

CONFIDENTIAL

PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT



I want to express my serious concern at today's action by the Senate with respect to Angola. If passed into law, this action will cripple any hope of bringing the conflict in Angola to a peaceful solution. It will be a signal to the world that the United States chooses to turn its back, not only on Africa, but on international crises -- a signal of U.S. withdrawal from world developments of importance to this nation's interests. What is happening in Angola can have an impact not only on the future of that troubled area, but on the general structure of international order.

The United States has steadfastly opposed the extension of super-power rivalry to Africa. We welcomed the agreement to grant Angola independence last January. We supported the idea of a coalition government and free elections. We had no special economic or political or military interests to protect. A free, independent Angola is wholly consistent with our interests and our policy. From that basic policy, we have strongly supported the efforts of the Organization of African Unity to foster an African solution to the Angolan problem without outside foreign intervention.

The fact is that the Soviet Union and Cuba have intervened massively in a local conflict, providing combat troops and war materiel. It cannot become a principle of international conduct that a major power can impose its position on a weak and helpless people. These

DECLASSIFIED
EO 12812 (EXEMPTED) CROS
1980 (Rev. 08-01) Date Rec'd 3/8/11
112

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -



actions we cannot ignore. They do not serve the interests of Africa, and are inconsistent with any spirit of detente. Africans share our concerns over this intervention and we could not ignore the requests from our friends in Africa for United States assistance in countering this outside intervention.

Let me set forth clearly what our policy will be:

First, I want to reiterate that the United States has absolutely no plan for military intervention in Angola. There are no US combat forces there, nor any American advisers.

Second, we seek no special position in Angola. We will support any diplomatic effort that holds promise of bringing a peaceful solution acceptable to the contending parties.

Third, we call upon the Organization of African Unity to mediate this conflict.

Fourth, we call for the withdrawal of foreign troops.

Finally, we call on the Soviet Union to support an urgent effort to settle this conflict peacefully.

The consequences of the conflict in Angola will not be confined to Africa alone. Already, there are disturbing trends in both the Horn of Africa and in West Africa that suggest this continent could become the springboard for a series of strategic military bases facing both the

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -



Atlantic and the Indian Ocean. If this trend continues, we cannot simply ignore it. Nor can we ignore the implications of a policy of interventionism by non-African powers, such as Cuba.

Angola need not be turned into a cold war contest. The people of Angola do not want it. The African states that border on Angola certainly do not want it. But these states cannot be indifferent to outside intervention by Cuban troops who can scarcely lay claim to any special interest in Angola.

Thus, we have provided some material assistance, on a modest scale, to redress the local balance and give the non-communist political movements a chance to survive in the face of outside intervention. This has been achieved, and it is time to call a halt in the fighting and return to the negotiating table. But this will become academic if the Congress ties our hands, and turns its back on this crisis.