MINI-GUIDE TO
MOZAMBIQUE

STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL
“If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark, and shameful corridor of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight.”

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

**Mozambique’s History**

*Mozambique 1990*

*The Case for Genocide*
**Mozambique's History:**

Mozambique was a Portuguese colony for more than four hundred years. Portugal was a poor country itself, unable and unwilling to develop Mozambique's economic potential. The Portuguese profited from exporting Mozambican labor to the South African mines and exporting agricultural products such as cotton, tea, and cashew nuts. Mozambican peasants were forced to grow these crops under brutal conditions. They were forced to work on government projects such as road and railway construction under conditions considered to be among the worst in African colonial history.

Mozambique is twice the size of California and strategically located on the Indian Ocean, with a coastline equivalent to that of the United States from Boston to Miami. It has been generously endowed with mineral resources.

In 1964, led by the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), they launched an armed struggle to oust the Portuguese. Ten years later, in 1974, Portuguese army officers rebelled against their own government, ending decades of fascist rule within Portugal. In the following year, Mozambique won independence, as did the other Portuguese colonies of Angola and Guinea Bissau.

Mozambique's new Frelimo government established a nonaligned socialist model of development, which included a non-racial policy of inclusion, provision of education and health services, and a plan to integrate women equally into the new society.

**Mozambique's History**

**Mozambique 1990**

Mozambique today is caught up in a devastating war that is killing and maiming its people, traumatizing its children, and destroying its economy. The stage for this war was set during the 1970s when Mozambique extended sanctuary to Robert Mugabe and his forces who were fighting a war for independence in what was then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Ian Smith was then the head of the Rhodesia's white minority government. The Rhodesian secret service set up a spy network and established bandit groups inside Mozambique to collect information about anti-Smith activities. When Ian Smith lost power in 1980, the bandit groups came under South African control. Since that time the South African government has continued to support these armed gangs of terrorists, now known as the Mozambique National Resistance, (MNR or Renamo). The Mozambicans call them 'bandidos armados,' (armed bandits), or 'BAs', for short.

**Mozambique Quality of Life Indicators 1988**

- Average Income: $121.00 per year
- Under 5 Mortality Rate: 325-375 per 1,000 (death rate for infants = 1 infant every 7 minutes)
- 1 year olds fully vaccinated: 45 years
- Measles: 46%
- Polio: 32%
- Literacy Rate for Women: 12%

**POPULATION** 15 MILLION
Prominent Mozambicans

Joaquim Chissano is the current president of Mozambique. He began his anti-Portuguese activities as a young student in the 1950s. He was a leader in Frelimo during the armed struggle in the 1960s, and was the Prime Minister of the transitional government in 1974. He was elected President following the death of Samora Machel in 1986.

Eduardo Mondlane was the first leader of Frelimo. He was trained as a sociologist in the United States and worked for the United Nations until he returned to Mozambique in 1960 to help end Portuguese colonialism. His book, *Struggle in Mozambique*, was for many years the only English-language source on modern Mozambique. He was assassinated in 1969 by the Portuguese secret police.

Samora Machel became president of Frelimo following the assassination of Mondlane. Trained as a nurse under the Portuguese, he led Frelimo and the nation to independence and became the first president of Mozambique. Widely acknowledged as a charismatic and dynamic man, his song-filled speeches carried in him the love and dedication of millions of Mozambicans. He was killed in October 1986 when his plane crashed in South African territory under suspicious circumstances.

Graca Machel Samora Machel's widow, was Minister of Education until recently. She continues on the Frelimo Central Committee and holds many other leadership positions. She has been active in increasing international awareness of Mozambique's current situation, especially the plight of the children.

Salome Moiane is the head of the Mozambican Women's Organization (OMM), which plays a central role in raising issues of importance to Mozambiques' struggle and development.

The MNR

There is ample evidence that the MNR is not interested in overthrowing the Frelimo government. Its major aim is to spread terror and destruction. In one of its most horrific attacks in July 1987 MNR entered the peaceful southern town of Homoine at dawn and massacred 424 people, including children and hospital patients. MNR targeted Homoine because the town had been recovering from the effects of the recent drought that has affected most of southern Africa. Not only had Homoine been feeding itself, but it had begun to supply food to the surrounding region. Its ability to survive and produce made Homoine a valuable target for destruction. While Homoine was perhaps the single bloodiest incident, similar massacres have been repeated all over the country. In February of 1990, there were 66 civilians killed and 50 wounded by the MNR when they blew up a train travelling from Ressano Garcia to Maputo. While the train was disabled they used bayonets and guns to kill some of the passengers. Buses, trains, and truck convoys bringing famine relief are routinely assaulted and burned.

