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THE COUP IN PORTUGAL AND THE LIBERATION STRUGGLES IN MOZAMBIQUE, ANGOLA AND GUINEA-BISSAU

The military coup in Portugal, which appears to have overthrown the repressive totalitarian Caetano regime has raised widespread speculation about an end to the 13 year old colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. General Spinola, leader of the coup and former Governor General in Guinea-Bissau, admitted in his recent controversial book, *Portugal and the Future*, that a military victory over the African liberation movements is impossible. In a press conference on April 26th following the coup, reported by Agence France Presse, General Spinola gave the provisional program of the new Junta. The program's principles for policy for the colonial territories had goals which include:

- a political, not military, solution to the colonial wars;
- the creation of conditions to open debate on the colonial problem; and
- the institution of policies in the colonies conducive to peace.

But any hopes that the Junta will make peace in the colonies must be tempered by realistic considerations.
The liberation movements have been fighting the long and bitter wars in order to win for their peoples the right of full freedom and independence. They have been overwhelmingly recognized in the United Nations as the authentic representatives of the aspirations of the peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. Therefore, if the new Junta intends to engage in a genuine attempt to reach a political settlement in Africa it will have to consider certain basic principles as bases for negotiation. These would have to include the following:

1. The immediate recognition of the already de facto independence of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, now recognized by more than 80 nations of the world, and the initiation of negotiations with the established Government of the new Republic for the withdrawal of Portuguese forces.

2. The recognition of the legitimacy of the liberation movements as the authentic voice of the population in Angola and Mozambique, and the immediate initiation of negotiations with the representatives of those Movements. This would involve negotiations with FRELIMO in Mozambique, and with MPLA and FNLA, the movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity in Angola.

3. An understanding that the white minority settlers in the colonies cannot be allowed to preserve their positions of dominance and privilege, and a commitment that they not be allowed to disrupt
negotiations leading to majority rule and independence.

4. A recognition that there may well be attempts by South Africa and Rhodesia to intervene or bloc the negotiations, and a commitment not to allow the interests of these white supremacist states to interfere in any way with negotiations.