

# ‘Remember Cassinga?’

## An Exhibition of Photographs and Histories

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### Introduction

Since May 4, 1978, the day it was attacked by the South African Defence Force, Cassinga has been a key site in the national history of Namibia. Within days of the assault, news spread through the exile community and around the world about the attack on SWAPO’s refugee camp at Cassinga, which had left at least 600 dead and hundreds more wounded. In the years that followed, Namibians have narrated a history of Cassinga that highlights the brutality of the South African apartheid regime, the bravery of those who resisted it, and the magnanimity of those who reconciled with their former oppressors.

But when we invoke Cassinga’s history, do we actually remember Cassinga? I often asked myself this question when, from 2006 to 2009, I prepared a doctoral dissertation about Cassinga and other camps administered by SWAPO in exile. As I learned, the dominant story of the ‘refugee camp’ does not begin to describe the collection of people, offices and practices that formed in and around Cassinga. At the same time, the apartheid government’s claim that Cassinga was a ‘military camp’ is also misleading, obscuring salient qualities of this community.

In this exhibition I present histories of the SWAPO camp at Cassinga and of photographs which have shaped perceptions of it since the South African attack. In so doing, I draw from a range of sources made available to me during my doctoral research. These include documentary and visual materials housed in public archives, interviews that I conducted with SWAPO officials who administered the camp, and photos which I took during a trip to Cassinga in September 2007. Through these sources I display happenings that have been excluded from competing narratives about the ‘refugee’ and ‘military’ camp. And I raise questions about how such exclusions are reproduced in, and impact on, southern Africa, whose people access social status through similar histories of racism, resistance and reconciliation.

I am grateful to all those who have supported this exhibition by participating in my research and permitting its display.<sup>1</sup> It should be clear, however, that the responsibility for the material presented in this exhibition is my own. As you look around, you may wish to share your views on the exhibition, Cassinga and related topics. If so, I encourage you to take a copy of my business card, available in the exhibition area, and contact me.

Also, if you would like to know more about my research, you may now access my dissertation in several locations, including the Special Collections at the

University of Namibia and the Centre for Humanities Research at the University of the Western Cape. The title is ‘Exile History: An Ethnography of the SWAPO Camps and the Namibian Nation’. Moreover, transcriptions and recordings of the interviews that I prepared for the dissertation are available at the National Archives of Namibia and the Mayibuye Centre at UWC. Please ask the staff at these locations about how you may access this material.

## PART I: THE CAMP AT CASSINGA

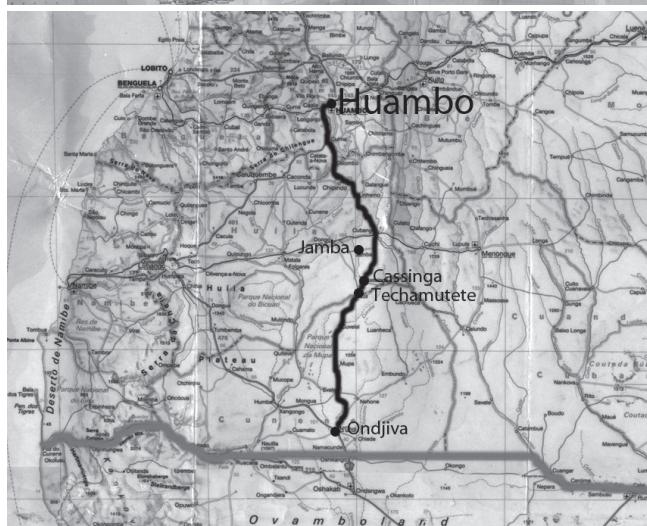
### Origins of the Camp

It appears that the first Namibian exiles encountered Cassinga in April 1976. At that time SWAPO was transferring PLAN combatants from southwestern Zambia, where most had been living during the early 1970s, to southern Angola, which would become PLAN's base of operations during the late 1970s and 1980s. In the course of this transfer, many combatants were sent to a farm on the outskirts of Huambo in central Angola. From there SWAPO trucks transported them to 'the Angolan front', a collection of mobile camps that PLAN had recently established near the Angolan–Namibian border, to the west and east of Ondjiva. In conjunction with these trips, Namibians passed through Cassinga, a village located about halfway between Huambo and the front.

Some weeks later, after several more groups had travelled from Huambo through Cassinga en route to the front, a group of PLAN soldiers led by Army Commander Dimo Hamaambo moved to Cassinga to inhabit the village.<sup>2</sup> When they arrived, the village was empty.<sup>3</sup> Although there were subsistence farmers living across the Cui longa River about a kilometre to the west, no people were living at Cassinga itself or on the low-lying hill on which it is situated when Hamaambo and his entourage arrived. Nonetheless, the former inhabitants, who had been workers and administrators at a nearby iron mine before they fled during the Angolan Civil War,<sup>4</sup> had left about twenty brick buildings, which appear to have been used previously as offices, dormitories and warehouses.<sup>5</sup> There was also a dirt road lined with gumtrees that passed through the middle of the village, connecting Cassinga with Jamba and the Angolan interior to the north and Techamutete and the Namibian border to the south.

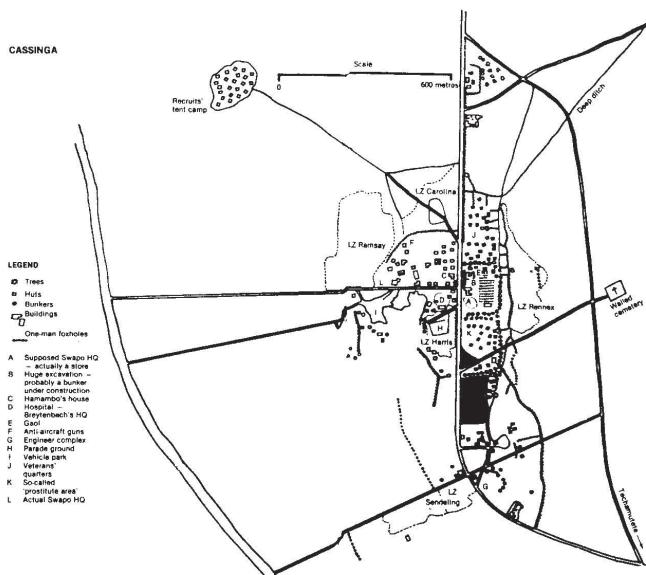


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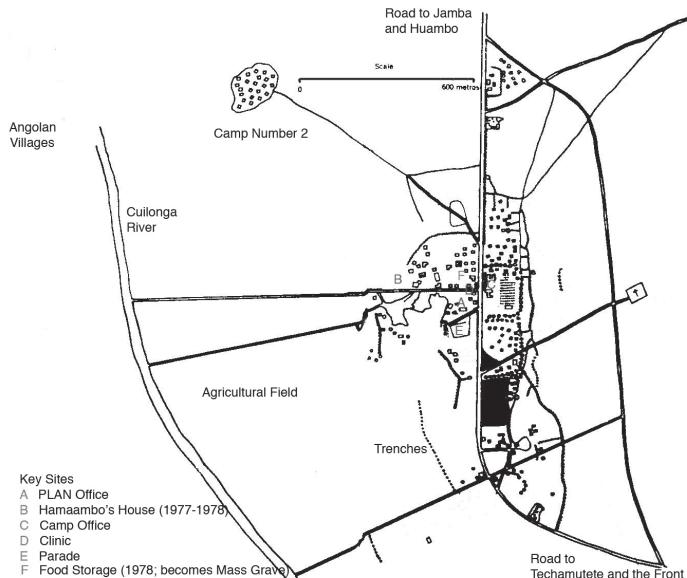


2

- 1 This map marks a route which many PLAN combatants took in 1976 when they were transported from the Zambian to the Angolan front. First, they were driven by truck from southwestern Zambia to Dar es Salaam. Then, from Dar es Salaam they were flown to Luanda and again to Huambo. From Huambo combatants were driven to the front. It should be noted that some combatants crossed into Angola from their camps in southwestern Zambia, but this was less common owing to conditions created by the war in Angola.
- 2 This map marks the route taken by PLAN combatants between Huambo and the front in April 1976. Among the first combatants to travel along this route was Ben Ulenga. According to him, the trucks transporting him and his comrades drove through Cassinga at night and stopped just south of the village, where he was assigned to stand on guard until the trucks moved on in the morning. Ulenga recalls that at that time, 'There was actually no Cassinga. There was Cassinga on the map, there was a village, but we were totally uninterested in it because there were no Namibians living there.'<sup>6</sup>



2



△

3/4 On this page are two maps of Cassinga. The first map was created by the South African Defence Force, probably with the aid of photographs taken by SADF planes shortly before the attack.<sup>7</sup> The map's legend reflects perceptions among South African military personnel about how camp space was used. The second map derives its layout from the first but differs from it, by highlighting how camp space was used according to people who lived at and administered Cassinga. Photographs of several sites identified in the second map are displayed in this exhibition.

