



***USSR, Russia and Angola:
Joint Contribution
to the Liberation of the Southern African Peoples***

PHOTO ALBUM



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This publication reveals little-known aspects of history, detailing the assistance provided by Soviet and Russian military experts during their service in Angola between the 1970s and 1990s. This assistance was provided to representatives of the Namibian liberation movement SWAPO, as well as anti-apartheid fighters from South Africa’s African National Congress (ANC) and units of Zimbabwe’s anti-colonial movement ZAPU. These patriotic groups fought against the apartheid regime to achieve freedom and independence for their countries, and found support from the Soviet Union and Angola in their struggle. The struggle of these African patriots, including SWAPO, ANC, and ZAPU, led to complete victory. Zimbabwe became an independent country in 1980, followed by Namibia in 1990. In 1994, South Africa conducted free elections that dismantled the apartheid system. The Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, which took place between 1987 and 1988, played a pivotal role in the liberation of Southern Africa. Military specialists from the Soviet Union also participated in this battle. Its end is celebrated annually as Liberation Day in several Southern African countries.

The publication features historical photographs from the museum of the Russian Union of Angola Veterans, the archives of photographers: R. Adler, P. Lantsov, A. Nikanorov, as well as images from the personal archives of Angola veterans: Yu. Andrianov, K. Alzhanov, A. Bendikov, V. Bitaeв, M. Vlasenko, S. K. Val, D. Gukov, A. Dubenko, I. Zhdarkin, I. Zherlitsyn, F. Zulkarneev, I. Ignatovich, S. Kolomnin, M. Konovalenko, N. Kurushkin, A. Kuryanov, V. Lebedev, V. Oleinikov, O. Porembsky, E. Ryabov, S. Remizov, N. Rybchuk, V. Sagachko, D. Streltsov, V. Cheremukhin, V. Shiryaev, A. Shishov, A. Fomin, and others.

The photographs, documents and eyewitness accounts published in this edition are of enduring value for preserving historical memory and helping contemporary readers understand the process, goals and objectives of providing international assistance to African countries and national liberation movements in the late twentieth century.

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“Our goal is to preserve the historical memory of the joint struggle for the freedom and independence of the African peoples from colonialism and oppression.”

Russian Union of Angola Veterans

USSR, Russia and Angola: Joint Contribution to the Liberation of the Southern African Peoples

Since the 1960s, the Soviet Union had provided assistance and support to Angola's national liberation movement, represented by the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), in its just struggle against Portuguese colonialism. After Angola proclaimed independence on 11 November 1975, this assistance increased significantly, as the young republic was subjected to armed incursions by the armies of South Africa and Zaire and was fighting against internal armed opposition. However, in Angola the USSR assisted not only the MPLA and the legitimate government of the country.

With the permission and support of the Angolan authorities, Soviet specialists in Angola also assisted representatives of the Namibian liberation movement SWAPO, anti-apartheid fighters from the African National Congress of South Africa, and Zimbabwe's anti-colonial ZAPU movement — all those who had found refuge in Angola from persecution and oppression in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. All of them fought against the apartheid regime for the freedom and independence of their countries and found support in this struggle from the USSR and Angola.

*The Soviet Decision
to Support the MPLA
in Angola*

Since the 1960s, the USSR, the Republic of Cuba, and other countries of the socialist community provided assistance and support to Angola's national liberation movement, represented by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), in its just struggle against Portuguese colonialism. Although the spread of Soviet influence in Africa, and specifically in Angola, was undoubtedly ideological from the outset, it OBJECTIVELY CONTRIBUTED to national liberation, and later to the protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of independent Angola and other newly liberated African states.

On the other hand, the leaders of many African countries found the ideas underlying socialist ideology attractive and beneficial for their peoples. For this reason, the well-known Russian orientalist A. Khazanov and African historian El-Sawi Ahmed Gamaa Hamdi reasonably argue that "the spread of Soviet influence in Africa was facilitated not only by anti-Western sentiments among the broad masses of the population but also by the radical, often Marxist sympathies of the new ruling elites. The Soviet model of development was very appealing to many Africans, regardless of their political beliefs, because they shared the view that it was precisely Marxism-Leninism that transformed underdeveloped Russia into the world's second greatest industrial power."¹

In Angola, during the 1960s and 1970s, the national liberation movement was represented by three main organisations: the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) led by Agostinho Neto, the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) led by Holden Roberto, and UNITA (National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola) led by Jonas Savimbi. Among these three organisations, the MPLA's declared political goals

and ultimate objectives most closely aligned with the preferences of the Soviet leadership. It was later reorganized into the MPLA Party – Party of Labour.

Why did the Soviet leadership support the MPLA in particular?

Why was it the one that received comprehensive assistance?

Soviet support for the MPLA was undoubtedly determined by statements from the movement's leaders about their socialist choice for Angola's future development and by concrete steps taken in that direction. While receiving in Luanda in late April 1975 a delegation of the SKSSAA headed by G. Yanayev, the chairman of the USSR Committee of Youth Organisations, A. Neto set out the MPLA's position directly:

"Everyone here calls us 'reds,' and although our organisation is a movement composed of various social forces, we stand on the same side of the barricades as the socialist countries."²

The closeness of the MPLA leadership's views to the position of the CPSU is also reflected in A. Neto's speech when he, together with a delegation of the movement, attended the 24th Congress of the CPSU as invited guest in 1971. Speaking from the congress rostrum, A. Neto declared:

"During ten years of revolutionary struggle, our movement, our people, and the fighters who constitute the vanguard of Angola's anti-colonial struggle have known the friendship and support of the Soviet people. We regard the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as one of the most important forces on which we rely in developing our liberation struggle."³

However, the USSR's support for the movement of the MPLA in Angola was based not only on the statements of its leadership about the socialist choice. The MPLA leaders (and, after





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1. MPLA President, President of the People's Republic of Angola Agostinho Neto
 2. The leader of the UNITA movement Jonas Mallero Savimbi
 3. FNLA President Holden Alvaro Roberto





4. PRA President Agostinho Neto thanks Soviet military advisers who came to the country to help in the creation of a regular army. Luanda, 1976

5. PRA President José Eduardo dos Santos arrives at FAPLA's Kvadrat anti-aircraft missile brigade, to thank the Soviet military advisers for their assistance. Southern Angola, 1984

the achievement of independence, the Angolan government formed by the MPLA) sincerely and consistently supported national liberation movements in the countries neighboring Angola.

In Namibia, they supported the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO). In Southern Rhodesia, they backed the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), which fought for the national liberation of their countries. In South Africa, they provided assistance to the African National Congress (ANC), which opposed the state policy of apartheid.

This principled position of the government of independent Angola was welcomed and fully supported by the USSR. And, despite the fact that this position was repeatedly used as a pretext for armed incursions by the South African Defence Force (SADF) into Angolan territory, periodic bombardment of refugee and SWAPO/ZAPU guerrillas camps by South African and Southern Rhodesian aircraft in Angola, the leadership of the MPLA did not abandon this course or the ideas of internationalism.

At the same time, the leadership of the USSR, which was responsible for assisting the national liberation movements⁴, in the period before the country's declaration of independence, did not exclude the possibility of cooperation with other nationalist organisations in Angola: UNITA and the FNLA, as major movements advocating the country's independence from the Portuguese, and took a number of actions in this direction.⁵ This is evidenced, for example, by the fact that the UNITA leader, Jonas Savimbi, was invited to Moscow in April 1964 and talked with a number of leaders of the Soviet Committee of Solidarity with the Peoples of Asia and Africa (SKSSAA).

During these conversations, “Savimbi requested that his political and military representatives be admitted to the USSR for training.”⁶

As for the FNLA leader, Holden Roberto, the note of Army General V. Kulikov, the head of the General Staff, dated 21 December, 1973, addressed to the Central Committee of the CPSU, directly speaks of “the expediency of establishing by us (i.e. the USSR) contacts with Holden Roberto’s FNLA organisation.”⁷ B. Putilin⁸, the former first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Brazzaville (at the same time chief of the GRU station (Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces) in the People’s Republic of the Congo⁹ in the mid-70s) testified that “for a long time the Centre persistently set the embassy and GRU staff in Brazzaville the task of organizing work not only with the MPLA leaders, but also with the UNITA and FNLA representatives.

However, it was difficult to implement, since H. Roberto was mostly in Zaire, and J. Savimbi was in the interior of Angola.”¹⁰

However, the historical truth is that among the three main national liberation movements in Angola, the MPLA stood out not only for its declarations of a “socialist path” but also for its commitment to the ideas of internationalism.

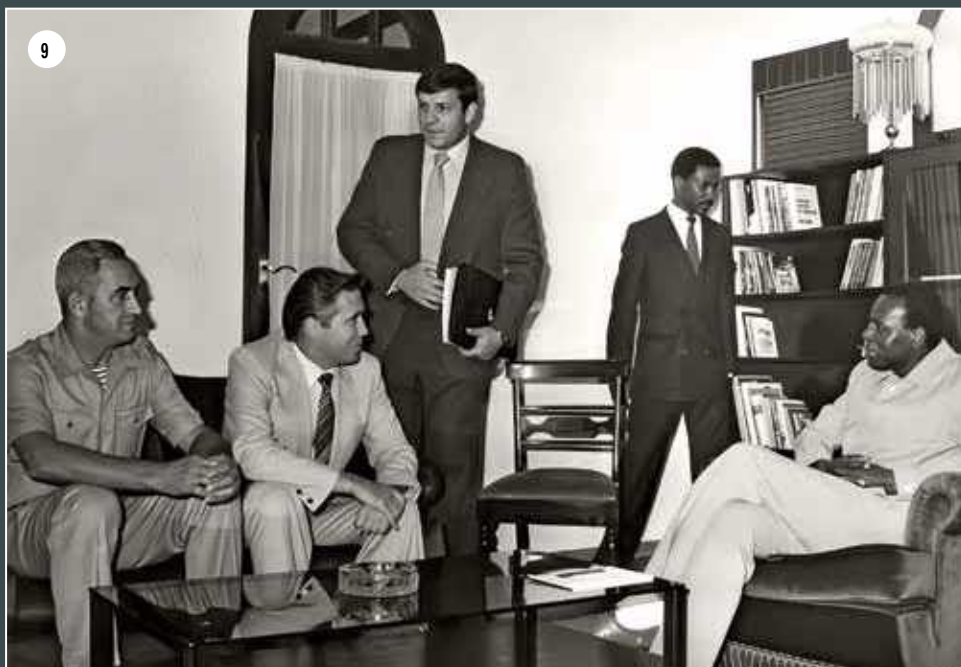
Its commitment to the ideas of internationalism, along with its goal of building a society free from the exploitation of one person by another, meant that it objectively and most consistently defended the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population, the territorial integrity of the country, and the principles of national reconciliation. It did not go unnoticed by the USSR.

The national and progressive nature of the MPLA was also evidenced by its slogans: “From Cabinda to

Kunene - one people, one nation!”¹¹, “The MPLA is the people, and the people are the MPLA!”, “Long live the MPLA, long live socialism!”. Such attitude, undoubtedly, attracted the political leadership of the USSR.

Against this background, the slogans of the opponents of the MPLA – the UNITA and FNLA movements – stood out for their intolerance of political opponents and their rejection of the non-capitalist path of development. For example, here is one of the public appeals of the UNITA leader, J. Savimbi, on the eve of independence: “Angola is not on the same path with Marxism! We have our own way! We don’t need Marxism!”¹². Some public slogans of both UNITA and the FNLA directly appealed to the national exclusivity and even divinity of their leaders, for example, UNITA’s: “Savimbi is the God of blacks!”: and the FNLA’s: “God is in heaven, Holden is on earth!”





6. PRA President Agostinho Neto visits the Soviet Navy large landing ship *Krasnaya Presnya*, which arrived at the port of Luanda, 1978
7. PRA President José Eduardo dos Santos inspects the cockpit of a Yak-38 deck fighter during a visit to the Soviet Navy aircraft-carrying cruiser (TAVKR) *Novorossiysk*, waters of Luanda port, 1983
8. PRA President Agostinho Neto aboard the Soviet Navy aircraft-carrying cruiser (TAVKR) *Minsk*, Luanda, 1979
9. PRA President José Eduardo dos Santos receives the USSR ambassador to Angola, A. Kalinin, and the Chief Military Advisor, Colonel-General K. Kurochkin, 1983
10. Presentation of the honorary member insignia of the Russian Union of Angola Veterans to PRA President, José Eduardo dos Santos. On the right: Head of the Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation of the Russian Federation, A. Fomin, 2013



Overcoming Tribalism and national rift

It cannot be ignored that nationalist organisations in Angola were formed mainly on a tribalist basis, and this was one of the sources of their confrontation. For example, UNITA consisted mainly of people from the Ovimbundu people (up to 40% of the population of Angola). And the FNLA included only representatives of the Bakongo tribe (about 13% of the country's population). Moreover, A. Khazanov, the researcher of the history of the Portuguese colonies, Doctor of Historical Sciences, believes that "the social base of the FNLA was very narrow... most of its members were Bakongo peasants who had emigrated from Angola and lived in Zaire..." Moreover, he writes: "The FNLA did not represent all the Bacongo, but only the population living in the districts of San Salvador (now Mbanza-Congo) and Maquela do Zombo in a border strip about 200 km long and 60 km wide".¹³ Within the MPLA, tribalism was far less pronounced. Although the movement was based on the Ambundu people's population, its activists included many representatives of other Angolan peoples, mulattoes and white Angolans.¹⁴

The leaders of the FNLA and UNITA, guided by their extreme tribalist views, fostered hatred among their supporters toward other Angolan ethnic groups, as well as toward white and mulatto population, openly espousing outright 'black racism'.

One of the main slogans of the FNLA was, for example: "Kill all whites, all mulattoes, everyone who can read, all MPLA members." One of the FNLA's programmatic documents dated 15 March 1970 stated: "Mulattoes are the products of the cohabitation of a white man, representing fascism, colonialism and imperialism, and a native woman." And the UNITA leader, J. Savimbi, categorically rejected the possibility of cooperation with the white Portuguese¹⁵, and in his programme documents one can find the following phrase: "UNITA is carrying out the most ruthless revolution against the Portuguese colonial puppet regime and its stupid mulattoes..."¹⁶

On the other hand, the MPLA, although it had the Ambundu (Mbundu) people as its social basis, widely accepted representatives of other Angolan nationalities, as well as white and mulatto population, which seriously expanded its social base and opportunities to promote its ideas and views. The MPLA, unlike UNITA and the FNLA, actually sought to express the aspirations and desires of all the peoples of Angola, which caused hostility and even hatred on the part of J. Savimbi and H. Roberto.

It is known that during the anti-colonial war of the 1960s and 1970s, the supporters of the FNLA repeatedly turned their hatred of MPLA activists into armed actions against the movement led by A. Neto. According to A. Khazanov, "the MPLA... rightly accused the FNLA of destroying its units operating in northern Angola. Roberto himself stated that MPLA forces would not be allowed to operate in these areas and rejected MPLA proposals for unification."¹⁷

A high-ranking officer of the South African armed forces, J. Breytenbach, who was engaged in the formation of combat detachments of the FNLA and UNITA for a "march" on Luanda to overthrow the MPLA in 1975, writes bluntly that "there was absolutely no sympathy between the two movements, although both had the MPLA among their common enemies."¹⁸

Nevertheless, under such conditions the MPLA remained open to compromise and cooperation with UNITA and the FNLA. Speaking at the end of April 1975 in Luanda with a delegation of the Soviet-Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee (SKSSAA) headed by G. Yanaev, the chairman of the USSR Youth Organisation Committee, A. Neto, in particular, declared the readiness of the MPLA leadership to cooperate with other nationalist Angolan organisations and to actively participate in the work of the coalition government and the preparation of elections.¹⁹

He stressed that the MPLA had repeatedly taken steps to expand contacts with UNITA, while the FNLA

intensified armed provocations against the MPLA.²⁰ It was for this reason, according to A. Neto, that "in such a situation the MPLA has no other choice but to resort to armed action," given "the considerable popularity of the MPLA and the growing anger of the population toward the FNLA, as well as UNITA, which plays into the hands of reactionary forces."

At the same time, it is known that the MPLA leadership treated UNITA more tolerantly than the FNLA and, in principle, allowed for its participation in the process of the transfer of power. Thus, representatives of A. Neto who visited Moscow during that period expressed the view in meetings with Soviet officials that "it would not be easy to proclaim Angola's independence without the participation of UNITA."²¹

However, the UNITA leader J. Savimbi was authoritarian in his character, had obvious dictatorial habits and was not inclined to compromise not only with political opponents from the MPLA, but with his party members: he brutally dealt even with his former comrades-in-arms, who expressed a simple verbal disagreement with their leader. A. Tokarev, a Russian specialist in the history of Angola, Doctor of Historical Sciences writes: "He did not tolerate those who disagreed with him, he resolutely dealt even with his former comrades who voiced the slightest verbal disagreement with their leader. One of the UNITA leaders, J. Sangumba, and the head of military intelligence, Chindonda, disappeared, and Brigadier General H. Chivale was tortured. A prominent figure in UNITA, Vakulukute, suffered an unenviable fate: while trying to break with the National Union, he was kidnapped (with the participation of the South African intelligence services), taken to UNITA headquarters, tortured and executed. J. Savimbi committed reprisals against his political opponents later."²²

The MPLA has also made efforts to cooperate with the FNLA. For example, in December 1972,



11. PRA President José Eduardo dos Santos receives the UNITA and FALA leaders, who emerged from the underground, at his residence in Luanda. He offered them a programme of integration into civilian life in exchange for the cessation of armed resistance. Luanda, 2002

through the mediation of the Organisation of the African unity, the MPLA signed an agreement with Holden Roberto on the unification of the MPLA and the FNLA, “with the intention of gradually disintegrating the FNLA and using the territory of Zaire to develop the struggle to the north of Angola”.²³ However, this agreement remained practically only on paper.

On the other hand, after the MPLA declared the country’s independence on 11 November 1975, the FNLA and UNITA finally showed their inability to negotiate and joined an alliance that opposed the MPLA. R. Kapuściński, a correspondent of the Polish news agency PAP in Angola, who was in Luanda at the time, testifies that he saw a poster in which J. Savimbi and H. Roberto embrace, with the following inscription: “Two leaders — one sun

of freedom!”²⁴. However, after the defeat in the Battle of Kifangondo²⁵ (November 1975), H. Roberto’s organisation gradually began to lose its influence in the northern regions of the country and by the mid-1980s, it had largely ceased active armed anti-government operations. In late 1984, recognizing the futility of further resistance, more than 1,500 armed FNLA fighters surrendered to the Angolan authorities.²⁶



However, after the defeat of the Zairian and South African forces that had invaded Angolan territory and the withdrawal of South African units from the country in March 1976, the UNITA became the principal instrument of neocolonialism in the struggle against the young independent state.

Savimbi's organisation, benefiting from broad support from the United States, South Africa, and other Western countries, launched armed resistance

against the new Angolan authorities in the southern and central regions of the country.

This war against the MPLA government continued, with brief interruptions, until the beginning of the twenty-first century and ended only in February 2002 with the death of the leader of the irreconcilable opposition, J. Savimbi. He was killed in a clash with fighters of a brigade commanded by Brigadier General Simão Carlitos Wala²⁷ during Operation Kissonde,

conducted by units of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA).

After the death of the UNITA leader, the President of Angola, J. E. dos Santos, offered the leadership of the opposition a programme for integrating them and their supporters into peaceful life in exchange for the cessation of armed resistance.

On 4 April 2002²⁸, in the presence of the ambassadors of the so-called "Troika" — Portugal,



12. A special forces detachment of an FAA brigade that eliminated J. Savimbi. In the centre, wearing a red beret, is the brigade commander and leader of Operation “Kissonde,” Brigadier General Simão Carlitos Wala. February 2002

13. Leaders of the Union of Angola Veterans, V. Sagachko and S. Kolomnin, present Brigadier General Simão Carlitos Wala, a graduate of the Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, with the badge “For Assistance to the Union of Angola Veterans.” Moscow, 2019

Russia, and the United States — as well as the UN Secretary-General’s special representative, a ceasefire agreement for Angola (the Memorandum of Luena) was signed.

It became the basis for a de facto reconciliation between the Government of Angola and UNITA. The UNITA Secretary-General P. Lukamba said that UNITA was moving into the legal opposition and would defend its demands by political means. The

agreement provides the demilitarization of UNITA and the integration of its former soldiers into the Angolan National Army, with equal rights with all others and appropriate financial and legal support.

A total of 5,007 former members of the UNITA Armed Forces (FALA) were recruited into the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA), including 30 generals, 800 officers and non-commissioned officers, 4177 soldiers and sergeants.¹⁴

Moreover, 40 other officers, of whom three are Major Generals of the former FALA, were recruited into the Angolan National Police. Another 18 former UNITA generals were assigned to the General Staff of the Angolan Armed Forces.

The “employment” of senior FALA generals and officers, with substantial material and financial support, effectively removed the ground for further armed resistance against the Angolan government.

Moreover, many of them were openly exhausted from years spent in a clandestine existence in the Angolan forests.

The remaining members, mostly rank-and-file of the UNITA armed formation — FALA, were demobilized and provided with general rights, employment guarantees, and pension benefits.

This complex and tense process of reconciliation, referred to in Angola as the “Processo de Reconciliação Nacional”²⁹, concluded on 2 August 2002. This day marked the final disbandment of UNITA's armed formations and the transformation of UNITA into a political organisation. Today, UNITA and the FNLA function as opposition political parties, with their own parliamentary factions and representation in the National Assembly, and they participate regularly in elections.



14. Former senior FALA commanders became generals in the depoliticized Angolan Armed Forces (FAA). Luanda, 2002

15. Angolan Minister of Defence, Kundi Paiyama, presents FAA general's epaulettes to the former UNITA/FALA Chief of Staff, Geraldo Abreu Muñengo “Camorteiro”. Luanda, 2002







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16. After the reconciliation process was completed, neither the MPLA armed forces (FAPLA) nor the UNITA armed forces (FALA) remained — only the unified Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) continued to exist. Luanda, 2002

17. Chief of the FAA General Staff, General Armando da Cruz Neto (right), with his former opponents — now generals in the depoliticized Angolan Armed Forces (FAA). Luanda, 2002

*The Battle
of Cuito Cuanavale
as a Prelude to the Liberation
of Southern Africa*

From August 1987 to the end of March 1988, the extensive wooded savanna³⁰ in the interfluvium of the Cuito and Lomba rivers³¹ in southeastern Angola became the scene of intense fighting, which is collectively referred to in modern historiography as the “Battle of Cuito Cuanavale.” At that time, the settlement of Cuito Cuanavale in Cuando Cubango Province became a symbol of courage and heroism for the Angolan people. These events were of immense significance for the final decolonization and liberation of the peoples of southern Africa.

A small settlement — practically a village of about a hundred peasant huts and a dozen single-story brick buildings — Cuito Cuanavale became widely known both within Angola and beyond, earning the dramatic nickname “the African Stalingrad”. Today, Cuito Cuanavale features a majestic monument, a wall with bas-reliefs depicting heroes and episodes of the battle, as well as a nearby museum and an exhibition of the military equipment that took part in the conflict.

The strategic value of this settlement lay in its proximity to a bridge over the full-flowing Cuito River, which allowed the passage of troops and heavy equipment, as well as a permanent airstrip with a concrete runway.

However, the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale cannot be viewed merely as a fight over a small settlement near an important bridge and airfield, as many South African participants of the events tend to present it in their numerous publications. The battle extended not only across Cuando Cubango Province, where Cuito Cuanavale is located, but also into the provinces abutting the Angola–Namibia border, Kunene and Namibe, as well as Huíla Province.

In fact, the battle began in August 1987, when, as a result of a large-scale FAPLA military operation prepared with the assistance of Soviet military advisors and codenamed Saluting October³² (Portuguese: Operação Saludando Octubre), UNITA





18. A column of SADF Olifant main battle tanks crosses the Angolan border, heading toward the Cuito Cuanavale area. 1987

19, 20. The bridge over the Cuito River. Crossing of FAPLA armored vehicles. Cuito Cuanavale, 1988

21. Armored escort vehicle for the columns — a front-line improvised vehicle based on a Soviet KrAZ truck. Standing next to the vehicle (left) with a group of FAPLA soldiers is Soviet advisor Vadim Sagachko. Cuito Cuanavale area, 1989

22. Soviet specialists of the FAPLA Pechora SAM brigade at their home in Cuito Cuanavale, destroyed by a strike from South African long-range G-5 howitzers. The date of the attack is recorded on the house wall: 14 November 1987

armed formations were placed in a critical situation in Cuando Cubango Province.

The 21st, 16th, 47th, and 59th FAPLA brigades assigned to the operation, together with two separately formed Angolan army tactical groups, advanced toward the Lomba River under the guidance of Soviet military advisers and began forcing a crossing. It created a real threat that UNITA would lose its so-called forward base at Mavinga.

To prevent the capture of Mavinga and the defeat of UNITA, units of the South African Defence Force (SADF) invaded Angolan territory. A large South African force, including long-range artillery and armored vehicles³³, was deployed to the Mavinga area both by land and by air. They launched a sudden strike against the advancing FAPLA units. Fierce fighting ensued at the crossings over the Lomba River, continuing throughout September. Only at the beginning of October, upon receiving orders, did the Angolan brigades begin a fighting withdrawal toward Cuito Cuanavale.

After the South African forces entered Angola, the balance of power shifted unfavorably for the Angolan army. The South African troops and UNITA units not only had a numerical advantage, but, most importantly, superiority in firepower and air support, which operated from the Rundu airfield in South West Africa (occupied by South Africa at the time).

For nearly two months, under the blows of superior enemy forces, the Angolan brigades fought a retreat from the Lomba River to Cuito Cuanavale, a distance of approximately 90 kilometers. In the second half of November 1987, Angolan forces halted the advance of South African troops and UNITA formations on the approaches to Cuito Cuanavale, after which a de facto siege of the town commenced.

At the beginning of January 1988, one of the units of the Cuban 70th Tank Brigade was deployed to reinforce FAPLA troops at Cuito Cuanavale.



South African long-range G-5 howitzers methodically shelled the positions of the defending FAPLA brigades as well as the settlement itself. South African forces, employing Olifant main battle tanks and probing for weak points in the defences, continued to assault the positions of Cuito Cuanavale's defenders from multiple directions, at intervals of approximately two weeks.³⁴ The siege of this small settlement lasted four months. On 23 March 1988, a final decisive assault was launched. However,

after losing several Olifant tanks in combat, the South Africans withdrew, failing to break the defenders' lines at Cuito Cuanavale.

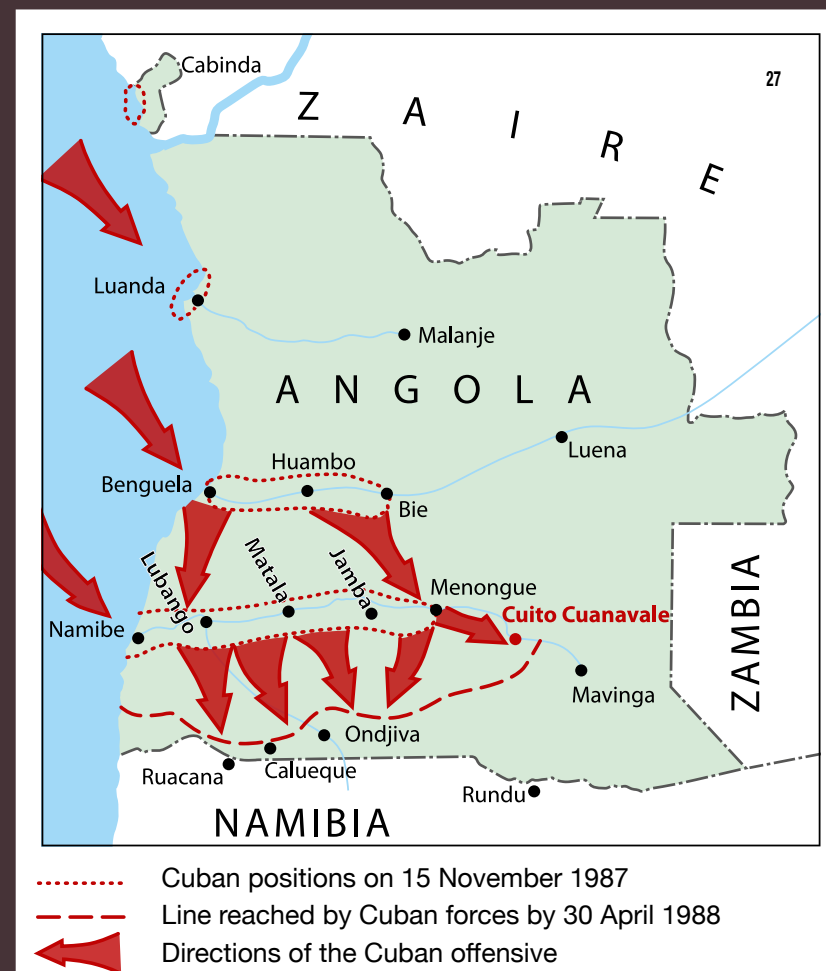
While the "African Stalingrad" successfully held out, tying down South African and UNITA forces, Havana and Luanda were preparing an offensive on another front. According to Fidel Castro, the Cubans acted "like a boxer who holds back his opponent with his left hand while striking with his right."³⁵ Units of the Cuban 50th Division of the Revolutionary

Armed Forces, equipped with Soviet T-62 tanks, were deployed from the Island of Freedom to Angola. Experienced Cuban pilots also arrived, flying MiG-23ML aircraft supplied from the USSR. New shipments of weapons, spare parts, and ammunition were delivered from the USSR to both the Angolan and Cuban forces.

Cuban armored units, delivered to Angola's Atlantic coast, carried out a rapid march across the provinces of Namibe, Benguela, and Huíla, advancing



23. Cuban and Soviet military personnel inspect a South African Olifant tank captured by FAPLA forces during the defence of Cuito Cuanavale, 1988
24. Leaders of the Union of Angola Veterans, V. Sagachko and S. Kolomnin, inspect Olifant tank No. 52, which was disabled by a mine during the SADF advance on Cuito Cuanavale. Cuito Cuanavale surroundings, 2014
25. Olifant tank No. 52, destroyed during the defence against the SADF on Cuito Cuanavale in March 1988. In the photo No. 18, it is the first tank in the column
26. Soviet military advisors — recipients of the medal “Heroic Defender of Cuito Cuanavale” — on the Menonge–Cuito Cuanavale road, 1988. Photo by Alexander Shishov (standing on the left)
27. Main directions of the Cuban forces’ advance in Angola during the final stage of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, from November 1987 to April 1988



along the Lubango–Cahama–Calueque and Matala–Cuvelai–Ondjiva routes toward the Namibian border. By the end of June 1988, Cuban and Angolan forces, fighting their way forward, had reached the Angola–Namibia border in Cunene Province.

On 27 June 1988, Angolan Air Force MiG-23ML aircraft, piloted by Cuban pilots, launched a massive bombing strike against South African forces in the area of the dam at Calueque, 11 km north of the Angola–Namibia border.

During the airstrike, the hydroelectric complex — of strategic importance to South Africa, as it supplied electricity to all of Namibia — was damaged.³⁶ Clearly shaken by the strike on Calueque, South African troops, while withdrawing from Angola, left an inscription in Afrikaans on the ruins of the dam that some loosely translated as “The MiG-23s broke our hearts.”

These developments put the South African contingent at Cuito Cuanavale under threat of encirclement. Moreover, the South Africans feared

that Cuban and Angolan tanks might cross the Namibian border and strike them from the rear. Consequently, the South African military command and the country’s political leadership were forced to order the commanders of units and subunits stationed in Angola to withdraw into Namibian territory.

Thus, after halting the offensive at Cuito Cuanavale and subsequently launching a broad counteroffensive in Cunene Province between March

and June 1988, Angolan and Cuban forces compelled the South Africans not only to withdraw from Angola, but ultimately to relinquish their occupation of Namibia. **For this reason, from the standpoint of historical accuracy, the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale should be viewed far more broadly — not merely as the heroic defence of a small town from 14 November 1987 to 23 March 1988, but as the entire course of fighting from August 1987 to June 1988, including the Cuban offensive and their advance to the Namibian border.**

The defeats suffered by South African forces in southwestern Angola in 1987–1988 forced the apartheid regime of South Africa to enter negotiations, culminating in an agreement signed in New York on 22 December 1988 providing for the complete withdrawal of South African forces from Angola and the granting of independence to Namibia. South Africa agreed to withdraw its forces from Namibia by July 1991, and in response, Cuba committed to recalling its personnel from Angola by June 1991.

To oversee the phased northward redeployment and full withdrawal of Cuban forces in accordance with the schedule agreed between Angola and Cuba in December 1988, the UN established the United Nations Angola Verification Mission I (UNAVEM I). It comprised 70 military observers and supporting civilian staff. The mission operated from January 1989 to May 1991 and confirmed that the Cuban withdrawal had been completed ahead of schedule, by 25 May 1991 — more than a month earlier than planned. On 6 June 1991, the UN Secretary-General informed the Security Council that UNAVEM I had fully and effectively fulfilled its mandate.³⁷



28. Angolan officers and a group of Soviet military advisers awarded the Cuban medal “Heroic Defender of Cuito Cuanavale,” 1988. Photo by Valery Bitav (third from the left)

29. FAPLA soldiers beside a captured South African Withings armored recovery vehicle (ARV). Cuito Cuanavale area, 1988

30. Presentation of the Cuban medal “Heroic Defender of Cuito Cuanavale” to Major Valery Cheremukhin, specialist to the commander of the Pechora surface-to-air missile battalion. Cuito Cuanavale, 29 March 1988









31. Soviet specialist of the FAPLA Kvadrat surface-to-air missile brigade, Vladimir Volodin, in Cuito Cuanavale, 1984

32. Soviet advisers and an Angolan soldier beside their home after South African artillery shelling. At the centre stands Colonel Andrei Gorb, who was killed in a similar strike on 27 November 1987. Cuito Cuanavale, 1987

33. Adviser to the chief of staff of a FAPLA infantry brigade, Major Vladimir Gavrilov, beside a FAPLA combat vehicle destroyed by a mine, 1987

34. Soviet advisers of the 16th FAPLA Infantry Brigade during a combat raid on Mavinga. At the centre is military adviser Lieutenant Colonel Daniyal Gukov, 1984

35. Field meal in the Angolan savanna during the 1984 advance on Mavinga. At the table are advisers of the 16th FAPLA Brigade: B. Lobanov, G. Yefremov, V. Klochkov, A. Pilipenko, V. Ponomarev, and V. Malyukin

***The Battle
of Cuito Cuanavale —
Victory Day and the Liberation
of Southern Africa***

Victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale led to the liberation of Namibia: on 21 March 1990, following free elections, SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma became the first president of the newly independent Republic of Namibia. This victory significantly accelerated the dismantling of the apartheid system in South Africa and the rise to power of a black-majority government led by the African National Congress (ANC). In the country's first universal and equal elections in 1994, ANC leader Nelson Mandela was elected president of South Africa.

Thus, Angola may figuratively be called the springboard from which Namibia's independence "took off," and from which the subsequent dismantling of the shameful system of racial discrimination in South Africa was carried out. In this way, the last strongholds of colonialism in the region were eliminated. Fidel Castro rightly believed that the victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale "...meant the immediate liberation of Namibia and possibly accelerated the end of apartheid by twenty to twenty-five years."³⁸

During his visit to Cuba in 1991, Nelson Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress (ANC), stated that *"the success of the FAPLA and Cuba at Cuito Cuanavale and at Lubango was a turning point for the liberation of our continent and of my people, as well as for the civil war in Angola and the struggle for Namibia's independence."*³⁹

The Cuban leader Fidel Castro expressed a similar view: *"The whole world knows, and new generations must know, that the end of apartheid was decided at Cuito Cuanavale and in southeastern Angola, where more than 40,000 Cuban fighters fought alongside Angolan and Namibian soldiers."*⁴⁰

In December 2005, T. Mtintso, a representative of the government of the African National Congress and South African ambassador to Cuba, paying tribute to the defenders of Cuito Cuanavale, declared: *"The soil of Angola is soaked with the blood of fallen Cubans, and it nourishes the tree of freedom of our homeland."*

However, the road to the liberation of Southern Africa was paved not only with the blood of Angolan and

Cuban soldiers and officers, but also with that of Soviet military advisors, specialists, and military interpreters.

José Eduardo dos Santos, the president of the Republic of Angola, speaking on 23 March 2008 (the twentieth anniversary of the victory in the battle), acknowledged their contribution: *"Along this path we were accompanied by our Cuban friends and comrades, as well as by advisors from the USSR — whose legal successor became Russia — who made an incomparable and unprecedented contribution to the liberation of our peoples."*

Together with the patriots of Angola and with the patriotic and progressive forces of Angola, Namibia, and South Africa, they contributed to the fall of the last citadels of colonialism and racism in Africa, which ultimately led to the complete liberation of the African continent."

...I express my gratitude to the Soviet Union and to its successor Russia for their enormous contribution to the liberation of Angola and Africa."

Soviet servicemen fought alongside their Angolan and Cuban comrades at Cuito Cuanavale. Soviet advisors and specialists were presented in all Angolan infantry (motorized infantry) and air-defence missile brigades, in the headquarters of the Southern Front and the military district, as well as at command posts. In total, more than 150 Soviet advisors, specialists, and interpreters took part in the events at Cuito Cuanavale during the battle.

More than ten of them — including Colonels A. Artemenko and A. Gorbach and Lieutenant I. Zhdarkin — were wounded or concussed in the fighting near Cuito Cuanavale, and three were killed. On 26 September 1987, near the district of Cuito Cuanavale, Junior Lieutenant Oleg Snitko, a military interpreter of the 21st Motorized Infantry Brigade of the FAPLA, was mortally wounded during the fighting. On 27 November 1987, during South African long-range artillery shelling, Colonel Andrei Gorb, adviser to the Chief of the Organisational and Mobilization Department of the 6th Military District, was killed."

