

Please visit our web site for up-to-date news and information on our attractions, events and projects

www.sadfgroup.org

If you are interested in joining the SADF Living History Group, please complete the enclosed Application Form and hand it to one of our members, or go to the website at www.sadfgroup.org and complete the contact form.

We are interested in your comments and ideas. Please contact us online.



South African Defence Force

Living History Group

Objectives

The object of The Group is to foster and promote interest in the South African Defence Force whilst engaged in the South West African / Namibian Border War, which lasted from 1966 to 1989.

The SADF Living History Group was created to Commemorate and Honour those who served, and in some cases, gave their lives in the Border War.

This is a non-political organisation, and the SADF Living History Group does not glorify war, or concern itself with the propaganda, politics or politicians, but with the humanity and the individuals who served, survived, and in many cases, sacrificed their all.

SADF LIVING HISTORY GROUP



info@sadfgroup.org
www.sadfgroup.org



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We Will Remember Them

THE BORDER WAR

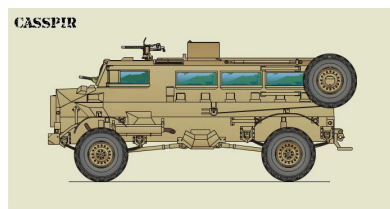
The Border War lasted from 1966 until 1989, a total of 23 years, making it one of Africa's longest conflicts.



The Border War was fought in Northern Namibia (former South West Africa), and in Southern Angola - the so-called "Operational Area" or "Border".



Sporadic and related skirmishes against Anti-SADF forces occurred throughout the sub-continent in places such as SW Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe (former Rhodesia), Mozambique, Lesotho, Swaziland, former Homelands within the current South Africa; and South Africa itself.



With a coup of the Portuguese Caetano Government in 1974, a military government took over in Portugal, and established a rapid withdrawal of Portugal's military from Angola and the other Portuguese colonies. It created an immediate power vacuum, and Angola was spiralling out of control being internally torn between 3 freedom movements often fighting each other, namely the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) under leadership of Agostinho Neto and with Marxist support, FNLA (National Liberation Front of Angola) under Holden Roberto and supported by the USA and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) (pro-Western and supported by SA and the USA)

The presence of the Portuguese ensured that SWAPO/PLAN could not establish a springboard in Southern Angola, and worked together with SA to prevent it. SA was concerned about the instability of Angola, and the threat of SWAPO getting a strong foothold across the SWA border, and this led to SA's intervention in Angola with Operation Savannah in 1975.

With the MPLA being backed by the Eastern Block and UNITA by the West, the conflict took on the shade of a Cold War conflict. SA had the secret blessing from the CIA that it will covertly support the SADF operation, but USA ignorance on Angola and Africa, as well as the embarrassment of withdrawal

from Vietnam still fresh in American minds, made it pull out of the Operation on 19/12/75 when the USA Senate stopped all anti-MPLA support, leaving SA to fight it alone. UNITA was given a strong foothold with this operation and with ongoing SADF and Western support throughout the Border War it remained the dominant freedom movement in South Angola until the end of the Border War.

Cuba started sending military support to Angola as early as 1975. The purpose of the growing Cuban support was Fidel Castro's policy of spreading "popular people's revolution" in 3rd world countries, and after his failure to ignite such revolutions in Latin America, he focused on Africa, where the notorious Che Guevara was also sent in the '60's. By March 1976 there were 36000 voluntary Cuban military personnel in Angola. By 1989 the figure grew to 55000, and an approximate total of 350 000 Cubans did military service in Angola.



Visit www.sadfgroup.org to find out more.