## The PLAN Office

Among those who accompanied Dimo Hamaambo to Cassinga were Charles ‘Ho Chi Minh’ Namoloh and Mwetufa ‘Cabral’ Mupopiwa, Namibia’s present Minister of Defence and Deputy Permanent Secretary of Defence respectively.<sup>8</sup> There they were assigned to help Dimo Hamaambo establish an administrative office for PLAN.<sup>9</sup> Initially five people worked in this office: Hamaambo, his personal bodyguard and driver, Namoloh and Mupopiwa.<sup>10</sup> Of these only Hamaambo, Namoloh and Mupopiwa were involved in the office’s administrative work.<sup>11</sup> Working out of their bedroom at the office, Namoloh and Mupopiwa began to record and file information about PLAN operations along the Angolan–Namibian border, such as where they took place, who was involved and who died in combat, as well as logistical matters, such as supplies of weapons, food and medicine.

At the time when the PLAN office was formed at Cassinga, it did not have access to radio communication. As a result Namoloh and Mupopiwa frequently drove to and from the front, communicating information that they gathered at the front to various SWAPO officials and transporting requested supplies back to the soldiers there.<sup>12</sup> To accomplish this communication and transport work, the office maintained a division of labour. Namoloh took trips to the front and to Huambo, where most of the maize-meal for soldiers at the front was purchased.<sup>13</sup> Mupopiwa, who had grown up partly in Angola and was fluent in Portuguese, was responsible for communicating with the Angolans. His tasks included corresponding with people administering the Angolan warehouses in Luanda, where donations of weapons and food arrived, by sending letters on trucks travelling to and from the Angolan capital. He was also in regular contact with Cuban soldiers based at Techamutete, who had maintained a base there since shortly after the Cubans’ entry into Angola in 1975 and were assisting the Namibians at Cassinga with logistical support. After SWAPO Defence Headquarters was founded outside Lubango in late 1976 or early 1977,<sup>14</sup> Mupopiwa also began to make regular trips to communicate with SWAPO and Angolan officials there.



5

5 This is a photo of PLAN commanders at Cassinga. It was developed from an undeveloped role of film which the South African Defence Force claims to have captured at the camp on the day of the attack. According to research participants, the photo depicts several senior PLAN commanders entering the Cassinga parade ground. The commanders appear to be (from left to right) Greenwell Matongo, Dimo Hamaambo, MacNamara, Haiduwa and Pondo.<sup>15</sup>



6



7

6 This is a photo of what remains of the original PLAN office at Cassinga, taken by the author in September 2007. The office was a Portuguese colonial edifice located to the west of Cassinga's main road on the southern side of the camp. Namoloh and Mupopiwa worked out of a bedroom in the office. According to Namoloh, the room in which he and Mupopiwa worked and slept was a kitchen. 'He was sleeping on the stretch and I was sleeping also on the stretch. So we were sharing this. And I had a table there, and I had a typewriter on that table, and I was typing on that table. It was the same, our office and our sleeping room.'<sup>16</sup>

7 This is a photo of what remains of Dimo Hamaambo's house, taken by the author on September 2007. Initially Hamaambo lived in the PLAN office with Namoloh and Mupopiwa. Later he and the PLAN office's administrative work was transferred to a brick building that Cassinga inhabitants constructed for him along a road leading west of the main road that runs through Cassinga (see map). When Namoloh and Mupopiwa left Cassinga in mid-1977, Hamaambo's house had not yet been built.<sup>17</sup>

## The Camp Office

With the exception of its earliest days, Cassinga was not exclusively or primarily inhabited by soldiers. It was not long before Namibians fleeing into exile began to enter Cassinga. Most of these newcomers were Oshiwambo-speakers who had crossed into Angola from Ovamboland, the central part of northern Namibia.<sup>18</sup> Usually those who fled were assisted by PLAN combatants who led them across the border and took them to the camps where combatants were living. After moving through several of these camps,<sup>19</sup> each successively further from the border, newcomers were picked up by SWAPO trucks and driven to Cassinga.<sup>20</sup>

The arrival of new exiles at Cassinga demanded an administration beyond that provided for combatants by the PLAN office. According to Darius ‘Mbolondondo’ Shikongo, from the time he was appointed by the SWAPO leadership to be the deputy camp commander or ‘commissar’<sup>21</sup> in November 1976, the camp was run by a staff of twenty to thirty persons.<sup>22</sup> Together they worked out of an administrative office.<sup>23</sup> Each person in the office was responsible for a ‘department’ of camp life: logistics, housing, transport, medicine, education, police.<sup>24</sup> The leaders of these departments were appointed and overseen by Shikongo and the senior camp commander.<sup>25</sup>

By 1977 SWAPO had begun to move some of those residing in Cassinga north to Jamba, where the liberation movement had gained permission to administer another camp.<sup>26</sup> Most of those transferred then and over the following months were women and children, who had access to better medical facilities and school resources in the Angolan town, where SWAPO medical personnel and teachers were also stationed.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, after SWAPO had established its offices in Luanda and Defence Headquarters in Lubango, exiles who were seen as fit for military training or further education abroad were transferred from Cassinga to other places. Nonetheless, from 1976 through 1978 the movement from Namibia into exile continued unabated, and the camp office administered the various Namibians passing through Cassinga.



8



9

- 8 This is a photo of what remains of the camp office at Cassinga, taken by the author in September 2007. The office was located in a typical Portuguese colonial building to the east side of the main road that passes through Cassinga.<sup>28</sup>
- 9 This is a photo of what remains of the clinic at Cassinga, taken by the author in September 2007. The clinic, which was located adjacent to the original PLAN office, held supplies of basic medicines, vaccines and first-aid equipment which were supplied both to exiles entering Angola from Namibia and to injured PLAN combatants returning from the front. Facilities were rudimentary and serious cases were transferred as quickly as possible to other locations such as Jamba and Lubango.<sup>29</sup>



10

10 This photo was taken at a Cassinga parade. According to Mbolondondo, every morning at a regular time, residents gathered outside the parade ground, which was located in a cleared area just south of the PLAN office, to the west of the main road. There they would assemble in the groups in which they had arrived at Cassinga, each of which was organised according to 'sections' and 'platoons'. Groups would check for attendance and line up in the order in which they had arrived at the camp, with the earliest arrival queuing first and the most recent queuing last. They would then march onto the parade ground, passing by the camp commanders who stood on either side of the path leading there. Once the last group had entered, the commanders and any visiting SWAPO officials would proceed to the front of the parade. After leading the call-and-response chants and perhaps requesting the singing of a liberation song or two, they would address the assembled. Central to the content of these addresses was the announcement of daily work assignments, which were given to all camp inhabitants with the exception of those who had particular responsibilities in the camp. Once these and other announcements pertinent to the camp's activities for that day had been made, the parade could be dismissed and inhabitants would proceed to their various assignments.<sup>30</sup>

## Namibians, Angolans and Cubans

During the period when Cassinga was a SWAPO camp, it was occupied by Namibians. Nonetheless, the camp's inhabitants interacted extensively with their Angolan and Cuban neighbours. As previously noted, Mwetufa 'Cabral' Mupopiwa liaised between Namibians, Angolans and Cubans during the period he worked at the PLAN office. Transnational relationships extended beyond officials as well. For example, when they were not completing their assigned tasks, Cassinga's inhabitants often visited the Angolans living on the other side of the Cuilonga River, using money or clothing to barter for commodities.<sup>31</sup> Those responsible for administering Cassinga were also able to hitch lifts on trucks travelling between Cassinga and Jamba, where many had family living. Some also travelled by truck from Cassinga to Techamutete, where they befriended the Cuban soldiers living there.<sup>32</sup>

