

**December 2, 1987**

**Confidential Telegram from USINT Havana to Secretary of State George Shultz, 'Cuba Describes Geographic Position and Military Role of its Forces in Angola'**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

Telegram from United States Interests Section in Havana to Secretary of State George Shultz describing the placement of Cuban forces in Angola and the justification that they are not taking part in active combat.

**Credits:**

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**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

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Transcript - English

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TEXT OF TELEGRAM 87HAVANA004469

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FM USINT HAVANA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0720  
INFO NAMIBIA COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 04469

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PREL, EGOV, CU, AG  
SUBJECT: CUBA DESCRIBES GEOGRAPHIC POSITION AND  
MILITARY ROLE OF ITS FORCES IN ANGOLA

(C) ENVIKE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: IN A POSSIBLY SIGNIFICANT STATEMENT, CUBA HAS SAID THAT ITS FORCES ARE NORTH OF THE 16TH PARALLEL FAR REMOVED FROM UNITA'S MAIN AREA, AND ACT AS A STRATEGIC DEFENSE AGAINST A SOUTH AFRICAN INVASION IN DEPTH  
END SUMMARY

3. IN REPORTING RECENT EVENTS IN ANGOLA, THE CUBAN PRESS HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO EMPHASIZE THAT CUBAN TROOPS HAVE NOT BEEN INVOLVED IN COMBAT. THE INSISTENCE ON THIS POINT BY THE RECENTLY DOWNED CUBAN PILOT, FOR EXAMPLE, RECEIVED SPECIAL ATTENTION HERE.

4. EVEN MORE INTERESTING WAS THE REPORT IN A PRENSA LATINA NOVEMBER-27 PIECE DATED LINED LUANDA THAT REFERRED TO THE STATEMENT OF ANGOLAN VICE MINISTER VENANCIO DE MOURA IN NEW YORK WHICH AFFIRMED THE RIGHT OF ANGOLA UNDER  
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THE UN CHARTER TO ASK MILITARY HELP FROM OTHER COUNTRIES.

5. PRENSA LATINA, HOWEVER, WENT ON TO SAY THAT REPORTS UNDERScoreD THAT:

- "...THE CUBAN INTERNATIONALIST FORCES IN ANGOLA
- HAVE NOT PARTICIPATED IN THE FIGHTING. THE SOUTH
- AFRICAN INCURSIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE EXTREME
- SOUTH OF ANGOLA NEAR THE FRONTIER OF NAMIBIA AND

PROCESSED A/CDC/LEB

D. ZACHARY

DATE 2/6/89

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Summary: In a possibly significant statement, Cuba has said that its forces are North of the 16th parallel, far removed from UNITA's main area, and act as a strategic defense against a South African invasion in depth. End summary.

In reporting recent events in Angola, the Cuban press has been careful to emphasize that Cuban troops have not been involved in combat. The insistence on the point by the recently downed Cuban pilot, for example, received special attention here.

Even more interesting was the report in a Prensa Latina November 27 piece... Luanda that referred to the statement of Angolan Vice Minister Venancio de Moura in New York, which affirmed the right of Angola under the UN Charter to ask military help from other countries.

Prensa Latina, however, went on to say that reports underscored that "...the Cuban internationalist forces in Angola have not participated in the fighting. The South African incursions have taken place in the extreme South of Angola near the frontier of Namibia and in the Southeast, a considerable distance from the internationalist Cuban line Namibe-Menongue, deployed north of the 16th parallel as a strategic force that would impede a massive racist invasion in depth".