

Chissano expects ceasefire soon

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PRESIDENT Joaquim Chissano expects his government to sign a ceasefire agreement with the MNR bandits before the end of the year, ending 15 years of conflict estimated to have cost a million lives.

At a news conference on Monday following the signing of a protocol at peace talks in Rome last Friday on the basic principles for future negotiations, Cde Chissano said he could not be sure a general ceasefire would be signed in 1991.

But he said: "The possibility is there, because after signing this protocol I cannot see any more difficulties in the issues to come.

"I hope that this protocol will create more trust between the two sides and we may quickly come to a good understanding on many of the issues ahead."

Cde Chissano emphasised that his government would remain in office in the period between a ceasefire and multi-party elections scheduled to be held next year.

The agreement on principles concerning reciprocal political guarantees said:

● The government undertakes not to act in a way contrary to the terms of the

protocols to be established, and not to adopt laws or measures or to enforce existing laws which may contradict those same protocols.

● For its part, the MNR undertakes, as from the entry into effect of a ceasefire, not to fight by force of arms, but to wage its political struggle in observance of the laws in force, in the framework of the existing state institutions, and in respect of conditions and guarantees set down in a general peace agreement.

● Both sides commit themselves to reaching a general peace agreement as soon as possible, containing protocols on each one of the points on the agenda adopted this year on May 28, and to take the actions necessary to this end.

● The protocols to be agreed in the course of these negotiations shall be an integral part of the general peace agreement, and they shall take effect on the date on which this general agreement is signed, with the exception of the article on the peace agreement of this present protocol which takes effect immediately.

● The two sides agree in principle that a commission shall be set up to supervise and control implementation of the general peace agreement. — Ziana-Reuter-Pana-AP.