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THE GLOBE AND MAIL

UN peacekeeping mission to quit troubled Angola

United Nations Security Council hopes mandate can be renewed

Reuters News Agency, United Nations

The United Nations Security Council voted unanimously yesterday to close down the UN peacekeeping mission in Angola, but at the same time left the door open for its revival at a future date.

With Angola's government insisting that the troops be withdrawn immediately, the council approved UN arrangements to pull out the soldiers from the African country where civil war broke out again last December.

It also requested that UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appoint a liaison officer "until the practical arrangements for the future United Nations presence in Angola are agreed upon."

Under Mr. Annan's withdrawal plans for the 1,000 peacekeepers, several hundred troops will be left behind for up to six months to guard UN property and ensure an orderly departure from Angola.

During this time diplomats hope the Angola government will relent and agree to a new mandate and a new name for a UN military presence, and allow a senior special representative to stay in Luanda, the capital.

Council members fear that full UN withdrawal could mean the total collapse of the Lusaka Proto-

col, a 1994 peace accord designed to end nearly two decades of civil war.

The UN Observer Mission in Angola, known as MONUA, was set up in 1997 and at one time numbered 7,000 soldiers. It replaced smaller missions that had been in Angola since 1988.

Angola has insisted that all military personnel leave the country and a special representative be based in New York and make trips to Angola. In contrast, the Security Council earlier this month said the representative should be based in Angola and a "multidisciplinary presence" that includes military personnel stay in the country.

Angola has said that human-rights monitors, now part of MONUA, can remain along with UN relief, political and development staff.

Again yesterday, the council blamed the failure of the peace accords primarily on Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, which refused to hand over land under its control to a national unity government and did not disarm its fighters as called for in the peace accords.

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