

ITEM NO. 99/08/01 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - NATURAL RESOURCES

The Mozambican, South African and Swazi governments signed an agreement in the Swazi town of Pigs Peak concerning three studies into the basin of the Incomati river. These studies will be financed by Denmark to the tune of 350,000 US dollars, and are the necessary prelude to implementing the Incomati Integrated Development Programme, agreed between the three southern African states and the Danish aid agency, DANIDA. The studies must determine exactly how the river and its tributaries are currently used, and will estimate how much water is available in the Incomati basin. The Incomati is the major water source for the whole region of the Maputo Development Corridor.

From: Agreement on Incomati Basin / AIM / 1 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/03 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - HEALTH - LEPROSY ERADICATION

Mozambique's National Leprosy Eradication Campaign, that took place between 7 April and 30 June, confirmed 1,695 of the 23,586 suspect cases tested, according to the chief doctor of the Health Ministry's tuberculosis and leprosy section, Paula Perdigao. She said that the campaign covered 44 districts in the northern provinces of Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula, and parts of Zambezia. The largest number of cases was reported in Nampula, with 863, followed by Cabo Delgado, with 410, Zambezia with 330, and Niassa, with 94. "Those who have started treatment should not abandon it, because the treatment is long and requires a lot of work on the part of everyone", said Perdigao, adding that Mozambique expects to attain the target of less than one case for every thousand inhabitants by the year 2000, although she posed some doubts about Nampula province, which still reports a large number of cases. Leprosy treatment takes between six and 12 months, depending on the stage of the disease. In 1998 the number of leprosy cases was estimated at 7,375 countrywide, 3,900 of which were new, compared with 10,896 reported in 1997, of which 4,195 were new.

From: Leprosy Eradication Campaign / AIM / 3 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/06 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - ECONOMIC CONDITIONS - AGRICULTURE

Mozambican Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi denied that there was any crisis in agricultural marketing in the northern province of Niassa. This followed claims by the delegate of the state marketing body, the Mozambique Cereals Institute (ICM), in the Niassa town of Cuamba, that the ICM did not have enough money to buy surplus maize, and that food might rot in farmers' barns. "I guarantee that the Niassa maize will not stay in the farmers' hands", Mocumbi told a Maputo press briefing. "Markets for the grain exist both inside and outside the country. There should be no concern about this". He pointed out that "gigantic efforts" had been made to repair roads in Niassa, and efforts were also under way to rehabilitate the railway from the provincial capital, Lichinga, to Cuamba. Mocumbi did not believe there was a real shortage of funds. This year "the commercial banks do have resources for agricultural marketing, particularly for grain", he said. He added that the

government had ensured the ICM had funds to start the marketing campaign. Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, "went to key marketing centres, and worked with the operators, including the ICM, guaranteeing resources for the initial period of the campaign", said Mocumbi.

From: Mocumbi denies marketing crisis / AIM / 6 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/09 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS - LITERATURE

The Swiss co-operation agency has created a fund in Mozambique to support the publication of works produced by researchers, academics and all citizens who wish to make Mozambican culture better known. For that purpose, a public tender has been launched, inviting citizens to submit proposals for work to be published in the areas of human and social sciences, with particular emphasis on culture and cultural identity, dictionaries, vocabularies and conversation guides in Mozambican vernacular languages, investigative journalism, and collections of poetry and oral narratives. Speaking during a Maputo press conference, Yolanda Arcelina, Swiss co-operation programme officer in Mozambique, said that her country has made 100,000 US dollars available for the publication of books in Mozambique, this year. The manuscripts can be presented either in Portuguese or in any other Mozambican language, but if the work is presented in a language other than Portuguese, it is the author's responsibility to supervise the translation into Portuguese. A consultative commission, which has already been set up, and which includes Nelson Saute, Emilio Araujo, Antonio Sopa, Fatima Mendonca, and Joaquim Salvador will do the selection of texts.

From: Swiss support for Mozambican publications / AIM / 9 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/09 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - WOMEN - FOOD SECURITY

Mozambican Agriculture Minister Carlos Agostinho do Rosario argued that more resources should be placed in the hands of women, since they "have the greatest responsibility" in ensuring food security for their families. Speaking at the opening of a national seminar on food security in Maputo, Rosario stressed that increasing the resources under the control of women will make it more likely that the country's food security programme will be successful. He said that about 90 per cent of Mozambican women work in agriculture, representing more than 70 per cent of this sector's workforce. He noted, however, that 41 per cent of the households headed by women have less than one hectare to cultivate. Rosario said that this is why the government, through its Rural Development Programme (PROAGRI), is paying particular attention to the role of women in reducing food insecurity and poverty.

From: Minister wants more resources in women's hands / AIM / 9 August 1999

Southern African News Features

A SARDC Service

30 September 1999

NUMBING AIDS STATISTICS PROMPT BILLION-DOLLAR CRISIS FUND

by Tinashe Madava

A billion-dollar World Bank initiative launched in Lusaka recently could serve as a blueprint for future aid to Africa's efforts against the HIV/AIDS pandemic by making it a focus of all development efforts.

The plan, called "Intensifying Action against HIV/AIDS in Africa: Responding to a Development Crisis", would allocate up to US \$3 billion annually to the fight against the disease in sub-Saharan Africa, the worst-hit region in the world.

"The strategy stands on four pillars (from) advocacy to positioning HIV/AIDS as a central development issue and to increase and sustain an intensified response," the Bank's regional vice-president for Africa, Callisto Madawo, said at the launching ceremony.

Over 5,000 health experts and activists gathered in Lusaka recently for the 11th International Symposium on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted diseases repeatedly warned that the rapidly spreading disease could derail economic gains if countries do not form joint emergency efforts to curb its spread.

The region's statistics are chilling. Zimbabwe's life expectancy could drop from 61 to 41 in five years. An estimated quarter of adults in Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe are now HIV positive.

In South Africa alone it is estimated that there are about 1,500 new infections each day. In Zambia every teenager has a 60 percent chance of contracting the virus. There were according to the United Nations Aids programme (UNAIDS) 16,000 new infections each day in Africa during 1998, at least 50 percent of which were economically active people.

The appalling aspect of these mind-numbing figures is that Africa, with one-tenth of the world's population, has 95 percent of AIDS orphans and a cumulative death toll of 11 million. The pandemic now outstrips malaria as the top killer disease on the continent.

Aside from the obvious humanitarian tragedy of today's pandemic, the future of millions more will be blighted as the continent loses its most productive age group – those from their teens to mid-thirties – people who should be at the cutting edge of growth, development, information and technology and the hopes for Africa's renaissance.

Only through a concerted effort by all sectors of society beginning with national governments and their leaders to industry, science, academia, labour, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), church and business can some positive turnaround occur, the symposium agreed. However, many African countries have retreated in the face of the growing disaster.

Despite the urging of the AIDS activists, the opening of the Lusaka conference did not attract a single African head of state, including the host country's President Frederick Chiluba who was to have officially opened the annual global event but sent his vice-president instead. No explanation was given. None of the other 10 heads of state mentioned as key participants, attended the opening, but it is not clear if any of them were actually invited or by whom.

