

Angolan President Addresses Lusophone Summit

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Text of report (ME/8246/ii):

At the opening session of the sixth summit of the Portuguese-speaking African countries, the speech of Comrade President Jose Eduardo dos Santos centred on issues connected with local wars, peace and underdevelopment - issues that concern the international community.

On the situation in southern Africa, the Comrade President said that there were no conflicts in the region other than colonialism in Namibia and apartheid in South Africa, which were the principal threats to peace on the African continent.

The President of the People's Republic of Angola noted that the prevailing tension in southern Africa was caused by the moral and material support given by a superpower to puppets that had been artificially created, inspired and led by Pretoria, as well as by the continuation of the colonisation of Namibia, which is used as a springboard for acts of aggression against Angolan territory, and the repression of the South African people.

Angola and Mozambique must cease to be Pretoria's whipping boys, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos said. He referred to the incalculable damage done by the armed bandits in the pay of imperialism who sow destruction and death against sovereign and independent countries which have been resisting with determination. To which side will the pendulum swing; will it swing to the side of the racist white minority or the side of the oppressed black majority, the Angolan head of state asked. He reiterated the Angolan people's support for and solidarity with the Namibian combatants led by SWAPO and the militants in the struggle against the racist South African regime.

On the presence of the Cuban internationalist troops in Angola, the Comrade President said that it was an issue [words indistinct] of our country and that the Cuban troops did not operate outside our borders. He reiterated the Angolan government's position with regard to Namibian independence based on the application of the UN Security Council Resolution 435/78 and pointed out that the Angolan government was ready to continue to work with the UN Secretary General to ensure the independence of Namibia.

According to President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, the solution of the southern African problem will only be possible when our adversaries change their attitude towards Angola, a peaceful and sovereign state which follows a policy of peaceful coexistence and diversified co-operation.

Economic blackmail against Angola and the imminent new large-scale invasion of our sovereign and independent state from the racist South African troops were other issues highlighted by President Jose Eduardo dos Santos.

Also on the present international situation, the President of the People's Republic of Angola referred to the importance of the decisions of the Geneva summit between the two big nuclear powers and noted that the USA had been making the peaceful solution of existing problems in the world difficult, particularly in the field of disarmament.

East Timor and the struggle for its legitimate achievement of independence were also referred to by the Angolan President, who called on Portugal and other UN member-countries to shoulder their responsibility over this issue and contribute to the peaceful solution of that former Portuguese colony. On the occasion, he reiterated the five Portuguese-speaking African countries' solidarity with and support for the struggle of the Maubere people.

In his speech, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos devoted much attention to the economic situation of the five countries in light of the present international financial crisis. The Angolan President hoped that the Luanda summit would permit the examination of issues of common interest and outline prospects for the strengthening of co-operation through which [words indistinct] as well as giving impetus to development, whose implementation is very often rendered difficult by serious problems inherited from colonialism and the continued imperialist acts of aggression as well as [natural causes].

On the economic situation of the five countries within the international framework, he called attention to the need for economic relations between industrialised countries and underdeveloped countries which, he said, were clearly unjust at present. He underlined the importance of regional co-operation and other forms of co-operation within the framework of South-South co-operation, which he described as a defence mechanism of paramount importance in that it would contribute towards reducing economic dependence and other factors which might endanger the sovereignty and independence of a state.

The fall in the price of raw materials, high interest rates and the substantial increase in defence spending to confront constant imperialist aggression were seen as the main causes of the worsening of the economies of the African and other developing countries. After referring to the countless difficulties caused by the external debt of various developing countries which had reached such a critical level that it endangered their independence, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos said that it was within this framework, which is not encouraging, that there was greater need for diversified co-operation among the five. On the strengthening of co-operation among them, the President of the People's Republic of Angola said that it was necessary to explore the possibilities offered by international organisations with a view to financing economic projects for (?balanced development).

Also within the framework of co-operation among the five, he underlined the importance of complementarity as a means of promoting economic integration and unity. The Comrade President described the existing relations among the five as valuable and pointed out that the five Portuguese-speaking African countries, inspired by a common history, have been forging a firm unity in that they shared a common trench in the fight for total independence and the building of new societies based on justice and social progress.