- 11 This photo, taken by the author, pictures an Angolan village on the opposite side of the Cuilonga River in September 2007. Apparently, Namibians at Cassinga often visited the villages when they thought they might obtain meat, a scarce commodity in the diet at Cassinga. In some instances, Namibians visited these villages without the permission of the camp office which was responsible for monitoring entry into and out of Cassinga. Culprits were often discovered when the camp office received reports from the Angolans about a Namibian drinking or fighting in their village. The camp's 'military police' would then apprehend and detain the offender.<sup>33</sup>
- 12 Although this photo was taken at Kwanza Sul, not Cassinga, it highlights a fashion at both of these camps: the Cuban uniform. According to research participants, the uniforms which these boys are wearing were probably once worn by Cuban soldiers. The uniforms were often given by the Cubans to SWAPO officials in exchange for other commodities or as gifts. In turn, officials distributed them to Namibian youth entering the camps, many of whom wanted to dress up as soldiers. Youth, especially boys, often wore their uniforms accompanied by pieces of wood which they carved to resemble guns.<sup>34</sup>



11

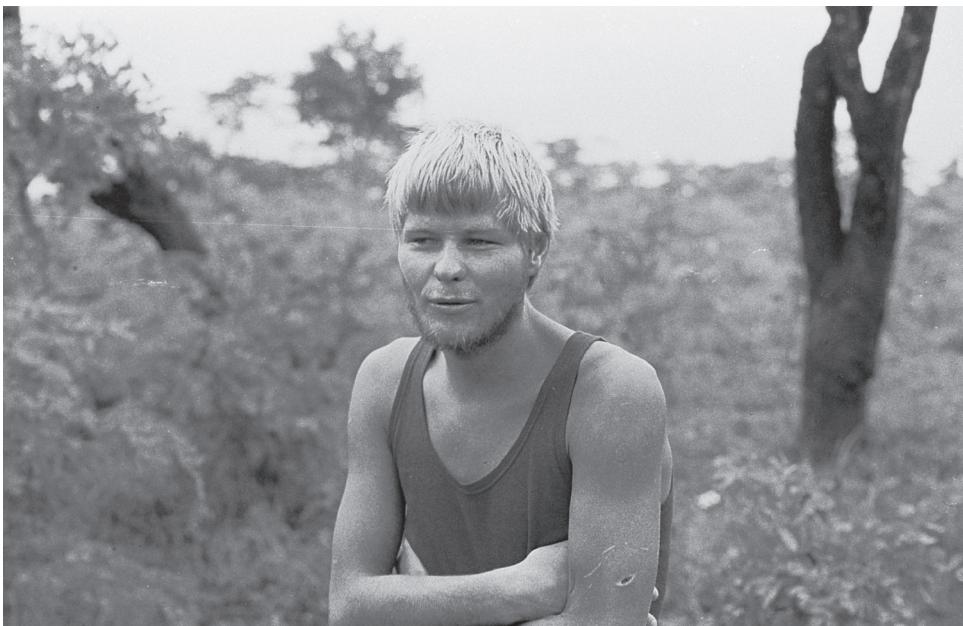


12

## February 18 to May 3, 1978

Some weeks prior to the South African attack, probably beginning in February or March, officials in the PLAN and camp offices began to observe ‘strange airplanes’ flying over Cassinga.<sup>35</sup> Although the identity and intentions of the pilots were unclear, the camp command thought there might be a connection between them and Johan van der Mescht, a South African prisoner of war. Van der Mescht had been captured on the night of February 18–19 in a PLAN raid on the SADF base outside Elundu in northeastern Ovamboland. He was transported to Cassinga sometime thereafter and was detained in the camp.<sup>36</sup> Due to concern among the camp command that South Africa might launch an attack on Cassinga to free Van der Mescht, arrangements were made to transfer him to Lubango, which was accomplished in conjunction with a trip made by President Sam Nujoma to Cassinga sometime before the attack.<sup>37</sup> Other changes were also made to the layout and defences of Cassinga at this time, apparently in response to the repeated sightings of strange airplanes.<sup>38</sup>

At the same time, numbers were growing rapidly inside Cassinga. In early 1978 the flow of Namibians into exile and intake in the camp were particularly high. Furthermore, while a truck usually picked up Cassinga residents travelling onward to Jamba and Lubango as soon as there were sufficient numbers to fill it, this was not the case during the weeks preceding the attack. The result was a bottleneck at Cassinga such that people who under other circumstances would have left the camp within days remained there for weeks or months.<sup>39</sup> Thus, on the night of May 3, many were sleeping in the open air on blankets because the buildings and huts in the camp were unable to accommodate them.<sup>40</sup>



13

13 This is a photograph of Johan van der Mescht, the South African soldier captured by SWAPO on the night of February 18–19, 1978 outside Elundu.<sup>41</sup> The photo was taken by Per Sanden and Tommy Bergh, Swedish film-makers who were travelling with the PLAN unit involved in the Elundu attack. Their mission was to collect material for a documentary film commissioned by the SWAPO leadership.<sup>42</sup>

Some weeks after Van der Mescht's capture, Sanden and Bergh filmed an interview with him at one of SWAPO's Lubango camps.<sup>43</sup> This interview was included in a film screened by television networks in European countries beginning on May 9, 1978. The film also included footage which Sanden and Bergh had taken at Cassinga during their visit there the week before South Africa's attack.<sup>44</sup> Neither Sanden's film nor the coverage of it in the international press noted that Van der Mescht also spent time at Cassinga, where he was detained as a prisoner of SWAPO.

UNICEF  
Area Office  
Brazzaville

p 3 Kass officials

Kass. numbers      <sup>\*</sup> 4 (6)      5 (6) 21  
nature

\* 11,000 - 12,000

"refugees" 7

Report on a mission  
to swapo centres  
for namibian refugees in angola  
from 10 to 14 april 1978

needs: blankets + clothes 8  
water 9  
soap 10  
health 11  
food 13 dependency  
schools 16-17

14

14 This is a reproduction of the front cover of the copy of 'the UNICEF Report' held at the National Archives of Namibia. The report details the visit of three UNICEF representatives to SWAPO camps, including Cassinga, between April 10 and 14, 1978 and was submitted from UNICEF's Brazzaville Office to the mother body on May 2, 1978. The document is the only known published account of Cassinga written by an organisation external to SWAPO prior to the attack.<sup>45</sup> The document corroborates claims made by SWAPO officials involved in administering Cassinga about the 'rapid increase in the number of refugees' in early 1978. Other claims made by the report are more dubious. For example, it maintains that it counted between 11,000 and 12,000 inhabitants at the camp, a figure which contrasts with figures for the camp cited by SWAPO and South African sources at the time of the attack, which placed its numbers between 3,000 and 5,000.<sup>46</sup> The Report also maintains that Jamba (which the authors misspell 'Djamba') 'is the oldest centre' and Cassinga 'a much more recent centre', despite considerable evidence indicating that Cassinga predated Jamba.<sup>47</sup>

*The Commissar  
Cassinga Commune  
Huila Province  
People's Republic of Angola*

*April 18, 1978*

*Dear Comrades,*

*Our Revolutionary Greetings, please! I have the honour to inform your Office that we have removed from Cassinga, a portion of the Namibian Community and settled it about 7 km north of the existing camp. The reasons for this move are as follows: 1. With enemy (S.A.) Air-reconnaissance work going on continuously, we came to the conclusion that S.A. racists [sic] intend to conduct an air-raid on this camp. 2. Jamba which is already overcrowded can no longer accom[modate] more of our people and worse there is a standing order for the removal of our people. The new camp is therefore a 'security' place for children, mothers, the sick and expectants. Its [sic] not a military camp. Hoping that you will accept our explanation.*

*I am, Yours for the eliminationof [sic] Imperialism,  
Dimo Hamaambo*

15

15 This letter is one of a series of documents which the SADF allegedly captured during the attack on Cassinga. Although the original is not currently accessible to the public, its contents are transcribed by Justine Hunter in her doctoral dissertation, cited below.<sup>48</sup>

The letter, attributed to Dimo Hamaambo, corroborates several points made in oral testimonies by other SWAPO officials living at Cassinga. These points include references to '(SA) Air-reconnaissance work', and efforts to move 'children, mothers, the sick and expectants' to an area outside the main camp where they might be more safe.<sup>49</sup> Hamaambo also suggests an explanation for why trucks were not coming to Cassinga frequently to transport people from the camp in the weeks preceding the attack: namely, because Jamba was 'overcrowded' and there was 'a standing order to remove our [i.e. Namibian] people'. Perhaps these conditions in Jamba are part of the reason why there was an exceptionally large number of people, almost all without military training, residing in Cassinga on the night of May 3, 1978.

