

Mozambique:

Turning Sorrow Into New Strength



"From the Rovuma to the Maputo, we are of one single will in our determination to continue the struggle. Mozambicans, despite our enormous suffering, have proved that the Mozambican people refuse to become discouraged or to feel defeated. It is a challenge which we have begun to meet to turn sorrow into new strength."

H.E. Joaquim Chissano
President, People's Republic of Mozambique

Conservative figures indicate that three-quarters of a million children have died in the Mozambican war, with an additional 250,000 traumatized. It was not an accident that children have become victims of the war. Says *Graca Machel*, head of Mozambique's National Commission for UNESCO and widow of the late President Samora Machel, "*Apartheid has defined our children as a priority target.*" Renamo bandits recruit them into their ranks where they are forced to commit atrocities. Among the worst crimes of apartheid, Ms. Machel adds, is "*destabilizing the seeds of the future.*"

Hundreds of thousands of other children in Mozambique have suffered from the indirect effects of the war through the dramatic increase of poverty. Today, **over sixty percent of the Mozambican population is classified as living in absolute poverty.** Among the results, said Ms. Machel, were children abandoned by their parents and forced to live on the streets of the main cities, or they are sent out to sell cigarettes, sweets, and other items on street corners in order to supplement the family income.

"What should our response be? First, we have to educate our constituencies into seeing and internalizing the indivisibility of the South African struggle from the Southern Africa struggle. In the second instance, we have to transform invisible networks of support for Renamo into exposed and highly visible networks.

No country in Southern Africa has paid a price of the magnitude Mozambique has in the name of international solidarity. Some day the war will end and then the yet living thousands of Mozambican workers, students, farmers, and teachers will take on the task of building a new Mozambique. For years ahead yet, the Mozambican people will need our attention, concern, and support. We should respond not with pity or alms, but rather, with a recognition that in helping Mozambique to once again flourish, we are helping ourselves to flourish as well."

Prexy Nesbitt
Senior Consultant, Mozambique Government

The Mozambique Solidarity Office (MSO) is a special resource providing educational needs such as speakers, videos, books, magazines, newsletters, and news brochures. The MSO can also assist you in organizing educational events, meetings, forums, educational trips to Southern Africa, fundraisers, and material aid drives.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Contact your elected representatives, and sponsor resolutions condemning South Africa and RENAMO.

Contribute to organizations giving aid to Mozambique such as *Oxfam*, *Church World Service*, and *Bread for the World*.

Contribute as well to those organizations in the United States and Canada actively supporting the Mozambique government and its people such as the *American Friends Service Committee* (Seattle), the *American Committee on Africa* (New York), *Trans-Africa*, the *Washington Office on Africa* (Washington, D. C.), the *Mozambique Support Network* (Chicago), and *COCAMO* (Cooperation Canada Mozambique, Ottawa).

GET INVOLVED!

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Our Sophisticated Weapon

The South African regime alleged that Mozambique is threatening it by concentrating *sophisticated weapons* on its border.

What are these *sophisticated weapons* that the regime is referring to? We answer: *the work we are doing*.

The sophisticated weapon is making the home the centre of fulfillment and not, as in South Africa, a prison and a guarded residence.

The sophisticated weapon is guaranteeing all citizens the right to study, culture, health, justice, progress, to the benefits of society.

The sophisticated weapon is putting our resources into carrying all this out and not into the manufacture of weapons, the production of death.

The sophisticated weapon is the people's right to create their own history, by directing their own destiny, by exercising their sovereign power.

It is surrounding children with love and affection, innocence and happiness, and not, as in Soweto, making them targets for police brutality and murderous weapons.

We do not represent a threat to anyone, neither militarily nor economically. In fact the only thing the regime has to fear is our example. This, yes.

In short, the *sophisticated weapon* that really threatens apartheid is the alternative of civilization that our society now represents.

Samora Moises Machel, 1933 - 1986
President of the People's Republic of Mozambique