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The Discourse of Samora Machel

Message from the President of FRELIMO, Comrade Samora Moisés Machel, to the FRELIMO militants and the fighters of the People's forces for the Liberation of Mozambique (FPLM) and to the Mozambican people on the occasion of Revolution Day, the Day of the FPLM, tenth anniversary of the beginning of the armed struggle

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An undocumented English translation of a widely disseminated text, also published in e.g. Mozambique Revolution, Notícias, Notícias da Beira, and also various pamphlets and anthologies. Includes some content on the history of the struggle from a FRELIMO perspective.

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Comrade fighters of the FPLM and FRELIMO militants,
Mozambican Women and Men,

The tenth anniversary of the beginning of the armed struggle finds our people in power, and this is therefore the first time that we are celebrating in conditions of peace 25 September, Revolution Day, the day of the FPLM.

The radical change in the political situation in our country means new tasks for all of us and thus we are celebrating our Revolution Day in a different way. The major battles we shall now be fighting, the acts of heroism to be undertaken in support of Revolution Day, must be on the fronts of production and national reconstruction.

The past ten years have been years of struggle to win power, years during which the masses, militants, fighters, cadres and leadership tirelessly devoted all their efforts to the fight against colonialism and imperialism, and against national reactionary forces.

We need to understand this fight and to analyse the price that has been paid for our victory, as this is the precondition for appreciating the true value of the power that has been won and thus also understanding the need to defend and consolidate it.

Indeed, our struggle was waged and won by the people, and victory belongs to the people who bore the full brunt of colonialism and exploitation.

But victory does not consist of hoisting a new flag or adopting a new anthem, however beautiful they may be. Our victory will be meaningful only with the triumph of the interests of the working masses, through the implementation of FRELIMO's Programme.

In 1962, when FRELIMO was formed, the objective of uniting all Mozambicans and overthrowing the colonial fascist system seemed to many illusory or utopian.

It is essential from the outset to establish a clear basis and just aims for the people's struggle.

Since FRELIMO's First Congress, a battle has been waged between revolution and reaction, centering on the following essential questions: defining who is a member of FRELIMO and, consequently, defining the interests to be served by the Front; defining the targets of our struggle and hence, in the last analysis, FRELIMO's objectives.

The victory of the revolutionary line at the First Congress was concretised by the declared need for the unity of all Mozambicans men and women, bound together by the same oppression, exploitation and humiliation, mobilised to build a new and popular social order.

The victory scored against the reactionary racist forces, against conservative forces clinging to outdated tribalist patterns, the fight against various forms of adventurism and opportunism, enabled FRELIMO to start the process of organising and mobilising the masses, and training vanguard cadres.

Thus, in 1964, the minimum conditions were created for going over to a higher form of struggle: the general armed insurrection of the Mozambican people against colonialism and imperialism, for the establishment of a popular social order free from exploitation.

The launching of armed struggle for liberation made our people's advance to national independence irreversible and created the material conditions, by liberating the land and men, for laying the foundations of the new power. Armed struggle made our unity operative, speeded up the process of eliminating divisive forces and tendencies, and enabled the masses to regain the historical initiative.

The proclamation of armed struggle appeared at first to be adventurism. Indeed, FRELIMO could oppose a colonial army 40,000 strong and equipped with all types of weapons with only 250 or so militants, scantily and poorly armed. But our weakness was only apparent. In fact, FRELIMO had the decisive force: the masses united by the correct line and the conviction of the justness of our cause and of the inevitability of victory.

For this very reason, from few and weak we became many and strong. The masses combined with a correct line gave us the strength required to overcome difficulties, to enrich our line, to rectify deviations and to transform weaknesses into victories.

We suffered failures and setbacks which it is necessary to analyse here, so that by spotting the causes we can further clarify our orientation and formulate a correct strategy for the new phase we are now entering upon.

In 1965, because many of us still had not properly understood the principle that the people are the main force, we made mistakes. We gave priority to technical aspects, looking upon weapons as the main factor and neglecting work among the masses.

As a consequence, we suffered reverses. We lost weapons, we lost militants and fighters, and the enemy exploited our ignorance of the main force.

In 1965, at the historic October meeting of the Central Committee, self-criticism of our mistakes led to further clarification of our political line, to better understanding of the decisive role of the masses and of the need to put their interests first. Thus we made a clearer definition of the enemy and of our objectives, engaging more decidedly in work among the masses. It was in this context that we launched the struggle for the emancipation of women.

