

Mozambique

President De Klerk's quick visit to Mozambique President Joaquim Chissano last Friday has already paid dividends. The positive effects of their five-hour discussions were evident at a Cape Verde summit of the five Portuguese-speaking African states — Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe. Chissano attended the summit only days after meeting De Klerk.

Chissano had told Pretoria of the importance of the imminent Cape Verde meeting and suggested that discussions with De Klerk would enable Chissano to brief the summit on plans for reform in SA... Chissano apparently also mentioned the problem of ... Renamo ... which has been threatening the Frelimo government ever since independence. It is understood that Chissano has grave misgivings about the mediating role of Kenya's Daniel Arap Moi; he fears that Moi may be influenced by pro-Renamo factions among his close advisers.

Sources in Maputo say Chissano also promised De Klerk that he would 'work on' Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, who has remained the hardliner in the thawing of relations between SA and the frontline states. He was as good as his word. A day after meeting De Klerk, he arrived in Harare for consultations with Mugabe on 'bilateral, regional and international issues' (the same phrasing formed part of his request to see De Klerk). Zimbabwe Foreign Affairs Minister Nathan Shamuyarira confirmed that the talks have centred on 'bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual concern'. That could only mean that SA featured strongly. During his overnight stopover in Lusaka, Chissano met Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda...

Chissano's influence surfaced strongly in Cape Verde. On Monday, the host country's leader, President Aristides Pereira, called for new methods in the struggle against apartheid. The 'evolution' of the current white South African government represented a break with the past and should be encouraged, he said.

Pereira said it was in the interests of the whole continent that change in SA should be peaceful and, while he stressed his 'militant solidarity' with the ANC, he said new methods were now needed to fight apartheid. 'It is necessary', he said, 'to replace the spirit of confrontation with the spirit of dialogue to preserve the country from unnecessary violence. We can say to all South Africans that the time has come to sit at the negotiating table and prepare a common future.'

As a result, ministers at the summit said the meeting would back De Klerk's reforms, which they see as bringing new hope to southern Africa. 'We have to recognise that the apartheid of four years ago is not the same as the apartheid of today,' said Cape Verde Foreign Minister Silvino da Luz...

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