Michael Dingake as leader of the official opposition while BNF struggles to retain its two seats. There are many other opposition parties as well seeking some of the political spoils. The primary ones to watch, in addition to the two parties with seats in the Assembly, are the United National Front (UNF), a merger of four of minority parties, and the Botswana Alliance Movement (BAM) which is trying to unite a "hodge-podge" — as a political scientist calls them — of small parties.

The problem, says a long-time political reporter and editor of the leading weekly, *Mmegi*, Sechele Sechele, is that the political party scene is factionalised within the ruling party and split amongst the opposition. The political centre is overcrowded with pragmatists with long associations and connections to government and civil service.

While few doubt the BDF will win, the party is worried that its safe majority could be weakened. Sechele says it still depends on how the real issues can be exploited by the opposition and how united they become. In a strict two-party race, the opposition could easily win, the question being which parties would merge to carry the mantle of change.

"It is a struggle in the BDP between old blood and new blood. Mogae is careful, clever and competent but associated with Masire's 18 years of very conservative rule. BDF's real ace is Ian Khama who will undoubtedly succeed Mogae in one or two terms. He is the one out on the campaign trail every day. He has his father's name, he is an army general, an effective administrator, a chief in his own right and very popular in the rural areas," Sechele says.

The main opposition parties have their largest support in the urban centres of Gaborone, Maun and Francistown and environs but they also suffer from a need to revitalise, although they had been growing rapidly until the split between BNF and BCP.

Had the parties remained united, many think this election might have resulted in a near the possibly forcing a government of national unity. "Great for the people, they would have got their issues dealt with properly," says analyst Titus Mbuya. With its huge territory (581,730 sq km), diamond reserves and sprawling cattle posts, Botswana is

very rich. The diamond industry alone represents 40 percent of the country's GNP, 50 percent of government revenue and 70 percent of its foreign exchange. Its yearly profits are more than US\$750 million. The BDP government boasts that its US\$20 billion in foreign reserves is sufficient to cover two complete budgets and four years of imports. Fiscally prudent — to a fault many human rights and gender groups argue — it rarely runs a deficit. The pula is Africa's strongest currency.

Botswana is per capita one of the richest countries on the continent and yet, at the same time 46 percent of its people live in abject poverty, especially rural women and the indigenous San or Basarwa (as the majority Tswana-speaking people call them). Increasingly Botswana is becoming an urbanised nation and rural villages and communal lands are shrinking, creating a large number of urban poor as well. For these reasons, the opposition, most analysts and even the BDP regard rural and urban poverty and unemployment as the key election issues, related to which is the wide disparity between the ultra-rich and extremely poor, one of the widest in southern Africa.

Sechele argues that the opposition needs to become united and establish a base of trust among the highly traditional and conservative rural population which, although declining annually, still controls the majority of seats in the Assembly. "The BDP has a strangehold because of the chiefs and their power over the people but agriculture and particularly cattle, are in serious decline — 50 percent of peasants have none while 90 percent of the country's 3.7 million cattle are in the hands of the so-called cattle barons who constitute less than 10 percent of the rural population."

Only five percent of the GDP comes from agriculture and that is almost entirely cattle. This rural-urban split is pronounced with 50 percent of the population now living within 100 km of an urban centre, mainly Gaborone, where housing and infrastructure problems are growing, leaving people to live in ramshackle slums.

conference, in Maputo, to mark World Youth Day. Razak said that this fight necessarily implies the involvement of all of society in the education of young people "for healthier and more responsible sexual behaviour". Alongside the first celebrations of World Youth Day, the government, representatives of United Nations agencies, and national youth organisations organised a "march of struggle against HIV/AIDS".

From: Intensive Campaign Against HIV/AIDS / AIM / 11 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/11 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - REFUGEES

The Zimbabwean authorities have promised that there will be no further mass deportations of Mozambicans from Zimbabwe without prior warning. According to a press release from the Mozambican High Commission in Harare, the promise came at a meeting in the Zimbabwean capital of the sub-committee on security, immigration and labour between the two countries. The Mozambican government was angered when several hundred Mozambicans were suddenly deported from Zimbabwe in mid-July, without the Mozambican consular services being informed or involved in any way. The two delegations agreed that the Mozambicans deported in July, who were obliged to leave possessions in Zimbabwe, will be given the opportunity to reclaim them. The meeting also agreed on a gradual relaxation of entry visa requirements. The holders of diplomatic passports, businessmen and citizens who travel regularly between the two countries will now be granted multiple entry visas, instead of having to re-apply every time they want to visit the other country. The free movement of citizens between Mozambique is to be "a gradual process", and initially only holders of diplomatic passports will be exempted from paying for their multiple entry visas. The two delegations also agreed on the need to encourage migrant workers in the two countries "to regularise their employment and residence situation, in accordance with the immigration and labour legislation in effect in each country".

From: Mozambique and Zimbabwe discuss deportations / AIM / 11 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/11 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - INTER INSTITUTIONS COOPERATION - EDUCATION

Mozambican Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi said that an effective partnership between the largest higher education institution in the country, the Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM), the government and the private sector could only have good results in terms of the acquisition and expansion of knowledge. Speaking during the meeting between the three parties, Mocumbi said "The biggest challenges", and added, "are, on the one hand, the need of a systematic selection of actions to be carried out, and, on the other hand, the permanent quest for quality, efficiency and excellence in what we offer in our interchange". The meeting aims to deepen and reassess the grounds for partnership between the university and society, and redefine co-operation strategies for the future. The meeting will broach the main areas of the UEM's activities, namely teaching, research and extension in economics, engineering, agronomy, social science and others.

From: Partnership between UEM, Government and Private Sector / AIM / 11 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/12 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - HUMAN RIGHTS - SOUTHERN AFRICA - LAND MINES

A regional meeting of disabled women from member states of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) concluded in Maputo, that land mines still remain a serious social problem, even in those countries where there are no armed conflicts, and urged the governments of these countries and the international community to intervene urgently. Addressing the meeting, the deputy chairperson of the Southern African Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD), Rachel Kachaje, urged the governments of Southern African countries to urgently review their policies and join the Ottawa treaty outlawing anti-personnel land mines. "The banning of land mines is urgent, because these are weapons that sow suffering since, instead of hitting the enemy, they kill innocent people, mostly women and children", she said. Kachaje, who is a Zimbabwean victim of land mines, stressed the need for women in the region, be they disabled by land mines or not, to join the campaigns for the banning of these devices. The report of the Mozambican Association of the Disabled (ADEMO) to the meeting, says that of the thousands of victims of land mines in the country, including children, most have been left to their fate. According to the report, most of them are living in a "very difficult" socio-economic situation, without the benefit of psychological, physical or socio-economic reinsertion. The meeting of SADC disabled women was running under the theme "Equal opportunities, Legislation, Gender and the socio-economic Situation of the Victims of Land Mines".

From: Disabled women of Land Mines / AIM / 12 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/12 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - SOUTHERN AFRICA - INFORMATION - MINE VICTIMS

Mozambique is preparing to create a data bank on the victims of land mines in the country, that will mirror the situation of this population group, said the chairperson of the Mozambican Campaign against Land mines, Alberto Manhique. Speaking during a workshop that has gathered in Maputo disabled women from SADC member countries, Manhique said that the idea of creating the data bank is part of the government's efforts to improve the living conditions of disabled people, particularly the victims of land mines. He explained that with the data bank it would be possible to identify the kind of disability of each one of the victims and make his or her social and economic reintegration easier. "Efforts are under way for the project to be concluded by next year. It involves the Social Welfare Ministry, the Mozambican Campaign Against Land Mines and the National Demining Institute", he said.

