

BAOBAB NOTES



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PRETORIA "GAVE ARMS TO RENAMO LAST YEAR"

According to a report by the US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Pretoria's military delivered weapons to Mozambican guerrillas and brought rebels to South Africa for training last year, possibly without the approval of President F.W. de Klerk's government.

After interrogating a rebel deserter in March 1991, the US Defense Department concluded that arms were still being shipped to Renamo by the South African Defence Force (SADF). The DIA report begins, "As late as February 1991, South African Helicopters delivered arms and ammunition to Renamo in southern Mozambique." The drop was made to a Renamo base at Mapulanguene in Gaza province.

The DIA questions why the SADF still arms Renamo, and how this could go unnoticed by a higher authority. (*The Independent*, 2/24/92)

On the Death of Ambassador Sharfudine Khan

The Mozambique Solidarity Office notes with deep sadness the tragic death of Ambassador Sharfudine Khan, Mozambique's Ambassador to Zambia, on March 15, 1992 in Lusaka. Ambassador Khan was found strangled to death in his residence. Some arrests have been made by Zambian authorities.

From 1967 to 1975, Ambassador Khan, known affectionately just as "Khan" or "Sharfudine", served as FRELIMO's representative to the United Nations. He worked tirelessly over the United States and even in Canada educating and mobilizing to garner support for the struggle of his people against Portuguese colonialism. He never asked for himself. He always reminded people that he was trained to be a representative in the USA by his beloved leader, FRELIMO's first President Eduardo Mondlane. Until the very end, in many varying ways, Sharfudine Khan was really Mozambique's premiere Ambassador to North America.

If You Want to Know Me

If you want to know me
examine with careful eyes
this bit of black wood
which some unknown Makonde brother
cut and carved
with his inspired hands
in the distant lands of the North

This is what I am
empty sockets despairing of possessing life
a mouth torn open in an anguished wound
huge hands outspread
and raised in imprecation and in threat
a body tattooed with wounds seen and unseen
from the harsh whip strokes of slavery
tortured and magnificent
proud and mysterious
Africa from head to foot
this is what I am

If you want to understand me
come, bend over this soul of Africa
in the black dockworker's groans
the Chopes' frenzied dances
the Changanas' rebellion
in the strange sadness which flows
from an African song, through the night

And ask no more
to know me
for I'm nothing but a shell of flesh
where Africa's revolt congealed
its cry pregnant with hope.

Noémia de Sousa

AIDS INCREASES IN MOZAMBIQUE

Through September, 1991, there were at least 288 officially known cases of AIDS in Mozambique. Although this figure is low relative to other countries in Africa, AIDS increase has doubled since last year. Now, there is an average of 10 cases of AIDS a month. The Minister of Health pointed out that this figure did not represent the real situation because the war does not allow to establish the real number of AIDS cases in the country. (*Mozambique Update*, 3/7/92)

\$1.1 BILLION PLEDGED FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Donor countries have pledged \$1.1 billion to Mozambique at a three day meeting of the World Bank Consultative Group on Mozambique in early December. This sum will cover the 1992 financial needs for ongoing economic and social programs in the country. The meeting welcomed government programs to privatize many large state companies "as an important step in redefining the role of government to one of strategic macroeconomic management, while enhancing private sector initiative in economic production." (*Mozambique Update* 3/7/92)

REGULOS RE-ESTABLISHED BY RENAMO

Renamo, in an attempt to extend its administration over the Imala area, has been trying to reinstate traditional chieftainships. Under Portuguese rule, these "regulos" were used as rural tax collectors and enforcers of colonial will. Refugees from Imala said that Renamo has appointed regulos for at least three settlements in the area. The regulos were chosen by Renamo leaders who made sure these individuals were trusted by local peasantry. (*Mozambique Information Office*, 3/19/92)

PRIVATIZED MEDIA IN MOZAMBIQUE

As Angola prepares for capitalist competition with the launching of private newspapers and radio stations, Mozambique isn't far behind. The forthcoming launch of the country's first private newspaper was announced last week by a Maputo-based journalist's cooperative called Media-Coop. Media-Coop has ambitious plans in periodical publishing, radio and video, and hopes to expand into other parts of the Southern African Market. (*SouthScan*, 2/21/92)

