *political and military* effort to neutralize these elements".¹⁴ He was understood to be implying that the military had done almost all that they could, and that it was now time for the politicians to complete the job by pacifying the remaining UNITA members with the promise of a lasting and just peace.

However, the hardliners in the MPLA had repeatedly vowed, over the course of 1999, that they would never again negotiate with Jonas Savimbi, or, by extension, with UNITA. They continued to insist on the "complete annihilation" of UNITA, even when it became apparent that this would be impossible by military means. The FAA were ordered to pursue UNITA into the bush until the rebels were wiped out. However, most of the FAA's troops are enlisted city youths, to whom Angola's vast countryside is like a foreign country,¹⁵ while most of UNITA's troops are forcibly recruited from villages at a young age, and then spend their entire lives on military bases concealed deep in the bush.¹⁶ The FAA were thus ordered into an endless, unwinnable, game of hide and seek with an enemy vastly more at ease with the terrain than themselves.

¹¹ *Televisão Popular de Angola*, Telenoticias Evening News Broadcast [Luanda], 20 October 1999

¹² Refugees who had escaped from Andulo and Bailundo, Mayukwayukwa Refugee Camp, Zambia, Personal interviews, March 2001

¹³ Refugees who had lived with the UNITA leadership party for a year before escaping, Nangweshi Refugee Camp, Zambia, Personal interviews, March 2001

¹⁴ *The Sunday Independent* [Johannesburg], Survivor Savimbi, Back on the Long March, 23 January 2000. Emphasis added.

¹⁵ *The Economist* [London], Queuing up to Die, 24 April 1999

¹⁶ Richardson, A., *Children Living with UNITA: A Report for UNICEF Angola*, Luanda: UNICEF, November 2001

UNITA took advantage of the Angolan government's stubbornness to regroup, reorganize its forces, and revert to the form of warfare at which it has always been most successful – guerrilla warfare. The basic principle of guerrilla warfare as practised by UNITA is to use movement as a form of combat. UNITA guerrillas never attempt to hold a town or other fixed location. Instead, by remaining constantly on the move they force their opponents to remain on the move too, in pursuit. UNITA thus wear their enemies out, and dictate the terms of contact and combat by choosing when to double back and launch hit and run attacks on their pursuers.¹⁷ While wearing out the enemy forces in this way, guerrillas also launch raids on villages, towns, road traffic and convoys, both to keep themselves in supplies, and to demoralize and destabilize the enemy side. Over the Christmas period of 1999 Jonas Savimbi is reported to have held a party congress in a game park in the south of Malange province.¹⁸ Regional commanders came from all over Angola to attend this meeting. Responsibilities were reallocated amongst leadership figures, and tactics and strategies hammered out. Regional commanders returned to their areas of responsibility, and a fresh guerrilla campaign was launched nation-wide.

The subsequent war has continued ever since, with no end in sight. UNITA and the FAA appear content to carry on conducting guerrilla and counter-insurgency campaigns indefinitely. UNITA will not give up fighting until offered a peace which it trusts. And trust is now a commodity in very short supply in Angola. On the government side there was a complete change of personnel at the top of the FAA at the beginning of 2001. In January 2001 General João de Matos, who had been Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces for eight years, was informed by President dos Santos that he was to be replaced. The commanders of the Army, the Navy and military intelligence were replaced at the same time. In March 2001 a revamped command team, lead by a new Chief of Staff, General Armando de Cruz Neto, took over.¹⁹ At the time General de Matos denied that he had been sacked, and stated that he had simply completed two four year terms in office and was ready for a change. However, there was speculation that General de Matos' team had been growing increasingly exasperated with the MPLA leadership's unrealistic insistence that the military finish off the war with no supporting political negotiations. The members of the new military command team have been more unequivocal in their support of the Angolan government's policy of fighting to the bitter end.

For their part, senior figures in the MPLA give every semblance of being satisfied with the current military stalemate. Since the end of 1999 a number of prominent individuals have repeatedly made statements to the effect that the war in Angola is no longer of consequence. Following the capture of Andulo and Bailundo it was declared that the conventional war was over, and that UNITA was no longer in a position to capture power or otherwise threaten the government. Subsequently Angola's President, José Eduardo dos Santos, has repeatedly made comments along the lines of "the war no longer represents an obstacle to the development of the country" and "the war is practically finished".²⁰ In a letter sent to the UN Security Council in October 2001 Angolan Foreign Minister, João Miranda, wrote that "UNITA's armed attacks have ceased to be a threat to the existence of Angolan democratic

¹⁷ Eugenio Manuvakola, former UNITA Secretary General, Luanda, Personal interview, 21 January 2000

¹⁸ *The Sunday Independent*

¹⁹ *Angola Peace Monitor*, New Heads of Armed Forces, Vol. 7, No 7, 28th March 2001, <http://www.actsa.org/apm/apm0707.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

²⁰ Agence France Presse [Luanda], Dos Santos Isists Angola's War Is 'Practically Finished', 1 November 2001

institutions and its activity today is reduced to acts of terrorism”.²¹ These statements give the impression that, so long as the fighting threatens neither the government’s hold on power, nor its ability to attract investment in the oil sector, it is not a problem.

Unfortunately, however, the war continues to be a serious problem for Angola’s civilians, particularly those of the interior, almost all of whom have come to be regarded as a legitimate military target by one side or the other. UNITA now views as a legitimate target any civilian who has come into contact with Angolan government forces or administration.²² Following two peace processes, during which state control was extended through much of the country, this now includes a large majority of Angola’s population. UNITA daily launches small scale attacks on both civilian and military targets across much of the country causing death and destruction.²³ Meanwhile, the rebels continue to deny those under their authority any freedom of movement, expression, or association and to exert control through the use of brutal discipline and terror. They continue to abduct civilians, including children, to serve as porters and soldiers, and forcibly to displace those seen as supporters of the government.²⁴ UNITA has also conducted several large scale and murderously successful attacks, including, for example, the attack on Caxito in May 2001,²⁵ and the attack on a train travelling between Luanda and Dondo in August 2001.²⁶ In these two attacks alone at least 300 people are estimated to have died.

Meanwhile the FAA continue to conduct what the government terms “counter-insurgency” operations in many of Angola’s provinces. Their objective appears to be both to kill UNITA’s soldiers, and forcibly to depopulate whole areas, thereby depriving UNITA of the civilian support which is its lifeblood. Despite the fact that the civilians who live under UNITA control have no freedom to leave, or to resist the rebels’ demands, the FAA now appear to view all of them as legitimate targets. In keeping with the government’s desire to propagate the myth that the war is “practically finished”, these “counter-insurgency” operations are rarely made public. However the continuing flood of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees²⁷ fleeing areas in which the FAA are operational bear witness to their presence and their tactics. Thus, refugees who have fled to Zambia from UNITA-controlled parts of Moxico and Kuando Kubango provinces, talk of indiscriminate FAA air and land attacks on civilian targets, including the burning of villages and crops, summary executions, and widespread rape and pillage.²⁸ Angola’s war has consequently become a war

²¹ *Angola Peace Monitor*, UN Extends Work on Angola, Vol. 8, No 3, 3 November 2001, <http://www.actsa.org/apm/apm0803.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

²² UNITA deserters, Mayukwayukwa Refugee Camp, Zambia, Personal interviews, March 2001.

²³ See UNITA’s website, União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola, *Focus on Angola*, <http://www.kwacha.org> [accessed 31 January 2002], *passim*, for comprehensive information about attacks claimed by UNITA.

²⁴ See Richardson, *Children Living with Unita*

²⁵ *Angola Peace Monitor*, UNITA Kidnapping and Murder Increases, Vol. 7, No 9, 7 June 2001, <http://www.actsa.org/apm/apm0709.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

²⁶ *Angola Peace Monitor*, Revulsion over Train Massacre, Vol. 7, No 12, 5 September 2001, <http://www.actsa.org/apm/apm0712> [accessed 31 January 2002]

²⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola 2002*, Geneva, 26 November 2001

²⁸ Refugees who fled FAA troops in Moxico and Kuando Kubango, Nangweshi and Mayukwayukwa Refugees Camps, Zambia, Personal Interviews, March 2001.

in which both sides attack the hapless civilian population, who are involuntarily turned into targets, and powerlessly trapped between two marauding armies. For them the war continues to constitute a serious obstacle to the development of their lives and hopes.