From: Data Bank on mine victims to be created / AIM / 12 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/12 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS - OAU

OAU general secretary Salim Ahmed Salim has appointed Mozambique's Minister in the Presidency for Parliamentary Affairs, Francisco Madeira, as his special envoy to the Comoros. An OAU press release states that the appointment "is part of the efforts by the

He said that all development and poverty reduction programmes should take into account the Strategic Plan Against HIV/AIDS.

Meanwhile, the World Bank has promised to enter into partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support the Mozambican HIV/AIDS programme. "We take seriously all the challenges of the fight against HIV/AIDS," said James Coates, the World Bank representative in Mozambique.

The UNDP representative, Emmanuel de Casterle, said that his institution would lend unconditional support to the Mozambican programme. "It is possible to reverse the AIDS situation in the country, if the appropriate strategies are adopted," he said. (AIM)

World population reaches 6 billion

Six billion people will be alive in the world at the end of this year, an addition of a billion in only 12 years according to *The State of the World Population 1999 Report* which was launched on 22 September.

Of that six billion, about 200 million are in the 14-member Southern African Development Community (SADC) of which just over 50 percent are women.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) representative in Zimbabwe Etta Tadesse urged government and the international community to acknowledge gender discrimination.

"Population growth is not about being born only but survival," said Tadesse. Personal choice and collective action guarantees better health and longer life, she added. (SARDC)

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Scientists support the activists. They point to new and drug-resistant mutations of the virus which are appearing in the West where expensive symptom-suppressing and extremely expensive drugs plus massive educational campaigns had brought the disease under control, although there is no cure yet, they insist.

Drugs are simply not available in the developing world due to their high costs and, to date, activists have been unsuccessful in persuading companies to supply protein blocks and other drugs to the Third World at reduced prices. (SARDC)

ITEM NO. 99/09/10 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - POLITICAL PARTIES – LEGISLATION

The parliamentary group of Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party has said that accepting the new constitutional amendments proposed by the main opposition party, Renamo would be "unthinkable". The Frelimo reaction came in a declaration read out at a meeting of the ad-hoc parliamentary commission dealing with the constitution. The ad-hoc commission has worked for four years on redrafting the constitution, reaching a high degree of consensus between the three political forces represented, Frelimo, Renamo and the Democratic Union (UD) opposition coalition. But Renamo submitted a counter-proposal, which in several key areas frontally contradicted the positions Renamo had earlier accepted. This party is proposing the introduction of a new tier of government, that of "region", which would be in between the provincial and central governments. It also wants provincial governors to be nominated by the political parties that won a majority of votes in each province. Frelimo believes that this would mark the end of the unitary state, and the introduction of federalism. The Frelimo declaration rejecting the Renamo proposal pointed out that the head of state, the parliament and the government would have no authority over a provincial governor appointed by a political party, which, although it might have a lot of support in that province, was a minority in national terms. Far from carrying out the central government's programme, such a governor would sabotage it.

From: FRELIMO Rejects Renamo Constitutional Proposals / AIM / 10 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/10 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - HEALTH - CARDIOLOGY INSTITUTE

A Cardiology Institute is to be created in Mozambique before the end of the year, for the prevention and treatment of heart diseases, catering particularly for destitute children. Speaking during a press conference, in Maputo, cardiologist and founder of the institute Beatriz Ferreira said that this is a humanitarian, non-profit making association, to serve particularly children of destitute families. It is estimated that more than 100,000 Mozambican children are suffering from cardiovascular diseases, and 300,000 adults from high blood pressure that can cause serious coronary complications for lack of adequate treatment. Ferreira said that the institute will also serve as a research and training centre, and will lend support to people and organisations working in the area of cardiology. She said that the institute would start functioning this year, with foreign specialists, while Mozambican cardiologists are being trained. Ten Mozambicans are currently being trained abroad in this area. The institute will have a management council and a Medical Council, including representatives of the Health and Education ministries.

From: Cardiology Institute to be Established / AIM / 10 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/11 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - LEGISLATION – PARLIAMENT

The Standing Commission of the Mozambican parliament, the Assembly of the Republic, is considering a proposal for an extraordinary parliamentary sitting that would begin on 31

August, said the Commission's spokesman, Alcido Nguenha. The last ordinary sitting of the Assembly set 20 July as the date for the start of an extraordinary session that would deal mainly with amendments to the country's constitution. However, the work of the ad-hoc commission drafting the amendments was not completed by that date. Nguenha said that some nine other matters would be on the agenda of the extraordinary sitting. These include a report from the commission charged with revising the national anthem, a bill on copyright, and a report summarising the work of the legislature over the past five years. In addition, deputies will debate a bill on their own pensions and other benefits that President Joaquim Chissano vetoed in 1998, because of the exorbitant sums the deputies were demanding from the state budget. Also on the agenda is the Frelimo bill on protecting the cashew processing industry. Nguenha said that the extraordinary sitting would last for 30 days. But experience has shown that the Assembly is quite incapable of dealing with ten substantial items in the space of a month.

From: Date for extraordinary sitting of Parliament / AIM / 11 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/11 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS - PRESS FREEDOM

Mozambican Foreign Minister Leonardo Simao declared that "there are limitations on press freedom in Angola". But he added, "this is an understandable situation because the country is at war". Simao was speaking to reporters after the ceremony in which a new Portuguese ambassador was accredited. He was reacting to the Angolan authorities' closure of the catholic radio station "Eclesia", after it had retransmitted a BBC interview with Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, who has been indicted for war crimes by the Angolan public prosecutor. Simao said that, in a situation of conflict, the authorities "take an arrogant attitude, and are ready to interpret facts as a threat against the state". "So it's necessary to look at it, remembering that this is a situation of war, and not a normal situation", he said. Simao added that a conflict such as the Angolan war "has no borders, and always brought instability to the bodies dealing with law and order". But Simao was hopeful that, if there was dialogue between Angolan government bodies and journalists and their unions, ways could be found whereby the roles and vocations of each side could be respected.

From: Foreign Minister reacts to Angola Media clampdown / AIM / 11 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/11 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - HEALTH – AIDS

The Mozambican government, with United Nations support, is to launch an intensive campaign against HIV, the virus that causes the lethal disease AIDS, aimed at checking the continuous spread of HIV infection, particularly among young people. According to Mozambican Deputy Health Minister Abdul Razak Noormahomed, the HIV prevalence rate in Mozambique is estimated at between 10 and 15 per cent, affecting in particular people aged between 15 and 25. "During the last few years we have been undertaking intensive work to check the growing rate of HIV infections, and I believe that, as in some other African countries, such as Uganda, it can make a difference in Mozambique if all of us join forces in the fight against this disease", said Noormahomed. He was speaking at a press

The other major concern for politicians and people is related to rural-urban migration, poverty and unemployment, and that is the HIV/AIDS pandemic which places Botswana — along with Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia — as the hardest hit in the world. Some 25 percent of people are said to be HIV-positive.

Results of the voting, to be held on Saturday, 16 October, should be official within less than two days. It is a First Past the Post system and the newly-formed Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), despite its part in the blunder which caused the State of Emergency, is well-run and untainted by scandal. Voters will elect their 40 members of parliament.

