

'YOU DON'T ASK A SLAVE IF HE WANTS TO BE FREE'

THE 11TH SUMMIT CONFERENCE OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY WAS HELD IN MOGADISHU IN JUNE. OUR PRESIDENT, COMRADE SAMORA MACHEL, ADDRESSED THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT, EXPLAINING FRELIMO'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PORTUGUESE REGIME'S LATEST MANOEUVRES. HERE WE PUBLISH EXCERPTS FROM HIS SPEECH.

It is our belief that this session will mark a new and decisive stage in the final eradication of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. Conditions to enable our continent to rid itself of the most reactionary and barbarous, the most decadent and corrupt form of foreign domination are more favourable than ever.

In Mozambique, the sustained political action of FRELIMO has made it possible for our clear and correct line to be followed by all the people of Mozambique, from the Rovuma to the Maputo.

The justness of our cause and struggle have won the complete adherence of the masses living in the zones still under enemy military occupation, as evidenced by the demonstrations that constantly take place in all the urban centres.

Without any distinction, Mozambicans of all races and ethnic groups, creeds and social backgrounds, young and old, men and women, are demanding national independence and identify themselves fully with the principles and programme of FRELIMO.

This determination and unity of the people of Mozambique, forged in clandestine struggle, in suffering and torture, in the prisons and concentration camps is what has made possible the constant expansion of the armed struggle for national liberation.

In 10 years of people's war, under the leadership of FRELIMO, the determined and united people of Mozambique have



President Samora addressing the O.A.U. Summit

been able to crush Portuguese colonial aggression.

Thus on 11th May last, during a press conference in Lourenço Marques, General Francisco da Costa Gomes, Chief of Staff of the Portuguese Armed Forces stated:

«The Armed Forces have reached the limits of neuro-psychological exhaustion».

The victory of the people of Mozambique is above all a victory of Africa's united struggle. It is the result of the heroic struggle of the peoples of Angola, Guiné-Bissau and Mozambique who, with arms in hand, are neutralising and destroying the colonial army of aggression.

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In recent weeks, the Portuguese colonial Government has taken the initiative in starting talks with the PAIGC and FRELIMO, the authentic and legitimate representatives of the peoples of the Republic of Guiné-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands and Mozambique.

This is certainly a positive attitude, and it is in accordance with the constantly

expressed desire of our peoples and of the whole of Africa that the fundamental antagonism between ourselves and colonialism should be resolved through dialogue.

However, for the dialogue to be fruitful and not just a scenario intended to demobilise our peoples and world opinion, certain fundamental principles must be respected.

The right to total and complete independence and territorial integrity is not negotiable. It is an inalienable right of the peoples which Portugal should recognise without ambiguity or limitations.

In this respect, we wish to express our disappointment at the Portuguese manoeuvres aimed at avoiding recognition of the Republic of Guiné-Bissau, a State which has been recognised by the whole of Africa and by more than two-thirds of the members of the International Community.

These manoeuvres obviously demonstrate the lack of sincerity and the bad faith of the Portuguese colonial government.

Moreover, Portugal's insistence on holding a referendum in our countries is a part of the same plan.

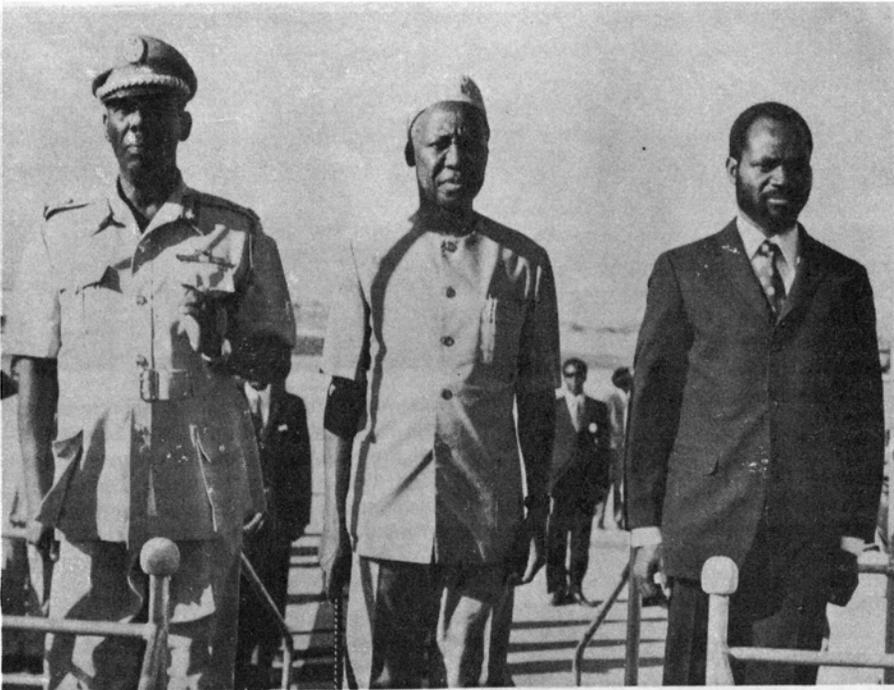
If such a referendum was valid before our peoples took up arms, it lost all meaning the day armed struggles were launched 13 years ago in Angola, 11 years ago in the Republic of Guiné-Bissau and 10 years ago in Mozambique.