THIRD PROTOCOL ESTABLISHES ELECTORAL PROCESS

The protocol on Mozambique's future electoral law was signed in Rome on 12 March 1992. The signing of the protocol, between the Government and Renamo, marked the end of the tenth round of peace talks, which had been in progress for over seven weeks. The two parties agreed to postpone discussion of several controversial topics until later in negotiations. (*Mozambique Information Office*, 3/19/92)

DE KLERK STRENGTHENED BY REFERENDUM

Johannesburg, March 18, 1992 - A whites-only referendum by South Africa's 3.3 million white voters has enhanced Frederik de Klerk's ability to both continue steering the current state machinery and negotiate a future dispensation. Responding to the question "Do you support a continued process of negotiations?", de Klerk was given a "yes" vote of 68.7% compared to a "no" vote of 31.3%. (*Christian Science Monitor*, 3/19/92)

LANGUAGE DISPUTE IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

In a decision to change the official liturgical language of Beira Catholic churches to Ndau, a minority language in the city, Archbishop Jaime Goncalves began a language dispute which eventually closed one parish church in a Beira suburb. Speakers of Sena, the majority language, feel alienated.

Unamo (Mozambique National Union) president Carlos Reis questions how Archbishop Goncalves can help solve the war "if at the same time he is defending tribal and linguistic prejudices in Beira." There are currently only two places in Mozambique where the use of Ndau is compulsory: the Catholic churches of Beira and the camps of Renamo, where most of the top military leaders are Ndau speakers. (*Mozambique Information Office*, 3/19/92)

MOZAMBIKAN RUNNER TO OLYMPICS

Mozambican athlete Maria de Lurdes Mutola was named 1991's sixth best world runner in the 800 meters by *Track and Field* newsmagazine. Mutola, second time track and field champion of the All African Games, will represent Mozambique in the 1992 Olympic Games in Spain. (*Mozambique Update*, 3/7/92)

THE WASHINGTON OFFICE ON AFRICA has done a major mobilization for Mozambique by calling for hearings on US support for Renamo. It urges you to call House African Subcommittee chair Mervyn Dymally to request hearings on Mozambique. US policy makers condemn Renamo atrocities but a network of Renamo supporters, US-based ultra-right conservatives, does exist. Hearings on the current situation are an important educational vehicle and serve to draw attention to continued private support for Renamo. Pressure on Policy makers and international institutions must be kept up to bring an end to this devastating war and to increase support for Mozambique as it prepares for reconstruction.

FOOD CRISIS IN TIMES OF DROUGHT & WAR

The Mozambique Government, the UN and SADCC (Southern African Development Coordination Conference) are meeting in Maputo to assess the amount of food aid needed by the drought-stricken countries of Southern Africa and to develop methods of transporting this aid to the people of Mozambique and to those of neighboring land-locked countries.

Food distribution within Mozambique is threatened by the Renamo bandits, who have frequently attacked food aid vehicles in a deliberate attempt to hinder the distribution of relief supplies and to use hunger as a weapon in its war of destabilization. Cooperation Minister Jacinto Veloso, at a Maputo press conference on the food crisis on March 11, proposed the establishment of "corridors of peace", through which food aid could reach the people without fear of ambush from Renamo. (*Mozambique Information Office*, 3/19/92)

MAGAIA NAMED NOTICIAS EDITOR

Mozambican writer Albino Magaia was named general managing editor on "Noticias", the most influential daily newspaper in Mozambique. Magaia, a poet, columnist and early supporter of the FRELIMO party is known for working for the independent weekly "Tempo" magazine for about 25 years before becoming its chief-editor. Observers believe that his presence in the paper will give it a new dynamism and refreshing independent view of news and analysis. (*Mozambique Update*, 3/7/92)

SPECIAL: ANGOLA

UNITA ADMITS KILLING UNITA MEMBERS

A special commission UNITA report released March 23 by Jonas Savimbi, the US-backed UNITA leader, admits that the abuses have taken place and various UNITA leaders have been killed. Savimbi blamed the killings on defected UNITA commander Miguel Puna. A related story by Savimbi biographer Fred Bridgland reveals that "Tito" Chingunji, UNITA's chief representative to the USA, missing for many months, was killed by Savimbi. Bridgland further asserts that, "Scores of UNITA members" have been killed over the past 15 years. He cites as an example Tito Chingunji's parents being murdered in the mid-80's by being repeatedly run over by a truck. (*Washington Post*, 3/26/92 & 3/29/92)

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