Eyewitness to the Homoine Massacre

All of them wore new uniforms, shiny boots and carried new weapons. It also appeared that they were well organized. One man led the group and directed the others into three smaller sections. As the bandits turned the corner under my windows, they fired a volley of bullets at the buildings on the main street. I stood stunned as I saw seven women, who were huddled on the sidewalk, shot down. Some of the women carried babies wrapped in cloth around their bodies...the final death toll in Homoine: 424 dead, 44 children. Another 298 people were taken captive by the bandits (MNR).

Mark Van Kovering, MCC, Agronomist

School bound children in Tete Province

Mozambique 1990

The Case for Genocide

Mark Van Kovering, MCC, Agronomist
Children As Victims

The hardest hit victims are the children of Mozambique. A United Nations study in 1989 'the economic cost of frontline resistance to apartheid' revealed that in Mozambique, nearly 494,000 children died between 1980 and 1988 as a result of the war. If Mozambique could live in peace, such conditions could be improved. Those children who survive face diminished lives as a result of the destabilization of their society. Many children have been maimed, have seen family members tortured and killed, have been kidnapped by the MNR and forced to murder others, or have been forced to flee their homes and live in refugee camps. The long term costs of having the next generation traumatized by these experiences cannot be calculated.

Health Care Under Attack

The health care system has been especially targeted by the MNR. A recent report states that by the end of 1986, 213 outlying health posts had been destroyed, and a further 382 had been looted or forced to close. This represents nearly one-third of Mozambique's health post network. These posts were designed to be the primary source of health care for the millions of rural peasants who make up the majority of Mozambique's population.

By the end of 1987, Mozambican health officials estimate two million people had lost access to health care. This was caused by the destruction of many centers, the increased difficulty in getting supplies to centers that remain open, and the problems of travelling to those centers when roads are not safe. In 1982, 72 doctors were working in rural areas, with a ratio of one doctor for every 161,000 people. By 1986, just four years later, only 31 doctors worked in rural areas, and the ratio had fallen to one doctor for every 396,000 people. Added to this decline is the decline in health caused by the war's impact on food supplies and sanitation.

South Africa's War Against Mozambique

The Impact

494,000 war-related child deaths 1980-1988
900,000 War-related total deaths 1980-1988
1983-84 war-induced famine reduced available grain to 2 million tons
1.5 million deaths have resulted from South Africa's war against its neighbors
4.6 million homeless Mozambicans

The Case for Genocide
The Gersony Report

In March 1988, a U.S. State Department commissioned-researcher interviewed two hundred refugees in camps scattered throughout Mozambique and its neighbors. His report clearly stated that the refugees blamed the MNR for their troubles, and continued to support the Mozambican government. Each refugee had a story to relate of forced labor for the MNR, beatings, rapes, looting, burnings, abductions, and mutilations. The report concludes ‘that the accounts are so strikingly similar by refugees who have fled from northern, central and southern Mozambique suggests that the violence is systemic and coordinated and not a series of spontaneous, isolated incidents by undisciplined combatants.’

“New evidence compiled by an experienced refugee expert working for the U.S. Department of State . . . provide factual evidence of what so many of us knew in our hearts that for whatever misguided reasons Renamo has been waging a systematic and brutal war of terror against innocent Mozambican civilians through forced labor, starvations, physical abuse and wanton killing. Condemn as we all do, condemnation of these acts is not enough. What has emerged in Mozambique is one of the most brutal holocausts against ordinary human beings since World War II; and the supporters of Renamo, wherever they may be, cannot wash the blood from their hands unless all support for this unconscionable violence is stopped immediately’.

(Statement by U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Roy Stacey)

“‘It (MNR) has not succeeded in gaining legitimacy or acceptance anywhere outside Mozambique, and it can’t hold major towns inside Mozambique, so it’s just a killing machine, sitting out there in the country.”