On 20 December 1987, Private Alexander Nikitenko, a driver-signalman of the group of Soviet advisors of the Southern Front, was killed when his vehicle struck a mine while he was transporting a seriously ill officer to a hospital.⁴¹

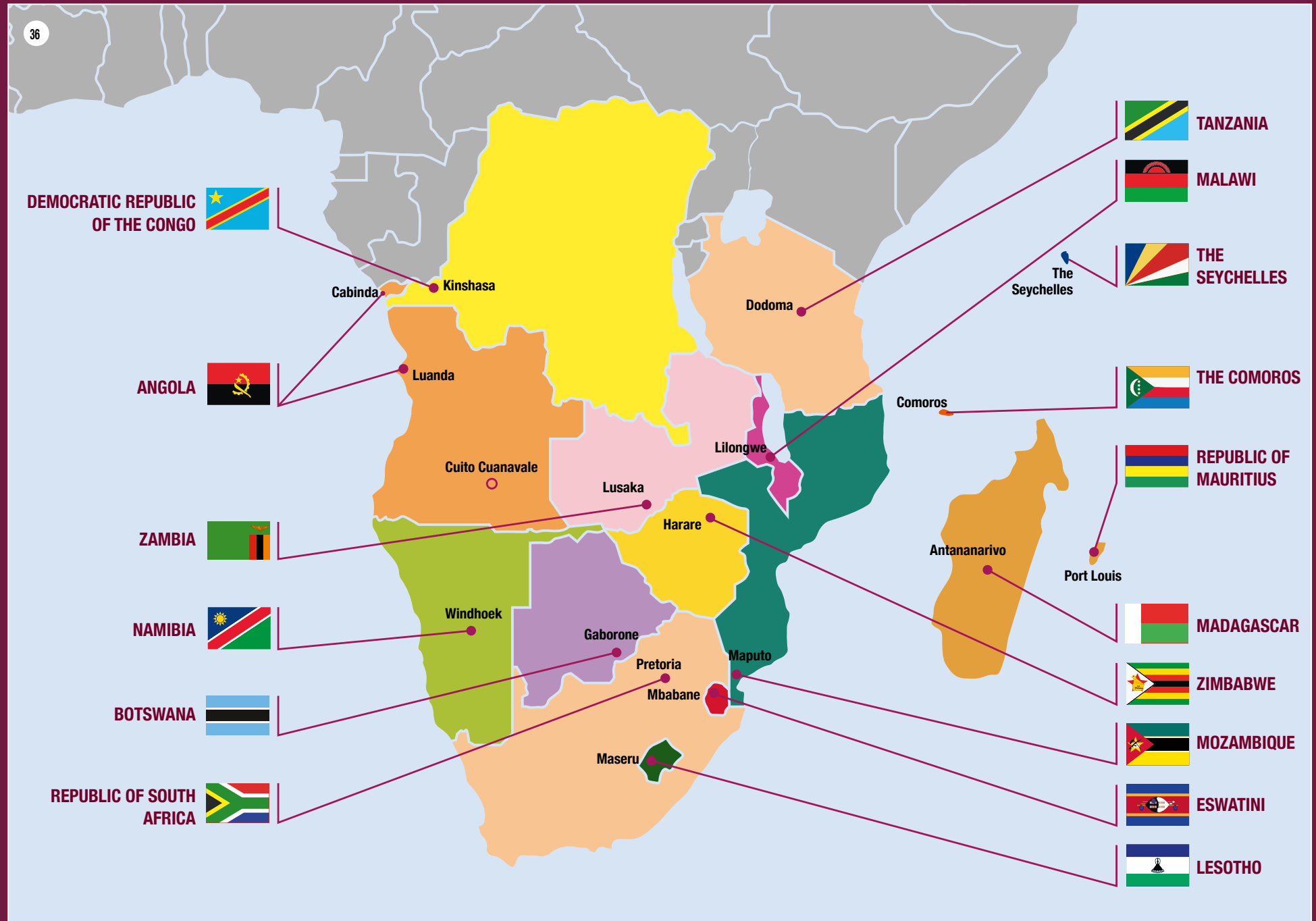
About one hundred Soviet servicemen were awarded the medal "Heroic Defender of Cuito Cuanavale," established by Decree-Law No. 103 of the State Council of the Republic of Cuba on 21 March 1988.⁴²

Since 2018, the Victory Day in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale has been celebrated as the Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa. It is a national holiday in Angola and the principal unifying celebration for the countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which includes sixteen states: Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zambia, Zimbabwe, the Comoros, Lesotho, Mauritius, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Eswatini, the Seychelles, Tanzania, and South Africa (photo 36).

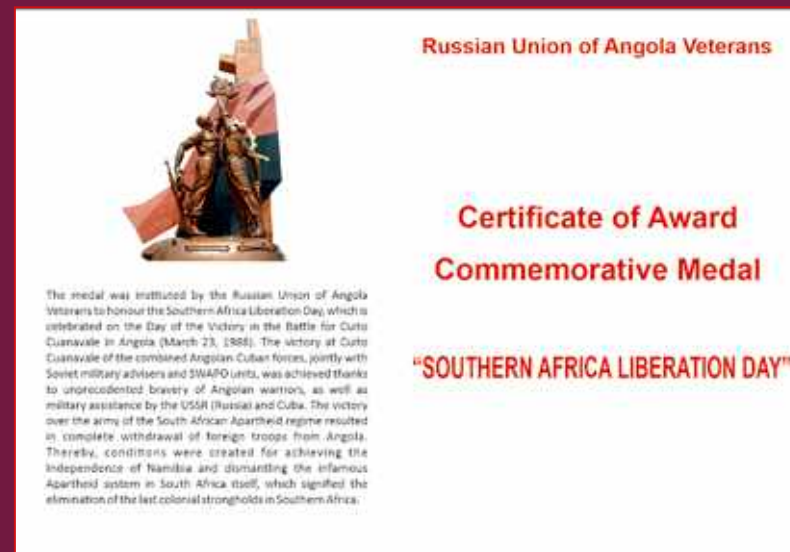
The initiative to establish 23 March as the Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa belonged to the President of Angola, João Lourenço. He first proposed this initiative in 2016, when he was serving as Angola's Minister of Defence, at an SADC conference in Mozambique.

At that time, however, not all member states supported the proposed date. The leadership of Malawi, for example, suggested 3 March (the country's Martyrs' Day), while Tanzania proposed 17 August (the anniversary of the establishment of SADC). It took two years for SADC members to reach an agreement on the matter. The final decision to celebrate the Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa annually on 23 March was adopted at the SADC conference held in Namibia in August 2018. The Government of Angola immediately declared it a national holiday.

In 2024, the Russian Union of Angola Veterans established a commemorative medal titled "Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa."



The “Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa” Medal



The medal was established by the Russian Union of Angola Veterans in February 2024. It has the standard circular form, 32 mm in diameter, and is made of a copper-nickel alloy with a matte finish. The obverse depicts the African continent, with the countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) highlighted in raised contours.

Two dark-colored hands superimposed on the image of Africa are shown tearing apart colonial shackles in a powerful gesture. The break in the chains runs across the SADC member states, while one of the broken chains (from the right hand) indicates the geographical location of Cuito Cuanavale. The date 23/03 appears at the bottom.

The reverse follows the traditional design of medals issued by the Union of Angola Veterans: a raised image of crossed Kalashnikov rifles, a

torch-flower, and a laurel branch. The rifle symbolizes military assistance to Angola from the USSR and its allies — Cuba, the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Tanzania, and other states — as well as from the ANC (South Africa) and SWAPO (Namibia). The torch-flower represents economic and humanitarian assistance to Angola and is depicted as the endemic “Angola Rose,” one of the country’s national symbols. The laurel branch symbolizes glory, courage, remembrance of the fallen, and gratitude to those who suffered while carrying out the international mission in Angola from 1975 to 1991. Along the semicircle runs the inscription “Union of Angola Veterans” in Russian and Portuguese.

The certificate accompanying the medal features, on its fourth page, an image of the

monument commemorating victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in Angola and includes a brief description of the event in whose honour the award was issued: “This medal was issued by the Russian Union of Angola Veterans in honour of the Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa, celebrated annually on the anniversary of the end of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in Angola (23 March 1988). Victory in the battle by the combined Angolan–Cuban forces, with the participation of Soviet military advisers and SWAPO units, was achieved through the exceptional courage of Angolan soldiers and the military assistance provided to Angola by the USSR (Russia) and Cuba. As a result of the defeat of the apartheid regime’s army, foreign troops were completely withdrawn from Angolan territory, conditions were created for Namibian independence,



and the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa was set in motion, marking the elimination of the last strongholds of colonialism in Southern Africa.”

The certificate is printed in Russian, Portuguese, and English. The medal is awarded by decision of the Council of the Union of Angola Veterans.

The first presentations of the “Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa” medal took place in March 2024 at the Embassy of the Republic of Angola in Moscow during a reception dedicated to the Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa.

37. Reception at the Union of Angola Veterans in Moscow in 2014 for Angola’s Minister of Defence and future president, João Lourenço, who initiated the designation of 23 March as the Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa. Lourenço was among the first in Angola to receive this medal in March 2024

38. Presentation of the “Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa” medals to the head of the Angola veterans’ delegation, Colonel General F. Afonso “Anga” (right), and delegation member Brigadier José Galiano, president of the Forum of Veterans of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale (FOCOBACC). Moscow, May 2024

39. Deputy Chairman of the Union of Angola Veterans Sergey Kolomnin with the head of the Namibian delegation, Commander of the Namibian Army, Major General Nambahu Aktöfel Ndengu, after awarding him the “Day of the Liberation of Southern Africa” medal. Moscow, March 2024

*History Behind
the Memorial and Monument
to the Victory in the Battle
of Cuito Cuanavale in Angola*

The history of the memorial dedicated to the Victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in Angola dates back to March 2008, when the first stone was laid in the foundation of the future monument. At that time, the Angolan government decided for the first time to celebrate this date on a large scale and to mark the 20th anniversary of the victory in the battle.

For the celebrations, Angola invited delegations from Cuba and Russia (as the successor to the USSR) — its main allies that had supported the MPLA and FAPLA in the war against the army of apartheid-era South Africa and its proxy, UNITA, and whose citizens had taken part in this battle. Delegations from Namibia, South Africa, and several other countries were also invited.

The delegation of the Russian Federation at the celebrations marking the 20th anniversary of the victory in the battle was headed by Viktor Sokolovsky, a member of the Federation Council and Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council Committee on Financial Markets and Monetary Circulation.

In coordination with the Angolan side and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Russian Union of Angola Veterans included in the delegation its active council member Yury Andrianov, who in the mid-1980s worked in Angola in the office of the Chief Soviet Military Adviser and in practice performed the duties of adviser to the Head of the Operations Directorate of the FAPLA General Staff.

After returning from his assignment in Angola, Y. Andrianov worked in the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, where he oversaw the supply of Soviet equipment and special materiel to Angola.

The delegation also included the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Angola, Sergey Nenashev, and the

Military Attaché at the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Angola.

The main anniversary ceremony took place on 22 March 2008 in Cuito Cuanavale itself. Guests were flown to Menongue and then transported to the town. The organisation of the event by the Angolan authorities was conducted at a notably high level. Nearly the entire political and military leadership of Angola participated, including the MPLA chairman and the president of Angola José Eduardo dos Santos, the Speaker of the National Assembly, cabinet ministers, service commanders, veterans of the MPLA and the battle, members of parliament, provincial governors, civic organisations, and local residents.

Y. Andrianov, a representative of the Russian Union of Angola Veterans, also made his contribution — he placed a trowelful of concrete beneath the memorial's foundation brick. A design for the future monument was presented, with completion originally planned for the following year.

However, financial difficulties caused by the global economic crisis of 2009–2010 delayed construction for several years. Structurally, it consisted of the battle museum building, which took the form of a truncated concrete pyramid, with concrete, three-sided pyramidal inclined columns attached to it on three sides — two along the edges and one in the centre of the front face — converging at a single point at the top. The columns, designed by the architects to symbolize the three branches of the Angolan Armed Forces, terminated in a spire at their junction, the exact purpose of which remains somewhat unclear.

Nearby, in a completely different stylistic approach, rose a multi-meter bronze-style composition of two figures representing the defenders of Cuito Cuanavale, standing face-to-face atop a Soviet-made T-54/55 tank turret. The figures held in

their outstretched left hands — raised and crossed in the shape of a Latin “V” (Victory) — a symbolic map of Angola, with the geographical location of the town of Cuito Cuanavale marked by a five-pointed star. The map was framed on both sides by a laurel wreath, symbolizing victory and glory. Each soldier held in his right hand a Kalashnikov assault rifle by the sling, along with a pistol in its holster.

However, although this memorial was constructed, it was never officially inaugurated, as it did not meet the approval of the Angolan authorities, including the President of Angola, José Eduardo dos Santos. A decision was made to revise it both architecturally and compositionally. In 2013, the government established a special organisation — the Office of Special Works (Gabinete das Obras Especiais, GOE), headed by Lionel Pinto das Cruz, tasked with refining the memorial project.

As Lionel Pinto das Cruz, director of the Office of Special Works, explained in an interview with the newspaper *Jornal de Angola*: “GOE became involved in the work in 2013, starting with an evaluation of the existing preliminary design without changing its overall concept, with the primary goal of enriching the main architectural and engineering elements already in place.”

He noted that “The work on the memorial drew upon art and traditional Angolan crafts: from clay and plaster work to foundry and painting.”

A large team of architects, artists, and sculptors from North Korea was engaged for the project. These North Korean specialists had previously proven their skills by contributing to the composition of the Battle of Kifangondo at the National Museum of Military History and to the Mausoleum of the Founder of the Angolan State, Agostinho Neto, in Luanda.

Angolan builders, artists, and sculptors also took part in the project. Overall supervision and coordination were carried out by the Angolan architect



40. Arrival of the Russian delegation in Cuito Cuanavale for the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the monument. Far left — Y. Andrianov. 22 March 2008
41. Head of the Russian delegation V. Sokolovsky at the foundation stone of the future memorial in honour of the Victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale. 22 March 2008
42. Original version of the memorial monument in honour of the Victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, which was never officially opened. 2014



43. Central monument of the memorial dedicated to the Victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale after renovation. 2018
44. Central memorial, distant view
45. Fragment of the memorial bas-relief depicting one of the stages of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale
46. Exhibition of Soviet-made FAPLA military equipment that was used in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale — an integral part of the memorial

and artist António Tomás. Representatives of the Ministry of National Defence, the General Staff, and the Military Intelligence Service were likewise involved in both the design and implementation phases.

Renovation of the memorial commenced in April 2015 and was completed in mid-2017. As a result of the redesign of the original concept, one of the main elements of the memorial was chosen to be a giant stele shaped like a stylized Kalashnikov assault rifle — its muzzle with the characteristic front sight is easily recognizable — around which the national flag of Angola cascades downward. The height of this tallest part of the memorial is 55 meters.

Directly in front of the stele stands a sculptural composition consisting of two bronze figures of Angolan FAPLA soldiers — defenders of Cuito Cuanavale (photo 43) — holding in their raised left hands a map of Angola and in their right hands their weapons. Compared to the original version, the composition of the sculpture was not fundamentally altered; however, it is not an exact replica. The poses of the soldiers were slightly modified, and both figures were fitted with helmets (in the original version, one soldier wore a beret while the other wore a helmet). Most importantly, the sculpture was significantly enlarged in scale to correspond proportionally with the stele.

According to official data, the height of the sculpture is 21.5 meters, and the weight of the composition, entitled “Two Soldiers,” symbolizing the “defence of the territorial integrity of the state,” is approximately 110 tonnes.

The sculptural group, mounted on the turret of a T-54/55 tank, was additionally installed on a human-height concrete pedestal faced with black granite. The front surface bears an inscription in Portuguese: “Monumento à Vitória na Batalha do Cuito Cuanavale. 1987–1988.” The sculpture of the soldiers and the stele in the form of an assault rifle and the national flag are executed in

a unified architectural style and color scheme and complement each other well.

In front of the “stele-sculpture” composition, on a platform of polished black marble, an eternal flame is installed, with a designated area for the laying of wreaths and flowers. In the background, a monumental sculptural diorama depicts scenes from the battle, illustrating its three principal phases, along with a Memorial Wall bearing the names of the fallen (“Wall of Heroes”). Many of the figures were modeled on actual FAPLA commanders and soldiers who participated in the battle.

The truncated concrete pyramid housing the Museum of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale was incorporated into the new memorial complex and is situated to the right of the central composition. In front of it lies a large square paved with light-colored granite blocks. A massive five-pointed star, visible only from above, is laid out in darker stone. The square is framed by U-shaped water basins.

The total area of the memorial complex covers approximately 3.5 hectares and, in addition to the main monument and museum building, includes several exhibition areas and landscaped lawns displaying authentic military equipment used by the defenders of Cuito Cuanavale.

Outdoor display areas feature examples of Soviet-manufactured weapons and military equipment employed by the FAPLA during the battle, including the T-54 tank, BMP-1 and BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles, BRDM-2 armored reconnaissance vehicle, BM-21 “Grad” multiple rocket launcher system, D-30 howitzer, 130 mm M-46 field gun, as well as MiG-23ML and MiG-21bis aircraft, among others. Several heavily damaged captured South African vehicles are also exhibited.

Within the museum buildings, visitors can view small arms, photographs, and relics of the battle. The memorial complex “Victory in the Battle of

Cuito Cuanavale (1987–1988)” is administered by the National Museum of Military History of Angola, whose main building is located in Luanda.

The memorial was officially inaugurated on 20 September 2017 by the President of the Republic of Angola, José Eduardo dos Santos. He laid a wreath at the foot of the monument, lit the eternal flame, and inspected both the museum exhibits and the displayed military equipment.

Among those present at the ceremony were members of the government, senior officials of the presidential military and civilian administration, provincial governors, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Defence Salviano de Jesus Sequeira Kianda, the Chief of the General Staff, as well as representatives of the diplomatic corps.

The delegation of the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Angola was headed by Nikolai Rybchuk, internationalist veteran and participant in combat operations in Angola, Head of the Representative Office of the Union of Angola Veterans in the country, who made an entry in the book of honorary visitors on behalf of the Embassy of Russia and the Russian Union of Angola Veterans.

In his address at the opening ceremony, the Minister of Defence of Angola, Salviano de Jesus Sequeira Kianda, emphasized the decisive importance of the victory of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAPLA), which succeeded in defending the sovereignty of the republic in a fierce confrontation with South African aggressors. He expressed gratitude for the contribution and assistance of the Cuban military contingent and Soviet military advisers and specialists — “assessoria soviética” — in eliminating the last strongholds of colonialism and racism on the continent, as well as in shaping the fate of Southern African states, in particular Angola, Namibia, and South Africa.





47. Delegation of the Union of Angola Veterans: Sergey Kolomnin, Igor Bakush, Vadim Sagachko, Alexey Pobortsev, and Vladimir Averkin at the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale. 23 March 2018
48. Laying of flowers at the memorial. 2018
49. Fragment of the memorial complex
50. President of the Republic of Angola, José Eduardo dos Santos, and Head of the Russian delegation, representative of the Union of Angola Veterans, Nikolai Rybchuk, following the memorial's opening ceremony. 20 September 2017
51. Member of the Russian delegation at the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the memorial dedicated to the Victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, Yuri Andrianov, together with MPLA veterans. Cuito Cuanavale, 22 March 2008
52. Sculptural composition-diorama depicting battle scenes and illustrating the three main phases of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale (1987–1988)





53. Official opening ceremony of the memorial dedicated to the Victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale. 20 September 2017

54. Museum of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale. Among the exhibited photographs are images provided by the Union of Angola Veterans

55. Head of the Russian delegation at the memorial opening ceremony dedicated to the Victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, Nikolai Rybchuk, makes an entry in the Book of Honour. 20 September 2017

56. Honour guard at the main monument of the memorial dedicated to the Victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale

***Preserving
the Historical Memory
of the Joint Struggle
for Freedom and Independence
of the Southern African Peoples***

While assisting their allies and the national liberation movements of neighbouring countries — SWAPO (Namibia), the ANC (South Africa), and ZAPU (Zimbabwe) — the Angolan people made great sacrifices.

Under the pretext that the Angolan authorities, remaining faithful to their internationalist duty, had provided their territory as a safe haven and an opportunity for training national cadres for liberation movements across Southern Africa, Angola was repeatedly subjected to acts of aggression by South Africa and Southern Rhodesia.

A part of its southern territory was occupied, while the provinces of Cuando Cubango, Cunene, Huíla, Huambo, Namibe and others were subjected to relentless bombing and unprovoked attacks by armed units of the apartheid South African and Southern Rhodesian forces for many years.

Between 1981 and 1985 alone, the South African armed forces violated Angolan airspace approximately 4,000 times, carried out 168 bombing

raids, conducted 230 airborne assault operations, executed 74 ground incursions, and landed four amphibious assault forces.

As a result of these aggressive actions, thousands of people were killed, tens of thousands of Angolans became homeless and joined the ranks of refugees. The number of refugees reached 900,000 people. The total damage inflicted by South Africa's military aggression and economic sabotage against Angola was estimated by international experts at 10 billion USD.⁴⁴

In this struggle, the Soviet Union and Cuba stood on the side of the Angolan people. They provided comprehensive assistance to Angola, primarily aimed at strengthening its defence capabilities. From 1976 to the end of 1990, the USSR supplied Angola with military equipment, weapons, and materiel worth more than four billion rubles (at the prices of that time).⁴⁵

Soviet military advisers, specialists, and interpreters, carrying out their military and international duties, were deployed within Angolan army combat

units, as well as within SWAPO units and the training centres of ZAPU and the ANC. They not only trained troops but often directly participated in combat operations, fighting side by side with Angolan, Cuban, and Namibian soldiers.

In total, approximately 40,000 Soviet military personnel served in Angola during this period, contributing to the establishment of the national armed forces of Angola, as well as the armed formations of SWAPO (PLAN) and the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Of these, 834 individuals were awarded state decorations of the USSR for their service in Angola, including 560 with orders and 274 with medals.

Within the Cuban military contingent, which was stationed in Angola at the invitation of the MPLA government from 1975 until the end of 1991, a total of 337,000 Cuban personnel⁴⁶ (both military and civilians) fulfilled their internationalist duty, of whom 2,077 were lost in action.⁴⁷

Striving to preserve historical memory and the truth about the joint struggle for the freedom and independence of the African peoples from colonialism and oppression, the Russian Union of Angola Veterans organized and held an international photo exhibition in November 2023: “THE USSR (RUSSIA) AND ANGOLA: JOINT CONTRIBUTION TO THE LIBERATION OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN PEOPLES.”

The exhibition was dedicated to Soviet and Russian internationalists who, in the 1970s-1980s, provided assistance and support on the territory of Angola to the Namibian liberation movement SWAPO, to anti-apartheid fighters from the African National Congress of South Africa, and to anti-colonial fighters from Zimbabwe — all those who found refuge in Angola from persecution and oppression by South Africa and Southern Rhodesia.

The grand opening of the photo exhibition took place on Angola Veterans Day, 16 November 2023, at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian

Academy of Sciences.

It was attended by Angola veterans from Moscow, Kaliningrad (photo 66), Anapa, Saratov, Vologda, Novosibirsk, and Rostov-on-Don (photos 71, 72), as well as invited Russian and international guests. Among those present were Augusto da Silva Cunha, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Angola to the Russian Federation (photo 61), and José Mateus Muaria Catupha, the Ambassador of the Republic of Mozambique in Moscow (photo 67). Among those who attended the opening were Monica Milian Gomez, the Military

Attaché of the Republic of Cuba in Moscow, and Nicolau Sebastião da Conceição Kudijimbe, retired Lieutenant General, the Angolan writer, the author of the books dedicated to the national liberation war in Angola (photo 64).

Among the distinguished Russian guests invited to the opening ceremony of the exhibition organized by the Union of Angola Veterans were Ivan Zherlitsyn, former senior leader of the group of Soviet military specialists at the Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre in Angola in 1979–1981 (photo 63), Vladimir Kazimirov, the former Ambassador Extraordinary and



Plenipotentiary of the USSR to Angola in 1987–1990, as well as leaders of the Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation of the Russian Federation (photo 80).

In his speech at the opening of the photo exhibition, the Chairman of the Council of the Union of Angola Veterans, Vadim Sagachko (photo 78), emphasised:

“This historical exhibition has been organized by the Russian public organisation — the Union of Angola Veterans, which for nearly 20 years has maintained and expanded comprehensive ties with veteran organisations in the countries of Southern Africa, such as Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and others. The goal of the Union of Angola Veterans is to preserve the historical memory and truth about our joint struggle for the freedom and independence of the peoples of Africa from colonialism and oppression.”

Vadim Sagachko emphasized: *“We are proud that our countries — the USSR, Russia, and Angola — provided comprehensive political, military, and other assistance to the patriots of Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, as well as to other countries of Southern Africa. Together we endured and prevailed! In 1980, Zimbabwe, and later in 1990 Namibia, became independent states, and in 1994, South Africa held universal free elections and freed itself from the burden of the apartheid regime!”*

The photo exhibition featured unique historical photographs capturing episodes of the work of Soviet military specialists training Namibian patriots in Angola (at the Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre and the Jumbo Training Centre near Lubango), as well as activists of the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, in Malanje and Luanda.

A unique section of the photo exhibition, “Along the Guerrilla Paths” (photo 57), was devoted to secret missions in which Soviet military personnel took





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part during the 1960s-1970s in areas of Angola and Mozambique liberated by the MPLA and FRELIMO.

Those missions were carried out under strict secrecy and at the invitation of the MPLA leader Agostinho Neto and the FRELIMO leader Samora Machel. All photographs in this section were exhibited publicly for the first time in history.

Equally noteworthy was the display — also for the first time — of unique documents related to Soviet assistance to African national liberation movements. Among them were: a letter from the MPLA Politburo member Lucio Lara to the Soviet leadership proposing that Soviet military surgeon Oleg Poremsky be awarded the title of “Honorary Member of the MPLA” in recognition of his selfless service at the MPLA field hospital in Dolisie (People’s Republic of the Congo); an official Soviet Ministry of Defence award citation recommending him for the Order of the Badge of Honour; as well as the original decree by the Minister of Defence of the People’s Republic of Angola, Henrique Teles Correia (“Iko”), awarding the first Soviet military attaché to Angola, Alexey Dubenko, the title of “Honorary Commander of FAPLA” in recognition of his services to the MPLA and the Angolan state, along with other documents.

The exhibition “USSR (Russia) and Angola: Joint Contribution to the Liberation of the Southern African Peoples,” organized by the Russian Union of Angola Veterans, once again clearly demonstrated — based on historical documents — that the Soviet Union made an enormous contribution to the liberation of the peoples of Southern Africa from colonialism and Western domination, and consistently remained a true friend of African patriots.

Most of the photographs and part of the documents presented at the exhibition are included in this photo album.



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ASSISTANCE TO PATRIOTS
of the African National Congress
of South Africa
and “Umkhonto we Sizwe” (MK)
on the Territory of Angola

The African National Congress (ANC) is the oldest political organisation of the indigenous population of South Africa, founded in 1912. The primary objective of the organisation was to combat racial discrimination (apartheid) and to secure equal rights for all inhabitants of South Africa, regardless of skin color.

Initially, the ANC's methods of resistance to the racist authorities were of a passive nature: the submission of petitions and demands, the organisation of meetings, and the holding of peaceful demonstrations. However, in 1960 the ANC was banned, its leaders — including Nelson Mandela and others — were arrested, and the organisation was forced underground.

In 1961, on the initiative of Nelson Mandela, the ANC established its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe ("Spear of the Nation," commonly abbreviated as MK), and transitioned to armed struggle on the territory of South Africa.

From the 1960s onward, the Soviet Union provided comprehensive support to the South African national liberation movement represented by the ANC. It extended substantial financial assistance and contributed to the training of both civilian and military personnel. With the commencement of ANC military operations within South Africa, the USSR also began supplying weapons to MK.

According to Vladimir Shubin, a former staff member of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee and now a prominent Russian historian, as well as a recipient of South Africa's Order of the Companions of Oliver Tambo (Silver), awarded to foreign nationals in recognition of their contribution to the liberation of South Africa, the armed struggle — supported by the USSR — significantly contributed to the collapse of apartheid. He notes: *"Armed struggle, with our assistance, made a tangible contribution to the collapse of apartheid. We supplied weapons to the ANC at a time when the West categorically refused*

to support their just cause. The very emergence of modern weapons and well-trained fighters within the ANC came as a shock to the racist regime and served as a powerful stimulus for the oppressed majority."

The diplomatic support extended by the Soviet Union to the ANC was equally substantial. The USSR was the author of a number of United Nations resolutions directed against the South African regime. Moreover, it initiated the adoption of such key UN documents as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (1960) and the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1963).

It is important to emphasize that the Soviet leadership did not impose any conditions on the provision of military or other assistance to the ANC and MK. As Ronnie Kasrils, one of the MK leaders and Minister for Intelligence Services of South Africa in 2004–2008, as well as the first foreign honorary member of the Russian Union of Angola Veterans,⁴⁸ wrote: *"In contrast to Western perceptions during the Cold War, the Soviet Union neither controlled nor directed us. The image of countless Russian conspirators burning lamp oil in the Kremlin at night while devising plans to seize South Africa was absurd. This did not mean that, as fellow revolutionaries, they did not share with us their historical experience and ideas on how to overthrow a dictatorship."*

With the proclamation of Angolan independence and the establishment of the People's Republic of Angola under the leadership of the MPLA, the situation regarding the training of Umkhonto we Sizwe personnel changed fundamentally. Their training was conducted on Angolan territory under the supervision of Soviet military advisers and instructors.

Vyacheslav Shiryaev, the first senior group leader of Soviet military specialists and adviser to the political leadership of the ANC and the command of MK in

Angola,⁴⁹ recalls: *"After the proclamation of Angola's independence in November 1975, the country became a stronghold for the national liberation movements of Southern Africa: the ANC (South Africa), SWAPO (Namibia), and ZAPU (Southern Rhodesia, later Zimbabwe).*

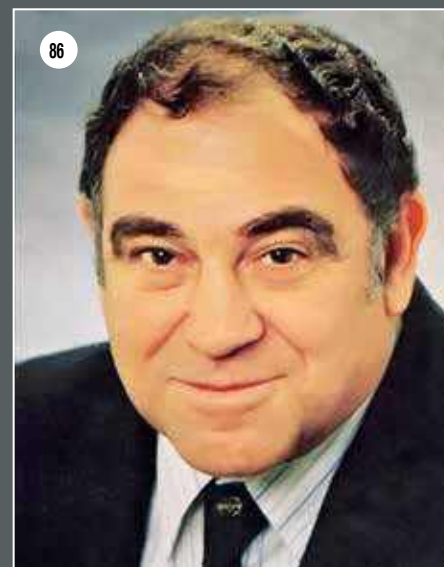
*Soviet military advisers and specialists worked with all of these movements. The first group of our specialists was dispatched to Angola in September 1979 to assist the ANC. It consisted of four advisers and an interpreter, Andrei Bodrov. Subsequently, the group was expanded to 25 personnel."*⁵⁰

As Shiryaev further emphasizes, Soviet military specialists were deployed to Angola in 1979 at the personal request of ANC President Oliver Tambo and with the consent of the MPLA government. This followed the withdrawal of Cuban advisers from the ANC by Fidel Castro after a tragic incident in mid-1979, when eight out of ten Cuban advisers were ambushed and killed in northern Angola during a clash with opposition armed groups.⁵¹

During the period of MK training in Angola, more than fifteen facilities associated with ANC activities were established. In 1976, the first small ANC military camps appeared near Kibaxe⁵² (Bengo Province) and in Funda (near Luanda). In 1977, a major camp was established at Novo Catengue⁵³ in Benguela Province with a capacity of up to 500 personnel.

Subsequently, additional facilities were created in Caxito, Viana (a suburb of Luanda), and in Malanje Province. According to Shiryaev, the centre in Caxito, located 40 kilometers from Luanda, was initially used by Soviet specialists to train ANC members for underground operations in South Africa. Later, it was reorganized into a communications training and repair centre, as well as an auxiliary agricultural base supplying ANC camps with food products.⁵⁴

Large training camps for Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) fighters began to be established in Angola after



84. Nelson Mandela, prominent anti-apartheid fighter and future President of South Africa, who in 1961 headed the armed wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe, was arrested in 1962 and spent 27 years in prison
85. Joe Modise, the leader of Umkhonto we Sizwe and later the first Black Minister of Defence of South Africa repeatedly visited the Caculama Training Centre in Angola
86. Ronnie Kasrils, a member of the MK High Command and head of MK intelligence, frequently visited Angola and the Umkhonto we Sizwe camp at Caculama
87. Godfrey Ngwenya, an advisee of M. Konovalenko at the Caculama camp, operated under the nom de guerre Timothy Mokoena
88. Presentation of the Order of the Companions of Oliver Tambo to V. Shiryayev. To his left stands President of South Africa Jacob Zuma. On the far left is Hélène Pastoors, also awarded the order—a Belgian-Dutch journalist and anti-apartheid activist who took part in special operations of Umkhonto we Sizwe and, in 1986, was sentenced by the South African authorities to 10 years' imprisonment. South Africa, 2011



SHIRYAEV
Vyacheslav
Fedorovich

Vyacheslav Shiryaev (1938–2017), Captain 1st Rank (Ret.), former officer of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the USSR.

In 1965, he graduated from the Higher Naval School in Leningrad; in 1968—from the Military-Diplomatic Academy in Moscow (Military Academy of the Soviet Army); subsequently, he completed advanced courses at the Diplomatic Academy of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He held the diplomatic rank of Counselor and was fluent in French and English. From 1969 to 1973, he served in Laos as Second Secretary of the USSR Embassy.

From September 1979 to September 1983, he was the first military-political adviser to the ANC Regional Command in Angola and, concurrently, the senior officer of the group of Soviet military specialists assigned to the ANC/Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Among MK fighters, he was known by the nom de guerre “Comrade Ivan.”

He is a veteran of military intelligence and a member of the Union of Angola Veterans. He has been awarded 16 state decorations, including the Order of the Red Star and the Order “For Service to the Motherland in the Armed Forces of the USSR,” 1st and 2nd Classes.

He is also a recipient of the South African Order of the Companions of Oliver Tambo (Silver), established in modern South Africa for foreign citizens in recognition of their contributions to the liberation of the peoples of South Africa.

He has also been awarded the medal of the Russian Union of Angola Veterans “For Rendering International Assistance to Angola.”





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89. Arrival in Malanje of the Chief Military Adviser in Angola, Lieutenant General G. Petrovsky, with his spouse (centre). On the right—Military-Political Adviser to the MK Regional Command in Angola V. Shiryayev; on the left—V. Lebedev. Malanje, Angola, 1981. Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
90. Halt en route after visiting the Kalandula Falls in Malanje. The Chief Military Adviser in Angola, Lieutenant General G. Petrovsky, in conversation with V. Shiryayev. Malanje, Angola, 1981. Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
91. Military-Political Adviser to the MK Regional Command in Angola and senior officer of the group of Soviet military specialists attached to the ANC/MK, V. Shiryayev (“Comrade Ivan”), and member of the ANC National Executive Committee and MK Regional Commander in Angola (1976–1980), Mzwandile “Mzwai” Piliso. Angola, 1979. Photo from the archives of V. Shiryayev
92. V. Shiryayev, former Military-Political Adviser to the MK Regional Command in Angola (1979–1983), and José Mateus, Cultural Attaché of the Embassy of Angola in Moscow, at the opening of the exhibition of the Union of Angola Veterans. Moscow, 2009
93. Meeting between V. Shubin and V. Shiryayev at a scientific conference at the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. On the right — Chairman of the Union of Angola Veterans V. Sagachko. 2010
94. V. Shiryayev, recipient of the South African Order of the Companions of Oliver Tambo (Silver), and O. Nodolo, the Military Attaché of South Africa in Moscow

1979, when Soviet military advisers became involved in this effort.

In early 1980, in coordination with the ANC leadership and with the assistance of the personal representative of the President of Angola, José Eduardo dos Santos — Captain Neto — and the Soviet Chief Military Adviser in Angola, Lieutenant General V. Shakhnovich, sites were selected across the country for the establishment of four major facilities intended for the accommodation and training of South African ANC/MK activists: near Luanda (Viana and Caxito), in the northeast near the border with Zaire, and in Malanje Province (east of Luanda).⁵⁵

Each of these facilities was designated to perform specific specialized functions. Transit camps were also established, where ANC members, upon arrival from South Africa and other countries, underwent screening and vetting procedures. Camp Quatro, for example, was used to detain individuals who had violated discipline or were suspected of possible collaboration with the South African security services. The Kamalundi camp in Malanje Province was converted into an agricultural farm to supply MK personnel in Angola with food.

In addition, several special facilities and safe houses operated in Luanda, where senior and mid-level ANC cadres received training in organizing military and combat operations behind enemy lines.

Alexander Bendikov⁵⁶, who served with the group of Soviet military advisers attached to the ANC/MK in 1986–1989, recalls the facilities located in Luanda and its surroundings: *“In the capital were the headquarters of the ANC Regional Command in Angola and a transit camp in the suburb of Viana, a vehicle repair base, several clothing and food warehouses, a modular hospital provided by the British under the auspices of the International Red Cross, and several safe houses used for preparing ANC operatives for infiltration into South Africa.”*⁵⁷

The largest and most significant ANC/MK facility in Angola was the MK Caculama training camp in Malanje Province. This camp was initially used by Soviet and Cuban specialists to train fighters of the Zimbabwean liberation movement ZAPU. However, following the proclamation of Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, all Zimbabwean trainees and the camp's command staff were evacuated from Angola, and the facility was transferred to the ANC.

