



# PARLIAMENT

OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## DRAFT REPORT

**STAKEHOLDER'S WORKSHOP IN  
PREPARATION FOR THE COMMEMORATION  
OF THE 20th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE  
OF CUITO CUANAVALÉ**

5 – 6 DECEMBER 2007

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH  
AFRICA, CAPE TOWN

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## BACKGROUND



In December 2006 the Parliamentary Millennium Programme (PMP), the South African Parliament's primary nation-building initiative, was mandated by the Presiding Officers to explore projects and activities to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale.

This battle, which took place in 1988, is widely recognised as one of the last battles of the Cold War and its outcome played a significant role in consolidating the independence of the people of Angola and Namibia, as well as ushering in the negotiation phase that led to the liberation of South Africa. The Presiding Officers felt that it is especially important that activities planned should educate young South Africans about the sacrifices made by foreign compatriots to achieve South African liberation and social justice.

Following the mandate the PMP initiated an extensive consultative process involving discussions with former combatants in South Africa, scholars, civil society organisations, relevant government departments and officials from Cuba and Angola. This initial consultative phase of the project was further enhanced by an official visit of a multi-party delegation of the SA Parliament, led by Speaker Baleka Mbete. During this visit the delegation travelled to Cuito Cuanavale where they received an in-depth briefing from the Angolan Military.

# INTRODUCTION



On the 5th and 6th of December 2007, the South African Parliament convened a Stakeholder's Workshop to brainstorm ideas around events and programmes earmarked for the Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 2008.

Among the attendees were foreign representatives from Angola, Cuba, Namibia and Russia. South African representatives included Members of Parliament, ex-combatants, civil society, academia, representatives from government departments, and the media.

A briefing was held with all South African delegates on the 5th of December 2007, and the Stakeholder's Workshop was convened on the 6th of December 2007. The proceedings of these events are outlined below.

**WEDNESDAY, 5TH DECEMBER 2007**

**Venue: Chamber E249, New Wing, SA Parliament**

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## **BRIEFING FOR SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATES**

**Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms. Baleka Mbete**



While many of the South African delegates were engaged individually prior to the workshop, Speaker Mbete made use of this opportunity to contextualize the SA Parliament's proposal for the commemoration, to them as a collective.

**Jihan El Tahri's "Cuba: An African Odyssey" was screened at this briefing.**

**THURSDAY, 6TH DECEMBER 2007**

**Venue: Chamber E249, New Wing, SA Parliament**

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## **FIRST PLENARY**

**10H00 – 12H40**

### **OPENING AND WELCOME**

**Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms. Baleka Mbete**



In her Welcome Address, the Speaker extended a special word of welcome to, Paulo Jorge [Head of the Political Bureau for International Relations of the MPLA and Former Foreign Minister of Angola], Angolan Ambassador [Mr. Neto], Cuban Deputy Ambassador [Mr. Enrique Orta], Consul General of Angola [Mr. Mario Correia], General Remigio Espirito Santo, Consul General of Russia [Mr. Vladimir Belous]; Representative of the Namibian High Commission [Col George Ngeesheya].

Speaker then thanked all present for participating in this conversation about a very significant milestone in the history of the continent, the sub-region, and of our individual countries, including Cuba.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BATTLE OF CUITO CUANAVALÉ: AN ANGOLAN PERSPECTIVE

**Mr. Paulo Jorge**

**Secretary of the Political Bureau of the MPLA, International Relations**



Mr. Jorge started his presentation by stressing the importance of ensuring that younger generations of Southern Africans get to understand the history of the liberation movements of the region. He reflected on the important role played by the former Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique in giving momentum to the national liberation movements of countries such as South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. He specifically made mention of the fact that the Proclamation of Independence by MPLA and Frelimo in their respective countries greatly enhanced the positions of South African, Zimbabwean and Namibian liberation movements.

## **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BATTLE OF CUITO CUANAVALÉ: AN ANGOLAN PERSPECTIVE**

**Mr. Paulo Jorge**

**Secretary of the Political Bureau of the MPLA, International Relations**

With regard to apartheid South Africa's role in the destabilization of Angola he indicated that notwithstanding the defeat of South African forces in the mid 1970's, sporadic clashes continued between the armed forces of Angolan groups backed by South Africa right up until the late 1980's. The South African incursions and occupation of portions of the Angolan territory not only resulted in tremendous destruction of infrastructure but also led to numerous massacres and human suffering. He indicated that given the apartheid government's destructive role in the region, Angolan leaders felt that there could be no peace and development in the region while the apartheid regime still existed.

