

PRESIDENT AGOSTINHO NETO'S MESSAGE TO THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE ON THE
OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF KEMEXE AN MPLA OFFICE IN LUANDA

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Compatriots and comrades,

Angola will soon be ~~independent~~ independent, thanks to our people's heroic resistance, thanks to the sacrifices made by the militants, thanks to sweat and blood and the lives given for our country; the Angolan people will soon enter a new phase of their lives, the phase preparatory to national independence. On 21 October this year, a truce between the MPLA and the Portuguese Government was signed, a truce which means only the cessation of the hostilities started on 4 February 1961 by a small and barely armed group against the colossal Portuguese army. The truce was made possible by the Portuguese Government's official and public recognition of the Angolan people's right to self-determination and independence, this recognition being a victory of our armed forces and our people.

More than thirteen years of armed struggle were needed for us to win back that right, a struggle during which national consciousness was formed, together with the political and military instruments needed to attain independence. The happiness of the times we are now living through was prepared for throughout a long period dotted with bloody episodes, marked with tragic events, but it also most certainly came out of justified victory. Our liberation struggle was an essential factor in the overthrow of fascism and it ~~is~~ still is an essential factor for democratisation in Portugal. Our action has always ~~transcended~~ transcended national frontiers.

We can regard ourselves as now being at the moment which precedes victory. Independence is certain. But we must also know how we are going to accept independence, what kind of independence it will be. Our people, led by their vanguard the MPLA, will know how to carry on their struggle until we achieve complete independence. They will know how to distinguish between what is real and what is false in the impetuous current leading to victory. There are certain currents bent on deflecting us from the goal to be attained.

Compatriots, Comrades: we cannot consent to the partition of our national territory by those who wish to seize the fruits of our struggle. We define our territory as coming within the present geographical boundaries in accordance with the principle adopted by the OAU. We cannot therefore allow succession to take place freely in Angola. It must be fought against, because it is yet another enemy action. In our country, which is rich and strategically well situated, there will in future be the freedom we are building with determination, and there will be room for all. For black and white Angolans, for Portuguese and other foreigners who observe the laws of our independent country. And the sole

guarantee that the honestly acquired material property of anyone whatsoever will be protected is the prerequisite that political power pass completely and definitively into the hands of our people. Our people will not see it as genuine independence if a part of political power remains in the hands of the former colonisers.

Who are our people? We define our people, irrespective of race, as all the peasants, workers and patriotic petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals. It is on these strata of the population that we must rely. We cannot accept without serious reservations the concept of the white community as a political entity, because we cannot divide our population along racist lines. The most correct way of seeing our country is to consider that there are no Angolans and foreigners in it; there are colonisers and colonised, regardless of skin colour. And among these there are those who are for progress and ~~thaxxaxaxaxaxaxax~~ there are reactionaries.

At this time when an MPLA office is being opened in Luanda, I should like once more to pay tribute to the guerrillas, to the militants in clandestine struggle and legal action, to our heroic and selfless people who, through their gigantic efforts, contributed to this victory, a victory over five centuries of colonialism.

The process now unleashed is irrevocable, whatever the sacrifices that still have to be made for our country to be free, independent and progressive. We militants will never tire in the battle for the people's well-being, for their freedom, for democracy and for true independence. May unity and intransigent struggle against all attempts at domination of a new type be the purpose of all militants, of all healthy elements among our people.

Compatriots, comrades, our victory is certain.