

# Turning Point

**P**resident Joaquim Chissano is this month officially visiting the United Kingdom. His visit is a herald of change with continuity. In his various talks with British leaders he will be putting an accent on a re-appraisal and re-orientation of his policies and seek British assistance in those areas where it can help immediately and effectively.

In one area however, Chissano had to take no for an answer. However it is finessed, the message from Whitehall is that Britain is unable to expedite Mozambique's application to join the Commonwealth. In his revision of the pattern and nature of his country and the international community, Chissano has been inclining towards multiple associations – Commonwealth being pretty high on his agenda.

Several countries have brought their goodwill to bear but it has been to no avail. Maputo diplomats and in some cases ministers have undertaken thank-you visits to a number of world capitals. For there is still hope that Mozambique may still make it to what is essentially a British institution serving former colonies of Britain the world over.

On the whole Chissano will return with his hands full, especially in economic and military areas. A leading financial house is backing him. It's even mobilising its influence to serve Chissano's prime objective in this visit – namely to win for his country palpable backing from the West.

This is in response to the geo-strategic realities in southern Africa. It is also a reflection of a new pattern of political alliances developing in the area.

Chissano's visit is taking place at a crucial point in the history of that part of the world and the following pages captures its significance. ●

*Fuad Nahdi*