

# Chissano assures MNR bandits safety at talks

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THE Mozambican president, Cde Joaquim Chissano, has promised MNR bandits that their lives will not be in danger if they come to peace talks in Malawi.

Mozambique's news agency, Aim, said yesterday that Cde Chissano had guaranteed the safety of Afonso Dhlakama, leader of the Mozambique National Resistance, if he came to Malawi for talks.

"We are not interested in killing Dhlakama in Malawi, nor are we interested in Dhlakama personally. All we are interested in is discussing how to end the war so we can rebuild our country in peace," Cde Chissano was quoted as saying.

Dhlakama refused to meet a Mozambican government delegation in the Malawian city of Blantyre last Tuesday. The bandits, who have

repeatedly said they want peace talks to be held in Kenya, said the Malawi talks would be a security risk.

On Friday, Cde Chissano accused the MNR of sabotaging peace prospects opened on April 4 when he proposed the first direct talks.

Cde Chissano said he did not understand the logic behind the MNR's new preconditions.

The demands include the withdrawal from Mozambique of several thousand Zimbabwe troops who guard the country's trade routes to the Indian Ocean. They are deployed along the road, rail and oil pipeline to the port of Beira in central Mozambique.

"I don't understand how Renamo can demand Zimbabwean troops should pull out of Mozambique and that we end our military offensive against their bases in Manica and Sofala provinces as conditions for starting peace talks," he said.

"These are the kind of questions that should be raised at the negotiations we would like to have with Renamo."

Ziāna-Reuter.