Ten Soviet military specialists, led by Major Vladimir Lebedev, who had previously worked with ZAPU cadres at this camp, were incorporated into the group of Soviet specialists attached to the ANC/MK.⁵⁸

V. Lebedev recalls: *“Caculama was a large facility, and the number of ZAPU fighters stationed there was considerable. In addition to Caculama, there were several abandoned fazendas in the Malanje area that had also previously been used for training ZAPU fighters. At one of these, we — specialists who had earlier worked with ZAPU personnel — began training small groups of ANC patriots.”*⁵⁹

V. Lebedev and his colleagues operated under the overall supervision of V. Shiryaev, adviser to the ANC Regional Command in Angola. By his decision, Lebedev, as the most experienced and knowledgeable specialist, was appointed senior officer of the Soviet military specialists' group in Malanje, while continuing to serve as an instructor in small arms employment.

Lebedev notes that the nature of training provided by Soviet instructors to ANC personnel differed somewhat from that given to ZAPU fighters: *“Zimbabweans underwent a general ‘basic training course’ at camps in Angola; they were prepared for operations at the level of squad, platoon, and company, and trained as machine-gun crews, tank crews, and APC crews — that is, for operations within medium and large units.*

By contrast, the MK members arriving in Malanje, the overwhelming majority of whom had no prior

military training, were first thoroughly instructed by Soviet specialists in handling small arms, marksmanship, grenade throwing, and the use of explosives — that is, the emphasis was placed on individual training.

*After one month or more of initial training at training centres in Malanje, young MK fighters were transferred to Luanda and other camps, where their preparation for deployment to South Africa and neighboring countries continued. As a rule, they reached those destinations via Europe (the United Kingdom, France, and other countries), where their legalization was arranged.”*⁶⁰

The Caculama camp was located near the Angolan village of the same name, approximately 60 km from the city of Malanje (the administrative centre of the province), and consisted of a fenced and well-guarded area covering several square kilometers. In addition, several FAPLA training ranges and firing grounds were located in the vicinity of the city and were also used in the training of MK fighters.

The Caculama camp functioned as the principal training base for MK personnel in Angola. Accordingly, the majority of Soviet specialists assigned to the ANC/MK resided and operated in the city of Malanje.

Ronnie Kasrils, previously mentioned, who taught MK fighters in Angola the fundamentals of Marxism–Leninism, recalled: *“A small colony of Soviet specialists, some accompanied by their wives, lived in two villas covered with garlands of bougainvillea in a pleasant, though somewhat dilapidated town (Malanje. — Author's note). They trained MK radio operators who manned our communications centre in Malanje, linking Luanda with Lusaka. They also trained and mentored our instructors at the maat camp located 60 km away, near a cluster of mud-plastered huts known as the village of Caculama... Soviet instructors assisted in training programmes. This raised the level of instruction and freed many of*

*our best-trained personnel for the 'home front'.*⁶¹

As part of the group of Soviet specialists in the Caculama camp in Malanje, the following personnel were usually present on a permanent basis: the deputy head of the group for political affairs, as well as specialists in artillery systems (82-mm mortars, Grad-P rocket launcher), communications systems, military topography, and fire training (small arms, hand grenades, RPGs, AGS-17 "Plamya" automatic grenade launcher). There were also specialists in air defence systems (anti-aircraft guns and Strela-2M MANPADS), a hand-to-hand combat instructor, a mine and explosives specialist, a tactics specialist (for both field and urban operations), a doctor, and 2–3 interpreters.⁶²

The overall head of the group of Soviet military specialists, together with another part of the team, was mainly based in Luanda. He usually worked without an interpreter and personally conducted training in covert intelligence work among the leadership of the ANC/MK. In total, during A. Bendikov's period of service with the ANC group (1986–1989), more than 20 Soviet military specialists were working in Luanda and Malanje.⁶³

Soviet specialists in Caculama worked on a rotational basis: they traveled from the city to the camp in groups for 2–3 days, conducted classes and training, and then returned to Malanje, where they were replaced by the next group. In the city of Malanje, Soviet

military specialists lived in four solid villas, and when they stayed overnight in the Caculama camp, they slept in dug-in shelters (earth bunkers) with reinforced concrete walls.

The material base of the camp was continuously improved. For training purposes, improvised classrooms were set up on the camp grounds, consisting of rows of wooden tables and benches in the open air, covered from the sun and rain by camouflage fabric or tarpaulin canopies. Chalkboards were also installed.

Around the perimeter of the camp, trenches, firing positions, and concealed defensive points were dug in to provide defence in the event of a possible attack by South African sabotage groups or members of the Angolan armed opposition UNITA. At the entrance to the camp there was an air defence battery (stationary ZU-23-2 anti-aircraft guns), manned by MK fighters.

For physical training, the Caculama camp was equipped with a sports ground featuring pull-up bars and parallel bars, as well as a tactical obstacle course. All these facilities were built by the trainees under the guidance of Soviet specialists in hand-to-hand combat and combat tactics.

Outside the camp perimeter, 2–3 km away, there was a training range consisting of an open field area with an embankment for placing targets and the remains of damaged or disabled equipment. At the entrance to the range there was an enclosed classroom where

Alexander Bendikov was born on 4 January 1964. In 1986, he graduated from the Faculty of Translation of Moscow State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages named after Maurice Thorez (Moscow), specializing in English and Norwegian, and completed training at the institute's military department. Upon graduation, he was awarded the military rank of Lieutenant.

In the same year, he was conscripted into the Soviet Army, assigned to the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR, and sent to Angola as an English-language interpreter in the group of Soviet military specialists attached to the ANC/MK.

He served in Angola from 30 September 1986, to 25 April 1989. He worked in Luanda and in the Caculama training camp for fighters of Umkhonto we Sizwe, cooperating with all categories of specialists of the Soviet military group attached to the ANC/MK, including group leaders Colonels M. Kononov and V. Belush.

While in Angola, he was promoted to the rank of Senior Lieutenant. He was awarded the Medal of the Union of Angola Veterans "For Providing International Assistance to Angola," the medal "70 Years of the Armed Forces of the USSR," and other decorations.

He currently lives and works in Moscow.



BENDIKOV
Alexander
Eduardovich



95. A. Bendikov, interpreter of the Soviet military specialists group attached to the ANC/MK (left), and a specialist in the combat use of the Strela-2M MANPADS with ANC fighters. Malanje Province, Caculama camp, Angola, 1987.
Photo from A. Bendikov's archives

96. Certificate issued to A. Bendikov in Angola in place of a USSR citizen passport.
Personal archives of A. Bendikov

97. Soviet military specialists in firearms training with an MK fighter. ANC Caculama camp, Malanje Province, Angola, 1985.
Photo from A. Bendikov's archives

98. Mikhail Shchepotin, firearms training specialist of the Soviet military specialists group attached to the ANC, with his wife and ANC fighters. Malanje Province, Angola, May 9, 1987.
Photo from A. Bendikov's archives

99. Air defence position of the ANC Caculama camp. Alexander Bendikov is seated at the gunner's position of a ZU-23-2 anti-aircraft gun. Malanje Province, Angola, 1987.
Photo from A. Bendikov's archives



theoretical lessons were conducted. The classroom was well equipped with visual aids: Soviet posters with instructions on disassembling and assembling small arms and other weapons were displayed on the walls.

At this training ground, Soviet military instructors taught MK cadets the practical use of small arms (assault rifles, machine guns, pistols), the RPG-7 hand-held anti-tank grenade launcher, standard hand grenades, and the AGS-17 “Plamya” automatic grenade launcher. Live-fire exercises were also conducted with 82-mm mortars and Grad-P rocket launchers. Heavy equipment (BTR APCs, BRDMs, BMP IFVs, etc.) was not used during training at the range.

Of particular interest was an improvised “simulator” used to train MK cadets in the combat use of the Strela-2M MANPADS.

Alexander Bendikov recalls: *“In the central part of the range there were several enormous baobab trees. They were adapted for training MANPADS crews. One of the cadets would skillfully climb a baobab and light a fire in a fork at the top of the tree. The training crew below would aim the activated system at the flame and learn how to properly lock the target. During my time, no real launches were carried out — only such training, since each shot cost enormous money at the time, about 10,000 rubles.”*

Cadets at the Caculama camp lived in dugouts, some with concrete walls, others with log walls. There were no beds — they slept in sleeping bags. Meals were taken on site: the camp had several Soviet-made field kitchens. Food was prepared by women from a separate ANC women’s unit, primarily engaged in support duties (cooking, heating water in the mornings for washing, cleaning the area, etc.). However, female MK fighters also underwent general military and firearms training, took part in drill exercises, and even served as assistants

in the camp’s honour guard company during the presentation of the flag.

According to A. Bendikov, Soviet specialists ate the same food as MK cadets and their commanders — usually rice or beans with meat, vegetables, tea, and local fruits. He noted that neither Soviet specialists nor MK cadets generally experienced problems with either the quality or quantity of food. The hardships of the late 1970s and early 1980s, recalled by Ronnie Kasrils — when MK cadets in Angola mainly ate canned meat supplied from the USSR, the GDR, and other countries, and sometimes even had to hunt monkeys for fresh meat — had largely been overcome.⁶⁴

Training of Umkhonto we Sizwe cadets at the camp was conducted under several programmes and specialties. Each Soviet instructor had their own group of cadets, but all fighters without exception underwent general firearms and tactical training. Upon completion of the general course, exercises with live fire were regularly conducted, usually at the squad or platoon level and above.

Training was also carried out in squads or small groups of 2–3 people depending on specialization. The camp formed both general-purpose units and specialized groups: communications personnel, mine and explosives specialists, and air defence crews. Small groups of 2–3 trainees selected for special future tasks received additional training outside the Caculama camp in the city of Malanje — after completing the general course. In the city, they lived in a safe house known as “Villa No. 5.” There, various Soviet specialists trained them and periodically took them to shooting ranges near Malanje to practice combat skills.⁶⁵

A. Bendikov particularly noted that only Africans were trained at the Caculama camp; he did not encounter any light-skinned MK cadets there. He recalls: *“Many ANC patriots arrived in Angola after*

*spending some time in London. Whites were not allowed into the camp (except for Soviet specialists); they were trained directly in Malanje and then probably in Luanda in MK safe houses. There, people of different races and genders trained — not only South African citizens, but also British and Irish men and women.”*⁶⁶

In the city of Malanje, Soviet military specialists usually moved around in civilian clothing, but all were armed with pistols due to the threat of attacks by UNITA armed groups on the city and surrounding facilities. Soviet specialists attached to the ANC in Angola, like their counterparts advising FAPLA, carried no identification documents other than simple cardboard “certificates” issued by the Soviet consular section of the embassy in Luanda. These stated in Portuguese that “the bearer is a citizen of the USSR and has permission from the Angolan government to be on the territory of the country.” Those who drove vehicles were issued local driver’s licenses by the Angolan side.

When traveling to the Caculama camp or to training grounds near Malanje, Soviet specialists wore FAPLA camouflage uniforms and were usually armed with automatic weapons (AK, AKM). A. Bendikov recalls:

“Our groups rotated to the Caculama camp for several days at a time with weapons and full ammunition loads, sometimes accompanied by a Cuban BRDM. During trips to the camp, FAPLA camouflage uniform was used, supplemented with ‘Afghan-style’⁶⁷ tactical chest webbings for carrying rifle magazines.”

He also noted that “such tactical chest webbings were sewn in the camp by ANC fighters themselves from very stiff canvas.”

While traveling from Malanje to the camp along dirt roads, all Soviet military specialists and the security detail remained in full combat readiness: there was a real danger of attacks by scattered UNITA groups or South African saboteurs. There was also

a risk of mines and improvised explosive devices planted along the road — therefore, “they moved according to instructions: with the doors half-open and weapons cocked.”⁶⁸

In the vicinity of Malanje and in the Caculama camp itself, danger also came from other sources — diseases, wild animals, and poisonous insects. Yellow fever and malaria were rampant in the country. As A. Bendikov recalls, the political officer of the group, B. Dovbnya, fell victim to a poisonous insect: “While sleeping in a dugout, some creature crawled across his neck; he was hospitalized in Luanda and soon sent back to the Soviet Union.” V. Shiryayev, in his memoirs, noted that many MK fighters in the camp frequently suffered from fever. Some died, and for those who survived and were later captured in South Africa, the illness became a kind of “Umkhonto mark”: blood tests could reveal that a person had suffered from it, which indicated that they had been trained in Angola.

The ANC/MK trainees in the Caculama camp were dressed quite variably: they wore FAPLA camouflage uniforms, East German military uniforms, and sometimes Soviet camouflage suits typically used by reconnaissance units. Trainees, including members of the women’s unit, also often used standard green cotton Soviet Army uniforms designed for hot climates, along with panama hats.

East German camouflage uniforms were supplied to the ANC in large quantities. As A. Bendikov notes: *“I remember the East German uniforms and various East German optical equipment, including binoculars, even naval ones. I can also add that weapons for the ANC were supplied not only by us, but also by other socialist countries: Yugoslavs, Czechs, Bulgarians, and even Poles. The ANC in Angola had large quantities of Yugoslav and Polish AKMs, Czech pistols, various submachine guns, including the ‘Scorpion’. Those were used by ANC security*

services (counterintelligence and protection units). They, by the way, moved around in excellent, new Land Rover vehicles with firing ports and a mounted machine gun. They were sharply dressed in foreign camouflage.”

According to his estimate, there were at least 300 people permanently stationed in the Caculama camp.⁶⁹ After completing their training, the fighters were sent to Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and Botswana.⁷⁰ Many future leaders of the ANC and MK who later occupied top positions in the state and armed forces of South Africa passed through the Caculama camp. Among them were John Nkadimeng, a member of the ANC National Executive Committee and the Politburo of the South African Communist Party, and from 1985 — General Secretary of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU).

Godfrey Ngwenya, who served as commander of MK forces in Angola from 1983 to 1989 and later became (in 2005) Chief of the South African National Defence Force.

Hagger MacBerry (real name Davidson Masuku, whom Soviet advisors simply called “Dr. Hoper”), who in 1997, with the rank of Lieutenant General, headed the Medical Service of the South African National Defence Force.

Ronnie Kasrils also frequently visited Caculama; his son Andrew underwent military training at this camp.

The Caculama camp was often visited by the top leadership of the ANC and MK. As A. Bendikov recalls, during his deployment he participated as an interpreter in negotiations with ANC leaders such as Oliver Tambo, Chris Hani, and Joe Modise. He particularly remembered Oliver Tambo’s visit to Caculama in 1987 for the anniversary celebration of the ANC.

However, the person who left the strongest impression on Bendikov was MK Commander-in-

Chief Joe Modise.⁷¹ He recalls: *“He was a heavyset, authoritative man who did not tolerate objections. I met him at the Viana camp while translating a request for the supply of another batch of weapons and equipment from the USSR. In addition to the standard list, he demanded increased deliveries of AGS-17 automatic grenade launchers, Strela-2M MANPADS, and also some ‘Horse & trailer.’ I couldn’t understand what that meant, and he became irritated. Eventually, he said ‘Kamaz’ and gestured a trailer. I realized he meant a KAMAZ tractor unit. Much later I found out that Modise often used American slang, which is why I couldn’t immediately understand what he meant or how to translate it correctly into Russian.”*

The Caculama camp was also visited by Soviet generals and officers from central headquarters in Moscow to support the group of military specialists. For example, in 1988, Major General N. Kurushkin, head of the Northern Training Centre for national liberation movements⁷², visited Malanje and Caculama. He had previously (1979–1983) served as senior Soviet military advisor to SWAPO forces in Angola.

In addition to supplying weapons and equipment from the USSR to ANC fighters, discussions were held with ANC leadership regarding the expansion of cooperation between the South African Communist Party and the CPSU. During one meeting between Boris Dovbnya, the political officer of the Soviet advisory group, and Chris Hani, ANC National Executive Committee member and MK Chief of Staff — with A. Bendikov serving as interpreter — a specific issue was raised: sending a group of 20 cadets to study at a military-political school in the USSR and at the Higher Party School under the CPSU Central Committee.⁷³

Such meetings often ended with shared feasts, where Oliver Tambo and other ANC leaders invariably “raised toasts and delivered speeches about the imminent victory over apartheid, expressing gratitude

from the ANC to the Soviet Union and the CPSU.”

Many personal meetings with ANC leaders were conducted by Colonel Mikhail Konovalenko⁷⁴, the head of the group of Soviet military specialists with the ANC/MK in Angola in 1985–1988, separately, without the involvement of an interpreter. Alexander Bendikov held his commander in very high regard. He recalls: *“Mikhail Ivanovich was respected by the ANC leadership. He often met with them privately to resolve important and confidential matters, responded promptly to their requests, and maintained not only professional but also friendly relations with them. He spoke excellent English and did not need an interpreter.”*

M. Konovalenko also enjoyed enormous authority among his subordinates. Bendikov notes: *“I personally was ready to die for my commander. He taught me a great deal, made a man out of me, and always respected us as individuals. He was never arbitrary or overbearing; he always behaved tactfully and respectfully toward us. In our free time, we were allowed to do whatever we wanted, without unnecessary restrictions.”*

ANC fighters and commanders addressed Soviet specialists with the prefix “comrade.”

Soviet military personnel did not use pseudonyms; instead, their real names were usually adapted into an English form. For example, Mikhail Konovalenko was called “Comrade Michael,” his successor in 1988 Viktor Belush — “Comrade Victor.” Alexander Bendikov was referred to as

“Comrade Alex,” while German Pimenov, who replaced V. Shirayev as head of the group, was called “Comrade George.” The specialist in guerrilla tactics Kalizhan Alzhanov, a Kazakh by nationality, was known among ANC fighters and commanders as “Comrade Kali.”⁷⁵

Perhaps the only exception was Vyacheslav Shirayev, who in Angola was called “Comrade Ivan.” This was not because the name “Vyacheslav” was difficult to pronounce or associate with an English equivalent. The reason was that Shirayev had arrived in Angola with documents bearing the name Ivan Sharov. Vyacheslav Shirayev himself recounted this story at the Union of Angola Veterans. Before his assignment to Angola, he had worked as a chief of the GRU station “under cover” of one of the Soviet embassies in Southeast Asia. During that period, a traitor recruited by American intelligence was uncovered among embassy staff. It was assumed that he might have disclosed the names of intelligence officers. Therefore, Shirayev was urgently recalled to Moscow, and when preparing him for deployment to Angola, he was issued cover documents under a different name in order to mislead the CIA.

Soviet specialists working with the ANC/MK in Angola operated independently from the advisory apparatus of FAPLA and had almost no interaction with Soviet specialists assigned to Angolan units. For example, A. Bendikov recalls: *“While in Luanda, we did not attend general assemblies at the Soviet mission.*

Mikhail Ivanovich Konovalenko (1947–2025), Colonel (Ret.). In 1968, he graduated from the Saratov Military Chemical School and served in the Moscow Military District as a platoon commander and assistant chief of staff of a military unit. In 1972, he enrolled in the Military Academy of Chemical Defence, graduating in 1976. That same year, he entered the Military Academy of the Soviet Army, which he graduated in 1979.

From 1980 to 1981, he served as part of the Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces in Afghanistan. He later served in the central apparatus of the Ministry of Defence and made multiple short-term deployments to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

From 1985 to 1988, he was on assignment in the People’s Republic of Angola as head of the group of Soviet military specialists working with the Umkhonto we Sizwe formations of the African National Congress (ANC). He worked directly with Godfrey Ngwenya, commander of MK forces in Angola from 1983 to 1989 (after the fall of apartheid in South Africa, General Ngwenya held several high-ranking positions in the new army and in 2005 was appointed Chief of the South African National Defence Force).

He met on numerous occasions with ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe leaders, including Oliver



KONOVALENKO
Mikhail Ivanovich

Tambo, Joe Modise, Chris Hani, Ronnie Kasrils, and others.

From 1989 to 1990, he studied at the National Defence College of India. In 1991–1992, he served as the senior military expert of the Russian delegation in the Joint Military-Political Commission for the peaceful settlement in Angola. From 1993 to 1998, he was Russia’s military attaché to the Republic of Namibia.

He was awarded the Order of the Red Star, the Order “For Service to the Motherland in the Armed Forces” (3rd class), and 14 medals. He held a Master’s degree in Military Science.



On Mondays, we usually reported to the formation of our group wearing everyday FAPLA uniform—that is, a beige or light blue short-sleeved shirt, green trousers, black or brown polished shoes, and a FAPLA belt—in order not to stand out from other Soviet military personnel working with FAPLA. But after the formation, we would go home and change into civilian clothes.

We generally moved around only in civilian attire, but always carried weapons. This was due to special security measures, since South African intelligence was active and searching for weak points and access routes to ANC camps and personnel in Angola.”

Soviet specialists also behaved cautiously in their contacts with the medical staff of the ANC Red Cross hospital in Luanda. A. Bendikov recalls: “Those who went to that hospital were instructed by their group leader about possible uncomfortable questions and, in

general, to be careful in their statements. I went there twice with our doctor. We discussed purely professional medical matters with a certain doctor—an Englishman named Fred—and conducted patient rounds. Several times he tried to start conversations on unrelated topics, but we immediately steered them back to professional issues. Personally, judging by his reactions, I got the impression that he understood Russian.”⁷⁶

At the same time, Soviet advisors working with the ANC maintained constant contact with their colleagues—Soviet specialists working with the Namibian national liberation movement SWAPO in Angola. This was due to the similarity of their tasks, the shared specifics of their work, and the need to exchange accumulated experience.

Moreover, when necessary, specialists assigned to the ANC/MK could be transferred to the SWAPO

group and vice versa. For example, in 1985, a small-arms employment specialist, Captain Igor Sheptun, and a tactics and infantry fire training specialist, Major Kalizhan Alzhanov⁷⁷, were transferred from the SWAPO training camp in Lubango to the ANC Caculama camp.

A. Bendikov recalls: “We constantly interacted with colleagues who worked with SWAPO patriots, and not only on work matters. In 1988, to mark another anniversary of the USSR’s victory in the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet embassy in Luanda decided to organize a concert involving musical groups from the national liberation movements of SWAPO and the ANC.”

Mikhail Konovalenko appointed me responsible for organizing this event. I was introduced to our officers working with SWAPO in Luanda, and together we began selecting a group of performers from



100. Colonel M. Konovalenko, senior officer of the group of Soviet military specialists with the ANC/MK, near the villa of Soviet military specialists in Malanje, Angola, 1988. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko

101. Address to the cadets of the Caculama camp by John Nkadimeng, member of the ANC National Executive Committee and General Secretary of SACTU (South African trade union). Seated: Colonel M. Konovalenko, senior officer of the group of Soviet military specialists with the ANC (left), and Major General N. Kurushkin, head of the Northern Training Centre for personnel of national liberation movements, who arrived from Moscow, 1988. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko

102. Arrival of ANC President Oliver Tambo at Malanje airport for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the ANC (right, in the centre). On the left is Colonel João Ernesto dos Santos "Liberdade," the provincial commissioner of Malanje (governor of the province), member of the MPLA-PT Politburo. Among the accompanying group is M. Konovalenko, the senior officer of the group of Soviet military specialists with the ANC. Angola, 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko

the ANC and SWAPO and conducting rehearsals. The cooperation proved fruitful: the concert at the embassy was a great success, with a full house and invited foreign guests.

The SWAPO members performed their national and new guerrilla songs beautifully. The ANC members also sang their songs and even performed an encore of the famous "Gumbo Dance" of South African miners. This number is still famous worldwide today and is performed by the "Amandla" ensemble from South Africa. The concert went excellently; I was even awarded a written commendation from the embassy, although unfortunately it has not been preserved.

The results of the work of Soviet military specialists with the ANC/MK in Angola are impressive. According to V. Shiryayev, on the territory of Angola, with the participation of about 200 Soviet military specialists and

10 interpreters, up to 8,000 South African patriots were trained in the following fields: combat tactics at units up to battalion level; mine warfare and engineering; air defence; ground artillery; airborne forces; special radio communications and repair of radio equipment; driving and maintenance of vehicles; field and medical support; organisation of military operations under deep underground conditions; and political and cultural-educational work in the troops.⁷⁸

Through Angola, the USSR also supplied weapons, military equipment, vehicles, and other matériel to the ANC. This enabled Umkhonto we Sizwe units to conduct combat operations in formations of 2–3 battalions for up to three months.⁷⁹ As a result, by the late 1980s, Umkhonto we Sizwe was capable of carrying out up to 180 combat operations within South Africa.

At the same time, a key condition for Soviet military assistance to the ANC was that targets were limited strictly to the army, police, and military and economic infrastructure of South Africa — never the civilian population, including the White minority.

Vyacheslav Shiryayev noted that the very appearance of modern Soviet weapons and well-trained fighters in the ANC came as a shock to the apartheid regime and served as a powerful factor for the oppressed Black majority.

"I remember the indescribable delight of ANC President Oliver Tambo when, in March 1982, he personally hit a target — a lit cigarette at a distance of over 500 meters — with a Strela-2M man-portable surface-to-air missile system, in the presence of many of his subordinates," he recalled.⁸⁰



103. The leadership of the Caculama camp and M. Konovalenko (centre) on the parade ground for personnel formations. Standing next to M. Konovalenko are John Nkademeng, Godfrey Ngwenya, and other MK commanders. An improvised podium is visible in the background. 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko.

104. M. Konovalenko (left) and N. Kurushkin with MK commanders arriving at the site of one of the new ANC/MK camps in Angola. 1988. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko.



Most MK veterans remember their Soviet mentors with great warmth and gratitude. One of the MK leaders, James Ngculu, wrote about V. Shiryayev: "Comrade Ivan was so deeply involved in ANC affairs at all levels that he became one of us... The leadership, especially Mzwai Piliso and the Revolutionary Council, discussed military and strategic matters with him, and gradually we all came to appreciate his knowledge and the respect he had earned among the ANC leadership.

Whenever meetings of the Regional Commissariat were held in Luanda, we would always arrange to meet him in the evenings after the sessions and enjoy his hospitality. Of course, there were many intense political discussions, completely uninhibited, since Comrade Ivan had a deep understanding of the ANC and other liberation movements in Africa. He had also served in Vietnam and Laos and could share valuable experience with us.

Comrade Ivan trained many comrades in military affairs, especially those urgently needed for other assignments within the organisation...⁸¹

Shiryayev assessed the use of Angolan territory for training personnel of the South African national liberation movement as follows: "It can be said plainly: most of the current leaders of South Africa underwent military training under our guidance, including in Angola. To this day, many leaders of the national liberation movement (now presidents, ministers, members of parliament, senior generals of the South African Defence Force, and ordinary citizens of the country) warmly remember their Soviet advisers, instructors, and teachers who worked with them in ANC camps in Angola...

And I would especially like to thank the ANC leadership for the attention it paid to ensuring the safety of Soviet military specialists and their families."

In his memoirs, V. Shiryayev emphasizes: "I would especially like to note that the attitude of the government and the people of Angola toward

South African patriots was always friendly and warm. Even while in a state of civil war and under conditions of near-total economic devastation, Angola nevertheless sought and found opportunities to provide the ANC with whatever assistance it could. The goodwill of the Angolans also extended to Soviet military specialists working with the ANC, who in turn tried to respond in kind. We established strong, trusting relationships with representatives of the country's President and with local provincial authorities."

A sign of deep gratitude and appreciation for the USSR's international assistance to the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe was the fact that the modern leadership of South Africa awarded a number of Russian military and civilian figures the Order of the Companions of O.R. Tambo. Among those who received this high honour at various times were V. Shiryayev, V. Shubin, Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary V. Kazimirov⁸², V. Solodovnikov, A. Urnov, as well as State Duma deputy of the sixth convocation from the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, member of the Presidium and Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPRF in 2008–2013, V. Tetyokin.

Sergey Kolomnin

APPENDIX:

List⁸³ of Soviet specialists who worked in ANC/MK camps in Angola in the mid and late 1980s (with indication of their official positions in the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces and the duration of their assignments)

- **Major Vladimir Feliksovich Lebedev**, specialist in the combat use of small arms, 30 Apr 1978 — 25 Apr 1981;
- **Major Kalizhan Kuanyshbaevich Alzhanov**, specialist in tactics of motorized infantry units, 4 Mar 1982 — 10 Jan 1985;
- **Colonel German Semyonovich Pimenov**, specialist in military-combat operations, 17 Jun 1982 — 10 Sep 1985;
- **Lieutenant Colonel Boris Ivanovich Dovbnya**, special political officer of the ANC group, 31 Oct 1985 — 29 Oct 1988;
- **Lieutenant Colonel Leonid Nefedovich Kukovitsyn**, specialist in military intelligence of the ANC, 27 Mar 1985 — 5 Apr 1988;
- **Major Konstantin Nikolaevich Siryk**, specialist in special training and hand-to-hand combat, 25 Dec 1983 — 29 Mar 1986;
- **Colonel Viktor Fyodorovich Belush**, advisor to the head of ANC regional command, 28 Apr 1987 — 27 Oct 1990;
- **Senior Lieutenant Alexander Eduardovich Bendikov**, English interpreter, 30 Sep 1986 — 25 Apr 1989;
- **Colonel Mikhail Ivanovich Konovalenko**, advisor to the head of ANC regional command in Angola, 1 Sep 1985 — 11 Jun 1988;
- **Senior Lieutenant Mikhail Ivanovich Shchepotin**, specialist in firearms training, 25 Dec 1984 — 18 Jul 1987;
- **Major Anatoly Konstantinovich Netkachev**, firearms training specialist of the ANC group, 1 Sep 1987 — 11 Apr 1989;
- **Lieutenant Colonel Vladimir Anatolyevich Kozodoy**, artillery training specialist of the Soviet military specialists group with the ANC, 28 Jun 1984 — 27 Jun 1987;
- **Lieutenant Colonel Nikolai Ivanovich Pirch**, military intelligence specialist at the ANC training centre, 26 Mar 1982 — 30 Mar 1985;
- **Pavel Alexandrovich Pivovarov**, English interpreter of the Soviet specialists group in the ANC, 1 Sep 1987 — 11 Apr 1989;
- **Lieutenant Colonel Vasily Samuilovich Pavlov**, logistics specialist of the Soviet specialists group in the ANC, 9 Dec 1986 — 6 Apr 1989;
- **Captain Igor Mikhailovich Sheptun**, specialist in materiel and combat use of small arms, 27 Jul 1982 — 25 Jul 1984;
- **Yuri Vasilievich Shkarpetkin**, physician (therapist) of the Soviet military specialists group with the ANC, 12 Aug 1990 — 19 Dec 1991;
- **Senior Lieutenant Konstantin Vladislavovich Krupsky**, English interpreter of the ANC group, 10 Nov 1987 — 1 Jul 1989;
- **Lieutenant Colonel Ivan Ivanovich Streltsov**, specialist in mine and demolition operations of the Soviet specialists group in the ANC, 26 May 1985 — 28 May 1988;
- **Colonel Vladimir Konstantinovich Troshin**, specialist in special radio communications with the ANC, 23 Dec 1986 — 26 Dec 1989;
- **Major Mikhail Sergeyevich Bulygin**, English interpreter of the ANC group, 15 May 1983 — 19 Mar 1985;
- **Civilian employee of the Soviet Army Vasily Nikolayevich Fediy**, English interpreter of the ANC group, 5 Mar 1982 — 28 Feb 1985;
- **Lieutenant Vitaly Dmitrievich Svetlyshev**, Portuguese and English interpreter of the ANC group, 2 Sep 1981 — 23 Aug 1984;
- **Captain Sergey Anatolyevich Belyakov**, English interpreter of the ANC group, 9 Sep 1986 — 29 Sep 1989.





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105. Soviet specialists attached to the ANC before departing for the Umkhonto we Sizwe Caculama training camp: military intelligence specialist Nikolai Pirch, small arms materiel and combat use specialist Igor Sheptun, firearms training specialist Kalizhan K. Alzhanov, military interpreters Vitaly Svetlyshev and Mikhail Bulygin. Angola, 1983. Photo from the archives of K. Alzhanov

106. Group of Soviet military specialists attached to the ANC/MK: Mikhail Bulygin, Vasily Fediy, Igor Sheptun, Kalizhan Alzhanov, Vitaly Svetlyshev — discussing issues related to the training of ANC fighters. Malanje, Angola, 1983. Photo from the archives of K. Alzhanov

107. Specialist in guerrilla warfare tactics and firearms training Kalizhan Alzhanov (Comrade Kali) worked in Angola with both ANC and SWAPO patriots. Here he is at the SWAPO training camp near Lubango. Angola, 1982. Photo from the archives of K. Alzhanov

108. Light breakfast. Soviet military specialists attached to the ANC and their wives at a shooting range during a break between personal weapons training exercises. Outskirts of Malanje, Angola, 1986. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko





109. Soviet military specialists at the Caculama camp with female MK fighters from the camp's honour guard platoon. 1986. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
110. At the Caculama camp. M. Konovalenko (left) and his counterparts: John Nkademeng, member of the ANC National Executive Committee and General Secretary of SACTU; Godfrey Ngwenya, commander of MK forces in Angola from 1983 to 1989 and future Chief of the South African National Defence Force (from 2005); Hagger McBerry, who from 1997, with the rank of Lieutenant General, headed the Medical Service of the South African National Defence Force; and the camp commander. Angola, 1986. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
111. Hand-to-hand combat training at the Caculama camp conducted by a Soviet instructor (centre). To his left is a Soviet English-language interpreter, and to his right an ANC fighter translating English terms into one of South Africa's national languages. Malanje Province, Angola, 1986. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
112. Female MK fighters from the Caculama camp undergoing firearms training. Malanje Province, Angola, 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
113. Caculama camp. Major General N. Kurushkin (left), head of the Northern Training Centre for National Liberation Movements, visiting from Moscow; Senior officer of the Soviet Military Specialist Group attached to the ANC in Angola M. Konovalenko (centre); Soviet instructors and the camp commander inspecting the camp's air defence positions. 1988. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
114. Members of the Soviet military specialist group attached to the ANC/MK: a specialist in mine and demolition operations and a specialist in urban combat tactics photographed next to the villa where they were living. Malanje. Angola, 1986. Photo from the archives of A. Bendikov
115. Deputy of M. Konovalenko for political affairs, Lieutenant Colonel B. Dovbnya, with female cadets of the Caculama camp. 1988. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko





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116. Godfrey Ngwenya, commander of MK forces in Angola from 1983 to 1989 and future Chief of the South African National Defence Force (from 2005), Lieutenant General (2001). Angola, Malanje, ANC/MK Caculama camp, 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
117. Presentation of commemorative gifts to distinguished trainees and commanders of the Caculama camp. On stage: M. Konovalenko (left), his deputy for political affairs Lieutenant Colonel B. Dovbnya, the camp commissar, and the camp commander. 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
118. Address to ANC/MK fighters of the Caculama camp by Deputy of M. Konovalenko for political affairs, Lieutenant Colonel B. Dovbnya. To his right: M. Konovalenko, N. Kurushkin, and the camp commander. 1988. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
119. Address to ANC/MK fighters at the Caculama camp by Major General N. Kurushkin, head of the Northern Training Centre for National Liberation Movements, visiting from Moscow. On the left, wearing a beret, is M. Konovalenko. 1988. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
120. M. Konovalenko, Godfrey Ngwenya, and John Nkadimeng performing a prone firing exercise with Kalashnikov rifles. Firing range of the Caculama camp, Malanje, Angola, 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
121. Arrival of ANC President Oliver Tambo (left, wearing glasses, holding the flagpole) for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the ANC at the "Umkhonto we Sizwe" camp in Caculama. Among those accompanying him: Godfrey Ngwenya, Joe Modise, M. Konovalenko. Angola, 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
122. Training of MK fighters in hand-to-hand combat conducted by Major Konstantin N. Syryk, specialist in special training of the Soviet Military Specialists Group at the Caculama camp. Angola, Malanje, 1986. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko





123. During the stay in Malanje of Major General N. Kurushkin, head of the Northern Training Centre for National Liberation Movements (standing second from the left), a photograph was taken of the command staff of the Caculama camp and the Soviet military advisors. Colonel M. Konovalenko (seated on the right) signed this photo by hand as: "Caculama, at the commander's dugout." On the far right stands Lieutenant Colonel B. Dovbnya. 1988. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
124. Arrival at the Caculama camp of Major General N. Kurushkin, head of the Northern Training Centre for National Liberation Movements. On the right are B. Dovbnya and M. Konovalenko. 1988. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
125. Soviet military advisors and ANC/MK commanders having lunch in a mess hall arranged in one of the dugouts of the Caculama camp. M.I. Konovalenko is on the left. Malanje, Angola, 1986. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
126. Part of the Soviet Military Specialists Group at the ANC/MK Caculama camp photographed near a baobab tree. From left to right: specialists in logistics support, welding of construction structures, repair and maintenance of motor vehicles; group leader M. Konovalenko; a specialist in mine-explosive operations; Colonel V. Belush; interpreter S. Belyakov; and a specialist in long-range radio communications repair and maintenance. 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
127. Senior officer of the Soviet Military Specialists Group at ANC/MK in Angola, Colonel Mikhail I. Konovalenko (right), and his deputy for political affairs, Lieutenant Colonel Boris I. Dovbnya. Angola, Malanje, Caculama camp, 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
128. Senior officer of the Soviet Military Specialists Group at ANC/MK in Angola, Colonel M. Konovalenko, addressing cadets at the Caculama camp. Seated in the presidium: B. Dovbnya and the camp leadership. 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko





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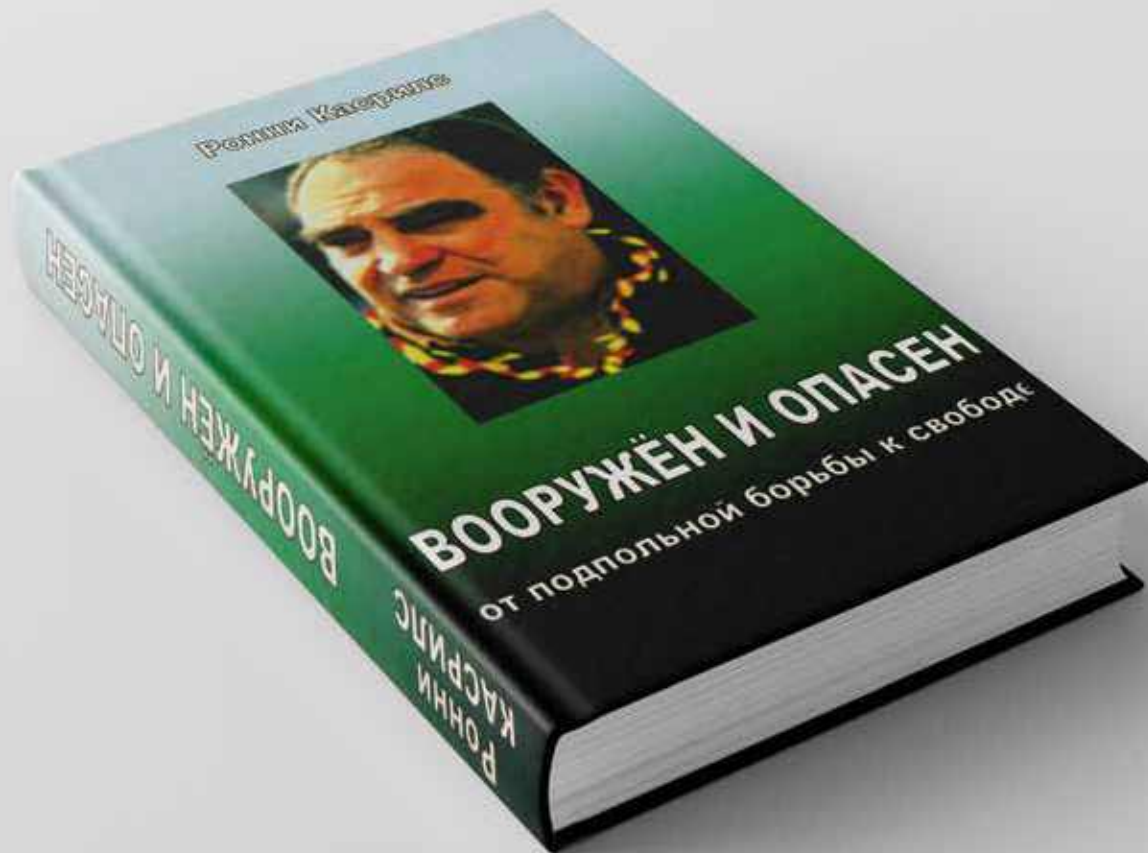
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129. M. Konovalenko with his subordinates at the Caculama camp. From left to right: a military topography specialist, a mine-explosive specialist, the group leader, an air defence specialist (Strela-2M), an artillery systems specialist (Grad-P, mortars), and a hand-to-hand combat instructor. Angola, 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
130. M. Konovalenko, senior officer of the Soviet Military Specialists Group at ANC/MK in Angola, and Godfrey Ngwenya, commander of MK forces in Angola (1983–1989), performing a pistol shooting exercise. Firing range of the Caculama camp. 1987. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
131. One of the MK leaders, Ronnie Kasrils, frequently visited Caculama; his son Andrew underwent military training at this camp. In the photo: R. Kasrils with M. Konovalenko. Angola, Malanje, Caculama camp, 1986. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
132. Soviet military specialists attached to ANC/MK with their wives at a football match at the local stadium in Malanje. Angola, 1986. Photo from the archives of A. Bendikov





Ронни Касрилс
To Sergei Kolominin,
Best wishes
Ronnie Kasrils

ВООРУЖЁН И ОПАСЕН

**От подпольной борьбы
к свободе**


ИТРК
 Москва
 2005

133. Major General N. Kurushkin, head of the Northern Training Centre for National Liberation Movements, (right), who arrived from Moscow to Angola to assist with operations, and M. Konovalenko, Senior officer of the Group of Soviet Military Specialists with the ANC/MK in Angola, near the villa of the Soviet military advisers' group in Malanje. N. Kurushkin is dressed in a brand-new FAPLA uniform, issued to him at the Soviet military mission in Luanda before his arrival in Malanje. Angola, 1988. Photo from the archives of M. Konovalenko
134. V. Shiryayev, military-political adviser to the regional command of MK in Angola (centre), V. Lebedev, senior officer of group of Soviet Military Specialists with MK in Malanje, Major (right), and a tactics specialist from the group of Soviet military specialists with MK (holding an AK rifle). Malanje, Angola, 1981. Photo from the archive of V. Lebedev
135. The book by Ronnie Kasrils "Armed and Dangerous: From Underground Struggle to Freedom," published in Russia in 2005, and the title page of the edition with a dedication from R. Kasrils to Sergei Kolominin

"We have a long history of cooperation with Russia, especially during the Soviet period, when most of Africa was colonized and received Russian support for liberation from colonial rule."