The FPLM regained their popular character and their class origin and objectives. Everyone clearly understood that no one was fighting on behalf of a race, ethnic group, region or religion. All were serving only the people, from the Rovuma to the Maputo, and making sacrifices and shedding their blood for their sake.

This greater consciousness and adherence to FRELIMO's political line led our people to new victories over Portuguese colonialism. Enemy military bases started to be attacked and assaulted, material was captured and enemy soldiers taken prisoner. At the same time, the conditions were being prepared for extending the people's armed struggle to new areas.

The enemy, realising from their defeats that the FRELIMO militants and fighters had discovered the main force and made it operational, then worked out a new strategy.

They infiltrated agents among us to establish links with reactionary forces living in our midst and incited divisive forces, using elitism, tribalism, regionalism and racism.

This collusion between the colonialists and Mozambican reactionaries was based on a common definition of who was their enemy and on the formulation of the same objective, that of safeguarding the system of exploitation.

1968 began with an open conflict between the two lines, with the struggle of the revolutionary forces to dismantle the reactionary network established within the leadership.

Feeling themselves threatened, the reactionary forces, under the guidance of Portuguese colonialism, launched a frontal attack against the comrades. There followed a succession of rumours, intrigues and

slanders. Comrades were arrested. Brandishing the weapon of racism, the expulsion of white militants was organised with the aim of weakening the revolutionary forces. Still with the same objective, militants and revolutionary leaders were assassinated.

Alongside this crime wave, the reactionaries demanded the holding of the 2nd Congress, intending to alter FRELIMO's objectives and to make the anti-popular line prevail.

On attacking the revolutionary forces, the enemy was in fact aiming at the people, at those who did not let themselves be bought, those who had no hesitation in identifying with the interests of the working masses.

Aware of the fact that the chief purpose of the reactionaries and colonialists was to keep the people dominated and knowing that their inspiration and strength stemmed from the people, the revolutionaries mobilised and organised the masses to defend their interests themselves.

Contrary to what the reactionaries wanted, the 2nd Congress was held inside our country, attended by the masses, militants and fighters. It analysed the struggle, reaffirmed and further developed revolutionary principles and introduced the structural changes demanded by the advance of the people's liberation war.

The political defeat sustained by the enemy at the 2nd Congress caused the reactionaries and colonialists, confusing the revolution with an individual, to make Comrade Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane the target of their attacks.

On 3 February, 1969, Comrade Mondlane was assassinated.

However, it was only one tree in the forest, although the tallest one, which was felled, and the Mozambican Revolution transformed its sorrow into new strength.

After thorough political work among the masses, FRELIMO's Central Committee met in April, 1969.

At this historic meeting of the Central Committee, a detailed analysis was made of the struggle and of the development of the contradictions among us, and the nature of the antagonisms which had given rise to the contradictions was discovered.

With this meeting of the Central Committee, FRELIMO entered upon a new phase: the creation of an organised vanguard of the working masses and cleansing our ranks of the ideas and values of the reactionary forces.

This struggle created the conditions for decisively transforming the national liberation struggle into a People's Democratic Revolution in 1970.

The impossibility of destroying FRELIMO by taking over its leadership and the failure of the attempt to divide our people made the colonial fascist regime try to liquidate our struggle by resorting to brute force.

Marcelo Caetano concentrated forces and arms in Mozambique and put war criminal Kaulza de Arriaga in command.

The strategic defeat suffered by the colonialist fascist forces in "Operation Gordian Knot" definitively destroyed the enemy's capacity to take the military initiative, changed the balance of forces in

our favour, created the conditions for the armed struggle to spread rapidly, consolidated our revolution and made the early defeat of the regime inevitable.

In a last ditch and desperate attempt at survival, the regime launched a campaign of blind terrorism and massacres which horrified mankind, rapidly raised the consciousness of the masses in our country and in Portugal and caused the total isolation of Portuguese colonial fascism.

At the same time, with the aim of creating contradictions between the militants and the leadership and between the masses and FRELIMO, the enemy infiltrated large numbers of agents provocateurs and subversive elements among us. They committed crimes against the people, against both black and white, committed base acts and incited indiscipline.

Yet the process of defining who belongs to our ranks, of clearly identifying the enemy, made it possible for the masses and militants to detect the subversive offensive and expose and neutralise hundreds of infiltrated agents, sealing our ranks from enemy subversion.