In quoting Dr. Agostinho Neto, the first President of Angola, Mr. Jorge pointed out that in Namibia, in Zimbabwe, and in South Africa, was the continuation of the Angolan struggle. He highlighted the creation of the SADCC in 1980 as an important milestone in the solidarity of the region to isolate the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Mr. Jorge then provided a brief historical synopsis on the political climate that existed during the time of the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1988. He pointed out that during this time South Africa was firmly in control of Namibia and had as its military objective the subjugation of Southern Angola to prevent SWAPO from launching attacks against the South African occupation forces in Namibia.

The South African campaign into Southern Angola was a highly public exercise with numerous members of the apartheid cabinet visiting the invading forces in their south Angolan bases. In a strategic sense the capture of Cuito Cuanavale would allow South African forces to consolidate their efforts to run down some of the best battalions the Angolan army had available. Mr. Jorge however pointed out that the resilience of the Angolan, Cuban and Namibian forces proved too much for the South African Defence Force and its surrogate allies at the battle of Cuito Cuanavale. He emphasized that the victory for the liberation forces at Cuito Cuanavale was decisive especially as it led to the independence of Namibia and the eventual capitulation of the apartheid regime.

Mr. Jorge concluded his address by reminding those present that the examples of solidarity, internationalism and the spirit of selfless sacrifice, as exemplified by those liberation fighters who fought at Cuito Cuanavale, should serve as an important legacy and catalyst to reinforce good relationships between our countries and peoples.

**(The full speech delivered by Mr. Paulo Jorge is attached)**

## **“THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BATTLE OF CUITO CUANAVALÉ” – A Cuban Perspective**

**Deputy Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba in SA, HE Mr. Enrique Orta**



Mr. Orta suggested that the significance of the battle of Cuito Cuanavale should not only be remembered as a historical event but should be used to make the younger generation aware of the sacrifices made to achieve freedom on the African continent.

In quoting former South African President Nelson Mandela, Mr. Orta asserted that: “Cuito Cuanavale was the turning point for the liberation of our continent”. He pointed out that for Cuba the victory at Cuito Cuanavale demonstrated that the vision of internationalism was not a fanciful dream. According to Mr. Orta the imperialists, up until today, cannot understand Cuba’s commitment to internationalism and her solidarity with the African continent.

## **“THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BATTLE OF CUITO CUANAVALÉ” – A Cuban Perspective**

**HE Mr. Enrique Orta**  
**Deputy Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba in SA**

Mr. Orta suggested that the significance of the battle of Cuito Cuanavale should not only be remembered as a historical event but should be used to make the younger generation aware of the sacrifices made to achieve freedom on the African continent.

He stressed that for Cuba its support to African sister countries was not about seeking economic benefit nor to defend strategic interest, but exclusively for the reinforcement of the values and principles underlining the internationalist worldview. He pointed out that Cuba left Africa with nothing but the coffins of its sons and daughters who died in the struggle to liberate Africa. Mr. Orta asserted that while Cubans did not take any riches from Africa, they are however showered with Africa’s most valuable riches, which is the love and respect of her people.

In conclusion, Mr. Orta indicated that more than 300 000 Cubans assisted in one way or another in its internationalists efforts on the African continent. In this regard he stated that, “Being an internationalist is paying our debt to humanity. Whoever is not capable of fighting for others will never be sufficiently capable of fighting for him or herself.”

**(The full speech delivered by Mr. Enrique Orta is attached)**



### **Consul General of Russia, Mr. Vladimir Belous**

The Consul General reflected on the role played by the former Soviet Union in alliance with their Cuban and African comrades in the fight against imperialism and new colonialism. He reiterated the importance of internationalism for our current era and expressed the wish that young generations of Africans be familiarized with the continent's liberation history, especially important events such as the battle of Cuito Cuanavale.