Emmerson Mhangagwa,
President of Zimbabwe

Assistance to the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) in Angola (1977–1980)





136. Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation with Emmerson Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe. St. Petersburg, 6, June 2024 (photo from kremlin.ru)

137. Joshua Nkomo, one of the leaders of the struggle for independence and the founders of the Republic of Zimbabwe. Head of the ZAPU party (since 1980 - Patriotic Front), Vice-President of Zimbabwe (1990-1999). After his death in 1999, he was declared a national hero and the Father of Independence

138. Robert Mugabe, leader of ZANU and since 1980 Head of the ruling party of the Republic of Zimbabwe ZANU-Patriotic Front, Prime Minister (1980-1987), President of Zimbabwe (1987-2017)

Friendly relations between Russia and Zimbabwe were born during the struggle of the Zimbabwean people for their independence. The Soviet Union provided military and political help to Zimbabwean patriots. On the territory of Angola, this assistance was specifically provided in the period 1977-1980 through the training of military personnel for this movement.

The Zimbabwe African People's Union, which joined the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front with the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU, led by Robert Mugabe), at that time set the task of overthrowing militarily the racist regime in Southern Rhodesia (colonial name of Zimbabwe) where all

power belonged to the white minority and most of the fertile land was in the hands of white farmers.

To accomplish this task, ZAPU created an armed wing of its movement: the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). In 1977, the leadership of ZAPU and the command of ZIPRA set the task to train in a short time a large number of fighters who can wield small arms and are able to act tactically competently on the ground as part of units.

Since it was not possible to train ZIPRA combat units on the territory of Southern Rhodesia, the leadership of ZAPU appealed to the friendly authorities of Angola and Zambia with a request to allow the placement of training camps on their

territory. At the same time, Joshua Nkomo, the leader of ZAPU, visited Moscow in January 1977 and asked the USSR to provide Soviet instructors for the ZIPRA training centre in Angola, as well as to provide graduates with weapons and ammunition. An agreement was reached with the Angolan authorities to open a training camp on Angolan territory, and the Cubans with a military contingent in Angola took over the responsibility for supply and promised to provide other necessary assistance in the process of educating Zimbabweans.⁸⁸

A training camp for ZIPRA fighters of the Zimbabwe African People's Union was located in the Angolan province of Moxico near the village of



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139. Study of the Soviet air defence missile system ZGU-1 by Zimbabwean soldiers. Helping an Angolan FAPLA soldier (left) and a Cuban instructor. ZAPU Patriot Training Camp. Boma, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

140. A souvenir photo with Cuban military instructors. Vladimir Lebedev, A. Andreev's wife Faina and Orynбек Dzhandosov. Training camp for Zimbabwean patriots, Boma, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

141. Training of Zimbabwean fighters for the mountain air defence missile system ZGU-1. On the left is Vladimir Lebedev, Soviet instructor. Boma Camp, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

Boma, located 18 km from the provincial capital — Luena (under the Portuguese the city was called Vila Luso).

Before the camp turned into a well-developed area, it was necessary to work hard to bring the existing buildings into proper condition. There were several one-story brick houses on the territory: in some there were classrooms, in others Soviet and Cuban military specialists resided.⁸⁹ In the camp, slit trenches, hideouts and shelters were also dug in the ground, spacious sheds with hammocks were arranged for the rest of the ZAPU fighters. There were also warehouses with food and a kitchen. Soviet military specialists were located in the camp together with the ZAPU fighters and shared with them all the difficulties of field conditions. As Soviet envoys noted, they and the Cuban military had to live at first *“in brick buildings without amenities, the windows of some of which had no glass or even frames”*.⁹⁰

Under the leadership of Soviet and Cuban military personnel, the cadets of the training centre equipped: a sports camp, a shooting range, trenches were dug for firing small arms, machine guns and recoilless guns. In the camp, cracks, hideouts and shelters were also dug in the ground, in case of an air attack. The centre was equipped with a parade ground with a podium for formation reviews and ceremonial events. The camp was guarded by the cadets themselves and an attached Angolan platoon of FAPLA soldiers.

The number of Soviet specialists was small — about two dozen people.

The group included instructors of small arms, engineering, sapper and explosives work, specialists in topography, communications, and guerilla warfare, teachers of tactics and weapons practice. The specialists came both from ordinary army structures and from the corresponding training centres of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces on the territory of the

USSR, who had experience in working with foreign contingents.⁹¹ To ensure the educational process, four Soviet English interpreters worked in the group, each company had a Cuban who spoke English.

The first group of Soviet specialists, consisting of 12 people, arrived in Boma in July 1977 and stayed there until July 1978.⁹² It was headed by Lieutenant Colonel Vladimir Penin, who, according to the documents of the 10th Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR, was “an educational planning specialist”.⁹³ Captain Anatoly Burenko was appointed his deputy for political affairs (educational work).⁹⁴ In July 1978, another group of Soviet military specialists headed by Lieutenant Colonel Vyacheslav Zverev arrived for replacement. In official documents his post was called a “specialist in tactics of Army units”.⁹⁵ In May

1979, he as the head of the group was replaced by Lieutenant Colonel Viktor Tabachnik, also a specialist in tactics of Army units.

As part of the first group of Soviet military specialists led by Lieutenant Colonel V. Penin, Major Vladimir Oleynikov served as a military reconnaissance specialist in the Boma camp.

Since the high school, he has been fond of drawing, sculpture, wood carving, and he carried this hobby throughout his life. In Boma, Vladimir Oleynikov in his free time painted sketches, still lifes, portraits of Zimbabwean fighters of the ZAPU. He gave some of these drawings to Zimbabwean patriots, but took the other part with him to the USSR. Some of the African works of Major Vladimir Oleynikov, as well as his photographs stored in the archives of his family, are published in this photo album.

In the group of Lieutenant Colonel V. Zverev was Captain⁹⁶ Vladimir Lebedev, who was a specialist in the combat use of small arms, who kindly provided his archival photographs from Angola for this photo album.⁹⁷ Photos by V. Lebedev, pictures and the drawings of V. Oleynikov are of enduring value for the preservation of historical memory and the understanding by our contemporaries of the process of providing international assistance to African national liberation movements in the 70s and 80s of the twentieth century in Angola.

Formally, the Joint Armed Forces group of Soviet military advisers at the ZAPU/ZIPRA training centre in the province of Moxico was subordinate to Lieutenant General V. Shakhnovich, the Chief Military Adviser in Angola, and was provided through the Soviet military mission in Luanda with weapons, vehicles



and received financial allowances there. But the staff of the Chief Military Adviser did not interfere in the educational process, the head of the group received guidance directly from Moscow.

In total, according to the memoirs of V. Lebedev⁹⁸, 2,160 Zimbabwean soldiers, divided into 12 companies (180 people in each company), were trained in the ZAPU Boma camp.

Not only infantry units were trained, but also crews for T 34 tanks, BTR 152 APCs and BRDM 1. On 30 November 1979, the next graduation took place: 10 T 34 tank crews, including drivers, 20 drivers and machine gunners for BTR 152s, 15 drivers and machine gunners-loaders for BRDM 1 were trained.⁹⁹

Every two months, about 2000 cadets arrived at the camp via the territory of neighboring Zambia in 30 Soviet-made KrAZ vehicles that were stationed in

the camp. The course lasted two months, after which the cadets were sent to Zambia and placed under the ZIPRA command. The training programme included Army tactics and training in coordinated actions of units as a group, sub-unit, platoon, company. Meanwhile, Cuban military personnel often acted as platoon and company commanders and, by their personal example, contributed to the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of the educational process.¹⁰⁰

At the end of the course, test company tactical exercises were conducted with overcoming a water obstacle. In addition, in the process of training, attention was paid to the tactics of guerrilla actions, the use of which would be required in the event of temporary failures of regular troops.¹⁰¹ In total, within a year, the first group of Soviet and Cuban specialists

trained and graduated about 10 thousand soldiers and commanders (company commander level) of ZIPRA.

The cadets were regularly trained in all types of small arms kept at the warehouses. Apart from light small arms, the cadets also mastered large-caliber weapons: a Vladimirov machine gun (14.5 mm) and a 12.7 mm DShK machine gun made in the USSR, as well as recoilless guns. Since small arms were of very different types (some came to the camp from various warehouses where they had been stored since the World War II, there were many automatic weapons produced in Germany, Belgium, and Great Britain), Soviet specialists had to carefully study them themselves at first. When training the units action, only a few people in the company were armed with small arms.

According to the memoirs of Soviet specialists, there was a danger of a surprise attack on the



142. Boma Zimbabwean Patriot Training Camp in Angola. Soviet advisers study the German MG-34 machine guns received by ZIPRA. Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

143. Zimbabwean fighters undergoing firearms training study the German NK-21 light machine gun. Boma Camp, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

144. The leaders of the "frontline states" at the Conference on the Liberation of Namibia demonstrate their solidarity in the struggle for the independence of African countries. From left to right: Sam Nujoma, SWAPO President, Kenneth Kaunda, the President of Zambia, Samora Machel, the President of Mozambique, Julius Nyerere, the President of Tanzania, Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, and J. Eduardo dos Santos, the President of Angola. Lusaka, Zambia, 1980



**LEBEDEV Vladimir
Feliksovich**

Vladimir Lebedev, Lieutenant Colonel (Ret), was born on 12 December 1945. In 1968 he graduated from the Far Eastern Higher Combined Arms Command School (DVOKU), in 1986 he graduated from the course of the Military Academy named after M. Frunze in Moscow. He served in the Primorsky Territory, in Blagoveshchinsk, Khabarovsk, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, in the city of Grozny. In 1978, as a Captain, he was sent to Angola through the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces to assist the patriots of Zimbabwe in the Boma training camp (Moshiko province, not far from Luena) as a specialist in the combat use of small arms. The military rank of "Major" was assigned during a business trip to Angola, in which he stayed for three years: from 30 April 1978 to 25 April 1981.

After some time following the raid and bombing of the Boma camp by Rhodesian aircraft (26 February 1979), all the non-permanent personnel of the ZAPU, as well as Soviet and Cuban instructors, were evacuated from Boma for security reasons to a new location, the Caculama camp in the province of Malanje.

After completing its training with the ZAPU fighters — in connection with the declaration of independence of Zimbabwe, all Zimbabwean cadets left for Zambia in spring of 1980 — the Caculama camp was reoriented to work with the patriots of the African National Congress of South Africa. V. Lebedev, together with other Soviet specialists, continued his work in Angola with the fighters of the ANC. He worked under the leadership of the adviser at the regional command of the ANC in Angola and the head of the SMA group with ANC, V. Shiryayev. By his decision, V. Lebedev, as the most experienced specialist, was appointed the head of the SMA group in Malanje and at the same time continued to perform his duties as an instructor in the use of small arms.

After returning from Angola in April 1981, he continued to serve in the Soviet Army. He retired in 1990 from the post of chief of staff of the motorized rifle regiment of the garrison of Grozny. He was awarded with many state medals of the USSR and the medal of the Union of Angola Veterans "For Providing International Assistance to Angola". Military pensioner.





145. Vladimir Lebedev (in uniform in the centre), Vyacheslav Shiryaev on the left and his wife, on the right is the wife of Warrant Officer V. Klysh, the radio communication specialist of the SMA group with ANC, with her daughter. Malange Province, Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
146. Soviet instructors in the Boma camp. From right to left: V. Lukyanchikov, O. Dzhandosov, V. Lebedev and Warrant-officer G. Skakun, who was mortally wounded on 26 February 1979 during a Rhodesian air raid. 1978. Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
147. Vladimir Oleynikov is in the centre. His handsign photo is: "With a detachment of the local army. Luena, March 1978."
148. Vladimir Oleynikov. Boma, May 1978
149. Vladimir Oleynikov in the Cuban uniform of "verde olivo". Boma, May 1978

Vladimir Oleynikov (1944–2001), Lieutenant Colonel. He was born in the Amur Region into a military family.

In 1963, he entered the Baku Higher Combined Arms Command School named after the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR. After successfully graduating from the military school, from 1967 he served in the following positions: commander of a motorcycle platoon, commander of a reconnaissance platoon on BRDM, commander of the reconnaissance company of the 15th independent reconnaissance battalion of the motorized division of the Southern Group of Forces (Hungary).

Then he served in the Baltic Military District in the following positions: commander of the division's reconnaissance company, head of reconnaissance of the Guards Tank Regiment, head of reconnaissance - head of the reconnaissance section of the headquarters of the Guards division.

In 1977, in the rank of Major through the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, he was sent to Angola to assist Zimbabwean patriots in the Boma training camp as a reconnaissance specialist. He was in Angola from 22 July 1977 to 18 July 1978.

After returning to the USSR, he continued his service. He finished his career as the head of intelligence of the army corps.

Since childhood, he was fond of drawing, sculpture, design and carried this hobby throughout his life. According to his plan and with his direct participation, a monument was created dedicated to the combat path of the 73rd Guards Tank Regiment, in which he served.

In Angola, in the Boma camp, Vladimir Oleynikov, in his free time, drew sketches, still life, portraits of Zimbabwean fighters of the ZAPU. He presented some drawings to Zimbabwean patriots, but took the other part with him to the USSR. Some of the African works of Vladimir Oleynikov, as well as his photographs stored in the archives of his family, are published in this photo album.

Awarded with the Medal of the Union of Angola Veterans "For the provision of international assistance to Angola."



OLEYNIKOV
Vladimir
Alexandrovich







150. Group of Soviet instructors at ZAPU with Angolan children in the village of Boma. Vladimir Oleynikov is standing on the right. Boma, 1977 Photo from the archives of V. Oleynikov

151. Vladimir Oleynikov with his colleague in the SMA group Sergey Islentiev. Boma, March 1978 Photo from the archives of V. Oleynikov

152. Vladimir Oleynikov. ZIPRA camp in Boma. 1977

153. A department store in the capital of the Angolan province of Moxico, the city of Luena (formerly Vila Luso). 1977. Photo from the archives of V. Oleynikov





The drawings by Vladimir Oleynikov: the village of Boma and its inhabitants, portraits of ZAPU patriots. The signature in the lower picture on the right is: "View of my monastery. I slept on the top bunk." Boma, Angola, 1977-1978

ZAPU camp by armed saboteurs of the Southern Rhodesian army. Therefore, measures were taken to organise the protection and possible defence of the camp: trenches were dug around it for standing position shooting, and weapons were zeroed in for one kilometer depth.¹⁰² The system of protection and defence of the camp included 22 permanent posts and 5 ambush positions, and when conducting classes with cadets outside the camp — in the field, during marches, at rest halts, precautions were also taken and guards were set up.¹⁰³

However, the air defence of the ZAPU camp, despite the presence of several ZGU-1¹⁰⁴ and DShK machine guns, could not be totally organised due to the lack of radar observation equipment. And the Angolan Air Force did not have enough fighter aircraft to cover the camp, moreover, they were all located mainly at the airfield in the capital Luanda.¹⁰⁵ The Rhodesians took advantage of this.

At 8:10 a.m. on 26 February 1979, four Rhodesian bombers “Canberra” (Air Force british-made) attacked the camp.¹⁰⁶ The attack was well planned and prepared: the bombers were accompanied by several Rhodesian Air Force fighters “Hunter” and an airborne command post on aircraft “Dakota”¹⁰⁷ which carried out a coordination with the South African Air Force. On the territory of occupied Namibia, at the military base in Rundu a squadron of Mirage aircraft of the South African Air Force was on duty in case Angolan fighters tried to intercept the Rhodesians.

The bombing began at the time of the formation of the camp personnel and was carried out with Mk 1 Alpha cluster bombs, which explains the large number of casualties. 192 ZIPRA fighters were killed and several hundred were wounded. Six Cuban instructors were also killed and 13 were wounded.¹⁰⁸ Some of the buildings in the camp were destroyed. Some Soviet instructors were also wounded and one of them, Warrant officer Grigory Skakun, a specialist in





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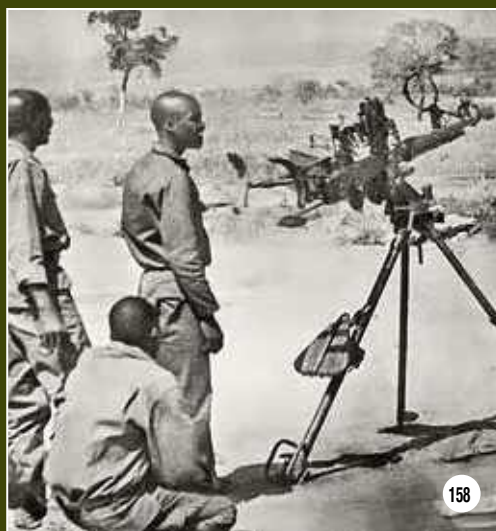
154. On 26 February 1979, the Southern Rhodesia Air Force launched a bombing and assault attack on the Boma training camp for Zimbabwean patriots in Angola. Nikolai Vinnik and Vladimir Lebedev, Soviet military instructors, inspect the bombed-out apartment building of Soviet military advisers on the territory of the camp. Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

155. Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, with Samora Machel, Mozambican President, at a Frontline States conference in Lusaka, Zambia, 1980





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156. Joshua Nkomo, ZAPU President, (in the centre) arrived at Zimbabwean Patriot Training Camp in Boma and was photographed with a group of Soviet military instructors. On the far right (sitting facing the camera) is Vladimir Oleynikov, on the far left (sitting) is Vasily Kurennoy, an armament specialist. Nearby from Nkomo (standing on the right) is Major Ivan Bryk, an engineering training specialist, who was later wounded in the leg during the bombing of Bona by the Southern Rhodesian Air Force. Angola, 1978. Photo from the archives of V. Oleynikov

157. Vladimir Lebedev, small arms instructor, teaches a Zimbabwean fighter shooting an AK rifle. Boma Camp, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

158. Zimbabwean crew of DShK heavy machine gun. Boma Camp, Angola 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

the operation of portable shooting equipment, died of wounds on 13 March 1979, despite the operation carried out in a Cuban hospital.¹⁰⁹

After the Rhodesian air raid on the ZAPU camp in Boma, security measures were strengthened, and several air defence gun mounts necessary infrastructure and radar support at the Luena airfield. A pair of MiG-21 fighters with Cuban pilots¹¹⁰ were transferred from Luanda to the nearest airfield in Luena. However, they could not fully carry out the task of providing air cover for the ZAPU camp due to the lack of the necessary infrastructure and radar support at the Luena airfield ZAPU. Therefore, after a few months, a decision was made to relocate the cadets and the entire camp to a safer location in the province of Malanje and to create a new training centre of the ZAPU there (60 km from the provincial capital of Malanje, not far from the village of Caculama). Soviet specialists and Cubans also moved there.¹¹¹

The camp in Boma was frequently visited by high-ranking leaders of ZAPU and ZIPRA. In particular, in 1978, ZAPU President Joshua Nkomo visited the camp. He personally inspected the organisation of training and combat training for the movement's fighters and was satisfied with the results of the work of the Soviet and Cuban teachers and instructors. His visit played a positive role in boostify the morale of his fighters and the high assessment of the quality of their training significantly strengthened the prestige of Soviet military specialists.¹¹²

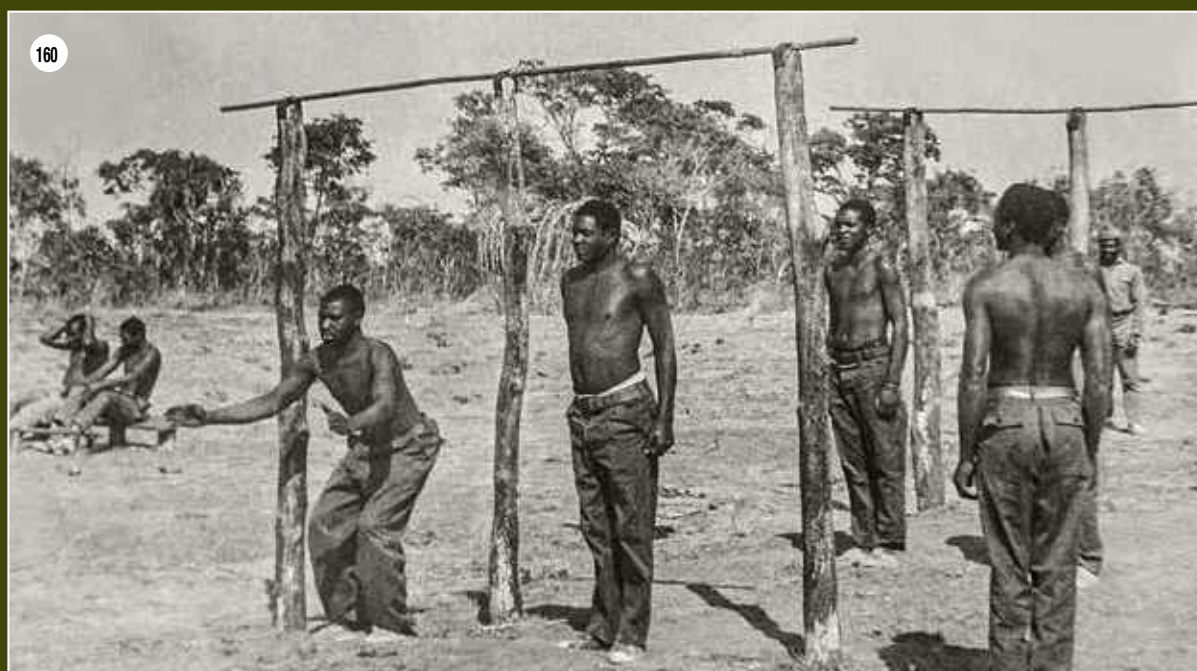
On the whole, the task set by the ZAPU leadership to train armed fighters for ZIPRA in Angola was fulfilled: within two and a half years, several tens of thousands of fighters and commanders were trained. Many of them subsequently, after the declaration of independence of Zimbabwe on 18 April 1980, joined the new Zimbabwean Armed Forces, and some moved to command posts. For example,

Ben Matiwaza, the commander of the ZIPRA camp in Boma, rose to the rank of Brigadier General in the new Zimbabwean army.¹¹³

Soviet specialists who worked in the Boma camp recall that the relationships between them, the Cubans, the ZIPRA fighters and the leadership of the ZAPU in the camp were always constructive, friendly and warm. The central and local Angolan authorities always provided assistance and met the halfway requests and wishes expressed.

After the end of the training course, before the departure of the next batch of trained ZIPRA fighters, cadets attended a parade on drill and ceremonies ground, where the soldiers and commanders expressed their deep gratitude to Soviet and Cuban specialists for training military personnel for the ZAPU movement. In their turn Soviet military specialists wished the ZAPU fighters a success in the struggle for the liberation of the Motherland and the construction of a new life in the country.

Sergey Kolomnin





159. ZIPRA fighters with a recoilless gun at the training firing position. Boma Camp, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
160. Zimbabwean cadets in physical training classes. ZAPU Camp, Boma, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
161. A Soviet instructor conducts practical exercises on the terrain. Training camp for Zimbabwean patriots ZAPU, Boma, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
162. A Zimbabwean crew shoots a Soviet-made DShK heavy machine gun. On the left is V. Lebedev, a Soviet military specialist. Boma Camp, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
163. The morning of 26 February 1979, ZAPU camp in Angola, Boma. Soviet instructors near the unexploded Mk1 "Alpha" cluster bomb dropped during the Southern Rhodesian air attack. In total, more than 80 such bombs were found and defused on the territory of the camp. Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev





164. Group photo of Soviet and Cuban specialists at the Zimbabwean Patriot Training Camp in Boma. In the centre is, Lieutenant Colonel Vyacheslav Zverev, the head of the SMA group, on the right are Captain Alexander Sizonenko and Captain Vladimir Lebedev, instructors in the combat use of small arms. On the left (peeking out between the Cubans) is Major Orynbek Dzhandosov, a specialist in the tactics of troops. Angola, 1978 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

165. Cadets of the ZAPU camp are getting a recoilless gun ready for a fight. Boma, 1978 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

166. Camp of ZAPU patriots in Angola. Solemn formation of personnel. The flags of Cuba and the USSR, the banner of the ZAPU and the flag of the People's Republic of Angola are raised on the flagpoles. Boma, 1978 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev



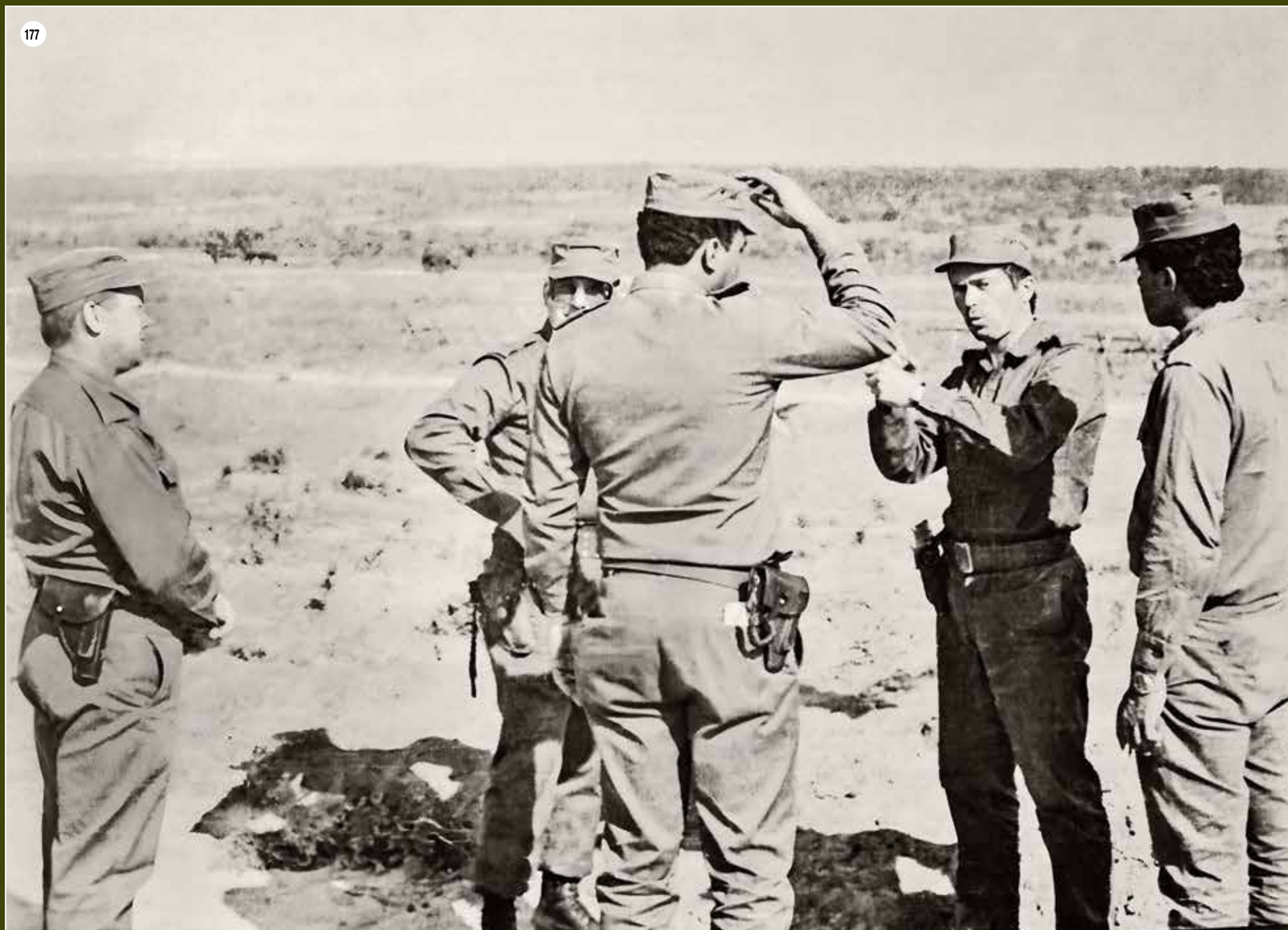


167. The morning of 26 February 1979, after the bombing of the Boma camp by Rhodesian aviation. Second from the left is Vladimir Lebedev, then Alexander Andreev, instructor in tactics, Ivan Dokai, BTR-152 APC specialist. Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
168. A mass grave of Zimbabwean patriots who died during the attack on the camp by South Rhodesian aviation on 26 February 1979. Boma, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
169. Soviet military instructors near the building damaged during the air attack by the Southern Rhodesian Air Force. ZAPU Camp, Boma, Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
170. A. Andreev, A. Sizonenko, V. Lebedev, soviet instructors, after zeroing western models of small arms. Shooting range of the Boma camp, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
171. Shooting range of the ZAPU camp in Boma. Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
172. The patriots of ZAPU were armed with a variety of small arms from various countries of the world. Boma camp. 1979. Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
173. General morning formation of the Soviet and the Cuban instructors of the ZAPU Boma camp. 1979. Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

174. A group of Cuban instructors of the ZAPU camp in Boma, they were photographed with the Soviet specialist V. Lebedev (in the centre). 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
175. "In this trench we took shelter from the bombs," Vladimir Lebedev (left) tells Captain Nikolai Vinnik, T-34 driving instructor, about the circumstances of the raid of the Southern Rhodesian Air Force on the Boma camp. 26 February 1979. Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev
176. Joint meeting dedicated to the Victory Day of the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945. On the podium in the first row are Captain A. Burenko, the political officer of the SMA group, the ZIPRA officer, a Cuban, Lieutenant Colonel A. Fidarov, the chief of staff of the SMA group, Lieutenant Colonel V. Penin, the head of the SMA group, and Major Maturel, the chief of staff of the group of Cuban instructors. Boma, Angola, 1978 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev







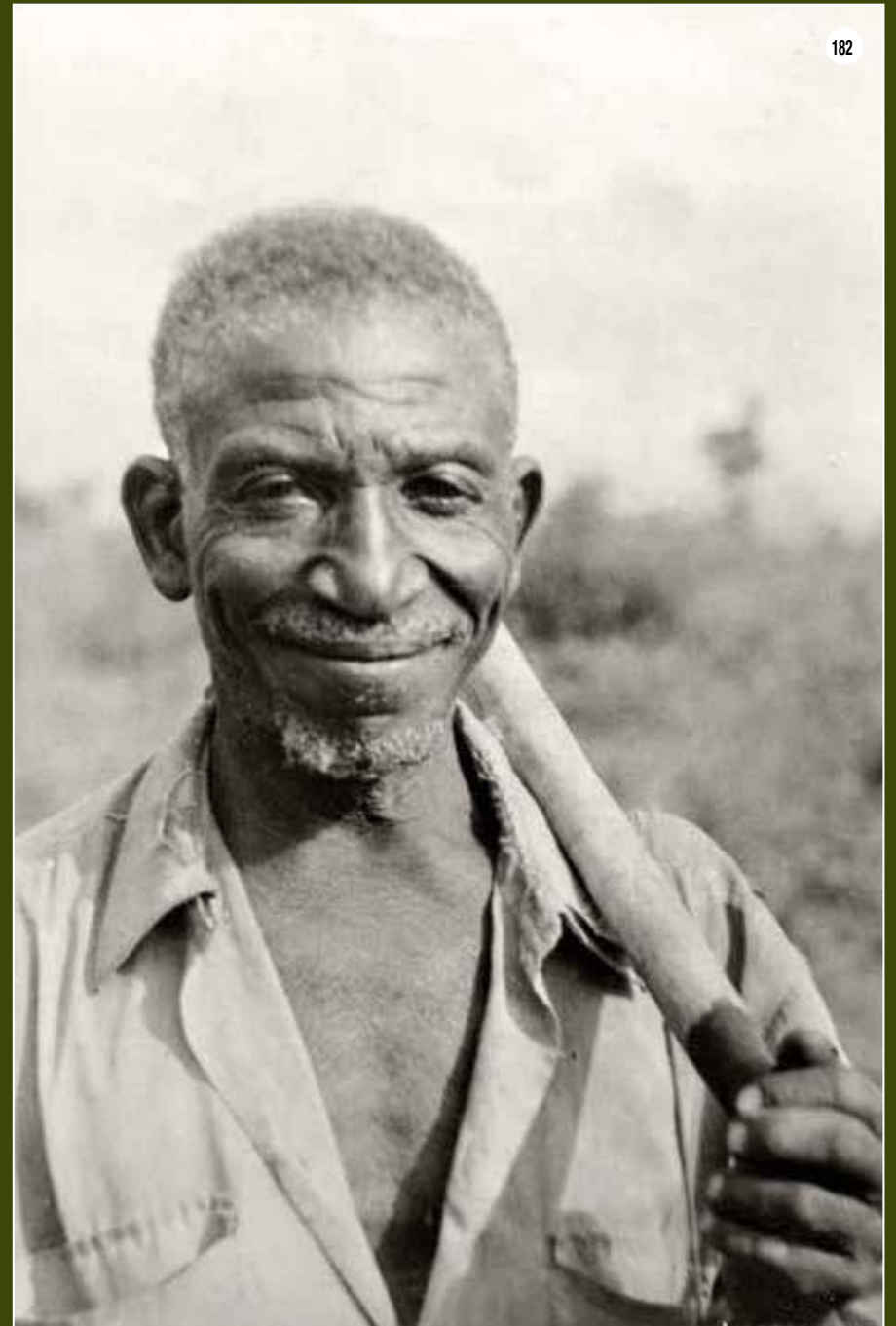


177. Another working day in the Boma camp. Captain V. Lebedev (second from the right) instructs a group of Cubans before the start of classes with ZIPRA cadets. Angola, 1978 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

178. Soviet military instructors after the classes with Zimbabwean cadets. The territory of the Boma camp, Angola, 1978 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

179. ZIPRA machine gunner. Boma camp, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev

180. ZAPU Camp, Boma. Zimbabwean patriots and Soviet military specialists after completing gun training V. Lebedev in the centre. Angola, 1979 Photo from the archives of V. Lebedev





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181–187. Angolan village and its inhabitants.
Near the ZAPU Boma camp.
Photos from the archives of Vladimir Lebedev
and Alexander Oleynikov, 1977–1979

“The Soviet Union provided political, diplomatic and military support to SWAPO and the Namibian people. Namibia, Angola, Zimbabwe, and South Africa are free and independent countries today, thanks in large part to the Soviet Union.”

