

Kenya and Renamo linked in papers released at sensitive moment

THE GOVERNMENT in Maputo has released captured documents dating from mid-1988, purporting to show the beginning of covert support for the rebel Renamo organisation by Kenya.

The documents were seized when the Mozambican armed forces overran a Renamo base at Nhamagodoa in Maringue district in the central province of Sofala on April 18, according to the official news agency AIM.

The agency notes that they are dated over a year before Kenya's President Daniel Arap Moi was asked to mediate in the Mozambican war.

Altogether the timing of the release is interesting - it came this week on the eve of a visit by South African President FW de Klerk to Nairobi, and as Moi was taking a strong stance against the maintenance of sanctions at the Organisation of Africa Unity meeting in Abuja, Nigeria.

It comes also after a seeming rapprochement between Mozambique's President Joaquim Chissano and Moi in April (*SouthScan* v6/15 p138).

According to the papers, from 1988

Kenya was promising financial and material support to Renamo, but insisting that the operation be kept very secret.

Renamo described Nhamagodoa as a "secret presidential base", and its functions seemed mainly to have been intelligence gathering.

Among the documents were transcripts of radio messages sent from Malawi to Renamo chief Afonso Dhlakama.

Most of the radio messages came from a Renamo contact referred to simply as 'Joseph' (Mozambican intelligence sources believe this to be the codename of a Mozambican businessman residing in Malawi).

Contacts between the Kenyan authorities and Dhlakama went via the then Renamo secretary for information, Francisco Nota Moises, who was based in Canada, but had previously resided for many years in Nairobi. An invitation from Moi to Dhlakama was relayed as well as offers of material aid. Malawi was also mentioned as an ally.

[Staff writers]