



# M O Z A M B I Q U E

National Office

343 South Dearborn

Suite 601

Chicago, Illinois 60604

312/922-3286

message center:312/9223915

Mozambique Support Network Newsletter

Vol.1, No.1 10/87

Report on President Chissano's Visit to New York, 10/1 thru 10/4

On October 4th 1987, members of the newly formed Mozambique Support Network (MSN) gathered at the U.N. Plaza Hotel to meet with his Excellency Joaquim A. Chissano on the occasion of his first visit to the U.S. as President. The members of the MSN are people who care about the People's Republic of Mozambique and Southern Africa, and who feel that to build and defend Mozambique is to attack apartheid. Many members of the Network have lived and worked in various parts of Mozambique and have first hand knowledge of the dire situation that nation faces under siege by South African-backed contras called "bandidos armados" or MNR/RENAMO.

Presidential Address to the 42nd United Nations General Assembly

Although the main function for the Network took place on Oct.3rd, the President attended various receptions and meetings in the days preceeding the meeting. On October 1, President Chissano addressed the U.N. General Assembly. During this address, he reaffirmed the Mozambican government's determination to pursue the investigation into the death of President Samora Machel until th truth is revealed about the plane crash which kikked Machel and 34 others. President Chissano said he was convinced that the aircraft was diverted from its path with criminal intent by enemies of peace, progress and justice. On the topic of the MNR the President said that the undeclared war waged against Mózambiq Mozambique by South Africa is part of the latter's strategy for domination of the whole of Southern Africa. "The twin vectors of this strategy" He said, "are to maintain the essence of apartheid within the country[S.Africa] on the one hand and to impose South Africa's hegemony in the region on the other." Copies of the President's speech are available from the MSN office in Chicago.

Press Conference

Also included in the President's itinerary was a press conference sponsored by the African-American Institute on Oct.3rd at the U.N Plaza Hotel. His Eexcellency met with approximately 30 reporters during a breakfast press briefing. He said that he was prepared to cooperate with the U.S. in every regard in order to receive support towards stabilizing the Mózambican situation. He reassured a member of the black press that he would meet with members of the Black Caucus while in Washington, and acknowledged an observ- ation that there is a very aggressive campaign by the Right to

# S U P P O R T N E T W O R K

discredit the Mozambican government headed by Chissano and the political party, the Mozambican Liberation Front (FRELIMO). President Chissano stressed that Mozambique receives aid in many forms from various countries, such as: material aid from Italy, Britain's help in training Mozambican military officers, and Sweden's long-standing assistance to almost every sector of Mozambican society. The President gave a lengthy history of the MNR terrorists, tracing their origins to the Rhodesian authorities and subsequently to the apartheid regime in South Africa when Zimbabwe became independent in 1980. He also explained that the "obvious desire by the S.African government to subjugate the entire region is the reason that the Zimbabweans and the Tanzanians fight beside Mozambicans."

#### MSN Reception/Seminar

On Oct. 4th, members of the MSN were honored with a private audience with President Chissano at the U.N. Plaza Hotel. There he received a progress report and an overview of future work from the Network leadership. Although much of the session was off the record, the President enthusiastically affirmed his approval and support of the Network, and he especially applauded the Network's goal to help people better understand and support Mozambique. After a smaller meeting with the MSN core leadership, a larger reception was held for some 200 friends and supporters of Mozambique. Immediately following the reception, the guests gathered at the Church Center of the U.N. for a Situation Update sponsored by the MSN and hosted by the New York support group. Co-chairs Roberta Washington of NYC and Allen Isaacman of Minneapolis opened the seminar and introduced representatives of the Mozambican government, Luis Bernado Honwana Minister of Culture, and Magid Osman, Minister of Finance. Together they painted a portrait of the impoverished and difficult situation in Mozambique. The picture revealed the viciousness of the South African-backed war, but it also showed the resiliency of the Mozambican people and their leadership. Damu Smith, Executive Director of the Washington Office on Africa (WOA), gave an outstanding review of the situation in Washington, demonstrating in detail that the U.S. Right wing offensive against Southern Africa is being steadily translated into pending legislation against which we must mobilize. Prexy Nesbitt, an African Affairs expert and long-time activist, led a discussion about support activity across the country. Mr. Nesbitt is a consultant to the MSN and to the Mozambican government. MSN members Micheal Johnson from Iowa, Ruth Minter from Washington, Tod Hawkins from Seattle, and Dan Murphy from Iowa shared news of the support activity in their respective areas.

