



The Argus

LIBERTY
AND PRESS
FREEDOM

Editor-in-Chief:
A P DRYSDALE

Deputy Editor:
J C B HOBBDAY

122 St Georges Mall,
Cape Town, 8000
Telephone: 488 4911

Now to Mozambique: Real test for the UN

SUDDENLY, with the end of the cold war, the United Nations seems to be coming into its own as the peace-seeking body it originally was intended to be. A prime reason, of course, is that member nations are now able to act with greater unanimity and accord, without two superpowers trying to tug them in different directions for their own selfish interests.

Yesterday's decision by the Security Council to send about 7 500 troops, police and civilians to monitor the ceasefire and elections in Mozambique will mean the establishment of the fourth major peace-keeping force by the world body this year. Its main brief will be to oversee the accord signed in Rome on October 4 between Mozambique's President Joaquim Chissano and Renamo rebel leader Afonso Dhlakama.

ONUMOZ, as it will be called, will also help organise presidential and legislative elections late next year and coordinate an extensive humanitarian programme. It will be far larger than the UN mission sent last year to Angola to monitor a similar accord.

The task of the force will be a great deal more onerous too — and dangerous. Maintaining the peace between the Frelimo government and Renamo will be but one aspect. Apart from the rebels, sundry other bandit groups have wreaked havoc and terror in the country over the past 15 years. Many hundreds of landmines planted at random in successive wars will pose a particular hazard for the UN troops in the dense or rough terrain.

Overall, the Mozambique operation could be more difficult than anything the UN has undertaken to date — and a real test of that body's resolve to end the world's conflicts.