## PART II: THE PHOTOS OF CASSINGA

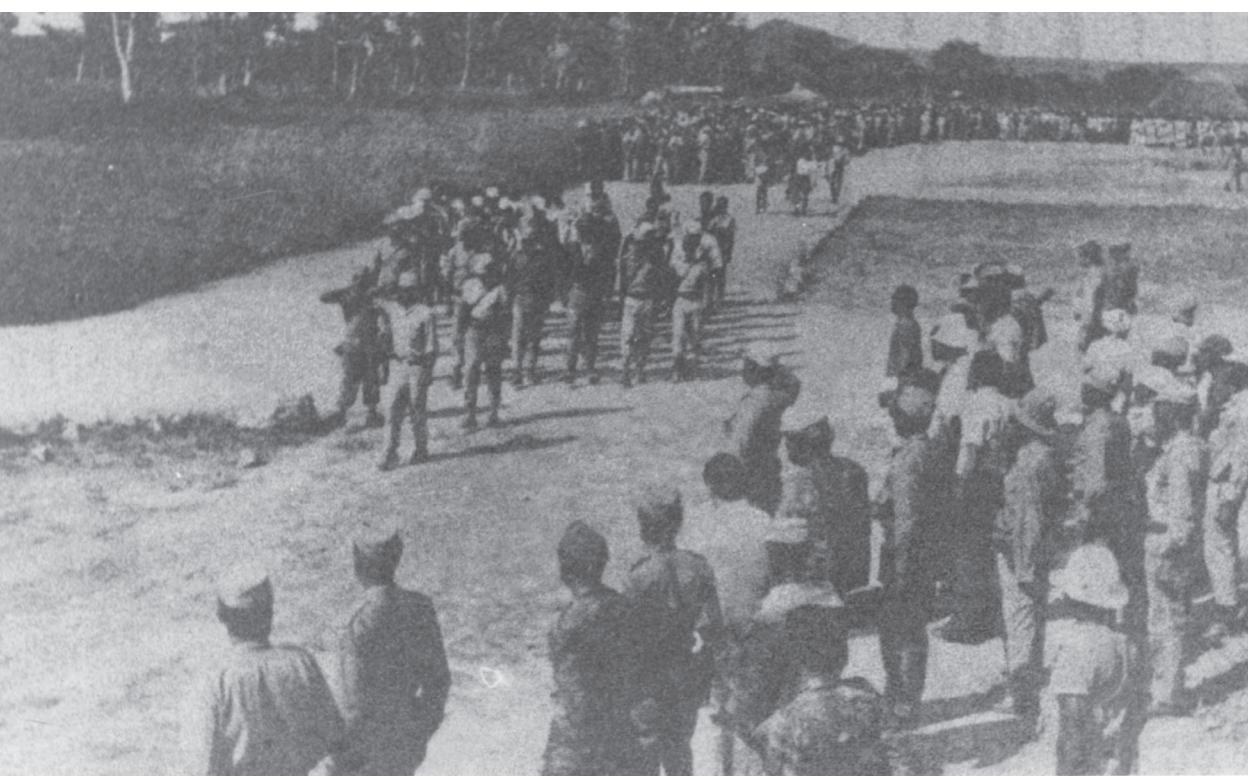
### Military Photos

South Africa's attack on the morning of May 4, 1978 at Cassinga resulted not only in mass carnage and destruction at one time and place, but also in competing histories that have continued to reproduce themselves and impact on people's lives over the more than thirty years since that day.

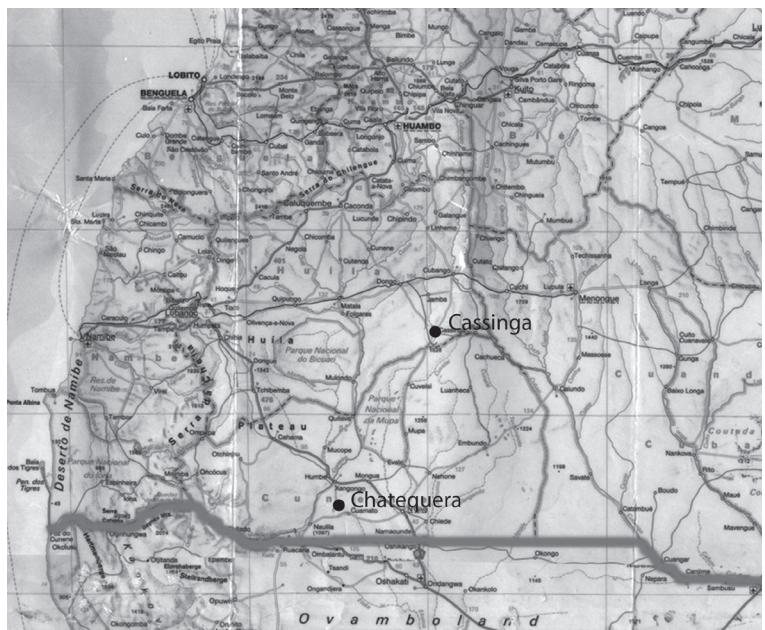
Following the attack, the South African government presented Cassinga to the world as a legitimate military target. On May 5, it issued a statement to the governments of the United States, Canada, Britain, France and West Germany, the so-called 'Western Five' then in the midst of intensive negotiations over the timing and terms of Namibian independence. After introducing the brief with an account of 'border violations by terrorists' that were supposedly undermining efforts to achieve 'an internationally recognized solution in South West Africa', the document described the attack and the camp, calling it 'an extensive SWAPO military installation' [sic] and 'SWAPO's main operational centre'. Although the brief acknowledged that 'camp followers, including women' were living at the camp, it emphasised that many women were 'in uniform, fully armed and actually fighting in the trenches'.<sup>50</sup>

At the same time that this statement was released, the South African government also circulated photographs and other images of Cassinga that were used to support the claim that Cassinga was a military camp. Several of these are displayed or discussed below.

- 16 This photo was part of a roll of film that the SADF claimed to have captured at Cassinga (frequently referred to in the South African press by its codename 'Moscow'). Although the layout of the parade and of the gumtrees lining the road clearly mark the camp as Cassinga, the circumstances in which the photos were taken are less clear. According to the camp commissar, Darius 'Mbolondondo' Shikongo, the photo depicts people leaving the Cassinga parade, part of the morning ritual at the camp. All groups would march past the SWAPO officials, who are assembled on the right side of the photo. As previously noted, youth without military training often wore uniforms at the parade and carried fake guns made of wood.<sup>51</sup>
- 17 This map identifies the location of Cassinga relative to Chatequera (codename 'Vietnam'), another SWAPO camp.<sup>52</sup> Cassinga and Chatequera were both targets of South African forces on May 4, 1978. When the first news reports about the attacks were shown on South African television, film taken by SADF during the raid on Cassinga were interspersed with images of Chatequera.<sup>53</sup> The Chatequera footage was useful for the SADF because Chatequera was better armed than Cassinga and inhabited by hundreds of trained PLAN combatants. The interspersed images appear to offer evidence that Cassinga was, in fact, a 'military camp'.



16



17



18

18 This photo depicts prisoners captured by the SADF during its May 4, 1978 attack on Chatequera.<sup>54</sup> It appears to have been taken on the day of the attack when South African journalists were flown to the camp and photographed 'prisoners of war ... sitting in rows while guarded by armed South African soldiers'.<sup>55</sup> The photo, in which young men feature prominently, is one among the many images of Cassinga and Chatequera interspersed in South Africa's coverage of its simultaneous military strikes.

The SADF was not alone in conflating representations of the prisoners from Chatequera with Cassinga. In July and August 1979 SWAPO officials held a series of press conferences in which they announced that about 200 'refugees' had been captured during the attack on 'Cassinga' and were being tortured and detained in a secret SADF camp near Mariental in southern Namibia.<sup>56</sup> Thereafter, 'the Cassinga detainees' became an international human rights issue, involving the International Committee of the Red Cross, Amnesty International and solidarity movements, the last-mentioned of which used the issue to highlight the unjust practices of the apartheid regime. By October 1984 all of 'the Cassinga detainees' had been released, few or none of whom had actually been captured in Cassinga.<sup>57</sup>

## Refugee Photos

In contrast, SWAPO and its allies have narrated a history of Cassinga focused on Namibian ‘refugees’. Already on May 4, 1978 at 19h00 the Angolan Minister of Defence issued a communiqué about ‘the criminal attack against defenceless people, women and Namibian refugees’ at Cassinga.<sup>58</sup> On May 6, SWAPO circulated its first press release which referred to ‘the unprovoked attack on the civilian population in Angola’ and ‘the cold blooded murder of Namibian women and children’. And later that month, SWAPO Secretary for Information Peter Katjavivi offered a history of the camp to solidarity workers in Basel, Switzerland, in which he narrated that ‘the Cassinga settlement has always been a civilian one … It contained a school, clinic, and agricultural projects but not military installations and no combattants [*sic*] of the People’s Liberation Army of Namibia.’<sup>59</sup>

Central to supporting these and similar claims about Cassinga have been photographs. Several have played a role in inducing SWAPO members and their allies to accept a particular narrative of Cassinga even as more complex histories of the camp, and of the images themselves, have been obscured.

