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INTERVIEWER: today is 18 September 2005. My name is Jose Manuel Chimupi a research of war history, and I'll working under Watersrand University, Johannesburg. And I'm here to talk with the Koevoet Members which they busy in this area(unknown) and I'm here with my brother, Andreas Leopard one of the Koevoet members. Andreas Leopard, I'd like you to tell me where are you coming from and which year did you join the Koevoet. And how many month did you do your training etc. Thank you very much this is your time. Andreas.

ANDREAS LEOPARD: I'm Andreas Leopard. I'm born in the place (unknown) in Angola. And I've been grown up in the place they called Umfana. Eh, I've been going to school there at the Portuguese school. In 1977, the war started in Angola. Then we started to leave the homes to go near town. In 1979, then the war became bigger and bigger in Angola. Even in the place that the school ... ended... we didn't even continue to go to school anymore. Then we stayed in another place the called Umfando. I stayed there starting 1977 to 1978. In 1979, because ... they were... er...the war some... others.... The other soldiers they were from Namibia. The government of South Africa, the one who ... who ... commanded the... sold... the Koevoet soldiers to go and fight in Angola. From then 1981, the big town the place they called Ongiva, they... it started to be fought. Then we leave that place and we go to the other place where they called

(unknown). Then in 1981 the government of Angola, it was not having power to... achieve their goal... there was hungry in the place they called Cunene. Then I leaved that place in 1982... Then I approached the border to come in... the... in Namibia. Then I came to spend the night in the place they called (unknown). In the morning I came to catch the taxi to come to the place they called Oshakati. Eh... then when I came in Oshakati I found one of my ... uncle was working at the other group for the soldier they called Koevoet. Then he took me to... the some of the... the... government office, in order for me to... to... to... have the... the... the... the... proof of the... the resident.

Then from then he asked me... that ... in this place the job is too scarce. Then he asked me if I could start to go to school, or what kinds of job eh... do I want. Eh, for me I wanted to go back to school because the time I was in Angola I was eh... a little bit poor. In 1985, then I started to go to the other place again they called Ondangwa. There was another place they called 11 Battalion, in that place there were... em...looking I mean some mens to go for ... to work ... somewhere.

Then they... I involved myself in that place... where they wanted some men. Then they started to train us eh... a little bit... in a ... before we can go inside the camp. Eh... before we can go to... the... in the camp there was... eh... only one mistake there that we couldn't even made.

Then eh...for them they say that no, we got a lift to go back first. Then... at that night ... we training, and training, and training, in order for us to go back and find a job.

Eh... early at the morning when I came there, they pointed me to the other... corporal, but I can't remember his name. Then we went inside the camp, and then they choose us. Then they... eh ... we slept there. They give us the blankets, the next morning they give us all the equipment that we need... as a soldier. In the training, I stayed there about 12 months. After I finished my training, they said no... in this (place unclear) you are so many.

Because you ... want the employed us, we were about one hundred... no one thousand six hundred. From there they just employed about 200 men. They say that they must go back home. Then while I went home, I stayed there only about 2 weeks. Then I heard again in that place they called the Koevoet camp, they say that there is come employees there. That train the Koevoet training to us in the place they called Ondangwa. Eh..., when we went there, I was the first to be employed, because... eh ... I've came the first to...I mean in the training. They trained us for 6 months. Eh... after they... while we was in the training, they trained us many things.... They... even how the Intelligence in you works. Then in our groups the chose us, we were about 12 people. Eh ... we started to work... starting at the place Angwena, till the place, they called Okalongo. We just worked about two weeks.

Then we came back again in 1986. Then they put us again in the training... training again. Eh... When we went back to the training, they say, now the... you can't work the... the... as the... the... the... field soldiers anymore. Now you are going to work using the... the... the Kaspers ...

Then from there we went back to... home... where.... Eh... in Ongedivwa there was another group they called Zulu Papa. They came to collect me there. Eh, from there I went with one man... commander they called Koen Marais. Eh from there we stayed in a place they called (unknown place). The big camp that is in Oshakati they came to work the Koevoet.

Eh... from there in our operations if we are go... we are facing the bush... there... Eh... at ... there's... at summertime mostly the... Swapo soldiers they don't come. Eh... at... eh... at springtime ... is where we... we... find... or we get this the real operations... all over the land there... or there the place. Eh ... we always have the operations to take to Angola... to go to Angola.

My first operation I started east of (unknown). That day I can't remember the date that eh... when was it... that the weight was eh... just eh starting a bit and a bit.

Eh... from the...the... starting or the beginning of the war with the Swapo soldiers, from the beginning until to the end, the big weight was only to the end.

Eh... one day while we were from the... the... the place called the east of (unknown place) could be (Inana) eh... at the border of Angola. Angolan border.

