

OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT FREDERIK DE KLERK

Mr President,

We are Mozambican intellectuals, writers, scientists, men and women from the arts, from journalism, with differing world views, who have been brought together by a profound concern for the future of our country and of the region as a whole.

Over the last decade, the People's Republic of Mozambique has been the setting for one of the most terrible genocides in the history of Africa. The aggression that our country has suffered for so long cannot in any way be described as a war. A war is directed against the armed forces of a state. A war, though it involves destructive acts, prepares the conditions for insurgents to take over the government. This is not what is happening in Mozambique. In our country, the violence is directed fundamentally against civilians, wiping out human lives and destroying economic infrastructures. The violence does not aim to replace one government with another but only to find the means for its own reproduction, making Mozambique inviable as a nation and threatening to extend the chaos to the whole region.

More than a million Mozambicans have either been murdered by Renamo or died as victims of the other sources of violence and of the widespread hunger caused by the aggression. The survival of millions of others depends essentially on foreign food aid. Hundreds of men and women have been mercilessly mutilated. Newborn babies are murdered and pregnant women disembowelled. The massive destruction of schools, health centres, shops and other infrastructures also serves to shatter national points of reference which are vital for a people made up of many ethnic groups, races and religious creeds. No set of ethics, no political objective could possibly justify continued support to this process of mass murder.

Mr President,

We have followed with interest your declared intentions to contribute to the building of a new South Africa. We view as positive the changes that are happening in your country and we believe that they are the beginning of an irreversible process of democratization in South Africa. We urge you to proceed on this path of transformation.

All those who were born in South Africa and love it as their home are undeniably South Africans. Through their sense of wisdom, their daily social contact, their moral courage, all communities in South Africa will be able to transcend prejudice and fear — producing a rich African cultural diversity that the whole continent can be proud of. Yet, what harmonious future can there be if the generalized terrorism launched against Mozambique continues, reproducing itself and expanding geographically?

When you were in Maputo in July last year, you suggested that you were willing to contribute to peace in Mozambique. But the fact is that Renamo continues to receive support from South African territory.

The first condition for the establishment of peace in our country is the eradication of all mechanisms conceived in the light of "total strategy" to destabilise the region militarily. In order to cancel this tragic heritage, it is imperative that all the forces in South Africa that still use armed violence to achieve political change in Mozambique be neutralised.

The survival of these mechanisms not only keeps the threat against southern Africa alive, but establishes a disastrous legacy of destabilization in South Africa itself. By eliminating these organised forces of chaos, Mr President, you would not be performing an act of charity. Rather, you would be incontestably promoting a future peace, which is the necessary condition for the integrated development of all the countries of the region, including your own.

Mr President,

We would not have sent you this open letter if we did not believe that you could use the powers conferred on you as head of the South African state to confront without further delay the forces in South Africa that are involved in the destruction of our common future.