

New proposals for Maputo peace talks tabled

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ROME.

NEW proposals from the Italian government and Catholic church mediators attempting to reconcile the positions of the MNR and Mozambican government at the Rome peace talks were being tabled yesterday.

These proposals seek to establish a definitive sequence of how the remaining matters on the agenda will be dealt with.

The mediators concluded a series of separate meetings with

each of the two delegations on Tuesday afternoon, and there were indications that a solution might now be available to break the deadlock that has paralysed the talks since their opening session last Wednesday.

The deadlock arose when the MNR immediately tried to make the conclusion of agreements on constitutional matters a precondition for starting discussions on military questions, thus violating undertakings

given in April.

The government holds that the talks should stick to the arrangement made by the MNR leader himself, Afonso Dhlakama, who, at his meeting with US Assistant Secretary of State Mr Herman Cohen on April 25 in Malawi, agreed that the constitutional dispute could be relegated to the last item on the agenda, namely the guarantees to be established for the transitional period before multi-party

elections.

There was some measured optimism in circles close to the talks on Tuesday afternoon that direct dialogue between the two sides could resume in plenary session yesterday.

Sources close to the talks told reporters that the reasons for the deadlock were "more complex than a simple question of where to put constitutional debates in the agenda". — Ziana-Pana-AIM.