



**INFORMAÇÃO PÚBLICA PUBLIC INFORMATION**

PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
FRELIMO PARTY AND THE PEOPLE'S  
REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE, JOAQUIM  
ALBERTO CHISSANO, ON 17 JULY 1989  
IN MAPUTO

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STATEMENT (extempore)

The topic for this meeting is what we are doing in the search for peace, peace initiatives. We have been trying to obtain peace in the People's Republic of Mozambique since before the Nkomati Accord, and we have never stopped taking initiatives either before or after signing the Accord. As everyone knows, the process was interrupted after violations of the Nkomati Accord were verified, and remained dormant for a considerable period of time, but even during this period some actions and initiatives were undertaken in an attempt to bring about conditions conducive to peace.

Our greatest effort during this period was focussed on the external factors in the violence and destabilisation of our country. These had to be reduced to a minimum before we could consider internal factors in greater depth. We thus made contacts within the international community to explain the nature of destabilisation and the nature of the war in Mozambique, and we were successful in this.

The nature of this war had to be understood even inside South Africa itself. We managed to make our message heard in different sectors of South African society, including in South African political and economic circles.

So we won a lot of sympathy within the international community and almost every sector began to repudiate terrorism, leaving a small number of people who still sympathised with destabilisation.

As you must remember, with these successes we reactivated direct talks and dialogue with South Africa, on the basis of commissions that were created such as the joint commission on security, the commission that deals with economic questions, and some specific commissions such as that on Cahora Bassa, etc.

The high point in this process was the Songo meeting with Pieter Botha, the South African President. The process was somewhat weakened by his illness, but nevertheless contacts continued at various levels. We kept this initiative going, and finally we saw that conditions were propitious for an advance.

At the same time, we were taking the feeling of the people inside Mozambique in relation to the problem of the war. We found massive repudiation of terrorist acts, but at the same time a great desire to see the war end. The people were ready to fight in every way possible, including militarily within the self-defence system in support of the huge efforts being made by our Armed Forces to eradicate armed banditry.

By military action we managed to weaken terrorism, banditry and destabilisation substantially. We retook strategic positions and weakened others that are not yet recovered, but we always maintained our conviction that other non-military measures had to be intensified in order to accelerate the peace process.

Having listened to the people we decided that it was time to listen more closely to the Mozambicans who were attacking the people and the People's Republic of Mozambique, to see whether they could give us a concrete ideas as to their intentions, or what they wanted, and to help us to define more clearly who they were. We knew that they were people who were used by interests that were alien to the Mozambican people, but we still had to establish who they were. To do this we had to make some form of contact, or have someone who could contact them.

We were always careful that whoever might make contact with them would not give them an identity they do not possess. I mean, that they should not be considered a political movement, and much less a Party, because they are neither one nor the other. We know how they were created and they are not a movement nor a Party. In fact, the arguments that they began to use later, no doubt with foreign guidance, are illogical if we consider that the movement was launched before Mozambique's independence, immediately after the signing of the Lusaka Accord on 7 September 1974.

If we take into consideration that some of the people who joined this so-called movement were with us prior to the Lusaka Accord, then we cannot link the movement's appearance to events or developments that took place after Independence.

So some contacts were made, the main ones brought about by ourselves. And in accordance with the wishes of various of our religious leaders we requested them to try to contact the armed bandits with two purposes. First: find out what they want, get to know a little better who they are, so as to give us a basis for rationale - a popular rationale because it would be the rationale of the religious leaders themselves who would try to understand the phenomenon a little better.

But the question as to what they wanted was never replied to in a logical way, but always with many contradictions.

We thus had some information from scattered meetings with individuals, and some from other sources, about the thinking within RENAMO. And finally, with the support of the Kenyan government, a more organised meeting was held between a delegation of the so-called RENAMO and religious leaders from our country representing 19 different faiths, namely the Catholic Church and the faiths grouped in the Christian Council. They met in Nairobi but failed to reach any conclusions due to some contretemps in the meeting.

One of the chiefs of the so-called RENAMO delegation became seriously ill, and there were shortcomings in the discussion, but our religious leaders got the impression that it would be possible on the part of RENAMO to agree to end atrocities committed against the people.

But this did not happen. The atrocities continued. The appeal was made on a humanitarian basis by the religious leaders, and they requested a meeting with the head of the so-called RENAMO, Mr Dhlakama, because they wanted a first-hand discussion with him in order to get his reactions to an attempt to create conditions for a direct dialogue between the government of the People's Republic of Mozambique and the RENAMO chiefs.

A lot of time was spent preparing this meeting, following the first meeting in Nairobi. It was finally decided to convene a meeting for 12 July. The religious leaders were ready, but it was decided to postpone it to 17 July. It did not take place on 17th, and was postponed to 19th. And so a delegation of religious leaders is to this day waiting in Nairobi to speak to Mr Dhlakama. But for as yet unknown reasons he did not appear, nor has any delegation from the so-called RENAMO appeared. However, efforts for the meeting to be held are still under way.

We would like to inform you that a small delegation is in Nairobi to follow this process, not to participate in the meetings but to be available to the Kenyan government and if necessary to the religious leaders to give any explanations they may need. Not to have a dialogue, not to discuss through the intermediary of the religious leaders or the Kenyan government, but to give peaceful explanations that might help to understand our positions. This small delegation is still in Nairobi.

In preparation for this second meeting, our government thought that it should do something to move the process forward. As in March and April it was expected that the meeting would take place in April, our government decided to take a further step consisting in providing the religious leaders and the Kenyan government with bases that would enable them to dialogue more positively with the armed bandits.