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### **Representative from the Namibian High Commission, Colonel George Ngeesheya**

Colonel Ngeesheya recalled that as a former SWAPO combatant the victory at Cuito Cuanavale greatly enhanced the efforts of liberation forces in other parts of Southern Africa in general and Angola specifically. He pointed out that whilst this victory was important it is equally important to see this battle in the context of other theatres of war conducted throughout Angola.



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### **General Remigio Espirito Santo - Angolan Army**

General Santo's address was delivered in Portuguese and is attached.



## DISCUSSIONS, QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

### **Mbulelo Mabala – MKMVA**

Mr. Mabala expressed a need for Angolans, Cubans, Namibians and Russians to be united more than ever before and requested contact details of veterans in these countries in order to communicate with one another, and to stay united.



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### **Ambassador Kubheka – South African Ambassador to Angola**

The Ambassador brought attention to the fact that the Battle at Cuito Cuanavale was not only important for the liberation history of Southern Africa, but was of significance globally, because it had wide-ranging international ramifications.



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### **Professor Omotoso – PMP Advisory Board Member**

Professor Omotoso raised the issue that from an academic perspective the issue of international responsibility and the principles of internationalism and solidarity are important to be captured, particularly for the attention of the youth. In this regard, he expressed the wish for the Cubans, in particular, to elaborate more on this.



# DISCUSSIONS, QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

## Professor Vale – Rhodes University

The Professor addressed a question to Mr. Jorge, and asked, in terms of the diplomatic history of the period of the Battle, what was the nature of the relationship between Angola and the Soviet Union. He further asked what Mr. Jorge's view is with regard to the viewpoint that some suggest that the Cubans entered Angola behind the backs of the Russians.



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## Selwyn Roup – Consultant

Mr. Roup said that it is important to bring the events in our history, such as the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, to the public consciousness and especially to the consciousness of the youth. He added that the values of humanism, solidarity and responsibility need to be brought forth again.



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## Sizwe Shezi – President of the SA Youth Council

Mr. Shezi suggested that the youth should play an important role in the commemoration of the battle. He noted that this is important as it is the younger generation that should carry forward the knowledge and the values of the battles that shaped Southern Africa. He also suggested that other relevant organizations, which are busy with similar projects, be invited to collaborate in this regard.



## DISCUSSIONS, QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

### **Themba Wakashe – Director-General, Arts and Culture**

Mr. Wakashe noted that it is important for workshop participants to deliberate on how they are going to deal with the issues of memory and legacy of the liberation struggles. He remarked that it is important to begin to invest in the minds of the younger generation a sense of history, heritage and identity. He also stated that individuals such as Mr. Jorge are immense resources for recording memory and legacy in the interest of feeding the minds of the future generation. He further remarked that the rules of cultural diplomacy and agreements between Angola, Cuba, Namibia and South Africa can play a significant role in consolidating the memories of the gains of the Battle. Mr. Wakashe suggested that in deliberating about commemorative projects and events, workshop delegates should think in terms of short-term, medium-term and long-term projects.



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### **Thaninga Shope-Linney – Head of Communications, NEPAD Secretariat**

Ms. Shope-Linney noted that in crafting a way forward, it is important to not only look at the Cuito Cuanavale Project in isolation, but to see it as a cluster project under the overarching Parliamentary Millennium Programme (PMP). She suggested that concrete suggestions be put forward in order for the necessary steps to be taken, so as to ensure the success of the Cuito Cuanavale projects as part of the PMP.



## DISCUSSIONS, QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

### Colonel Patrick (Blahz) Ricketts – South African Ex-combatants Association

Colonel Ricketts stated that Angola is not duly recognized in Southern Africa for the tremendous role that they played in liberation movements across the region. He suggested that the question now is how we will restore the relationship between Angola and South Africa, as it is not currently what it used to be.



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## RESPONSES TO COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

### Mr. Paulo Jorge and Speaker Mbete

Mr. Jorge expressed his appreciation to the South African Parliament for taking the initiative in convening the Stakeholder's Workshop.

He responded to Prof. Vale's question by stating that when Angola asked for help during the Angolan war, Cuba responded immediately to Angola's call without any influence from Russia. Cuba's expression of solidarity and internationalism was clear. The Soviet Union also gave military support, but nothing more. It was at the time of Ronald Reagan's electoral campaign that they propagated that the MPLA was aligned to the Soviet Union and hence to communism. The MPLA was not communist, as popularized by Reagan, but it was purely a liberation movement. America only recognized Angola's independence in 1993 and thereafter established diplomatic relations with Angola.

