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THE CUBAN AMERICAN NATIONAL FOUNDATION

1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W., Suite 601
Washington, D.C. 20007
(202) 265-2822

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Dear Member of Congress:

As you may know, José Eduardo dos Santos, leader of the Marxist MPLA and President of the Peoples Republic of Angola, has cancelled his unofficial visit to the United States.

Despite this development, the Cuban American National Foundation would like to bring to your attention several points you may find interesting:

* On December 7, President dos Santos visited communist Cuba to strengthen political and military ties with Castro.

* In a speech given during his visit he stated "all we can do is express our deepest gratitude to the government of Cuba, the Communist Party of Cuba, and especially to Comrade Fidel Castro (for the assistance given by Cuban troops in Angola)."

* Thousands of young Cuban veterans of the Angola war are, perhaps, the most deeply affected by Castro's growing economic crisis; returning from an unpopular war which necessitated a forced draft, to widespread unemployment and food rationing, and a lack of promised veterans housing. Castro is reportedly anxious to slow the Cuban withdrawal from Angola for these economic reasons.

* On December 23, President dos Santos launched a surprise attack against UNITA areas in southeastern Angola, involving several thousand MPLA troops, mechanized battalions, Soviet T-52 and T-54 tanks, helicopters, MIG-23's, high-altitude SU-22 and SU-25 bombers, and supported by Soviet advisors in the field with each unit.

* The attack came just before the eight-nation regional peace summit scheduled for January 10th, and raised questions about the MPLA's commitment to a negotiated, peaceful settlement to the Angolan war.

* On December 31, Mr. dos Santos addressed the nation, stating "...we believe that in Angola, only a one party system realistically serves our country...and it will encourage the expansion of democracy. The MPLA workers' party will guide the State and society."

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* Mr. dos Santos also called for the integration of UNITA forces into MPLA forces, recognition of sole legitimacy of the MPLA government, and his opposition to multi-party balloting.

* On January 8, the scheduled regional peace summit was postponed indefinitely because of escalated fighting.

* On January 21, seven Cuban troops were killed in a UNITA counterattack during the MPLA offensive.

* A January 22 communique by the MPLA Central Committee confirmed the party has no intention of "relinquishing a one-party state" and declared the MPLA "the vanguard of all the working people."

* On January 25 the UNITA High Command issued a statement of regret for the Cuban deaths and reiterated their desire to be informed of Cuban troop movements so as to avoid action in those areas, any further deaths, and interference with the Cuban troop withdrawal timetable.

* On January 26, Fidel Castro responded to the most recent Cuban war casualties by suspending the Cuban troop withdrawal from Angola. The Cuban troop withdrawal was part of an agreement linked to independence for Namibia.

* On January 29, the MPLA's official newspaper announced that 33 UNITA members had been killed by Cuban forces in retaliation for the UNITA raid last week.

The Cuban American National Foundation appreciates your interest in Angola and shares your hope for a just and fair resolution to the conflict. However, without a renewal of the cease-fire, the resumption of the Cuban troop withdrawal, the return to earnest negotiations involving all parties, and the establishment of a democratic framework for fair elections with universal participation, there will not be genuine peace in Angola.

Please call if we can answer any questions.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline Tillman
Executive Director