

Mozambique blames rebels for talks failure

Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano has blamed the Renamo rebel movement for the failure to start peace talks as planned last Tuesday in the Malawian city of Blantyre.

Chissano last week accused Renamo of "sabotaging the talks and therefore making the search for peace difficult", reported the news agency *AIM*.

Chissano was speaking to a crowd of several thousand on his arrival at the airport of Pemba, capital of Mozambique's northernmost province of Cabo Delgado, on Friday.

He accused Renamo of trying to impose "harsh and dictatorial conditions" for the start of direct talks.

Rebel officials in Lisbon this Tuesday accused Malawi of announcing peace talks which the rebels had not agreed to attend.

The Renamo statement said they repeatedly objected to Malawi as a venue on security grounds.

Renamo said a Malawian government minister, John Tembo, had invited representatives of the Mozambican and Zimbabwean governments to talks and had said that Renamo had agreed to attend.

"That does not correspond to the truth," said the statement, adding that Renamo had insisted first on the withdrawal of Malawian and Zimbabwean troops from Mozambique.

Renamo has favoured holding talks in Kenya or in Portugal, and the statement said the guerrillas would soon propose an alternative venue to Malawi.