

**Mozambican President Interviewed in Japan: No Negotiations with MNR**

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Excerpts from dispatch datelined Tokyo, 27th May (ME/8270/B/9):

President Samora Machel has stated that Mozambique will never negotiate with the bandits of the South African backed "Mozambique National Resistance" (MNR), because "they serve foreign interests and are part of international terrorism".

Interviewed on Japanese television, President Samora joked about the true meaning of the word "Renamo", the Portuguese acronym for the MNR. What "Renamo" really stood for, he said, was "the moral remains of Portuguese colonialism. With this there can be no negotiation", he stressed. "Certain man-made problems can only be resolved by eliminating them", he continued, "they can't be negotiated". He gave as examples colonialism, the Smith regime in Rhodesia, and apartheid in South Africa. . . President Samora declared that the MNR bandits "are not a national organisation. They are not a political oppositon. They are terrorists and mercenaries organised by South Africa." He told the Japanese interviewer that the activity of the bandits was characterised by "kidnapping, raping and murdering women and children, burning people alive, cutting off their victims' ears or noses, and plucking out their eyes. They are part of international terrorism. We do not negotiate with agents of terror", he added. . .

Asked what he thought of the "reforms" introduced by South African President P.W. Botha, the Mozambican leader replied that "apartheid is not reformable, it has to be eliminated. There is no such thing as democratic apartheid. Either there is apartheid or there isn't." President Samora described apartheid as "the source of all the violence in South Africa, and of instability in southern Africa. The South African regime is still faithful to apartheid. It still has shown no sign of being willing to abolish apartheid and to enter into negotiations with the true leaders of the South African people." . .

On economic relations between Mozambique and South Africa, the President smiled and said "that is how history left us. I would like to have more economic relations with Japan than with South Africa, but I would be crazy to ignore South Africa. We cannot choose our neighbours."

President Samora said that Mozambique hoped to establish long-term co-operation with Japan, and a relationship of "interdependence". He pointed out that Mozambique was richly endowed with natural resources, but lacked the finance to develop them. Private Japanese companies were welcome to invest in Mozambique he said. Japanese technology would be greatly appreciated, he added, seressing the willingness of Mozambican workers to learn new techniques.

The interviewer asked at one point if co-operation with Japan was conditioned on the withdrawal of technicians from the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic. "You are not very well informed", replied President Samora, "your source was not honest with you". He reiterated Mozambique's desire for relations with all countries, "on the basis of mutual benefits, and non-interference in our internal affairs. The socialist countries have always understood, and understand today, this position of ours."

On Mozambique's food needs, President Samora said that "the situation is less tragic than it was a year ago, but it is still very serious. The effects of the prolonged drought that Mozambique suffered still affect about a million and a half people." The food situation had been worsened by banditry, he continued - not only by the direct looting of the MNR, but also by the mass exodus of peasants from areas badly hit by banditry in order to seek refuge in overcrowded emergency settlements.

The President also blamed the colonial heritage for Mozambique's current predicament. "For centuries, colonialism was only concerned with making the maximum profit out of Mozambique. It organised the backwardness of our people and our country. So natural disasters, in Mozambique as in other African countries, are in part man-made." He said that Mozambique would continue to need food aid [words indistinct] rehabilitation of agriculture until at least 1990. . .