

WARID: Angola (UNITA) 1975–1995

STARDATE: 1 November 1975

ENDDATE: 31 December 1995

Related cases: Angola (UNITA) 1998–2002

Zaire/Democratic Republic (DR) of the Congo (AFDL) 1996–1997

DR Congo (RCD) 1998–2004

DR Congo (MLC) 1998–2002

DR Congo (CNDP) 2006–2009

Congo-Brazzaville (Cobras/Cocoyes, Ninjas, Ntsiloulous) 1997–1999

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Conflict overview

Both conflict parties in this case – the UNITA and the MPLA – trace their roots back to Angola’s fight for independence from Portuguese colonial rule. The MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertação) assumed governmental power immediately after the war for independence had ended with an abrupt Portuguese withdrawal in 1975. The two remaining rebel groups – the FNLA (Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola) and the UNITA (União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola) – challenged the governmental authority of the MPLA, leading to the onset of war in the very same year. The FNLA suffered a military defeat in the 1980’s. The UNITA achieved considerable military successes against the MPLA, at times reaching the strength of a conventional army, at other times falling back to guerrilla tactics. Several peace negotiations and treaties failed, most remarkably the Bicesse Accords in 1992 when the UNITA resumed fighting after having lost presidential elections. Due to the prevailing military stalemate, both parties signed another peace agreement two years later, the Lusaka Protocol. It provided more mechanisms for power-sharing than the Bicesse Accords had (Bekoe 2008: 61); but implementation proved to be slow. Until the end of 1995, fighting continued in spite of the presence of UN peacekeeping troops. From 1996 onwards, the intensity of the fighting fell below the threshold of an armed conflict (defined as 25 deaths per year) according to the UCDP [**WARENDUC=5**]. Some case experts consider the signing of the peace agreement to have marked the end of war, but as fighting continued for one year thereafter, we consider the UCDP judgment to be correct [**WARENDOS=5**]. In March 1998,

hostilities re-emerged, and in September 1998, the government officially aborted the peace process (Bekoe 2008; Hodges 2004; Malaquias 2007).

During the 242 months of war [**WARDUR=242**], 39,000 people were killed according to UCDP data [**FATALUC=39000**].¹ For the same period, Alex J. Bellamy of the Stanley Foundation estimates that the war claimed 300,000 to 500,000 lives. This high discrepancy can partly be explained by the fact that Bellamy also takes into account the victims of famines caused by war. In order to compare this number to the battle-related deaths according to the UCDP, we take the lower estimation of 300,000 victims [**FATALOS=300000**].² In 1974, approximately 6.5 million people were living in Angola [**PREWARPO=6500000**].³ If we set this number in relation to the death toll according to UCDP, 0.6% of the population died in the war [**INTENSUC=0.6**]. Bellamy's estimates result in a percentage of 4.62% [**INTENSOS=4.62**].

The military balance at the end of war

Until fighting ceased in 1995 – approximately one year after the signing of the Lusaka Protocol –, neither side had been able to achieve military victory [**VICTORY=0**].⁴

During the war, the UNITA unambiguously controlled some territory (Cunningham et al 2009). However, it should be noted that the UNITA's territorial control was under severe pressure by the end of 1995: “Within a month UNITA had lost most of its significant urban and strategic strongholds: Soyo, Huambo, Mbanza Congo, and Uige” (Vines 1996: 7). Furthermore, the army under the MPLA's command (FAA, Forças Armadas Angolanas) occupied Soyo, Sumba, Kikandi, Quinzau, Manga Grande, Nenga and Quelo (Vines 1996: 11). On the other side, several case-specific publications report that the UNITA had been able to maintain territorial control even after the war had ended and demobilization processes were initiated, mainly in the provinces of Bie, Moxico and Cuando Cubango (DeBoeck 2001: 554; Petithomme 2011: 65). Considering the general situation in the country, the UNITA was still able to control the larger part of its territory despite these setbacks [**REBTERR=1**].

Several sources estimate that, in 1994, up to 70% of the country's territory was under UNITA control. As mentioned before, this control decreased in 1995 with the advancement of the FAA. We estimate that neither UNITA nor the MPLA controlled significantly more territory

1 http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=4®ionSelect=2-Southern_Africa# (14 Apr 2014).

2 Bellamy 2011: 2.

3 <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/tableview.aspx> (12 Jun 2014).