Speaker Mbete re-enforced the point made by Mr. Shezi in saying that it is important that the values and the legacies that we can extract from the Battle be transferred to the youth. Speaker also highlighted the fact that reconciliation amongst the soldiers within and between the concerned countries, is of paramount importance.

## PROPOSALS FOR DELIBERATIONS

Speaker then asked for suggestions from the floor in terms of a way forward for deliberations.

Ms. Shope-Linney suggested that a group of people break away during lunch to come up with a proposal for commemorative projects and events in 2008, and present it to the workshop participants. This suggestion was supported by the floor.

### **The following delegates were selected:**

- Ambassador Kubheka, SA Ambassador in Angola
- Terrence Tryon, Consultant
- Irwin Langeveld, Department of Arts and Culture
- Chris Matlhako, Secretary-General of Friends of Cuba Society
- Sizwe Shezi, President of the SA Youth Council
- Thaninga Shope-Linney, NEPAD Secretariat and PMP Advisory Board Member
- Selwyn Roup, Consultant
- Heindri Bailey, Research Consultant (PMP)

## SECOND PLENARY

13H30 – 16H00

Speaker welcomed everyone back for the second plenary session and handed over to the selected team to present their proposals.



### PRESENTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF CUITO CUANAVALÉ

#### HEINDRI A. BAILEY

Mr. Bailey indicated that a multinational approach to the commemoration is recommended for the overall success of the Project. The idea is to have an individual within every Embassy (Angola, Cuba, Namibia and South Africa) who will act as a liaison official. This will assist in the implementation of proposed projects and programmes.

The Team suggested that the programme be divided into three categories: Short-term projects, medium-term projects and programmes, and long-term programmes. The proposals related to each of these phases are outlined below:

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A SHORT-TERM PROJECT: THE ACTUAL CELEBRATION

The 23rd March 2008 is proposed as the focal date for commemorative activities, since this was the day on which the final assault on Cuito Cuanavale by the apartheid military forces were repelled by the liberation forces back in 1988. The entire weekend of 21-23 March 2008, could be set aside for activities.

A conference/ workshop is proposed to be convened during the above-mentioned weekend and that veterans from the different countries and formations are invited. The event may be coordinated with Angolan and Cuban counterparts. Ambassador Kubheka indicated that he could take responsibility to liaise with the Angolan authorities. Cultural events should be included in these celebrations.

In a prior engagement with the SA Minister of Sport, Mr. Stofile, he suggested that a goodwill sport game take place between the concerned countries. This can also be incorporated into the events of the weekend of 21-23 March 2008.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEDIUM-TERM PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

- The Team suggested that the medium-term projects and programmes be divided into the following clusters, which can be further elaborated upon in another session:
- Women and Youth Cluster: This cluster would center on activities for women and the youth in the respective countries.
- Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation Cluster: Partnerships specifically to be sought with SADC, the PAP, the Forum for Former Heads of State, and various government departments, including the SA Department for Public Works for possible reconstruction efforts in Cuito Cuanavale. The team further indicated that resource requirements are not only restricted to finance, but also include research capacity, education, civil society partnerships, etc.
- Living Heritage Cluster: Projects focused on ideas of global solidarity and internationalism. Suggestions for assistance to communities in and around Cuito Cuanavale, for example the removal of landmines, agricultural development, assistance with building of schools, etc.
- People-to-People Exchange Cluster: This may focus particularly on introducing the youth from the respective countries to each other. It may also deal with legacy elements such as planning 'heritage trials' for the youth to go to Angola and Cuba.
- Media Cluster: Media agencies may be approached for possible partnerships. The information on the projects and the implementation thereof should be popularized.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LONG-TERM PROGRAMMES**

- The Team proposed that at another opportunity the following areas be considered for long-term programmes:
- Reconstruction and Infrastructural Development, particularly the building and repairing of bridges that were destroyed during the Battle.
- Development Assistance
- Reconciliation [One specific idea was that a tomb for all unknown soldiers be erected as a symbol of reconciliation, healing and peace; the tomb will carry no names of any soldier and would thus represent all combatants who were involved in the Battle].
- Involvement of SA youth on a voluntary basis in these above-mentioned programmes. This might nurture the idea of international solidarity and voluntarism

### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS TO PROPOSALS**

#### **Ambassador Kubheka – SA Ambassador in Angola**

The Ambassador added that there was another suggestion for a dinner to be hosted by the Angolans, and that a visit is paid to the site of the Battle as well. He noted that it would be important for the representatives of the four Parliaments and the Heads of State to be present at the dinner, as well as the former combatants of the different armies. Furthermore, the building of a school in Cuito Cuanavale is an important proposal.