Heightening the political and organisational level of the masses and fighters, cleansing our ranks, drawing a clear dividing line between ourselves and the enemy, and bringing about ideological unity, all made it possible to go over to the final phase of our liberation struggle.

Implementing the guidelines laid down by the FRELIMO Central Committee in December, 1972, in 1973 we launched a general offensive on all fronts. This offensive, together with the struggle of the brother.

peoples of Angola and Guinea-Bissau and that of the Portuguese people and the Armed Forces Movement, caused the fall of the colonial fascist regime on 25 April.

The new situation in Portugal hastened inevitable decolonisation, the most recent manifestations of which have been the recognition of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau on 10 September and the investiture of the Transitional Government of Mozambique, led by FRELIMO, on 20 September.

The Mozambican people's struggle has been crowned with success. This victory was the product of the determined struggle of our people, united and guided by FRELIMO's correct line.

It was also because of this correct line that our struggle could be a part of the general struggle of the oppressed peoples and classes against the system which exploits man. In this way, we had the benefit of the political contribution and material solidarity of the revolutionary and democratic forces of the world. For this same reason, we were able to contribute to the advance of world democracy and revolution.

In the course of these difficult years, the comrades of the PAIGC and the MPLA fought at our side.

The PAIGC's struggle already culminated in the independence of Guinea Bissau last year and in Portugal's recent recognition of the young state, which put an end to the existing state of war.

We are in full solidarity with Guinea Bissau's efforts in national reconstruction and with Cape Verde's advance to independence and unity with Guinea Bissau.

As we have always done, FRELIMO will support the Angolan people's struggle to win national independence in unity.

FRELIMO will continue to stand by the people of Saõ Tome and Principe, led by the MLSTP, in their fight for freedom.

The Mozambican people's struggle is an integral part of the African liberation struggle. The Mozambican people's present victory is therefore a contribution to the total liberation of Africa, just as the victorious struggle of the brother peoples consolidates Mozambique's Revolution.

The countries adjacent to the Portuguese colonial empire have had a special role to play. They sustained aggression and provocations to support our liberation struggle. Guinea, Senegal, Congo and Zaire were associated with our struggle.

As regards Mozambique, it is only right to give prominence to the unique contribution made by Tanzania and Zambia.

Conscious of the role played by Tanzania, as from 1967 the Portuguese colonialists started aerial bombardments of that country and infiltrated agents who mined roads and murdered Tanzanian citizens, hoping that through terror they would intimidate Tanzania and prevent it from giving material expression to its solidarity with our people. The Tanzanian people, educated in TANU's internationalist principles, did not let themselves be intimidated and accepted sacrifices. People living near the border abandoned their huts and fields, stopped fishing in the Rovuma and agreed to live in shelters.

The Tanzanian people as a whole, from their President to the ordinary man, accepted privation to support Mozambique. The people gave blood

for the FRELIMO fighters and many lives were saved in Mozambique by Tanzanian blood.

When TANU proclaimed 1974 "Liberation Year", old people and children, peasants, workers, soldiers, civil servants, men and women all came forward to contribute to FRELIMO.

Four million shillings were handed to us out of popular solidarity, the solidarity of poor people.

FRELIMO wants the Mozambican people to say how we should use this money, the sweat of the Tanzanian people. We should like an important work of national reconstruction to perpetuate the association of Tanzania's sweat and blood with the sweat and blood of Mozambique.

To speak of the solidarity of Tanzania, of TANU and of the people and Government, is also to speak of Zambia's solidarity, of the action of UNIP and the people and Government of Zambia.

As from 1968, the bombs dropped by the colonialist air force, the mines and the agents extended the war to Zambia.

The launching of armed struggle in Tete, in Manica e Sofala, in Zambezia, the spread of the struggle to the enemy's nerve centres, was largely due to the historic role played by Zambia as a strategic rear base.

Despite the tremendous difficulties suffered by the Zambian economy as a consequence of economic and other reprisals taken by the colonialist and racist regimes, the Zambian people and Government, mobilised and led by UNIP, were unsparing in their efforts to give material support to our struggle.

The unity between the Mozambican people and FRELIMO and Tanzania and TANU and Zambia and UNIP was forged and seasoned in the tough and difficult war years. This unity is now indestructible.

The exemplary struggle of the peoples of Indo-China against imperialist aggression is an inexhaustible source of theoretical and practical inspiration for the world revolutionary forces.

