

# 'We must defend our country under attack and support the just cause of the Zimbabwe people'

The following speech was delivered on 3 March 1976 by President Samora Machel, in the presence of the Council of Ministers, and leaders of the Party, the State and the FPLM (Peoples' Liberation Forces of Mozambique).

Comrade members of the Central Committee; members of the Executive Committee;  
Comrade members of the Council of Ministers;  
Comrade officers of the Party, State and armed forces;  
Excellencies, Ambassadors and Charge d'Affaires in the Peoples' Republic of Mozambique;  
Members of the national and foreign press;  
Compatriots:

In the name of the Central Committee of FRELIMO and of the Council of Ministers of the Peoples' Republic of Mozambique, I am here to inform you that Mozambican men and women, old people and children, are being killed, our people are being massacred, the PRM is being assaulted.

The criminal and irresponsible regime of Ian Smith has unleashed a war of aggression against the P.R. Mozambique. Less than



eighteen months after the signing of the Peace agreement with Portugal, the Mozambican people are again forced to face the desperate acts of aggression of a colonial-fascist.

After a long series of armed provocations against the PRM, on the night of the 23/24 February, the forces of Ian Smith's racist regime launched a large-scale attack against our national territory, concentrated on the villages of Pafuri and Mavue. The attack began at 2100 hours (local) on the 23rd and lasted through the day of the 24th. On the 24th bombing raids took place. Jets, bombers, helicopters, artillery and infantry took part in the attack.

As a result of the criminal attack by the racist forces against the Pafuri area, the following died: Albertina Maguguzo Cossa, 36; Lucas Valentim Judicio, 36; Picane Milane, 29; Laurentina Valentim, 18 months. The following were wounded: Ester Judicio, 60; Muhlave Mulave, 48; Feniassa Vilanculos, 22; Phefu Mulave, 21; Berta Nhampule, 19 years. Sabao Munhangane, 65, is missing.

In the attack on Mavue three women and a child were murdered and a man and an eleven-year old child were injured. The fighters of the Peoples' Liberation Forces of Mozambique, supported by the paramilitary forces of Alfandega and Migracao, repelled the invader, inflicting severe damage and shooting down two jets and one helicopter. Ten fighters suffered injuries. Two other comrades sacrificed their lives in defence of the People and of our sovereignty.

This act constitutes open aggression, an act of war. It is a crime against Peace and a war crime as defined by the International Nuremburg Tribunal.

Why does Ian Smith attack us? Why does the racist Salisbury regime make war on us? What makes it murder women and children, burn houses, massacre peaceable peasants?

To answer this question correctly, we have to say that Ian Smith does this because it is what he has always done against Mozambique. In 1965, when he proclaimed his pseudo-independence, Ian Smith joined Portuguese colonialism's war of aggression against our people. At that time his troops were sent into the Province of Niassa.

Since then, the Salisbury regime has become accustomed to committing crimes against our People, becoming a vicious aggressor against Mozambique. Up till the end of the colonial-imperialist war, Ian Smith's forces took part in the gravest crimes against our People, in Niassa, in Tete, in Manica.

Ian Smith's soldiers played an active role in the sadly notorious massacre of Mucumbura. In August-September 1973, the Salisbury troops participated actively in the great three-pronged offensive unleashed in Zumbo district. In March-April 1974, a great number of Rhodesian planes were shot down north



of the Zambezi while bombing people and property in the liberated areas.

If the acts of provocation and armed aggression of the Salisbury regime diminished during the Transitional period in favour of subversion, recruitment and training of armed bands of mercenaries and assassins, they were rapidly and progressively intensified in the period after Independence until they reached the present phase of a war of aggression.

Without attempting to make an exhaustive list of the enemy actions in the last six months, we can emphasise the following:

### In Tete Province

In the second half of August 1975 a Rhodesian group was detained in the Albufeira area of Cabora Bassa trying to smuggle into the Republic of Mozambique a sum equivalent to 35 million contos in Rhodesian money, destined to buy national currency on the black market.

On 27 August racist troops entered the locality of Genda in the

Luia area and kidnapped a civilian. Later, on the 30th, in the same place, they murdered a peasant and wounded two others.

On 1 September, racist troops set up an ambush in our territory against the force patrolling the Luia and Mucumbura area, and wounded three comrades.

On 20 January 1976, again in the Luia area, after the enemy had mined the roads, one of our patrols stumbled on an anti-personnel mine and one of our fighters lost a leg. Soon afterwards, two vehicles carrying enemy troops entered our national territory, supported by two helicopters and two reconnaissance planes.

From 17 February onwards, the air force began systematically violating Mozambican airspace in the areas of Mucumbura, Luia, Chioco and Changara.

## **In Manica Province**

On 5 August 1975, in Vista Alegre, enemy troops opened fire on people working in the fields. One of our patrols went to their aid and neutralized the enemy fire. On the following day the racist forces, supported by a helicopter-gunship, penetrated about one kilometre inside our national territory. The gunship opened fire, mortally wounding one of our soldiers. The enemy was repelled at 13.30 hours, having entered at about 09.00 hours.

