

MOZAMBIQUE: MNR LEADER DHLAKAMA ON TALKS WITH FRELIMO

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[Announcer] Frelimo does not want peace, it wants to remain in power by force of arms: this is how MNR leader Afonso Dhlakama reacted to Joaquim Chissano's description of the rebel movement's peace proposals as meaningless. Our Washington correspondent Luisa Pinho reports:

[Pinho]. . . President Joaquim Chissano has rejected the rebels' demands as lacking any significance. In this connection Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama made the following statements:

[Dhlakama - recording] I would start by stating that the Frelimo leader, Chissano, is not ready to talk to the MNR about true peace in Mozambique. As is known, Frelimo made a 12-point proposal. Having appraised the 12 points, we came to the conclusion that some of them made no sense, so we replied with 16 points of our own and demanded that Frelimo must recognise the MNR as a political party. Because it would be difficult, we believe it would be difficult for us to have genuine talks without Frelimo's recognition of the MNR as a party. Otherwise how could we talk? Talk about what?

Moreover, in our 16 points we tell Frelimo that the Mozambican people are tired of war, that they want peace, but a genuine peace. We also tell Frelimo that the MNR is prepared to hold unconditional talks with them. So when Chissano says that the 16 points do not make sense, are meaningless, we believe that Frelimo is not prepared for talks. What Frelimo wants is to remain in power by force of arms. It does not want the Mozambican people to enjoy the opportunity freely to choose Mozambique's political system.

[Pinho] Despite the complexity of the situation, the MNR President remains hopeful of an end to the war, and outlined the following prospect for Mozambique's future:

[Dhlakama] It will depend on the two sides, on the MNR and Frelimo. As far as I and my organisation are concerned, we would like peace to be attained as a matter of urgency. While acknowledging that there are obstacles, for Frelimo will always seek to raise obstacles at the negotiating table, both myself and my organisation shall do our utmost to see that the Mozambicans - the MNR and Frelimo in particular - manage to achieve peace for the Mozambican people, so that the Mozambican people may be free to choose through the ballot box what kind of political system they wish to govern the country. Because we believe that what happened after independence, the imposition of a dictatorship in Mozambique by force of arms, is not really independence, not the independence that we wanted. So we want peace so that the Mozambican people may be able to vote for the political system of their choice, so that the people may have the opportunity to rebuild the economy and enjoy freedom of movement and so on, because, as I see it, Mozambique is destroyed, exists only in name. It is not really Mozambique, is it? . . .