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In Memoriam

“One of the liberators of our country”

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Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho was one of the architects of 25 April 1974. He died at the age of 84 in the Military Hospital in Lisbon. Catarina Martins, national coordinator of the Left Bloc, says Otelo deserves to be “remembered as one of the liberators of our country”.

Born in 1936, in Maputo (then Lourenço Marques), Mozambique, Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho was an ensign and captain in Angola, from 1961 to 1963, and from 1965 to 1967, respectively. He was also a captain in Guinea from 1970 to 1973.

He was an active participant in the protest movement against Decree Law No. 353/73, which was intended to address the shortage of captains as permanent staff, and which played the role of a real catalyst for the Captains' Movement and the Armed Forces Movement.

Otelo was responsible for the operational sector of the MFA Coordinating Commission, devising the military operations that ended with the siege of Largo do Carmo in Lisbon. The operations were directed from the clandestine command post set up in the Quartel da Pontinha.

On 13 July 1975, he was appointed Commander of COPCON and Commander of the Lisbon military region. He was a member of the Conselho da Revolução, created on 14 March 1975. In May of the same year, together with Costa Gomes and Vasco Gonçalves, he was a member of the Directorio, a political leadership structure during the 4th and 5th Provisional Governments.

He was arrested after the counter-revolutionary coup of 25 November and released three months later.

He ran for the 1976 and 1980 presidential elections. In 1985 he was arrested in the framework of the FP-25 Case. He was released five years later, awaiting trial on parole. In 1996, the detainees in the FP-25 Case were granted amnesty by the Assembly of the Republic.

Catarina Martins, national coordinator of the Bloco, evokes Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho as "one of the architects of the 25th of April, recognised strategist of the coup that gave us back our Freedom".

The Bloc leader stresses that Otelo deserves “to be remembered as one of the liberators of our country”.

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More on Esquerda.net, with pictures and interviews with him in 1975, 1976 and 1980.

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