4 Clark 1995: 49; Pycroft 1994: 247.

than the other [**MORETERR=0**].⁵

According to Cunningham et al. (2009), the relative fighting capacity of the rebel side was ‘moderate’ [**REBFIGHT=0**]. From the signing of the Lusaka Protocol to the beginning of 1996, the UNITA had only quartered 16,500 of its 60,000 men in the designated assembly areas, mostly boys and elderly men (Küppers 1996: 339). At the same time, the FAA mostly kept its force. Both sides were able to keep fighting in more than a few areas of the disputed territory and in more than a sporadic manner [**CONFIGHT=0**]. Neither Jonas Savimbi, the leader of UNITA, nor José Eduardo dos Santos, the President of Angola and leader of the MPLA, was killed [**LEADER=0**].

In sum, there is a slight military imbalance to the benefit of the UNITA [**WARBAL=0.17**].

The military balance in the post-war period

The implementation of the Lusaka Protocol contained two basic agreements regarding Angola’s military issues in the post-war period: the demobilization of UNITA troops and the partial integration of former UNITA troops into the state forces. In January 1996, both parties agreed to integrate 26,000 UNITA soldiers into the army, 200 into the air force, and 100 into the navy. However, the implementation of this agreement was protracted. In December 1996, the first nine UNITA generals were integrated into the FAA; by February 1997, this figure had increased to 5,500 former UNITA soldiers of all ranks (UN 1997: 3). In 1997, further integration took place, bringing the number up to 10,600 (IISS 1997: 236). In May 1998, the integration process concluded with 11,000 former UNITA soldiers into the FAA (IISS 1998: 241). These figures meet our criteria of at least 3,000 integrated former rebel fighters for 1997 and 1998 [**STATEFOR 1997-1998=0**]; in 1996, however, state forces should be considered as still being under the MPLA’s control [**STATEFOR 1996= -1**].

Several sources indicate that the UNITA was still in control of armed forces in 1996 due to the slow demobilization processes (Committee on International Relations 1996: 4; Küppers 1997: 339). In 1997, the UNITA spoke of 7,877 fighters that were yet to be demobilized – though 25,000 men were missing in this official balance (Körner 1998: 341; IISS 1998: 241). For 1998, IISS again reports 30,000 fully equipped UNITA soldiers (IISS 1998: 241). On the MPLA’s side, three actors are relevant as separate forces: in 1996, the army was still under its control and therefore constituted a separate force. Furthermore, it disposed of the Rapid

5 Hare 1999: 652; Vines 1998: 3.

Reaction Police Force of 9,400 men (according to IISS) in 1996, of which 4,000 were to be quartered – up to 15,000 men were to be quartered in 1997 and 1998.⁶ Additionally, we can assume that the government still had access to the services of private security companies. Although the contract with the South African company ‘Executive Outcomes’ was terminated in January 1996, it was later revealed that another private company, ‘American Military Professional Resources Incorporated’, took its place. Many members of Executive Outcomes remained in Angola and were employed by other private security firms with ties to Executive Outcomes [SEPFORCE 1996-1998=0].⁷

The demobilization and integration processes involving UNITA soldiers results in inconsistent data on troop numbers. In 1996, no significant change can be detected in support for one side [TROOPS 1996=0]. The IISS numbers suggest a significant change in troop numbers to the UNITA’s advantage in 1997 [TROOPS 1997=1].⁸ The situation in 1998 is quite unclear: the numbers provided by IISS indicate a complete turnaround, significantly changing the troop ratio to the advantage of the MPLA (IISS 1998: 241). This estimation is based on the assumption that the UNITA completed the demobilization of 34,000 of its troops. On the contrary, case-specific literature suggests that demobilization efforts by the UNITA were rudimentary and remained superficial. The UNITA did not deliver its weapons in time and the soldiers that arrived in the quartering areas were suspiciously poorly equipped. Furthermore, the desertion rate from the demobilization camps was alarming (UN 1996a: 3; Vines 1999: 32-34). When war broke out again at the end of 1998, the allegedly demobilized 34,000 UNITA troops were quickly back on Angola’s battlefields (Körner 1999: 337). This leads to a coding that deviates from the numbers provided by the IISS; otherwise, the imperfect demobilization would be coded as a distorting factor that would display an incorrect imbalance in 1998’s troop ratio in support of the MPLA. The allegedly demobilized UNITA troops will be considered as ‘not demobilized’ for 1998 [TROOPS 1998=1]. Concerning equipment on both sides, it should be taken into account that, according to the Lusaka Protocol, neither side was allowed to equip their forces any further (Lusaka Protocol 1994: 8-9). There is evidence that both sides violated this agreement (Committee on International Relations 1996: 25; Vines 1996: 13), but the extent to which this happened is difficult to assess due to the illegal character of these activities. Furthermore, there is no data at all on the

6 IISS 1996: 242; IISS 1997: 236; IISS 1998: 241.

7 Bekoe 2008: 82.

8 IISS 1997: 236.

equipment held by the Rapid Reaction Police Force, only data for 1996 concerning UNITA troops [**ARMS 1996 – 1998=n.d.**].

