

Nam Involved With FAA For Our People's Safety

IN recent months, much has been said about Namibia's involvement in the war in Angola. Opposition parties, in particular, have been questioning the legality of providing logistical support to the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) in its offensive against Unita.

It is common knowledge that since gaining independence in 1990, Namibians living along the Angolan border have been subjected to Unita's banditry activities. Their cattle and personal belongings have been and continue to be destroyed by Unita bandits.

It is because of the suffering inflicted on Namibian civilians near the Angolan border that the Namibian Government decided to provide logistical support to the FAA, in its offensive against Unita. What are the opposition leaders worried about? The defeat of their long-standing ally Unita? Aren't the lives of innocent Namibians worth such protection?

Opposition leaders in this country should learn that while they were busy destroying the Katutura Compound and eating boerewors behind the central shops in Katutura, the Angolan government was offering its territory to Swapo to fight for this country's freedom, which they (the opposition) are enjoying more than the people who struggled for it.

Moreover, the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, which speeded up Namibia's independence was not fought in the four 'O' regions where the war against the South African occupationists was felt on a daily basis. It was fought on Angolan territory. They (the opposition leaders) more than anyone, should know better as people who fought against the liberation of this country. In fact, some of them were Swapo members who launched the liberation struggle from Angola.

Don't we therefore owe it to the Angolan government and its people, to assist them in their quest for peace?

There are of course many ways of achieving peace. Our Prime Minister on February 22 2000 addressed the nation in the National Assembly and listed all efforts by the Namibian Government and the international community in achieving peace in Angola. The role played by Namibia was no secret. It was public knowledge just as it currently is. Who didn't know that Unita leader Jonas Savimbi was invited to Namibia in August 1996? All other meetings arranged with Unita officials were also made public.

The excuse that banditry activities are as a result of the logistic support offered to the FAA is rather misleading. Unita's banditry activities were reinforced by the fact that Unita is on the run, cut off from logistical and other supplies which resulted in sheer desperation and criminality.

The Government has a responsibility to protect its citizens, and maintain peace and stability which is being threatened as a result of Savimbi's unwillingness to comply with internationally brokered peace agreements for his country.

I, therefore, think that we all owe it to the Angolan people to assist them in obtaining genuine peace and stability in their country, which otherwise we would not enjoy as long as Unita continues to be led by Jonas Savimbi. All we need at this moment is unity, in order to achieve peace in this region. And the only solution left to achieve peace and stability is by offering support where it is most needed. It is time that we too assist the Angolan nation in restoring peace and stability in its country.

Let's give credit where it is due. There is nothing wrong with the Namibian Government providing such support. In fact, such support was long overdue.

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