

MOZAMBIQUE/SOUTH AFRICA: Dialogue renewed 10N(330)30/4/88

The Mozambican president, **Joaquim Chissano**, could soon meet his South African counterpart **Pieter Botha**; according to a report by South African state television on April 25, following a visit to South Africa by Mozambique's minister for co-operation, **Jacinto Veloso**, with a "goodwill message" from Mr Chissano which was written "in the spirit of the Nkomati agreement" between the two countries, in the words of the official Mozambican news agency, AIM. p. 2

I.O.N.- Since succeeding **Samora Machel** as president in October 1986 Mr Chissano has never had a direct meeting with any South African official, let alone President Botha. If a meeting does take place it will therefore be an indication of an important development in relations between the two neighbours, possibly an agreement on the attitude to be adopted towards Mozambique's rebel Renamo movement (see article page 3 on the murder of **Evo Fernandes**). The impression was confirmed by a visit to Maputo on April 6 by the head of the Anglo-American Corporation, **Gavin Relly**. After meetings with President Chissano and prime minister **Mario Machungo**, he told the press that his mining group, the most powerful in South Africa, would like the opportunity to participate in the development of Mozambique by investing in such sectors as agriculture, forestry and the Pande natural gas fields in Inhambane province.

The resumption of a dialogue between Maputo and Pretoria, which is being predicted even after a former Renamo who recently defected to the Mozambican government gave evidence of South African support for the rebels, was in fact decided at the last summit meeting of the Frontline States on March 24 in Lusaka. According to a well-informed source, the leaders of these states agreed on the necessity of restoring a channel of communication with South Africa, and Mozambique offered to take on the task.