# NAMIBIA

# NAMIBIA TODAY



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NAMIBIA

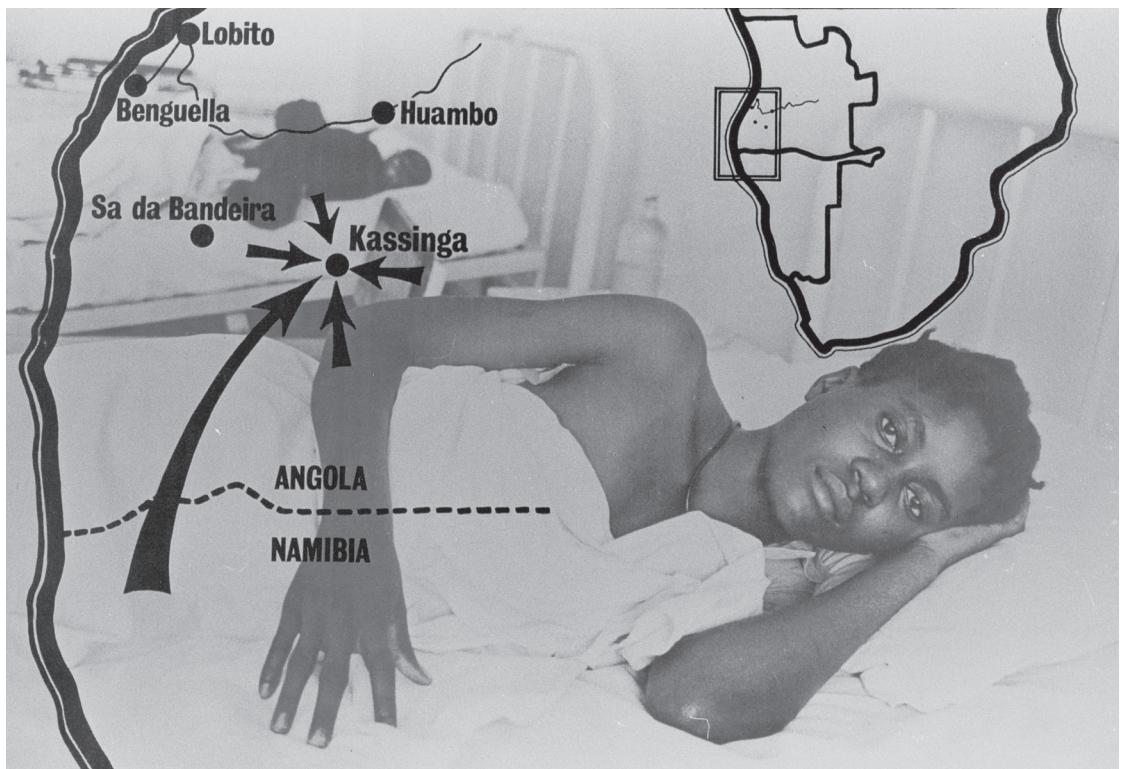
ORGAN OF THE SOUTH WEST AFRICA PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION (SWAPO) OF NAMIBIA



20

19 This photograph (which is also displayed in Part I of the exhibition) was taken by Swedish film-maker Per Sanden on May 3, 1978 during a special parade at Cassinga held in his and his colleague Tommy Bergh's honour. For weeks prior to their arrival at Cassinga on April 29, Sanden and Bergh had been travelling with a group of PLAN soldiers in southern Angola and northern Namibia, collecting material for a documentary film commissioned by the SWAPO leadership.<sup>60</sup> Shortly after the May 3 parade, Sanden, Bergh and their entourage departed for Jamba. On May 5 PLAN dispatched several commanders to Jamba to collect Sanden and Bergh's film of Cassinga. This photograph of the Cassinga parade, which foregrounds women and children, proved one of the most popular images. The photo was displayed in several SWAPO publications, including the front page of SWAPO's newsletter *Namibia Today* in the issue published immediately after the Cassinga attack.<sup>61</sup>

20 This photograph was taken at Cassinga within a few days of the attack while international journalists were visiting the site. In subsequent publications the photo was associated with 'the school' at Cassinga, highlighting both a kind of activity that occurred at the camp and the identity of attack victims. One author writes: 'Three walls remain standing. Inside is a jumble of broken desks and benches, home-made by the young people themselves. Textbooks in Afrikaans and English and exercise books litter the floor.'<sup>62</sup> According to another: 'The main school building is open to the hot wind. Nearby a group of more than 200 children, survivors of more than 500 primary school children at the camp, watch from the shade of eucalyptus trees.'<sup>63</sup>



21

21 The photograph pictures Anna Kandume, a girl who was injured in the South African attack on Cassinga, lying on a bed at the Cuban hospital in Luanda, where many of Cassinga's wounded were sent.<sup>64</sup> It was probably taken by one of the international journalists who visited the hospital within a few days of the raid. The maps of Cassinga and southern Africa were transposed over the original image for the cover of *Namibia Today*, which, in turn, was distributed among Namibian exiles and the international community.



22

22 The caption to the copy of this photograph housed at the National Archives of Namibia reads 'Cassinga before SA massacre, two women outside house'. Despite this claim, all of my research participants who inhabited Cassinga doubt that this photo actually depicts the camp, particularly since none remember shacks made out of corrugated iron at Cassinga. The photo may be one of two at the National Archives of Namibia which have been attributed to Cassinga, but which were not taken at that site. In each case the photos feature destitute women or children, making them potential images for SWAPO's most famous 'refugee camp' regardless of whether they were taken at Cassinga itself.

## The Mass Grave

More than any other image, it is an open mass grave photographed by journalists after the attack that has become the enduring symbol of Cassinga. Taken from the grave's edge, the mass grave photos are close enough to the corpses for individual bodies, and in some cases the clothing, wounds and flies covering them, to be discernible. The photos demand a visceral reaction. In the weeks following the attack and for years to follow, SWAPO and solidarity organisations published texts alongside the photos that directed this reaction by imputing meaning to the bodies in the grave. Texts drew attention to the 'civilian' qualities of the bodies, the suffering of Namibians under colonialism, and the violence committed against oppressed people in other settings. In so doing, they associated the mass grave at Cassinga with the history of the refugee camp.

Nonetheless, for those who peer into the grave, it is open to perspectives which the dominant narratives of Cassinga do not permit us to see and which may be important to acknowledge.



11194

23

23 This photograph is one of the most widely spread images of the mass grave at Cassinga, placed alongside captions in countless publications. To my knowledge, however, it has never been published alongside a history of how the grave, and the grave photos, have been constructed.

According to Mbolondondo and others involved in administering Cassinga, the holes used for this and another mass grave were originally built as food storage spaces. Their physical construction was a response to the threat of enemy attack heightened by the 'strange airplanes' observed flying over the camp.<sup>65</sup> Following the attack, the survivors at Cassinga, together with Namibian, Cuban and Angolan soldiers, collected the dead scattered in and around the camp and laid them to rest in the two holes. At first the corpses were laid neatly in rows but later, as the bodies began to swell, they became unbearable to handle and were placed in the grave hastily. Shortly after the graves were covered, Mbolondondo and others were instructed to re-open the larger grave to show international journalists who would be arriving at the camp. People took turns digging up the sand and brushing it away from the bodies so that it would not obscure the journalists' view.<sup>66</sup> It is this re-opened grave that was photographed on May 8, when many journalists visited the camp.<sup>67</sup>

In their reports journalists note that there were two mass graves at Cassinga, but they photographed mostly, or only, the larger grave because it was open at the time of their arrival. They assumed that the larger grave had not yet been covered and made no mention of how it was prepared for them. Also, they did not discuss others' prior entry into the camp and any photographs which may have been taken before or as the graves were prepared.<sup>68</sup>

# MASSACRE AT CASSINGA

"First we saw gaily coloured frocks, blue jeans, shirts and a few uniforms. Then there was the sight of the bodies inside them. Swollen, blood-stained, they were the bodies of young girls, young men, a few older adults, some young children, all apparently recent arrivals from Namibia." The Guardian (London) 10.5.78.



