

rebels await talks results

Lisbon: Direct talks have taken place in South Africa between the Mozambican Government and representatives of rebel forces, and the rebels are now awaiting a response to their settlement proposals, according to a spokesman for the rebels in Portugal.

If no consensus was reached by October, the rightwing Mozambican National Resistance (MNR) would enter Maputo, the Mozambican capital, which is already threatened by its

forces, according to the MNR spokesman, Mr Jorge Correia.

At the time of the talks in Pretoria nearly two weeks ago, the Mozambique Government said there were no direct negotiations. Official sources in Pretoria said South Africa attempted to mediate between the two sides.

Mr Correia said that the Mozambican Economic Affairs Minister, Mr Jacinto Veloso, had been handed the rebel proposals in Pretoria and that the MNR was now waiting in

the South African capital for a reply.

Mr Correia denied reports that an end-of-August deadline had been set in the Pretoria talks, which he said were between delegations headed by the MNR secretary-general, Mr Evo Fernandes, and Mr Veloso.

"Talks will continue in Pretoria this month and during all of September," added Mr Correia, whose movement has been trying to overthrow the Marxist Government of President Machel since soon after

Mozambican independence

"We want a constitutional change ending one-party rule, dissolution of the People's Assembly, a government of national reconciliation, and the leadership of the Government and the armed forces if Samora Machel stays in the presidency," Mr Correia said.

"Changing the regime is more important than the division of power. If this change is not agreed by the end of September, the war will go on to the last." — Reuters