

MOZAMBIQUE: FRELIMO divided

President **Joaquim Chissano** last week failed for the second time within a few months, to replace his Defence Minister, General **Alberto Chipande** (ION N°428). According to information obtained by *The Indian Ocean Newsletter* within the Mozambican Defence Ministry, "everything was ready and the President was to announce his decision on Monday, May 14." The same source puts Mr Chissano's withdrawal down to "sizeable differences within the Politburo and the Armed Forces." The Mozambican President nevertheless appointed five new Vice Ministers on May 15. Generals **Hama Thai**, Chief-of-Staff, and **Edouardo da Silva Nihla**, political commissioner for the Armed Forces were nominated to the posts of Vice Ministers for Defence; Mrs **Salome Moiana** has been named Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs; **Paulo Zucula** and **Agostinho Lonjone** become respectively Vice Ministers of Agriculture and Construction.

These recent events are the sign of a significant divide within the *FRELIMO*. Since his return from Portugal last month where he met members of the opposition in exile, Joaquim Chissano seems to have lost the little credibility he had among the regime hard liners led by **Marcelino Dos Santos** and **Jorge Rebelo**.

Marcelino Dos Santos for example, has spent the past three weeks in the provinces of Cabo Delgado and Niassa, considered to be two of the *FRELIMO*'s largest political bases. He stayed for a while in Mueda, Nangade and Palma (in Cabo Delgado) where he held meetings with "Maconde" fighters, during which he openly dissociated himself from the President's peace process.

I.O.N.- The opposition between the conservative wing and those known as the "moderates" led by **Armando Guebuza** and **Mariano Matsinha** is now crystal clear. Control of the Armed Forces is the main bone of contention between the different factions as well as that of President Chissano who has tried to adopt a "neutral" stance until now. Within the Armed Forces themselves, former officers fear that if Alberto Chipande's replacement is someone close to the President, then it will be a sign of the advent of a new generation of officers at the head of the Army. And most of the old generals are involved in affairs of scandal over deviation of international aid and were firmly defended by General Chipande when the President wanted to publish the report made by the inquiry commission on this matter.