Sam Nujoma,
President of the Republic of Namibia, 2005

Assistance To the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) in Angola (70 – 80s of the twentieth century)



188. Russian veterans of SWAPO are awarded medals "For the provision of international assistance to Angola". From right to left: Colonel (Ret) V. Stryukov, head of the SMA group at Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre, 1984–1986. Colonel (Ret) V. Shaida, Advisor to the SWAPO Secretary for Defence in 1985–1988, Colonel (Ret) I. Ignatovich, interpreter of the SWAPO SMA group in 1985–1988, S. Sidorin interpreter of the SWAPO SMA group in 1979–1982. Moscow, 2011

The South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) was established on 19 April 1960 with the aim of liberating Namibia from colonial oppression and its actual occupation by South Africa. By the early 1970s, close ties had developed between the USSR and SWAPO, which was recognized by the UN as the legitimate representative of the Namibian people. The USSR provided Namibian patriots fighting for national independence with not only broad political and diplomatic, but also material and military support. Thanks in large part to Soviet assistance, SWAPO had successfully resisted South Africa's military power for 25 years and had increased its pressure on the occupational regime in Windhoek. Close contacts with this organisation had been established as early as the 60s of the twentieth century and in 1987 an office of SWAPO representative was opened in Moscow.

Angola has played a special role in SWAPO achievement of its ultimate goal of Namibian independence. On its territory, combatants and commanders of the SWAPO military wing — People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) — were trained since the late 70s of the twentieth century, with the help of Soviet military specialists.

In the 1960s, SWAPO also had training centres for the PLAN in other countries, such as Tanzania and Zambia. But Tanzania did not have a common border with Namibia, and it was difficult for SWAPO patriots to enter the country through the Zambian-Namibian border.¹¹⁴ With the collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire and the proclamation of the People's Republic of Angola in November 1975, the situation for SWAPO changed radically. There was a direct route from Angola to Namibia, which made it faster and easier for PLAN units to enter Namibia, on the one hand, and on the other hand, it allowed SWAPO to recruit new fighters more easily.

The MPLA government that came to power in Angola, faithful to the international principles, declared

its support for the national liberation movements SWAPO, ANC (South Africa) and ZAPU (Zimbabwe) and provided them with territory to host refugee camps, representative offices and military training centres. This principled position of the Government of independent Angola has been repeatedly used as a pretext for South African aggression: periodic bombing and air strikes by South African aviation, as well as incursions into its territory by South African troops.

The issue of military training of Namibians by Soviet military specialists in Angola was first discussed at a high level in July 1976 during a visit to Moscow by Namibian leaders: Sam Nujoma, SWAPO President, Peter Nanyemba, SWAPO Defence Headquarters (DHQ), and Solomon Hawala, PLAN Deputy Commander.

During this visit, the Namibians met with Colonel-General G. Skorikov, the head of the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces. At the meeting, Sam Nujoma requested that Soviet military specialists be sent to Angola to train SWAPO fighters, and also asked to consider the possibility of receiving from the USSR everything necessary for the PLAN to conduct combat operations against the South African army, including heavy weapons, such as tanks and APC as well as air defence systems.¹¹⁵

This request, although received with caution by the Soviet political and military leadership¹¹⁶ was generally answered in the affirmative. As early as 31 December 1976, the first group of Soviet military specialists at SWAPO/PLAN, consisting of 16 people, headed by Colonel Yuri Zaputryaev arrived in Luanda. Thus, began the creation of PLAN Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre in Angola¹¹⁷, which was located about 20 kilometers from the capital of the Angolan province of Huila, the city of Lubango.

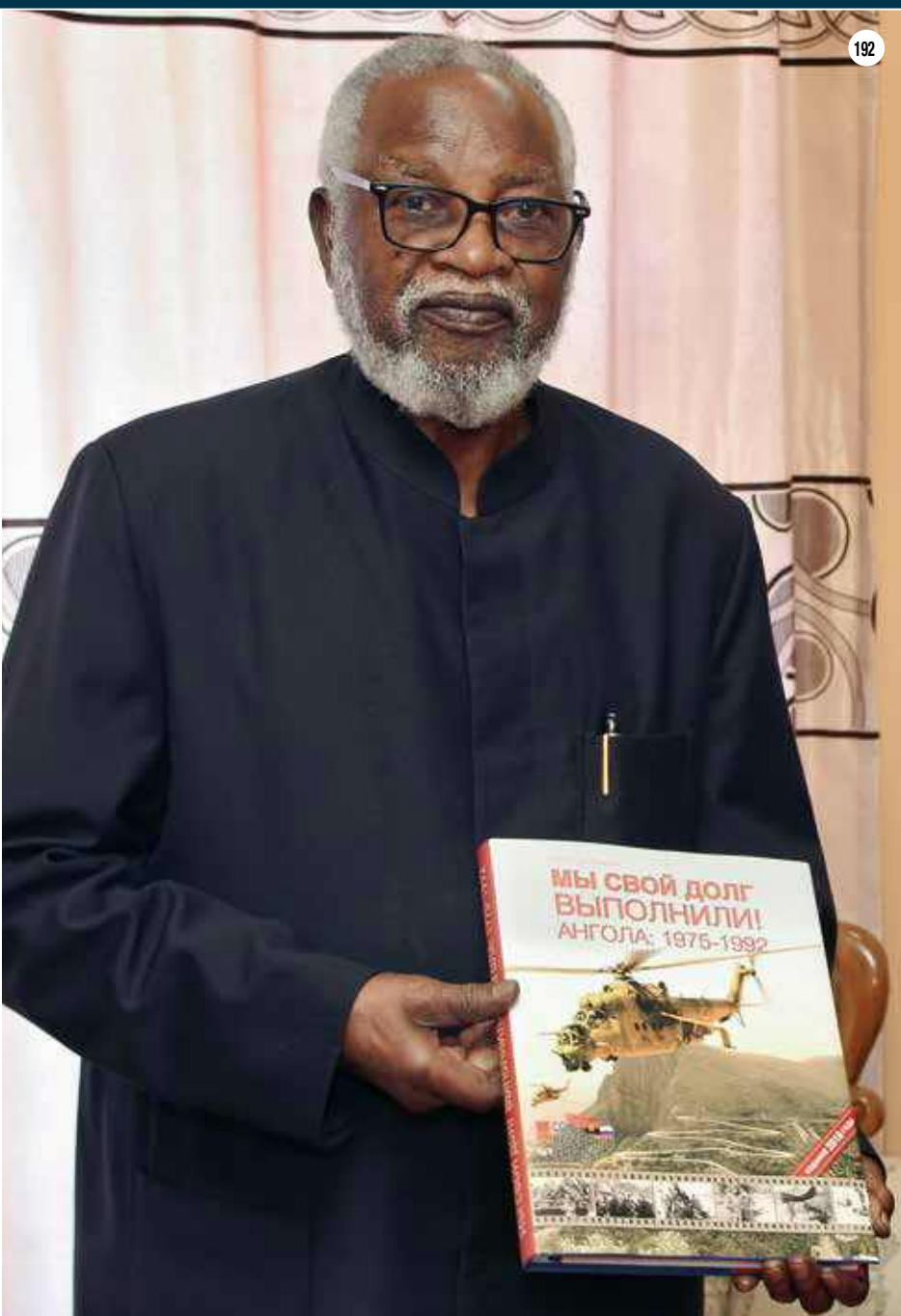
Colonel Ivan Zherlitsyn, who arrived in 1979 to replace Y. Zaputryaev, recalls: *"In Moscow, I began to work with the SWAPO combatants"¹¹⁸, but it turned out that later I went to Angola. In 1977, at the request of Sam Nujoma, it was decided to open a training centre for the mass training of PLAN combatants in southern Angola. It was during this period, in 1977, that two officers of our Moscow Centre¹¹⁹, and 16 military officers, were sent to organise and create this centre in the south of Angola. For two years they created, strengthened, and expanded it. The first leader, the head of the group of specialists of the THTC was Colonel Y. Zaputryaev. In March 1979, my wife and I came there as a replacement."*¹²⁰

According to the documents of the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, Colonel Y. Zaputryaev was mentioned as a *"specialist in troop tactics and reconnaissance"*.¹²¹ According to the same documents, I. Zherlitsyn, who came to replace him, was *"a specialist with SWAPO Training Centre Commander/head of the SMA group"*.

And Colonel Nikolai Kurushkin, who arrived in the SMA group at SWAPO a little bit later (on 22.03.1979), according to the documents of the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff, was *"an adviser to the army commander"*.¹²²

Colonel N. Kurushkin had performed his duties in Angola in the period from 22 March 1979 to 22 March 1983. He was replaced by Colonel Boris Perebillo (who was in Angola from 10 March 1983 to 12 December 1985), whose post had already been officially called *"Advisor to SWAPO Secretary for Defence, head of SMA group with SWAPO"*. At the end of the business trip, he was replaced in this position by Colonel Vladimir Shaida (from 1 December 1985 to 30 December 1988). The SMA group with SWAPO was directly subordinate to the Chief Military Adviser in Angola and worked closely with Soviet military specialists at FAPLA.





189. Sam Nujoma, President of SWAPO, speaking at the THTC. Angola, 1984 Photo from the archives of V. Stryukov

190. Sam Nujoma was awarded the badge of honorary member of the Russian Union of Angola Veterans. Windhoek, 2017 Photo from the archives of N. Rybchuk (in the photo on the left)

191. Taking out the SWAPO banner in the THTC, 1985 Photo from the archives of V. Stryukov

192. Sam Nujoma, the first president of independent Namibia, with a book presented by Sergei Kolomnin "We have carried our duty! Angola: 1975–1992", Windhoek, 2020

Soviet military specialists sent to Angola to work with SWAPO were assigned and received assignment and posting when still in Moscow in the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff: some of them were sent from Army regular units, and some from units of the GRU of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces. As for the English interpreters registered to work in Angola, they did not always have precise information about where exactly and with whom they would work: often their assignment took place already in Luanda.

Mikhail Vlasenko, a military interpreter who worked with the SWAPO SMA group in Angola from 1978 to 1980, recalls that he and three other English language interpreters sent to Angola were first accommodated in the Soviet military mission in Luanda.

"All of them were graduates from the Kharkov State University¹²³: Igor Ilyin, Sergey Savinykh, Alexander Muzok and me. Sergey and Sasha were taken by specialists for the flight interpretation.¹²⁴ It happened like this: we were offered to pull matches clutched in our hand. Short match pulled — flight interpretation with Air Force, long match — an interpreter with land forces. So, Igor and I stayed at the mission in Luanda and began to wait for the appointment...

A few days later we met Yevgeny Parfyonov¹²⁵, who worked with Namibian guerrillas at a training centre. According to him, our team of specialists was in great need of English interpreters, so our presence there would be very welcome. He arrived in Luanda from Lubango to procure food for this group. At that time, there were two training centres in Angola where English-speaking specialists were needed. One in Lubango (SWAPO) and the other in Luena, where the Rhodesian rebels — ZAPU — were trained. According to Yevgeny, it would be preferable for us to go to Lubango for several reasons. Firstly, the climate there was much better than in Luena. Secondly,



ZHERLITSYN
Ivan Grigorievich

Ivan Zherlitsyn, Colonel (Ret.), was born on 26 May 1936 in the village of Vorovskoleskaya, Kursavsky District, Stavropol Territory. In 1955, he was drafted into the Soviet Army. He served and at the same time was preparing to enter the Kiev Tank School named after M. Frunze, which he successfully graduated in September 1956. After school graduation, he was assigned to the 122nd Guards Tank Regiment of the 22nd Guards Division of the 6th Tank Army of the Kyiv Military District.

He served as a platoon commander of a tank company, then as a political officer of a reconnaissance company, commander of a deep reconnaissance company of a reconnaissance battalion of the division.

In 1962, he was sent to study at the Military Academy of the Soviet Army. After completing a one-year accelerated special course, he continued to serve in the central office of the Ministry of Defence in the Main

Intelligence Directorate (GRU) in Moscow, where he was engaged in the training of specialists for foreign national liberation movements and parties fighting for national independence. At the Moscow Centre for Training Personnel for National Liberation Movements, which was established in 1963, he worked as a junior researcher, head of the facility, instructor, and then head of the Department of Guerrilla Tactics.

While working at the Moscow Centre for Training Personnel for National Liberation Movements, he was engaged in providing assistance to African and Latin American national liberation movements, met with many leaders of African liberation movements: Amilcar Cabral (PAIGC, Guinea-Bissau), Agostinho Neto (MPLA, Angola), Sam Nujoma (SWAPO, Namibia), Samora Machel (FRELIMO, Mozambique), traveled to the liberated territories to meet with them and to discuss engagement and assistance. During this period, he graduated

in absentia from the engineering department of the Order of Lenin and Red Banner Military Academy of Armor named after Marshal of the Soviet Union R. Malinovsky.

From March 1979 to March 1981, he was in Angola as a head of the group of Soviet specialists and interpreters with the SWAPO THTC. On the basis of the centre was realized mass training of SWAPO/PLAN combatants for guerrilla operations in the territory of Namibia. They were also trained to conduct regular army combat operations. The Centre was established in 1977 at the request of SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma and in consultation with the leadership of the People's Republic of Angola.

For his merits during his service and in the performance of command tasks, he was awarded the Order of the Red Star, the Order "For Service", the Order of Carnation and the Order of Glory (Afghanistan), the medal "For Military Merit" and many other medals.





- 193.** Acquaintance with Peter Nanyemba, SWAPO Secretary for Defence. On the left is Ivan Zherlitsyn, on the right is his wife Alexandra. Lubango, 1979 Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn
- 194.** Visit to the Hainyeko Training Centre by Sam Nujoma, SWAPO President. In the first row, from left to right: S. Nujoma, I. Zherlitsyn, Dimo Amaambo, PLAN Commander, N. Kurushkin. 1979. Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn
- 195.** From left to right: regular PLAN brigade commander, Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Zverev, tactics specialist, Ushona, PLAN command representative. Lubango, 1979 Photo from the archives of M. Vlasenko
- 196.** Interpreters of the SWAPO group clean personal weapons. In the foreground M. Vlasenko, on the right V. Dzyuba, in the background S. Sidorin, M. Istomin THTC, 1979 Photo from the archives of M. Vlasenko

Mikhail Vlasenko, Colonel (Ret.) of the Foreign Intelligence Service, diplomat. He was born on 12 August 1955 in Ukraine in the city of Zenkov, Poltava region. In 1978, he graduated from the Faculty of Foreign Languages (Translation Department) of Kharkov State University. Trained at the military department of the University, upon graduation commissioned with a rank of lieutenant. English language specialist, interpreter. Also fluent in Polish and Slovak.

In 1978, he was called up for military service in the USSR Armed Forces and, through the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, was sent on a long-term business trip to Angola, where he worked in the first group of Soviet military specialists at the SWAPO THTC near the city of Lubango. He was on a business trip to Angola from 30 August 1978 to 5 June 1980.

Then he continued his military service in the USSR in counterintelligence and intelligence units of state security agencies. In 1985, he graduated from the Advanced Officer Training Courses (KUOS), where one of the main areas of training was the training of the command staff of operational and combat groups intended for reconnaissance and sabotage operations behind enemy lines in a special period.

In 1990, he moved to diplomatic work. He worked in various positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, and then in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. In 1994, he was sent to South Africa as a United Nations observer to serve with the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa for the Parliamentary Elections (UNOMSA).

From 1994 to 1997 he was Third Secretary of the Russian Embassy in Poland. From 2003 to 2007, he was Deputy Trade Representative of Russia in Slovakia.

For success in official activities, he was repeatedly encouraged. He was awarded a badge "For Service in the Foreign Intelligence Service" of the first degree, the medal "For Distinction", and other state awards. Member of the Union of Angola Veterans, awarded the medal "For Providing International Assistance to Angola". Military pensioner.



VLASENKO
Mikhail
Nikolaevich

*we would live in a house, and not in the bushes, as in the “Rhodesian” case. The arguments were convincing, but nothing depended on us. Yevgeny promised to inform his group leader, who at that time was also on the mission in Luanda, about our meeting. I didn’t hear from him for a day or two, but later Yevgeny (Zhenya, because we were on speaking terms now) approached us and told that a decision had been made to send us to Lubango”.*¹²⁶

The capital of the province of Huila, the city of Lubango, and the surrounding areas had been the base areas for the establishment of a network of SWAPO camps and PLAN training centres in Angola since 1977. The main PLAN training sites in the province were the THTC and the Jumbo Training Centre.¹²⁷ SWAPO Peter Nanyemba Military Hospital was also organized in the vicinity of Lubango. Soviet military advisers, instructors and doctors worked at all these facilities.

The city of Lubango was located 450 km from the border with Namibia, which made it possible to move PLAN units to the border relatively quickly, and at the same time covertly. The city was covered by Angolan air defence (S-125 “Pechora” brigade)¹²⁸ and troops: both FAPLA and the Cuban contingent in the country.

According to M. Vlasenko, *“the first to be set up was the THTC, which was initially located near the SWAPO refugee camp of Onkulumbashi on the territory of a former Portuguese farm 20 kilometers northeast of Lubango”.*¹²⁹ Later, due to the threat of South African air strikes, it was relocated to confuse the South Africans.

I. Zherlitsyn recalls: *“... According to intelligence, it was expected that... there would be a raid on a SWAPO camp, and hence the entire training centre was relocated seven kilometers to another place.*

*This was exactly what Mikhail Vlasenko was doing. And the vacated positions were bombed by the South Africans. We left in time”.*¹³⁰

M. Vlasenko recalls: *“Soviet specialists called this place where the centre was located simply “fazenda”. In the centre of the “fazenda” there were several dilapidated buildings that were used as classrooms. Meanwhile classes with combatants were conducted mainly in the neighboring forest areas under the cover of tall, branched trees. In each of these improvised “classrooms”, there were benches for cadets and a desk for the instructor. Tactical exercises were conducted in the field, and the simplest shooting range was equipped for shooting training, but it made it possible to teach shooting from various types of weapons”.*¹³¹

PLAN personnel lived on the territory of the training centre in huts and dugouts. Trenches were dug along the perimeter and next to the huts to shelter personnel in case of possible air raids by South African aviation. AD artillery positions were located nearby. M. Vlasenko recalls, that *“SMA group established permanent liaison with the Cuban regiment in Lubango which could provide the necessary support in the event of an enemy airborne operation. This regiment was a deterrent — the South Africans were never able to conduct a single ground operation in this area”.*¹³²

In 1977–1978, the training of PLAN combatants in the THTC, and in Angola in general, was mainly “guerrilla oriented”. Combatants were taught terrain navigation, competently laying ambushes, conducting raids on enemy posts and bases, carrying out sabotage, and laying mines in the area. Simultaneously, they were taught the use of various types of small arms, throwing grenades, handling explosives, and paid great attention to physical training.

M. Vlasenko, who arrived in Lubango in September 1978, notes: *“At the time of our arrival, the SWAPO guerrillas were trained in the following disciplines: guerrilla tactics (led by Alexander Zverev*

*and Arkady Shchigelsky), communications (instructor Viktor Zaev), artillery training (instructor Yevgeny Parfenov). Our specialists also taught mine blasting, military topography and conducted political classes with the fighters. Interpreters of English were: Mikhail Suknov from Kharkov, Sergei Kiryunin from Leningrad, and Alexander Kuryanov from Moscow. They worked with the instructors”.*¹³³

In 1979, the PLAN command set a new long term goal for the THTC leadership — to begin the creation of regular military formations for the future army of free Namibia. Therefore, with the arrival of Colonel I. Zherlitsyn at the THTC in March 1979, the shift in the training of PLAN combatants from a three-month to a six-month period began. The training programme was amended accordingly and all the Namibian trainees in the next training cycle were organised into the PLAN 1st Motorized Rifle Brigade (MSBr). Later, other combat units were created, which were organised into the PLAN 20th Motorized Rifle Brigade. Meanwhile, the training of combatants in guerilla tactics continued.

I. Zherlitsyn recalls: *“We trained combatants for the regular army, PLAN. The training was carried out in the following way: young guys arrived directly from Namibia, there were even 16-year-olds, and there were girls. There have been 30 years-olds, but mostly 20–23 years-olds. The first, as it is supposed to be in our country, was the recruit basic course: for a month and a half to two months, they were all trained in general: drill training, basic knowledge of weapons, army discipline issues — everything was basic.*

Together with interpreters, our specialists trained better-qualified SWAPO cadres to work as instructors, to further train recruits. And these instructors conducted direct training with the rest. After two months of training, the formation of separate units began: a squad, a platoon, a company. They were formed, put together and held separate training sessions by units, so that



197. Practical lessons. PLAN combatants study T-34 tank. Among the Namibian cadets are Andrei Timoshenko, materiel maintenance specialist, and Stanislav Sidorin, military interpreter (on the right). Jumbo Training Centre, 1981 Photo from the archives of S. Sidorin
198. Mikhail Vlasenko (on the right) with Peter Nanyemba, SWAPO Secretary for Defence. On the left is Captain Vladimir Smilgevich, Grad-P missile-employment specialist. Lubango, 1978 Photo from the archives of M. Vlasenko
199. The Soviet T-34 is as reliable as it was half a century ago. Among PLAN combatants are Soviet specialists: Sergei Gaikov, PT instructor, and Igor Ignatovich, military interpreter. Jumbo Training Centre, 1987 Photo from the archives of I. Ignatovich

everyone could feel the support of their comrade in the battle. On completion of small unit-level training, units were organized into a brigade-size large unit of one and a half thousand people. And then we conducted brigade-level field exercises".¹³⁴

When working with PLAN combatants, Soviet specialists had certain difficulties in translating lectures, classes and briefings into a foreign language.

Most of the Namibians arriving in Angola came from the Namibian countryside, they had been herding cattle or working in the fields since childhood, and many had never gone to school and did not speak English. Therefore, in many cases, it was impossible to do without double or even triple translation in the educational process.¹³⁵ Soviet advisors and specialists were assisted by 295 SWAPO/PLAN instructors in the training process.

I. Zherlitsyn recalls: *"In April 1979, a SWAPO brigade completed training, and Peter Nanyemba asked me to make a speech"¹³⁶. I talked for about fifteen minutes explaining that this was the beginning of a new stage in combatants' life, that they were joining the vanguard of the struggle for independence, that they would be relied upon. I spoke in Russian, Igor Iliyn, who was an interpreter, translated it into English. Peter Nanyemba then translated my words for the PLAN Commander, and the PLAN Commander then translated my speech for brigade combatants in his own dialect. It was a triple, or even quadruple translation"*.¹³⁷

Peter Nanyemba, SWAPO Secretary for Defence, was at that time a central figure in the leadership of SWAPO in Angola. M. Vlasenko recalled: *"Nanyemba was a charismatic and competent leader, a real*

diplomat. He paid close attention to the SWAPO/PLAN camps in the vicinity of Lubango. All issues of training SWAPO combatants were solved by him jointly with Nikolai Kurushkin, head of SMA group and at the same time adviser to the PLAN Commander, and Ivan Zherlitsyn, head of our specialists at the THTC".¹³⁸

Many Soviet military advisers had trusting and friendly relations with many Namibian leaders, and in particular with P. Nanyemba. As M. Vlasenko recalled: *"I cannot say that I had particularly frequent contacts with him, but the meetings were always mutually friendly. One day he came to our house in Lubango to meet with N. Kurushkin. Kurushkin was lingering somewhere, and it so happened that I met Nanyemba. Due to the lack of strong drinks at that time, I offered beer (the "Cuca" brand was popular in Lubango at*



that time). Nanyemba said that it would be better to drink whiskey — “this is the enemy, and it must be destroyed.” We laughed, but since Kurushkin was holding on, I offered, for lack of a better option, Riga balsam, although I hate it. And, in the end, like good friends, we drank a glass of this beverage with him: undiluted and without an ‘appetizer’.”¹³⁹

The Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre was a kind of “field military academy” for PLAN combatants and commanders. All SWAPO officials were required to receive military training here. Almost all PLAN personnel, from commander to combatant, have undergone training at the THTC in Angola. Two younger sons of Sam Nujoma, President of SWAPO, also trained here. Moreover, one of them was sent to the THTC after graduating from the Lomonosov Moscow State University in the Soviet Union.

The PLAN command and Soviet advisers had to constantly take into account the danger posed by South Africa: its aviation repeatedly attempted to destroy SWAPO and PLAN sites in Angola from the air, and by landing paratroopers.¹⁴⁰ A South African Defence Force airborne operation in the vicinity of Lubango was unlikely, since this area was well covered by air defence systems, and in addition to FAPLA units, as M. Vlasenko has already mentioned, Cuban formations were also stationed here.

But even despite the presence of strong air defences, South African aircraft bombed the vicinity of Lubango. Igor Ignatovich, a participant in the hostilities in Angola, a military interpreter who worked in the SMA group with SWAPO in 1985–1988, recalls: “South African aircraft regularly hit PLAN targets near Lubango — in 1979 (repeatedly), in 1980, 82, 83 and

even in February 1988, six months before the signing of the peace agreement in New York. It was also my bad luck to get once under bombardment while driving a vehicle within a column of UAZes heading to THTC.”¹⁴¹

The Soviet military not only assisted PLAN command in selecting optimal locations for air defence systems at SWAPO facilities, but also ensured their camouflage. I. Ignatovich recalls: “It is necessary to pay attention to camouflage. In the initial phase, SWAPO camps used corrugated iron sheets to cover the roofs of kimbas (the local name for huts), shelters and dugouts, which glittered like a mirror in the sun. During the An 12 test flight over some sites near Lubango, we clearly saw the location of the shelters, which the attention of command, and the roofs were covered with leaves, bark, branches,



200. Before being sent to the front. Ceremonial formation of the PLAN brigade trained in the Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre. Lubango area, 1979 Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn
201. The wreckage of the South African Air Force Impala attack aircraft shot down by PLAN air defences in southern Angola, was moved to the THTC. In the centre is Colonel V. Skurydin, adviser to the SWAPO Chief Military Prosecutor. 1985 Photo from the archives of A. Marchenko
202. PLAN combatants received by a Soviet doctor. Sitting at the desk is Gennady Rybachko, Lieutenant Colonel of the Medical Service, the doctor of the infectious diseases department of the SWAPO Peter Nanyemba Military Field Hospital, and Igor Ignatovich, military interpreter. SWAPO/PLAN North-Western Front, 1986 Photo from the archives of I. Ignatovich



IGNATOVICH Igor Vladimirovich

Igor Ignatovich, Colonel (Ret.), was born on 12 November 1962 in Moscow. In 1980, he entered the Military Red Banner Institute of the Ministry of Defence where he studied at the Faculty of Western Languages. In 1985, he received a diploma qualifying him as an interpreter and referent in English and Modern Greek. From 1985 to 1988 he was on a business trip to Angola as an interpreter for a group of Soviet military advisers and specialists attached to SWAPO. During the mission, he ensured work at all facilities of the military wing of SWAPO-PLAN in the 5th Military District, in the DHQ, in the THTC and Jumbo, Peter Nanyemba

Military Hospital, in the PLAN brigades, repeatedly went to the war zones in Xangongo, Ondjiva, Cahama, Matala. In 1987, he worked with the 20th PLAN Brigade, which participated in the battles against the UNITA group in the province of Bié (Andulo, Nharea). Participant of combat actions.

In 1988, he was sent to the city of Gorky, where until 1991 he taught a foreign language at the military department of the Gorky Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages named after N. Dobrolyubov.

In 1991, he graduated from the UN Military Observer Course in Solnechnogorsk. From 1992 to 1993, he was in Cambodia as a military observer in the UN UNTAC mission. In 1994 he was dismissed from the ranks of the Russian Armed Forces.

Member of the Council of the Union of Angola Veterans, Head of the SWAPO Veterans Section.

He was awarded the Diploma of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the badge "To the Soldier-Internationalist", medals "For Impeccable Service" of the I, II and III degrees, jubilee and departmental awards, awards of the Union of Angola Veterans, the UN Medal "UNTAC Mission" and "South African Service Cross" (South Africa). Military pensioner.

turf. They were pelted with leaves, bark, branches, turf, despite the protests of the inhabitants, who complained that all kinds of living creatures were found on such roofs. This clearly reduced the visibility of objects from the air, which proved the correctness of this decision.¹⁴²

The increased combat effectiveness of the PLAN air defence units in Angola also did not allow the South Africans to relax. In October 1979, in the area of the village of Mupa, located south of Lubango, SWAPO air defences shot down the first South African Air Force aircraft, an Impala attack aircraft. M. Vlasenko recalls: "SWAPO fighters shot it down with two Strela-2M MANPADS missiles. It was a landmark event. The ejected pilot was picked up by a helicopter sent to rescue him. I. Zherlitsyn and A. Romancha went to the crash site."¹⁴³

Part of the fuselage, the pilot's small caliber rifle, which remained in the cockpit after the pilot ejected, and an ejection seat were delivered to the THTC. SWAPO fighters staged a real celebration on the occasion of this first air victory, with a demonstration of the wreckage of the downed aircraft, national songs and dances."¹⁴⁴

The tasks of the Soviet military instructors for the training of the army of the SWAPO continued to expand. In the early 80s of the twentieth century, as part of the formation of regular PLAN units, the Soviet Union began deliveries to Angola of heavy military equipment for SWAPO (T 34 tanks, BRDM 2, BTR 152 and BTR 60 APCs, anti-aircraft guns, and artillery pieces). The question arose about the training of crews for tanks, drivers of APC and BRDM, artillery

crews for anti-tank guns and ZU-23-2 anti-aircraft guns, ZGU-1 anti-aircraft mountain mounts. It was decided to concentrate the training of PLAN personnel for this purpose at another SWAPO training centre in Angola, Jumbo.

I. Ignatovich recalls: "The Jumbo Training Centre was located at the exit from Lubango on the road to Namib on the territory of an abandoned Portuguese fazenda, where dilapidated colonial buildings and a eucalyptus alley leading to them and a grove of African mimosa are still preserved. At the very entrance there was a warehouse containing World War II weapons, handed over to SWAPO. Both Soviet and foreign: Yugoslav, Czechoslovak, German, there were even Chinese and Israeli ones.

Near the Training Centre, at a distance, there was a training ground and a shooting range, where practical firing was carried out from all types of small arms and field artillery: B10, RPG. Here our women, the wives of specialists, sometimes practiced their skills in using a Kalashnikov rifle. Armored vehicles — old T34 tanks and BTR152 APCs, as well as modern BRDM2 — were placed in camouflaged emplacements.

Along the perimeter of the territory of the training centre there were air defence systems ready for battle: Strela2M MANPADS, ZU23-2, ZGU1, DShK, the security was organised, the territory was secretly patrolled. At the positions of the anti-aircraft crews, the fighters had diagrams and tables with the capabilities of their own and the enemy's planes and helicopters, as well as warning equipment. However, there were some hitches: there was a recorded

case when a female aircraft gunner employed a MANPAD to shoot down a friendly Cuban MiG-21 that had taken off to intercept South African aircraft.”¹⁴⁵

By the mid-1980s, the Jumbo Training Centre focused on training crews for T-34 tanks, BRDM and APC drivers, as well as crews for 82-mm mortar batteries, 76-mm and 57-mm anti-tank gun batteries. At the THTC, artillerymen were also trained and regular units of the PLAN brigades were formed, made up of motorized riflemen (infantrymen), sappers and demolitionists, communications and reconnaissance men, snipers.

Although the tanks were never used in the combat conditions of that time, according to the plan of the top leadership of SWAPO, they had to demonstrate the combat power of PLAN and “will eventually victoriously enter Windhoek.”¹⁴⁶ The tanks in Angola were never used in offensive operations, but were used only for positional defence. Our military advisers recall that out of a dozen T-34 tanks in the Jumbo Training Centre, up to 5–6 vehicles were constantly maintained in working order. In total, SWAPO in Angola received 10 T-34 tanks from the USSR during this period, 10 BTR-60 APCs, 6 BTR-152 APCs and 12 BRDM –2 vehicles. All the BRDMs and APCs, after running-in, selecting and training crews, were sent to the southern regions of Angola to combat zones along the entire border with Namibia.

I. Ignatovich recalls: “The main course of training with PLAN cadets in the Jumbo Training Centre, as well as in other units, was conducted by Namibian instructors trained



203. Farewell dinner at the SWAPO Defence HQ before the departure of Soviet advisers to the USSR. From left to right: Lieutenant Igor Ignatovich, military interpreter, Lieutenant Colonel Oleg Fedorin, logistics advisor with the SWAPO Defence HQ, Colonel Yuri Golousenko, advisor to the PLAN Chief of Staff, SWAPO Defence HQ, Lubango, 1988
Photo from the archives of I. Ignatovich

204. How can I not to give a woman a ride? Especially if she is a SWAPO fighter. Riding the Ural motorcycle Igor Ignatovich, behind Sergey Gaikov, PLAN Jumbo Training Centre, 1987

by Soviet specialists, and the most important and difficult disciplines were taught by our specialists. In addition to training crews for tanks and BRDMs, cadets were trained in other specialties. If necessary, Soviet mentors from other units were invited: Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre, motorized infantry brigades, Defence HQ — in political affair, logistics organisation, special reconnaissance and sabotage work, wire and radio communications, repair and maintenance of equipment and weapons, explosives.

The head of the SMA group in the Jumbo Training Centre during my period was Colonel Nikolai Zhuravlev, who, in addition to general management, was engaged in small-arms fire training with cadets and other issues. Physical training and hand-to-hand combat training of SWAPO combatants, as well as the training of PLAN special units in the centre, were carried out by Valery Skvortsov¹⁴⁷, Nikolai Chernykh¹⁴⁸ and Sergei Gaikov from Minsk.

An interpreter was required during physical training classes only at the beginning and at the end of the lesson, to set up the goals and sum up the results. The bulk of work of interpreters in JTC was to translate the documents into English.¹⁴⁹

Interpreters in the SWAPO group had to work not only during working hours, but also on holidays, when SWAPO/PLAN representatives came to visit.

M. Vlasenko recalls: “Sam Nujoma came to the Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre several times in my presence and even participated in the celebrations that were held on Soviet public holidays in our group. We used to invite the command of the Cuban regiment stationed in the Lubango area and, of course, high-ranking Namibians to such meetings. They always came and talked to us with pleasure.

After the official part, a feature film was sometimes shown — it was the Soviet one. This was not the easiest event for the interpreters, because, in addition to simultaneous translation of the text,





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it was necessary, if possible, to explain to them our Soviet realities.

*In general, all the holidays were held for us in a working mode, and we had to interpret many private conversations, which often ended in small banquets with invariable mutual toasts to the friendship between our peoples. The toasts of the Namibians are similar to those of Fidel Castro in terms of duration — not so much a difficult translation as it was important to stand on feet during the speech. But we, the interpreters, endured, because they were very sincere in their speeches. There were also words of gratitude to our country and, in particular, to the military representatives for the assistance and support provided. I can say that such events contributed to the strengthening of our relations and to a certain extent facilitated the solution of various issues, sometimes controversial”.*¹⁵⁰

SWAPO fighters had always chosen the dry route to enter Namibia from Angola. But by the end of 1985, the South African military had cut off almost all land routes for them. Therefore, it was decided to train the cadets to overcome water obstacles. *“On the territory of the Centre there was a whole network of reservoirs, which were used not only as a source of uninterrupted supply of drinking water, here special forces groups learned to swim, worked out the skills of overcoming water obstacles. This was extremely important for the guerrillas, given the natural fear of some Africans of rivers and lakes”.*¹⁵¹

In the mid-80s, a special reservoir was built at the Jumbo Training Centre in order to teach the cadets to swim and overcome their fear of water. The work was carried out for more than two months with the involvement of more than 500 people of the Centre’s personnel. Several “swimming pools” were equipped on the reservoir, where Soviet physical training instructors taught the soldiers to swim. Facilities were also built here to practice mining bridges, berths, ships, both on the surface and under water.



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205. *In the Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre. In the centre Colonel Ivan Zherlytsin, on the right comrade Ushona, representative of PLAN leadership. Lubango, 1979. Photo from the archives of I. Zherlytsin*

206. *Colonel Boris Perebillo, adviser to the SWAPO Secretary for Defence, , head of the SMA group, (in the centre with his wife). On the right, between two Namibian girls, is Colonel Nikolai Kurushkin, his predecessor. Among the SMA: Major A. Afanasyev, Colonel M. Yatsko, Major V. Danilov and others. Lubango, March 1983 Photo from the archives of N. Kurushkin*

207. *Reconnaissance men of PLAN special forces with their hand-to-hand combat instructor Captain Valery Skvortsov. Jumbo Training Centre, Lubango, 1985 Photo from the archives of F. Zulkarneev*

In the vicinity of the city of Lubango, near the Angolan village of Omutunda, the SWAPO Peter Nanyemba Military Hospital (PNMH) was organised.¹⁵² It was created with the help of Soviet specialists and doctors, and because of the threat of a possible attack by South Africans, it had a “semi-underground” location — on the slopes of a ravine with numerous lateral branches. There were patient rooms, specialist offices, staff rooms, storage rooms and shelters, permanent staff accommodation. The hospital was well camouflaged, carefully guarded, and had a well-developed communication system. There were underground classrooms for conducting classes with junior and secondary medical personnel.

I. Zherlitsyn recalls: “Just in March 1979, one week before my visit the group of doctors arrived. The head of the group was Mikhail Kornev. There were a

therapist, two surgeons, a female gynecologist, and an anesthesiologist. They arrived to organise a hospital. Both our interpreters and our specialists provided a lot of assistance to the doctors in reconnoitering the area, selected for the location of the hospital...