MASS GRAVE CONTAINING MORE THAN 400 BODIES OF NAMIBIANS MASSACRED BY SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS. PHOTO TAKEN ON MAY 8, FOUR DAYS AFTER THE ATTACK.

24 This photograph was printed in the SWAPO publication *Namibia Today*.<sup>69</sup> The text, written by *The Guardian*'s Jane Bergerol, was used repeatedly to frame the Cassinga grave photos in the weeks following the South African attack.<sup>70</sup>

In his master's thesis, titled 'The Cassinga Raid', Edward Alexander challenges the accuracy of Bergerol's description of the grave. He writes:

A detailed examination of the [mass grave] photographs indicates that the bodies are those of adults more than teenagers, though some of them are certainly young adults. The overwhelming majority of them are in addition men, with only a few women who can be identified amongst them. Most of the men are wearing uniforms and there is little evidence of the 'brightly coloured frocks' although several of the photographs are in colour.<sup>71</sup>

Perhaps there is some truth in what Alexander writes. But may we oppose only the story of 'authentic' refugees with the one of 'authentic' soldiers as Alexander does here? Or are there other histories which may be told, histories which honour the many, diverse victims of Cassinga; histories which include both those who were laid to rest in Cassinga's graves and those whose lives have been shaped by the national history of it?

## PART III: VICTIMS OF CASSINGA'S HISTORY



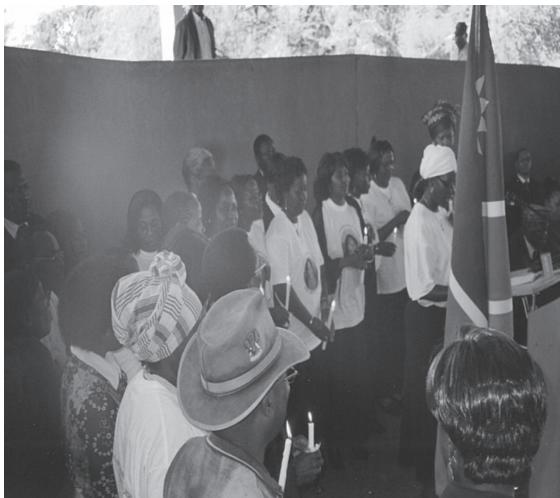
25



26

### The Dead at Cassinga

25/26 These two photographs of the mass graves at Cassinga were taken by the author in September 2007. To the left is a picture of the larger mass grave which appears in all the other mass grave photos. To the right is a picture of the smaller mass grave which does not appear in any photographs that I have previously seen. Today both graves are covered with concrete. At the far side of the larger grave there is an inscription marking the 'Massacre at Cassinga, May 4, 1978' and its renovation on May 4, 1988, the last time that a large delegation of Namibians commemorated Cassinga Day at this site.<sup>72</sup> The names of those interred are not marked on the graves and most are missing from *Their Blood Waters Our Freedom*, the Namibian government's official record of those who died during the liberation struggle.<sup>73</sup>



27

### **The Cassinga Survivors**

27 This photograph of 'the Cassinga Survivors' was taken by the author at the United Nations Plaza in Katutura on May 4, 2007. Since independence, the survivors have become regular participants in the ceremonies and media programmes commemorating Cassinga Day. Repeatedly they have drawn attention to individuals who lived and died with them at Cassinga, requesting recognition for their contributions to the nation and appealing to the Namibian government for the repatriation of those buried in Cassinga's graves. In addition, there are thousands of other survivors – families and friends of those who died at Cassinga – who have grieved over Cassinga without making public statements and requests.



28

### **The Angolans at Cassinga**

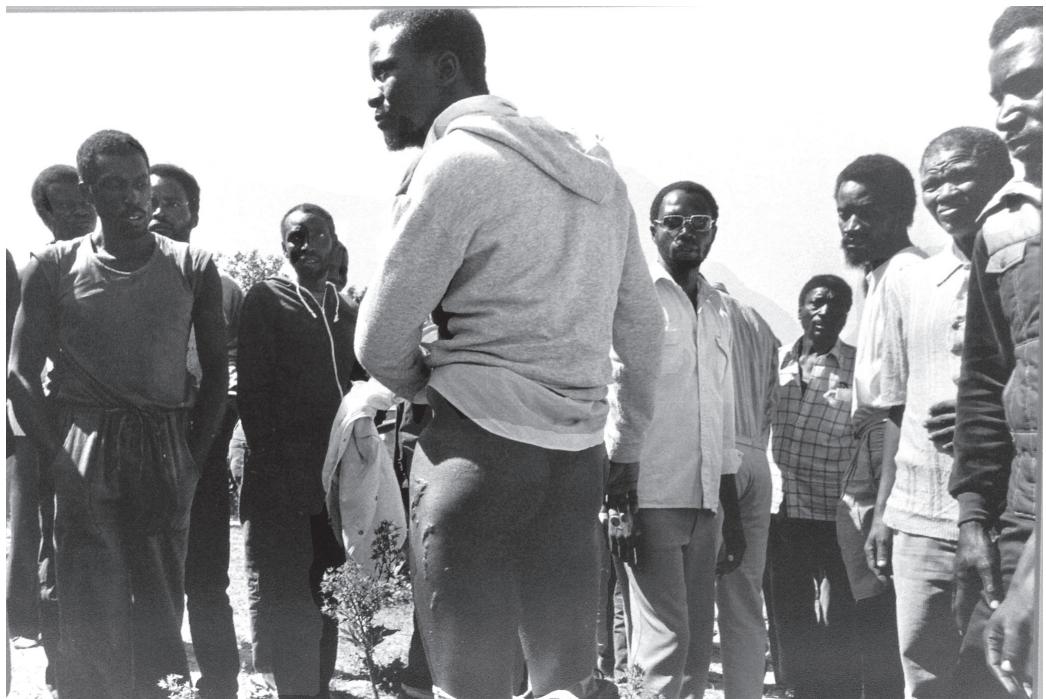
28 This photograph was taken by the author in September 2007 at the Cuilonga River, where it runs next to Cassinga. For Namibians who survived the attack, this river is often associated with those who drowned in it while attempting to flee their South African assailants. But, as the photo highlights, there are people who continue to live along the Cuilonga today. According to Galiano Ntyanba, the government administrator for Techamutete and the surrounding area, Angolans living along the river near where it passes Cassinga come to the site annually on May 4 to clean the two mass graves there. The day is also commemorated as a holiday in the region.<sup>74</sup>



29

### **The Cubans at Cassinga**

29 This photograph was taken by the author outside Techamutete in September 2007. According to Galiano Ntyanba, the graves mark where fourteen Cubans and one Namibian were buried after they were killed by South African landmines on the day of the SADF attack. They had been travelling from the Cuban base at Techamutete to Cassinga in an effort to protect the Namibians living there.<sup>75</sup>



30

#### **The Victims of 'a Second Cassinga'**

30 This photograph was taken by John Liebenberg for *The Namibian* on May 25, 1989 on the occasion of the release of SWAPO's detainees. These and hundreds of other SWAPO members detained near Lubango were imprisoned, tortured and 'disappeared' on the premise that they were South African spies. Among the events for which they were most frequently blamed was the attack on Cassinga. In some instances they were accused of helping the South African military execute its May 4, 1978 attack. In other cases they were said to be busy planning 'a second Cassinga'.

The apartheid government's tactics during its campaign against SWAPO gave Namibian exiles good reason to fear a second Cassinga. Nonetheless, evidence has never been presented to connect SWAPO ex-detainees with these accusations. And ex-detainees' efforts to investigate the reasons for their detention have been stifled by government policy, according to which the public discussion of 'the detainee issue' is a threat to 'national reconciliation'.<sup>76</sup>



31

### **The (Namibian) Nation**

31 This photograph was taken by the author at Namibia's annual Cassinga Day commemoration on May 4, 2009 in Okahandja. The audience stand at attention as officials begin to lead those assembled in the day's programme. A well-known song plays over the loudspeaker. Its refrain repeats:

We remember Cassinga, we remember  
We remember Cassinga, we remember  
We remember Cassinga, we remember  
We remember forever.

