## MOZAMBIQUE: "*Veterans*" active again ION 17/3/90 p. 6

Since the beginning of March, a group of "retired soldiers" who fought in the "*war of liberation*" led by the *FRELIMO* against the Portuguese colonial authorities, is preparing a petition which is expected to be submitted to President **Joaquim Chissano**. According to information obtained by *The Indian Ocean Newsletter* from a member of the group, the document contains several political claims, and in particular the introduction of a multi-party system in Mozambique. The group member also said that the war veterans have taken the opportunity to express their concern over the crisis with which the party is faced. They are equally worried about growing corruption. The petition is accompanied by a forty-page document saying that the country's leaders should publicly discuss the accusations of corruption heard in Mozambique today. These "old soliders" have apparently already begun to put pressure on the Minister of Transport and Communication, **Armando Guebeza** whose name frequently crops up in corruption allegations, to discuss this matter.

According to official figures, there are 20,000 Mozambican war veterans. At the beginning of 1987, they sent a first petition to the Mozambican President (ION N°269), threatening to join up with the rebels if their living conditions were not substantially improved. Their demands were met in part.

> ***I.O.N.***- *It is said that, Armando Guebuza is the owner of Organizacoes Grupo Pinto, a chain of restaurants and cafés situated in the capital. However, the Minister of Transport refutes these allegations, claiming that they are false and have arisen from a misunderstanding after he approached the Banco de Mocambique asking them to extend credit facilities to a member of his family so they could set up the business.*
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> *Armando Guebeza, who is considered to be one of the champions of "black power" in Mozambique, is also thought to be very close to the veterans, one of the most conservative groups within the Party. The veterans esteem that these rumours of corruption may be harmful to his political image and ruin his chances of eventually becoming Prime Minister.*