

# Mozambican president is expected to extend feelers to RENAMO

By Peter Younghusband 4/3/87  
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CAPE TOWN, South Africa — Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano will visit Zimbabwe and Angola this week in a first step toward negotiations between the Mozambican government and the Mozambique Resistance Forces, RENAMO, according to reports in the Mozambican capital, Maputo.

Sources said Mr. Chissano now believes that if he does not reach an accommodation with the rebels, who have been laying waste to Mozambique, they will be able to keep his country in a state of chaos indefinitely.

The sources said that Marxist elements in the Mozambican government are opposed to any approaches to the rebels, and Prime Minister Robert Mugabe of neighboring Zimbabwe is hotly opposed to talks with RENAMO. More than a quarter of his armed forces are tied up in Mozambique — at least 12,000 troops — helping to defend vital trade and supply routes from rebel attacks.

Mr. Mugabe fears that South Africa is jacking RENAMO, and that Pretoria would be manipulating the rebels in whatever negotiations take place, reports in Harare said. The Zimbabwean prime minister would rather get international help to crush RENAMO.

But morale in the Mozambican regular army is reported so low that it has very little stomach left for the fight. Some senior officers have been in touch with RENAMO leaders on their own initiative. Those preliminary talks could lay the foundation for full-scale peace nego-

tiations leading to a coalition government in what is at present a Marxist state, sources said.

Diplomatic sources in Lisbon and Maputo said there are indications that the Mozambican government could open talks with RENAMO at any moment, perhaps in the neighboring small state of Swaziland.

The Catholic Church in Mozambique, with connections to Vatican diplomacy, is emerging as a possible mediator in the expected talks.

The economic situation in Mozambique is becoming desperate as rebel activity continues to disrupt supply routes and part of the nation faces famine.

Arturo Hein, United Nations coordinator for Mozambique, this week called for more than \$200 million in emergency aid. He told a news conference in Maputo that food aid requirements for the agricultural year 1987-88 would be at least 670,000 tons of grain, worth about \$170 million including the cost of transportation within Mozambique.

The country will need more than \$33 million in other forms of emergency assistance, including health care, water supplies, relief and survival items and agricultural aid, he said.

Mr. Hein told the Mozambican media that U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar appealed to the international community Friday. Some 3.5 million Mozambicans need emergency assistance, and at least 1 million of these are displaced from their homes, in part by activities of RENAMO.

Mr. Hein's Maputo office is to be expanded.

In the fighting, the Zimbabwean army is reported to have recaptured intact the vital railway bridge across the Zambezi River in Mozambique linking the north and south of the country. The two-day operation was the biggest success against the rebels in a year. Five key towns along the Zambezi also were recaptured from RENAMO, which had held them since September.

But RENAMO remained undefeated. The rebel forces retreated before the Zimbabwean advance, split up into small bands and were not pursued.

Mozambique's military situation has been made difficult by growing tension between the Mozambican armed forces and their Zimbabwean allies, who regard them as inferior troops and show disrespect for them.