

13 3 87 INTERVIEW WITH XAVIER DE FIGUEIREDO, AFRICAN EXPERT AND EDITOR OF WEEKLY "AFRICA CONFIDENCIAL"

"THEY WERE BORN AS AN INSTRUMENT OF RHODESIA ... THEY SOUGHT OUT FRELINO DISSIDENTS AND ALL THOSE WHO WORKED FOR THE COLONIAL REGIME"

"THEY REPRESENT A POWERFUL MILITARY FORCE BUT THEY HAVE NEVER HAD, NOR WORRIED ABOUT HAVING, A SOLID POLITICAL STRUCTURE ... THEY NOT ONLY DID NOT HAVE IT BUT THEY CHOSE THE WORST ... A WHITE PORTUGUESE COMPONENT"

RECENT MEETING BETWEEN MNR LEADER AFONSO DALAKAMA AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS SECRETARY ARTUR JANEIRO DA FONSECA AND SPECIAL ENVOY MATEUS LOPES

"IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THEY ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE SITUATION HERE (IN LISBON) ... WE WILL HAVE TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS"

"IT IS ALSO BECAUSE RENAMO HAS TAKEN ON A NEW IMPORTANCE FOR SOUTH AFRICA ON THE MILITARY FRONT ... THEY (SOUTH AFRICA) ARE PERHAPS TRYING TO GIVE RENAMO POLITICAL CREDIBILITY"

(SAYS SOUTH AFRICA, FACING ITS OWN SURVIVAL PROBLEM, IS CONTINUING ITS POLICY OF TRYING TO SET UP A KIND OF SECURITY "CORDON SANITAIRE" ON ITS FRONTIER, PARTICULARLY IN NAMIBIA AND MOZAMBIQUE. BECAUSE THEY ARE TERRITORIES WITH ACCESS TO THE SEA AND THEREFORE HAVE A STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE IN RELATION TO THE LANDLOCKED BLACK AFRICAN STATES SANDWICHED BETWEEN THEM)

"UNITA AND RENAMO SERVE SOUTH AFRICA'S INTERESTS ... BUT THEY HAVE A LARGE MEASURE OF AUTONOMY ... RENAMO IS THE MORE AUTONOMOUS"

"MOZAMBIQUE IS A NATION THAT IS COMPLETELY DESTROYED ... THERE IS NO OTHER COUNTRY IN AFRICA WHERE PEOPLE LIVE AS BADLY AS IN MOZAMBIQUE ... IT HAS A POPULATION OF 10 MILLION DISCONTENTED PEOPLE ... RENAMO'S MEASURE OF AUTONOMY STEMS FROM CAPITALISING ON THAT DISCONTENT ... THEY HAVE INTERNAL SUPPORT"

SAYS THERE IS A CERTAIN COMPLICITY ON THE PART OF FRELINO TROOPS TOWARDS RENAMO -- THEY RUN AWAY WHEN ATTACKED BY RENAMO, DONT ATTACK THEM AS AGGRESSIVELY AS THEY MIGHT.

SAYS RENAMO IS NOT NOT DEPENDENT ON RENAMO FOR ARMS. SAYS THERE ARE MILITARY CONTACTS BETWEEN RENAMO AND SOUTH AFRICAN OFFICERS. BUT ARMS BASICALLY CAPTURED FROM FRELINO FORCES.

SAYS SOUTH AFRICA PROVIDES LOGISTICAL SUPPORT, EITHER IN

COMMUNICATIONS OR TRANSPORT ETC

"I BELIEVE THAT RENAMO COULD BE USEFUL AGAIN FOR SOUTH AFRICA EITHER AS A MEANS OF PRESSURING CHISSANO OR AS A MEANS OF TOPPLING HIM"

"THEY (SOUTH AFRICA) RECOGNISE THAT THERE ARE POLITICAL WEAKNESSES ... AND THEY ARE TRYING TO MODIFY THIS"

STILL SEES FORMER RENAMO SECRETARY GENERAL EVO FERNANDES AS "BRAIN" AND POLITICAL STRATEGIST OF THE GROUP.

"PERHAPS HIS DISMISSAL IS JUST A COSMETIC MOVE"

"IF THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS CONTINUE, WE WILL SEE HERE IN LISBON A NEW POLITICAL REPRESENTATION FOR THE GROUP MADE UP OF WELL-EDUCATED BLACKS"

"RENAMO DOESNT NEED ADMINISTRATORS ... FRELIMO HAS THEM"

SAYS THAT WHILE MACHEL WAS IN POWER, "RENAMO WAS A ESTABILISING ELEMENT BUT NOTHING MORE". SUGGESTS THIS WAS INTENTIONAL SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY TOWARDS THE MORE CONCILIATORY MACHEL, NOTES THAT WHILE RENAMO OFTEN ATTACKED THE OUTSKIRTS OF MAPUTO THEY RARELY STRUCK IN THE CENTRE OF THE CAPITAL DESPITE HAVING THE CAPACITY TO DO SO.

"THE KEY IS THE USE RENAMO CAN BE TO SOUTH AFRICA"

"IF THE WESTERN NATIONS HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT FRELIMOS MILITARY CAPACITY AND THERE IS AN ESCALATION OF THE WAR, THEN IF RENAMO HAS MANAGED TO CREATE A BETTER POLITICAL IMAGE THIS WILL BE IN THEIR FAVOUR"

MILITARY SITUATION. SAYS RENAMO CONTINUING ITS POLICY OF CAPTURING BUT NOT REALLY OCCUPYING TOWNS. SAYS THEY BENEFIT FROM LEAKS OF INFORMATION FROM FRELIMO FORCES ABOUT IMPENDING OFFENSIVES. SAYS OFFENSIVE LAUNCHED BY CRACK ZIMBABWEAN TROOPS IN EARLY JANUARY IN ZAMBEZIA PROVINCE FOUND RENAMO BASES EMPTY. THE ZIMBABWEANS WERE THEN AMBUSHED BY RENAMO AS THEY PULLED OUT.

SAYS OF NUMEROUS REPORTS OF ATROCITIES ETC. "RENAMO CARRIES THEM OUT BUT THEN SO DOES FRELIMO"

SAYS FRELIMO FORCES ARE BADLY PAID, POORLY FED AND DEMORALISED.

"RENAMOS FORCES ARE IN A VICTORIOUS PHASE .. THEY ARE MORE TRAINED AND DISCIPLINED THEN THE FRELIMO TROOPS"

(CONTRAST ELITE ZIMBABWEAN TROOPS)

"THE MILITARY FACTOR IS THE MAIN ONE ... THE REST IS SECONDARY"