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Mozambique Leader Raises Hopes Of Peaceful Settlement in Rhodesia

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania, Jan. 6 (Reuters)—President Samora Machel of Mozambique, whose country is the main springboard for nationalist guerrilla attacks on Rhodesia, was reported today to have expressed his readiness for a peaceful solution in the breakaway British colony.

After arriving here tonight from Mozambique, Ivor Richard, the British chairman of the stalled Geneva conference on Rhodesia, said:

"My assessment of the possibilities of a settlement is almost precisely the same as it was before I went to Geneva. I said then the chances of a settlement were 50-50. I think I would put them slightly better than that now."

British sources said President Machel had been conciliatory in talks with Mr. Richard and had raised hopes of a negotiated settlement between blacks and whites in Rhodesia.

British Proposals 'Make Sense'

They said the Mozambique leader believed the British proposals "made sense." These include plans for a British resident commissioner in Rhodesia, to play a balancing role between blacks and whites in a transitional government.

The one white Rhodesian delegation in Geneva and the four black nationalist delegations are deadlocked over who should wield real power during the changeover. Prime Minister Ian D. Smith of Rhodesia has also made it clear that white should have a major, if not controlling, role after the move to majority rule.

Mr. Richard, on a peace shuttle around southern Africa, will confer tomorrow with President Julius K. Nyerere of Tanzania, chairman of the so-called front-line group of African countries closely involved in the Rhodesian situation.

Mr. Richard said at a news conference that the amount of time needed to produce a settlement may have been underestimated, "but the elements of a settlement are there if we can slot them all together."

"I don't think it is going to be an easy task but I do think it is a possible one."

Expects Parley to Reconvene

Mr. Richard told a questioner that he

thought the Geneva conference would reconvene but whether it would be by Jan. 17, as scheduled, "is a different matter."

"I think the chances of reconvening as early as that don't look as good as they did when I came to Africa," he declared.

He said this was because his visit "is proving one I think we would like to continue and therefore if we are making progress here there is not much point in going straight back to Geneva."

Mr. Richard said that after completing his talks here with President Nyerere, and the black nationalist leader Ndabaningi Sithole, he would probably go to Kenya. Later he would go round all the same countries again but not in the same order.

Asked about his talks with President Machel, Mr. Richard said: "Our conversation was extremely helpful, in which there was a great deal of common ground between the two of us."

"I think perhaps both of us were very surprised to find how much common ground there was, but there was a great deal. I came away from my meeting feeling that we had indeed made some progress—quite a lot of it."