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FACT SHEET

PRESIDENT FORD'S AFRICAN POLICY

President Ford's African Policy has to be seen in the perspective of the events of the past year. Not quite a year ago, a Cuban expeditionary force intervened in Angola and with heavy Soviet military assistance succeeded in installing a minority marxist-oriented government. The Administration made a determined effort to oppose the Soviet-Cuban intervention in Angola and would have succeeded if Congress had not unwisely voted to cut off funds for the anti-Communist parties.

The continued presence of 15,000 Cuban troops in Angola posed a major threat that Cuban interference in Angola would be repeated in Rhodesia with the result of major war and bloodshed there. Cuba sent advisers into Mozambique to train insurgents for action in Rhodesia. The implications for all of southern Africa were obvious.

Black Africa, which had observed events in Angola and the Congressional restraints on U.S. action, were looking to their options in a new superpower context. The trend was against us. There was a radicalization process accelerating in Africa, Soviet prestige was rising, violence was multiplying and fast action was necessary. That is why the President sent Secretary Kissinger to Africa, to try to reverse these trends. The President believed that Africa's future should be determined by Africans, not by Americans -- but not by Russians or Cubans either. He wanted Africa to know that America was prepared to respond to African initiatives and to help wherever possible.

Secretary Kissinger went with a message of cooperation and commitment and to make clear where we stand on such issues as majority rule, with strict guarantees of minority rights, peaceful settlement and economic development.

The President's determination has paid off. From Nairobi to Monrovia, to Salisbury, African leadership has welcomed and taken heart from this solid demonstration of U.S. support.



If we are to avert the continuing threat of violence in southern Africa and preserve whatever hope exists for a peaceful solution to the problem of Rhodesia and Namibia, we must do all we can to break the cycle of violence and to bring together the elements of a peaceful and a just solution. President Ford does not underestimate the difficulties ahead, but neither does he underestimate the consequences of doing nothing.

This is a policy that Americans support because of our deeply ingrained desire to prevent unnecessary bloodshed and suffering and the establishment of new foreign spheres of influence. Today we are the most prosperous nation on earth, and we have a tradition of helping people willing to help themselves. This help, our support of Africa's aspirations, is in our national interest because it is right and because it is in the interest of the world peace and security all Americans seek.