On 11 August, in the same area, a group of enemy infantrymen penetrated into our national territory and moved in the direction of Vista Alegre. Our forces intervened, forcing the enemy to withdraw.

On 13 August, a helicopter violated our air space in Vista Alegre. At the same time an enemy infantry force which had entered our national territory at Timba to commit crimes was dealt with by one of our patrols and had to retreat, leaving behind four dead.

On 28 August, in the same area, the enemy opened fire, wounding a soldier. On 31 August, the enemy came into Timba, near the Niangalula river and ransacked a shop after wounding one child in arms and another on its mother's back and murdering a peasant named Penzura Apalekwamanja. The racist soldiers remained on national territory from 0900 to 1400 hours, opening fire several times.

On 14 September, at Rotamba, the enemy opened fire with 120mm mortars. Our forces replied and silenced the enemy. The enemy suffered four casualties.

On 16 December, at Inhamacaze, the racist forces killed two civilians.

On 9 January 1976, an enemy aircraft violated our airspace at Espungabera, at 10.30 hours. Later, that evening, enemy aircraft bombed a neighbouring area.

On 28 January an enemy company backed up by four helicopters and three planes penetrated 1½ kms. into the Penhamlonga area.

On 8 February, at 04.00 hours, the enemy entered the Espungabera area with 10 helicopter-gunships and strafed the Mude area.

## In Gaza Province

On 11 November 1975 four aircraft violated our airspace in Choa for 15 minutes before being driven off by fire from our anti-aircraft batteries.

On 4 February 1976, at about 24.00 hours, members of the racist police trying to penetrate into the Malvern area were repelled by our fighters.

On 6, 7, 13, 14 and 15 February, our forces were compelled to open fire on enemy aircraft which violated our airspace.

On 14 February, at about 24.00 hours, the enemy penetrated into the Pafuri area with infantry and artillery troops and began harassing civilians there, kidnapping one peasant and wounding two others, a man and a woman. The FPLM, supported by customs police, intervened at 4.20 hours, when two jet aircraft and three helicopters came to the enemy's aid. In the course of the fighting our forces at about 13.00 hours put out of action one bomber which later crashed about 10km inside enemy territory.

Comrades, excellencies, compatriots, this incomplete and brief account of the acts of provocation and aggression committed by Ian Smith's armed forces along the frontier between the PRM and the British colony of Southern Rhodesia demonstrate the racist regime's persistence in wanting to unleash a war of aggression against our people and our state. The oppressive regime, which is facing an armed uprising from the people of Zimbabwe and is isolated internationally, is seeking to settle its internal strife by spreading the conflict. The Republic of Botswana and the Republic of Zambia have, like us, been the victims of countless criminal acts by the Salisbury regime.

Ian Smith's aim is to deny the justness of the Zimbabwe people's liberation war by trying to make the world believe that if there is war in Zimbabwe it is because foreign forces want it. By acting in this manner, Ian Smith is only emulating the Portuguese colonialists and other aggressors who have always denied the existence of liberation wars.

Ian Smith is trying to put out the fire he lit himself with his oppression by committing crimes aimed at involving other countries in the conflict he started in his own land. Like a lunatic, he is seeking to put out fire with petrol. Ian Smith wants to shift the strife and the fighting from his territory to our country.

In his criminal attack on 24 February, Ian Smith deliberately violated South African airspace in order to attack us from South Africa so as to draw our attention away from the target and so

provoke an even greater conflict on a sub-continental scale. Smith is trying to provoke a general war throughout Southern Africa by every means in the criminal hope of delaying his downfall by increasing the scale of destruction and death.

He will fail, as will all those who rise against the people, all those who dare attack the people. Ian Smith will be swept away from history, as other colonialists were before him. The war in Zimbabwe is the product of Ian Smith's regime and its exploitation and oppression of the people of Zimbabwe. And this war will end in an inevitable victory for the people of Zimbabwe.

Comrades, compatriots, we have liberated our Fatherland from colonialism. Today we must defend our Fatherland from attack. We must support the just struggle of our brother people of Zimbabwe. In order to carry out our task we need the invincible force of unity and organization. The immensely creative energy of the People organized and led by FRELIMO defends our freedom. Let us apply our creative energy to defend our independence and support our Zimbabwean brothers.

For this:

1. We must build air-raid shelters in the villages, urban districts, schools, hospitals, factories, offices, shops, farms, wells, rivers and all other places. With these shelters we shall protect ourselves from enemy attacks. The shelters will have to be built after normal working hours. We must intensify the creation of communal villages, to enable us to set up a better defence organization. The FPLM will have to raise their political and military operational level and support the masses in their defence organization.

2. We must organize our means of production. During our war of national liberation we always maintained that production is the backbone of war and that war creates the conditions to improve production. For this reason, we must speed up the creation of communal villages where, when we are organized, we shall be able to produce and to defend ourselves against the enemy.

We must increase production in our factories. We must step up our work and work more efficiently in the ports, railways and civil aviation. We must be speedier and more efficient in building and repairing roads, homes and other buildings. Every worker should discuss with his colleagues ways and means of producing more, better and quicker.