2.2 In Neighbouring Countries

During the period in question Angola's war has also impacted negatively on all of her neighbours. UNITA has in the past enjoyed moral and material support from a number of Angola's neighbours including Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and the Republic of Congo. From 1996 the Angolan government began intervening militarily in some of these neighbouring countries to deny UNITA this support. Thus in 1996 and 1997 the FAA were involved in the military overthrow of the governments of both the DRC and Congo, and their replacement with regimes which would not deal with UNITA. At the peak of their deployment several thousand Angolan troops were operational in both of these countries. Both deployments have been gradually scaled back and now number only in the hundreds.²⁹ However, the Angolan government's influence in these two northern neighbours continues to be far more significant than the scale of these deployments would suggest. In Congo Angola continues to be instrumental in propping up the government of President Denis Sassou Nguessou. And in the DRC Angola is believed to have played a key role in manoeuvring Joseph Kabila into power, after the assassination of his father, Laurent Kabila, in January 2001. The presence of Angolan troops in the DRC has been of particular value to the Angolan government. They have mostly been deployed along the DRC's border with Angola, from where they have been used to launch cross border attacks into UNITA-controlled areas of northern Angola which have been inaccessible to FAA forces inside Angola for many years. They have also served to seal off possible UNITA escape routes. There have been persistent reports of armed clashes between FAA and UNITA forces inside the DRC.

From 1999 onwards Namibia and Zambia, which had hitherto managed to keep Angola's war out of their country, were increasingly affected by the conflict. Namibia's SWAPO government owes a debt of gratitude to the MPLA, which for many years allowed it to pursue its guerrilla campaign against South Africa's occupation of Namibia from within Angolan territory. In December 1999 the Namibian government repaid this debt by allowing Angolan forces to launch attacks on UNITA from Namibian airbases. Only with this assistance from Namibia were the FAA able to capture Jamba. In the eyes of UNITA this turned Namibia into a belligerent in Angola's war, and UNITA has subsequently conducted numerous raids into northern Namibia, attacking and killing civilians, planting landmines, and looting property. In 2000 alone, UNITA was reported to have killed 75 people in Namibia and wounded more than 1,500.³⁰ One much publicized attack in the Caprivi Strip in January 2000, in which three young French tourists were killed, seriously damaged the tourism industry on which northern Namibia relies for much of its income.³¹ The FAA have also been accused of looting, lawlessness and kidnapping in northern Namibia.³²

²⁹ United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks, *Angola-DRC: Angola Announces "Substantial" Troop Withdrawal*, Nairobi, 14 November 2001

³⁰ *Angola Peace Monitor*, UNITA Attacks Continue, Vol. 7, No 3, November 2000, <http://www.actsa.org/apm/apm0703.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

³¹ *The Economist* [London], Bad Neighbour, No Fences, 15 January 2000

³² Amnesty International, *Angola and Namibia: Human Rights Abuses in the Border Area*, London, 3 February 2000. See also reports from the Namibian National Society for Human Rights, <http://www.nshr.org.na>

Tensions between Angola and Zambia began to rise from early 1999. The Angolan government repeatedly accused the Zambian government of allowing UNITA to trade diamonds and weapons through Zambian territory, and of selling fuel to the rebels. Zambia denied these accusations. Then, in March 1999, 16 bombs exploded in the Zambian capital Lusaka in one day.³³ The bombs were later proven to have been planted by employees of the Angolan embassy.³⁴ In early 2000 the Angolan government brought pressure to bear on Zambia to follow Namibia's example by allowing the FAA to attack UNITA positions in eastern Angola from inside Zambia. The Zambian government refused, fearing UNITA reprisals. Relations between the two countries have remained uneasy ever since. The Angolan government insists that many of the 220,000 Angolan refugees hosted by Zambia are actively supporting UNITA,³⁵ while the Zambian government holds the FAA responsible for a number of attacks on Zambian villages near to the border with Angola. In November 2001 President dos Santos was obliged to send a special envoy to Lusaka to apologize after 7 Zambian civilians were killed, and over 150 abducted, in FAA raids inside Zambia.³⁶

3 Political Developments in Government-controlled Territory

3.1 The Angolan Government's Political Strategy

During the period in question the changing political strategies of the Angolan government have in large part been dictated by the ups and downs of the FAA on the battlefield. In late 1998, in the build up to the resumption of the war, the Angolan government employed a Brazilian public relations company, Orion, to demonize Jonas Savimbi, discredit the possibility of a negotiated settlement to the conflict, and drum up popular support for "one last war for peace".³⁷ A slick propaganda campaign comprising television and newspaper advertisements, a weekly television programme, and a series of specially commissioned pop songs, was orchestrated to convince the public that war was the only way to "conquer peace". Officials repeatedly insisted that the MPLA would never again negotiate with Jonas Savimbi, who was decried as a terrorist and war criminal. Angolan journalists were energetically encouraged by the government to support the war effort in their coverage.

Subsequently, following the FAA's disastrous early defeats in the Central Highlands, the government's approach to the war, and in particular to media coverage of the war, changed completely. Between January and October 1999, while UNITA clearly held the upper hand in the fighting, the Angolan government tried assiduously to create the impression that there was no war in Angola. All mention of either the war or UNITA was banned in the state-controlled media or in the discourse of government officials. Thus, for example, in January 1999 the Ministry of Information issued a written order to the state media, asking them to "no longer make mention of facts concerning the war".³⁸ Independent journalists, opposition politicians, and anyone else who attempted to convey a more realistic version of the situation,

³³ *The Economist* [London], Zambia's Mystery Bombs, 13 March 1999

³⁴ Confirmed to the author in person by an Angolan Government Minister, Luanda, March 2000

³⁵ *The Angola Peace Monitor*, Fears that Refugee Camps Harboring [sic] UNITA, Vol. 7, No 5, 31 January 2001, <http://www.actsa.org/apm/apm0705.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

³⁶ United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks, *Angola-Zambia: Border Tense as Villagers Return*, Johannesburg, 13 November 2001

³⁷ *The Economist* [London], Hopeless War, 4 September 1999

³⁸ Human Rights Watch, Angola in *World Report 1999*

were persecuted by the government's security apparatus. The independent newspapers which continued to publish information on the conflict were accused by the government of "playing the enemy's game".³⁹ Numerous journalists were assaulted, threatened or detained after publishing or broadcasting information about the state of the war, or interviews with UNITA leaders.

For example,⁴⁰ in January 1999, authorities forbade the FM radio stations Radio Morena and Radio Ecclesia from broadcasting interviews with UNITA representatives. In April 1999, a Voice of America journalist, Josefa Lamberg, was assaulted by soldiers while trying to report on a forced conscription drive by the Angolan Armed Forces. William Tonet, the director of the independent weekly *Folha 8*, was arrested twice during 1999, accused of "insulting the armed forces and incitement to desertion". In June 1999 Minister of Information Pedro Hendrik Vaal Neto, publicly threatened to resort to "violence against independent media". Independent journalists, who were described as "bad nationalists" by the minister, were accused of "inventing incidents with the government which they convey to international press freedom and human rights organizations". Between May and September 1999 journalists in the cities of Malange, Huambo and Kuito were all summoned by the police and reprimanded for reporting that UNITA was shelling their respective cities. They were ordered not to report anything "political or military in nature" on pain of death. On 9 August 1999 officers from the Department of Criminal Investigations closed down Radio Ecclesia in Luanda because the station re-broadcast a BBC interview with UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi. Over the course of two days the police arrested and interrogated five Ecclesia journalists, one of them twice. Before they were released the journalists were forced to sign an agreement that Radio Ecclesia would no longer refer to Jonas Savimbi or UNITA on the air without prior permission from the government. In September 1999 free-lance journalist Rafael Marques was arrested and imprisoned without trial for two months because of an article in which he accused President dos Santos of being corrupt, incompetent and a dictator. Marques, and two other co-defendants, were eventually convicted of defamation in April 2000 in a trial which contravened all norms of Angolan law.⁴¹ And so the list goes on. In May 2000 this campaign of intimidation caused the New York based Committee to Protect Journalists to list Angola's President dos Santos as one of the world's ten worst Enemies of the Press.⁴²

Following the successes of "Operation Restoration" in late 1999, the Angolan government's attitude towards press coverage of the war again changed completely. Having been obliged, for ten months, to assert that there was no war in Angola, the state-controlled and independent media were suddenly instructed to announce that the war had been won, by the Government. This triumphalist phase lasted until early 2000, when it became apparent that UNITA was not the spent force which the FAA had hoped. Subsequently, as the guerrilla war has dragged on over the last two years, the Angolan authorities have again reverted to the tactic of denying that there is a war in Angola. The Angolan government insists that it has

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ For a complete list see: Amnesty International, *Angola: Freedom of Expression under Threat*, London, November 1999, pp.3-7; 11-14

⁴¹ Human Rights Watch, *Crackdown on Angola's Independent Media Condemned*, New York, 31 March 2000, <http://www.hrw.org/press/2000/03/ang0331.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁴² Committee to Protect Journalists, *Spotlight on Press Tyrants: CPJ Names Ten Worst Enemies of the Press on World Press Freedom Day*, New York, 2 May 2000, http://www.cpj.org/enemies/enemies_00.html [accessed 31 January 2002]

basically won the war, and prefers to depict the ongoing conflict as a series of insignificant, random attacks by bandits.