## End Notes

- 1 I would like to acknowledge the Centre for Humanities Research at UWC for supporting the exhibition project, the Museums Association of Namibia for assisting in the exhibition's physical preparation, the UWC Library for hosting the exhibition from April 12 to April 23, 2010, and the National Archives of Namibia for hosting it from April 29 to May 13, 2010. Special thanks are also due to Premesh Lalu, Jeremy Sylvester, Allison Fullard and Werner Hillebrecht for their extraordinary help and encouragement.
- 2 Theopholus Kalimba, Interview 2.9.2007; Mwetufa 'Cabral' Mupopiwa 26.7.2008; Charles 'Ho Chi Minh' Namoloh 19.6.2008.
- 3 T. Kalimba 2.9.2007; Mupopiwa 26.7.2008; Namoloh 19.6.2008.
- 4 A. Heywood, *The Cassinga Event: An Investigation of the Records* (Windhoek: National Archives, 1994), 17, 20; E.G.M. Alexander, 'The Cassinga Raid' (MA Thesis, University of South Africa, 2003), 41; Gaetano Pagano, letter in *The Cassinga File* (Geneva: International University Exchange Fund, 1978). Heywood indicates that Cassinga was 'built around a deposit of high-grade iron ore'. According to Alexander and several sources he cites, the mine was closer to Techamutete, the town 16 kilometres to the south of Cassinga. Pagano writes that 'originally Cassinga was inhabited by a few thousand Angolans, mostly workers at the iron mines in Techamutete 16 km away. The mines, once owned by Krupp and Japanese steel interests, never resumed work after the war and so Cassinga ... had remained an empty town.'
- 5 Heywood (1994) indicates that in colonial days Cassinga consisted 'of a sprawl of houses and mine buildings' (17). Pagano refers to 'three or four brick houses and hundreds of straw and adobe huts' that had remained empty since the start of the war (letter in *The Cassinga File*). Alexander indicates that, based on SADF aerial photographs, Cassinga had no more than 30 permanent buildings in 1978 (41-42). I draw my conclusions from interviews with Charles Namoloh (19.6.2008), Mwetufa Mupopiwa (26.7.2008), Darius 'Mbolondondo' Shikongo (Interviews 26.3.2007; 11.6.2007; 20.8.2007; 3.9.2007), Canner Kalimba (Interviews 1.4.2007; 13.6.2007) and a trip that I took to Cassinga with Canner and Theopholus Kalimba in September 2007. Namoloh indicates that he thinks some of the buildings that he found at Cassinga were dormitories. Shikongo refers to warehouses filled with timber that were cleared after his arrival (26.3.2007, 4, 15).
- 6 Ben Ulenga, Interview 12.6.2008.
- 7 Heywood 1994, 24; Alexander 2003, 55.
- 8 T. Kalimba 2.9.2007; Mupopiwa 26.7.2008; Namoloh 19.6.2008.
- 9 Namoloh 19.6.2008; Mupopiwa 26.7.2008.
- 10 Later they were joined by PLAN Political Commissar Greenwell Matongo, who moved to Cassinga in late 1976 or early 1977 (Namoloh 19.6.2008; Mupopiwa 26.7.2008; Nyamu, Interview 3.4.2008).
- 11 Namoloh 19.6.2008; Mupopiwa 26.7.2008. It should be noted that Hamaambo died in 2002 (and Matongo, who later joined the PLAN office, died in exile). Therefore, according to their testimony, Namoloh and Mupopiwa are the only two living persons with knowledge of the work done in and by the PLAN office during its first months.
- 12 Namoloh 19.6.2008; Mupopiwa 26.7.2008. Namoloh, Mupopiwa and D. Shikongo (26.3.2007) recall that at some point while they were at Cassinga, probably in early 1977, commanders at Cassinga began to access other commanders at the front and officials in Lubango and Luanda via radio communication.
- 13 Namoloh 19.6.2008; Mupopiwa 26.7.2008.
- 14 Namoloh 19.6.2008; Mupopiwa 26.7.2008; Nyamu 2.4.2008.
- 15 National Archives of Namibia (NAN) Photo Archive, No. 14119.
- 16 Namoloh 19.6.2008.
- 17 C. and T. Kalimba, 2.9.2007, 2,3; D. Shikongo 11.6.2007, 40; 3.9.2007, 69; Nyamu 3.4.2007, 17; Namoloh 19.6.2008.
- 18 Most of those entering exile from southern Namibia during this period travelled through Botswana and were sent to SWAPO camps in Zambia. According to Kalimba and Shikongo, few, if any of these exiles, arrived at Cassinga (D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 11-12; C. Kalimba 13.6.2007, 16).
- 19 Some of those who entered exile during the outbreak of the Angolan Civil War seem to have lived in these small camps near the front for many months before being transferred to any settlement to the rear. For example, Theopholus and Canner Kalimba fled from Namibia to Angola in August 1975 (C. Kalimba 2.4.2007). Unlike research participants I interviewed who entered exile before August, the month when widespread violence broke out in Angola, the Kalimbas did not move onward into Zambia. Rather, the couple moved between various camps in southern Angola until they were finally moved to Cassinga, shortly after Namibians' arrival there.
- 20 C. Kalimba 13.6.2007, 11, 15, 16; D. Shikongo, 33-34.
- 21 In Shikongo's case the title commissar denoted that he was the deputy camp commander. Some commissars, especially after the increased involvement of the Soviet Union with SWAPO in exile, were responsible particularly for political education.
- 22 D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 3.
- 23 D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 16; 3.9.2007, 77.
- 24 D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 15-16; 20.8.2007, 65-66; 3.9.2007, 76-77.
- 25 Shikongo remembers the commander by his *nom de guerre*, 'Nakombole'. He died in the South African attack on Cassinga (D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 17).
- 26 Kalimba 13.6.2007, 1, 4, 10, 16; Shikongo 11.6.2007, 30; Nyamu 2.4.2007; Namoloh 19.6.2008.
- 27 Notably, Iyambo Indongo, trained Namibian doctor, ran the medical centre at Jamba. Canner Kalimba was a founding teacher at the school there (Kalimba 13.6.2007, 4).
- 28 D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 16; 3.9.2007, 77.
- 29 NAN, File A.614, UNICEF Area Office Brazzaville, 'Report on a mission to SWAPO centres for Namibian refugees in Angola from 10 to 14 April 1978', 11; Ellen Namhila, Interview 25.7.2008.
- 30 NAN Photo Archive, No. 12778. The photo was an acquisition from the Mayibuye Archives at the University of the Western Cape (Mayibuye) and International Defence and Aid Fund (IDAF); D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 3, 15; 11.6.2007, 38-39.
- 31 C. Kalimba 13.6.2007, 14; D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 19-20.
- 32 C. Kalimba 13.6.2007, 12-14; D. Shikongo 11.6.2007, 41.
- 33 C. Kalimba 13.6.2007, 14; D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 19-20.
- 34 NAN Photo Archive, No. 12314 (Mayibuye/IDAF); D. Shikongo 26.3.2007; 11.6.2007; 3.9.2007. Namoloh 19.6.2007. Per Sanden and I also discussed footage of Namibians marching, dressed in military uniforms and carrying sticks which

he filmed while he was visiting Cassinga and which was used in his film 'Here Is Namibia: Inside the Liberated Areas and Beyond' (Per Sanden, Interview 5.2.2008).

35 D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 3, 17; 11.6.2007, 32, 35, 36, 39, 40. Nyamu 3.4.2008, 19; J. Hunter, 'Die Politik der Erinnerung und des Vergessens in Namibia seit der staatlichen Unabhängigkeit' (Doctoral Thesis, Universität Freiburg, 2005), 80.

36 University of Namibia (UNAM), Katjavivi Collection, Series B1, Category 5, File No. 9, 'For Immediate Release', 4.5.1978; 'Back to the Border with Johan and Danger', Louis Bothma, *New Era*, 2.12.2009; D. Shikongo 11.6.2007, 39. It should further be noted that freeing Johan van der Mescht was one of the reasons stated by the South African government for its attack on Cassinga.

37 D. Shikongo 11.6.2007, 39-40.

38 D. Shikongo 11.6.2007, 35, 36. For example, when I showed Shikongo the SADF map of Cassinga, he referred to the location named 'Recruits' tent camp' as the new site which the camp commanders had created for 'the elderly, the women with children and children'. Apparently, he and other camp officials thought that, by removing them from the main camp, these groups would be less vulnerable to an aerial attack.

39 D. Shikongo 11.6.2007, 35.

40 D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 3; 11.6.2007, 37, 43. Shikongo further notes that a group of eighty or more exiles arrived at Cassinga the night before the attack.