The party with most seats will then elect the President. Each party wishing to contest the presidency has already nominated its candidate by presenting 1,000 names of supporters to a High Court judge and it is from among these that the new President will be selected. The new Assembly will also se-

lect the four MPs who sit in the house to provide expertise and experience, making it a 44-member parliament. The vice-president of Botswana is a member but, while the President may attend parliament, he seldom does and cannot vote.

Once the Botswana election is concluded, two more important votes face the region. On 30 November and 1 December, Namibia goes to the polls to elect a president and parliament for the second time since its independence in 1990. President Sam Nujoma is seeking a third term, but second term directly elected post independence. Proportional Representation is used in Namibia for national elections.

Mozambique also goes to the polls for its second multi-party elections on 3-4 December to elect a president and parliament. President Joaquim Chissano, the Frelimo leader, will seek a further term, while his main opponent, Afonso Dhlakama, head of the former rebel movement Renamo, will run as the candidate of a newly formed opposition alliance. (SARDC).

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need food, medicines and clothing", said Chissano. SADC, he added, would support the Angolan government in its efforts to extend its authority throughout Angolan territory. Asked about the dispute between Angola and Zambia over alleged Zambian support for UNITA, Chissano said, "We didn't even talk about that. We saw them (Presidents Jose Eduardo dos Santos of Angola and Frederick Chiluba of Zambia), smiling and embracing each other. They have been able to deal with this".

From: SADC to support Angola, but not with troops / AIM / 18 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/18 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL INTEGRATION - SADC SUMMIT

The SADC has taken unspecified measures to ensure that the main Congolese rebel group, the Congolese Democratic Movement (RCD), will sign the cease fire agreement reached in Lusaka on 10 July. According to a final communiqué, from SADC heads of state summit, held in Maputo, the cease fire accord, once it is signed by the rebels, "will prepare the ground for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Congo". The heads of state appeared to agree with the position expressed publicly by Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos that there is "nothing to negotiate" with UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi. As for the goal of regional integration, the summit claimed "praiseworthy progress" since the SADC treaty came into force in 1993. The most important factor, it said, was "the undeniable undertaking by member states to establish a unified and economically viable southern African region". It pledged that the SADC trade protocol would take effect in January 2000. To achieve this goal, nine of the 14 member states must ratify the protocol. Seven have already done so, while three others (South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia) have promised to ratify by the end of 1999. Other protocols, which are already in effect concern, shared watercourses, illicit drugs, transport, communications and meteorology, and energy. Protocols on mining and on education and training are not yet in force, because not enough members have ratified them. The summit urged member states to speed up ratification. The heads of state signed two new protocols during the summit - one on health, and one on wildlife preservation and law enforcement.

From: Final Communiqué, from SADC Summit / AIM / 18 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/19 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL INTEGRATION - SADC SUMMIT

The SADC heads of state summit, held in Maputo unanimously elected Chissano as SADC chairman, and Namibian President Sam Nujoma as Deputy Chairman. The next summit will be held in Namibia in the year 2000. The summit also decided that the SADC Council of Ministers would assess the operations of all SADC bodies including the controversial Defence, Politics and Security Organ. But it also agreed that for the time being this body would continue to operate under the chairmanship of President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. The summit confirmed that SADC Executive Secretary Kaire Mbuende would soon be leaving the post. And concluded saying "there is an uneasy relationship between the Executive Secretary and most, if not all, members of the Council of Ministers". The new SADC chairman said the problem had been discussed "in a very friendly way" with

Mbuende and "he decided, in a very humble fashion, to help the organisation by proposing that he be replaced. This was accepted and we shall discuss with him the modalities and the period".

From: Chissano elected chairman of SADC / AIM / 19 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/20 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - SOUTHERN AFRICA – SADC

The executive secretary of SADC, Kaire Mbuende, offered his resignation because of severe criticisms made of the functioning of the secretariat by the SADC Council of Ministers, said the Mozambican Foreign Minister Leonardo Simao. Briefing the press on the outcome of the SADC heads of state summit held in Maputo Simao said that at times the secretariat "has not done its job properly, in terms of organising meetings on time, and sending out documents on time". This was not a trivial matter, he argued, since, if documents were only received at the last minute, that would affect the quality of meetings and the ability of SADC governments to bring sectors of civil society into the preparatory discussions. Simao said that the heads of state last year decided that French should be a SADC language, and asked the secretariat to draw up a study on the financial and other implications of this. But to date no such study has been produced. Simao said there had also been "failure to abide by the rules of SADC, and although Mbuende may not be personally guilty, he has overall responsibility for the secretariat". He did not elaborate on these "breaches of rules". At the summit, "Mbuende was informed of these criticisms, and he thought it better to offer his resignation, which he will put into writing shortly", added the Minister.

From: SADC: Mbuende's resignation explained / AIM / 20 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/24 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - EDUCATION – LANGUAGES

Teaching in the Bantu languages that are the mother tongues of most Mozambicans will be introduced in the country's primary schools, but no pupil will be forced to study these languages, according to Simao Mucavele, director of the National Institute for the Development of Education (INDE). He was speaking to reporters about the new curriculum for basic education, which will take effect as from 2004. Mucavele assured his audiences that learning Bantu languages would be optional. The new curriculum proposes a form of bilingual education: Portuguese will remain the main medium of education, but pupils will have the opportunity to learn to read and write in their mother tongue. Mucavele said that the new curriculum would be less exam-oriented. Instead pupils will be continually assessed. This will avoid children being forced to repeat years, just because they fail an exam. He admitted that this would require higher professional standards and greater motivation from the teaching staff. English will be introduced into primary school as from sixth grade, he added, and there will be a new discipline of "moral education".

From: Bantu languages in schools, but not compulsory / AIM / 24 August 1999

countries". Chissano called for unity, not only among politicians, but amongst all social forces in order to turn into a reality the summit's theme "SADC in the next millennium: Working together for peace, progress and prosperity". The word "together" was intended to cover everyone, he declared.

From: Chissano calls for dialogue and trust / AIM / 17 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/17 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - NATURAL RESOURCES - ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The largest reserve of titanium-bearing heavy sands in the world has been discovered in the district of Chibuto, in the southern Mozambican province of Gaza, according to the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, John Kachamila. This reserve is estimated at more than 100 million tonnes of the mineral. Kachamila is optimistic that exploitation of the reserve may start within the next two years, and feasibility studies have already begun. The Chibuto deposits are said to be three or four times larger than the titanium reserve at Richards Bay, in South Africa. "It is a reserve free from impurities", said Kachamila, adding that "we think there will be a greater chance to develop this deposit than the ones at Moebasse, in Zambezia province, and at Moma, in Nampula". Chibuto is essentially an agricultural district, where the only major infrastructure is a tarred road linking the district capital to the country's main north-south highway. Titanium is a metal used in paints and plastics, in the aeronautics and military industries, and in other areas of high technology.