The sacrifices accepted and the steadfastness and determination of the masses in the course of one of the most cruel wars in history, have clearly demonstrated the will of our peoples.

The day they took up arms, our peoples affirmed their self-determination in opting for national independence, and regaining the historical initiative they were deprived of by colonial domination.

When a people so clearly expresses their will, to raise doubts about their decision is to insult those who have sacrificed so much and those who have laid down lives.

The United Nations has, in fact, understood this and has constantly called upon Portugal to enter into negotiations with



The President of FRELIMO and President Nyerere of Tanzania, after their arrival at Mogadishu Airport, accompanied by President Siad Barre of Somalia.

the Liberation Movements on the basis of the right to self-determination and independence.

By recognising our organisations as the authentic representatives of our peoples and the legitimacy of our struggle, the United Nations has given concrete expression to the reality brought home by the armed struggle for freedom: the peoples under colonial domination have earned their right to self-determination and affirmed their inalienable right to national independence.

The present attitude of the Portuguese Government is therefore not in keeping with existing realities.

One does not ask a slave whether he wants to be free, especially after he has rebelled, and still less if one is a slave owner.

The Portuguese Armed Forces Movement itself realised this and therefore did not wait for a referendum from Marcello Caetano, but took over power, thus creating the conditions for genuine democratic life in Portugal.

In Mozambique, only FRELIMO, which is engaged in destroying colonialism, is equal to the task of establishing the democratic process, as can be seen from the actual life in the liberated areas.

We should also add that having proved in 10 years of war that our struggle has never been aimed against any people or race, since colonialism has no colour just as imperialism has no country, FRELIMO has the political and moral capacity to assert that it guarantees the lives, integrity and legitimate interests of Portuguese citizens in Mozambique. Respect for these principles is an integral part of our political line, and not therefore a product of any tactics or concessions.

It is within this context that we are prepared to continue, as scheduled, our talks with Portugal, which, according to the joint communique of FRELIMO and the Portuguese government, are due to resume in the first half of July in Lusaka, on African soil.

But for these preliminary talks to develop into negotiations, in other words, for Portugal in its dialogue with FRELIMO to respect the right of peoples and nations to freedom and independence, to respect the aspirations of the people of Mozambique and the stand of Africa, Portugal must:

1. Recognise FRELIMO as the legitimate representative of the people of Mozambique in accordance with the relevant OAU and UN resolutions.

2. Recognise the right of the people of Mozambique to total and complete independence in the whole of their territory.

3. Accept the principle of the transfer of the power it still exercises to the institutions representing the people of Mozambique.

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We are entering a decisive period of the African struggle against Portuguese colonialism. We feel that we should at this moment tell you what the people of Mozambique expect from their African brothers.

Our liberation war must continue, which means that your material, financial, political, diplomatic and moral support is more necessary today than ever before, it is decisive.

It was our struggle, supported by Africa and mankind, which gave rise to the present crisis of colonialism. The continuation of the struggle will smash colonialism once and for all by thwarting its machinations.

We say therefore that the «blood bank» which Africa has placed at our disposal should be maintained and developed. We need your unwavering support even more now than in the past.

The political, diplomatic, economic and cultural isolation of the Portuguese colonial regime has been one of Africa's major weapons in its liberation struggle.

Since the liberation struggle has not yet come to an end, Africa as a whole must enforce and increase the isolation of Portugal and pursue the struggle to compel Portugal's allies to stop supporting Portuguese colonialism.

Any hesitation in this matter will only make it easy for the enemy to continue their machinations.

Defeated on the military front, the enemy are trying to regain lost ground on the political and diplomatic fronts through their manoeuvres.

Africa as a whole must engage in the battle to expose and neutralise the enemy's machinations.

To frustrate the colonialist machinations and defeat the imperialist offensive we must adopt a dynamic and operative strategy.

Now more than ever, our vigilance and unity are the weapons with which we will tear the camouflage from the enemy's face, laying bare their manoeuvres.