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16 April 2003

Angola/Democratic Republic of Congo (RDC): Whether a permanent mission of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA exists in Kinshasa; and, if this is the case, the names of its representatives and how they are treated by the Congolese authorities (May 1997-April 2003)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

No mention of the existence of a permanent mission of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in Kinshasa since the fall of the Mobutu regime in May 1997 could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints for this Response.

However, in referring to the role Zaire played from 1994 to 1997 on behalf of UNITA, the report entitled *Rapport du groupe d'experts chargé d'étudier les violations des sanctions imposées par le Conseil de sécurité à l'União Nacional Para A Independência Total De Angola* mentioned, among other things, the fact that, [UN English version] "[i]n the case of UNITA's office in Zaire (prior to the overthrow of Mobutu), Savimbi [former leader of UNITA] emphasized to his representatives there the importance of their mission" (United Nations 10 Mar. 2000). The report explained the relationship that existed between the former Zairian president and the UNITA leader as follows:

[UN English version]

Until the overthrow of Mobutu in May 1997, UNITA used Zaire as a base for the stockpiling of weapons, and it used Zairian end-user certificates as the means by which arms brokers working for UNITA were able to obtain the weapons Savimbi wanted. Mobutu provided Savimbi with the Zairian end-user certificates, and in exchange Savimbi gave Mobutu diamonds and cash. Savimbi passed the end-user certificates to Marcelo Moises Dachala (known as "Karriça") who served as UNITA's representative in Zaire. Karriça in turn would provide the end-user certificates to Kabir, who then used the certificates to purchase the weapons that UNITA required (ibid.).

It is worth noting that, according to the same United Nations report, the Democratic Republic of Congo (RDC) was not one of the 14 countries that harboured UNITA representatives in 2000 (ibid.).

Another source stated that, "[w]ith the collapse of Mobutu's rule, UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi had moved his main African office to Brazzaville, and then Pointe-Noire [in the Republic of Congo (Congo-Brazzaville)]," but it did not specify whether this office was formerly located in Kinshasa (IPS 22 Oct. 1997).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in

researching this Information Request.

References

Inter Press Service (IPS). 22 October 1997. "IRIN Background Brief on the Situation in Congo." <<http://www.ips.org/critical/watch/con3.htm>> [Accessed 15 Apr. 2003]

United Nations. 10 March 2000. *Rapport du groupe d'experts chargé d'étudier les violations des sanctions imposées par le Conseil de sécurité à l'União Nacional Para A Independência Total De Angola (UNITA)*. <<http://www.un.int/canada/html/angolareportfrench.htm>> [Accessed 15 Apr. 2003]

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Africa Confidential 1997 - March 2003

Africa Research Bulletin 1996 - February 2003

Info-Congo/Kinshasa 1997-2001

IRB Databases

Jeune Afrique/L'Intelligent 2001 - April 2003

Keesing's Record of World Events 1997-2002

LEXIS/NEXIS

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Internet sites, including:

Africatime

Allafrica

Amnesty International

Digitalcongo.net

European Country of Origin Information Network (ECOI)

Human Rights Watch (HRW)

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

Missionary Service News Agency (MISNA)

ReliefWeb

Le Soir [Brussels]

United Kingdom, Immigration and Nationality Directorate

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