

Mozambique, Renamo in new bid for peace

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ROME. — The Mozambique government and Renamo have scheduled a third round of peace talks here this week.

The decision follows Friday's approval by parliament of a new constitution, which sees Mozambique abandoning its Marxist ideology and gives Renamo the right to run in multi-party elections planned for next year, provided it ends its campaign of violence.

Two previous rounds of negotiations ended inconclusively.

In September negotiations were interrupted over the issue of African mediators and a flare-up of fighting against Zimbabwe troops, detached to help the Mozambique army.

Renamo maintained it could not return to bargaining as long as Zimbabwean troops were on the offensive and requested that Kenya be brought into the talks in an active role.

Last week Mozambique's parliament approved a new constitution

that ends 15 years of one-party rule, eliminates the death penalty and drops the country's Marxist name.

Renamo has rejected the constitutional project because it was not consulted.

Renamo leader Mr Afonso Dlakhamama said he did not believe assertions by Mozambique President Joaquim Chissano that free and democratic elections could be held next year in Mozambique.

Last week a French relief agency reported that more than 10 000 people a month are fleeing the country to Malawi to join an estimated 850 000 Mozambican refugees in overcrowded camps without food and shelter.

● Renamo guerillas killed 25 people in a pre-dawn raid yesterday on a village in Gaza province, Radio Mozambique reported.

Fifty-four people died in a massacre at the same village last year.