41 Mayibuye Photo Archive, LA 229-2.5; UNAM, Katjavivi Collection, Series B1, Category 5, File No. 9, 'For Immediate Release', 4.5.1978; 'Back to the Border with Johan and Danger', Louis Bothma, *New Era*, 2.12.2009.

42 Sanden 5.2.2008, 6.

43 Sanden, 5.2.2008, 6. Mayibuye Archives Centre, Box: Namibia 1978, 'SA Prisoner tells of SWAPO capture', *Argus*, 10.5.1978; 'Moving Plea to SWAPO', *Rand Daily Mail*, 12.5.1978.

44 Mayibuye Archives Centre, Box: Namibia 1978, 'SA Prisoner tells of SWAPO capture', *Argus*, 10.5.1978; 'Moving Plea to SWAPO', *Rand Daily Mail*, 12.5.1978; NAN, Institute for Contemporary History, Microfilm 78 F85: *Die Transvaler*, 11.5.1978; Microfilm 78 F83: 'Swapo wil praat oor sappeur', *Die Volksblad*, 9.5.1978.

45 NAN, File A.614, 'UNICEF Report'.

46 For a discussion of these numbers see Heywood 1994, 19. UNICEF's figure also seems implausible when put in relation to the number that the Report projects for Jamba (6,000), the on-going mass migration of Namibians into exile during the 1980s and the number of exiles repatriated to Namibia in 1989.

47 Namoloh 19.6.2007; Mupopiwa 26.7.2007; C. Kalimba 2.4.2007; 13.6.2007; D. Shikongo 26.3.2007; 13.6.2007; 20.8.2007; 3.9.2007.

48 J. Hunter, 'Die Politik der Erinnerung und des Vergessens in Namibia seit der staatlichen Unabhängigkeit' (Doctoral Thesis, Universität Freiburg, 2005), 80. The letter has also been published in German translation in Hunter's book *Die Politik der Erinnerung und des Vergessens in Namibia: Umgang mit schweren Menschenrechtsverletzungen der Ära des bewaffneten Befreiungskampfes, 1966 bis 1989* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 2008), 57. According to Hunter, the letter was included among the personal files of the late Hannes Smith, formerly the editor of the *Windhoek Observer*. These files have recently been transferred to the National Archives of Namibia, but are not yet accessible to researchers.

49 Some former Cassinga inhabitants refer to an area like the one which Hamaambo mentions here as 'Camp No. 2' (See 'Cassinga Revisited', *The Namibian*, 7.5.1999). But whereas they and the SADF map of Cassinga suggest that 'Camp No. 2' was located less than 1 km outside the main camp, Hamaambo's letter refers to a distance of 7 km.

50 NAN, File A.614, Annex I to the 'UNICEF Report'.

51 NAN Photo Archive, No. 14120.

52 The location of Chatequera/'Vietnam' on the map is based both on the estimates of research participants and South African newspaper reports which identify Vietnam as a camp located about 30 kilometres from the border and 75 kilometres from Ruacana (NAN, Institute for Contemporary History, Microfilm 78 F84, 'Nog Dokumente: SWAPO baie lief om te spog', *Die Suidwester*, 9.5.1978; NAN, M187/1 'News Footage from SABC-TV').

53 NAN, M187/1 'News Footage from SABC-TV'; Heywood 1994, 8.

54 Mayibuye Photo Archive, LA 343-3-2.

55 NAN, Institute for Contemporary History, 78 F80, 'I visited "Vietnam" and saw the aftermath of the battle', *Pretoria News*, 6.5.1978. Magdalena Nghatanga offers a similar account of being photographed after her capture at Chatequera in IDAF's 'Remember Kassinga – And Other Papers on Political Prisoners and Detainees in Namibia. Fact Paper on Southern Africa No. 9', available at Mayibuye.

56 NAN, 'IDAF Newsclippings Database', A.570 IDAF, 1/97, A01.1C.011, 1979 July-Dec.

57 This point about the identity of the 'Kassinga detainees' was confirmed by South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Volume 2, 52-53).

58 Alexander 2003, 161.

59 UNAM, Katjavivi Collection, Series B1, Category 4, 'Address Given by Peter Katjavivi, SWAPO Secretary for Information and Publicity to the World Conference for the Eradication of Racism and Racial Discrimination, Basle, May 18-21, 1978'.

60 Sanden and another cameraman, Rudi Speer, had first made films with PLAN in southwestern Zambia and the Caprivi Region of Namibia in 1973. Apparently, these are the first and only filmmakers to have worked inside PLAN for many years. Sanden developed personal relationships with Sam Nujoma and other SWAPO leaders from the early 1960s when he became involved in anti-apartheid activities as a student in Sweden (Sanden 5.2.2008, 1-2).

61 *Namibia Today*, 2(2), 1978.

62 SWAPO, *Massacre at Kassinga: Climax of Pretoria's All-Out Campaign against the Namibian Resistance* (Special Bulletin, June 1978), 19.

63 Alexander 2003, 169.

64 C. Kalimba 1.4.2010; Sanden 23.3.2010; NAN, File A.614, 'Joint United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and World Health Organization Representatives on their Visit to Cassinga and to the Namibian Press', 2; 'Remember Cassinga' produced by SWAPO Party Archive, 2007; D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 3.

65 D. Shikongo 26.3.2007, 15; 11.6.2007, 32, 35, 36, 39, 40. Other former inhabitants of Cassinga have also noted the grave's use as a storage space. See Vilho Shigwedha's forthcoming doctoral dissertation.

66 Canner and Theophilus Kalimba and Galiano Ntyanba, Interview 2.9.2007; T. Kalimba 1.4.2010; D. Shikongo 1.4.2010.

67 Kalimbas and Ntyanba, 2.9.2007; T. Kalimba 1.4.2010; D. Shikongo 1.4.2010; NAN, Institute for Contemporary History, Microfilm 78 F84, 'Desolation reigns as SWAPO buries dead', *Daily Dispatch*, 10.5.1978; Microfilm 78 F85, '460 in mass grave at scene of Angolan raid', *Cape Times*, 10.5.1978; 'IDAF Newsclippings Database', A.570 IDAF, 1/4,

A01.1A.049, 'Hundreds buried in mass grave at Angolan town after South African raid', 10.5.1978. Some journalists, in later writings and interviews, indicate that they arrived at Cassinga and photographed the mass grave before May 8 (Pagano, (letter in *The Kassinga File*); Sanden 5.2.2008, 8). In contrast, camp officials interviewed for this research think that the mass grave was only filled after at least three days, and they do not recall presenting it to journalists before it was re-opened for them.

68 NAN, Institute for Contemporary History, Microfilm 78 F84, 'Desolation reigns as SWAPO buries dead', *Daily Dispatch*, 10.5.1978; Microfilm 78 F85, '460 in mass grave at scene of Angolan raid', *Cape Times*, 10.5.1978; 'IDAF Newscuttings Database', A.570 IDAF, 1/4, A01.1A.049, 'Hundreds buried in mass grave at Angolan town after South African raid', 10.5.1978; Pagano (letter in *The Kassinga File*); Sanden 5.2.2008, 8.

69 *Namibia Today*, 2(2), 1978.

70 As one can see if it is compared with the previous photograph, this photo is taken from a slightly different angle. It appears identical to the one taken by Gaetano Pagano on May 6, 1978, included in *The Kassinga File*.

71 Alexander 2003, 60.

72 According to Charles Namoloh, he initiated the first renovation of the two mass graves in the early 1980s. At that time concrete was laid on both graves (Namoloh 19.6.2008). The 1988 commemoration of Cassinga Day was well covered in *The Combatant*.

73 *Their Blood Waters Our Freedom* (Windhoek: Swapo Party, 1996).

74 Kalimbas and Ntyanba 2.9.2007.

75 Kalimbas and Ntyanba 2.9.2007.

76 Seminal texts on the Namibian government's reconciliation policy and its relationship to the 'detainee issue' are: Lauren Dobell, 'Silence in Context: Truth and/or Reconciliation in Namibia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 23(2), 1997, 371-382; C. Leys and J.S. Saul, 'Lubango and After: "Forgotten History" as Politics in Namibia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29(2), 2003, 300-325; J. Hunter, *Die Politik der Erinnerung und des Vergessens in Namibia: Umgang mit schweren Menschenrechtsverletzungen der Ära des bewaffneten Befreiungskampfes, 1966 bis 1989* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 2008). I also discuss these issues extensively, including accusations made in the name of Cassinga in my doctoral dissertation.