We went in... eh... one ... it was only the community member house. Eh... we find that man, he was very... very angry. Eh... when we entered in that place he came to us. Eh... and that man he started saying that they were here, in my... in my house. They asked me food, I give them food. After I give them food they went, but they came back again at night. Then they took his milk, they took his milk, and... his soaps... then we went following those feet... but the feet(?) it was for yesterday. It was around seven o'clock those men they were past there.

Eh... we didn't even go approaching... even one kilometer. Eh... for me myself I was looking somewhere. Eh.. I saw something. In ... on my side when I was looking I ... I was thinking that it was a bed, because it was in the... on the bush. It was ... there was a lot of trees there. That thing it was about hundred meters from me... eh... on my left side, when I looked ... on my left side. There was the... the... Kasper, the no one Kasper(?).

That car it was a little bit on... front of us... about... I'm not sure...how... how many meters was that car... far from us... but it was going facing straight to where I saw that5 thing. The time I saw that thing I even... I didn't tell some other soldier that I saw something in front there. Because when I saw that thing, it was like a bed. Eh... when I heard I just hear the sound of a gun. The other man who was on top of the Kasper.eh... they were already shooting. Against I saw that men falling on the other side of the... the (unclear). Then for us we started to... to shoot facing where we... where the sound has comes from.

Then we started to go forward. Then we find two Swapo soldiers. From there those two Swapo soldiers, they were killed and one of our Koevoet soldiers who has been killed there. Eh... from there we called the gun chop, to came and collect one of our soldier to... to take him to the camp.We went on one place where... all of us we gave (unclear). Our commander Koen Marais said let us pray first, because we have lost one of our soldier. He was a Sergeant. Eh... from there we heard only to the radio. Eh... because for us we were in Angola. Approaching the border. We was in Angola but not... eh... deeply in Angola. Then from there we came back in Namibia.

Then we came in the camp they called in Anana. Then we ... we...fill our car with the... the... what?? The petrols. Eh... from the camp Anana about ten kilometer. Eh... we just saw some gun choppers eh... in some other groups, they were... in there they were searching for something. Eh...Then our Commander Koen Marias says that the war is coming. Then he says let us go and help some other stores who are there. Eh... for us as the soldier is what we have been trained for. We went there to help some other of our soldiers. We find some other group that they called Zulu Bravo. And the other is Zulu Sierra and Zulu November and other they say that Zulu Uniform and the other they say that Zulu (unclear).

Then we saw some feet that those feet it was about for seven mens. eh... in all of these seven Swapo soldiers, there was only one man who was having a small firearm. Eh... (unclear- muffled) they were only having a big gun. We followed their feet and when we reached there... We haven't even eh... go about five meters then the... the... we heard the big firearms shooting... bomb search... then eight of our soldiers they were injured. Eh... and we found... we called eh...some of them ... the gun choppers to come and help us. Then eh... those... eh... seven of our soldiers who were injured they put them in the gun choppers, we take them to the hospital. Now our Commander also informed some other group to come and help us. Eh then ... eh... they came in many groups. When you... when we leave that place about one kilometer then the other ... what? Then some eh... of our soldier, again they were injured about seven of them. But about the Swapo soldiers we ... we haven't even found them yet. Eh... we were still following their feet. Eh... then our big Commander, the one they called that

Fouche came. Then he came to... to... to... make a research in that area and say that when this area, because the... the war... is eh... growing bigger and bigger now, eh... and the problem is that place there were many trees there. They started to command us that eh... need ... need stop there then go for what? Then many of our soldiers they started to argue that no we can't stop here because many of our soldiers they were ... they are injured. For us we are just facing forward. If the... the Swapo soldiers they came here to kill us all let them kill us all until we all die. Then they started to separated from each other, because some of our soldiers those who were driving the Kasper, they becamed angry. And they started just to... to... ride all over that place there... to... to...drive all over that place. And even the small commander those who were in the Kasper they started to be angry and they say that, okay want the Swapo soldiers to be found. After about one hour, we found two of the Swapo soldier. And then we... we found the R ...R7 ... the... the... R.7 gun ... Ja . Then after that we followed some of the Swapo soldiers that we... we... they were separated from those two. Then we found one Swapo soldier. And from there were found another one in the... the... (how do you...) ja in the field. Then we just saw that... that Swapo soldier was eh... was pulling the tree as a community man. Then we told one of our soldier that go to that... that... community member... eh... we... we... couldn't even go nearer him then while... while he was just looking so that we realized , that , no that one was not a community person. Then he started to... to... shoot. Eh... lucky because our car it was very hard. And eh... he was having the small firearm and he was the only one who was having the small firearm.eh...

