

TELL RENAMO ELECTION BOYCOTT WILL NOT BE REWARDED

October 28, 1994 -- The threat to successful democratic Mozambique elections posed by a last-minute boycott by Renamo, the formerly South African-backed Mozambique National Resistance, appears to have been removed. Under intense international pressure, Renamo Presidential candidate Afonso Dhlakama re-entered the race today.

Mozambicans signaled their desire for successful peaceful elections by voting in large numbers in all parts of the country in the first scheduled day of national elections yesterday, despite a boycott call only hours before the polls opened.

Renamo spokesmen had accused the Mozambican government, the independent National Electoral Commission and the United Nations of plotting to cheat them of victory. The incident was the latest in a long series of maneuvers by which Dhlakama has apparently hoped to extract new concessions, including a share of power to be guaranteed before the election. The Mozambican government has been under intense pressure from the United States and other outside powers to make such an agreement. It is reported that the pressure continues, this time to announce a government of national unity even before the vote count is completed.

The Frontline States, meeting in Harare on Tuesday, strongly criticized international efforts to dictate a solution to Mozambique. Frelimo Presidential candidate Joaquim Chissano has consistently argued that the people should first be allowed to have their say at the polls.

In his view, while the rights of opposition parties should be respected, and a new government should reach out to incorporate diverse sectors of national life, a functioning government should only incorporate those who are willing to cooperate in implementing the program of the winning party.

The elections are the culminating step in implementation of the peace accord signed between the Mozambican government and Renamo in Rome two years ago. Renamo, founded as a guerrilla group by the former Rhodesian government, and taken over as a client by the South African military in 1980, has received \$19 million from outside donors to try to transform itself into a political party and clean up its image as a perpetrator of atrocities against civilians.

It is important that all those concerned with peace and democracy in Mozambique reaffirm that

- (1) the electoral process, including the vote count, should continue, with or without Renamo, including addressing any legitimate questions raised about flaws in the procedures;**
- (2) the Renamo leaders should not be rewarded with additional concessions for their attempts to sabotage the electoral process; and,**
- (3) the U.S. should refrain from any pressure or posture that would encourage Renamo to make additional demands or threats.**

Send messages expressing your concerns to: National Security Advisor Anthony Lake
(Phone: 202-456-1414; Fax: 202-456-2883).

Copies should be sent to: Edward Brynn, Dep. Asst. Sec. of State for African Affairs (Phone: 202-647-4485; Fax: 202-647-6301); Senator Paul Simon (Phone: 202-224-2152; Fax: 202-224-0868); and Representative Harry Johnston (Phone: 202-225-3001; Fax: 202-225-8791).

This alert prepared jointly by the Washington Office on Africa, the American Committee on Africa, and the Mozambique Solidarity Office. For more information contact Jennifer Davis at 212-962-1210.