Namibia peace threatened by violence

WINDHOEK, Namibia — An ambitious U.N. plan for independence in Namibia verged on collapse hours after taking effect Saturday as South Africa reported 40 people killed in overnight clashes between police and rebels, and said a U.N. peacekeeping force may have to leave the territory.

South African Foreign Affairs Minister Roelof "pik" Botha said 38 guerrillas of the South West Africa People's Organization and two South West Africa police were killed, and 14 other police wounded in the incidents, creating "an extremely grave situation."

The clashes between the police and the leftist SWAPO were the deadliest in the protracted regional conflict since a Cuban-Angolan air strike on June 27, 1988, killed 12 South African soldiers.

The incident largely overshadowed the unannounced visit to Namibia Saturday of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who tacked the trip onto the end of a four-nation African tour at the last minute.

Namibia, also known as South West Africa, has been under South African rule since 1915.

"According to the latest information, serious armed clashes occurred between the South West African Police and SWAPO terrorists," Botha said in Windhoek before an anticipated meeting with Thatcher.

"This is a most serious development as I have stated earlier. At the request of the state president (Pieter W.) Botha) I am in the process of communicating directly with U.N. Secretary-General Dr. Javier Perez de Cuellar in connection with this incident."

He said unless Perez de Cuellar took a clear stand on the "flagrant violation" of the accord setting up the independence program, South Africa would have no choice but to order the peacekeeping force to leave until SWAPO could be "brought to its senses."

South African authorities said the clashes occurred overnight after two groups of guerrillas of the pro-independence SWAPO entered Namibia from Angola in the area of Ruacana Falls in northern Ovamboland.

The clashes evidently involved South West Africa police instead of defense troops, because the U.N. independence program confined all military troops to base at midnight.

The same plan also required SWAPO guerrillas to stay north of the 16th parallel through Angola.

At 6 a.m., a cease-fire formally took effect between SWAPO and the South African Defense Forces, but a de facto cease-fire had been in effect since September.

Botha said the incidents amounted to a "clear violation" of the December accords between South Africa, Cuba and Angola, and a repudiation of a U.N. Security Council resolution approving the agreements. He called SWAPO's agreement to a cease-fire "a farce."

The agreements paved the way for implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 435 calling for Namibian elections and independence by April 1990, in exchange for a withdrawal of some 50,000 Cuban troops supporting the Markist government in Angola against U.S.-backed UNITA guerrillas.

WINDHOEK, Namibia — Supporters of the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) carry placards and the pictures of SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma during a march to central Windhoek. The demonstration was turned back by police last Saturday.

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The U.S. Department of Education has awarded a grant of $86,000 to the University of Maryland — Estern Shore for a summer research opportunity program for minority students.

The program's goal is to encourage a broader participation in graduate study of scientific and technical disciplines.

The pool of minority students in graduate schools is drastically declining, according to the American Council on Education, and yet it has been established that one-third of the nation's college faculty will retire by the year 2000, thus presenting an unprecedented opportunity for minority faculty members to make significant advances.

That opportunity will be lost if minority Ph.D.'s are not available to fill the vacancies.

The training program is called "SEPUM" (Scientific Enrichment Program for Undergraduate Minority Students), and is the first such opportunity developed by the Department of Education under an amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Between 15 and 30 campuses across the country will be offering similar programs.

According to Dr. Carolyn Brooks, director of the U.M.E.S. program, promising minority undergraduates will be exposed to scientific research in a wide variety of disciplines under the supervision of mentors.

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