

Guebuza urges donors to pressurise Renamo

The Mozambican government's chief negotiator with Renamo, Transport Minister Armando Guebuza, has urged the international community to force Renamo to respect the 1992 peace accord and the resolutions on Mozambique passed by the UN Security Council.

Briefing the Mozambican parliament on 30 November, Guebuza blamed Renamo for the delays in implementing the 1992 agreement. He disagreed with the argument, put forward repeatedly by Aldo Ajello, that the original timetable for the peace accord was unrealistic. "The timetable was purely and simply ignored", he said. He noted that when the timetable was redrafted, after tripartite discussions between the government, Renamo and Onumoz, Renamo refused to sign it. It only agreed to sign three months later, after the October visit to Maputo of UN Secretary-General Boutros Ghali. Even after Boutros Ghali's visit, Renamo raised new problems over the electoral bill which required a third round of meetings between President Chissano and Dhlakama.

"We are faced with a process where one of the sides finds agreed dates inconvenient, and even when they exist only complies with them insofar as it finds them useful for its own interests", accused Guebuza. "Otherwise it just ignores them".

Guebuza criticised the international community for failing to provide the financial support promised to Mozambique during the lengthy negotiations that led up to the peace accord. The choices made in drafting the accord depended on "the explicit supposition that the international community was prepared to fund them", he said. Donors were now conditioning their finance on speeding up implementation of the peace accord. Guebuza's solution to this conundrum was that the donors should put pressure on Renamo. UN resolutions had already stated as much. In a coded warning to

Ajello, Guebuza said that "arbitrary pressure" or "mere declarations of principle" have proved "not only unjust, but disastrous or absolutely useless". He urged that the international community clearly identify by name those responsible for delays or failure to implement the accord.

"Someone has to prove that we are not facing a situation of double standards here", remarked Guebuza.

As for the draft electoral bill, which this session of the Assembly should pass into law, Guebuza said that the government had made significant concessions. He was worried that the mechanisms inserted in the election bill at Renamo's demand "can be used to continue a strategy of creating impasses in pursuit of goals that have nothing to do with peace or democracy".

He urged Mozambican civil society and the international community to discourage or neutralise any attempt to abuse the mechanisms of the electoral law.

Concluding, Guebuza said that the period for the cantonment of forces would be the decisive proof as to whether the signatories of the peace accord were really interested in peace and democracy. He said this would put to the test "the ability of Onumoz to control and supervise this process with objectivity and efficiency. If the process succeeds, then we will all win, the government, Renamo and Onumoz, because peace and democracy will have triumphed".

"But if something goes wrong", Guebuza warned, "then history will record implacably who was responsible for bringing the terrible spectre of war back to haunt our country". AIM-30/11/93