there was no... one of our... soldier who was injured there. Then we leave him there dead. After our seven days, we went back to our camp. Then we used to go to do our operation in Angola and in Namibia. eh... at the end of the time when the war it wanted to end there from 18... On 1989... eh... we were in the other camp they called Okangola our Commander Koen Marais said that now the war is coming to the end eh... but... eh... at sometimes... at the times ... at the end of the time the election will come. And then from there our Commanders commanded us to go back to the camp, because eh... the war is coming to an end now. For us...as the... the Koevoet soldiers as we have been trained, or as they have been trained us, that always you have to be sure and to have something. We have took some of our soldiers to the camp, and some of our soldiers we took them to the border to see what will happen, that will come from Angola. Some of them they were even chosen to go to work as eh... as a Police in Namibia. Eh... they... they divided them starting from Chumbebe some of them in Windhoek, some them in (unclear) and some of them in Swakopmund. For me myself they sent me to... to go to Chumbebe. We have two sections, the other section it was in Chiwarongo and the other one was in Windhoek. For me myself they sent me to Swakopmund. I started that work as a Police. We have even leaved not to work as a soldier anymore but as a Police.

INTERVIEWER: But that was now eh... still in Koevoet?

ANDREAS LEOPARD: It was the end; they came to be the end of the war, so they stopped them not to fight.

INTERVIEWER: All right thank you.

ANDREAS LEOPARD: on 1 April 1989, eh... eh... at 6o'clock pm, we were at the Police Station at Swakopmund. So some of them, they were working somewhere... they... what??? On the board. Then they called them to come back. Then they said that the Swapo soldiers they've approached the border to came in Ovambo now they... they... they are starting to fight there. And then they heard on to the radio to call all those who were trained as the soldier because they found them they, were ... at their homes at that time. And at that, we start to drive that time to go back to Ovambo. Then we drive to came to collect some of our soldiers in Chiwarongo. And to came again to the place they say to Chumebe. We drived the whole night we came to reach Oshakati at eleven o'clock at night. Then we reached in our camp where we were as the Koevoet camp in Oshakati, in the camp there was no other car, those ... the ... the Kasper car it was only for us. Then we... we started to go in that deep office of us where you can report something to the radio. Then our small commander, the one we found was working there, he told us that the war is ... is... has just started. Then we went we took all our equipment as the soldiers. Then we went to spend the night at... eh... in the community. Then our commander allowed us to ... to... say that ... eh... go first5 and see you family because now the war has just started. Because now you may find that you are not going to stay for seven days ... there maybe it will be for one month just in the bush. Eh... early at the morning, around six o'clock we started to report ourself in the camp. Then we ... we took all our equipment and... We go to the station where we can load our car with them,

petrol. Eh... we went to the place they called (unclear) it was near Catemba .
eh... when we went there we found many groups , they were coming ... they were
there and some of the army soldiers they were coming the.... they coming back.
They say that the war it was started yesterday. It was in (unclear) and that day it
was 2 April. Eh... from there we went facing the place eh... at the... the... at the
airport. The big place they called Ondangwa. Then we give the report to our
radio, that now our enemies are face... they are coming facing the airport. Then
our big Commander started to command starting... all the soldiers ... starting from
Kavango until Opu. To come and help eh... the Ovambo those soldier who were
in Ovambo. Eh... when we was there our ... our Commander Koen Marias went
to the radio, then he was looking at the map, and he commanded all that ... are
you... the group as a Zulu Papa.... what??? That be together in one place. And
Zulu Sierra eh... say you must come here. Because there is about fifty Swapo
soldiers that we are here.... they are at the place they called (unclear) and eh...
that place where they were, to that place where the other soldiers they were
there was about forty... forty three kilometers. Eh ... from there then we heard the
phone, it was coming at the station (unclear) they say that they ... there about ...
fifty soldiers. Then about twenty kilometer we heard that... eh... one of the
Kasper... Okay... one of the... Kasper car has been shotted by the Swapo
soldiers there. Eh... those (unclear) cars they were only two. ...Two cars. And the
other one felled in the... oh... on the sand... eh... then the other one was shoot
until the ... the... the... tyre wheel was... it went to fall somewhere in some field
there. And one of the soldier who has been trained well, was in that car of the

(unclear) eh... he was at that, eh... big gun they called RMG. So the... Swapo soldiers when they saw that eh... all those car they... they... falled... they falled around there, they tried to come ... up closely to those car in order for them to arrest those people who was in the car. Then that person was in that car, he started to... he opened that RMG gun and some of them... the... the... the... soldiers were in that car they were injured. So he was the only one who helped that... car not to be taken by the enemies. About twenty minutes, when we ourself we reached that place, and we are (unclear) that place. We found only one Swapo soldiers there who was injured. His ... his arm was broken. Then we arrest him, then we asked him all the information that he was from where... he says that we are coming from Angola, and we have camp here to arrest all the camps in Namibia. And we asked him about eh... how many are you.... and he says that in front there are Swapo soldier, there about eighty Swapo soldier in front of us. And at our back there are many more, of us again. From there we went to the shop and we found our friend. And then our friend said, are you are the only one? And the community member said that ... the Swapo were here the Swapo soldiers. Then it seems that if you are the only Koevoet people then it means you must call the others. Ah... for us we seems like that we were many. There was... there was a small road, some of the soldiers, Swapo soldiers that are saying that you must not cross that ... that road... that road. And us we followed their steps for yesterday. Uh... there was a few rain some drops that fell on the floor... on the sand. But... the... we can see the feet through. Then from there we went to the house of the member of the community. And after that and

