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MINUTES OF THE MEETING BETWEEN RSA AND ANGOLA
REPRESENTATIVES AT NOCAMEDES ON 1 NOVEMBER 1978

Present

R.S.A.

Mr P.R. Killen
Mr G. Rothman
Col. D.R. Verbeek
Cmdt K. Snowball
Capt A. Pombo (interpreter)

ANGOLA

Cdr Rodriques (Kito) Inspector FAPLA
Cdr Moisés (Ndozi) 9th Bde Luanda
Maj Tuta Cdr Cuando Cubango
Capt ?
One interpreter)
One secretary) women
Two civilians (probably security)

Opening

1. Cdr Rodriques welcomed the RSA delegation and said that his side had no agenda but the purpose of the meeting was to de-escalate the increased tension on the Angola/SWA border. During the POW exchange on 2 September 1978 some problems had been mentioned which remained unsolved.

2. Mr Killen thanked Cdr Rodriques for their hospitality and stated that it was the RSA's hope to de-escalate tension on the border and to find ways to normalise relations between the RSA and Angola. At the last meeting in Ngiva on 2 September 1978 certain items for discussion - the demilitarised zone and reduction of tension, the return of refugees and the reactivation of the Cunene-scheme as well as a system of border surveillance - were put forward. The RSA delegation had come prepared to discuss the question of border surveillance because this was the subject referred to in the exchange of telexes with Mr Fourie.

Discussions

3. Cdr Rodrigues stated that the Angolan authorities accepted in principle the concept of a demilitarised zone on the Angola/South West African border, but they had not replied to our detailed proposals submitted at the last meeting in Mocamedes in September 1977 because they had been contacted by the five Western powers over South West Africa and it seemed that events were moving positively towards independence for Namibia. The detailed proposals by South Africa were therefore no longer relevant and Angola looked forward to making arrangements with the government of an independent Namibia. In the meantime, however, since South African troops would be in South West Africa it was necessary to have some arrangements in order to reduce tension between the armed forces on both sides of the border. Angola thought it would be necessary to have an arrangement for the joint patrolling of the actual border by helicopters. Because Angola lacked the necessary resources for this purpose, they asked whether South Africa could make proposals in this connection. They also asked whether there were any other aspects of our 1977 proposals that we thought important and would like to revive.

4. Mr Killen explained the RSA Government's stance regarding reduction of troops in South West Africa only after the cessation of violence and a period of peace, and made it clear that SWAPO was responsible for the tension on the border. In this respect the increased number of incidents since 2 September 1978 which caused tension had been communicated to Angolan authorities. The question of local contact at the border should be looked at. Very little, if any, local contact between RSA and Angolan forces took place at present, whereas it had in the past. Four border control posts were previously mentioned (Ruacana, Calueque, Oshikango and Rundu) and this was where local contact could be instituted. The RSA could supply the names of local commanders who could be contacted. If FAPLA could do the same, contact could be made at regular intervals or if and when it became necessary.

5. Cdr Rodrigues said that a solution must be found. Local contacts were difficult due to the tension but the two sides should try to introduce continuous control. The RSA complained of MPLA border violations but he could testify that FAPLA was not authorised to cross the border. The Angola presence at this meeting showed their concern. On the other hand the RSA frequently violated Angola's air space. About the local contacts, it should be no problem. The level and frequency of contacts must be decided upon.

6. Mr Killen stated that a fixed date for the first local contact should be decided on. It was, however, pointed out that SWAPO had fired on RSA security forces at Ruacana which caused the existing contact to break down. It must be noted that the possibility existed that SWAPO could sabotage the contact by causing incidents. Radio contact was mentioned as a possible means of contact although physical contact would be easier. A date must be fixed.

7. Cdr Rodrigues said that they would have the same worries about incidents frustrating contacts. However, they accepted SWAPO in their country as a genuine liberation movement, recognised by the international community. They could exercise some control as SWAPO had respect for their Government and armed forces on account of the aid given to SWAPO. At one of the previous meetings with RSA it had been mentioned that a meeting between SWAPO and a South African delegation should be arranged especially in the light of the present international situation. This offer had been accepted by the RSA in principle, but no follow-up had occurred. Angola would be glad to make its territory available for any such meeting. Angolan authorities were worried about UNITA - the RSA had always denied that they supported UNITA, but Angola had proof of South Africa's support of UNITA. It must be borne

in mind that UNITA could also be blamed for possible incidents designed to frustrate local contacts. Regarding these proposed local contacts, he hoped that procedures could be arrived at for border crossings for individuals. At a previous meeting it had been mentioned that passage through the demilitarised zone could only take place at the recognised border posts. If tension decreased, the local authorities would be able to control workers who passed through. At present people were being arrested on both sides when they crossed the border.

8. Mr Killen said the contacts at local level should take place even though the possibility of malicious incidents existed.

9. Cdr Rodrigues said that they would first report to their Headquarters and send a telex, hopefully on Monday, 6 November 1978 to the effect that the first contact would take place later that week at Santa Clara. From their side this would be on provincial level with a maximum of four officials including one interpreter. Angolan officials would be able to attend to both military and civilian matters. The RSA should respond to the telex giving names of its delegates.