During the two years of peace, both sides were able to conduct recruiting and to exploit resources in their territories. While this is obvious for the government since it stayed in power, the UN reports of forced conscription by the UNITA in 1996 (UN 1996a: 3). The UNITA also continued to mine diamonds throughout the post-war period (Prendergast 1999: 3). Luzamba, a diamond-rich area in the northeast of the country, remained under rebel control until the official handover to the government in January 1998 (Bekoe 2008). At the beginning of 1998, the UN still reported 60 localities under UNITA's control, among them the UNITA headquarters in Bailundo and Andulo [**TERRCON 1996-1998=0**].⁹

The Lusaka Protocol first provided for the cessation of all offenses and subsequently for gradual disengagement by both sides in areas of close contact (Lusaka 1994: 6-9). Although there were marginal violations on both sides (UN 1996b: 3), we can assume that the territorial status quo was by and large maintained in 1996 [**TERRWIN 1996=0**]. In 1997, the process of extending state administration started – during which the GURN (Government of National Unity) was supposed to take control of the formerly disputed territory. It proceeded slowly (UN 1998: 2). If considering the GURN as still mainly representing the MPLA (see below), we see this process as a widening of the MPLA's territorial control compared to the end of war [**TERRWIN 1997-1998= -1**].¹⁰

Both parties controlled strategically important areas during the post-war years – the government held the oil fields while the UNITA controlled several diamond mines (Hodges 2004: 170-174; Le Billon 2001: 67-70). Both parties also controlled cities with large populations, the capital Luanda being under the MPLA's rule and Bailundo and Andulo being UNITA strongholds. The vulnerabilities and advantages of these territories are evenly distributed [**VULNERAB 1996-1998=0**].

From 1989 until 1999, UN troops were continuously present in Angola (UN 2013: 1-2). From February 1995 until December 1998 (UNAVEM III and MONUA), they were armed according to Virginia Page Fortna (2008) [**PEACKEEP 1996-1998=0**].¹¹ No permanent members of the UN Security Council were expected to intervene, as the relapse into civil war in 1998 proved [**P5ALLY 1996-1998=n.r.**].

9 UN 1998: 3.

10 UN 1998: 2.

11 Fortna 2008 data table.

Together, the values for POSTBAL show a slight advantage for the government in 1996, due to the fact that the army was still entirely under the MPLA's control [POSTBAL 1996= -0.14]. This advantage ended in 1997 and 1998, which leads to a completely balanced situation [POSTBAL 1997-1998=0].

However, the combined value of WARBAL and POSTBAL shows a very slight advantage for UNITA [BALANCE 1996=0.1, BALANCE 1997-1998=0.17].

Economy

Whereas World Bank data indicate a constant growth of the Angolan population in the post-war period, GDP per capita declines in each year of the investigation.¹²

Table 1: GDP per capita in post-war Angola in current USD

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population (total)</i>	<i>GDP per capita</i>
1996	12,451,945	604
1997	12,791,388	598
1998	13,137,542	491

The scale of compromise

The Lusaka Protocol from 1994 envisaged the implementation of a Government of Unity and National Reconciliation (GURN), encompassing the inclusion of UNITA officials in the executive branch (Lusaka Protocol 1994: 26). Furthermore, the National Assembly was to be recomposed according to the 1992 election results (Lusaka Protocol 1994: 20), in which the UNITA won 34.1% of the votes (De Brito 2012: 5). Implementation efforts were not made until April 1997 [GOVERN 1996= -1] when eleven UNITA officials joined the cabinet, four of them as ministers [GOVERN 1997=0].¹³ Two days prior, the UNITA representatives had assumed their functions in parliament (Hare 1999: 657). In September 1998, however, tensions between the MPLA and UNITA reached a critical level once again. Consequently, the UNITA officials still loyal to Jonas Savimbi were dismissed (Bekoe 2008: 91). Nevertheless, UNITA officials had been part of the executive branch for all months of peace in this year [GOVERN 1998=0]. The UNITA constituted a minority in the cabinet as well as in parliament. Lacking any other mechanisms to enforce consensus, the UNITA had no veto power [VETO 1996-1998= -1; VETOSAT 1996-1998=n.r.]. Freedom House considers

¹² <http://data.worldbank.org/country/angola> (14 Apr 2014).