From: Reserve of Titanium uncovered in Chibuto / AIM / 17 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/17 – MZ

REGIONAL COOPERATION - ANGOLAN CONFLICT - SADC DAY

The Angolan government has no intention of holding any further negotiations with Jonas Savimbi, leader of the UNITA rebels, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos declared in Maputo. Addressing other SADC leaders at the commemorations of "SADC Day", dos Santos noted that, having failed to overthrow the Luanda government earlier this year, Savimbi "no longer says that the government is weak and will fall. Instead he sends messages saying that he wants to negotiate". "There is nothing to negotiate", insisted dos Santos. There was already a peace plan for Angola, the Lusaka protocol negotiated in 1994. "We cannot allow groups of adventurers and bandits, benefiting from the open or disguised support of some countries, inside and outside of Africa, and from influential political and economic circles who always fought against us, to continue their destabilising action", said the Angolan President. "They prevent the normal functioning of democratic institutions, devastate cities, towns and villages, destroy property and infrastructures, and condemn entire peoples to misery, illness and hunger". He pointed out that, whereas Savimbi had not accepted either the popular will as expressed in the 1992 elections, or any of the three agreements negotiated with the government, the Angolan authorities "always implemented in good faith the tasks included in the peace agreements, and kept our promises".

From: No more negotiations with Savimbi / AIM / 17 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/17 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - INTER REGIONAL COOPERATION - ECOWAS/SADC
Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo called for closer co-operation between the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). He was speaking in Maputo as the guest of honour at the celebrations of "SADC Day", on the eve of the organisation's 19th summit. Obasanjo described SADC and ECOWAS as "two dynamic organisations with the potential to become corner stones" in building the projected African Economic Community. He called for more intensive consultations between SADC and ECOWAS on "key African questions", and said a start could be made simply by exchanging information on "projects, policies and regional priorities". Obasanjo had much bolder ideas - including freedom of movement for SADC citizens in ECOWAS countries and vice versa. He also suggested import concessions or even a common customs tariffs regime between the two regions. Obasanjo said that although ECOWAS is an older organisation than SADC, its efforts at regional integration had run into severe setbacks, not only because of armed conflicts, but also thanks to lack of leadership from the former military regime in his own country, which is the giant within ECOWAS. He stressed that the Nigerian democratic regime that he heads is committed to pushing ahead with regional and continental integration.

From: Obasanjo calls for ECOWAS-SADC Co-operation / AIM / 17 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/18 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - ARMED CONFLICT – CONGO

The Ugandan and Rwandan Presidents, Yoweri Museveni, and Pastor Bizimungu, arrived in Maputo, where they were to attend the summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as "special guests". Neither Uganda nor Rwanda are members of SADC, and they have clearly been invited because of the military involvement in Congo. It would seem that the Congolese delegation to the summit was not informed of the invitation, since Congolese Foreign Minister, Jerode Nbondasi, told reporters that he did not want to talk to Ugandan or Rwandan delegations, and "the best thing they can do is go home". A cease-fire was signed in Lusaka last month between most of the parties involved in the Congolese war, to put an end to the conflict, but some of the rebel groups have not yet signed the document.

From: Ugandan and Rwandan Presidents in Maputo / AIM / 18 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/18 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - ARMED CONFLICT – ANGOLA

The heads of state summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), meeting in Maputo, agreed to give full support to the Angolan government in its war with the UNITA rebels, short of sending troops and military hardware to Angola. At a closing press conference, the new SADC chairman, Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano, said, "the Angolan delegation did not ask for weapons or soldiers. They asked for moral, political, diplomatic, and humanitarian support". He made clear that this could include non-lethal forms of support for the Angolan armed forces. "The people who are fighting also

SPECIAL REPORT

VOTERS BIG WINNERS IN SADC'S YEAR OF THE ELECTIONS

by Hugh McCullum

Southern African voters are queuing up again as the third of five national elections in the region this year takes place on 16 October in Botswana. From a region that less than a decade ago was plagued with single-party elections, racially exclusive elections, fraudulent elections, the voters are now flocking to the polls for a chance to exercise their rights to choose those who will govern them for a fixed period of time in one-person-one-vote, multi-party, democratic elections.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has five elections this year and a similar number in 2000. The first was South Africa in June. Nelson Mandela was leaving office and Thabo Mbeki, his successor, led the African National Congress to its second straight sweeping victory with a massive turnout of voters.

South Africa, after decades of institutionalised apartheid, was holding its second only democratic election in history and professional political pundits in academia and media alike predicted that interest in democracy was already on the wane. Wrong. More than 67 percent of eligible voters said they wanted to give ANC another chance to deliver on the promises made in 1994.

A few weeks later, Malawians did a repeat of their first democratic election in 1994 after 30 years of Hastings Kamuzu Banda autocracy. Same thing. The country's extremely politicized tabloid media highlighted corruption, incompetence, and treated its readers and listeners to a series of scandals and court cases, some reporters even calling for a return to Banda-style authoritarianism.

But, it was the voters who streamed out of their villages and towns and delivered a proper democratic scare to the ruling United Democratic Front (UDF) which barely squeezed back into power in both presidential and parliamentary elections. The results were so close, in fact, that the litigious Malawian opposition has challenged the results in court.

The point in both instances is that the people spoke and their wishes were implemented.

And now regional eyes will turn to Botswana where multi-party democratic elections are routine, even if the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has won all six since independence in 1966 and seems set to win the seventh.

However, the country's only State of Emergency was proclaimed recently to recall parliament to amend electoral laws which would have disenfranchised 67,000 voters, proving that even in the most experienced and sophisticated of democracies things can go wrong.

Portrayed usually as an oasis of democracy, stability, economic growth and good governance, the 1.3 million people take their elections seriously, but below the placid surface, there are many issues which the BDP would like to avoid and just as many which the 12 opposition parties would like to exploit.

The ruling party will be going into the election led by Festus Mogae who became Botswana's third chief executive when Sir Ketumile Masire retired in 1998 after 18 years as president. He, in turn, had succeeded the country's revered founder, Sir Seretse Khama.

Mogae is a British-educated economist who has worked his way steadily through the ranks of government and politics as a well-respected technocrat and some analysts say he took over from Masire in mid-term because, for the first time, the opposition Botswana National Front (BNF) had managed to win 13 seats in the 40-seat (plus four more appointed) unicameral National Assembly. The BDP retained a secure 27 seats.

Fortunately for the ruling party, the BNF split, with 11 MPs defecting to form the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) which goes into the election with

Southern African News Briefs

SA, Mozambique to ratify trade protocol

Mozambique and South Africa have indicated they will, before the end of this year, ratify the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Trade Protocol, which aims to set up a free trade area in the region.

Mozambique's Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Oldemiro Baloi, revealed this at an annual private sector conference in Maputo. He recalled that when the protocol was signed, in 1996, it was initially envisaged that ratification would follow fairly quickly.

Some countries did indeed ratify speedily, he added, "but the weaker members, including Mozambique, thought it necessary to alert business and society to the content of the protocol, because of the drastic consequences it would have for the economy".

In a related development, South African members of parliament were urged to ratify the ground breaking free trade deal so that implementation can proceed on schedule, by January 2000. President Thabo Mbeki has been on record as saying this target date will still be met, despite the fact that it is now only three months away.

Seven countries – Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe have already ratified the protocol while South Africa and Swaziland have expressed their intention to do so before the end of the year. (*AIM*)

Miners retrenched

Mining workers in South Africa will be forced to return to rural areas and neighbouring countries as the mining industry sheds off another 28,000 jobs, according to trade union officials.

The bulk of the miners come from the rural areas and neighbouring countries where there is little prospect of finding alternative employment.