#### **Ms. Thaninga Shope-Linney – NEPAD Secretariat and PMP Advisory Board Member**

Ms. Shope-Linney said that the team's major concentration was on the short-term projects, as time was not enough to deliberate fully on the medium-term and long-term programmes. She suggested that a sub-committee be formed from the workshop participants, who would further look into all projects and proposals in detail.

#### **Mr. Selwyn Roup – Consultant**

Mr. Roup noted that importance of replicating smaller functions in Cuba, Namibia and South Africa that would coincide with the major event in Angola. This is important in order for people not to feel excluded from the celebrations.

# FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS AND RESPONSES TO PROPOSALS

## Speaker Mbete

Speaker asked how President Fidel Castro could be thanked for the major leadership role he played in the Battle.



## Ms. Roben Penny – SA Veterans Association

Ms. Penny recommended that processes of dealing with the trauma, as well as peace building and healing processes be included in all three proposed stages of the commemoration.



## Ms. Zoliswa Kota – ANC MP

Ms. Kota proposed that the Parliaments of all countries concerned be involved in the processes. She further mentioned that the re-writing of the history is important and that the story of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale should appear in the school curriculum.



# FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS AND RESPONSES TO PROPOSALS

## General Solly Mollo – SANDF

General Mollo mentioned that from a practical point of view the date of 23rd March 2008 might present a challenge.



## Mr. Themba Wakashe – DG of Department of Arts & Culture

Mr. Wakashe remarked that in addition to time-frames, proper consideration should be given to the costing of projects and programmes, with particular focus on the short-term projects. He also mentioned that other political endorsement, for example from SADC, is an important consideration. In terms of Speaker's suggestion that President Castro be thanked for the role he played, Mr. Wakashe suggested that an appropriate national order is bestowed on President Castro. The order may be handed over at the proposed dinner.



## Professor Seegers – University of Cape Town

Prof Seegers said that the 23rd March 2008 deadline is a brutal one; furthermore, the goals of the short-term commemoration need to be clearly specified. She asked if it would be a goal of education, of commemoration, or of contemporary international relations. [Speaker suggested that it could in fact be all three of those goals mentioned].



# FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS AND RESPONSES TO PROPOSALS

## Dr. Saul Pelle – Head of SABC Africa

Dr. Pelle stated that he agrees with all the clusters for the medium-projects that were mentioned, but in terms of the media cluster he suggests that it feeds into every other cluster. The media should therefore not be a cluster in isolation from the rest, because it is integral to all other projects and programmes.



## Dr. Motshekga – PMP Advisory Board Member

Dr. Motshekga proposed that the academics present prepare papers for a conference.



## Mr. Terrence Tryon - Consultant

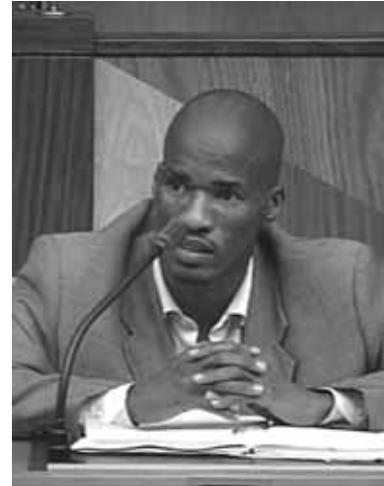
Mr. Tryon noted that the 23rd March might be a suitable date as it coincides with Namibia's Independence Day on 21st March and Sharpeville Day in South Africa, also on 21st March. He also requested that all risk factors be duly considered. One of these being that many of the people who were involved during the time of the Battle, particularly the veterans, are fairly angry people because they felt they were excluded. [In this regard Speaker noted that it is a sensitive matter that should receive attention at another opportunity].



## FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS AND RESPONSES TO PROPOSALS

### Mr. Lucian Segami – SA Communist Party

Mr. Segami recommended that the possibility of the creation of a regional or continental peace movement be considered for a longer term programme. In addition, he proposed that assistance to Cuba also be given.



### Professor Peter Vale – Rhodes University

Prof Vale indicated that it seems that the project plans are time-bound by the date of 23rd March due to the significance of the date. He therefore suggested that the weekend of 23rd March 2008 constitute the kick-off date for six months of activities related to the short-term programme.



### Mr. Selwyn Roup – Consultant

Mr. Roup suggested that a military parade take place during the launch of the commemoration. This parade would include former and current soldiers from the respective countries. In addition, if Heads of State and other important persons are not able to attend the dinner or events on that weekend, video-conferencing can be used to reach everyone. He also suggested that the gala dinner be hosted in Luanda by the different defense forces that were involved. On that evening the Plan of Action and the roll-out programme may also be announced.



**The above discussions and proposals were tied together by Speaker Mbete. She raised the following points:**



- All proposals have been noted. The feasibility of all proposals should be assessed.
- An audit of all resources available should be conducted.
- One should consider whether Angola would be able to receive such an event.
- It would be important to involve all Parliaments concerned and to invite the Heads of State to the kick-off ceremonies.
- Political buy-in becomes critical.
- The conference might want to propose that Mr. Jorge be deployed to request the presence of the Heads of State at the dinner celebration.
- A smaller group, a Task Team, from the delegates present is required to look at these proposals carefully, to see what is feasible, and craft a way forward.

**Following this, the Speaker invited final comments :**

## FINAL COMMENTS

### **Colonel Patrick Ricketts – South African Ex-combatants Association**

Colonel Ricketts proposed that the various diplomatic offices in the SADC region be requested to have smaller commemorative events in their respective countries.



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### **Ambassador Kubheka – South African Ambassador to Angola**

The Ambassador mentioned that President Dos Santos has mentioned to him before that the Angolan government is already planning commemorative events and programmes. The Ambassador thus suggests that the proposed programmes be aligned closely with the Angolan government's programmes.

He further mentioned that it is important that the programmes enjoy the buy-in from the relevant political leadership. In relation to a gesture of thanks to President Fidel Castro, the Ambassador suggested that he be honoured with one of the most prestigious South African national order awards, the Order of the Companions of OR Tambo. President Neto may also be honoured post-humously, and a gesture of appreciation given to former Namibian President, Mr. Sam Nujoma.



## FINAL COMMENTS

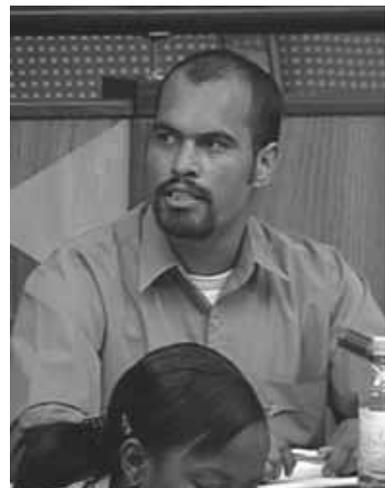
### Speaker Mbete

Speaker suggested that a commemorative event also be planned on Africa Day 2008, and that the signing of the peace agreement in New York (in December) also be commemorated.



### Mr. Lee Martin – SA Communications Forum

Mr. Martin suggested the creation of an on-line portal, which would be a central point of presence to inform the public, and the youth in particular. The portal could be a receptacle for information and other multi-media contributions and it could also capture the history of the Battle. The portal could also facilitate ongoing discussions, and it could act as a global media platform.



### Professor Peter Vale – Rhodes University

Prof. Vale mentioned the fact that current Cold War studies are dominated by Northern scholars. He strongly suggested the inclusion of an academic conference in the commemoration programme, which could culminate in the publication of a book. The book should bring forth a Southern scholarly perspective.



## FINAL COMMENTS

### **Mr. Michael Cameron – Education Specialist from Western Cape Education Department**

In relation to the suggested commemorations on Africa Day, Mr. Cameron pointed to the fact that all grade nine learners in the social sciences curriculum are required to write an essay on 'Times arising from history', of which 'A new vision for Africa' is a sub-component. He said that this could possibly tie in with the suggested celebrations on Africa Day.

