



ORGANIZATION OF  
AFRICAN UNITY

Secretariat  
P. O. Box 3243

منظمة الوحدة الأفريقية

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Part I  
Addendum I  
Page 1

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TERRITORIES UNDER PORTUGUESE DOMINATION

1. The report of the Administrative Secretary-General regarding the Territories under Portuguese Domination has been overtaken by events. Although the success of the liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique contributed largely to the overthrow of the Caetano-Thomaz Fascist dictatorship in Portugal, the intentions of the military junta regarding the decolonization of Portugal's colonies still remain vague. The statements made so far by the members of the junta on the question were unclear and sometimes even contradictory.

2. In a statement read out at a press conference in Lourenco Marques, on 11 May 1974, General Costa Gomes, Chief of Staff of the Portuguese Armed Forces and member of the Junta of National Salvation declared; "The Junta of National Salvation is the guarantor of this principle (self determination) ... in the light of which the people of Mozambique will, at the opportune time, decide their destiny. They will then be able to choose between the extremes of total independence and total integration. But they will acknowledge that virtue does not lie in extremes and I, personally, believe that the people of Mozambique will know how to strike the right balance by accepting our original plan, which provides for their political integration within the great Portuguese area".

3. Earlier, in a press conference held in Lisbon on 6 May, 1974, after his mission to Angola, General Costa Gomes had expressed similar views. When he was asked: "If the liberation movements were to opt for total and unconditional independence, would the junta agree to that?" General Gomes replied: "The junta could not agree to this." Asked whether the junta would accept the decision if the majority of the peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau voted for independence in a referendum, General Gomes replied: "This will no longer be the junta's business ... The referendum will take place under a government elected by universal suffrage, and with proper political institutions."

4. It is clear that the policy of the military junta regarding complete decolonization is very vague. According to informed sources the Junta of National Salvation is composed of seven officers, two from the Army, with conservative tendencies; two from the Airforce, with relatively liberal tendencies; two from the navy, with progressive tendencies, and General Spínola, who believes in political solution through a federation. In other words as there is a struggle between different political tendencies within the junta, its policy on decolonization has been vague and confusing.

5. On the other hand, among the organized political parties, the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and other progressive parties, have come out openly in support of complete decolonization in Portugal's colonies in Africa. Now that the progressive parties have joined the recently formed provisional government, it seems that it was pressure from the parties which have forced the junta to conduct direct negotiations with the Republic of Guinea-Bissau and subsequently with the national liberation movements.

Informal contacts between the new Portuguese foreign minister, Dr. Soares and the PAIGC were established in Dakar on 17th May. Subsequently, formal direct negotiations, as a first step towards peace, between the two parties started on May 25, 1974 in London. Similar direct negotiations between Portugal and the National Liberation Movements are likely to take place shortly. Meanwhile, the National Liberation Movements have made it clear to Portugal that they will not start any negotiations unless Portugal accepts the principle of self-determination and independence to the peoples of Angola and Mozambique.

6. Recent statements by Dr. Soares, the foreign minister, as well as by Dr. Almeida Santos, minister for "Inter-territorial co-ordination", indicate that the new provisional government of Portugal was willing to accept the principle of self-determination and independence. But it is too early to know whether the present rulers of Portugal are sincerely committed to the total and unconditional decolonization of Angola and Mozambique.

7. In fact, some of the political manoeuvring of the new rulers of Portugal appear to indicate that they are putting-forth a new colonial formula for gradual transition to independence instead of immediate independence. For instance, General Costa Gomes called on the National Liberation Movements to lay down their arms, and conduct a peaceful struggle by forming political parties in Angola and Mozambique. Yet General Gomes did not reciprocate by an undertaking to send the colonial troops back to Portugal as well as to free the freedom fighters still languishing in prisons in Angola and Mozambique.

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8. Moreover, with the view to delaying independence, the new rulers of Portugal are encouraging the setting<sup>up</sup> of puppet groups, which call themselves political parties, in Angola and Mozambique and even in the Republic of Guinea-Bissau. Thus, in Mozambique there are GUMO (Group for the Unification of Mozambique); MIMO (Movement for the independence of Mozambique); FICO (Front for the continuation of Western civilization); the Mozambique Democratic Party, the United Democratic Socialist Party of Mozambique, etc... Similarly, numerous puppet organizations are proliferating in Angola and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands. In Angola the following political parties have been formed: The Christian Democratic Party(P.C.D.A.); Movement for the Defence of the Interests of Angola; The Democratic Party; Party for the Independence of Angola; Angola Democratic Movement; Movement for the Liberation of the People of Angola; Liberal Movement of Angolan Unity; Rassemblement du Peuple Angolais; and Democratic Party of the Peoples of Cabinda.

9. The strategy of gradual independence, worked out<sup>by</sup> the new rulers of Portugal, is also aimed at preparing Angola and Mozambique for neo-colonial exploitation. In other words, what the Salazar and the Caetano fascist governments failed to accomplish by force of arms, the Spinoia junta hopes to accomplish through political and propaganda manoeuvres.