The steel and engineering industry is also suffering job losses as a direct result of the mining industry retrenchments. The steel and engineering industry is

shedding between 1,000 and 2,000 jobs per month due to loss of contracts with the mining industry. (*IRIN*)

Fund for livestock breeding

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) says that it will spend an estimated US\$2.6 million on a three-year regional project which is aimed at preserving the diminishing animal genetic resources.

Louise Setshwaelo, one of SADC's chief technical advisors said that there was need to build an inventory of the available livestock breeds and their genetic characteristics.

She also said the project would provide information to the policy makers, farmers and other stakeholders on the regions potential in overall food security and poverty reduction. (*IRIN*)

Mozambique forms committee on HIV/AIDS

Mozambique is to create a national committee to deal with sexually transmitted diseases (STD), and AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), as well as HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) before the end of the year.

President Joaquim Chissano, who made the announcement, speaking during the conference on the National Strategic Plan for the fight against HIV/AIDS, in Maputo, recently, said that this committee will include members from various sectors of society. Chissano warned the Mozambican society of the dangers of this disease.

"AIDS is not a joke," he said, adding that "the current scenario of this disease is a gloomy one". He also urged society to abandon the secrecy and taboos surrounding AIDS and deal with it with more seriousness and responsibility, "because it is the future development of the country that is at stake".

"The country's economic development may be disturbed by this disease," said Chissano, adding that "the government, civil society, political parties, and the international community should work together to check its spread".

OAU aimed at securing an early solution to the crisis that has been prevailing in the archipelago for the last two years". The Comoros has been grappling with an attempt by one of the islands, Anjouan, to secede. An agreement was reached in the Madagascar capital of Antananarivo in April this year that seeks to resolve the crisis on the basis of maintaining a single state in the Comoros, but the would-be separatists have not yet implemented it. Madeira's mandate involves "facilitating the attainment of the OAU's objectives on the Comoros, including the implementation of the Antananarivo agreement which, *inter alia*, provides for the preservation of the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros". It added that Madeira will be guided by the decisions of the OAU summit held in Algeria in July, in particular the need for "implementation of the Antananarivo agreement by the Anjouanese party and the speedy return of constitutional order in the Comoros".

From: Mozambican Minister appointed OAU envoy / AIM / 12 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/12 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - HEALTH - POLIO

For the second year running, the Mozambican health authorities' polio vaccination campaign has greatly exceeded its target. The first dose of the vaccine this year was given from 26 to 30 July and the Health Ministry expected that 3.3 million children would be vaccinated. This means that the campaign reached 110.3 per cent of its target figure. In 1998, the application of the second dose of the vaccine also reached more than the estimated total of under five million living in the country. The figure then was 111 per cent. This encouraging result brings Mozambique closer to receiving the World Health Organisation (WHO) certificate as a country free of polio. The second dose of this year's vaccine was applied from 30 August to 3 September.

From: Success claimed in Polio Campaign / AIM / 12 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/12 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - ANGOLA - SADC - MINES - ARMED CONFLICT

A senior SADC official not only admitted that the organisation is powerless to prevent the planting of more land mines in Angola, but even defended the Angolan government's violation of its treaty obligations under the Ottawa convention on the outlawing of anti-personnel mines, to which it is a signatory. The official in charge of the land mine area in the SADC secretariat, Joao Machatine Ndlovu, told a Maputo press briefing that there was nothing that SADC could do about the problem because Angola was at war. He claimed that, even if there were willingness on the part of the Angolan government to apply the Ottawa convention, it would make no difference since the UNITA rebels of Jonas Savimbi would continue to sow mines with impunity. The Angolan government signed the convention on 4 Dec. 1997, but has not yet ratified it. Since then there have been many reports of the continued laying of mines in Angola by both the government and UNITA. The Angolan government has made no attempt to deny the reports. During the May conference in Maputo of signatories to the Ottawa treaty, Angolan Deputy Foreign Minister Toko Serao justified his government's attitude on the grounds that the country was still at war. From: SADC official defends Angolan mine treaty violations / AIM / 12 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/16 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - ARMED CONFLICT - ANGOLA

Contrary to some expectations, the Angolan government has now made it clear that it will not ask fellow members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for military assistance at the heads of state summit in Maputo. According to spokesman for Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, the government has no intention or interest in other SADC countries involving themselves directly in the Angolan conflict. "The intention Angola does have is that SADC should carry out the goals for which it was created, which are to increase co-operation between the countries of the region, politically and economically", said the source. Angola, he added, expected from other SADC members "understanding for its internal problem and solidarity". He pointed out that the Angolan war is not the only problem facing SADC. "It's a difficult and serious problem, but we think there are other problems which the region must also discuss", he said, mentioning in particular the situation in the Great Lakes region, and the secessionist rebellion in Namibia's Caprivi strip.

From: Angola not seeking SADC military intervention / AIM / 16 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/16 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL INTEGRATION - SADC DAY

The president of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Laurent Kabila, failed to attend the celebrations in Maputo of the seventh anniversary of the founding of the Southern African Development Community. He was also absent from the summit meeting of SADC heads of state, even though the Congolese crisis was a major issue on the agenda. At the opening of the celebrations, host President Joaquim Chissano apologised for him, saying he had to return to Kinshasa "because of the prevailing situation in his country". The "prevailing situation" mentioned by Chissano can only refer to the outbreak of fighting in the eastern Congolese City of Kisangani between Ugandan and Rwandan troops. But Kabila must have known about this before flying to Maputo, and figured prominently in the international media.

From: Kabila absent from SADC celebrations / AIM / 16 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/17 - MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - SADC DAY

Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano urged his fellow heads of state of SADC (Southern African Development Community) to make every effort to turn the region "into an area where wars, hunger, and endemic diseases are things of the past". He was speaking in Maputo at the "SADC Day" celebrations, on the eve of the organisation's 19th summit. "Peace means mutual trust among states and among all actors in society", said Chissano. "It must be taken as essential. And in order to promote trust, there is a need for constant dialogue at all levels as a condition for achieving peace". He was confident that the efforts to end the wars in two SADC members, Congo and Angola, would bear fruit, and that "the benefits of peace enjoyed in other member countries will soon also be extended to these

ITEM NO. 99/08/31 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - ECONOMIC POLICIES - TRADE FAIR

Mozambican Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi inaugurated, the 35th edition of the Maputo International Trade Fair (FACIM), which has this year 400 companies participating, 183 of which are Mozambican. Describing the trade fair as "essential" in the business world, Mocumbi was optimistic that the country will enter the next century with good prospects, as a result of the political stability and healthy economic performance of the last few years. He noted that the country's Gross Domestic Product grew by over 14 per cent in 1997 and by 9.9 per cent in 1998. As for the inflation rate, Mocumbi noted with satisfaction that it dropped from 70 per cent in 1994 to minus 1.3 per cent in 1998. He added that the depreciation of the national currency, the metical, was not more than one per cent last year. He mentioned particularly the participation of other countries of the region, which, like Mozambique, are members of SADC. This, Mocumbi said, showed the strength and dynamics of regional economic integration, for the benefit of the economies and the welfare of the peoples of the region. It took about four billion meticals (320,000 US dollars) to organize this year's trade fair, whereas last year's cost 3.5 billion meticals, and earned revenue of five billion, thus making a profit of 1.5 billion meticals.