He further mentioned how the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale may be worked into the school curriculum since the History subject themes in the following grade years are:

- Grade 7:** Africa and the Atlantic Sea Trade
- Grade 8:** How African societies experienced and responded to colonialism.
- Grade 9:** The Cold War
- Grade 12:** The impact of the collapse of the Cold War on South Africa and Africa.



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### **Mr. Clever Banganyani – Deputy Secretary-General of Friends of Cuba Society**

Mr. Banganyani emphasized the need for investing in the education of young people in and around Cuito Cuanavale. He recommended that scholarships be created for young people from the area to come and study in South Africa. This may be an interim arrangement whilst the infrastructure of the area is reconstructed.



## FINAL COMMENTS

### **Professor Edna van Harte – South African Military Academy, Stellenbosch University**

In relation to the proposed academic conference, Professor van Harte stated that she supports such an idea and that the Military Academy's School for Security and Africa Studies will be hosting its bi-annual conference next year on 'War and Society'. She declared that the Academy would gladly assist with a conference and also offers to be a partner in an academic conference on the Battle. In terms of scholarships, Prof. van Harte mentioned that it would be possible to appeal to South African tertiary institutions for scholarships to Angolan students. This could be further explored.



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### **Ms. Linda Shongwe – Department of Foreign Affairs**

In terms of acquiring political buy-in from SADC, Ms. Shongwe noted that South Africa will be hosting the SADC conference in 2008 and this would thus be a good opportunity to approach the organization.



# FINAL WORDS FROM ANGOLAN AND CUBAN PRESENTERS

## Mr. Paulo Jorge

Mr. Jorge expressed his gratitude to the South African Parliament for taking the initiative in convening the stakeholder's workshop. In terms of the proposals presented, there is a need for further deliberation, which could lead to a Programme of Action. Mr. Jorge suggested that it is important to pay attention to the date of 23rd March, as that was the climax of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale. A celebration on Africa Day, as per some suggestions, is also a good idea. He further stated that he would maintain links with Ambassador Kubheka in Angola. Mr. Jorge strongly agreed with the preparation of a book on the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, which would be a gift to the future generations.



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## Mr. Enrique Orta

Mr. Orta placed emphasis on the education of young people on the values of international solidarity and humanism, which would ensure that history does not repeat itself. He indicated that he will transmit the day's proceedings to his government in order to acquire their commitment.



# A WAY FORWARD

## Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms. Baleka Mbete

Speaker proposed the selection of a task team that would work on consolidating the proposals that were raised. The team should convene in early January 2008. Speaker emphasized that this meeting is crucial in order for concrete steps to be taken forward in the planning of the Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale.

### The Individuals selected to serve on the Task Team are:

- Ambassador Kubheka, SA Ambassador in Angola
- Terrence Tryon, Consultant
- Irwin Langeveld, Department of Arts and Culture
- Chris Matlhako, Secretary-General of Friends of Cuba Society
- Sizwe Shezi, President of the SA Youth Council
- Thaninga Shope-Linney, NEPAD Secretariat and PMP Advisory Board Member
- Selwyn Roup, Consultant
- Heindri Bailey, Research Consultant (PMP)
- General Solly Mollo, SANDF
- Dr. Mathole Motshekga, PMP Advisory Board
- Prof. Edna van Harte, Military Academy (Stellenbosch University)
- Colonel Patrick Ricketts, SA Ex-combatants Association
- Mr. Mbulelo Mabala, MKMVA
- Ms. Anthea Abrahams, SA Ex-combatants Association
- Dr. Saul Pelle, Head of SABC Africa
- Ms. Roben Penny, SA Veterans Association
- Ms. Zoliswa Kota (MP)

## CLOSING REMARKS AND WORD OF THANKS

Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Mr. MJ Mahlangu



Mr. Mahlangu stated that the workshop was an eye-opener as it marks the start of a better understanding on the historic event of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale. He said that the story of the Battle should be part of the history that is taught in our schools. Having this knowledge of the Battle, it is our responsibility to guard jealously the democracies that we fought for. It should be protected and guarded. He expressed his joy at the process having started at a parliamentary level. He thanked Speaker Mbete for initiating the process, to foreign offices for participating, for all delegates present, and to the PMP staff.