They treated SWAPO fighters who came from the frontline with illnesses and wounds. Anatoly Kuzenko, an interpreter, was attached to them.”¹⁵³

At different times, the group of Soviet doctors at the Peter Nanyemba Military Hospital (PNMH) in Lubango included representatives of various specialties: surgeons, radiologists, anesthesiologists-resuscitators, dentists, therapists and gynecologists. Some of the names of these employees have also been preserved in the history: Lieutenant Colonel Boris Levin, chief resuscitator-anesthesiologist of the SWAPO PNMH, Lieutenant Colonel Yuri Zhuravlev, head of the therapeutic department, chief therapist

of the hospital, Colonel Yuri Sheshin, therapist, Major Boris Butin, dentist of the SWAPO PNMH, Major Alexander Bocharov, head of the infectious diseases department of the SWAPO PNMH, and dozens of other doctors.

Many doctors were known and remembered by the Namibians only by their first names — this is how they addressed them: “Comrade Boris”, “Comrade Alex”, “Comrade Regina”... during the more than 10 years that SWAPO hospital functioned in Angola, Soviet doctors performed hundreds of surgeries, helped thousands of PLAN combatants, and trained dozens of junior medical specialists for a future free Namibia.

M. Vlasenko recalls: “In 1979, practically from the very first day of the creation of the Peter Nanyemba Military Hospital, the first group of Soviet military doctors began to work in it. Taking into account the specifics, in order to ensure high-quality



and fast translation, only one interpreter constantly worked with the group, if it was possible, the Soviet medical specialists went to the hospital every day to carry out planned operations, check ups and examinations and consultations. In response to emergency calls, they were dispatched at any time of the day. If necessary, military doctors resorted to the help of civilian specialists, in particular from the Central Hospital named after A. Neto, located in the city of Lubango”.¹⁵⁵

Colonel Vladimir Stryukov, head of the SMA at the Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre recalls: “our military doctors from the Peter Nanyemba Military Hospital worked hard: once, within two weeks, they conducted a medical examination of more than 1700 Namibians.”

In SWAPO/PLAN training centres and camps around Lubango, there were about 10–15 thousand

Namibians. Food supply of combatants was scarce.

I. Zherlitsyn recalls that “in the training centre Namibians received one meal a day. They cooked mealie pap, which they ate with their hands. It’s a porridge that looked like plasticine to us”.¹⁵⁶ But lack of food had little effect on the morale of combatants — it was high.

M. Istomin, interpreter of the SWAPO group in 1979–1981, recalls: “once during one of the crises (the food crisis) commander Nikolai Kurushkin discussed with Peter Nanyemba the shooting of an elephant somewhere in the bushes. I don’t remember how the question was resolved.”¹⁵⁷ According to the memoirs of Colonel V. Stryukov, this way of replenishing food supplies for PLAN combatants was practiced repeatedly. You can read more about how PLAN fighters hunted elephants for supplying with fresh meat in his book ‘African Hunts’.¹⁵⁸

Soviet officers and warrant officers of the SWAPO SMA group lived in the city of Lubango. In the morning we went to the training centres and others sites by cars and in the evening we came back. As M. Istomin recalls, “we lived not far from the city centre in a 5-storey building with two entrances. This building was located in the Deolinda Rodrigues street.

The rooms of the Angolan guard were on the ground floor, entered from the street. There was also a fish shop, where fish from Moçâmedes was occasionally brought. At the end of 1980, the rooms for bachelors were renovated on the ground floor with access to the street. Each family lived in a separate room, and the so-called “bachelors” (whose wives haven’t arrived yet) lived together in one room. There was a Soviet school in Lubango where the children of both military and civilian specialists studied”.¹⁵⁹



208. Small arms training at the Jumbo Training Centre shooting range. In the centre is Lieutenant Ferid Zulkarneev, a military interpreter. The Soviet specialists of the training centre often assigned qualified interpreters to conduct some classes themselves. Among the SWAPO combatants on the right sits Lieutenant Colonel Ivan Svyatetsky, an adviser. 1985
Photo from the archives of F. Zulkarneev

209. Colonel Nikolai Kurushkin, adviser to PLAN Commander in 1979–1983, greets the combatants of one of the African national liberation movements, Angola, 80s of the twentieth century.
Photo from the archives of N. Kurushkin

210. 20th PLAN Brigade combatants assist FAPLA in the fight against UNITA gangs. In the centre on the armor of the BTR-152 APC is a military interpreter Igor Ignatovich, Andulo municipality, Bié Province, 1987
Photo from the archives of I. Ignatovich

In Angola SWAPO SMA group wore the same uniform as FAPLA advisers. Until 1980 they wore the Cuban monochromatic uniform “verde olivo”, and later wore the same uniform as the Angolan military, the FAPLA camouflage. M. Istomin writes: *“They were dressed in the same way: a camouflage shirt, camouflage trousers, a khaki military sweater, a wide military belt made of hard tarpaulin and laced up military high boots. For night duty, there were camouflage jackets of the same type as a shirt and trousers. At the early stages of the mission, the headgear was a green beret with black edging and FAPLA ribbons, later we were issued a military cap¹⁶⁰ with a visor. There were no insignia on the uniforms. All the officers had personal weapons: an AK-47, AKM or AKMS assault rifle and a TT pistol or Makarov pistol.”*¹⁶¹

Since the early 1980s, at the request of the Angolan Government, PLAN units have provided assistance to the Angolan Army (FAPLA) and the ODP (local self-defence) groups in the fight against internal armed opposition — against UNITA. These operations took place in the central provinces of Angola, the native place of the UNITA leader J. Savimbi, and in the UNITA-controlled area of the northern province of Bié, in the cities of Andulo and Nharea. To counter UNITA, units of the 20th SWAPO brigade were deployed there from the beginning of 1980.

The PLAN combat units guarded and defended the settlements, communications and the Andulo airfield, from which light aircraft and supply and evacuation helicopters took off and landed. The units conducted reconnaissance, planned and carried out operations against the UNITA anti-government group and SADF sabotage groups.

PLAN fighters also took part in escorting convoys carrying food, weapons, ammunition and medical supplies from Huambo. Uninterrupted process of the power plant was ensured, which made it possible to supply the city with electricity, also a water supply system was functioning.

Since 1983, Soviet specialists and interpreters from the 1st and 20th PLAN brigades located in Lubango have been deployed in Andulo. In addition, special officers were sent from the USSR to assist the fighting PLAN brigades, who, according to the records kept in the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff, were listed as “specialists in the regular SWAPO brigades”. With their help and under their leadership, an established system of defence of the city was organised, shelters and dugouts were equipped, trenches were dug and connected by communication routes. In order to coordinate actions, constant contact was established with the mission of Soviet advisers at FAPLA in Huambo and advisers at SWAPO in Lubango, by the leadership of the Cuban troops. Soviet specialists worked in the 20th PLAN Brigade until November 1987.

The victory of the combined Angolan-Cuban troops in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1987–1988 and the advance of a strong group of Cuban troops to the Namibian border in the south-west of Angola forced the South African government to agree to negotiations. The culmination was the signing on 22 December 1988 in New York of a tripartite agreement between South Africa, Angola and Cuba on the external aspects of the settlement in Angola. South Africa agreed to withdraw its troops from Namibia completely, and Cuba agreed to evacuate its troops from Angola.

The Angolan and Cuban victories in the Battle for Cuito Cuanavale eventually led to the national liberation of Namibia, and on 21 March 1990, SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma was elected as the first president of the free country. The basis of the new armed forces of independent Namibia was made up of motorized infantry combat brigades and other PLAN units which were formed in Angola and trained and equipped with the assistance of the USSR and Soviet military specialists.

The victory in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale greatly accelerated the dismantling of the apartheid system in South Africa and ensured ANC-led black majority government coming to power there. Figuratively speaking we can say that Angola was the springboard from which Namibia's independence “was launched”, and a decisive blow was dealt to the system of shameful racial discrimination in South Africa. SWAPO and ANC were supported by the USSR and Cuba. This should not be forgotten.

As for the general attitude and feelings of Russian servicemen towards Namibians and in general towards the developments in Angola at that time, in my opinion, it was expressed quite accurately by I. Ignatovich, a veteran of hostilities in Angola: *“The most important thing that I remember from that trip to Angola is not even the war, not the death and human suffering, not difficulties and trials, but I remembered and loved proud, beautiful, brave people — Namibians and Angolans, ready to sacrifice themselves, to die for the sake of freedom of their Motherland.”*

I will forever remember the beautiful and surreal African nature, peculiar highlands met only in Lubango, where a dense forest, savanna, semi-desert with rock inclusions and oases-fazendas, mushrooms in the sand under mimosas are mixed...

*In helping the Namibians and Angolans, we did not demand resources, lands or minerals from them, then or in the future. We only felt a great moral responsibility for people who shared our common values and did everything we could to help them achieve justice and become owners in their own land”.*¹⁶²

Sergey Kolomnin



211. Adviser and his advisee. Colonel Ivan Zherlitsyn, the head of SWAPO SMA group of the Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre and Joshua, THTC Commander. Lubango, 1979. Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn





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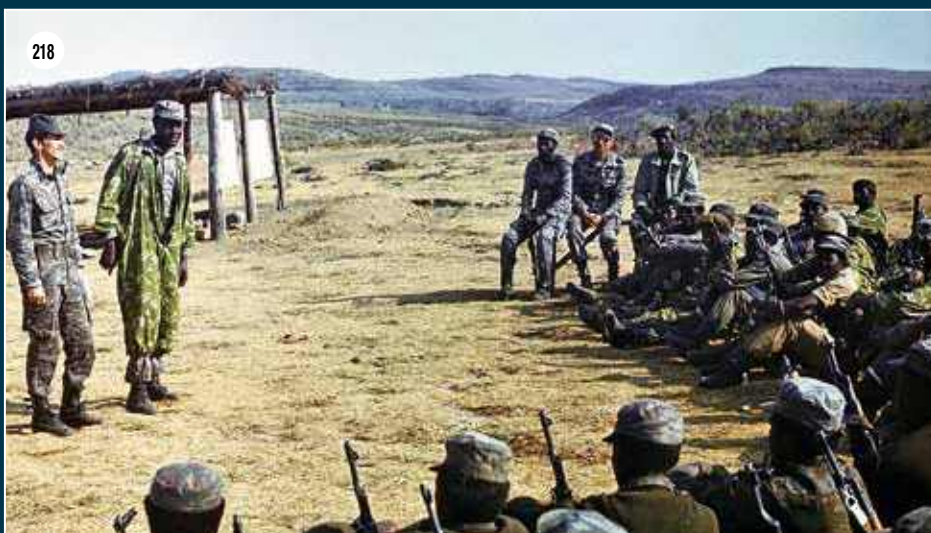


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212. Review at the Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre. To the right of Peter Nanyemba, SWAPO Secretary for Defence, is Colonel Yuri Zaputryaev, head of the first group of Soviet military advisors and specialists with SWAPO in Angola, and Mikhail Suknov, the interpreter. Extreme left in the photo is Lieutenant Alexander Kuryanov. 1977 Photo from the archives of A. Kuryanov
213. On 4 May 1978, the SWAPO camp in Cassinga was subjected to a brutal aerial bombardment by the South African Air Force. And then an airborne operation was launched there. According to the Government of Angola, 624 people were killed and 611 wounded in this barbaric attack by South Africans. In the foreground is Lieutenant Valery Eremin, Soviet military interpreter. 5 May 1978. Photo from the archives of V. Eremin
214. Training of the PLAN reconnaissance group. In the centre F. Zulkarneev, Jumbo Training Centre, Lubango, 1985. Photo from the archives of F. Zulkarneev
215. Review of the PLAN motorized infantry brigade in the Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre. 1985. Photo from the archives of V. Stryukov



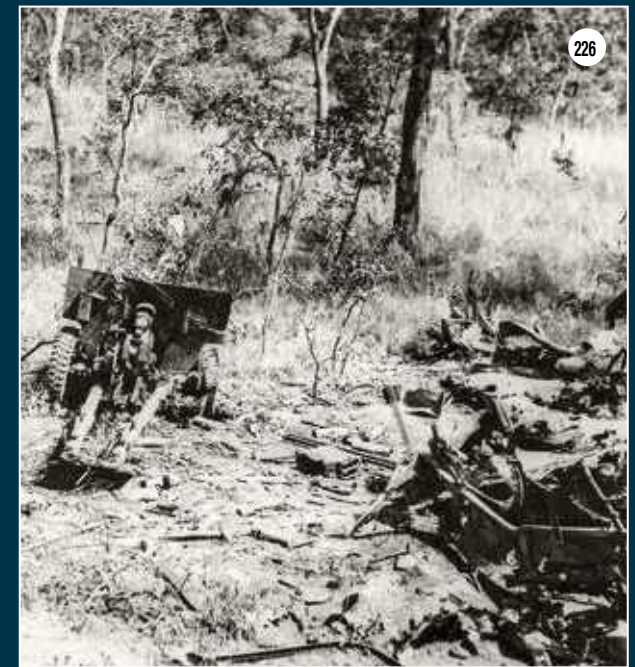


216. Live ammunition shooting of PLAN gun crews in the Namib desert. Standing (from left to right): Lieutenant Igor Ignatovich, military interpreter, Colonel Vladimir Shaida, adviser to the SWAPO Secretary for Defence, Colonel Vladimir Pestov, specialist at the PLAN combat training department, Ndali Che Kamati, PLAN Political Commissar, 1986
217. PLAN commanders, Angolan soldiers and Soviet military advisers inspect the wreck of a South African Air Force helicopter shot down by SWAPO combatants. Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre, early 80s of the twentieth century
218. The training ground of the Jumbo Training Centre, before the start of tactical exercises with PLAN combatants. On the left with a PLAN commander is Lieutenant Ferid Zulkarneev, military interpreter, on the right, between two SWAPO combatants, sits Lieutenant Colonel Ivan Svyatetsky, military adviser, 1985
219. Practical firing of PLAN combatants. Soviet-made 9P132 "Grad-P" ("Partizan") portable rocket launcher. Namib Desert, Angola, 1986. Photo from the archives of V. Doroshenko
220. Soviet military advisers from SWAPO first group and Sam Nujoma photographed outside SWAPO headquarters in Lubango. To the left, with a child in his arms is Lieutenant Alexander Kuryanov, military interpreter, to the right of S. Nujoma is Captain Stepan Dyachenko, small arms instructor, and Captain Ivan Viktorov, mortar and recoilless gun specialist, Colonel Yuri Zaputryaev stands with his back to cameraman. Lubango, 1977. Photo from the archives of A. Kuryanov





221. SWAPO leadership and Soviet military advisers observe the training of a PLAN special forces group. In the centre are Sam Nujoma and Colonel Boris Perebillo, head of the SMA group with SWAPO. On the right is Captain Valery Skvortsov, who was engaged in training of special forces, on the left is Lieutenant Colonel Gennady Kireev, specialist in guerilla tactics. Training ground of the Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre, 1985. Photo from the archives of I. Ignatovich
222. During the war, there is also time for a holiday - together we celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March. Namibian girls in SWAPO T-shirts. Tobias Hainyeko Training Centre, 1985. Photo from the archives of V. Doroshenko
223. A SWAPO/PLAN motorcade is marching to the firing range in the Namib Desert. Serra da Leba, the road between Lubango and Moçâmedes (Namibe), 1986
224. From right to left: N. Kurushkin, Sam Nujoma, Peter Nanyemba and SWAPO officials observe the exercises of the PLAN combatants, 1982, Lubango. Photo from the archives of N. Kurushkin





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225. In the 80s of the twentieth century, thousands of regular SWAPO combatants were trained in the territory of Angola, these combatants later formed the core of the future Namibian Defence Force. SWAPO/PLAN brigade formation at the training ground of the Jumbo Training Centre, Lubango, 1985. Photo from the archives of F. Zulkarneev
226. After a massed attack by South Africans on the SWAPO camp in Cassinga, Angola, on 4 May 1978
227. The underground classroom in a SWAPO training centre was well camouflaged and practically invisible from the air, 1986
228. A Cuban convoy that was coming to the rescue of SWAPO fighters in Cassinga, 4 May 1978. Photo from the archives of V. Varganov
229. PLAN combatants are studying small arms. Angola, early 80s of the twentieth century. Photo from the archives of the Union of Angola Veterans
230. On 31 October 1987, in the battles against South African Defence Force near Indungo in Angola, PLAN combatants captured a Buffel APC belonging to the 101st Battalion of the South West Africa Territorial Force. The APC was taken to Lubango, displayed in front of the SWAPO Defence HQ. Soviet military advisers were photographed with the trophy. Sitting on APC, leaning on armor board is Lieutenant Colonel Kazhmukhan Satenov, advisor to commanders of SWAPO regular brigades. Among the rest: Colonel A. Latushkin (advisor with the Defence HQ combat training department), Colonel A. Sukhorukov (air defence advisor in regular brigades), Major I. Stennikov (advisor to the regular brigades chiefs of staff), as well as medical specialists from the SWAPO Peter Nanyemba Military Hospital: Colonel A. Krupnik, Lieutenant Colonel Y. Zhuravlev, Major A. Bocharov, Lieutenant Colonel A. Rudenko. Lubango, December 1987. Photo from the archives of K. Satenov
231. Peter Nanyemba, SWAPO Secretary for Defence, and Colonel Nikolay Kurushkin, head of SMA group with SWAPO in Angola, observing PLAN exercises, Angola, early 80s of the twentieth century. Photo thanks to the Namibian Independence Memorial Museum, Windhoek





232. PLAN combatants cross the Angola-Namibia border to conduct a raid in the rear of the South African army, which illegally occupies Namibia. Early 80s of the XX century. Photo from the archives of the Union of Angola Veterans
233. PLAN combatants in a training camp in Angola. In front of the formation is Sam Nujoma, leader of SWAPO, future president of Namibia, (in camouflage uniform), 1978. Photo from the archives of the Union of Angola Veterans
234. Captured South African Buffel APC of the SWATF 101st battalion. On the left is Lieutenant Colonel Kazhmukhan Satenov, advisor to commanders of SWAPO regular brigades. Captured equipment displayed at SWAPO Defence HQ, Lubango, December 1987. Photo from the archives of K. Satenov
235. Exercises of the SWAPO/PLAN regular brigade. Angola, mid-80s of the twentieth century.

AFRICA:

Guerilla Paths

***(Angola, Mozambique,
Guinea-Bissau)***

This unique section is devoted to clandestine missions in which Soviet military personnel participated in the areas of Angola and Mozambique liberated by the MPLA and FRELIMO in the 60s and 70s of the twentieth century. However, similar missions have also taken place in other African colonies, such as Guinea-Bissau. All of them were carried out in great secrecy and at the invitation of the leaders of the liberation movements: Agostinho Neto (MPLA), Samora Machel (FRELIMO) and Amilcar Cabral (PAIGC). Many of these photos are published for the first time in history.

This section of the photo album is based on photographs provided by Ivan Zherlitsyn, Colonel (Ret.), and the family of Rear Admiral Alexei Dubenko. Both of them were veterans of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, participants in providing assistance to the national liberation movements in Africa.

After the victory in World War II and the expansion of its sphere of influence in Europe and Asia, the political and military leadership of the USSR turned its view to the African continent. Beginning in the late 1950s, many states in the region were embraced by a powerful anti-colonial and national liberation movement. These countries fought for their national liberation, and consequently against the main political and ideological opponents of the USSR — the United States and other states of the North Atlantic Alliance, among which there were many powers that owned colonies in Africa. Therefore, from the point of view of the leadership of the USSR, African countries were its natural allies. This fact was also reflected in the programme of the ruling party in the Soviet Union, the CPSU. In this document, the national liberation movement in the countries of the “third world” was proclaimed one

of the main anti-imperialist forces, which had to be supported in every possible way.

Of great importance in this regard was the adopted resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU of 20 January 1960 “On the expansion of cultural and social ties with Black peoples of Africa and the strengthening of the influence of the Soviet Union on these peoples”. The initiative of the USSR, as a member of the UN Security Council, to adopt the “Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples” at the 15th session of the UN General Assembly in 1960 was a logical step in this direction.

At the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, specialized “African” structures began to be created in the Soviet Union, which were faced with the task of developing forms and ways of helping the national liberation movements of Africa. In addition to financial and material support, much attention was paid to the training of personnel. In particular, the military educational institutions of the USSR Ministry of Defence were tasked with training officers and technicians for developing and colonial countries, who in the future could take leadership positions in their states and armies. As early as 1953, the training of foreign military personnel was carried out at special faculties of 21 military academies, 27 higher military schools, as well as at 30 courses for the improvement of officers and officer schools of the USSR Ministry of Defence.¹⁶³

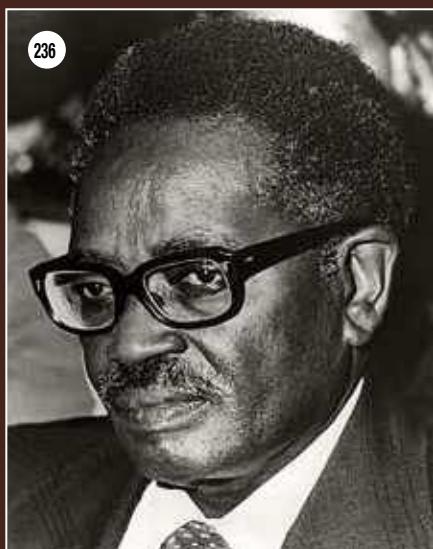
Foreign military personnel were also trained in four naval schools.

In the USSR, several highly specialized training centres were also created to train exclusively foreign military personnel and fighters for national liberation movements. In December 1963, in accordance with the decision of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Moscow Centre for the Training of Personnel for National Liberation Movements was

established.¹⁶⁴ It was established at the request of the leaders of the African NLMs – Agostinho Neto (Angola), Amilcar Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) and Samora Machel (Mozambique). The Moscow (or Northern)¹⁶⁵ Centre trained commanders of guerrilla fronts, districts, sectors, as well as brigade commanders and detachment commanders, as well as commanders of various special units: artillery, anti-aircraft and units sapper-demolition. The first participants to study at the Moscow Centre were representatives of the African National Congress, which was fighting against the apartheid regime in South Africa.¹⁶⁶

In 1965, in the Crimea, in the village of Perevalnoye, the Southern Centre for the Training of Personnel for the National Liberation Movement was established, which received the official name “165th Training Centre for the Training of Foreign Military Personnel “Perevalnoye”, where middle and lower rank fighters were trained for guerrilla formations of national liberation movements — the basis of the future regular armies of independent states. The climatic and natural conditions of the mountainous Crimea were close to many Africans. The training of each group of cadets lasted from six to ten months, during which they were trained in shooting a pistol, submachine gun and machine gun; throwing hand grenades, driving cars, blowing up bridges, roads, buildings. They studied the tactics and combat manuals of the Portuguese and South African Armed Forces.¹⁶⁷ When training African fighters, Soviet teachers carefully practiced guerrilla tactics, the organizing and laying ambushes and counter-ambushes, single combat operations and as part of units, as well as the use of not only light weapons, but also mortars, anti-aircraft artillery mounts (ZU and ZGU) and “Strela 2” MANPADS.¹⁶⁸

Naturally, in the USSR, military assistance to the national liberation movements of Africa was not widely advertised. The first information about this



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236. Agostinho Neto, President of the People's Republic of Angola

237. Amilcar Cabral, Head of PAIGC

238. Samora Machel, President of the People's Republic of Mozambique

239. Agostinho Neto (centre), FAPLA senior commanders and Soviet advisers. Luanda, 1976

240. Samora Machel, Amilcar Cabral, Agostinho Neto at the training centre "Perevalnoye" in Crimea



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was made public only in July 1970. Director of the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, who was present as the head of the Soviet delegation at the International Conference in Support of the Peoples of the Portuguese Colonies held in Rome, V. Solodovnikov said in an interview with the newspaper "Pravda" that that the USSR supplies freedom fighters in countries fighting colonialism with "weapons, means of transport and communication, clothing and other goods necessary for a successful struggle", and that military and civilian specialists who are members of liberation organisations are being trained in the USSR.¹⁶⁹

All assistance to liberation movements in Africa and other countries was coordinated by the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU, as well as through the relevant units of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces and the First Main Directorate of the KGB of the USSR (foreign intelligence). An important role in expanding this assistance was played by a visit in early 1967 by a group of Soviet leaders of the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the KGB of the USSR to a number of African countries: Tanzania, Zambia, Congo (Brazzaville) and Guinea (Conakry).

Pyotr Evsyukov, an employee of the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the future first Soviet ambassador to independent Mozambique, who was part of this delegation, wrote: "In accordance with the decision of the Central Committee of the CPSU, a group of Soviet officials of a number of institutions was created, who were tasked with doing all the necessary work to collect materials to determine the line of the Central Committee of the CPSU on our further cooperation and policy in this region".¹⁷⁰ The group included P. Mancha, the head of the African sector of the International

Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU, G. Fomin, the head of the Third African Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, V. Kirpichenko, the head of the department of the First Main Directorate of the KGB, and P. Evsyukov himself. As a result of the group's work, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU adopted a decision that provided for "comprehensive assistance to the warring nationalists in the Portuguese colonies," taking into account the fact that the struggle there was becoming protracted.¹⁷¹

On a trip to Africa, a group of "Soviet responsible workers" sought to obtain as much useful information as possible about the national liberation movements in this region and for this purpose met not only with their leaders, but also used other sources of information. For example, V. Kirpichenko, the head of the KGB Foreign Intelligence Department, who was part of the group, testifies: "In terms of obtaining specific information, we were most fortunate in Brazzaville. At that time, the headquarters of A. Neto was located there, competent interlocutors from Angolans were present, and Brazzaville statesmen and politicians were more interested in the situation in Angola, since the Congo borders on the oil-rich province of Angola, Cabinda".¹⁷² There, in the Congo, the team met with a Soviet doctor¹⁷³ who worked at the MPLA Military Field Hospital in the village of Dolizi near the border with Cabinda. "The doctor said that the wounded are admitted to the hospital quite regularly, therefore, some hostilities are taking place. According to his information, commanders and commissars work well in the detachments, and military discipline is not bad".¹⁷⁴

However, according to the same V. Kirpichenko, meetings with the leaders of the movements, including A. Neto, "did not fully satisfy the Soviet envoys"¹⁷⁵ — the information was from only one source.

From this period the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU began to plan

illegal trips of "responsible workers" to the free regions of African colonies to have more detailed information which was necessary for planning means and ways of supporting these organisations by the USSR. This is how the "guerrilla paths" began.

P. Evsyukov, a senior official of the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the future first Soviet ambassador to independent Mozambique, repeatedly went on such "familiarization" missions in Africa testified to how this happened. In his unpublished memories he writes: "Each trip was prepared for a long time and carefully. After all, they were all illegal. We flew to Conakry, Dar es Salaam or Lusaka, discussed the upcoming route, got by car to the borders of the "overseas possessions of Portugal". And on the other side a detachment of rebels was waiting for us. And the campaign began".¹⁷⁶

Ivan Zherlitsyn, retired Colonel, who served in the Moscow Centre for the Training of Personnel for the NLM since its foundation, in an interview with author¹⁷⁷ recalls in detail how he prepared and carried out a campaign through the liberated territories of Mozambique in August 1974.

"By decision of the higher commander, Colonel Fyodor Fedorenko (later Major General), the head of the Moscow Centre for Training Personnel for the NLM, was appointed the head of our group.

He selected me and Stanislav Kokin for the trip to Mozambique, since our activities as employees of the Moscow Centre were fully consistent with the goals and objectives of this trip. In addition, we both spoke Portuguese, I also spoke Spanish, while Kokin spoke English.

Our goal was to understand the military-political situation in the areas controlled by the FRELIMO armed detachments, and to see how the graduates of the Centre fulfill their mission in the active guerrilla detachments and local authorities management,

what is their role and place. We also had to assess the logistical support of the FRELIMO combat wing (weapons, uniforms, food, medicines). Particular attention should have been paid to the relationship between the local population and the armed groups and FRELIMO fighters.

Before departure, we were vaccinated against tropical fever. We got to Mozambique through Tanzania. We flew on a regular "Aeroflot" flight on the route Moscow — Odessa — Cairo — Khartoum — Nairobi — Entebbe — Dar es Salaam. Moreover, we had the ordinary foreign passports. At that time, a Soviet exhibition of the newspaper "Izvestia" was held in Dar es Salaam. Therefore, according to legend, we were Soviet journalists — participants in this exhibition.

We were met by an employee of the Soviet embassy in Tanzania, Igor Granin, and preparations for the campaign began. We were equipped in Moscow. We bought shoes and suits of protective color, duffel bags (equipment like a tourist or a participant in a student construction team). In addition, there were our civilian clothes, in which we arrived, a change of underwear. The FRELIMO men offered us for the campaign the field uniform of our servicemen, supplied to the partisans. But we kindly refused. After all, according to legend, we were tourists-journalists who got acquainted with the life of the population in the liberated areas of Mozambique. For the same reason, all weapons were excluded — we took only a camera with us. We did not take documents with us. We left it in Tanzania, in the Soviet embassy.

But we were not particularly worried about safety: the leader of our march through the liberated territories was Sebastiano Mabote, the head of military operations (Chief of the General Staff of FRELIMO), an experienced and knowledgeable military man. He, organising a campaign, competently planned routes of movement and transitions from one base to another, which excluded meetings with the enemy.

In addition, during the campaign, Mabote kept in touch with the central base in Tanzania and, specifically, with comrade Joaquim Chissano, the Permanent Representative of FRELIMO in Dar es Salaam. Comrade Chissano was in contact with an employee of the Soviet embassy in Tanzania, Igor Granin. Thus, our movement through the territory of Mozambique was tracked

Alexey Dubenko was born on January 11, 1922 in the village of Gubovka, Novo-Sergievsy District, Chkalov Region, RSFSR. He graduated from high school in Essentuki. In 1942, he graduated with honors from the Leningrad Higher Naval School named after M. Frunze and left for the active units of the Navy. From 1942 to 1945, he participated in hostilities in the Great Patriotic War. He fought as part of the Azov Military Flotilla, and then the Danube Military Flotilla under the command of Rear Admiral S. Gorshkov, the future Commander-in-Chief of the USSR Navy. He was the commander of a landing craft. He participated in the operation to liberate Prague, Vienna and other European cities from the Nazis invaders.

At the end of the Great Patriotic War, he was sent to study at the Academy of the Soviet Army, after which he served in various positions in the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR, was on long business trips in China, Cyprus, Egypt, Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, Uganda, Somalia, Tanzania the Republic of the Congo, Mozambique and Angola. From 1975 to 1977, he was

the first military attaché of the USSR in Angola.

For his bravery, courage and merits during the Great Patriotic War and in the performance of command tasks, he was awarded two Orders of the Red Star, the Order of the Patriotic War, the Order of the October Revolution, two Orders of the Red Banner and a number of medals.

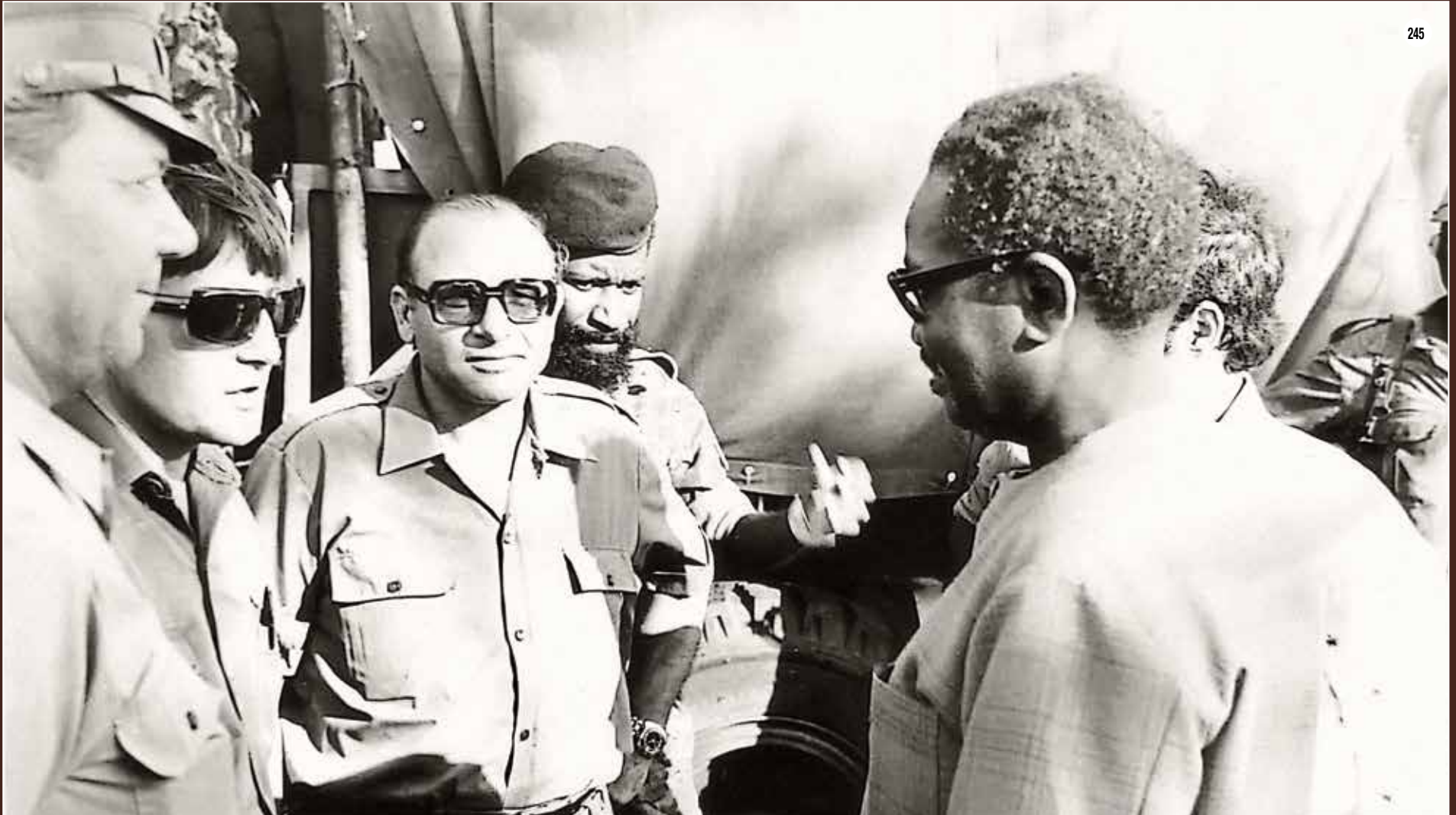
For exceptional services in assisting in the creation and development of the People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA), he was awarded the title of "Honorary Commander of FAPLA", which corresponds to the rank of general.

The order of the Angolan Ministry of Defence on awarding A. I. Dubenko the honorary title of "Commander of FAPLA" of 3 July, 1977 is a recognition of the merits of the Soviet officer in assisting the MPLA and FAPLA and gaining the independence of the country. It emphasizes that A. Dubenko "closely cooperated" with the leadership of the MPLA even before the declaration of independence "in the period of the creation and development of the people's army" (FAPLA).



DUBENKO
Alexey
Ivanovich





241. A. Dubenko, military attaché of the USSR in Angola, together with Angolan and Cuban military personnel at the joint exercise of FAPLA and the Revolutionary Military Forces of Cuba. Angola, 1977.
242. A. Dubenko at the event on the occasion of the arrival of the Cuban military contingent in Angola. Luanda, November 1975
243. A. Dubenko and Major General I. Ponomarenko, the head of the group of Soviet military specialists, among the Angolan servicemen of FAPLA. Luanda, 1976
244. Military attaché of the USSR in Angola A. Dubenko inspects armored vehicles arrived from the USSR for the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba. Angola, Luanda, 1976
245. Agostinho Neto, MPLA President, and A. Dubenko, the first military attaché of the USSR in Angola, during an inspection of military equipment supplied from the USSR. For the assistance provided to the national liberation movement of Angola, by order of the Minister of Defence of the People's Republic of Angola Henrique T. Carreira "Iko", Rear Admiral A. Dubenko was awarded the honorary title of "Commander of FAPLA". Luanda, 1977 All photos from the archives of A. Dubenko

constantly.

The border crossing was carried out by fording the Ruvuma River at night and, I believe, with the consent of the Tanzanian authorities. However, when we had already penetrated 15–18 kilometers into the territory of Mozambique, the crossing site was bombed by Portuguese aviation.

The passages were quite difficult: sometimes they passed 30 or even 60 kilometers per day. There were also minefields on the guerrilla paths. Once we walked 15 kilometers along the elephant trail. At halts and bases, we ate the same food as the guerrillas. Although it should be noted that the personnel cooked separately for us and commanders. The “extra pack” also helped: we took canned meat, smoked sausage, sugar, tea with us from Moscow.

It must be noticed that in some areas there were difficulties with drinking water. In order for the soldiers to cook food, it was necessary to bring water, for which they had to walk 15 km from the base and back 15 km. During the entire march, it was often necessary to cross streams with clear cold water.

The escort soldiers drank this water, but they did not recommend it to us. We drank pre-prepared tea from flasks. Upon arrival at the next guerrilla base, at halts and stops, we talked with commanders and fighters of FRELIMO, and also met with local inhabitants, many of whom spent several hours on the road to meet with Soviet representatives.

Comrade Mabote wanted to show us as many territories as possible that had been liberated from the Portuguese colonizers. During our stay in Mozambique, we visited about 10 guerrilla bases and settlements in the provinces of Niassa and Cabo Delgado. In the settlements, we met with the local leadership.

Thus, on 13 August 1974, a meeting was held in the district centre of Nana, Nyasa province. Elias Antonio, district commissioner, spoke about the

structure of the government and the state of affairs in the district. It should be noted that the local government bodies included people who had a certain level of training and practical experience for this. After the meeting with the leadership, a meeting was organised with the local population — about 7 thousand people gathered. Similar meetings were held in other districts.

At one of the bases, work was organised with the commanders of guerrilla brigades and detachments to exchange experience, reports of commanders were heard, which covered not only successes in the fight against the enemy, but also shortcomings or blunders, sometimes made in the course of hostilities, and summed up the results.