Chester Crocker,
Former assistant Secretary for African Affairs

Struggle and Hope:

It is important to catalog the poverty and destruction, but it is equally important to note the continued resilience of the Mozambican people and their Frelimo government. The Front Line states have formed the Southern African Development Coordination Council, or SADCC, which works to decrease regional dependence on South Africa. The port of Beira, in central Mozambique, has been increasing its capacity annually for the past few years. It is a major outlet for Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi, and has received international attention and investment through the Beira Corridor Authority.

The Mozambican government has established a centralized bureau to deal with the national emergency. Emergency projects include careful management of agricultural production to avert famine, organized distribution of foreign donations, and a long term rehabilitation project for families that have been displaced by the war.

“I left Mozambique because of the war. Renamo arrived in our village taking cattle, stealing food, burning houses and killing some of the villagers. They stole all my cattle. I fled to Malawi with my wife and seven children. I was in the refugee center of Biri Biri. But the conditions were too difficult. I could not come back last year. But this year the security situation is more stable. We want to return to our land.”


The South African Connection

The evidence is clear that South Africa is funding the MNR. Even the Reagan State Department had to admit that the pattern of destruction rules out random violence by uncoordinated groups. MNR terrorists who have been captured or turned themselves in tell of night time parachute drops of equipment and food. A captured diary found in 1986 in the MNR base at Gorongosa documented specific visits by named South African government and military officials.

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“Mozambicans, it is a challenge, which we have already begun to meet, to turn sorrow into new strength.”

(Joaquim Chissano, 1986, upon being elected president following the death of President Machel.)
Destabilization Campaign

South Africa is bordered by Black nations. As these countries have achieved independence, South Africa has reacted by exerting economic pressure, by arming and training insurgency movements, and by undertaking direct military actions to undermine their newly formed governments and developing economies. The following examples are only a few of the many ways in which the regime has acted to undermine the political stability of its neighbors and to hold them as economic hostages. Within South Africa, most observers have concluded that White South Africans have not yet made the decision to begin negotiations about one person one vote. Instead they seem determined to avoid internal and external pressure, and to continue their domestic oppression and regional destabilization activities.

In Angola, even after the three-party agreement in December of 1988, South Africa has continued its undeclared war against Angola. In late January, 1990, SADF flew 2300 troops from Walvis Bay into Cuando Cuabango province where they aided Unita in efforts against the Angolan government. In November 1989, an American C-14 plane was downed in Southern Angola, underscoring growing U.S. involvement. South African and U.S. collaborative efforts make a mockery of the Bush administration denouncements of Apartheid. U.S. aid to Unita has been reported to be as much as 80 million dollars.

When Lesotho provided refuge for South African dissidents forced into exile, South Africa mounted military raids on Maseru, its capital. After exiles continued to find refuge there, the apartheid regime began an economic blockade of this tiny country which is surrounded by South Africa. As a result, the Lesotho government was disposed in favor of local officials who agreed to deport all dissident refugees.

Namibia, having gained its independence from South Africa in March of 1990, after a protracted and bloody guerrilla war, still finds itself ensnared in a maze of economic dependency. South Africa’s adamant refusal to turn over Namibia’s only deep water port, Walvis Bay, to the new SWAPO government highlights the economic choke hold they continue to have on that country. Reports continue to surface concerning MNR/UNITA like forces that are being readied to wreak the same kind of havoc in Namibia that they have in Mozambique and Angola.

Peace Initiative

Presidents Moi of Kenya, Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and Kaunda of Zambia have agreed to act as brokers between the Mozambican government and the MNR. President Kaunda has urged the Mozambican government to talk to Renamo’s leaders “and find out what they think they are doing to themselves and to their brothers and sisters and on whose command they are doing it.” This request was followed by a Mozambican government announcement of their willingness to engage in dialogue with Renamo. Subsequently, Renamo chose not to honor a request by Mozambican church leaders to meet on July 19th, 1989. Nevertheless, Mozambique’s President Chissano maintains that the time is right to advance, and “to hear more closely from those Mozambicans who attack the people and the people’s Republic of Mozambique.” In January of 1990, President Chissano reported that Renamo rejected direct talks with the government of Mozambique. He said, “...they don’t recognize the People’s Republic of Mozambique of the Mozambican constitution.”

South African War of Destabilization

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South African War of Destabilization

Elisa Pedro learns to walk again, her legs were amputated after she was hit by a mine in Inhambane Province, in 1989.

President Chissano leads (R) mourners at the funeral of Samora Machel.