While waging this propaganda war, the MPLA also launched a campaign to divide and rule its political opponents, particularly other parliamentary parties. Starting from September 1998, a plan was launched to divide and co-opt all of the main opposition parties. In all cases the initial tactic was to bribe or buy off the government's opponents. If that failed then other tactics like blocking access to employment, credit, and housing, and recourse to blackmail, threats, violence, and arbitrary arrest were employed to coerce opposition politicians into curbing their criticism of MPLA policies. Over the course of two years this tactic created a situation where there are now two branches of all of Angola's key political opposition parties. One branch is recognized and funded by the Angolan presidency, and parrots and supports the policies of the government, and a second branch adheres to the original opposition politics of the party and is therefore disenfranchised, impoverished and outlawed by the government. This campaign of undermining and co-opting all viable political opposition began as a means of coercing the opposition parties into supporting the Government's return to war and denouncing Jonas Savimbi's UNITA as terrorists and war criminals. It has evolved into a means of trying to ensure that, if and when Angola holds new elections, the MPLA will be guaranteed victory.

The wave of divisions and defections within opposition parties began with the creation of UNITA Renovada in September 1998, when a handful of senior UNITA figures who had come to Luanda during the peace process announced that they were "taking over" UNITA, and dismissing and renouncing Jonas Savimbi.⁴³ The Angolan government immediately welcomed and recognized this group, and announced that henceforth the only valid interlocutor with which it would negotiate peace would be UNITA Renovada. This despite the fact that Renovada had virtually no support base and no control over UNITA's armed forces. It rapidly became obvious that Renovada was a creation of the Angolan Presidency. The state-controlled media has adamantly referred to the Renovada leader Eugenio Manuvakola, as the "President of UNITA" ever since. Jonas Savimbi, meanwhile, is referred to as "leader of the Savimbistas" or "leader of the terrorist belligerents".

Enormous pressure was subsequently brought to bear on the other UNITA representatives in Luanda, mainly parliamentary deputies or officials involved in the peace negotiations, to join Renovada. Under the terms of the peace process these people were at that time all housed by the Angolan Government. Those who agreed to join up were promised houses, cars and phones of their own. Those who refused were threatened with eviction, unemployment and persecution. A great many UNITA figures did subsequently join Renovada. Many others left the country. Only those with private funds could afford to stay in Government controlled parts of Angola and refuse to be co-opted. Key amongst these was Abel Chivukuvuku, leader of the UNITA parliamentary party. A charismatic and eloquent figure, Chivukuvuku's support was seen as essential to the success of Renovada. Prior to the launch of Renovada the Angolan authorities had attempted to cajole, bribe and threaten him into joining the defectors, but he refused.⁴⁴ A few weeks later someone with a silenced revolver fired three shots into Mrs. Chivukuvuku's car as she was backing out of their driveway. The gunman was never caught. Chivukuvuku was subsequently replaced as head of the UNITA parliamentarians by a representative of Renovada.

⁴³ Human Rights Watch, *Angola Unravels*, p. 70

⁴⁴ Abel Chivukuvuku, Luanda, Personal interview, November 1998

Pressure to convince more UNITA people to join Renovada continued. In January 1999 five UNITA MPs who had refused to join were arrested in their homes and incarcerated in the top security Labatorio prison for political prisoners. Carlos Kandanda, Carlos Kalitas, Vicente Vihemba, Domingos Maluca and Joao Savihemba were accused of being caught *in flagrante delicto* plotting against state security, despite the fact that Vicente Vihemba was “caught” in his bed, where he was seriously ill on an intravenous drip.⁴⁵ They were detained, without charge, for ten months. Finally an Angolan court decreed that there were no grounds for holding them, and they were released. Vicente Vihemba was immediately evacuated to a hospital in Europe. All five still refuse to join Renovada.

The same tactics were used to create schisms in the other major opposition parties, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (Frente Nacional para a Libertação de Angola – FNLA), the Democratic Renewal Party (Partido Renovador Democrático - PRD), and the Social Renewal Party (Partido Renovado Social - PRS) over the course of the next two years.⁴⁶ In early 1999 FNLA leader Holden Roberto, one of the original instigators of the armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism, was offered substantial inducements by the Presidency to tone down his criticism of the government and of the resumption of the war. Roberto rejected the proffered inducements, and so was informed that he would be marginalized and lose his party. A short while later internal FNLA elections were orchestrated in which FNLA members supported by the Angolan Presidency threw out Holden Roberto and elected Lucas Ngonda instead. Ngonda, whose policies now mirror those of the MPLA, moved into a large house in the old part of Luanda shortly afterwards. The FNLA has split, with the die hards remaining with Holden Roberto, while the rest support Lucas Ngonda. In exactly the same way, the original leader of the PRS, Eduardo Kuangana has been marginalized and the party has been taken over by Antonio Muachicungo, while in the PSD Nzugi Sumbu has been marginalized and the party taken over by Bengui Pedro Joao.

With Jonas Savimbi’s UNITA declared an outlawed terrorist organization, and with the remaining major political contenders divided and emasculated, the MPLA began, from the end of 1999, raising the possibility of holding fresh parliamentary and presidential elections. Angola’s only democratic national elections were held in 1992. The mandate which they gave President dos Santos and his MPLA government expired in 1997. However, the war has prevented the holding of new elections. A fresh ballot would confer much needed legitimacy on the MPLA government. With most serious political contenders out of the running, the MPLA could be fairly confident of winning. In early 2000 President dos Santos announced that elections would be held in 2001.⁴⁷ As the war has rumbled on, continuing to make the logistics of holding an election unthinkable, he has subsequently postponed the elections twice. In August 2001 he announced that the elections will not now be held until 2003. Significantly, President dos Santos also announced that he will not be standing for re-election at that time.⁴⁸ He has urged his party to appoint a successor.

⁴⁵ Human Rights Watch, *Angola Unravels*, p. 71

⁴⁶ Personal interviews in Luanda, 2000

⁴⁷ *The Economist* [London], Amazing Grace, 18 March 2000

⁴⁸ *The Economist* [London], Dos Santos Will Just Go, He Says, 10 November 2001

3.2 Civil Society's Response

The political machinations of the MPLA since 1998 have had an unforeseen and highly significant knock-on effect in government-controlled territory. In the face of the Angolan government's refusal to discuss a negotiated end to the war, and its clumsy attempts to manipulate public opinion and to emasculate all viable political opposition, Angola's long dormant civil society has, since 1999, begun to be awoken and enraged. A string of new social and political movements and lobby groups, founded by politicians, journalists, priests and others, has emerged. All of these movements call for an immediate cease-fire, followed by peace talks between the government, UNITA, and, for the first time, civil society, definitively to end what is perceived to be an unwinnable war. Given that, for the last three years, any mention of peace has been denounced by the MPLA as treason, those who have spoken out against the war have shown rare courage. Many also call for a more equitable distribution of the country's wealth. For the first time since the 1970s anti-government demonstrations have been held.

In mid 1999 two groups, the Angolan Reflection Group for Peace (Grupo Angolano de Reflexão para a Paz - GARP and the Angolan Group for the Promotion of the Culture of Peace (Grupo Angolano para a Paz - GAP), were launched in Luanda. Both sought to build up a culture of accountability and respect for human rights.⁴⁹ GARP compiled a Manifesto for Peace which was signed by numerous prominent public figures.

Since the resumption of the war in 1998 Angola's various churches have played a new, and increasingly significant role in rallying and voicing opposition to the continuation of the conflict, and to the corruption which it is seen to facilitate. In January 1999 the Catholic Bishops of Angola and Sao Tome (Conferência Episcopal de Angola e São Tomé - CEAST) issued a strongly worded pastoral letter, stating flatly that the war did not represent the wishes of the people, that both sides neglected the welfare of their troops, and that the troops on both sides stole from the people. Following its congress in Lubango in July 1999 CEAST issued a further denouncement of the war. The conflict "has become twice-deadly ... it kills with weapons and kills with hunger" the bishops said. The letter called for the opening of humanitarian corridors for the delivery of aid, and described indiscriminate attacks on civilians and aid workers as acts of "cowardly banditry". Bravely treading on politically very sensitive ground the bishops wrote:

We cannot here omit a word denouncing those who turn war into a lucrative business. To clock up bank accounts in foreign banks and to grow rich at the cost of the hunger, suffering, blood and death of one's brothers, is a repugnant infamy, which must never again occur in the heart of any Angolan, or any person whatsoever.

