

## British Overseas Development Minister's Visit to Mozambique

Maputo home service in Portuguese 1730 gmt 11 Feb 87

Text of report (ME/8490/B/6):

At a press conference in Maputo today, UK Minister of Co-operation [title as heard] Christopher Patten stated that his government vehemently repudiates South Africa's apartheid system. Christopher Patten, who has left Mozambique on his return to the UK reaffirmed the British government's intention to co-operate with southern African countries in their efforts to become economically independent from South Africa. He revealed that a large portion of UK finance to SADCC is destined for development projects currently under way in the People's Republic of Mozambique. He said that projects for the rehabilitation of the so-called Beira corridor as well as the Limpopo and Nacala railways were the beneficiaries of this financing.

Christopher Patten revealed his government's desire to participate in the current economic rehabilitation programme in Mozambique, together with other international organisations such as the World Bank.

Christopher Patten spoke about the reasons for a substantial increase in economic relations between Great Britain and Mozambique recently. [Recording of Patten, in English fading into Portuguese translation]. First of all, I think it is undoubtedly the case that our relationship became a great deal closer as a result of the considerable support that we received from the late President Samora Machel for the restoration of peace in Zimbabwe. We are very grateful for the understanding and help that we received at the time. Secondly, we are aware of the great difficulties facing the countries that are geographically, politically and economically in southern Africa's front-line. We want to help create a healthier economic equilibrium in the region. We believe that this is the most positive response that we could give to the problems. Obviously, we are going to be much more involved in the support for a number of projects in Mozambique. Thirdly, a growing portion of our budget is being channelled into the Africa reform programme which therefore includes your efforts in Mozambique to achieve economic growth on a more solid basis. This is precisely the type of effort that we can support. I share your hope that the security situation will improve. I hope that our help in preparing elements of the armed forces will contribute towards further improvement [end of recording].

Christopher Patten said that his government, together with other EEC member countries, will study an increase in food aid to Mozambique so that it can deal with the effects of natural disasters.

According to the UK Minister of Co-operation, British aid to Mozambique has quadrupled since 1982. In 1985, it amounted to more than £8m or about 2.5m contos [one conto = 1,000 meticals].

[Note: Maputo home service (1030 gmt 11 Feb 87) reported a meeting between Patten and Prime Minister Machungo at which Patten had stated that Britain would like to be among the financiers of Mozambique's economic recovery programme. He also said that he had discussed with Mozambican Co-operation Minister Jacinto Veloso, the way in which £5m granted to Mozambique by Britain would be used, and had announced that the British government would donate £1.5m to UNICEF and Oxfam to help Mozambique children living in areas where food was scarce. When meeting the Mozambique Agriculture Minister Patten had stated that Britain would send agricultural experts to Mozambique.]