By this I mean that, instead of eliciting suggestions from the armed bandits of what they wanted, as we had been doing, we decided to put forward a basis for reflection by the RENAMO people, and so we made recommendations to the religious leaders and to the Kenyan government indicating the principles to be observed for there to be a dialogue between the government and the so-called RENAMO.

They are principles, and we said that once they were accepted the dialogue would be guaranteed. The principles were transmitted verbally to the religious leaders and the Kenyan government, and as there were many countries that were also interested in what they felt to be initiatives under way, we thought it useful to communicate these principles to them as well. Everyone was asking us: the Party and government do or don't want dialogue, accept or don't accept dialogue, are doing what? Do they think the struggle will end through military means alone or are there other initiatives?

When I visited the United States of America I told President Reagan that we would coordinate our efforts to find solutions for the problem of destabilisation in Mozambique, and also for Southern Africa. I spoke with President Reagan as I discussed with other countries such as Britain, and we also have contacts with such countries as France, Italy, West Germany, not to mention the Front Line States.

We transmitted our principles verbally to all these countries, including Portugal, which is an important country in this search for solutions. We had frequent contacts. We had to communicate our principles to South Africa itself. In this way they were all clear that the Frelimo Party and the government of the People's Republic of Mozambique are not against dialogue per se, but reject dialogue outside the framework of the principles we enunciated.

As an aide-memoire for those individuals and governments to which we communicated our principles, we wrote them down in a paper which is not a document nor a peace plan. But it is starting from these principles that a peace plan or peace platform could be drawn up. In principle, this platform was to be communicated directly to the RENAMO chiefs, but they repeated that they wanted "unconditional" negotiations. We do not understand what they mean by "unconditional" talks, as we know perfectly well what the conditions are and what they want to achieve with such "unconditional" talks. So, we wanted to put forward principles, that were put down on paper but which do not constitute a document.

We are saying that if they accept these principles then there is dialogue, and with a clearly defined agenda; that is to say, on clearly defined questions. Because in this way we for our part are trying to reply to the question we have asked so often: Dialogue about what? Negotiate, but negotiate what? It should be clear that we never said no to negotiations, but we always said: Negotiate what?

And we sometimes let our ideas come out, also in an attempt to help the others produce a reply. In our discussions, in our public meetings, we always said that if they want to talk about their integration into society, to obtain guarantees, etc, we could receive them. But it seems that this was not enough. This was why we put our principles on paper, so that they could be used by all those who might want to help us find a solution.

(reading of the paper)

This last paragraph sums it all up. That is, once these principles are accepted a dialogue can take place about ways of ending violence and establishing peace and normalisation of life throughout the country. These are principles that, if accepted, will mean that we can then meet and dialogue with the so-called RENAMO.

As you must have noted, even here we do not demand that fighting ends as a pre-condition, but simply that they accept the principles. We know that they are afraid to put down their weapons because they do not know what would happen to them afterwards, so we cannot insist that they put down their weapons before they know. This is why the final paragraph says that the acceptance of the principles would lead to a process aimed at ending violence, followed by the normalisation of life for all Mozambicans.

When we say all Mozambicans we don't only mean those who are in the bush with their weapons aimed at the people or the government, but all the Mozambicans whose life is not proceeding normally. There are refugees, displaced people, Mozambicans living abroad, some who have committed no crimes but are afraid to return.

We extended the Amnesty Law and tried to inform followers of the so-called RENAMO that the Amnesty is a necessity. They think that they have not committed any crimes, but we know that rebellion and resorting to violence are crimes that are illegal in the People's Republic of Mozambique, not to mention the atrocities they commit and have committed against the people that are known throughout the world, and the theft of the people's goods. They don't classify this as theft, but the citizens think that it is and only an Amnesty can give them back their dignity without humiliating them and without even placing them in the position of being defeated. A defeated person has to obey everything, and can't have an opinion about anything. But the Amnesty transforms them into normal people and considers them free from guilt, including in relation to the crime of disobedience and the crime of rebellion.

These principles should have been made known to the RENAMO chiefs at the meeting that was to take place in Nairobi, and should have happened last week. We hope that the meeting will be held, and that they will be informed of these principles.

Meanwhile, we have not stopped. I invited President Arap Moi to visit Maputo, and we will begin to discuss and to prepare the next stages.

We are hopeful that perhaps they will, finally, listen to the appeal that comes from all over the world and from our people, and accept the principles we have just set out, and on this basis we think it is the moment to begin to prepare the next stage. So President Daniel Arap Moi will be here in three days' time, and with him we will outline the next steps.

We have ideas. We cannot reveal these ideas now, it would be premature, and perhaps even after the meeting with President Moi it will not be appropriate to reveal them. Perhaps the ideas that we have today will be amended after the meeting with President Moi, and so it would be inopportune to speculate about them. What I should tell you is that the Central Committee, which is currently in session, approved these principles and approved the measures that have been taken by the leadership of our Party.

You will remember that we had called a press conference a few days ago, which we then cancelled. We cancelled it precisely because we felt that it would not be correct to begin to publish such delicate matters in the press, although there was already a great deal of speculation about them and some revelations here and there, because we should not officialise the information before giving a full report to our Central Committee. For this reason we decided that now that the Central Committee is informed we could say something about it. Even so, we delayed a little, because we had thought that it would be good to let the Nairobi meeting take place, but as time is going by and we know that sectors of national and international opinion are thirsting for knowledge as to what exactly is happening, we decided that even so we should give this press conference.

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