This was one of the first times that the way Angola's war has become a business for the profit of the few, at the expense of the many, was publicly denounced inside Angola. It was the more startling for having come from such a morally authoritative source.

In April 2000 the churches took a further important step. For the first time the different branches of the church in Angola – the Catholic, Protestant, and Episcopal Churches – put their political and doctrinal differences to one side and joined forces to found the Inter-

⁴⁹ Human Rights Watch, Angola in *World Report 1999*

Church Committee for Peace in Angola (Comite Inter-ecclesial para a Paz em Angola – COIEPA). COIEPA’s stated aim was to push the MPLA and UNITA into ceasing hostilities and instead joining a national peace-building dialogue. The group’s first major act was to organize a mass march for peace in Luanda in July 2000, which culminated in an inter-denominational church service in the national football stadium attended by an estimated 10,000 people.⁵⁰ Along the route of the march thousands of copies of a printed prayer were handed out. The prayer, which read like more of a political manifesto, concluded:

Soldiers, pray for peace,
For it is your own brothers that you are killing.
Do not allow yourselves to be manipulated any longer
For already many see you as animals
Who with pleasure eat the flesh of your neighbours.
Pray for peace.
Politicians, pray also,
That you may not be asked to account for what you have done
And that you may be considered human.
Businessmen, pray for peace,
That your best clients
May not devour your business
When hunger draws near.
Children, pray that the same fate does not await you when you grow up.
Oh, our people, pray.⁵¹

No other organization in Angola could have got away with organizing such an event. In subsequent months the churches have continued to campaign for peace, both inside and outside Angola. They have written to Jonas Savimbi calling on him to join in a peace dialogue, and they have offered themselves as mediators in future peace talks. In recognition of these efforts the President of both CEAST and COIEPA, Dom Zacarias Kamwenho, the Bishop of Lubango, was awarded the European Union’s Sakharov prize for the promotion of peace, in December 2001.⁵²

In another first for Angola, a new political movement, the Broad Movement of Citizens (Amplio Movimento de Cidadãos - AMC), was founded in Luanda in April 2000. The objective of the AMC was to rise above party politics and create a new political momentum for change and peace in Angola. The movement’s manifesto denounced the MPLA and UNITA equally, blaming them both for the destruction of Angola. It united prominent figures from all walks of life including disenchanted members of the political parties, trades unionists, and journalists. Outspoken journalist, William Tonet, was elected leader of the movement.

⁵⁰ *The Economist* [London], A New Crusade, 8 July 2000

⁵¹ Excerpt from author’s personal copy, translated from the Portuguese.

⁵² *Voz de America* [Luanda], O presidente da CEAST-Conferência Episcopal de Angola e São Tomé, Dom Zacarias Kamwenho, recebeu o ‘Prémio Sakharov’, 12 December 2001, http://www.ebonet.net/voa/ver.cfm?m_id=2638 [accessed 31 January 2002]

Finally, in a sign that the culture of obedience and fear, which has for so long predominated on both sides of the political divide in Angola, was beginning to crumble, an obscure political party, the Party for Democracy and Progress in Angola (Partido para Democracia e Progresso em Angola – PADPA), did the unthinkable, repeatedly. PADPA took on the government, the security forces, and even the Presidency, and won. The party first attracted attention in March 2000 when it organized a protest in Luanda against exponential increases in the price of all fuels. After the protest was violently put down by the security forces, a number of PADPA’s leaders staged a peaceful sit in and hunger strike in front of the provincial government buildings in Luanda. Again, the protest was violently quashed by the security forces, and the protestors were arrested. Realizing, too late, that in beating up and arresting the PADPA members it had actually turned them into heroes, the government forced the police to release them without charge, and to issue a full apology for the way they had been treated. This unprecedented capitulation by the government gave a number of other political parties the courage to organize their own protest a few days later.⁵³ PADPA again came to prominence in January 2001 when they staged a further peaceful demonstration in front of Angola’s presidential palace.⁵⁴ They were demanding the resignation of President dos Santos, following reports, emanating from France, that associated him with international arms dealers and corruption scandals. Seven protestors were beaten, arrested, and hauled before a hastily assembled court to be tried for holding an illegal demonstration. Remarkably, the court acquitted them, and declared that their right to protest peacefully had been violated.⁵⁵ For the first time in twenty years, Angolans began to contemplate the possibility that their President may not, after all, be untouchable.

These, and other, developments in Angola’s civil society have been relatively few, small, and isolated. In most cases they have not reached far beyond Luanda. Nevertheless, they have begun to show Angolans that it is possible to challenge the status quo, and they have sowed a seed of hope, in a country where it has been sorely lacking. They have also, quite clearly, alarmed the Angolan government.

The Angolan government has continued to try to repress and quash this unprecedented domestic opposition to its policies. Hence, for example, its repeated attempts to disrupt PADPA’s protests. Hence, also, reports from senior figures in COIEPA that the security forces are organizing cells throughout Angola to intimidate and discredit COIEPA members.⁵⁶ However, the profile of these civil society activities has been such that the Angolan government has also had to at least be seen to try to respond to their demands. In an attempt to placate criticism of its refusal to contemplate peace talks, the MPLA has, for example, established the Peace and Reconciliation Commission under the leadership of the influential Interior Minister Fernando de Piedade dos Santos “Nando”. The mandate of this commission is to consult with political parties and civil society representatives to build a consensus as to how peace should be achieved. However, the one group with which the commission refuses to consult or even communicate is UNITA. It is widely recognized that so long as this continues to be the case, its relevance will be limited.

⁵³ *The Economist* [London], 18 March 2000

⁵⁴ Media Institute of Southern Africa, *Angola Alert: Media black-out, Detainees Released*, 26 January 2001, <http://www.misanet.org/alerts/20010126.angola.0.html> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁵⁵ *The Economist* [London], Hearing Complaints, 3 February 2001

⁵⁶ Rev. Octavio Fernando, founding member of COIEPA, Personal interview, London, November 2000

Nevertheless, in the first half of 2001 there were some positive signs that a cease-fire and peace negotiations might once again become possible. In April Jonas Savimbi broke 18 months' silence to give a radio interview in which he called for peace through dialogue. Later, in response to a letter from the Catholic Bishops of Angola, he accepted their offer to serve as intermediaries between UNITA and the government. Taking advantage of the opening provided by these apparently conciliatory gestures, the Angolan government, in the persons of both President dos Santos and the Interior Minister, finally admitted the possibility that they might agree to negotiate with Jonas Savimbi once more. The scope of these peace overtures was however limited by the fact that both sides unrealistically insisted that the other must call a unilateral cease-fire before any talks could be contemplated. Before a way could be found out of this deadlock UNITA attacked Caxito. It seems likely that this attack was meant to strengthen UNITA's negotiating position by reminding the Angolan Government that UNITA retained the ability to mount major attacks perilously close to the capital. Unfortunately it had the opposite effect, hardening the government's position and giving it a further pretext not to negotiate with the UNITA "terrorists". This position has remained largely unchanged ever since. If anything, it has hardened further still since the events of 11 September 2001 and the United States' subsequent endorsement of the annihilation of terrorists, and those who harbour them. Like many other governments around the world, the Angolan government has eagerly espoused this as a mandate to eradicate its enemies by whatever means.⁵⁷

President dos Santos ended 2001 on an ambiguous note – in the same week he, on the one hand, gave permission to the UN Secretariat to resume contacts with UNITA for the first time in three years, while, on the other, declaring that the only options now open to Jonas Savimbi are to be killed or captured. Peace negotiations remained a remote possibility.

4 Developments on the International Front

4.1 Political Engagement

The international community has appeared unwilling to engage meaningfully in helping Angola to find peace and stability during the period in question. Two failed UN peace processes seem to have convinced both multinational groupings like the United Nations, and individual states, that to engage politically in Angola is to run the risk of bitter, humiliating failure. Much of the outside world has, consequently, preferred to take a simplistic, hands off approach to Angola over the last three years, and has made little effort to champion the cause of peace.

