

U.N. Agency to Give Food to African Insurgents

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Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, April 26 —The World Food Program, an arm of the United Nations, has decided to make food aid available to "peoples in the liberated areas in the colonial territories of Africa and their national liberation movements," it was announced here today.

The decision was not directly connected with the coup d'état in Portugal, according to United Nations officials in Rome, where the decision was made, but it was made with Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea in mind.

Portugal refers to the three areas as Portuguese African territories, although critics have been calling them colonies, and the Food and Agriculture Organization, a co-sponsor of the World Food Program, last year recognized the Republic of Guinea-Bissau that has been proclaimed by insurgents in Portuguese Guinea.

There was no immediate comment from Portugal's United Nations delegation regarding the decision, which was taken by a vote of the World Food Program's governing council at the Food and Agriculture Organization's world headquarters in Rome.

The United States is one of

the 24 countries with seats on the council, called the Inter-Governmental Committee, but United States diplomats here and in Washington said this afternoon that they had had no word about the details of the vote. Word had been sent to Rome earlier that the United States was opposed to aiding the insurgent groups.

Some details of the debate were made public in an F.A.O. communiqué released here today, which said the Organization of African Unity had requested "that the question of food aid to freedom fighters in Africa be considered by the W.F.P. governing body."

"During the debate on Wednesday and Thursday, in which most of the members of the committee present took

part, full support to the humanitarian needs of the affected peoples was expressed," it continued, although "some members held that there were legal constraints in existing W.F.P. regulations which prevented liberated territories being treated on a par with the member countries of the F.A.O. and the United Nations who are entitled to receive aid."

The World Food Program, which is co-sponsored also by the United Nations, is a 10-year-old organization that has been aiding hunger-stricken areas in India and Bangladesh. It also provides food that is disbursed in lieu of wages to workers on road-building and irrigation projects and the like. The organization has never sent aid directly to African in-

surgent groups in the past, although as of Jan. 1 it had provided \$9.3-million worth of food to 125,215 refugees who had fled from the three Portuguese territories into adjoining countries—through which the aid was channeled.

Decision Is Hailed

Departing from past practice the World Food Program committee decided, as the communiqué put it, "to bend but not break the rules" and "to invite" the F.A.O. to "begin immediately through the Organization of African Unity an interim program of aid on an emergency or quasi-emergency basis to peoples in the liberated areas in the colonial territories of Africa and their national liberation movements."