

Mandela may help Maputo Arg. 22/7/94 elections p. 3

MAPUTO. — President Nelson Mandela, in Mozambique on his first official state visit, said he would not dictate how the country should resolve its problems before its multi-party elections in October.

But he hinted that South Africa would consider providing logistical help for the poll, which is aimed at sealing 1992 peace accords that ended 16 years of bitter civil war.

"I would not like to advise any country as to how it should settle its own problems, except if I am requested," Mr Mandela told a news conference yesterday.

"In our situation, the formation of a government of national unity was a correct step. The leadership in Mozambique has drawn a distinction between our case and that of the ... country, and whether I agree with it or not I must leave it to them to decide the best solution for their country."

Mr Mandela earlier met United Nations special envoy Aldo Ajello, who oversees a 7 000-strong peacekeeping mission, and the head of the independent National Electoral Commission (CNE), Brazao Mazula.

The South African leader declined to say whether Mr Mazula had requested assistance in running the elections, on October 27-28. But he noted that Mozambique was a vast country and its political parties should not be hampered by logistical problems and a lack of resources.

Mr Mandela said today that he would meet Mozambique's former rebel leader Afonso Dhlakama at 2pm. The South African ambassador to Mozambique, John Sunde, said yesterday that the meeting had been cancelled, and sources close to Mr Mandela said there was apparent tension over the meeting in the camp of President Joaquim Chissano.

Mr Mandela met President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe for breakfast at a Maputo guest house and later he was to attend an African science and technology conference with at least six other heads of state who will sign an agreement for the development of technology on the continent. — Reuter.