

SPEECH DELIVERED BY DR. AGOSTINHO NETO, SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF
THE THREE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE PENINA
AGREEMENT, 15 JANUARY 1975

Mr. President of the Portuguese Republic
Ministers of the Portuguese Provisional Government
Friends
Comrades,

From 11 to 15 January 1975, our delegations, respectively of the Portuguese Provisional Government and the legitimate representatives of the Angolan people, have met in Algarve to take decisions on ending the ^{colonial} social system.

The presence of His Excellency the President of the Portuguese Republic at the final signing ceremony will go down in the history of Portugal and that of Angola as an eloquent augury of political progress for the peoples of both countries.

Allow me, therefore, on behalf of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), on behalf of their respective delegations, who are honoured by your presence, and on behalf of our people, whom we legitimately represent, to express satisfaction at this perfect appraisal of the historic value of this moment.

It was from Sagres Point that caravels set out which contributed positively to the establishment of contact with other peoples and continents and, hence, to the advent of a new stage in human society.

Relatively close to Sagres Point, the unjust relations which later blackened the brilliant feats of Portuguese navigators have ended for the African continent. Here the pretensions of the colonialists have been buried for ever. I have the immense pleasure of congratulating the Portuguese people for these last rites of shameful Portuguese colonialism in Africa.

Mr. President of the Portuguese Republic and Chairman of the Decolonisation Commission, permit me also to address myself to the representatives of the Portuguese Provisional Government, whose Prime Minister has also honoured us with his presence, to

salute them and convey to them with dignity and appreciation our feelings of friendship towards them all, the implementers of the policy of democratisation and decolonisation through appropriate instruments created after the glorious 25 April 1974. We extend our appreciation to the technicians and co-workers in the Ministries who were the artisans of the perfect presentation of the text of the agreement.

To the fourth Liberation Movement, I mean the Armed Forces Movement, which catalysed the people's will to overthrow fascism in Portugal and lay sound foundations for the ending of colonial exploitation, the backbone of the popular will for democratic changes in Portugal, we representatives of the FNLA, the MPLA and UNITA wish to say how much we admire their courage and firmness, which made it possible not only to free the Portuguese people from the Salazarist and Caetano dictatorship, not only to provide guarantees of democracy for the Portuguese people who so deserve it, but which also transformed into reality, also made possible the fact of our joint assertion about the absence of hatred between the Portuguese people and the Angolan people.

It was the system which was wrong, and now that it has been put right, Mr. President of the Republic, in Angola fraternisation is a fact between the vast majority of the Portuguese military forces and Angolan guerrillas.

Here in these discussions, which it has become customary to call the Algarve Summit, no irremediable antagonisms ever appeared. The cordiality, respect and sincerity greatly facilitated our work. The objective was always a common one. The interests of both our peoples were defended on the basis of our equal rights.

I cannot fail at this solemn moment to thank our Portuguese friends of the Security, Police and Armed Forces who ensured us tranquility and discretion so that this meeting could take place in a climate of perfect calm, without anxieties, removing any fear of incidents or external pressures.

Our stay in Penina, it must be emphasised, was made easier by the staff of the Hotel whose excellent facilities were offered

to us, and by the extremely cordial management who provided us with comforts and a temperature as African as the friendly warmth of the rest of the staff.

It is possible that representatives of the Portuguese, Angolan and foreign press will not be completely satisfied, but I think they will have understood the reasons for the discretion required at this summit meeting. We thank them for their patience and for the coverage given to this event.

The FNLA, MPLA and UNITA delegations express satisfaction at the cooperation and understanding there has been during this Conference, cooperation which confirms the respect promised at the Mombasa pre-Summit meeting and heralds close cooperation at the start of the exercise of new responsibilities in our land.

The fundamental factor for the success of the liberation struggle has finally been acquired, and we can no longer accept differences which are not fundamental being transformed by our enemies into serious disputes.

Angola and Portugal are starting a new era in their relations. An era of friendship, cooperation and solidarity. The bonds which exist between our peoples, although strongly marked by exploitation for centuries on end, will not fail to lead us easily to the necessary and desirable cooperation in various spheres.

Now that the obstacle of colonialism has been removed, neither the Portuguese people nor the Angolan people will wish to retreat in the process of progressive transformation to arrive at a new definition of Man in society. The dynamics of life can lead to only one destiny for us, a destiny of progress. If we allow the process to lose ground in Portugal or Angola, this important agreement signed today to establish just relations between our peoples is bound to break.

For us to reach this historic moment, some of the finest sons of the Angolan people shed their blood, sacrificed their lives defending honour, dignity and the rights of an entire people.

Portuguese patriots totalled hundreds of years in prison and lost valiant members of their people in the anti-fascist

struggle, while many of their young men perished in the colonial war.

And today, now that the trigger has been replaced by dialogue and the rights of both peoples to independence and freedom has been recognised, we see embraces and fraternisation suddenly taking the place of violent confrontations. We are all of us worthy of this moment. The National Liberation Movement and the Portuguese Anti-Fascist Movement, which made 25 April possible, have contributed magnificently to the building of a new political climate.

And that is not all.

They have contributed to a radical change in Africa and a new balance in the world.

Therefore, we cannot at this solemn moment forget our friends in Africa, ^{Europe,} ~~Europe,~~ Asia and the rest of the world who have contributed either directly or indirectly to the victory of our peoples.

The Angolan people will face the new conditions with confidence and determination. During the long colonial night the Angolan people learned that exploitation must always be fought, wherever it comes from and whatever form or colour it assumes. This lesson of history shall be for us the basis of all future action. Only social progress ^{constantly} insisted upon by the leaders and the base can bring about complete independence, freedom and happiness ^{for} ~~for~~ all.

Mr. President of the Portuguese Republic

Friends

Comrades in the struggle,

On behalf of the FNLA, the MPLA and UNITA, we reaffirm here our desire and determination to defend by all possible means the victories already gained by our people, and to cooperate with your country on the basis of the just principles of mutual respect, non interference and reciprocal advantage, in other words cooperation in independence and dignity.

Algarve, 15 January 1975.