From: Maputo Trade Fair opens / AIM / 31 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/31 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi are to establish a triangular development programme aiming, among other things, to promote trade exchanges and investment between the three neighbours, in the context of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to Zambia, Olubanke King-Akerele, said that this programme, which is the first of its kind in Africa, will facilitate, in a first stage, the development of certain areas of Tete province, in Mozambique, Zambia's Eastern Province, and some areas of western Malawi. King-Akerele visited Tete last week, in representation of the UNDP, which is the promoter and funding body for the initiative. He held talks with Tete Governor Virgilio Ferrao, and they agreed that the initiative is essential for the development of the areas in question. This is a programme for the development of areas of neighbouring states that make up an economic zone with possibilities of integrated growth, which can be accelerated through co-operation. The idea is to identify a number of projects that can benefit neighbouring areas, and mobilise both national and foreign funds for their implementation.

From: Triangular development programme / AIM / 31 August 1999

In 1997, Malawian President Bakili Muluzi agreed to commute the sentences of all prisoners awaiting execution, and he pledged not to sign any orders of execution for the rest of his term.

In Zimbabwe, two prisoners were executed, and more than five others sentenced to death in 1998. Recently there has been an outcry by local NGOs against the sentencing of Sukoluhle Kachipare, who was convicted in March 1997 for inciting her 17-year-old maid, Masline Chibwara to murder her own new born baby.

If Kachipare is hanged, she will be the first woman to be executed in Zimbabwe since 1898, when the great spirit medium Mbuya Nehanda was hanged by the colonial regime.

"Death sentence is viewed as the most primitive way of meting out justice," said ZimRights former executive director David Chimhini. He added, "the legendary eye for an eye concept is outdated, inhumane, immoral and evil."

The main disadvantage with the use of death penalty according to Ditshwanelo, a Botswana human rights organisation, is the fact that it is the most final of all punishments. "If the convicted is later found innocent, there is no way of reversing the punishment."

Proponents of capital punishment argue that public opinion is in favour of death penalty. However, human rights organisations say that public opinion depends on how and when the questions are posed.

"The media and rumours play an unquestionable role in forming public opinion. It is likely that the public would accept abolition if governments took the lead in bringing it about," said Chimhini.

But evidence in South Africa, where it was banned, points to the contrary. There is growing public demand to re-endorse the death penalty to curb escalating crime. Early this month a Zimbabwean diplomat was murdered during a carjacking in South Africa, now considered the most dangerous country outside a war zone. (SARDC)

Southern African News Features

A SARDC Service

30 September 1999

A NEW MILLENNIUM FREE FROM DEATH PENALTY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA?

by Diana Mavunduse

There has been significant progress towards ending the use of death penalty in southern Africa following intense lobbying from human rights activists in the region.

Between 1996 and 1998, Angola, Mauritius and South Africa abolished the death penalty in their laws, joining Namibia and Mozambique, which had abolished it as of 1991.

"The main argument for the death penalty as a form of punishment is the belief or the expectation that death penalty reduces homicide and other violent crimes like rape and armed robbery," writes Rigmor Argen in *ZimRights News*.

In Swaziland, King Mswati III said, "death penalty should not be repealed, on the grounds that it would increase the threat of serious crimes, such as ritual murder."

Mswati also suggested that, in view of an increasing number of HIV cases, the judiciary in Swaziland should consider rape to be equal to murder in seriousness, a matter he hoped would be taken up urgently by the Ministry of Justice.

But critics see no relationship between crime and capital punishment. "Whether crime increases or not has nothing to do with the presence or absence of the death penalty," said Brain Spilg, a lawyer from Botswana.

He added, "crime is more related to subjects such as poverty, social inequality, poor housing, unemployment and the disappearance of formal or informal methods of social control."

Inter Africa Network for Human Rights (Afronet) Director, Ngande Mwananjiti said, "the most severe punishment should be life imprisonment with a view to reforming the criminal."

Studies conducted by the United Nations in 1998 concluded that there is no scientific proof that death penalty is more deterrent than lifetime imprisonment.

In Zambia, the voice leading the call for the abolition of capital punishment comes from former president Kenneth Kaunda who was mainly forced by circumstances during war time to sign scores of death warrants in his country.

"It has pained me to sign the death warrants during my tenure, I did so with utmost reluctance," said Kaunda.

The death penalty debate has become more topical in Zambia where 59 soldiers were recently sentenced to death for attempting to overthrow President Frederick Chiluba in October 1997.

In Botswana, an attempt was made to declare capital punishment unconstitutional in 1995, but regrettably the Court of Appeal held that it was constitutional.

The other major concern for politicians and people is related to rural-urban migration, poverty and unemployment, and that is the HIV/AIDS pandemic which places Botswana — along with Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia — as the hardest hit in the world. Some 25 percent of people are said to be HIV-positive.

Results of the voting, to be held on Saturday, 16 October, should be official within less than two days. It is a First Past the Post system and the newly-formed Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), despite its part in the blunder which caused the State of Emergency, is well-run and untainted by scandal. Voters will elect their 40 members of parliament.

The party with most seats will then elect the President. Each party wishing to contest the presidency has already nominated its candidate by presenting 1,000 names of supporters to a High Court judge and it is from among these that the new President will be selected. The new Assembly will also se-

lect the four MPs who sit in the house to provide expertise and experience, making it a 44-member parliament. The vice-president of Botswana is a member but, while the President may attend parliament, he seldom does and cannot vote.

Once the Botswana election is concluded, two more important votes face the region. On 30 November and 1 December, Namibia goes to the polls to elect a president and parliament for the second time since its independence in 1990. President Sam Nujoma is seeking a third term, but second term directly elected post independence. Proportional Representation is used in Namibia for national elections.

Mozambique also goes to the polls for its second multi-party elections on 3-4 December to elect a president and parliament. President Joaquim Chissano, the Frelimo leader, will seek a further term, while his main opponent, Afonso Dhlakama, head of the former rebel movement Renamo, will run as the candidate of a newly formed opposition alliance. (SARDC).

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ITEM NO. 99/09/10 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - POLITICAL PARTIES – LEGISLATION

The parliamentary group of Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party has said that accepting the new constitutional amendments proposed by the main opposition party, Renamo would be "unthinkable". The Frelimo reaction came in a declaration read out at a meeting of the ad-hoc parliamentary commission dealing with the constitution. The ad-hoc commission has worked for four years on redrafting the constitution, reaching a high degree of consensus between the three political forces represented, Frelimo, Renamo and the Democratic Union (UD) opposition coalition. But Renamo submitted a counter-proposal, which in several key areas frontally contradicted the positions Renamo had earlier accepted. This party is proposing the introduction of a new tier of government, that of "region", which would be in between the provincial and central governments. It also wants provincial governors to be nominated by the political parties that won a majority of votes in each province. Frelimo believes that this would mark the end of the unitary state, and the introduction of federalism. The Frelimo declaration rejecting the Renamo proposal pointed out that the head of state, the parliament and the government would have no authority over a provincial governor appointed by a political party, which, although it might have a lot of support in that province, was a minority in national terms. Far from carrying out the central government's programme, such a governor would sabotage it.

