



President Joaquim Chissano addresses the 29 November press conference on the new Mozambican constitution and its implications for the life of the country (AIM/Alfredo Mueche)

New constitution comes into force

At zero hours on 30 November, the new Mozambican constitution came into force, and officially the country was no longer a one-party state.

Even the name changed – the "People's Republic of Mozambique" was no more, and instead the country is now known simply as the "Republic of Mozambique".

At a press conference on the new constitution, given on 29 November, President Joaquim Chissano called on the leadership of the Renamo bandits to put down their guns and take part in the political life of the nation. "I call on Renamo to accept the democratic order and to participate, actively and in peace, in the building of the new Mozambique, letting our people know what their political, economic and social proposals are", said the President.

"Force and the threat of force can no longer be political instruments in Mozambique", he said. "The use of force must be completely excluded so that we begin the much longed for process of peace in our country".

"It is salutary when differences can be faced in a constructive manner", said the President. "We have to be able to live with each other, even when we are

different, and to agree to disagree but always by finding appropriate forms for democratic discussion in the spirit of reciprocal tolerance among patriots".

The decision to create a multi-party system, he continued, "corresponds to the need to impress a new dynamic on our political process that will allow organised groups of citizens greater freedom of political expression".

"We hope that the combined efforts of political parties with differing ideas will also provide the necessary dynamism for economic and social development, and for solving the most serious problems that the Mozambican nation faces", said Mr Chissano. "Democracy also means the freeing of physical and intellectual energies for greater commitment to the multiple tasks of national reconstruction".

The introduction of political pluralism was a challenge, not only to the Frelimo Party, and to the other forces which would now act openly on the Mozambican political chessboard, he added, but it was also a challenge to every citizen in the Republic "because in the circumstances of Mozambique, pluralism is not without its dangers. But these are dangers that we have to be able to confront and overcome".