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A CONQUEST THAT NEEDS TO BE DEFENDED - AIM Special Service

Mozambique and South Africa will shortly be signing a Non-Aggression and Good Neighbourliness Accord. What could ~~be~~ ~~the~~ perhaps be the last meeting between the two countries before the signing of the accord took place in Cape Town last Friday.

In Cape Town the two ^{sides} ~~parts~~ agreed over the principal aspects of the agreement. Its main content lays down that no one of the two states ^{should} ~~should~~ serve as a base for acts of aggression or violence against the other. It also lays out that no one of the countries will use the territory of a third state for the same ends.

These are the most recent facts. But for them to have reached this far there had been a very long and laborious process of ^{diplomatic} ~~contacts~~ at the same time that the South African regime maintained an undeclared war against Mozambique.

These contacts date back ^{to} ~~from~~ the time of National Independence and in them were involved, from the Mozambican side, Sergio Vieira, who was at that time Director of the Presidency of the Republic, and, on the South African side, Brand Fourie, the then Director-General of Foreign Affairs.

At the same time there had been meetings for the resolution of questions related to railways and ports as well as to the area of competence of the criminal police of the two countries.

The first two ministerial ^{level} ~~meetings~~ took place at Komatipoort in December 1982 and later in May 1983. [^] these two meetings Mozambique put forward the proposal that the two countries should establish relations based on coexistence. The Mozambican delegations to the two meetings at Komatipoort added another fundamental point: there could be no state to state relationship with economic repercussions, for example, without there being a security agreement in the first place. This basically envisaged South Africa stopping to organise the armed bands.

On the diplomatic plane South Africa was talking to Mozambique but in the field of conflict it continued to organise acts of ^{armed} ~~banditry~~ and launching direct aggression.

At the same time, in Western Europe and the United States of America, the governments and influential political forces persistedⁱⁿ analysing southern Africa in function of the criteria imposed by the powerful South African propaganda machine.

This situation made the Central Committee of the Party Frelimo to adopt three decisions at its 10th Session in August 1982:

- Transformation of the economy of the country into a war economy;
- Launch a coordinated offensive of the Armed Forces of Mozambique (FPLM);
- Launch a diplomatic offensive in the West in order to break Mozambique's isolation in relation to the Western governments.

In the middle of 1983 the positive effects of the actions of the FPLM were already being felt and in October last year President Samora Machel visited six European countries, ^{among them} ~~among which~~ five Western ones, thus fulfilling the decision of the Central Committee.

This visit is of crucial importance for understanding what happened later. In Portugal, France and Britain in particular, the leaders there ultimately understood one thing: Mozambique is an effectively independent country, a tenacious defender of its sovereignty. They also understood that Mozambique will not accept serving as a base for any other country for any aggression against South Africa.

In ~~other~~ other words, the socialist policy of peace, of coexistence and cooperation is not a slogan, a constitutional clause, but rather a policy applied in the field of international relations.

A few days after the return of President Samora Machel, Roelof Botha, The South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, left for Europe where he found the doors tightly shut. The Mozambican diplomatic ~~is~~ ^{an} offensive had produced some effects. The world had started understanding the true nature of the conflict in southern Africa.

It is within this context that President Samora Machel received the first emissaries carrying messages ~~from~~ from South Africa last November.

South Africa was requesting the reactivation of the dialogue that Mozambique had started. What happened since then is already widely known:

the Mbabane, Maputo, Pretoria meetings, once again Maputo and again, last Friday, the Cape Town meetings

For many people all this will appear as a surprise. But for those who have been monitoring the crisis in the South African economy and the set backs in the field of its military option, none of this will have come as a surprise.

In Mozambique, in Angola, in Namibia and in Zimbabwe South Africa has not succeeded in setting back the wheel of history. If South Africa's strategy is to achieve through the *economy* what it failed through arms, for Mozambique the agreement that it is going to ^{be} ^{ed} sign is the culmination of many years of a policy of ~~em~~ (co)existence.

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