10. Moreover, any delay in granting independence is likely to give sufficient time to the settlers in Angola and Mozambique to organize themselves and declare a Rhodesia-type unilateral declaration of independence (UDI).

It should be recalled that the lengthy negotiations on granting of independence to Algeria in the 1950s and early 1960s made possible the emergence of the OAS. Similarly, the over-extended talks between Britain and Ian Smith in 1964 and 1965 enabled the settlers to declare UDI and assume power illegally.

11. The potential role of Apartheid South Africa and of rebel Rhodesia in encouraging and supporting UDI in Angola and Mozambique cannot be underestimated. The Pretoria and Salisbury racist regimes know that the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship in Lisbon has brought about far reaching consequences on the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, particularly, in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Thus in its attempt to put pressure on the new rulers of Portugal not to decolonize immediately, South Africa was the first country to accord recognition to the military junta. Since then the Pretoria regime has been working silently against the decolonization process in Angola and Mozambique.

12. It is strongly suspected that violent anti-independence demonstrations staged by settlers, such as the one held in Beira during the visit of General Costa Gomes, have been instigated by the Pretoria regime. Perhaps Pretoria intended to use such provocative activities of settlers as a pretext to intervene in Mozambique and Angola to preempt the possibility of immediate independence of the two territories. Vorster and Smith have worried so much that they held closed door meetings in Pretoria on May 28th and 29th, 1974. In order to hoodwink world public opinion they declared, at the end of their meeting, that they would not mind the coming into power of African governments in Angola and Mozambique, so long

as those governments were stable ! Meanwhile, Rhodesian settlers are feverishly working for some form of closer association with Apartheid South Africa. Recently, an organization called "For Unity with South Africa" has been formed in Salisbury.

13. Apart from the minority racist regimes of Pretoria and Salisbury, foreign economic and financial interests operating in Angola and Mozambique, and with branches in South Africa and Rhodesia, are also likely to encourage, finance and support UDI in Angola and Mozambique. The major western companies such as Gulf Oil in Angola, and the various mineral and agricultural companies operating in Angola and Mozambique are likely to provide not only finance, but also arms and mercenaries to back up any UDI in Angola and Mozambique.

14. Now that the unholy alliance between Pretoria, Lisbon and Salisbury, which was aimed at frustrating the armed struggle and subverting independent Africa, has largely evaporated following the Lisbon coup d'etat, the Pretoria regime has recently launched a counter plan hoping to save the situation in Southern Africa. In its determination to preserve racism and colonialism in Southern Africa, the Pretoria regime has started secret negotiations with the United States Government. Admiral H.H. Biermann, Chief of the General Staff of the South African Defence Forces arrived in the United States on May 5, 1974 and subsequently held a series of secret meetings with top officials of the Pentagon. Admiral Biermann is known to be one of the Chief architects of Apartheid South Africa's current military strategy, which seeks to involve the

United States and certain NATO countries in a closer regional alliance with Pretoria against what Defence Minister, Botha, described recently as the forces of "International Communism and its cohorts - leftist activists, exaggerated humanism, permissivism, materialism, and related ideologies." According to Admiral Biermann South Africa occupies a strategic location between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, with one of the best equipped naval bases in the Southern Hemisphere. Each year over 600 million tons of oil destined for Europe and the United States are transported via the Cape. The recent establishment of a United States base at Diego Garcia<sup>is</sup> also proof of the rapidly increasing strategic interest of the United States in the area. On the other hand, Apartheid South Africa is desperately in need of allies, because it has realized that its wealth and military might in the area are not sufficient to stand up against the violent tide of liberation against racism, colonialism and exploitation in Southern Africa. Hence, South Africa's desperate attempt to form a new unholy alliance with the United States and certain NATO member countries against the legitimate aspirations to freedom, equality and independence of the over 30 million Africans in Southern Africa ! Africa, should therefore, foil the intrigues of Pretoria aimed at involving certain major Western Powers, which may have forgotten too soon their bitter experiences in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia\*.

\* Please note that when the Republic of Guinea-Bissau was recently admitted to the WHO by 92 votes for, 1 against and 31 abstentions, the United States was the only country which voted against its admission.

15. In short, the policy of the new rulers of Portugal regarding the decolonization of Angola and Mozambique is far from being clear.

The call for a cease-fire and the laying down of arms, as a prior condition for negotiations with Portugal, has been rejected by the National Liberation Movements. Portugal's initiative in that regard is tantamount to a call for unconditional surrender. It is nothing else but a manoeuvre aimed at finding a new formula to maintain the existing colonial domination. In this respect, as in others, there are important lessons to be learnt from the rich experiences of the struggle for liberation in Algeria and Vietnam against colonialism.

16. As long as Portugal fails to recognize the right to self-determination and independence by the peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Sao Tome and Principe Islands and grant independence to those territories as early as possible, the struggle for liberation will be intensified and will continue unabated. There cannot be peace in Angola and Mozambique without independence.



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# Territories Under Portuguese Domination

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