¹³ Küppers 1997: 341; Roque 2009: 139.

elections in Angola as ‘not free’ for the entire post-war period.¹⁴ Nevertheless, Roque (2009) and Ottaway (1998) both describe that each side competed in the 1992 elections as legal political parties and under fair circumstances. The Lusaka Protocol – with the recognition of the 1992 election results by both parties – confirms this point of view for the post-war period. As the election results were not implemented before 1997, we assume that both parties would have had the opportunity to participate if elections had been held in 1997 and 1998 and not in 1996 [**ELECT 1996= -1, ELECT 1997-1998=0**].

The warring parties did not fight over Angola’s external or internal borders [**EXBORDER 1996-1998=n.r.; INBORDER 1996-1998=n.r.**]. The allocation of competences among the political levels was a central conflict item for the UNITA, as this was the only way to preserve political influence in its strongholds once the fighting had stopped. Several times during the peace negotiations, it demanded a new constitution that would establish a decentralized state (Hodges 2004: 26). The MPLA opposed this demand. Negotiations could only continue despite this disagreement because the participants in the peace talks did not have the authority to change the constitution. Both parties agreed to postpone this issue until the UNITA could fully participate in the political process (Hare 1998: 31). However, the MPLA succeeded in postponing this issue further until the civil war resumed [**COMPETEN 1996-1998= -1**].

In regards to the economic order, we do not see any substantial disputes [**ECONOMY 1996-1998=n.r.**]. The civil war in Angola can be considered a conflict with ethnic components, with the UNITA mainly representing the Ovimbundu (Kyle 2003: 4; Petithomme 2011: 63-64).¹⁵ Indeed, the creation of the UNITA can be traced back to a deeply racist, classist and nationalist ideology of its founder Jonas Savimbi (Malaquias 2007: 200-203). Nevertheless, this conscience did not translate into political demands concerning special programs in favor of the Ovimbundu or any other group [**SPECPRO 1996-1998=n.r.**]. Other issues were not under discussion during wartime [**ISSUE 1996-1998=n.r.; ISSUE2 1996-1998=n.r.**].

In 1997, the peace process was seriously threatened by episodes of fighting. The FAA and UNITA forces struggled for access to diamond-rich regions. Although this escalation did not

14 <http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Country%20Ratings%20and%20Status%2C%201973-2014%20%28FINAL%29.xls> (26 Mar 2014).

15 Whereas the link between the UNITA and the Ovimbundu is quite pronounced (Hodges 2004: 26), our reviewer pointed to the fact that the MPLA is linked to different parts of the population that are not necessarily ethnic groups, among them prominently the ‘assimilados’ (the educated middle class that emerged under colonial rule and adapted to Portuguese language and culture) and the inhabitants of the coastal region, but also the Akwambundu.

cross the threshold of a civil war, a resolution to this controversy was vital for keeping the fragile peace. This temporary re-escalation of the conflict ended with the UNITA resuming territorial restitution (Körner 1998: 341; Körner 1999: 336) but led to the split-up of the UNITA into two wings – one with an affiliation to the GURN, the other under the leadership of Jonas Savimbi in clear opposition to the government [NEWCON 1996=n.r.; NEWCON 1997-1998= -1].¹⁶ No further central issues emerged in the post-war period [NEWCON2=n.r.].

As a compromise could not be identified beyond the items GOVERN and ELECT, the question as to whether compromises have been more favorable for one of the former warring parties is not relevant [BENEFIT 1996-1998=n.r.; BENEFIT2 1996-1998=n.r.].

Due to the fact that political representation had not yet been implemented by 1996, the scale of compromise in 1996 is absolutely in favor of the MPLA [COMPROM 1996= -1]. In 1997 and 1998, the government's interests still prevailed [COMPROM 1997-1998= -0.6].

The stability of peace

After only two years of an unstable ceasefire, Angola relapsed into a full-scale civil war [SAMEWAR=1; ANYWAR=1]. At the end of 1997 and the beginning of 1998, ceasefire violations increased on both sides (Vines 1998: 5). According to the UCDP, the threshold for a renewed civil war was reached on 12 March 1998 [DATESAME=12 Mar 1998; DATEANY=12 Mar 1998]. Until this date, Angola had witnessed 26 months of peace [PEACMON1=26; PEACMON2=26].

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¹⁶ Hodges 2004: 63-65.

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Annex

Table 2: Troops in post-war Angola (IISS 1995/96-1998/99)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Government</i>	<i>Rebels (UNITA)</i>	<i>Ratio</i>	
1995	122,000	55,000	2.22	1
1996	106,400	62,000	1.72	1
1997	107,000	69,500	1.53	1
1998	118,000	75,000 ¹⁷	1.57	1

17 The allegedly demobilized 34,000 UNITA troops are considered as 'not demobilized' for 1998 and therefore deviate from the IISS estimation, resulting in a ratio of 1.57:1 instead of 2.89:1.