when we went in the member ... in the house of member of that community, we found a woman, eh... when I reached that place... of the... all of the house member of the community... then I asked the lady when did these people pass here? then the lady went through my back. Then I asked her why are you going at the back... why? Then that lady she just went through and she went out and left her house. And that shows that those people, the Swapo people are only 500meters away. Eh... from there we went following their footprints, until at the camp. Ah ... from there we went there... following their feet print until at the camp. And then that camp was situated in that place called Chiaua... uh...Piaua... ja...as we were told that we cannot cross that small road. And then I was the third one to those other... men... uh ... those other soldiers. And then we went through ... we were walking with our own foot following this footprint. And then we... we arrived next to that small road we saw the footprint that the others have just passed. And then I called my Sergeant the Black one. And then I told him that these two Swapo people have passed just here today, but we didn't go far ... for two meters... on my left there were so... seems like there were so many cars. And the... gun... fired. And then when I just look on the floor from there I just saw the fire burning. Eh... when I s... When I look around and I see the other three people I came with them, then we started shooting and we stopped the car... and... Start... we went inside of the car. Then we went. Then they shoot the car on the wheels, the wheels went flat. The others were helping to shoot and us we were busy fixing the tyre. (Laughing) And then from there after one meter... and then... after that we went to found the car of one of our Commando, I forgot his

name, he was a Black man then he was just shot there dead. And one of the army's car there was just shot there, and it was burnt.

INTERVIEWER: You know it is interesting, you know everything. The other they are shooting, the other they are changing the tyres you know it is interesting ...

ANDREAS LEOPARD: And then the... that Commander his name is Davies (unclear) eh... the one who died there. From there the war started. And then from there until the sun was set. They told us we must come back to that camp. And then from there for... while we... we busy gathering the others... and then we started counting our self... if everyone was present. And our... we were... there many of our friends... we injured. And those soldiers of Swapo that we've got there... some ...sixteen of them died there. And we caught three of them. And the other one was injured. And then from there we went to Ondangwa.

And then we started... we still... we did continue with the war. From the five of April when they said, we must leave them. And then those who are going to Angola they must... just leave them, and those... who are going to (unclear) must follow them. And then when it was the seventh?? The seventh... we came back to the camp. And then we went back to the camp and the Commander made... called us and we called up for a meeting. And then... they told us that the war is ended now it is time for election. And the ... UN have arrived in South Africa, Namibia. And we started working with the UN, until when the election you arrived, and then until the Swapo have won... the election. 1989, and I came

out...from... I left Namibia to South Africa. I came to... to... look for a work. And then I arrived there... I stopped in a place called Rustenburg. And then I started staying in that place.

And then the government have received me nicely when I arrived in the place of South Africa. Eh... eh... looked for me some job called (unclear) they wanted me to see me if I will afford or if I know the work. Then we worked the place is in... Kwazulu Natal. Those places in South Africa. And there was that place Kwazulu natal? Kwazulu Natal... there was something some other places that were (unclear) ... danger area. Okay. And then we went there to do a operation at that place called Vryheid. And then we got there some guns called AK ... AK47... and they were two hundred and s...sixty. And then from there the Government oh... saw that I knew my work or that I can afford that work. And then they employee me... or they transferred me in the Police... Police Force of South Africa. I was working in Johannesburg and Cape Town. In 1994, then asked for my package. I was so implicated ... eh... I was so implicated because in the other government where I was working they didn't pay me nothing that's why I had to leave that other one. Then from there I asked myself to take the package. Then until today I'm in Venterkraal, there it's where I stopped.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you very much Mr. Andreas um... do you like ... (unclear) so you like to ha.... I mean to add some word on the question.

ANDREAS LEOPARD: that... he don't have anything to say or any question. To my friend Ze... Jose...is the person I know we have been together, and then for myself I just say thank you we have met again today. So that he must come to ask me about my... (What?) My information how do I live. That to you ... I just tell you that I need only Job. That the one who is going to be able to help me with work I will help you, and I have been trained as a soldier, or as a good Recce.I know all the job. If anyone who needs me to help employ me can employ me. Thank You.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you very much. Thank you very much Mr. Andreas

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