3. Because of enemy aggression, some economic activities may be forced to halt or to lower their production level and the effect of this may be that some of our working compatriots may also temporarily lose their jobs. It is the duty of each one of us to support these people by creating conditions which will enable them to find work. The main task for the absorption of all our

workers lies in the rural areas, in agriculture and animal husbandry. All those whose jobs are affected may, with State assistance, organize themselves in communal villages and begin their own arable and livestock production.

4. How should we fulfil our internationalist duty towards Zimbabwe? By supporting the Zimbabwe struggle, we are defending Mozambique. By supporting and developing the struggle of our Zimbabwe brothers we are keeping the enemy away from our frontiers, consolidating our independence and creating conditions for the establishment of peace.

Thus we say that support and solidarity are not charity or favour, but mutual assistance between forces fighting for the same objective.

Our support for the just fight of our Zimbabwe brothers is: moral support; political support; and material support.

We shall support them morally and politically by organizing ourselves in our 'Grupos Dinamizadores' to study and learn from the Zimbabwe struggle. We shall express our support by singing songs about our internationalist duty towards the Zimbabwe struggle; we shall support it by explaining the struggle to our people and discussing it with them; we shall support it by accepting sacrifices and overcoming hardships in order to fulfil our internationalist obligations.

We shall support it materially by producing; by producing to feed and clothe our people; by producing to feed and clothe the fighters who are defending our frontiers; by producing to feed and clothe our brother Zimbabwe guerrillas. We shall support it materially by reducing our imports and by ceasing to import what is not essential to the country's economy.

We shall support it materially by making a monthly contribution to the solidarity fund which we set up on 3 February, Mozambique Heroes' Day.

Comrades, excellencies, compatriots, the Mozambique People's Republic has been in existence for just over eight months. From the beginning it has declared quite firmly that its internationalist duty is not a matter of compromises or negotiations.

We are fervent advocates of peace. We have come through 10 years of a colonial-imperialist war of aggression. We are therefore very conscious of the sacrifices which the defence of our freedom and independence demand.

But we accept all this today as we did yesterday. Our frontiers have been sealed with the blood of our People and our internationalist duty was born of the countless sacrifices of the peoples of the whole world.

Conscious of this reality, the FRELIMO Central Committee and the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Mozambique have given me a mandate to take the appropriate measures designed



to safeguard the inviolability of our frontiers, and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Mozambique People's Republic. Similarly, they have given me a mandate to take the decisions that may be necessary to ensure the internationalist support of FRELIMO, our State and our People for the just liberation struggle of our brother Zimbabwe people.

The acts of aggression of Ian Smith have already mingled our blood with the blood of the Zimbabwe people.

The Mozambique People's Republic, to support the liberation struggle of the Zimbabwe people in accordance with the decisions of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, with effect from today, 3 March 1976, closes all its frontiers with the British colony of Southern Rhodesia; prohibits any form of communication with the territory dominated by the racist regime; bans the passage through its territory and airspace of any traffic of persons and goods originating from or bound for Southern Rhodesia.

The PRM fully applies the sanctions against the British colony of Southern Rhodesia. The PRM confiscates all assets belonging to the illegal regime, to firms with headquarters in the territory of Southern Rhodesia, and to citizens living in our territory who recognize the illegal regime.

Men and women of Mozambique, on 25 September 1964, in order to liberate the land and its people, the oppressed Fatherland, the FRELIMO Central Committee proclaimed a general uprising by the Mozambican People. Today, in order to guarantee the defence of our national territory, the FRELIMO Central Committee again calls upon the People of Mozambique, from the Rovuma to the Maputo, to defend the Fatherland from attack.

Excellencies, ambassadors and charges d'affaires accredited to the People's Republic of Mozambique, all your countries have firmly and unanimously condemned the racist Ian Smith rebellion. Your countries have prescribed sanctions against the criminal regime. The measures taken by our State correspond to the need of all mankind to live free from colonial and racist domination.

This is a fight of the People of Mozambique and also of the whole of Africa and the whole of preogressive mankind. We are sure that your Peoples and your States will rally in solidarity behind us at this difficult hour when our country is the victim of aggression unleashed by the criminal minority regime.

We look to the continent of Africa to be with us and support us in the defence of our sovereignty and in the liberation of the continent. We look to our other natural allies, the socialist countries, to be with us as they have always been, without fail assisting our working masses to defend their revolution and to fulfil their internationalist duty.

We address ourselves to all States which cherish freedom and

peace and call on them to help us defend our freedom and restore true peace throughout our region.

Comrades, compatriots, we have begun a new phase of our revolution. A phase in which our sacrifice and our blood as in the past will go to cultivate, cement and consolidate our unity, our independence and our revolutionary achievements.

The fighters of the FPLM and the popular masses will unitedly defeat the enemy and smash the aggressor who has broken the peace and massacred our People.

We pay glowing tribute to all our comrades who have sacrificed their lives and, inspired by their example, united by FRELIMO, and by developing our production and reinforcing our vigilance, we shall build our victory.

We declare firmly - the struggle continues.

As in the past, we repeat - independence or death, we shall win. The struggle continues!

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