10. Mr Killen said the next matter for consideration concerned the joint patrolling of the border.

11. Cdr Rodrigues responded by saying that Angola had indicated its sincerity by being the first to say that it was prepared to forget the past. He requested the RSA to draw up a document regarding combined patrolling which should meet the fears of both sides. South Africa should be in no doubt regarding Angola's interest in this matter.

12. Mr Killen suggested that the two sides would have to be clear about what these patrols would be looking for. This

question had been dealt with in previous RSA proposals. (A copy of the proposal on air surveillance was handed to the Angolan delegation to read.)

13. Cdr Rodrigues said that what they had in mind was air reconnaissance and not ground reconnaissance.

14. Cmdt Snowball asked the Angolan delegation to provide evidence regarding their accusations of RSA reconnaissance flights over Angola.

15. Cdr Rodrigues (obviously prepared for such eventuality) presented a marked map of RSA air incursions which he said had been obtained by visual methods. He also handed a typed list to Mr Killen containing incidents of air incursions by RSA aircraft. (The list is attached as Appendix A).

15. Mr Killen indicated that the RSA military authorities would investigate the question of combined air reconnaissance and draw up draft proposals which would be presented to the Angolan authorities.

17. Cdr Rodrigues said that they were worried about air space transgressions by South Africa, some of which were deep into Angola, and asked if South Africa was looking for SWAPO. He said that Angola had in fact respected the proposal contained in our draft of September 1977 that "should a border violation by an aircraft occur, such aircraft is not to be fired upon", even though the document had not been signed, but he implied that they might not always be able to do so. Shooting down of aircraft would raise tension.

18. Mr Killen asked how the patrolling would work in practice since there would now be no demilitarised zone.

19. Cdr Rodrigues replied that there was a difference between air reconnaissance and air patrolling. In the

Angolan view the demilitarised zone was to be discussed with the future South West Africa government. To decrease tension air patrolling should take place. The distance from the border should also be taken into account. They would await South Africa's draft proposals.

20. Mr Killen said that progress had been made on two points and asked Cdr Rodrigues if he had any more military matters to discuss.

Mr Killen also mentioned that Commandant Ndalú at Ongiva on 2 September 1978 had mentioned the question of refugees.

The RSA delegation at that time replied that the number varied according to the situation in Angola. Many had been integrated with the population in South West Africa. The Angolan delegation had said they wished the United Nations or the Red Cross to conduct a census of the refugees.

Regarding the Cunene scheme Mr Killen mentioned that the works had not been completed yet. The work had been stopped at the request of the Angolan authorities. It was only Angola and South West Africa which could benefit from the scheme - not South Africa. If Angola wanted to reopen talks the Republic would bring an expert team.

The other question which had been mentioned previously was prisoner Van der Mescht when the South African delegation had said that the RSA was looking to the Angolan authorities i.r.o. his safety and repatriation. This question could be a negative factor in our relations.

21. Cdr Rodrigues said that the Cunene scheme created the same problem for Angola as the demilitarised zone, viz that it was a problem to be dealt with by the future South West Africa government. Angola had however been thinking of engaging specialists to advise them on the possibility of reopening the works. Speaking rather cryptically Cdr Rodrigues said that if South Africa indicated that it wanted to continue the work, then it would seem that it would be in the interests of South Africa rather than Namibia that talks were restarted.

Regarding the prisoner Cdr Rodrigues said that as a result

of the Angola government's intervention, his conditions of captivity had improved; they accepted this responsibility for him since he was held in Angolan territory. The Angolan authorities however could not mediate for his release. He suggested that South Africa use other channels such as the International Red Cross - possibly an exchange for SWAPO prisoners held in South West Africa. The Angolan authorities had visited the prisoner and had arranged Red Cross visits, and they would take all measures to ensure that he be treated as humanely as possible - to the same extent as the previous seven. Regarding his repatriation South Africa must however contact SWAPO. Angola offered its territory for any such meeting. Cdr Rodrigues did not know what SWAPO's position was on the idea of an exchange because he had not heard from them since he communicated the possibility of an exchange to them. Cdr Rodrigues then said that future relations between Angola and the RSA could include commercial links which will facilitate projects. (It is not clear whether he referred to the Cunene project.)

22. Mr Rothman emphasised that SWAPO's incursions were the problem and asked the Angolan authorities whether they could not do anything to stop these incursions because that was the basis of the problem between the two countries.

23. Cdr Rodrigues closed by saying that the Republic of South Africa was making the process more difficult and complicating the issue over SWAPO. Angola recognised SWAPO as the internationally authentic liberation movement and considered that SWAPO should be involved in the political process in Namibia. They regretted the lives that were lost. However the United Nations process in South West Africa should make the situation easier.

24. Mr Killen pointed out that SWAPO was not excluded from the political process, provided they came in peace and desisted from acts of violence and intimidation.

P.R. Killen