

Renamo blamed for talks delay

ROME. — Mozambique government negotiators yesterday accused Right-wing rebels of invoking "ridiculous pretexts" to delay resuming talks on ending the country's 15-year-old civil war.

"Regional conflicts are being settled all over the globe whereas we are just sitting here marking time without knowing why," a government source said. "The situation is bad."

However, the head of the rebel delegation — said by the government side to have come to Rome without any real negotiating powers — said he was optimistic direct talks could begin today.

"I am seeing the mediators again this evening and it is possible that we could have a face-to-face meeting with the government side tomorrow," said Raul Manuel Domingues, the Renamo rebels' "foreign minister".

The seventh round of talks aimed at ending a conflict that has cost over one million lives should have started on July 10, but the two delegations arrived in Rome only on July 19.

— Sapa-Reuter.

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