Towards the end of the meeting, the garrison commander reported to comrade Mabota that, after a five-hour march, a leader had arrived from a remote area, accompanied by three people, to meet with our group. This leader turned out to be a graduate of our centre, Daniel Chissan Oscar. When he learned that there was a group of officers from Moscow in the provinces, he decided to see them. It is difficult to explain the joy of the meeting and the delight of comrade Sebastiano Mabote after what he saw.

But I assume that this meeting was organised by Mabote himself. Comrade Daniel remembered his studies at the Centre with great warmth, and turned to F. Fedorenko and me with gratitude. And I was pleased to meet my student far from Moscow. Daniel and his group brought four live chickens. And while we were talking, the people accompanying Daniel cooked delicious food from these chickens — something similar to barbecue. That's how they greeted us kindly and with joy.

But the most difficult and lengthy was the return to Tanzania. The march lasted about 17–18 hours. We walked more than 80 km. At midnight we came to the Ruvuma River, where several canoes were waiting

for us. By 2 o'clock in the morning, we were already in a hotel in the city of Mtwara in Tanzania. And at 5 o'clock in the morning, the place of our crossing was again bombed by Portuguese aviation.

In the morning, our delegation visited the Central Military Hospital in the city of Mtwara, where an international team of doctors from the USSR, Bulgaria and the GDR worked. FRELIMO fighters wounded during the fighting were treated there. In total, our business trip to Tanzania and Mozambique lasted 25 days — from 1 August 1974 to 25 August 1974. And the march itself through the liberated territories of Mozambique took place from 8 August 1974 to 24 August 1974.”

Who else specifically went on these illegal “campaigns” and was part of such detachments?

P. Evsyukov writes: “The group that arrived in the forests of Guinea-Bissau, for example, included officers of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR.” He recalls that, apart from him, “General Ivan Plakhin and Nikolai Tyazhayev participated in the campaign to the guerrilla regions of Guinea-Bissau”.¹⁷⁸ Officers of the GRU of the General Staff of the USSR also participated in the campaigns in Mozambique: the already mentioned Colonel Fyodor Fedorenko, the head of the Moscow Centre for Training Personnel for the NLM, Colonel Zherlitsyn Ivan, the future head of the SMA Training Centre in Angola, Stanislav Kokin an employee of the Moscow Centre, as well as Captain 1st Rank Alexei Dubenko, the future first military attaché at the USSR Embassy in Angola and the only Soviet officer who was later awarded the highest Angolan military rank of “FAPLA commander” at that time, and others.

It should be noticed that the African leaders of the NLM have always been grateful for the selfless work of Soviet representatives in their countries and

noted the quality of training of African activists in the USSR.

I. Zherlitsyn recalls: *“After the end of our campaign and crossing the border, on the same day we flew to Dar es Salaam, where we met with Samora Machel, the President of FRELIMO. The meeting was attended by F. Fedorenko, I. Zherlitsyn and S. Kokin. Comrade Machel noted the exceptional importance of our stay in Mozambique, stressing particularly, the excellent training in our centre of commanders of guerrilla formations and leaders of local administration. Joaquim Chissano was present at the meeting”*.¹⁷⁹

In this regard, the text of a recently declassified document published in this photo album and addressed to the Central Committee of the CPSU on behalf of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the MPLA is also of interest — a letter of gratitude dated 13 November 1967 on the merits of Soviet specialists: military doctor Lieutenant Colonel O. Porembsky and his interpreter Captain E. Ryabov, who worked in the military field hospital of the MPLA in the village of Dolizi¹⁸⁰ in the Congo during 1967.

In this letter the secretary of the Central Committee of the MPLA and a member of the Politburo, Lucio Lara, writes: *“During his stay among us, Dr. O. Porembski devoted himself entirely to the treatment of our sick and wounded. Hundreds of medical interventions by the doctor allowed them to return to active work. We highly appreciate his knowledge and experience, which he passed on to our paramedics. We also highly appreciate the dedication and sacrifices of E. Ryabov¹⁸¹, who worked with Dr. O. Porembsky as an interpreter.*

We will never forget this internationalism, and that is why the Central Committee of the MPLA decided to award these two comrades the title of “Honorary Member of the People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola” (MPLA) as a modest compensation for their huge sacrifices.

Ivan Zherlitsyn, Colonel (ret), was born on 26 May 1936 in the village of Vorovskoleskaya, Kursavsky District, Stavropol Region. In 1955, he was drafted into the Soviet Army. He served and at the same time was preparing to enter the Kiev Tank School named after M. Frunze, which he successfully graduated in September 1956. After graduating from the school, he was assigned to the 122nd Guards Tank Regiment of the 22nd Guards Division of the 6th Tank Regiment of the Army of the Kiev Military District. He served as a platoon commander of a tank company, then as deputy commander of a reconnaissance company for political affairs, commander of a deep reconnaissance company of the division’s reconnaissance battalion.

In 1962, he was sent to study at the Military Academy of the Soviet Army. After completing a one-year accelerated special course, he continued to serve in the central office of the Ministry of Defence in the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) in Moscow, where he was engaged in training specialists for foreign national liberation movements and parties fighting for national independence.

At the Moscow Centre for Training Personnel for National Liberation Movements, which was established in 1963, he worked as a junior researcher, head of the facility, instructor, then head of the Department of guerrilla tactics.

While working at the Moscow Centre for the Training of Personnel for National Liberation Movements, he

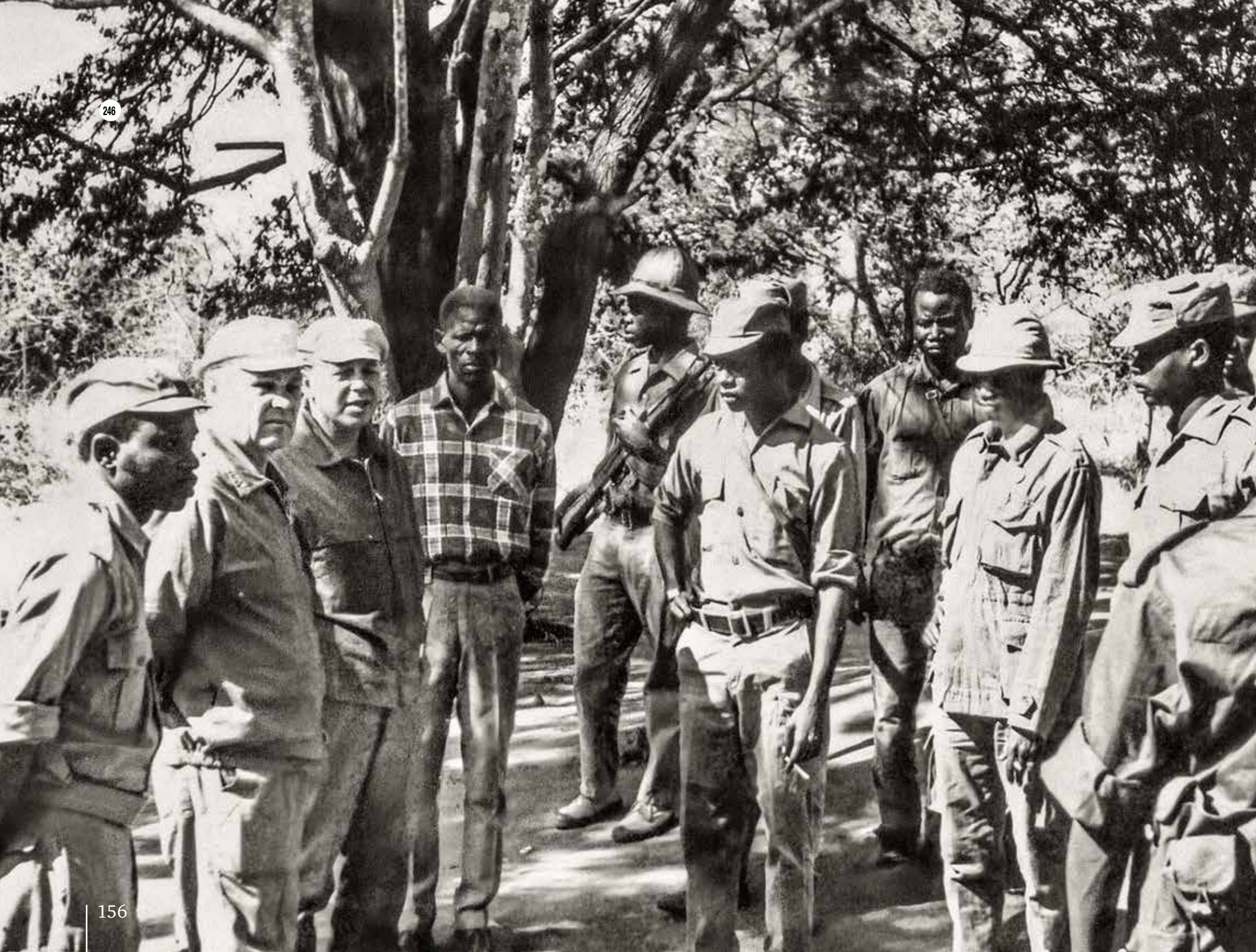
was engaged in providing assistance to African and Latin American national liberation movements, met with many leaders of the African liberation movements: Amílcar Cabral (PAIGC, Guinea-Bissau), Agostinho Neto (MPLA, Angola), Sam Nujoma (SWAPO, Namibia), Samora Machel (FRELIMO, Mozambique), traveled to the liberated territories to meet with them and to discuss the ways of collaboration and assistance. During this period, he graduated in absentia from the engineering faculty of the Military Order of Lenin of the Red Banner Academy of Armored Troops named after Marshal of the Soviet Union R. Malinovsky.

From March 1979 to March 1981, he was in Angola as the head of the group of Soviet specialists and interpreters at the SWAPO Training Centre named after Tobias Hainyeko. On the basis of the centre, mass training of SWAPO – PLAN fighters was carried out. Fighters were prepared for guerrilla operations on the territory of Namibia and, also, they were trained in regular army tactics. The centre was established in 1977 at the request of SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma and in agreement with the leadership of the People’s Republic of Angola.

For the merits during his service and in the performance of tasks set up by Command, he was awarded the Order of the Red Star, the Order of the Servant, the Order of Carnation and the Order of Glory (Afghanistan), the medal “For Military Merit” and many other medals.



ZHERLITSYN
Ivan
Grigorievich





246. Acquaintance with the leadership of the FRELIMO Central Guerrilla Training Camp "Nachingweya" in Tanzania. The second from the left is Colonel F. Fedorenko, the third from the left is Lieutenant Colonel I. Zherlitsyn. South of Tanzania, 8 August 1974
Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn

247. At a halt in the liberated areas of Mozambique. From left to right: Colonel F. Fedorenko – the head of the Moscow Centre for the Training of NOD specialists, Lieutenant Colonel I. Zherlitsyn – deputy chief of the Tactical Section, Sebastiano Mabote – operational commander of FRELIMO. Mozambique, Niassa Province. August 1974. Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn

248. Visit to FRELIMO Military Field Hospital in Tanzania. From left to right: Ivan Petrov, Soviet physician of the hospital, Lieutenant Colonel I. Zherlitsyn, responsible health worker, Tnzanii Samuel R. Janama, Colonel F. Fedorenko, head of the hospital Francisco Justino, doctor David Lehrer, Captain 3rd rank S. Kokin, doctor Anna Maria, Serafim Kostandov, surgeon. Tanzania, Mtwara, August 1974. Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn

249. A training class for medical instructors at FRELIMO Hospital in Tanzania. In the centre at the blackboard from left to right: Francisco Justino, the head of the hospital, Colonel F. Fedorenko, Lieutenant Colonel I. Zherlitsyn. Tanzania, Mtwara, August 1974
Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn

We ask the Central Committee of the CPSU to convey our feelings to comrades O. Porembsky and E. Ryabov, as well as to express our sympathy and gratitude to them."

Often in such groups, made up of responsible officials of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Soviet military, and carried out raids on the "guerrilla paths", included journalists and photojournalists. Upon their return, they published in Soviet newspapers reports from the territories liberated by the guerrillas and created documentaries about the struggle of Africans for liberation. The fact that such "campaigns" could be "not entirely peaceful" was demonstrated in the narration of the Anatoly Nikanorov, Soviet journalist, who visited the liberated territory in three Portuguese colonies once in the early 1970s as part of such a group for a short period of time: Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau.¹⁸²

He writes: *"I recall one combat operation of the Angolan guerrillas. Preparation for it was carried out*

especially thoroughly. After all, it had to be filmed. Therefore, together with the rebels, we first went to reconnoiter the Portuguese fort. We studied all the approaches to it, chose the best points for shelling. Then, returning to the permanent partisan base, we reproduced all the structures of the fort on a model, clarified the place of each soldier in the upcoming battle, and developed an attack plan." Interestingly, the journalist writes "we developed", "we chose the most successful firing points". The Soviet group clearly included not only cameramen and correspondents, but military specialists who coordinated the attack, at least gave practical advice.

After a detailed plan for an attack on the Portuguese fortified base, as Anatoly Nikanorov writes, *"the day of the operation was appointed."* *"The attack began at dusk on 26 July 1970. The operation was commanded by Spartacus Monimambu, the MPLA combat commander. A pistol-gun shot slammed, rifles clicked and machine guns crackled, then one mortar shot, then another. A fuel depot caught fire in the fort. We heard hysterical voices. From there, the soldiers began to shoot at random into the darkness. Then everything calmed down. The Portuguese must have taken refuge in concrete bunkers with which they had equipped all their camps for such an eventuality..."*

However, it is possible to say without any doubts, that the Soviet "walkers" in the African jungle did not take much risk and did not get into trouble. And their escorts did everything to ensure that nothing happened to the visitors from the USSR, and did not expose them to unnecessary risk. Situation with the "assault" of the Portuguese fort, which was told by A. Nikanorov, was apparently due to the fact that it was necessary to film the actions of the rebels, and the guerrillas chose a proven area where there was confidence that the Portuguese would not really engage in battle.

What was the effectiveness of such illegitimate campaigns of Soviet representatives in the territories liberated by the partisans? And what influence did they have on developing future policies towards Africa's liberated by guerrillas?

I. Zherlitsyn recalls: *"During our campaign through the liberated territories of Mozambique in August 1974, we clearly understood the military-political situation in the northern provinces of Mozambique. On the basis of its analysis and the report of comrade Mabote, the FRELIMO armed detachments conducted military operations to liberate the village of Mueda in the province of Tete on 20 January 1974 and capture the "Namatil" airfield in the province of Cabo Delgado on 1 August 1974. This has enabled us to assert that FRELIMO is the only organisation in Mozambique that expresses the interests of the people and that it is close to winning the struggle for the liberation of Mozambique."*

*In addition, it was concluded that the combat wing of FRELIMO had a need to create units of the regular army and switch to conducting combat operations using its methods. And finally, the conclusion was confirmed that it was necessary to make adjustments to the training programmes of the centre not only for FRELIMO, but also for MPLA, SWAPO and ANC".*¹⁸³

"Traveling" along the African guerrilla paths, Soviet envoys noted that with the growth of the liberation movement and the strengthening of military and financial assistance to the guerrillas from the USSR in many areas of the Portuguese colonies, a kind of status quo was established between the guerrillas and the colonial army. The Portuguese controlled cities, large villages, roads and airfields, and the territory where it was difficult for the rebels to hide. But tropical humid jungles, hard-to-reach mountain and forest areas, large waterways often remained with the guerrillas.



250. MPLA guerrilla camp. Early 70s of the XX century

P. Evsyukov testified: *“Marching behind the lines of the Portuguese army in Guinea-Bissau in 1972, I was quite surprised by the specifics of the war there. I simply could not believe when our group, including officers of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR, sailed at night on a longboat with a rumbling engine and searchlight, and on the bank of the canal the stronghold of the Portuguese army was just as brightly illuminated. It was enough to throw a grenade from the shore, and our entire detachment would have been destroyed. But our companions were imperturbably calm. In this way, as if in some magical theatrical performance, we passed by a fortified point called Gilezh”*.¹⁸⁴

There is another explanation for this strange behaviour of the Portuguese garrison in Guinea-Bissau. In the early 70s of the twentieth century, Lisbon had already realized that with such an increase of the national liberation movement, they would most likely not be able to hold all their colonies. The least valuable of these were East Timor in Asia and Guinea-Bissau in Africa. From these countries the troops, primarily the elite special forces, were gradually withdrawn. They were transferred to the richest colonies of Portugal, Angola and Mozambique, which the Portuguese decided to preserve at all costs — but they did not succeed in doing this either.

Recalling his work in Mozambique and his association with African leaders and ordinary FRELIMO guerrillas, Pyotr Yevsyukov, Soviet diplomat, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, author of the first self-study book in the USSR of the Portuguese language, noted: “As a Soviet ambassador, I often had the opportunity to meet and talk for a long time with Mozambican leaders: the late President Samora Machel, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Joaquim Chissano, the actual President of Mozambique. Both of them always tried to emphasize their gratitude to the Soviet Union for its assistance in building the armed forces of the republic, highly appreciated the work of Soviet military advisers and specialists; and this was not a part of the diplomatic protocol.

Oleg Porembsky (1926–1984), Colonel of the medical service, surgeon, medical scientist. A hereditary military doctor, his father, Major General of the Medical Service, Boris Porembsky, was the deputy head of the department of the Military Medical Academy named after S. Kirov in Leningrad.

O. Porembsky graduated from the S. Kirov Military Medical Academy in 1948 and completed postgraduate studies at its Department of Hospital Surgery in 1953. He worked at the Department of Naval and Hospital Surgery of the Naval Medical Academy as a junior lecturer, assistant to the head of the clinic, senior lecturer, deputy head of the department. Doctor of Medical Sciences (1965), Professor (1967), Colonel of the Medical Service (1969), dealt with the use of incomplete ligation of arteries in surgery of large blood vessels, diagnosis and treatment of chronic recurrent pancreatitis, to which his doctoral dissertation is devoted. Author of 120 research papers, co-author of two textbooks on naval surgery.

In 1966, at the request of the Angolan national liberation movement of the MPLA, doctor of Medical Sciences O. Porembsky was sent by the Ministry of Defence of the USSR to the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville) as a practicing

surgeon at the Matsende Military Field Hospital of the MPLA, located in Dolizi (now the city is called Lubomo). Working in the hospital for a year, he trained nurses and personally performed dozens of difficult and hundreds of simple operations, helped hundreds of injured and sick MPLA fighters who were taken to the hospital after being wounded during guerrilla operations in the Angolan province of Cabinda.

Based on the results of work in the military field hospital in Matsende on 21 November 1967, as a sign of deep gratitude for the help, the MPLA's leadership awarded the title of “Honorary Member of the MPLA” to Lieutenant Colonel Oleg Porembsky, surgeon of the MPLA Military Field Hospital in Matsende, and his military interpreter, Captain E. Ryabov.

For the successful fulfillment of his official and international duty in Africa, the leadership of the Ministry of Defence of the USSR presented O. Porembsky to the Order of the “Badge of Honor”, which he was awarded on 17 May 1968 (number 590326). Later, for his work in the hospital in Dolizi, he was also awarded the USSR Medal “For Military Merit”.

He was buried at the Bogoslovskoye cemetery in St. Petersburg.



POREMBSKI
Oleg
Borisovich

Soviet officers in Mozambique really had high authority and universal respect, and their work, if you will think about it, went far beyond the boundaries of one African country. After all, by helping to ensure the independence of Mozambique (as well as Angola and Guinea-Bissau), they directly or indirectly contributed to the acceleration of the processes that already have been in the region and which ultimately led to the the fall of the racist regime in Southern Rhodesia and the apartheid regime in South Africa. That is, to a radical change in the political map of the whole of Southern Africa".¹⁸⁵

In this chapter of the photo album are presented unique photographs and documents from the personal archives of A. Dubenko, I. Zherlitsyn, O. Poremsky and the archives of the Union of Angola Veterans.

Sergey Kolomnin



MOVIMENTO POPULAR DE LIBERTAÇÃO
DE ANGOLA
M. P. L. A.

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B. P. 2353

Tel. 49-15

BRAZZAVILLE
République du Congo

Brazzaville, 23 novembre 1967

Camarade
Dr. OLEG POREMBESKI
Brazzaville

Ref. 669/65/67

Cher Camarade,

Nous vous transmettons ci-joint la Carte de MEMBRE D'HONNEUR du MPLA, qualité qui vous a été conférée en réunion du Comité Directeur du MPLA, le 21 novembre 1967, en raison de votre dédication, compétence et esprit de sacrifice, démontrés au cours de la période où vous avez soigné nos malades et entraîné nos infirmiers à l'Hôpital de Matsende.

Nous n'oublierons jamais votre concours et tous les militants du MPLA garderont de vous un très chaleureux souvenir. Notre gratitude est extensive à votre famille, qui a du rester séparée de vous pendant tout ce temps.

Votre contribution concrète pour la libération de notre pays nous encourage à vous inviter dès maintenant à venir chez nous, lorsque nous serons libres et indépendants.

Une fois de plus, MERCI BEAUCOUP!

Certains de vous revoir, nous vous prions d'agréer, Cher Camarade, l'expression de notre gratitude et de notre profonde amitié.

Au nom du Comité Directeur

Lúcio Lara

Membre du Bureau Politique



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НАРОДНОЕ ДВИЖЕНИЕ ЗА ОСВОБОЖДЕНИЕ АНГОЛЫ, МПЛА

Браззавиль, Республика Конго

№ 669/65/67

Браззавиль, 23 ноября 1967 г.

Доктору Олегу Порембскому

Дорогой товарищ,

Мы передаем Вам в приложении удостоверение ПОЧЕТНОГО ЧЛЕНА МПЛА (Народного Движения за Освобождение Анголы), звание, которое было Вам присвоено на заседании Центрального комитета МПЛА 21 ноября 1967 года в знак признания вашей преданности, компетентности и самопожертвования, проявленных в период, когда Вы лечили наших больных и обучали наших медсестер в военно-полевом госпитале Матсенде.

Мы никогда не забудем Ваш вклад, и все бойцы МПЛА сохранят о Вас самые теплые воспоминания.

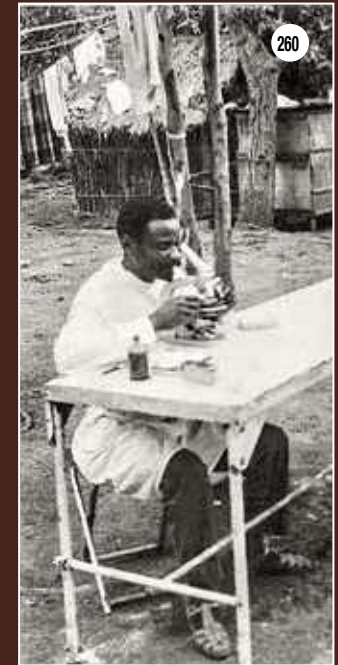
Наша благодарность распространяется и на Вашу семью, которой приходилось оставаться вдали от Вас все это время.

Ваш неоценимый вклад в борьбу за освобождение нашей страны побуждает нас уже сейчас вновь пригласить вас к нам, когда мы станем свободными и независимыми.

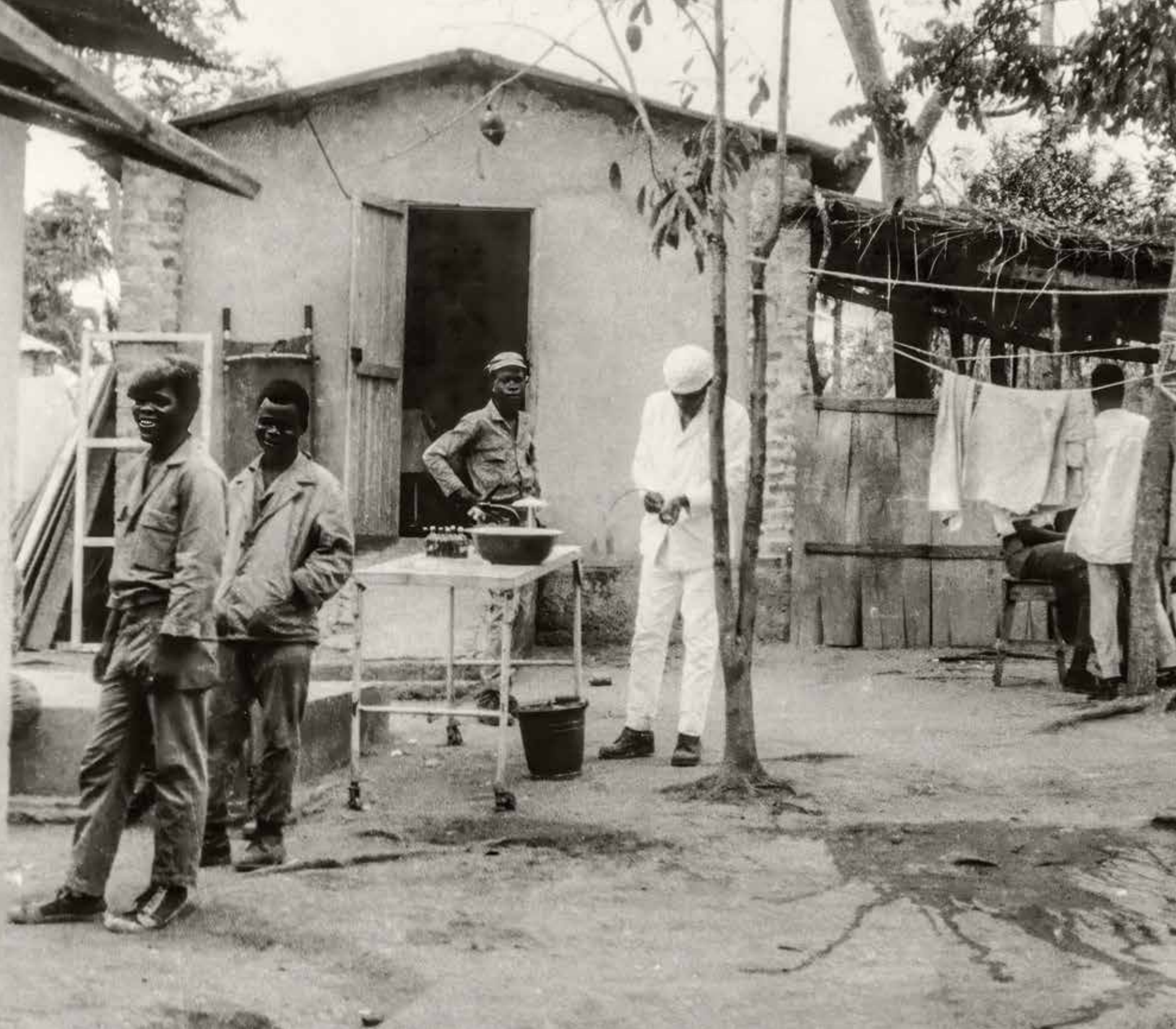
Еще раз БОЛЬШОЕ СПАСИБО!

Некоторые из нас надеются снова встретиться с Вами, а пока примите, дорогой товарищ, выражение нашей благодарности и искренней дружбы.

От имени Центрального комитета
(Печать и подпись)
Лусио Лара
Член Политбюро



256. Letter in French from Lucio Lara, a member of the Politburo Central Committee of the MPLA, to O. Porembski. Brazzaville, 23 November 1967 Archives of O. Porembski
257. Translation from French of an official letter to O. Porembski from Lucio Lara, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the MPLA, with gratitude to the Soviet surgeon and the award of the title of "Honorary Member of the MPLA Movement". Brazzaville, 23 November 1967. Archives of O. Porembski
258. Doctor. Oleg Porembsky and the medical staff of the MPLA Matsende Military Field Hospital. Dolisi, Republic of the Congo, 1967. Photo from the archives of O. Porembsky
259. Captain Evgraf Ryabov, French language interpreter, of the French language, with the service personnel of the military field hospital of the MPLA Matsende (Congo-Brazzaville). In the vicinity of the village, a huge boa constrictor was caught and killed, it was prepared for dinner by the cooks of the hospital. Dolizi, Republic of the Congo, 1967. Photo from the archives of O. Porembsky
260. Paramedic at MPLA hospital in Matsend, Dolizi, 1967
261. MPLA hospital in Matsende, Dolizi, 1967





262. Courtyard of the MPLA military field hospital in Matsend, Dolizi, Republic of the Congo, 1967.

263. The Poremsky medical dynasty. In the centre is Major General Boris Poremsky, on the right is Doctor of Medical Sciences, Colonel Oleg Poremsky, on the left is his son Lieutenant Yaroslav Poremsky after graduation from the Naval Academy named after S. Kirov. Leningrad, 1982. Photo from the archives of J. Poremski

264. An Angolan paramedic at the bed of a wounded MPLA fighter. MPLA hospital in Matsende, Dolizi, Republic of the Congo, 1967 Photo from the archives of O. Poremski

Народное движение за
освобождение Анголы
(МР А)

Республика Конго
(Браззавиль)

Перевод с французского

Браззавиль 13 ноября 1967 года

Центральному Комитету
Коммунистической партии
Советского Союза

Дорогие товарищи!

В час отъезда т.т.доктора Порембского О.Б. и Рябова Е.П. мы выражаем глубокую благодарность за предоставленную возможность нам общаться с ними в течение целого года.

В течение пребывания среди нас доктор Порембский О.Б. отдавался полностью делу лечения ангольских больных и раненых. Сотни медицинских вмешательств доктора позволили им вернуться к активной деятельности.

Мы высоко ценим его знания и опыт, которые он передавал нашим фельдшерам. Мы также высоко ценим преданность и смысл жертв т.Рябова Е.П., который всегда сотрудничал с доктором как переводчик, способствуя успешной работе доктора Порембского О.Б.

Мы никогда не забудем этого проявления интернациональности и поэтому наш Комитет решил присвоить двум товарищам звание "Почетного члена Народно-освободительного движения Анголы" — это скромное возмещение их огромных жертв.

Мы просим ЦК КПСС выразить наши чувства перед товарищами Порембским О.Б. и Рябовым Е.П. симпатии и признательность.

Еще раз говоря спасибо дорогим товарищам просим принять заверения в нашей непоколебимой солидарности.



От имени руководства Лусио Лара
Член политбюро

Перевел: капитан Рябов Е.П.

Верно: *Лусио Лара*
28.11.67 *(Кочаров)*

медалью "За боевые заслуги"

Все графы заполнять полностью

НАГРАДНОЙ ЛИСТ

1. Фамилия, имя и отчество РЯБОВ Евгений Павлович
2. Звание капитан
3. Должность, часть переводчик французского языка в военном госпитале Народно-освободительного движения Анголы
- Представляется к награждению медалью "За боевые заслуги"
4. Год рождения 1927
5. Национальность русский
6. Партийность чл. КПСС
7. Участие в боевых действиях по защите СССР и Отечественной войне (где, когда) не участвовал
8. Имеет ли ранения и контузии в Отечественной войне не имеет
9. С какого времени в Вооруженных Силах СССР с 1962г.
10. Каким РВК признан Фрунзенским облвоенкоматом, г. Фрунзе
11. Чем ранее награжден (за какие отличия) не награждался
12. Постоянный домашний адрес представляемого к награждению и адрес его семьи г. Алма-Ата, 30, ДСС-4, подъезд 3, кв. 4.

Краткое, конкретное изложение личного боевого подвига или заслуг

Капитан РЯБОВ Е.П. в течение двух лет работал переводчиком французского языка в полевом военном госпитале Народно-освободительного движения Анголы. Возложенные обязанности выполнял образцово.

За время нахождения за границей, в сложных условиях тропической Африки, с чувством высокой ответственности выполнял свой интернациональный долг. Имея хорошее политическое развитие умело, со знанием дела проводил пропагандистскую работу среди личного состава отрядов Народно-освободительного движения Анголы о достижениях Советского Союза. Пользовался заслуженным авторитетом среди руководящего и личного состава отрядов.

За образцовое выполнение своего интернационального долга собраньем руководства Народно-освободительного движения Анголы от 27 ноября 1967 года тов. РЯБОВ Е.П. зачислен почетным членом движения.

В письме на имя ЦК КПСС руководство Народно-освободительного движения Анголы выразило чувство признательности и благодарности тов. РЯБОВУ за оказанную помощь.

Дисциплинированный и исполнительный офицер. Обладает хорошими организаторскими способностями.

Идеологически выдержан, морально устойчив.

ВЫВОД: За образцовое выполнение задания достоин награждения медалью "ЗА БОЕВЫЕ ЗАСЛУГИ".



ЗАМЕСТИТЕЛЬ НАЧАЛЬНИКА I УПРАВЛЕНИЯ 10 ГЛАВНОГО
УПРАВЛЕНИЯ ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОГО ШТАБА
ГЕНЕРАЛ-МАЙОР

Командир (начальник)
января 1968 г.

(подпись)

(СОРОЧАН)

орденом Знак Почета
орденом Знак Почета

10 14 III 70

Все графы заполнять полностью

НАГРАДНОЙ ЛИСТ

58

1. Фамилия, имя и отчество ПОРЕМБСКИЙ Олег Борисович
2. Звание ПОДПОЛКОВНИК м/с 3. Должность, часть врач-хирург в военном госпитале Народно-освободительного движения Анголы
- Представляется к награждению орденом "Знак Почета"
4. Год рождения 1926 5. Национальность русский 6. Партийность чл. КПСС
7. Участие в боевых действиях по защите СССР и Отечественной войне (где, когда) не участвовал
8. Имеет ли ранения и контузии в Отечественной войне не имеет
9. С какого времени в Вооруженных Силах СССР с 1943г. 10. Каким РВК призван Кировским горвоенкоматом, г. Киров (обл.)
1. Чем ранее награжден (за какие отличия) пятью медалями
2. Постоянный домашний адрес представляемого к награждению и адрес его семьи г. Ленинград, ул. Блохина, дом 6/3, кв. 7.

Краткое, конкретное изложение личного боевого подвига или заслуг

Доктор медицинских наук подполковник м/с ПОРЕМБСКИЙ О.Б. имеет высокую специальную подготовку и большой практический опыт работы. Находясь в командировке за границей в течение года в качестве врача - хирурга полевого военного госпиталя Народно-освободительного движения Анголы в исключительно сложной обстановке и тяжелых климатических условиях оказал большую помощь в организации медицинской службы и подготовке младших медицинских специалистов. Принимал непосредственное участие в лечении больных и раненых, чем способствовал возвращению к активной деятельности сотен ангольских воинов. Пользовался большим авторитетом среди руководства и личного состава Народно-освободительного движения Анголы.

За образцовое выполнение своего интернационального долга собранием руководства Народно-освободительного движения Анголы от 27 ноября 1967 года тов. ПОРЕМБСКИЙ О.Б. зачислен почетным членом движения.

Отмечая большую работу тов. ПОРЕМБСКОГО руководство Народно-освободительного движения Анголы, в письме на имя Центрального Комитета КПСС, выразил чувство признательности и благодарности за оказанную помощь и проявление интернационализма.

Дисциплинированный, инициативный и исполнительный офицер. Обладает высокими организаторскими способностями и большим трудолюбием.

Делу Социалистической Родины предан.
Вывод: За образцовое выполнение задания достоин награждения орденом "Знак Почета"

ЗАМЕСТИТЕЛЬ НАЧАЛЬНИКА 1 УПРАВЛЕНИЯ 10 ГЛАВНОГО
УПРАВЛЕНИЯ ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОГО ШТАБА
ГЕНЕРАЛ-МАЙОР

Командир (начальник)

(СОРОЧАН)

января 1968 г.

(зависит)



265. Letter from Lucio Lara, a member of the Politburo of the MPLA Central Committee, to the Central Committee of the CPSU and the leadership of the USSR, in which he reports on the awarding of the rank of "Honorary Member of the MPLA" (translated from French). 13 November 1967, Brazzaville-Dolizi Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans
266. Photocopy of the award list (recommendation) of the USSR Ministry of Defence for the medal "For Military Merit" of Captain E. Ryabov. 3 January 1968. Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans.
267. Photocopy of the award list (presentation) of the USSR Ministry of Defence for the Order of the Badge of Honor of Lieutenant Colonel of the Medical Service O. Poremsky. January 3, 1968. Archive of the Union of Angola Veterans
268. Lieutenant Colonel Oleg Poremsky, Soviet military surgeon of the MPLA Military Field Hospital in Dolizi (People's Republic of the Congo (second from left) with Angola guards. At the end of the mission, by the decision of the Central Committee of the MPLA O. Poremsky was awarded the title of "Honorary Member of the MPLA". 1967. Photo from the archives of the Union of Angola Veterans
269. An advanced detachment of FRELIMO fighters accompanies Soviet officers on the march. Liberated areas of Portuguese Mozambique. Nyasa Province, August 1974 Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn



270. A meeting of the local population on the occasion of the entry into the village of the armed detachment FRELIMO and a group of Soviet officers - envoys of the USSR. Nana District, Niassa Province, Mozambique. 13 August 1974 Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn



271. Captain 1st Rank A. Dubenko in a guerrilla village in the territory liberated by FRELIMO, he receives a gift from the hands of the President of FRELIMO, Samora Machel. Mozambique, 1969 Photo from the archives of A. Dubenko

272. F. Fedorenko and I. Zherlitsyn at the FRELIMO central base "Nachingweya" in the south in Tanzania before meeting with Sebastiano Mabote. 8 August 1974. Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn

273. A group of Soviet officers and generals as part of the FRELIMO detachment in the liberated territory of colonial Mozambique. A. Dubenko is the fourth in a row in the column. 1969. Photo from the archives of A. Dubenko







REPÚBLICA POPULAR DE ANGOLA

MINISTÉRIO DA DEFESA

DESPACHO Nº18/GPQ/1977NOMEAÇÃO DE ALEXEI DUBENKOCOMO COMANDANTE HONORIFICODAS FAPLANOMEAÇÃO

POR ALTURA DA SUA NOMEAÇÃO PARA CONTRA-ALMIRANTE DA MARINHA DE GUERRA SOVIETICA, ETENDO EM CONTA OS SERVIÇOS PRESTADOS AS FORÇAS ARMADAS POPULARES DE LIBERTAÇÃO DE ANGOLA-F.A.P.L.A. PARA OS QUAIS SEMPRE COOPEROU QUER NA SUA CRIAÇÃO QUER NO SEU DESENVOLVIMENTO,

O MINISTRO DA DEFESA DA REPUBLICA POPULAR DE ANGOLA NOMEA-O HONORIFICAMENTE COMO COMANDANTE DAS FORÇAS ARMADAS POPULARES DE LIBERTAÇÃO DE ANGOLA-F.A.P.L.A.

