

Renamo demands delayed Maputo peace accord

MAPUTO.

AFTER 15 years in the bush, Renamo leader Mr Afonso Dhlakama now stays in a bluff-top villa when visiting the capital to negotiate with President Joaquim Chissano.

The lavish headquarters, provided by the government, is one of the reasons it took the two men more than a year to agree on how to implement an accord they signed to end Mozambique's civil war.

Having halted their insurgency with the October 4 1992 signing of the accord, Renamo wanted to pry as many perquisites from the government as possible because they know an election victory next year is beyond their reach, observers say.

"This time is the right time for them to capture things — houses, cars — because after the election they won't be able to," said Mr Eric Lubin, the special adviser to UN

special representative Mr Aldo Ajello.

Renamo boycotted the various commissions created under the peace pact until the government provided lodging, transportation and other amenities for its delegates in Maputo.

They also have secured money from foreign donors, courtesy of Secretary-General Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali to help them compete against Frelimo in the balloting.

Such political wrangling, along with unrealistic timetables and logistical quandaries, have delayed the vote at least a year later than envisaged in the peace accord.

Drafted by UN and foreign intermediaries, it called for soldiers and Renamo fighters to gather immediately at assembly points and disarm while a UN force of more than 6 000 foreign troops provided security.

But it took five months for most of the UN force to arrive because of a



RELIC OF WAR: This ruined government tank rusts at the entrance to Inhámunga, a town now in Renamo hands and testifies to the battles fought for control of the area in the 1980s.

(Picture by A.M.)

money crunch caused by the expanding UN role in conflicts around the world.

Some of the 49 assembly points are still being prepared due to the nation's destroyed infrastructure and lack of supplies following 15 years of civil war.

Meanwhile, Renamo made political demands in exchange for taking part in the peace process. They wanted a guaranteed voice in provincial governments, and for the government to disband militias comprising former soldiers.

Cde Chissano's government called the Renamo demands a delaying tactic, but with UN intervention, eventually consented to most of them.

— Ziana-AP.



AN UNLIKELY COMBINATION: A pet monkey plays with a dog in the Maputo suburbs.

(Picture by A.M.)