

The Indian Ocean Newsletter received information from sources within the clergy in Lisbon that the Archbishop of Maputo, **D. Alexandra** is expected to meet a highly-placed representative of RENAMO in Nairobi and perhaps even its leader, **Afonso Dhlakama**. The meeting is to have been arranged in an attempt to arrive at a state of peace in Mozambique. The Archbishop of Beira, **Mgr. Jaime Gonçalves**, for his part, prepared a pastoral letter this week addressed to young people. In his letter he stresses the necessity for "all to pardon and to accept other people's differences" in this period of "reconstruction". These acts seem to be related to the peace efforts underway, initiated by the Luso-Mozambicans. Everything points to the Portuguese government's involvement in these operations although it says it is simply joining on the peace train which has already been set rolling. In respect of this, the Portuguese Secretary of State at the Ministry of Cooperation, **Duraro Barroso**, who was in South Africa this week, requested representatives from the Portuguese Young Entrepreneurs Association (AJEP) to "become involved in the efforts already underway to find a solution to the conflict in Mozambique." These young businessmen and women, children of ex-colonials are widely considered as being RENAMO's fifth column in Mozambique.

According to our information, several people closely linked to the Catholic Church are playing an active role in the quest for peace. In particular, the Franciscans who participated in the past in Radio Pax, Beira's old Catholic radio station. From among the Franciscans, Father **Manuel Carreira Das Neves** name stands out. He is a personal friend to the family of **Evo Fernandes**, former general secretary of RENAMO assassinated last year in Lisbon in circumstances which remain unclear to this day. Another prominent character is Beira's Archbishop who belongs to the same ethnic group as Afonso Dhlakama, Ndaue. Mgr. Jaime Gonçalves is still considered to be an "enemy" by FRELIMO and perhaps the main pole of opposition to the regime. The Archbishop of Nampula, who gives the impression of being very close to FRELIMO, is attempting to contact clergymen captured by RENAMO at different times, to find out who would be the best person within the organisation to hold talks with. **Fernando Braz de Oliveira** is another key figure: in the past he was an executive for the Beira railway before becoming a part of the Zambezi Development Cabinet which is to plan the construction of the Cahora Bassa dam. Today, he works for Bratex, a small services firm linked to the powerful group Partex, financial holding of Gulbenkian Foundation, a humanitarian group, which has initiated a number of educational projects in Mozambique.

Each of these "mediators" would have presented President **Joaquim Chissano**, in April, with a two-phase peace plan. In the initial phase, "poles of development" would be created around major economic projects, as is already the case in the corridors of Beira, Nacala and other

urban centres. These poles would serve, in the first place, to attract "armed bandits" who do not belong to either RENAMO or any other group and who live off war. The aim would be to give them a salaried occupation and to encourage them to put their arms aside. This "peace plan" makes the distinction between three groups: the regular armed forces; RENAMO rebels and "free-lance" bandits born of Mozambique's catastrophic domestic economic situation. The creation of poles of development would help to reduce this type of bandit-ism while settling a number refugees homeless as a result of the war. The economic management of these "poles" should be independent of the country's administration to experiment with a new local administrative system involving expatriate Mozambicans who are in contact with RENAMO. The plan also comprises a mobilisation of foreign capital and finance which would be coordinated by the plan's architects. In the second phase of the plan and following the experiment in the development zones, the two protagonists in Mozambique's war, RENAMO and FRELIMO could enter into a certain dialogue.

President Chissano is reported to be in favour of the project, although he continues to consider the RENAMO rebels as armed bandits and not as an structured opposition force . His opinion does not, however, prevent him from meeting members of the organisation on an individual basis. The plan's authors say that for their part, they are "moderately optimistic." Having tried in vain over the last few years to unite RENAMO and FRELIMO around the table for talks, today they are advocating a more pragmatic approach, and also more limited, but which in real terms, may bring a certain hope to some of the regions at least.