FRELIMO reaffirms its total support for the just struggle of the Arab peoples to regain the occupied lands, and expresses special solidarity with the Palestinian people's fight for their national rights.

The socialist countries, because they have destroyed the system of exploitation, constitute the strategic rear base of the struggle of the oppressed peoples and classes, and hence the natural alliance between us. The Mozambican people and FRELIMO will never forget the exemplary internationalist solidarity extended to them by the Socialist Republic of Bulgaria, the People's Republic of China, the German Democratic Republic, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, The Socialist Republic of Romania, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia.

The democratic forces in capitalist countries identified our struggle against the colonial fascist regime with their own struggle. Particularly, in the Scandinavian countries, Holland and Italy, there was a great popular solidarity movement which helped to isolate the colonial regime internationally and provided material support for the reconstruction of our liberated areas.

The action of the OAU, the UN and numerous international, governmental and mass organisations, and the action of the non-aligned

and Afro-Asian countries made it possible to isolate Portuguese colonialism and back our struggle with the growing solidarity of the whole of mankind.

The solidarity which backed us and the sacrifices made by the world democratic forces further accentuate the responsibilities which fall on us in this decisive moment of our history.

Today we have our own Government in Mozambique, a Government of the Mozambican people, which has as its task to extend People's Democratic Power to the whole country.

But just as our struggle was not waged by a small group, but by the people, the task of establishing People's Power, the task of building a modern advanced country is the task of the whole people engaged in work.

Mozambique's progress will not be the result of any miracle, but of the efforts of each and every one of us.

Wiping out hunger, lack of clothing and housing, illiteracy and endemic diseases, and putting an end to unemployment, prostitution and delinquency, are possible objectives right now with the means already available to us.

There is no reason for unemployment, prostitution, stealing, delinquency or hunger when we have abundant fertile land which is not cultivated. It is absurd not to have clothing or footwear when we have and can produce the required raw materials and have the necessary industries which are capable of development. The rapid elimination of endemic diseases through mass health education campaigns is possible if the health personnel mobilise and organise themselves for

this purpose. In the same way, the voluntary participation of pupils and students in the struggle against illiteracy in the rural areas in particular, would enable us to eliminate with a short space of time one of the major sources of obscurantism. Building decent housing, especially in the urban areas, could be done if we combine our voluntary labour with the means within our reach.

The country is ours, of all of us who, regardless of sex, race, ethnic origin or religion, want to build a new Mozambique. Creating prosperity depends solely on our hands and intelligence, collectively combined in productive effort.

We must concentrate our efforts on building Mozambique. We must be able to overcome whatever divides us, so as to consolidate the Mozambican people's unity through work, through the efforts of our combined hands and intelligence. We must leave aside concern for time-tables and high salaries, in order to lay new foundations for Mozambique's economy.

We must take a pride in building a great country like ours through great efforts.

In the critical period that we are living through, we must strengthen our vigilance against reactionary provocations and aggression. The enemy are seeking in their desperation to divide our people on the basis of skin colour, instilling unrest and fear in the white population and trying to make the black population transform their hatred of the system into personal vengeance.

The task of the women and men of Mozambique is to expose, neutralise and defeat reactionary manoeuvres.

On this Revolution Day, the 10th anniversary of the start of the armed struggle for national liberation, the Mozambican people fraternally hail the Portuguese people, their consistent ally in the struggle against the colonial fascist regime.

FRELIMO congratulates the Portuguese people, who understood and supported the Programme of the Armed Forces Movement, and who thus transformed 25 April into the starting point for building true democracy in Portugal.

The Mozambican people and FRELIMO hail particularly the Portuguese democratic forces who, in the difficult times of colonial fascist repression, supported our struggle, thus laying the foundations for friendship between our peoples.

Under the leadership of FRELIMO, the Mozambican people from the Rovuma to the Maputo, are advancing towards the proclamation of national independence on 25 June, 1975.

25 June will not be an isolated moment in the process of our struggle.

It will be the affirmation of our people's full responsibility over the power that is theirs. It will be a result of our people's struggle and the point of departure for new struggles.

We therefore say once again emphatically: let us consolidate national unity! Let us strengthen vigilance! Let us get down to work!

Long live the 10th anniversary of the armed struggle!
Long live the victory of the people's liberation war!
Long live the FPLM!
Long live Revolution Day!
Long live National Independence!
Long live FRELIMO!