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GENERAL DECLARATION OF THE ROME CONFERENCE



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE PORTUGUESE COLONIES

(Rome, June 27-30, 1970)

1. One of the essential characteristics of the history of our times is the vigorous development of national liberation struggles which have been transformed for many countries into independence and the regaining of dignity for hundreds of millions of men and women in Africa and elsewhere. Portuguese colonialism, which refuses decolonisation and conducts genocidal wars against the people of Angola, Guinea and Mozambique, is manifestly a crime against humanity. To dominate and exploit the peoples and riches of Angola, Guinea and Cape Verde, Mozambique and San Tome, it has resorted above all to repressive actions. It has instituted forced labor, the compulsory export of workers, a system of obligatory cultivation of certain crops solely for its own profit and that of the companies.

2. Every time these peoples attempted to express even by peaceful means, their rejection of the brutal exploitation which was enslaving them, the Portuguese colonialists in cold blood resorted to massacres.

3. That is why, in fully assuming their national and historic responsibilities, FRELIMO, MPLA and PAIGC led their peoples along the only road which could bring them freedom and independence: armed national struggle. In developing the popular fight towards victory, in identifying themselves with the interests of their peoples, FRELIMO, MPLA and PAIGC are confirmed as the true representatives of Mozambique, Angola, Guinea and the Cape Verde. Their activities can be seen in the destruction of the structures of domination, new and traditional, and in the establishment of a new and popular social order.

4. In order to oppose this situation, the colonialists of Lisbon are facilitating penetration of powerful economic interests of imperialist powers to ensure that these interests should consider their fate as linked to that of Portuguese domination. They become defenders of the cause of Portugal's colonialism expressing themselves through the policies of their governments, and thus create conditions for an increasing internationalisation of the confrontation.

5. The direct and massive aid from NATO - not to speak of the military and economic support Lisbon receives from the governments of the United States, West Germany, Britain and France - is a decisive factor in Portugal's ability to continue her colonial wars. The governments of member states of NATO must dissociate themselves from this crime, isolating Portugal at both political and military levels and firmly condemning this colonial war. It must also be underlined that Portugal's grand design is strengthened by the racist and colonial alliance between Portugal, South Africa and Rhodesia.

6. In spite of the assistance and the collaboration which she enjoys, Portugal cannot control the situation so that her allies have been led to consider the use of South African troops and material in Angola and Mozambique. The struggle of the peoples of the Portuguese colonies becomes in this context a vital contribution to the cause of freedom in Africa, and to the cause that applies to all humanity - national independence and human dignity.

7. At the same time the activities of democratic and progressive forces towards these objectives, and in particular the development of the anti-colonialist movement in Portugal and the other liberation struggles in Africa, and throughout the world, are an important and necessary factor for the cause of

the peoples of the Portuguese colonies. On this we must state that the successes already won by the peoples of Angola, Guinea, and the Cape Verde Islands and Mozambique, while being the result of the efforts and sacrifices of these peoples in their fierce struggle, are also owed to the active solidarity of the independent countries of Africa, of the Socialist countries, of the non-aligned countries, and of democratic and progressive forces throughout the world.

8. For the first time delegates from 64 countries, representing 177 national and international organisations, have met in Europe to study and decide upon ways of developing political, moral and material solidarity with the struggling peoples of the Portuguese colonies.

9. This solidarity must be translated into urgent and immediate actions, the nature of which will be decided by the evolution of the situation in each country and taking into consideration their specific conditions. They must first be concerned with forcing Portugal to grant immediate and total independence to these peoples, who already have sovereignty over large areas of territory administered in Angola by the MPLA, in Guinea by the PAIGC and in Mozambique by FRELIMO.

10. To achieve this, we must increase the isolation of the Portuguese colonialists by exposing the massive support they receive from the NATO Alliance in general, and in particular from the United States, West Germany, Great Britain and France. This must also be undertaken with regard to all the national and international economic and financial institutions that provide Portugal with the necessary means for continuing her aggression.

11. We must also, especially through mass popular action, prevent the countries linked with colonialist Portugal from committing themselves to a new phase of armed intervention to replace the failure of their political and military strategies.

12. Finally, our activities must concretely support the efforts towards liberation and national reconstruction made by FRELIMO, MPLA and PAIGC, whom the Conference considers as holding effective power in their countries, on the basis of the law of their peoples. This new legal situation must be recognised internationally.

13. In this tenth anniversary year of the United Nations Declaration on the right to independence of the colonial peoples, and on the threshold of the tenth anniversary of the launching of the armed national liberation struggle of the peoples of the Portuguese colonies, the Rome Conference reaffirms its solidarity with the peoples of Angola, Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands, Mozambique and San Tomè and Príncipe and calls on all countries, governments, national and international organizations, and to all men of good will, to accomplish these inspiring tasks.

THE PEOPLE OF THE PORTUGUESE COLONIES WILL WIN!

PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM WILL BE VANQUISHED!

Liberation Support Movement was represented at the Rome Conference by LSM Liaison Secretary, Don Barnett. The speeches by national liberation movement leaders will be available soon.

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