

Unita Defends Its Position

I AM hereby responding to Andreas Atumutala's letter, published in *The Namibian* on June 22 2001.

Unita is not and has never been unfriendly to *The Namibian* newspaper, which we regularly read on the Internet. But we regret its Editor's hostile reaction to our letter and his or her engagement in name-calling. Nevertheless, we thank and commend them for publishing our letter.

As for Andreas Atumutala whose e-mail is also hosted by *The Namibian* newspaper, he (she) lost an opportunity to be positive towards the

Angolan conflict. More, it seems that he or she doesn't know all the constitutive elements of the struggle of Swapo.

1. We in Unita do not question now and have never questioned the legitimacy of Swapo as a liberation movement.

2. As you probably know well that when Kenneth Kaunda, then president of Zambia, in 1968 expelled Swapo from operating from Zambian soil because of a deal with Apartheid South Africa, Unita, under its President Jonas Savimbi, was the only one who helped Swapo. Ask his Ex-

cellencies Sam Nujoma, Kandindima Nehova, Generals Dimo Hamaambo, Mbulunganga and others, if this is not true.

Because of Kaunda's detente rapprochement with South Africa's John Vorster, Swapo has never really officially waged armed struggle from Zambian soil, other than using Zambia as burial and conduit for their weapons going to their bases in eastern Angola around Luiana and Jamba areas. At a time Unita and Swapo forces fought against Apartheid South African forces together. This is history!

3. Unita commanders trained many Swapo combatants in Unita camps inside Angola. The then Namibian comrades shared the same territory with their Unita comrades and they even married Angolan women. Talking about political Unita's marriage with Apartheid South Africa is like a kettle saying the pot is black!

4. Unita helped most Namibians who crossed the border into Angola to join the ranks of Swapo (especially in 1974-1975) in east Angola or in Zambian refugee camps. Many Unita people, including myself, participated in what was really a brotherly operation.

5. We are and have been fighting for our freedom. All honest people recognise the fact that the MPLA in 1975 took power by force with the help of the eastern bloc countries in clear violation of the Agreement of Alvor signed by the three Liberation Movements with the colonial power, Portugal, and made a unilateral declaration of independence.

This was only possible with Cuban and Russian assistance to prop up the MPLA in seizing the power. Faced with this massive infusion of Soviet and Cuban military might, Unita was like a person drowning in deep water. And when you are drowning you do not choose the hand that is saving you. As Mao-Tse Tung said: "There are no permanent friends, there are only permanent interests."

Just like Apartheid South African forces, which then included Namibians now serving in the Namibian Defence Force, helped Unita to fight against MPLA and its Cuban and Soviet allies, the MPLA is now also using South African, Portuguese and Brazilian mercenaries, to mention just a few, to fight against Unita! The same multinational corporations that were supporting Apartheid South Africa's occupation of Namibia are the same ones who are now supporting the MPLA to suppress the Angolan people. Please deny this fact, Atumutala!

Our permanent interest is a truly free Angola and you know well that Angola is not free. The Dos Santos regime is the most corrupt dictatorship in Africa and Dos Santos of Sao Tome is the richest man on the continent. He is cracking down on the free press and other civil society groups even more than the Swapo Government is cracking down on *The Namibian* newspaper.

6. I am at peace with my conscience. Probably if our houses and villages in Angola were not destroyed, and if Unita, with, yes, American and South African support, did not

put up fierce resistance against the Cuban and Soviet expansionism in Angola, you probably would never have achieved your independence. Unita was founded in 1966 and was not created by Apartheid South Africa as you tried to imply.

If this were true Unita would have collapsed after the Americans and South Africans withdrew. Unita is supported by the largest ethnic group in Angola, just like Swapo, which is supported by the Ovambo people. It is a legitimate liberation movement. The neo-colonialist regime in Angola will have to give way to true independence for all Angolans.

7. For your information, Unita is not responsible for what is happening in your country. Nor have our troops entered your country to attack MPLA forces there. It is Namibian forces together with MPLA who are wiping out suspected Unita sympathisers inside Namibia and exterminating everyone found in former Unita-controlled areas in south-east Angola. Well before your Government brought in the MPLA to fight our forces in Cuando-Cubango, we moved our forces north deeper inside Angola. Recently General Shalli was speaking highly of victories of the NDF in places such as Mavinga. As far as I know Mavinga, Jamba, Likuwa, etc are not in Namibia. The judgement day will come!

8. So please moderate your violent language and be honest and polite, Atumutala. You appear to harbour personal hatred towards Unita. Direct your hatred to the MPLA and Namibian soldiers who are maiming and killing ethnic Kavangos and Bushmen under the disguise of "suspected Unita bandits".

Have they ever captured a single Unita soldier to show him to you? There needs to be positive proof of Unita's involvement in planting mines and killing Namibian villagers, not just propaganda!

JO VAHEKENI
Unita Bureau in Europe
VIA E-MAIL

Note: Further to your reference to The Namibian, please note that this newspaper has never had any kind of relationship with Unita, and in the 1980s reporters from this newspaper were prevented from travelling on any Unita junkets to Jamba because such invitations were issued through the former Apartheid SA Ministry of Foreign Affairs and your president made it clear that reporters from this newspaper were not welcome, especially the editor, Gwer Lister. Neither did we have accreditation with the then SA Ministry of Defence for obvious reasons. - Ed

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