Many governments placed themselves in an awkward position by openly siding with the Angolan government at the beginning of the latest phase of fighting. Exasperated with UNITA and with the failure of the Lusaka peace process, these governments, curiously, opted to believe the Angolan government's assurances that the war would be won within three months. Consequently, they gave their backing to the war, and agreed to sever all contacts with UNITA, on the assumption that UNITA would not exist for very much longer. Later, when UNITA failed to disappear, these governments found themselves in a compromised position, unable to bring pressure to bear on either belligerent to cease fire. Having supported the Angolan government's war, they were in no position to condemn its effects; and having ostracized UNITA, they had lost all leverage with the rebels. As a result, despite the fact that,

⁵⁷ *Voz de America* [Luanda], Resenha da semana, 21 September 2001, http://www.ebonet.net/voa/ver.cfm?m_id=1469 [accessed 31 January 2002]

in private, foreign diplomats in Luanda quietly concede that it is hard to envisage an end to the current conflict without further peace negotiations, the international community has made almost no effort to promote those negotiations.

The only notable exception to this rule has been the UN's Under Secretary General for African Affairs, Ibrahim Gambari, who has made repeated visits to Angola in recent years, and has consistently pointed out the need for peace negotiations. In early 2001 he went so far as to suggest that the UN should host an international conference to look for peaceful solutions for Angola. However, having been fiercely reprimanded by the Angolan government for daring to suggest such a peace conference, he was forced to withdraw his suggestion.⁵⁸

With the exception of Ibrahim Gambari, the UN has appeared extremely reluctant to play an active political role in Angola. Following the failure of the Lusaka peace process, and the closure of the UN peace-monitoring mission MONUA in February 1999, the UN politically disengaged from Angola almost entirely. It took five months of negotiations (five of the worst months of the current phase of the war), for the UN to wrest agreement from the Angolan government to a follow-up UN mission. In late July 1999 the Angolan government permitted a thirty-strong UN Office in Angola (UNOA).⁵⁹ On 15 October 1999 the formation of UNOA was approved by UN Security Council Resolution 1268.⁶⁰ In January 2000 responsibility for UNOA was transferred from the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Department of Political Affairs. In February 2000 the Angolan government officially approved the "status of mission agreement" for UNOA, setting out the objectives and scope of the mission. However it was not until 31 July 2000, 17 months after the withdrawal of MONUA, that the UN Secretary General finally appointed Mozambican Mussagy Jeichande, as the first head of UNOA. He did not arrive in Luanda to take up his post until 1 October 2000.⁶¹ Resolution 1268 states that the role of UNOA is to "liaise with the political, military, police and other civilian authorities, with a view to exploring effective measures for restoring peace, assisting the Angolan people in the area of capacity-building, humanitarian assistance, the promotion of human rights, and coordinating other activities".⁶² Thus far the tiny mission has been able to make very little impact either on the course of the war, or on the lives of the Angolan people. Most Angolans are not even aware of its existence.

Beyond the creation of UNOA the United Nations' (and by extension the international community's) sole attempt to influence the course of the war in Angola has been to set up successive "expert panels" to review the effectiveness of the UN sanctions imposed on UNITA. These sanctions were intended to deny UNITA the ability to wage war by cutting its funding and its access to arms and supplies. In 1993 the UN imposed an arms and petroleum embargo on UNITA, the first such embargo against a non-state actor. This was followed in

⁵⁸ *Voz de America* [Luanda], Ibrahim Gambari, Secretario Geral Adjunto das Nações Unidas, recua nos seus propositos de organizar uma conferencia de paz sobre Angola, e alinha no reforca das sancões contra a UNITA, 27 April 2001

⁵⁹ Human Rights Watch, Angola, in *World Report 1999*

⁶⁰ United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 1268 (1999), S/RES/1268, 15 October 1999

⁶¹ Human Rights Watch, Angola, in *World Report 2000*, New York, 2001, <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k1/africa/angola.html> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁶² United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 1268

October 1997 by the imposition of sanctions banning UNITA representation overseas, banning named UNITA officials from travelling, banning flights into UNITA-controlled territory, and banning the sale to the rebels of equipment which could be used in diamond-mining.⁶³ Finally, in July 1998, sanctions were imposed expressly embargoing the purchase of diamonds mined in UNITA areas, and freezing UNITA bank accounts.⁶⁴ Throughout the Lusaka peace process UNITA was able openly to flout these embargoes, with the result that the movement managed to rearm its armed forces in spite of the presence of MONUA military observers.⁶⁵

In January 1999, in a bid to address the ineffectiveness of the sanctions, Canada's ambassador to the UN, Robert Fowler, was appointed to head the UN's Angola Sanctions Committee. Fowler toured Southern Africa in May 1999 and Europe in July 1999, and then made a series of preliminary recommendations as to how the sanctions could better be implemented.⁶⁶ In May 1999 he set up two expert panels with a mandate to investigate violations of the sanctions regime. In late August 1999 it was decided that the two panels would operate as one, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Anders Mollander of Sweden. The first expert panel was granted an initial mandate of six months, funded by donor pledges of up to US\$900,000 in addition to the US\$1,000,000 funded internally by the UN Secretariat.⁶⁷ During that time its members travelled widely, in an attempt to gather intelligence on how UNITA circumvented the sanctions. At the end of that six month period, on 28 February 2000, the panel produced a widely publicized report on the mechanisms of UNITA's sanctions busting.⁶⁸ Notably, the report "named and shamed" a number of governments and heads of state who had profited by helping UNITA to market diamonds and import arms through their territory. The so-called "Fowler Report" made a total of 39 recommendations for making the sanctions more effective, including, for example:

- The Security Council should apply sanctions against leaders and governments found to have been deliberately breaking sanctions on UNITA.
- The end-user certificate system for the importation of weapons should be reformed.
- DNA-type analysis should be carried out on fuel samples from petroleum suppliers in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region for the purpose of evaluating the source of fuel captured from UNITA.
- Penalties should be imposed on those who cannot prove the legal origin of rough diamonds in their possession.
- A substantial bounty or "finders' fee percentage" should be paid to any institution or individual that tracks down and identifies UNITA assets that are subject to sanction.

⁶³ United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 1127 (1997), S/RES/1127, 28 August 1997

⁶⁴ United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 1173 (1998), S/RES/1173, 12 June 1998

⁶⁵ For a full exploration of how UNITA contravened the sanctions see Human Rights Watch, *Angola Unravels*

⁶⁶ *Angola Peace Monitor*, Plan to Tighten Sanctions on UNITA Unveiled, Vol. 5, No 10, 30 June 1999, <http://www.actsa.org/apm/apm0510.html> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁶⁷ Human Rights Watch, Angola, in *World Report 1999*

⁶⁸ United Nations, Secretariat, Report of the Panel of Experts on Violations of Security Council Sanctions Against UNITA, S/2000/203, 28 February 2000, http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest/angolareport_eng.htm [accessed 31 January 2002]

Despite the obvious good intentions of the Expert Panel, a number of shortcomings were evident in their investigative methodology, which undermined the credibility of the report.⁶⁹ For example, governments were generally reluctant to provide detailed intelligence to the Panel. Many who did provide information found it used to condemn them, while those who refused to cooperate escaped without mention. The Panel did not use the expertise and assistance of Interpol, despite the offer of an analyst from Interpol. The only specialist consultant hired became operational only a week before the Fowler report was to be drafted and was unable to contribute meaningfully to the process. The Fowler report relied heavily on information acquired, just a few weeks before publication, from UNITA defectors proffered by the Angolan government. Given that these defectors were dependent on the Angolan government for their sustenance and safety, it was widely felt that their testimonies were inadequately cross-checked, and given too much weight in the final report.

In April 2000, due to diplomatic sensitivities, the Security Council effectively decided to delay acting on the Fowler report's recommendations, instead approving the formation of a second, smaller panel of experts, to carry out further investigations into UNITA sanction-breaking.⁷⁰ Due to disagreements over nominations, the five member panel was not in fact convened until late July.⁷¹ The new committee, known as the Monitoring Mechanism, was given another six month mandate.

The Monitoring Mechanism presented an interim report to the President of the UN Security Council in October 2000,⁷² followed by a full report on 21 December 2000.⁷³ The December report appeared to be based on more consistent and in-depth research than the Fowler Report. Again, it set out a detailed list of recommendations as to how UNITA's ability to circumvent the sanctions could be curtailed.

