

MOZAMBIQUE: Church mediation?

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The Mozambican Ecumenical Council of Christians is setting up a Commission for Peace and Reconciliation with the intention of mediating between the Mozambican government and RENAMO. The project has reportedly received the backing of President **Joaquim Chissano**, until now opposed to any negotiation with the rebel organisation. The announcement of the commission was made on November 22 by the Reverend **Filipe Sigue Banze** during a Conference of Churches at Harare. Meanwhile, the Mozambican Justice minister, **Ossumane Ali Dauto**, claimed on November 23 that the commission had been authorised in order to "explain the amnesty law" passed by the government. However, he denied that it had been given a mandate to negotiate.

I.O.N.- The recent reactivation of the good neighbourliness pact between South Africa and Mozambique has been bearing fruit in the economic domain. Many South African investors have visited Maputo. Pretoria has agreed to participate in the rehabilitation of the Limpopo corridor and has lifted restrictions on working permits for Mozambicans in the gold mines. However, in terms of security, the South African government appears helpless in the face of extreme-right elements within the army who are assisting RENAMO in its sabotage operations. These operations have increased considerably over the past few weeks. Mr. Chissano is thus being forced to examine other routes towards a return of peace in his country. After the Catholics (who were criticised at the time by the government), it is now the turn of the Protestants to play at mediator.