

Pretoria's reforms are irreversible – Chissano

Star Africa Service

Maputo – Mozambique's President Joaquim Chissano has become the first leader of a Frontline state to pronounce South Africa's reform process "irreversible".

The statement flies in the face of opposite views held by the African National Congress and other Frontline leaders. It could be interpreted to imply that the Mozambique government believes the time has come for the lifting of sanctions and other punitive actions taken against South Africa.

President Chissano made the statement at a traditional New Year reception for the Maputo diplomatic corps on Friday.



Mr Chissano . . . speech first crack in Frontline wall.

The process of eliminating apartheid is now "irreversible" he told the diplomats, and called on the South African Government to rapidly remove the remaining obstacles to the negotiation of a new constitutional dispensation for the country.

He also expressed joy at the return to South Africa of the leader of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, and said he hoped many other exiles would soon follow his example and return home.

The Chissano speech is the first crack in the solid facade presented by the Frontline states on the South African reform process, and could be a major setback for the ANC, which has relied heavily on its African allies for moral support as European and American support for continued sanctions crumbles.

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