

This week's opening of peace negotiations on Mozambique in Nairobi is a grim reminder that, in the case of South Africa's relationships in the region, Pretoria's policy of sponsoring violence has paid off and changed the political map of Africa. It also underlines the dominance of US policymakers behind the scenes in Africa.

No one believes that the MNR leader, Afonso Dhlakama, went into the negotiations with a political programme or with a following in Mozambique, or was able to act as a political force independent of South Africa. The decision by the Mozambican government to send church leaders as intermediaries to present their 12-point peace plan to him in Nairobi is a measure of their utter desperation after a decade in which 700 000 Mozambicans have been killed and more than a million and a half displaced...

The very holding of the Nairobi talks will, like the July meeting in the Zairean town of Gbadolite between President Dos Santos of Angola and the Unita leader Jonas Savimbi, give international status to the man who incarnates for the country's inhabitants the deaths, mutilations and flights into exile which have, as President Chissano told the Frelimo party congress, 'affected every single Mozambican'... *Guardian (UK) 10.8.89*