E COMO TAL ENTREGA UM RELOGIO COMEMORATIVO.

DEFESA PRODUÇÃO DISCIPLINA

A LUTA CONTINUA

P'LO PODER POPULAR

A VITÓRIA É CERTA

O MINISTRO DA DEFESA,

Henrique Teles Carreira

-COMANDANTE-

Ministério da Defesa em Luanda, aos 3 de Julho de 1977.-

НАРОДНАЯ РЕСПУБЛИКА АНГОЛА
МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБОРОНЫ

Приказ №18/GPQ/1977
о присвоении Алексею Дубенко
почетного звания «Команданте»
ФАПЛА

Присвоение звания

В связи с присвоением Алексею Дубенко звания «Контр-адмирал» Военно-морского Флота СССР и, принимая во внимание, его заслуги перед Вооруженными Силами Освобождения Анголы – ФАПЛА, с которыми он тесно взаимодействовал в период их создания и развития

Министр Обороны Народной Республики Ангола приказывает присвоить Алексею Дубенко почетное звание «Команданте» Вооруженных Сил Освобождения Анголы – ФАПЛА.

По этому случаю Алексею Дубенко вручить памятные часы.

ОБОРОНА, ПРОИЗВОДСТВО, ДИСЦИПЛИНА

Борьба продолжается!

За народную власть!

Победа будет за нами!

МИНИСТР ОБОРОНЫ

Подпись

Печать

КОМАНДАНТЕ

Энрике Телеш Каррейра

Министерство Обороны, г. Луанда, 3 июля 1977 г.



274. Order of Henrique Teles Carreira, the Minister of Defence of the People's Republic of Angola, "Iko" on awarding the honorary title of "Commander of FAPLA" to Rear Admiral A. Dubenko, 3 July 1977 Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans
275. Translation of the order of the Minister of Defence of the People's Republic of Angola on awarding the honorary title of "Commander of FAPLA" to Rear Admiral A. Dubenko into Russian. Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans
276. A group of Soviet officers and generals on the territory of colonial Mozambique. On the right is Samora Machel, FRELIMO leader. 1969. Photo from the archives of A. Dubenko.
277. Soviet officers in the campaign through the territories of Mozambique liberated by FRELIMO fighters. In the middle is A. Dubenko, 1969 Photo from the archives of A. Dubenko
278. Soviet officers among children in one of the villages in the territories of colonial Mozambique liberated by FRELIMO. On the far right is A. Dubenko. 1969. Photo from the archives of A. Dubenko



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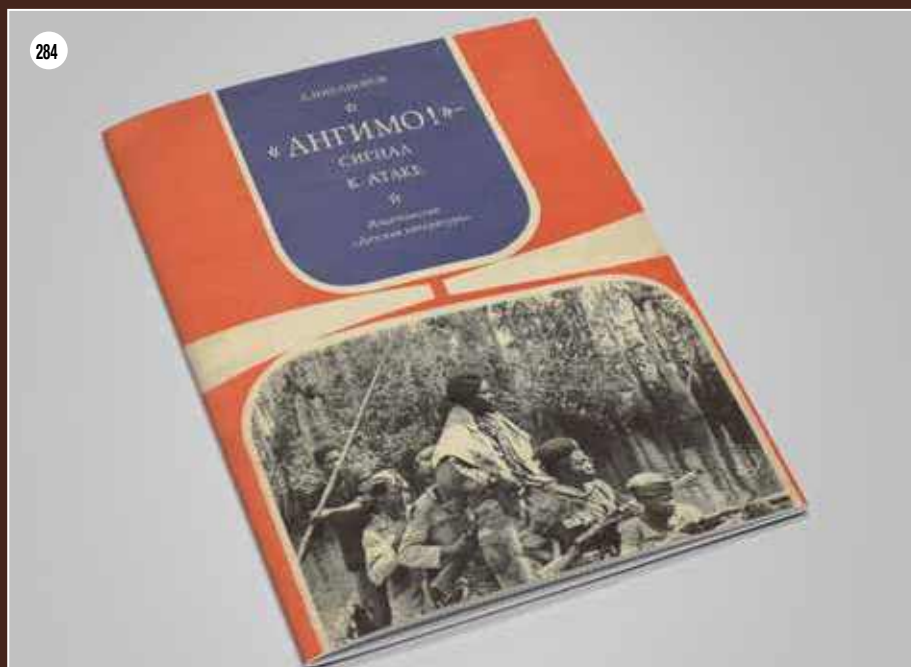
279. A group of Soviet officers and Generals moves to their destination as part of the FRELIMO detachment. The territory of colonial Mozambique. A. Dubenko is the fourth in the column. 1969. Photo from the archives of A. Dubenko

280. I. Zherlitsyn and F. Fedorenko on the shore of the Indian Ocean. Behind them in the roadstead is a Soviet ship (second from the right) with cargo for FRELIMO. August 1974. Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn

281. Soviet officers visit the FRELIMO Central Military Hospital, where FRELIMO fighters were treated recovering from wounds. Mtwara, Tanzania, 24 August 1974. Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn

282. Representatives of the Ministry of Defence of the USSR with FRELIMO guerrillas in the liberated areas of Mozambique. The third from the left is Captain 1st Rank Alexei Dubenko, the fourth is Igor Granin. 1969. Photo from the archives of A. Dubenko





283. A group photo of the leadership of the Moscow Centre for Training Specialists for Specialists for the NLM with students on the occasion of the arrival of Sebastiano Mabote, the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Mozambique, Moscow, 1975. Photo from the archives of I. Zherlitsyn
284. A. Nikanorov's photo essay "Angimo!" is a signal for an attack. Children's Literature Publishing House, Moscow, 1973. Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans
285. Augusto da Silva Cunha, Ambassador of the Republic of Angola (left), and José Mateus Katupha, Ambassador of the Republic of Mozambique, during the photo exhibition of the Union of Angola Veterans "THE USSR (RUSSIA) AND ANGOLA: OUR JOINT CONTRIBUTION TO THE LIBERATION OF THE PEOPLES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA" thanked Ivan Zherlitsyn for the assistance rendered to them in struggle for independence and the achievement of the national liberation of their countries. Moscow, 2023. Photo from the archives of the Union of Angola Veterans
286. Visit to the Moscow Training Centre for Specialists for the NLM by Sebastiano Mabote, the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Mozambique. From left to right: V. Kosarev, F. Fedorenko, S. Mabote, V. Efimov, I. Zherlitsyn, Moscow, 1975



287–291. Photo by Anatoly Nikanorov: MPLA (Angola), FRELIMO (Mozambique) and PAIGC (Guinea-Bissau) guerrillas.
 Illustrations from the photo essay “Angimo!” is a signal for an attack”. Children’s Literature Publishing House, Moscow, 1973.
 Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans



List of footnotes

- ¹ A. Khasanov Portugal's Expansion in Africa and the African Peoples' Struggle for independence. 16th-18th Centuries. Moscow, Nauka, 1976.
- ² Report of the USSR Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee Delegation on its visit to Angola. State Archives of the Russian Federation, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 704, l. 6.
- ³ Newspaper of the CPSU Central Committee "Pravda", 8 April 1971. Speeches by foreign guests at the CPSU Congress.
- ⁴ This refers, first and foremost, to the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee.
- ⁵ At that time, the USSR lacked definite and complete information concerning the actual political views of J. Savimbi and H. Roberto.
- ⁶ Personal archives of E. Kapsky, an official of the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee, donated by his widow to the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. For details, see: V. Shubin. The Hot "Cold War". Moscow, LRC Publishing House, 2013. P. 35.
- ⁷ Documents from the Russian State Archives of Contemporary History (fond 89, opis 46, delo 104, pp. 1-6).
- ⁸ In the USSR, assistance to national liberation movements in Third World countries was overseen by the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff.
- ⁹ From 1970 to 1991 – The People's Republic of the Congo, after 1991 – The Republic of the Congo.
- ¹⁰ S. Kolomnin The Russian Trace at Kifangondo. Unknown Pages of Black Africa's History. Moscow, Etnika, 2014. P. 25.
- ¹¹ Cabinda is geographically the northernmost, and Cunene is the southernmost province of the country.
- ¹² A. Tokarev The FNLA in the Anti-colonial Struggle and Civil War in Angola. Moscow, Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, 2006.
- ¹³ A. Khasanov The Portuguese Colonial Empire. 1415-1974. Moscow, Veche, 2014.
- ¹⁴ In literature, white Angolans are often incorrectly referred to as "Portuguese". These people, born in Angola, often second or third generation, consider themselves Angolans. Many have never been to Portugal and consider it a foreign country.
- ¹⁵ This did not, however, stopped Savimbi to ally with white South Africans and get their support, including white instructors, in the guerrilla war against the MPLA during the period 1975-1988.
- ¹⁶ A. Khasanov The Portuguese Colonial Empire. 1415-1974. Moscow, Veche, 2014.
- ¹⁷ A. Khasanov Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Breytenbach, Jan. The Buffalo Soldiers: The Story of South Africa's 32nd Battalion, 1975-1993. Galago Publishing, 1999.
- ¹⁹ Report of the USSR Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee Delegation on its visit to Angola. State Archives of the Russian Federation, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 704, l. 6.
- ²⁰ V. Shubin The Hot "Cold War". Moscow, LRC Publishing House, 2013. P. 43.
- ²¹ V. Shubin Ibid. P. 48.
- ²² A. Tokarev, "The Black Rooster" of Angola. Asia and Africa Today, No 5, 2002.
- ²³ A. Tokarev A. Ibid.
- ²⁴ A. Tokarev The FNLA in the Anti-colonial Struggle and Civil War in Angola. Moscow, Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, 2006.
- ²⁵ For details, see: Kolomnin S. The Russian Trace at Kifangondo. Moscow, Etnika, 2014.
- ²⁶ Jornal de Angola, 18 November 1984.
- ²⁷ For details on the elimination of J. Savimbi and general S. Vala, read S. Kolomnin's article "Who Killed Savimbi?" in the journal "Africa and Asia" No. 2, 2014 [<https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/nauka/savimbi2>], (<http://www.veteranangola.ru/main/nauka/savimbi2>) as well as in the brochure "The Military Academy of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces and the Training of Cadres for the National Army of the Republic of Angola (1980-2019)" in the electronic supplement to the photo album.
- ²⁸ April 4th is celebrated annually in Angola as the Day of National Reconciliation.
- ²⁹ For details on the peace process in Angola, read "Angola: The Reconciliation Process and the Armed Forces" (in Russian and Portuguese), author: Sergey Anatolyevich Kolomnin® Publication of the Russian Union of Angola Veterans, 2017. The file is located in the electronic supplement to the photo album, as well as at [<https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/knigi/roccess>](<http://www.veteranangola.ru/main/knigi/roccess>).
- ³⁰ The terrain in this region is a plain densely overgrown with forest and bushes, not a savanna in its classic sense with isolated groups of trees, so Angolans call it "mata", which translates to "forest".
- ³¹ The Cuito and Lomba are rivers flowing in the Angolan province of Cuando Cubango.
- ³² According to the concept that views the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale only as a battle for the town, it began on 14 November 1987.
- ³³ The forward units of the South African Defence Force's 61st Mechanised Battalion Group crossed the Angolan-Namibian border on 4 August 1987, and units of the 32nd "Buffalo" Battalion had been on Angolan territory since May-June 1987.
- ³⁴ The main area of combat engagements between FAPLA and the SADF/UNITA on the left bank of the Cuito River became known as the "Tumpo Triangle".
- ³⁵ Quote from F. Castro's message to Joe Slovo, leader of the South African Communist Party. Source: Information Centre of the Revolutionary Armed Forces in Havana.
- ³⁶ The strike was specifically aimed at the Calueque dam on Angolan territory, not at the underground Ruacana hydroelectric power station (machine hall), which is located downstream in Namibian territory, 42 km from Calueque. The dam at Calueque adjust the water flow to the Ruacana HPP.
- ³⁷ <http://www.un.org/ru/peacekeeping/missions/past/angola1.htm>
- ³⁸ Speech of Fidel Castro Ruz, the President of the Republic of Cuba, on the occasion of International Workers' Day, meeting held at the Revolution Square. Havana, 1 May 2003.
- ³⁹ Kasrils, Ronnie. "Turning point at Cuito Cuanavale", Independent Online, 23 March 2008.
- ⁴⁰ The armed units of the Namibian SWAPO liberation movement located in Angola during that period, did not directly engaged in the battles near Cuito Cuanavale but were involved in fighting UNITA units, guarding communications, and engaged in armed confrontation with SADF units in other areas and provinces. Units of the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa, "Umkhonto we Sizwe", which were trained with

the assistance of Soviet advisors on Angolan territory, also played an important role in countering the SADF in southern Angola.

⁴¹ Book of Memory of the Union of Angola Veterans: https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/bookmem [http://www.veteranangola.ru/main/bookmem]

⁴² Some Soviet military specialists who participated in those events never received the Cuban medal, as their deployments ended earlier and they returned home. A list of Soviet participants in the battle awarded the Cuban medal “Heroic Defender of Cuito Cuanavale” can be found on the website of the Union of Angola Veterans https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/history/spisokKK [http://www.veteranangola.ru/main/history/spisokKK]

⁴³ Some sources report that the figures symbolize a Cuban and an Angolan soldier, but the Angolans do not officially confirm this.

⁴⁴ Speech by José Eduardo dos Santos, the President of the PRA, Chairman of the MPLA-Workers’ Party, at the 2nd Party Congress. Quoted from the newspaper “Pravda”, 4 December 1985.

⁴⁵ Russian State Archives of Contemporary History, fond 89, opis 10, delo 20, p. 2.

⁴⁶ Official data from the Museum of the Revolution in Havana (Cuba).

⁴⁷ Speech by Cuban President Fidel Castro at the anniversary rally dedicated to the 49th anniversary of the Granma yacht landing - Day of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the 30th anniversary of the start of the Cuban military mission in Angola. Havana, 2 December 2005.

⁴⁸ The badge of honorary member of the Russian Union of Angola Veterans was presented to Ronnie Kasrils by the leaders of the Union of Angola Veterans, V. Sagachko and S. Kolomnin, in the State Duma of the Russian Federation in 2005 during the presentation of his Russian-language book “Armed and Dangerous: From Underground Struggle to Freedom”. At that time, the author presented Ronnie Kasrils with his own memoir about his work in Angola, “Russian Special Forces in Africa”, and the legendary MK commander gave him a copy of his book with a dedicatory inscription in return. R. Kasrils also presented another copy of his book in Russian to the Union of Angola Veterans with his dedication.

⁴⁹ Vyacheslav Shiryayev (1938-2017) from September 1979 to September 1983 was the senior officer of the group of Soviet military specialists attached to the ANC in Angola, holder of the South African Order of the Companions of O.R. Tambo in silver, established in modern South Africa for foreign citizens as a recognition of their contribution to the liberation of the peoples of South Africa.

⁵⁰ Memoirs of V. Shiryayev. S. Kolomnin “We Did Our Duty! Angola: 1975-1992”, Moscow: Etnika Studio Publishing House, 2018. ISBN 9785990769397, pp. 172-175.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² At the ANC camp near Quibaxe in 1976, Ronnie Kasrils, a member of the ANC and MK leadership, worked. See his memoirs in the book “Armed and Dangerous: From Underground Struggle to Freedom”. Moscow: ITRK Publishing House, 2005. ISBN 5-88010-214-9.

⁵³ In 1978-1979, Ronnie Kasrils, a member of the ANC and MK leadership, was sent as a political instructor to the camp in Novo Catengue. See his memoirs in the book “Armed and Dangerous: From Underground Struggle to Freedom”. Moscow: ITRK Publishing House, 2005. ISBN 5-88010-214-9.

⁵⁴ According to the memoirs of A. Bendikov.

⁵⁵ According to the memoirs of V. Shiryayev.

⁵⁶ Alexander Bendikov, graduated from the Translation Faculty of Moscow State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages in 1986, was drafted into the Soviet Army the same year and deployed to Angola as an English interpreter for the group of Soviet military specialists attached to the ANC/MK. He was in Angola for three years, working in Luanda and in the regions. A. Bendikov was interviewed by the author in November 2024.

⁵⁷ Interview of A. Bendikov with the author, November 2024.

⁵⁸ Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) on Angolan Territory (1977-1980)” in this publication.

⁵⁹ Author’s conversation with V. Lebedev, February 2025.

⁶⁰ Author’s conversation with V. Lebedev, February 2025.

⁶¹ Ronnie Kasrils. “Armed and Dangerous: From Underground Struggle to Freedom”. Moscow: ITRK Publishing House, 2005.

⁶² This distribution of specialists from the group of Soviet military specialists attached to the ANC in Angola was typical for the mid and late 1980s. The senior officer worked both in Luanda and in Malanje, coming to Caculama as needed to resolve operational issues.

⁶³ According to the memoirs of A. Bendikov.

⁶⁴ See: Ronnie Kasrils. “Armed and Dangerous: From Underground Struggle to Freedom”. Moscow: ITRK Publishing House, 2005.

⁶⁵ Interview of A. Bendikov with the author, November 2024.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Such “chest webbing” (tactical vests) were first used by Soviet Army soldiers in the Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces in Afghanistan, hence they received the name “Afghanka”.

⁶⁸ According to the memoirs of A. Bendikov.

⁶⁹ The total capacity of the camp was designed for the stay and training of up to 2,000 people.

⁷⁰ Interview of A. Bendikov with the author, November 2024.

⁷¹ Subsequently, Joe Modise became the first black Minister of Defence of South Africa, serving in that position from 1994 to 1999.

⁷² The Northern (or Moscow) Centre for Training Cadres for National Liberation Movements was established in December 1963 by decision of the CPSU Central Committee to train guerrilla leaders. There was also a Southern Centre for Training Cadres for National Liberation Movements, opened in 1965 at the Perevalnoye Training Centre. It trained mid-level and rank-and-file personnel for guerrilla units of national liberation movements, Moscow Centre – in prospect the basis of future regular armies of independent states. The ANC representatives were first to joint training at the Moscow Centre.

⁷³ According to the memoirs of A. Bendikov.

⁷⁴ According to documents of the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff, his position was called “advisor to the commander of the ANC regional command in Angola”. The memoirs of M. Konovalenko about his work in Angola and at the Caculama camp, recorded by PhD in History D. Zelenova, can be found in the electronic supplement to the publication in the collection of articles “Solidarity in the Struggle Against Apartheid: Historical Memory in Russia and South Africa”. Executive editor Prof., Dr. of History V. Shubin. Moscow: Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, 2023. 260 p. ISBN 978-5-91298-295-8.

⁷⁵ Kalizhan Alzhanov worked in Angola not only with ANC patriots, but also with SWAPO: specialists could be moved from one group of Soviet military specialists to another if necessary.

⁷⁶ Interview of A. Bendikov with the author, November 2024.

⁷⁷ Lists of military personnel deployed by the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces to Angola. Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans.

⁷⁸ Memoirs of V. Shiryayev. Kolomnin S. “We Did Our Duty! Angola: 1975-1992”, Moscow: Etnika Studio Publishing House, 2018. ISBN 978-5-99076-939-7, pp. 172-175.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

- ⁸¹ A. Davidson, I. Filatova “Russia and South Africa: Building Bridges”. Moscow: Higher School of Economics Publishing House, 2012.
- ⁸² V. Shiryayev, V. Shubin and V. Kazimirov are members of the Russian Union of Angola Veterans.
- ⁸³ The list is compiled from documents of the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, held in the archives of the Union of Angola Veterans. The list is far from complete; many specialists, especially in the early years of providing assistance to the ANC in Angola, were deployed via the GRU of the General Staff due to the secrecy classification of these trips, and their names did not appear in the registries of the 10th Main Directorate.
- ⁸⁴ Interview of Zimbabwean President E. Mnangagwa with RIA Novosti, 22 October 2019, <https://ria.ru/20191022/1560084986.html>
- ⁸⁵ In the Shona language of Zimbabwe, “Zimbabwe” (dzimba dzemabwe) means “houses of stone”, symbolized by the stone ruins of Great Zimbabwe near the modern city of Masvingo.
- ⁸⁶ V. Shubin The Hot “Cold War”. Moscow, LRC Publishing House, 2013. Chapter 12 “The Patriotic Front”.
- ⁸⁷ Memoirs of A. Burenko. Memoirs of direct participants and eyewitnesses of the Angolan Civil War. Oral History of Forgotten Wars. Moscow: “Memories”, 2009. 328 p. with illustrations.
- ⁸⁸ V. Shubin Op. cit.
- ⁸⁹ Data published in Western sources claiming that there were allegedly “East German advisors” in the Boma camp who trained ZIPRA fighters do not correspond to reality. Possibly these speculations arose from the fact that many fighters of national liberation movements in Angola (e.g., SWAPO, and highly likely ZAPU) wore military camouflage of the GDR army. This military uniform was indeed supplied from the GDR to Angola and provided to such formations. On the other hand, the Boma camp warehouses held some quantity of German weaponry from World War II (MG machine guns, MP-38/40 submachine guns, etc., see photo). Soviet advisors used it when training ZIPRA fighters, who, upon completing the course, took some of this weaponry when departing for Southern Rhodesia. Apparently, the use of German weapons by ZAPU fighters in Southern Rhodesia gave rise to such rumors.
- ⁹⁰ Memoirs of A. Burenko.
- ⁹¹ National liberation movements abroad were overseen by the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, which had a corresponding network of training centres and schools.
- ⁹² Memoirs of A. Burenko.
- ⁹³ Lists of specialists deployed abroad by the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff. Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans.
- ⁹⁴ Memoirs of A. Burenko.
- ⁹⁵ Lists of specialists deployed abroad by the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff. Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans.
- ⁹⁶ V. Lebedev received the rank of “Major” later, when he was already working as the senior officer of the group of Soviet military specialists attached to the ANC in Malanje.
- ⁹⁷ V. Lebedev recalls that after completing work with the ZAPU fighters and their departure in the spring of 1980 (Zimbabwe’s independence was proclaimed on April 18, 1980), he and his comrades were “reoriented” to work with ANC fighters in Malanje. V. Lebedev was on an official deployment in Angola from 30 April 1978 to 25 April 1981. Interview of V. Lebedev with the author, 11 June 2024.
- ⁹⁸ Interview of V. Lebedev with the author, 11 June 2024.
- ⁹⁹ Training of ZAPU specialists on these soviet-made combat vehicles did not take place within the Boma camp territory, and was transferred to the vicinity of Luena, at FAPLA and Cuban military bases and units that could provide such equipment. The training of Zimbabwean instructors was provided by Cuban and Soviet specialists in T-34 tanks, BTR-152 APCs, and BRDM-1 reconnaissance vehicles. Interview of V. Lebedev with the author, 11 June 2024.
- ¹⁰⁰ Memoirs of A. Burenko.
- ¹⁰¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰² Ibid.
- ¹⁰³ Interview of V. Lebedev with the author, 11 June 2024.
- ¹⁰⁴ Single-barrel mountain anti-aircraft mount based on the Vladimirov heavy machine gun.
- ¹⁰⁵ From February 1976, the Angolan Air Force was supplied by the USSR a squadron of MiG-17f fighters, but its combat capabilities were limited. In February 1979, more modern MiG-21 aircraft began arriving in Angola from the USSR; they were being assembled and test-flown in Luanda by Cuban pilots - the Angolan Air Force did not yet have pilots for this aircraft type.
- ¹⁰⁶ The Rhodesians named this air operation “Vanity”.
- ¹⁰⁷ V. Lebedev, a participant in those events, personally observed these aircraft from the ground. See also material https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Vanity
- ¹⁰⁸ V. Shubin Op. cit.
- ¹⁰⁹ Book of Memory of the Union of Angola Veterans. <<http://www.veteranangola.ru/main/bookmem/noyabr75>>
- ¹¹⁰ The author was in Angola at that time, working at the air base in Luanda, and witnessed the described events of transferring Cuban fighters to Luena.
- ¹¹¹ Interview of V. Lebedev with the author, 11 June 2024.
- ¹¹² Memoirs of A. Burenko.
- ¹¹³ Moscow and the Liberation of Zimbabwe. Journal of Southern African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. Vol. 43, Issue 1, 2017.
- ¹¹⁴ Zambia has a fairly long (233 km) border with Namibia in the so-called “Caprivi Strip”, a relatively narrow strip of Namibian territory bordering Botswana to the south and Angola and Zambia to the north. However, the African tribes living in Caprivi did not support SWAPO, and moreover, the South African police maintained strict control of the border. Therefore, the penetration of SWAPO patriots into Namibian territory via this route met certain problems.
- ¹¹⁵ Read more in: Shubin V. The Hot “Cold War”. Moscow, LRC Publishing House, 2013, pp. 285-286.
- ¹¹⁶ The supply of heavy weapons to PLAN in Angola was questionable and raised doubts in the Soviet Union, but later they were completely dispelled. See: V. Shubin The Hot “Cold War”. Moscow, LRC Publishing House, 2013, pp. 285-286.
- ¹¹⁷ Tobias Hainyeko (1932-1967) – first commander of PLAN, killed in action against South African forces in Namibia.
- ¹¹⁸ For details on the work of I. Zherlitsyn in training cadres for African national liberation movements, read the chapter “Africa: Guerrilla Paths (Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau)”.
- ¹¹⁹ This refers to the Moscow Centre for Training Cadres for National Liberation Movements. Read more about it in the chapter “Africa: Guerrilla Paths (Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau)”.
- ¹²⁰ Interview of I. Zherlitsyn with D. Zelenova, staff member of the Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. <https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/vospominaniya/zerlicin>
- ¹²¹ Lists of specialists deployed by the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff to Angola, archives of the Union of Angola Veterans. The names of the job categories of officers sent

abroad via the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff, in these lists, especially for those who worked with the ANC, ZAPU, and SWAPO, did not always exactly correspond to the actual position they held in Angola. Possibly this was done for reasons of secrecy, but in this case, as in the case of N. Kurushkin (see below), it was more likely due to a lack of specific information about situation in PLAN: at that time, it was just being formed. Furthermore, specifying in the 10th Main Directorate's staffing tables not a specific position for a specialist abroad, but rather a work profile, such as: "specialist in reconnaissance and tactics", "specialist at a training centre", "specialist in organising the training process", etc., allowed, if necessary, for specialists to be transferred abroad from one group of Soviet military specialists to another by decision of the Chief Military Advisor, without creating bureaucratic red tape in Moscow. All positions within groups of Soviet military specialists in the armies of developing countries, as well as the actual deployment of each specialist abroad, were approved by order of the Chief of the General Staff (or his deputy).

¹²² As per document, but obviously it refers to the SWAPO army. In later official documents of the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff, Colonel N. Kurushkin is referred to as advisor to the commander of the SWAPO/PLAN armed forces. In practice, N. Kurushkin was effectively advisor to the SWAPO Secretary for Defence, Peter Nanyemba, but worked with all PLAN military leaders.

¹²³ All graduates of Soviet civilian higher education institutions who completed a military department were commissioned as officers and could be conscripted into the Armed Forces.

¹²⁴ English interpreters in Angola ensured radio communication within the crews of Soviet aircraft of the Chief Military Advisor's air detachment (eight An-12 aircraft, later Il-76), the Chief Military Advisor's personal An-24 aircraft, and Mi-8 helicopter.

¹²⁵ Captain Evgeny Parfenov, specialist in combat use of ZU-23-2. Lists of military personnel deployed by the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces to Angola. Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans.

¹²⁶ Memoirs of M. Vlasenko. https://veteranangola.milportal.ru/vospominania_vlasenko/

¹²⁷ According to the recollections of several Soviet specialists who worked with SWAPO, this centre existed since 1977, and in the early 1980s, it was repurposed for training PLAN mechanized units. Soviet specialists called it by different names: "Jumbo" or "Jamba". In many languages, the word "Jumbo" or its cognate "Jamba" means "big", "giant", or "elephant". English: Jumbo Training Centre (JTC).

¹²⁸ The Angolan Air Defence Forces' Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade, equipped with Soviet S-125 "Pechora" surface-to-air missile systems, was deployed in Lubango in September-November 1979. Due to the lack of a sufficient number of trained Angolan specialists in air defence missile forces and radio-technical troops, the brigade at that time was largely staffed by Cuban military personnel.

¹²⁹ Interview of M. Vlasenko with the author, 20 March 2025.

¹³⁰ Interview of I. Zherlitsyn with D. Zelenova, staff member of the Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. <https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/vospominaniya/zerlicin>

¹³¹ Interview of M. Vlasenko with the author, 20 March 2025.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Interview of I. Zherlitsyn with D. Zelenova, staff member of the Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. <https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/vospominaniya/zerlicin>

¹³⁵ Additional translation from English was carried out into the Kwanyama language, belonging to the Ovambo language group, as well as other, less widely spoken languages of the Namibian population.

¹³⁶ Peter Nanyemba, SWAPO Secretary for Defence. National Hero of Namibia. Died in a car accident in Lubango in April 1983. His remains were later transferred from Angola to Namibia and 31 years after his death reburied in the Windhoek Memorial Park.

¹³⁷ Interview of I. Zherlitsyn with D. Zelenova, staff member of the Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. <https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/vospominaniya/zerlicin>

¹³⁸ Interview of M. Vlasenko with the author, 20 March 2025.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ On 4 May 1978, a large-scale attack by South Africans on a SWAPO camp in the village of Cassinga in Angola took place (in the media, this act of aggression became known as the "Cassinga Raid" or "Cassinga Massacre"). The camp was subjected to severe aerial bombardment, followed by landing of paratroops. According to the Angolan government, 624 people died and 611 were wounded as a result of this attack by SADF. According to SWAPO, the number of dead was 582, and the wounded numbered 400.

¹⁴¹ Interview of I. Ignatovich with the author. March 2025.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Major Anatoly Romancha, specialist in guerrilla warfare tactics for the group of Soviet military specialists attached to SWAPO in Angola.

¹⁴⁴ Memoirs of M. Vlasenko. https://veteranangola.milportal.ru/vospominania_vlasenko/

¹⁴⁵ Interview of I. Ignatovich with the author. March 2025.

¹⁴⁶ I. Ignatovich recalls that the top leadership of SWAPO indeed had an idea "to enter Windhoek on these tanks", and this idea was constantly reiterated by political commissars of all ranks. Such an attempt was made after the end of active hostilities, on the eve of Namibia's independence. On 1 April 1989 PLAN units decided (in violation of international agreements) to cross the border from Angola with weaponry and equipment. This led to an escalation of tension, the resumption of armed clashes and needless casualties on both sides.

¹⁴⁷ Major Valery Skvortsov, specialist in judo and karate training. Lists of military personnel deployed by the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces to Angola. Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans.

¹⁴⁸ Captain Nikolai Chernykh, special training instructor. Lists of military personnel deployed by the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces to Angola. Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans.

¹⁴⁹ Interview of I. Ignatovich with the author. March 2025.

¹⁵⁰ Interview of M. Vlasenko with the author, 20 March 2025.

¹⁵¹ Interview of I. Ignatovich with the author. March 2025.

¹⁵² After the death of Peter Nanyemba, SWAPO Minister of Defence, in a car accident in Lubango in 1983, the SWAPO hospital was named after him.

¹⁵³ Interview of I. Zherlitsyn with D. Zelenova, staff member of the Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. <https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/vospominaniya/zerlicin>

¹⁵⁴ As per document. Lists of military personnel deployed by the 10th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces to Angola. Archives of the Union of Angola Veterans.

¹⁵⁵ Memoirs of M. Vlasenko. https://veteranangola.milportal.ru/vospominania_vlasenko

¹⁵⁶ What I. Zherlitsyn mentions is a traditional dish, even a national one in the case of Angola, for both Angolans and Namibians (and also Congolese and many other Western Bantu peoples). It is called funje (funge). This dish, as Ivan Zherlitsyn correctly states, can be made from corn flour. It is also made from sorghum, millet, but mainly in Angola, it is cooked from cassava flour. It is the most common and popular dish in Angola - eaten in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. Cassava (corn, millet, etc.) flour is mixed into boiling water until it reaches a jelly-like consistency, allowed to cool and set (it is more like a very thick porridge than hard plasticine), and eaten with fish or meat sauces. It can be eaten with hands, as correctly noted. For example, rolling a small ball from it, which can be dipped in stew, garnish, or sauce this is an African tradition.

- ¹⁵⁷ M. Istomin Group of Soviet Military Advisors for SWAPO in Angola. <http://fox-notes.ru/spravka/TXT-FN11082022-ANGOLA.htm>
- ¹⁵⁸ V. Stryukov "African Hunts". Published at the author's expense, printed by Orgtechprint LLC, Obninsk, Kaluzhskoe Shosse, 59. 2005.
- ¹⁵⁹ M. Istomin Group of Soviet Military Advisors for SWAPO in Angola. <http://fox-notes.ru/spravka/TXT-FN11082022-ANGOLA.htm>
- ¹⁶⁰ This refers to a lightweight camouflage peaked cap.
- ¹⁶¹ M. Istomin. Ibid.
- ¹⁶² Interview of I. Ignatovich with the author. March 2025.
- ¹⁶³ Main Directorate for International Military Cooperation of the Russian Federation: 1961-2001. Military-Historical Essay. Moscow., 2001. P. 118.
- ¹⁶⁴ Interview of I. Zherlitsyn with D. Zelenova. <https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/vospominaniya/zerlicin>
- ¹⁶⁵ The name "Northern" is conditional. The Moscow Centre for Training Cadres for National Liberation Movements, established in 1963, did not have a single territorially separate location. Foreign groups arriving for training at the centre, numbering up to 35 people, were accommodated at several suburban locations in the Moscow region, which had equipped classrooms furnished with visual aids, equipment, and weapons. If a small group of up to 10 people arrived, they worked primarily in Moscow. Upon completion of the training course, graduates returned to their countries and continued the struggle for liberation from colonial oppression as leaders of higher and middle rank. (Note by I.G. Zherlitsyn).
- ¹⁶⁶ Interview of I. Zherlitsyn with D. Zelenova. <https://www.veteranangola.ru/main/vospominaniya/zerlicin>
- ¹⁶⁷ Yu. Gorbunov. "Crimea and Africa. Memoirs of a Military Interpreter" <https://mil.sevhome.ru/voenistor/crimcouldwar/ju-gorbunov-simferopol-krym-i-afrika-vospominaniya-voenogo-perevodchika/>
- ¹⁶⁸ According to the memoirs of A. Kiselev, a Soviet military interpreter at the "Southern Centre" for training cadres for national liberation movements in Perevalnoye, and later a Portuguese language instructor at the Military Institute of the Ministry of Defence, "natives of the Portuguese colonies were distinguished by their particular quick-wittedness and ability to learn: fighters from Guinea-Bissau, having made only one qualifying combat launch of the Strela-2 MANPADS, a week after arriving home successfully began 'shooting down' one Portuguese aircraft after another" (from the author's conversation with A. Kiselev).
- ¹⁶⁹ Pravda, 7 July 1970.
- ¹⁷⁰ V. Shubin The Hot "Cold War". Moscow, LRC Publishing House, 2013. Chapter "Zigzags of History"
- ¹⁷¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁷² V. Kirpichenko Intelligence: Faces and Personalities. Moscow: Gea, 1998, pp. 205-206.
- ¹⁷³ This doctor, judging by the time of work (1967), could only have been Lieutenant Colonel of Medical Service Oleg Porembsky, awarded the Soviet Order of the Badge of Honour for his work in the MPLA field hospital. In gratitude for his work, the MPLA Central Committee awarded him the title "Honorary Member of the MPLA". See document photos in this photo album. Oleg Porembsky, a hereditary physician (his father was Major General of Medical Service Porembsky Boris, Deputy Head of the Department at the Naval Medical Academy in Leningrad), surgeon, Doctor of Medical Sciences (1965), Colonel of Medical Service, Professor, Deputy Head of the Department of Naval Hospital Surgery at the Kirov Military Medical Academy in Leningrad. He dealt with issues of using incomplete artery ligation in surgery of large blood vessels, diagnosis and treatment of chronic relapsing pancreatitis. Died in 1984, buried at the Bogoslovskoye Cemetery in St. Petersburg.
- ¹⁷⁴ V. Kirpichenko Intelligence: Faces and Personalities. Moscow: Gea, 1998, pp. 205-206.
- ¹⁷⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁷⁶ P. Yevsyukov. Memoirs (unpublished). Archives of the Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences.
- ¹⁷⁷ Interview of I.G. Zherlitsyn with S. Kolomnin, recorded in July 2024.
- ¹⁷⁸ P. Yevsyukov. Op. cit.
- ¹⁷⁹ Interview of I. Zherlitsyn with S. Kolomnin. July 2024.
- ¹⁸⁰ The MPLA field hospital was located not in the populated locality of Dolizie itself (now this city on the Pointe-Noire – Brazzaville railway line is called Loubomo), but several km from it in the settlement of Matsendé. The wards for the sick and wounded, operating room, living and auxiliary premises of the hospital were housed in several single-story stone buildings, some of which did not even have utility amenities.
- ¹⁸¹ Captain E. Ryabov was awarded the medal "For Combat Merit" for his work in the MPLA field hospital in Dolizie. See the photocopy of the commendation in the photo album.
- ¹⁸² A. Nikanorov. Photo-essay "Angimo!" the signal to attack". Publishing house "Children's Literature", Moscow, 1973.
- ¹⁸³ Interview of I. Zherlitsyn with S. Kolomnin. July 2024.
- ¹⁸⁴ P. Yevsyukov. Op. cit.
- ¹⁸⁵ "Unknown Wars" "INTERFAX – AiF" No. 46 (176), 13-19 November 1998.

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USSR, Russia and Angola:
Joint Contribution to the Liberation of the Southern African Peoples

P H O T O A L B U M

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Photo from the archives of the Union of Angola Veterans,
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