

MPLA - SAM

The Africa Fund
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May 14, 1973

REPORT ON MEDICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICE OF MPLA
From: George Houser, Executive Secretary

The Africa Fund has received communication from Dr. M.A. D'Almeida, Director of Servico de Assistencia Medica (SAM) or the Medical Assistance Service of the Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (MPLA). We want to share this information with you, for the progress of SAM's work in bringing medical assistance to the war-beleaguered peoples of Angola is most encouraging.

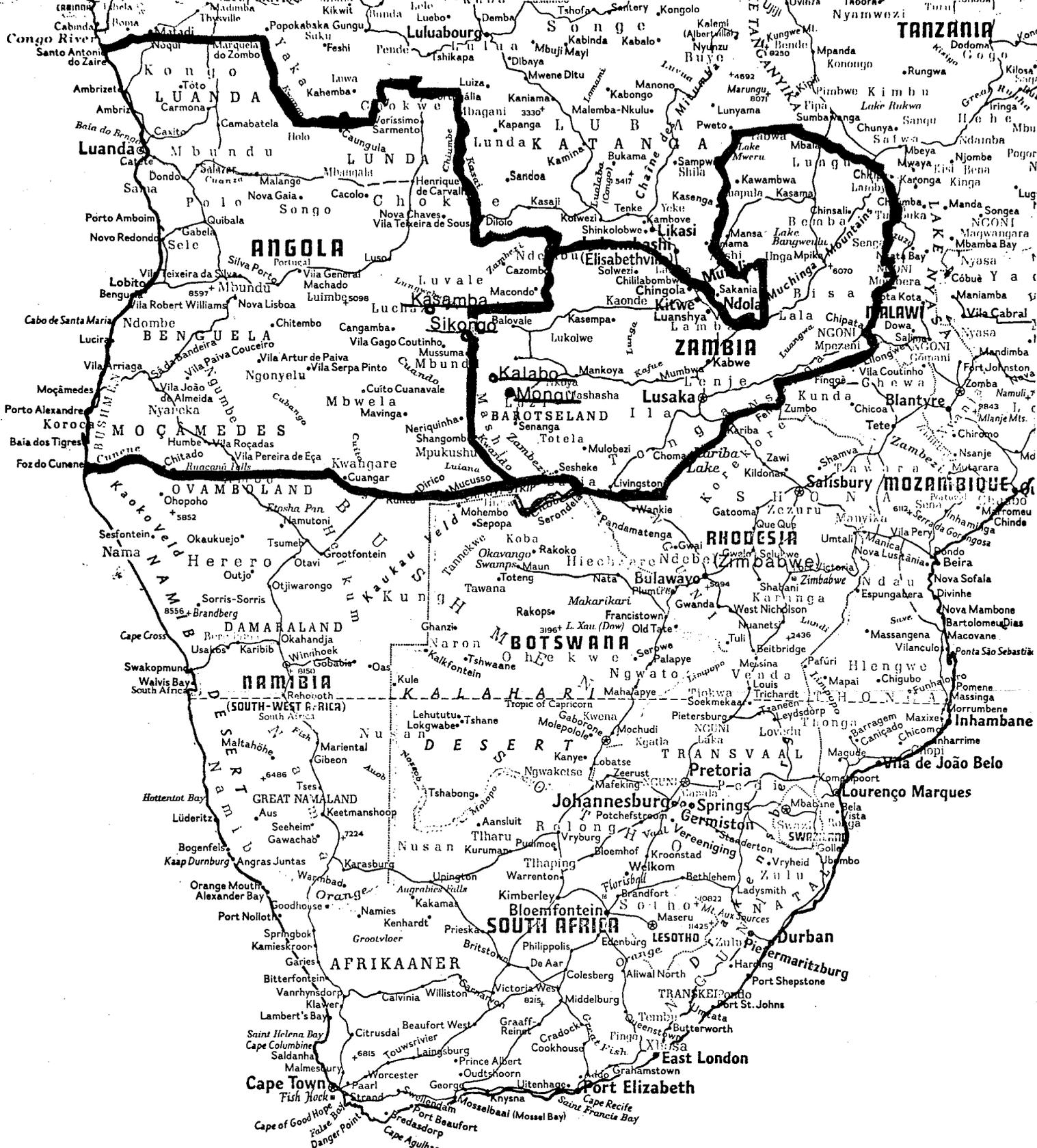
Serious medical problems, such as amputations, extractions of shell fragments and bullets, and grenade wounds are currently handled in Kalabo and Mongu and other Zambezi towns near the Angola-Zambia frontier. (see map). Dr. D'Almeida expresses the Angolan people's gratitude to Zambia for this vital service, but also voices the desire of patients to remain closer to home and family while undergoing treatment.

Consequently, SAM is currently carrying out construction plans for two small hospitals which have basically the same design and function. These hospitals, holding 45 to 50 beds, will be located in the Sikongo and Kasamba areas respectively. Actual construction has begun on the Sikongo hospital although it has been somewhat slower than initially planned, for supplies and fuel are brought overland from Lusaka, Zambia, covering nearly 350 miles of high, grassy terrain. Dr. D'Almeida describes the costly transport: "It (the hospital) is situated very far from Lusaka where we get the majority of items; part of the road is very bad and the vehicles are sooner damaged and they expend a lot of fuel".

These rural hospitals will contain an operating theatre, thus aiding those people who cannot be cared for by the sanitation posts in the liberated zones, and who up to now are brought into Zambia for treatment. In addition, dentistry, X-ray and general laboratory services will be available to the people, due, as Dr. D'Almeida acknowledges in behalf of the people of Angola, to the support of foreign peoples, including the U.S.

The Sikongo hospital will be completed in two months' time, after which construction can begin on the Kasamba area hospital. Both are located so as to be relatively inaccessible to aggressive action from Portuguese colonial troops.

Dr. D'Almeida is very clear in stating that the completion of these hospitals has major priority at this time for the work of SAM. The Africa Fund has been asked by SAM to raise \$20,000 to fund the building of dispensaries just such as these. We encourage you to seriously consider including the fund drive for SAM in your fund-raising work this year.



Medical Assistance Service Hospital Facilities as mentioned in the attached letter:

Kalabo and Mongu - sites of presently existing facilities within the Zambia border used for surgical operations primarily.

Sikongo - site of construction of a hospital with dental facilities, laboratory, etc. To be ready in about two months.

Kasamba - located further into Angola this is the future site of a hospital to be similar to the one now being built in Sikongo. Construction will begin in 3 - 4 months.