

NORTH/SOUTH**Africa's lost champions**

MOZAMBIQUE lost not only a beloved President in last week's South African plane crash but many other champions of African independence. Three were particularly well known abroad.

Born in Goa in the mid-1920s, Aquino de Braganca worked clandestinely in Portugal with Amilcar Cabral of Portuguese Guinea and Marcelino dos Santos of Mozambique in the 1950s before guerrilla resistance had begun in Portuguese Africa. When Algeria became independent in 1962 de Braganca was one of those who helped organise military

training for Mozambiquans.

As the guerrilla movements in Africa gathered strength, de Braganca became a familiar figure in western Europe, a tireless, committed and engaging champion of their cause. After the Portuguese revolution in 1974, he played a key role in the negotiations with Lisbon that brought independence to the colonies. Aquino de Braganca believed in the central, but independent, role of intellectuals in third world revolutions. He became director of the Centre for African Studies in Maputo and invited the South African writer Ruth First to be its research director. Together with Frelimo members working in the Centre, they produced critical studies of government policy, and trained party members. In the bomb explosion that killed Ruth First in 1983 Aquino de Braganca was temporarily blinded and his hearing impaired. But he soon restarted his intellectual and diplomatic work on behalf of Frelimo.

Frenando Honwana was only 36 when he died, but he had already served Frelimo in key diplomatic roles for a decade. His knowledge of English, partly from York University, as well as his intelligence and tact made a natural envoy for Frelimo in the English-speaking world. He led a section of guerrillas on one expedition into Mozambique from Tanzania.

Alcantara Santos, Minister of Transport and Ports, was an engineer, one of the technocrats placed in senior positions by Frelimo. He was responsible for Mozambique's key section — transport — in the SADCC nine country economic initiative intended to disengage the region from dependence on South Africa. The very significant Scandinavian and EEC funds pledged for railway rehabilitation and port upgrading which are vital for the whole region were forthcoming largely because Alcantara Santos's "dynamism and persuasiveness overcame our scepticism and pessimism," according to one donor.

Victoria Brittain, Third World Review Editor