In January 2001 the Monitoring Mechanism's mandate was extended for a further three months, to allow it to pursue leads which were received too late to be included in its December report.⁷⁴ These were to be presented in an "addendum" in April. In the meantime, any decisions by the Security Council as to how the recommendations should be enforced were deferred once again. The Addendum found that "sanctions continue to play an important part in efforts to resolve the Angolan conflict. With no fixed arms supply lines and diminishing revenue from diamonds, UNITA's military capacity has been significantly reduced". The Addendum reported that UNITA's revenues from diamonds had diminished, from US\$300 million in 1999, to around US\$100 million in 2000. However it conceded that

⁶⁹ Human Rights Watch, *The U.N. Sanctions Committee on Angola: Lessons Learned?*, New York, 17 April 2000, <http://www.hrw.org/press/2000/04/brief-angola> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁷⁰ *Angola Peace Monitor*, UN Sanctions Mechanism under Pressure to Deliver, Vol. 7, No 2, October 2000, <http://www.actsa.org/apm/apm0702.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁷¹ Human Rights Watch, Angola, in *World Report 2000*

⁷² United Nations, Department of Political Affairs, Interim Report of the Monitoring Mechanism on Angola Sanctions, S/2000/1026, 25 October 2000, <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/docs/sclet1026e.pdf> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁷³ United Nations, Department of Political Affairs, Final Report of the Monitoring Mechanism on Angola Sanctions, S/2000/1225, 21 December 2000, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/docs/monitoring_final.pdf [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁷⁴ United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 1336 (2001), S/RES/1336, 23 January 2001

this drop was due not to the sanctions, but rather to a reduction in UNITA's diamond-mining workforce.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, the Security Council again deferred acting on the Monitoring Mechanism's recommendations and instead extended its mandate for a further six months.⁷⁶ On 12 October 2001 a "supplementary" report was presented.⁷⁷ The report found that UNITA was still smuggling around US\$300,000 worth of diamonds out of Angola each day, excluding diamonds sold from its stockpiles. The report also revealed the Monitoring Mechanism's frustration with the Security Council's failure to act on its recommendations for enforcing the sanctions. In sum the report acknowledged that the sanctions had not denied UNITA its ability to wage war, because they had not been properly enforced, and that, even if they were properly enforced, UNITA would still be able to continue fighting "for a very long time" due to its existing stockpiles of weapons and due to the frugal nature of guerrilla warfare. This threw into question the whole purpose of the sanctions.

Despite these findings, on 19 October 2001 the Security Council adopted Resolution 1374 which extended the Monitoring Mechanism's mandate for a further six months until 19 April 2002. At the end of the meeting the Security Council in a Presidential Statement "reaffirmed its intention to keep sanctions under close monitoring with a view to improving their effectiveness until it is convinced that the peace process is irreversible".⁷⁸ It has still taken no steps to render its own sanctions more enforceable. Those living with the daily reality of war in Angola were left to ask "what peace process?".

4.2 Economic Engagement

While the international community has thus been seen to have disengaged from Angola politically in recent years, many countries have simultaneously been manifestly very keen to enhance their economic relations with the Angolan Government. This dichotomy has left many Angolans with the impression that outsiders' interest in their country is now largely opportunistic and governed by self-interest. The enthusiasm for enhanced economic relations with Angola has been fuelled by the marked increase in the global importance of Angola's oil industry, in particular following the discovery of some colossal oil fields in deep water exploration blocs in the country's Atlantic waters. Most of Angola's oil fields lie offshore, where their exploitation has never been affected or jeopardized by the ongoing conflict. Thus, even as the war grinds on, governments have competed to help their national companies secure lucrative contracts and concessions in Angola, particularly, but not exclusively, in the petroleum sector. The fact that those concessions are allocated at the discretion of the Angolan government is perceived as one reason for the international community's unquestioning support for the government's "last war for peace".

⁷⁵ United Nations, Department of Political Affairs, Addendum to the final Report of the Monitoring Mechanism on Angola Sanctions, S/2001/363, 11 April 2001, <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/Angola/363e.pdf> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁷⁶ United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 1348 (2001), S/RES/1348, 19 April 2001

⁷⁷ United Nations, Department of Political Affairs, Supplementary Report to the Final Report of the Monitoring Mechanism on Angola Sanctions, S/2001/966, 12 October 2001, <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/Angola/966e.pdf> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁷⁸ United Nations, Security Council, Statement by the President of the Security Council, S/PRST/2001/36, 15 November 2001

Thus, for example, in 1999 and 2000 Angola was the United States' second largest site for investment and third largest trading partner in sub-Saharan Africa. US investment in the petroleum sector was valued at over US\$4 billion each year, and the US purchased 50 per cent of Angola's oil production, which exceeded 750,000 barrels per day. Seven per cent of the US's oil imports already come from Angola, and it is estimated that this figure could double, to 15 per cent, over the next 10 years.⁷⁹ Reflecting the importance of these trade links to the United States, the US Government in September 1999 created a Bilateral Consultative Commission to broaden and deepen the engagement between Angola and the United States, effectively upgrading the status of relations between the two countries. The Commission has met on numerous occasions since, always focusing predominantly on trade and investment rather than on human rights, peace, and other politically sensitive subjects.⁸⁰

While other countries, including those of the European Union, were less significant to Angola's balance of payments than the United States, their approach to Angola was also informed largely by trade and energy considerations. During 1999 the EU did issue a number of communiqués which included condemnations of human rights abuses by both sides to the Angolan conflict. However, the sensitivity of commercial interests tended to erode the impact of periodic human rights initiatives. For example, in 2000 a proposed common EU policy document on human rights in Angola was never published because some EU partners feared it would anger the Angolan government, thereby prejudicing business interests.

Watching the interests of their countries' oil companies expanding in Angola in recent years, many of these governments may feel that their consideration of the Angolan government's sensitivities has paid off. Thus, in 1999 America's Exxon, France's Elf, and UK-based BP-Amoco were awarded hotly contested concessions to exploit ultra-deep-water oil exploration blocs 31, 32, and 33, off Angola's Atlantic coast. Together, the three companies paid a total of US\$870 million to secure rights to the blocs. It was feared that much of this money went straight into financing the FAA's "Operation Restoration".⁸¹ Oil industry executives, meanwhile, continue to view Angola as "one of the most exciting places in the world to do business".⁸²

The opportunistic approach to Angola taken by both foreign governments and companies has helped to fuel the increase in Angolan civil society activism. Recognition of the fact that the outside world has largely given up on helping Angola to find peace and social justice, has been one element in convincing the people of Angola that they must take their fates into their own hands. It has also led to denunciations and calls for a more responsible engagement from international aid agencies and campaigning groups including Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), the international NGOs World Vision and Save the Children, and the UK based lobby group Global Witness.⁸³

⁷⁹ Human Rights Watch, Angola, in *World Report 1999 & 2000*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Global Witness, *A Crude Awakening*, p.11

⁸² *The Independent* [London], Angola's Oil Boom Fuels Civil War, 27 February 2000

⁸³ Médecins sans Frontières, Behind the Façade of 'Normalization': Manipulation, Violence, and Abandoned Populations, Luanda, 9 November 2000; World Vision, *Angola, a Tangled Web: Many Players in a Complex War*, London, July 2000; Save the Children, *War Brought Us Here*, London, 2000, pp. 31-52; Global Witness, *A Crude Awakening*, and *A Rough Trade: The Role of Companies and Governments in the Angolan Conflict*, London, 1998

4.3 The International Monetary Fund

Curiously, one of the few international institutions which has continued to engage constructively in Angola in recent years has been the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which has attempted to launch a Structural Adjustment, or Poverty Reduction, Programme in Angola. Angola is not a poor country, yet its people are amongst the poorest in the world. The IMF may not see itself as a peace-maker or champion of social justice; however any attempt to cast light into the dark recesses of the Angolan government's finances, to expose how such a rich country manages to offer so little to its people, amounts to a great service to those people. Furthermore, the perpetuation of Angola's conflict is now so tightly bound up with the control of the country's finances, that steps which make the management of those finances more transparent could directly contribute to ending the war.

The IMF has tried for several years to convince Angola to sign up to a Structural Adjustment Programme.⁸⁴ Under such a programme the Angolan government would be helped to introduce free market reforms, liberalize banking systems, bring down inflation, increase transparency, and curtail what is diplomatically referred to as "extra-budgetary expenditure", namely the use of state revenues for covert purposes which are never accounted for in the national budget. Such covert expenditure has become routine in Angola, creating scope for serious allegations of corruption.⁸⁵ Thus, for example, in 1995 the IMF estimated that about 64 per cent of all government expenditure was "extra-budgetary".⁸⁶ Under an IMF programme the Angolan government would also be expected to invest considerably more of its revenues in social sectors like health and education. In 1999 Defence and Public Order accounted for 41 per cent of government expenditure, whilst Health and Education put together accounted for a mere 8.6 per cent.⁸⁷ In exchange for these reforms, the IMF would make financing available to the Angolan Government at favourable rates of interest and, perhaps more importantly, would facilitate access to lines of credit from mainstream lenders. Angola's access to financing from these conventional donors has been frozen for a number of years due to the country's failure to service its extant debts. As a result it has been forced to take out loans from private creditors at punitively high rates of interest, secured against the country's future oil production.