The entire event seemed to be well received by the New York guests. The day was saddened however, by the untimely death of the Aunt of MSN member Paul Epstein. Genevieve (Jean) Fein was involved in a number of Southern African and peace issues, and was especially proud of her nephew's involvement with Mozambique support efforts. On Monday Oct. 5th Roberta Washington represented the Network at a memorial service for Ms. Fein. Ms. Washington presented the family money raised at the seminar in honor of Ms. Fein. The family returned the donation to the MSN saying that Jean would have wanted the money to be used for expanding the awareness in the USA about Mozambique. The seminar concluded on a very positive note with Lisa Brock Secretary/Treasurer for the MSN speaking about her time in Mozambique and spearheading a request for donations. Over \$1,000 was raised. Chairperson Roberta Washington closed the seminar with a word of gratitude and a clear "A LUTA CONTINUA."

#### Washington Visit

On Monday October 5, Mozambican Ambassador Valeriano Ferrao introduced over 100 long time friends and supporters of Mozambique to President Joaquim Chissano. The president proceeded in an informal and most congenial manner to briefly summarize his meeting earlier that day with President Ronald Reagan and to enthusiastically welcome the formation of the Network. He also greeted several long time friends of Mozambique like Bill Minter, Kathy Flewellen and Prexy Nesbitt, noting that Prexy is now working as a consultant for the Mozambique government and to the Network. He stressed that now is the time for both old and new friends of Mozambique to emerge and concretely embrace Mozambique as part of the process of "consolidating our friendship." The apex of the evening reception was when members of the Southern African Solidarity Project (SASP) led by longtime supporters, Sylvia Hill and Sandra Hill, presented \$ 4,000 worth of medicine to the President to accompany him back to Mozambique.

Monday morning President Chissano met with President Ronald Reagan, President Chissano emphasized Mozambique's desire, as a non-aligned nation, to have firm ongoing relations with the United States, as it has already with a number of Western nations ranging from the United Kingdom to Japan. President Reagan indicated that his administration supported Mozambique and the "changes in Mozambique" but was constrained by budgetary considerations in terms of increasing the current level of US economic assistance for Mozambique.

A day later President Chissano met with a delegation of the Congressional Black Caucus led by Congressman Merv Dymally, members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and attended an evening coffee hour hosted by Senators Sarbanes, Kassebaum, McConnell, and Boschwitz. Two key national leaders with whom President

Chissano had private meetings were: the Rev Jesse Jackson, America's leading presidential candidate, and Mr. Randall Robinson, the Executive Director of TransAfrica.

On the last day of President Chissano's visit to "the Hill," as he was preparing for his return trip to Mozambique, he received the good news that an amendment introduced by Senator Jessie Helms to cut off aid to Mozambique had been defeated by a 61-34 margin.

President Chissano was accompanied throughout his visit by several senior cabinet ministers, namely, Jacinto Veloso, Minister for International Cooperation; Dr. Pascoal Mocumbi, MD, Minister for Foreign Affairs; Luis Bernardo Honwana, Minister for Culture; Magid Osman, Minister for Finance, and Ambassador Valeriano Ferrao. The delegation also included Ambassador Manuel dos Santos, the Ambassador to the United Nations, and Sharfudine Khan, the former FRELIMO representative to the United States and Canada. (For a more detailed description of the Mozambican delegation's visit to Washington, see: MOZAMBIQUE UPDATE, No 4, October 7, 1987 available from the MSN office and the Embassy in Washington, D.C.).