In the last decade the Angolan government has twice signed up to IMF reform programmes, usually at moments when it has been experiencing budgetary crises. It has subsequently failed to meet the benchmarks set by the IMF, or indeed has instituted policies even worse than those which the IMF programmes sought to reform, leading to the collapse of the IMF interventions. Due to these past experiences, the IMF is now very cautious in its approach to Angola.⁸⁸ The Fund's current intervention was initiated in early 1999 when a slump in global oil prices, combined with the military build-up necessitated by the return to war, pushed the Angolan government into perhaps its worst financial crisis ever. By the end of 1998 the

⁸⁴ Angola, *Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies*, 3 April 2000, <http://www.imf.org/external/np/loi/2000/ago/01/index.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁸⁵ Hodges, T., *Angola from Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism*, Oxford: James Currey, 2001, pp. 71-73; Vicente, S., *Corrupção, Democracia e Economia em Angola*, Luanda, August 1999, unpublished paper given as part of a series organized in Luanda by the National Democratic Institute on Ethics and Transparency in Public Life

⁸⁶ Hodges, p.113

⁸⁷ Hodges, p.187

⁸⁸ IMF Staff, Luanda, several personal interviews between 1998 and 2000

country's foreign reserves were sufficient to cover only one week of imports.⁸⁹ In desperation the President sacked his economic team in February 1999, appointed a new, more reformist team, and granted them permission to undertake the reforms necessary to secure a new IMF deal. As a test of this new team's good faith, and ability to deliver, the IMF set out a list of preliminary requirements to be met before a real IMF programme could begin. In return the Angolan government took some major steps, such as the abolition of the dual exchange rate system which had led to serious budgetary distortions, and had effectively created one exchange rate for the rich and another for the poor.⁹⁰ A year into these reforms, the IMF agreed to embark on the next stage, the establishment of a Staff Monitored Programme (SMP) for Angola. Under the SMP experts from the IMF were to help the Angolan authorities to instigate more wide-ranging and profound reforms, to start the complete overhaul of the economy. The SMP was to be another exercise in re-building confidence between Angola and the IMF. Only upon its successful completion would a full Structural Adjustment Programme be countenanced, and IMF funds be forthcoming.

The SMP began on 3 April 2000, and was to run until the end of 2000, by which time a number of targets were to have been met. These included the reduction of annual inflation to 150 per cent; the elimination of domestic fuel subsidies; the improvement of pay for civil servants; the limitation of subsidies to indebted state-owned enterprises; the elimination of import licenses and non-tariff barriers; the definition of a strategy to deal with the country's external debt, and much more.⁹¹ Some progress was made towards these targets. For example, in November 2000 the Angolan government appointed the international financial consultancy firm KPMG to conduct a thirty month "diagnostic study" into the way in which Angola's oil revenues (which account for 92 per cent of exports and around 50 per cent of GDP⁹²) are accounted for by the government.⁹³ This is intended to cut down on "extra-budgetary expenditure" and enhance transparency.⁹⁴

However, overall the Angolan government still has a long way to go to meet the requirements of the SMP. To date, the SMP has twice been extended. In its latest report on Angola's progress, the IMF is particularly critical of the government's continuing lack of transparency with regard to revenues and expenditure.⁹⁵ The report makes clear that Angola will receive no IMF financing until the goals of the SMP have been met.

5 Meanwhile, the Humanitarian Situation Deteriorates

While the belligerents have preferred carnage to compromise, and the international community has promoted sanctions over cease-fires, the people of Angola have continued

⁸⁹ Angola, *Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies*

⁹⁰ Deutsche Presse Agentur, Angolan Government Floats Currency out of Desperation, [Luanda], 28 May 1999

⁹¹ Angola, *Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies*

⁹² Hodges, pp.181, 183

⁹³ *Angola Peace Monitor*, Further Economic Reforms, Vol. 7, No 3, November 2000, <http://www.actsa.org/apm/apm0703.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁹⁴ For an examination of the strengths and weaknesses of the diagnostic study see: Human Rights Watch, *The International Monetary Fund's Staff Monitoring Program for Angola: The Human Rights Implications*, March 2001, <http://www.hrw.org/press/2000/06/ango-0623-back.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

⁹⁵ International Monetary Fund, *Preliminary Conclusions of the IMF Mission*, 14 August 2001, <http://www.imf.org/external/np/ms/2001/081401.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

struggling to survive, under ever deteriorating circumstances. That most survive at all is a tribute to their resilience and inventiveness. UNITA is no longer in a position to provide any social services to the populations under its control,⁹⁶ while the government has long neglected investment in the social sector, instead delegating its responsibilities to aid agencies and churches.⁹⁷ Most food aid, agricultural assistance, de-mining, health care, and even education provided in Angola comes from UN agencies, NGOs, and churches. These humanitarian actors constantly fight to retain the funding necessary to stave off a humanitarian disaster, from donors tired of pouring money into a country which, in theory, has more than ample resources to care for its people itself. The following paragraphs give some indication as to quite how difficult surviving in Angola has become:

Forced displacement: In 1998, before the outbreak of the current phase of the conflict, UN agencies estimated that one million Angolans, out of a total of around 12 million, were living as IDPs.⁹⁸ A further 225,000 were living as refugees in neighbouring countries.⁹⁹ Since the resumption of hostilities in 1998 the UN estimates that a further 3.5 million Angolans have been internally displaced, of whom 1.3 million have received some form of assistance.¹⁰⁰ Over the course of 2001, whilst the Angolan President was declaring the war “practically over”, an average of around 30,000 civilians were forced to abandon their homes and livelihoods each month.¹⁰¹ Most of these newly displaced people were peasant farmers, forced off their land by attacks, insecurity, and the collapse of the rural economy. The majority moved to the relative security of towns and cities where housing is oversubscribed and unemployment is already rampant. Once there, most are forced to depend on humanitarian aid handouts to survive. Despite periodic hopes on the part of the aid community of reversing the decline in the humanitarian situation, this has never, in fact, become possible. The situation stubbornly continues to get worse.¹⁰² Accordingly, the number of refugees fleeing the insecurity and poverty imposed by Angola’s war has increased steadily since 1998, with around 450,000 now living in neighbouring countries.¹⁰³

Travel and transport restrictions: Freedom of movement remains extremely restricted in Angola, due to a combination of unpredictable attacks, landmines – both old and freshly laid, the dire condition of roads, bridges and transportation infrastructure, and the policies of both belligerents. This lack of freedom of movement has greatly restricted both the lives of Angolans, and the activities of the aid agencies trying to assist them. The only reasonably reliable way to travel within Angola is by air, which is prohibitively expensive for most people, and only grants access to those places with airstrips. Due to the difficulties and

⁹⁶ See Richardson, *Children Living with UNITA*

⁹⁷ Save the Children, *Angola: Emergency Update*, London, November 2001, www.scfuk.org.uk/eme_updates/angola6.html [accessed 31 January 2002]; Médecins sans Frontières

⁹⁸ Richardson, *Internally Displaced Persons in Southern Africa*, p.4

⁹⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, *Humanitarian Situation in Angola: Annual Report 1998*, Luanda, 1999, p. 12

¹⁰⁰ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, *Humanitarian Situation in Angola: Monthly Analysis, October 2001*, Luanda, November 2001

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, *Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola 2002*

¹⁰³ Approx. 230,000 in Zambia, 200,000 in DRC and 20,000 in Namibia; see UNHCR website, <http://www.unhcr.org>

insecurities of road transport, 60 per cent of all aid delivered in Angola is transported by air,¹⁰⁴ and unknown numbers of Angolans, perhaps numbering in the millions, remain beyond the reach of the aid agencies.

Increasing poverty: Due in part to the difficulties of getting around the country, most Angolans have grown steadily poorer over the period in question. According to a Household Expenditure and Income Survey published in July 2001, 63 percent of households were living below the poverty line, with 25 percent of households surviving below the extreme poverty line.¹⁰⁵ The majority of households surveyed were in urban areas. Comparative statistics for rural areas are almost certainly even worse. Farming, the main occupation in rural areas, has become a terribly dangerous occupation as farmers caught in their fields have been systematically attacked by the armed forces of both sides on the assumption that they must be growing food for “the enemy”. The dangers of transporting any food that is grown to market has led to the collapse of much of the rural economy. With the disappearance of local produce from markets, the cost of living has increased persistently. Yet, with the continuation of the conflict very few new jobs have been created to replace those lost in the farming sector. The only sector which is booming in Angola is the oil industry. Unfortunately this is a capital intensive industry which requires relatively few local employees, and which has very little impact on those not directly employed in it.

Food shortages: The destruction of much of the farming sector has created a perilous food security situation. Around 800,000 Angolans are entirely dependent on the World Food Programme for their food. Many others receive a partial ration. In addition, around 320,000 families are assisted with seeds, tools and fertilizers.¹⁰⁶ Despite this intervention malnutrition rates are alarmingly high, particularly in those parts of the country beyond the reach of the aid agencies. Hence in some populations of newly displaced people flooding into the cities from the countryside, as many as 45 per cent have been found to be malnourished.¹⁰⁷ 42 per cent of all Angolan children are underweight for their age.¹⁰⁸

Deteriorating health situation: Access to health care, education or other social services remains extremely limited. There has been no notable improvement in the government’s provision of any of these sectors.¹⁰⁹ Less than half of Angola’s children ever go to school, nearly one third die before they reach the age of five, and one mother in every 50 dies while giving birth. As a result of the desultory state of the health care sector, Angolans have repeatedly faced epidemics of eradicable diseases, including polio, measles, and meningitis, in recent years. Several mass vaccination campaigns have been conducted to try to wipe out these diseases. However their efficacy is undermined by the fact that health care officials cannot access large parts of the country, and by influxes of unvaccinated internally displaced people to urban areas. There has been a resurgence of sleeping sickness, which is now

¹⁰⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, *Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola 2002*

¹⁰⁵ *Angola Peace Monitor*, Economy, Vol. 8, No 3, 3 November 2001, <http://www.actsa.org/apm/apm0803.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

¹⁰⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, *Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola 2002*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ Hodges, p.33

¹⁰⁹ See Médecins sans Frontières

endemic in three provinces of North Western Angola. At the time of Angola's independence from Portugal in 1975, sleeping sickness had been virtually eradicated due to a rigorous campaign to trap and poison the tsetse flies which spread the disease. Meanwhile it seems likely that an unseen AIDS epidemic is escalating in Angola. The general health situation in the country is already so poor, that the impact of AIDS has not been as noticeable as in neighbouring countries. Patients are rarely tested for AIDS, and even more rarely given any treatment for it. However there is growing evidence that the country is already seriously afflicted by AIDS. Thus, for example, a UNICEF survey conducted in 2001 found that 8.6 per cent of women attending ante-natal clinics were HIV positive. An earlier survey, conducted in exactly the same circumstances in 1999, found only 3.4 per cent of ante-natal clinic attendees to be HIV positive.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, UNICEF believes that the women tested are likely to be more protected from HIV than the majority of their compatriots, as they are at least amongst the minority with access to health care. Overall, UNICEF in 1999 declared Angola "the worst place in the world to be a child" based on measures of child mortality, child malnutrition, access to primary education, physical security, and prevalence of HIV/AIDS.¹¹¹ The situation cannot be said to have improved since UNICEF reached that conclusion.

6 In UNITA Territory

The figures cited above may paint an unusually grim picture, but in fact even they do not reflect the full enormity of Angola's humanitarian crisis. The aid agencies which compile these figures work only in government-controlled areas of Angola. Few of them can venture beyond the towns and cities, into the vast countryside; none of them are in contact with UNITA, or with the civilians living under UNITA control. While conditions in government-held parts of Angola are dismal, conditions for those living with UNITA - perhaps as much as 30 per cent of the population - are inestimably worse. Yet, because of the policies of UNITA, the Angolan government, and the international community, these hapless people have been rendered invisible, and therefore, ignored.

From 1998 onwards the Angolan government lobbied to isolate UNITA, practically, politically and diplomatically. By the end of 1998 this had led to a situation where no UN or aid agencies were left working in UNITA-held territory, and where no governments or humanitarian actors were, at least officially, in contact with UNITA. The UN sanctions imposed on UNITA made it easier for the Angolan government to enforce this isolation: UNITA officials were barred from travelling outside Angola, it became illegal to fly into UNITA territory from anywhere other than government-held territory, and the Angolan government refused to permit any flights of any nature into UNITA territory. Throughout 1999 various humanitarian actors, including the UN, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and MSF lobbied the Angolan government for humanitarian access to populations living under UNITA control, including the establishing of secure humanitarian corridors for the delivery of aid.¹¹² These requests were steadfastly rejected by the Angolan government, and eventually petered out.

¹¹⁰ United Nations Children's Fund, *Angola Situation Report November to Mid December 2001*, Luanda, December 2001, <http://www.unicef.org/emerg/Country/Angola/011215.htm> [accessed 31 January 2002]

¹¹¹ United Nations Children's Fund, *The Progress of Nations 1999*, New York, 1999, <http://www.unicef.org/pon99/> [accessed 31 January 2002]

¹¹² Richardson, A. *Negotiating Humanitarian Access in Angola, 1990-2000*, New Issues in Refugee Research Working Paper No.18, Geneva: UNHCR, June 2000, pp. 27-31

As a result no accurate data on conditions in UNITA territory have been available since 1998. No one even knows how many civilians are living with UNITA, or where they are. The best available information on this subject comes from refugees and IDPs who have escaped from UNITA.¹¹³ Generally they arrive in a pitiful state, weakened and malnourished and suffering from malaria, respiratory diseases, diarrhoea and parasitic worms. Many have also been wounded in fighting. These fugitives tell of a nomadic life of incredible hardship.

In UNITA areas every person is considered of and for the party, and the role of civilians is merely to support combatants. Villagers are regarded as a reserve of slave labour, available to support UNITA's forces at any time. They are expected to provide food for the movement, to serve as porters for UNITA's soldiers, and often to give up their children to be trained as soldiers. If individuals refuse to provide these services, they may be beaten in public, imprisoned, or killed. Civilians living under UNITA enjoy minimal freedom of movement and are rarely allowed to leave. Trade, or indeed any contact, with government-controlled areas is seen as tantamount to treason and invites harsh punishment. Almost anybody caught trying to leave UNITA-controlled areas permanently is executed. Those who succeed, and particularly those who cross over to government-controlled territory, expose any relatives who remain behind to reprisals, frequently execution.

Rather than allow the populations upon which it depends to fall into government hands, UNITA forces whole communities to move ahead of government advances. These communities are obliged to abandon their homes and withdraw into the bush with UNITA's forces, living in temporary camps, often sleeping in the same place for only a few days at a time. As a result of the FAA's numerous recent offensives which have been aimed at denying UNITA civilian support, most civilians under UNITA control now seem to be existing under these nomadic conditions. In the past UNITA has attempted to provide some services, including education and health care, in areas under its control. However, in recent years, due both to the military situation, and to the impact of the UN sanctions, UNITA has ceased to be able to sustain these services. Fugitives from UNITA areas now report that the movement's main source of supplies is through attacking and looting towns, traffic, and government forces. This source is, inevitably, unreliable. What supplies – of medication, clothing, food, soap, salt and so on – are acquired in this way, now tend to be reserved for UNITA's soldiers. Very little is left over for civilians, who, consequently, are surviving under impossibly difficult circumstances. Fugitives also report that schools, which used to be well established in UNITA-territory, now barely function because of the perilous military situation. When lessons do occasionally take place teachers have been reduced to writing with charcoal or cassava root, on bark or rocks.

7 Conclusions

A dreadful deadlock reigns in Angola. Two armies are engaged in an unwinnable war, with both insisting that the other side must cease fire first. The country's civilians are trapped powerlessly between them, viewed as tools and targets by both. Voluntarily or otherwise, all of the countries which border Angola have also been sucked into the conflict. The international community has, for three years, averted its gaze and failed to intercede to force the two sides back into peace talks. The outside world's main interest in Angola is now the country's oil exploration industry. Untouched by the war, this industry has received billions

¹¹³ See Nilstam; Richardson, *Children Living with UNITA*

of dollars of investment in recent years. Very little of this money has served to improve the lives of the people of Angola, while too much has been used to purchase the weapons which permit the continuation of the conflict. Small numbers of enlightened and infuriated Angolans, despairing of UNITA, the Angolan government and the outside world, have begun agitating for change. Yet these groups are small, underfunded and largely confined to the capital Luanda. As such, they have little coercive power with which to compel the belligerents back to the negotiating table. Under these circumstances, an imminent improvement of the situation in Angola is hard to envisage.

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