From: FRELIMO Rejects Renamo Constitutional Proposals / AIM / 10 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/10 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - HEALTH - CARDIOLOGY INSTITUTE

A Cardiology Institute is to be created in Mozambique before the end of the year, for the prevention and treatment of heart diseases, catering particularly for destitute children. Speaking during a press conference, in Maputo, cardiologist and founder of the institute Beatriz Ferreira said that this is a humanitarian, non-profit making association, to serve particularly children of destitute families. It is estimated that more than 100,000 Mozambican children are suffering from cardiovascular diseases, and 300,000 adults from high blood pressure that can cause serious coronary complications for lack of adequate treatment. Ferreira said that the institute will also serve as a research and training centre, and will lend support to people and organisations working in the area of cardiology. She said that the institute would start functioning this year, with foreign specialists, while Mozambican cardiologists are being trained. Ten Mozambicans are currently being trained abroad in this area. The institute will have a management council and a Medical Council, including representatives of the Health and Education ministries.

From: Cardiology Institute to be Established / AIM / 10 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/11 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - LEGISLATION – PARLIAMENT

The Standing Commission of the Mozambican parliament, the Assembly of the Republic, is considering a proposal for an extraordinary parliamentary sitting that would begin on 31

August, said the Commission's spokesman, Alcido Nguenha. The last ordinary sitting of the Assembly set 20 July as the date for the start of an extraordinary session that would deal mainly with amendments to the country's constitution. However, the work of the ad-hoc commission drafting the amendments was not completed by that date. Nguenha said that some nine other matters would be on the agenda of the extraordinary sitting. These include a report from the commission charged with revising the national anthem, a bill on copyright, and a report summarising the work of the legislature over the past five years. In addition, deputies will debate a bill on their own pensions and other benefits that President Joaquim Chissano vetoed in 1998, because of the exorbitant sums the deputies were demanding from the state budget. Also on the agenda is the Frelimo bill on protecting the cashew processing industry. Nguenha said that the extraordinary sitting would last for 30 days. But experience has shown that the Assembly is quite incapable of dealing with ten substantial items in the space of a month.

From: Date for extraordinary sitting of Parliament / AIM / 11 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/11 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS - PRESS FREEDOM

Mozambican Foreign Minister Leonardo Simao declared that "there are limitations on press freedom in Angola". But he added, "this is an understandable situation because the country is at war". Simao was speaking to reporters after the ceremony in which a new Portuguese ambassador was accredited. He was reacting to the Angolan authorities' closure of the catholic radio station "Ecclesia", after it had retransmitted a BBC interview with Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, who has been indicted for war crimes by the Angolan public prosecutor. Simao said that, in a situation of conflict, the authorities "take an arrogant attitude, and are ready to interpret facts as a threat against the state". "So it's necessary to look at it, remembering that this is a situation of war, and not a normal situation", he said. Simao added that a conflict such as the Angolan war "has no borders, and always brought instability to the bodies dealing with law and order". But Simao was hopeful that, if there was dialogue between Angolan government bodies and journalists and their unions, ways could be found whereby the roles and vocations of each side could be respected.

From: Foreign Minister reacts to Angola Media clampdown / AIM / 11 August 1999

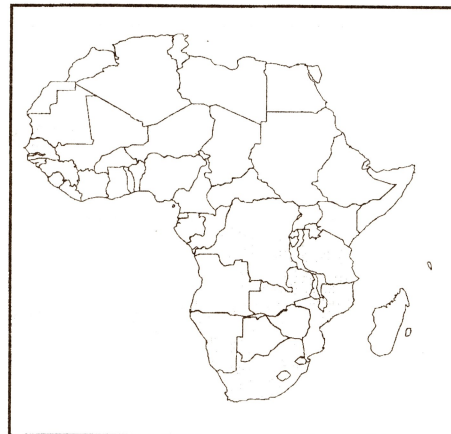
ITEM NO. 99/08/11 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - HEALTH – AIDS

The Mozambican government, with United Nations support, is to launch an intensive campaign against HIV, the virus that causes the lethal disease AIDS, aimed at checking the continuous spread of HIV infection, particularly among young people. According to Mozambican Deputy Health Minister Abdul Razak Noormahomed, the HIV prevalence rate in Mozambique is estimated at between 10 and 15 per cent, affecting in particular people aged between 15 and 25. "During the last few years we have been undertaking intensive work to check the growing rate of HIV infections, and I believe that, as in some other African countries, such as Uganda, it can make a difference in Mozambique if all of us join forces in the fight against this disease", said Noormahomed. He was speaking at a press

SOUTHERN AFRICAN NEWS FEATURES

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Southern African Research and Documentation Centre

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He said that all development and poverty reduction programmes should take into account the Strategic Plan Against HIV/AIDS.

Meanwhile, the World Bank has promised to enter into partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support the Mozambican HIV/AIDS programme. "We take seriously all the challenges of the fight against HIV/AIDS," said James Coates, the World Bank representative in Mozambique.

The UNDP representative, Emmanuel de Casterle, said that his institution would lend unconditional support to the Mozambican programme. "It is possible to reverse the AIDS situation in the country, if the appropriate strategies are adopted," he said. (AIM)

World population reaches 6 billion

Six billion people will be alive in the world at the end of this year, an addition of a billion in only 12 years according to *The State of the World Population 1999 Report* which was launched on 22 September.

Of that six billion, about 200 million are in the 14-member Southern African Development Community (SADC) of which just over 50 percent are women.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) representative in Zimbabwe Etta Tadesse urged government and the international community to acknowledge gender discrimination.

"Population growth is not about being born only but survival," said Tadesse. Personal choice and collective action guarantees better health and longer life, she added. (SARDC)

Scientists support the activists. They point to new and drug-resistant mutations of the virus which are appearing in the West where expensive symptom-suppressing and extremely expensive drugs plus massive educational campaigns had brought the disease under control, although there is no cure yet, they insist.

Drugs are simply not available in the developing world due to their high costs and, to date, activists have been unsuccessful in persuading companies to supply protein blocks and other drugs to the Third World at reduced prices. (SARDC)

conference, in Maputo, to mark World Youth Day. Razak said that this fight necessarily implies the involvement of all of society in the education of young people "for healthier and more responsible sexual behaviour". Alongside the first celebrations of World Youth Day, the government, representatives of United Nations agencies, and national youth organisations organised a "march of struggle against HIV/AIDS".

From: Intensive Campaign Against HIV/AIDS / AIM / 11 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/11 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION – REFUGEES

The Zimbabwean authorities have promised that there will be no further mass deportations of Mozambicans from Zimbabwe without prior warning. According to a press release from the Mozambican High Commission in Harare, the promise came at a meeting in the Zimbabwean capital of the sub-committee on security, immigration and labour between the two countries. The Mozambican government was angered when several hundred Mozambicans were suddenly deported from Zimbabwe in mid-July, without the Mozambican consular services being informed or involved in any way. The two delegations agreed that the Mozambicans deported in July, who were obliged to leave possessions in Zimbabwe, will be given the opportunity to reclaim them. The meeting also agreed on a gradual relaxation of entry visa requirements. The holders of diplomatic passports, businessmen and citizens who travel regularly between the two countries will now be granted multiple entry visas, instead of having to re-apply every time they want to visit the other country. The free movement of citizens between Mozambique is to be "a gradual process", and initially only holders of diplomatic passports will be exempted from paying for their multiple entry visas. The two delegations also agreed on the need to encourage migrant workers in the two countries "to regularise their employment and residence situation, in accordance with the immigration and labour legislation in effect in each country".

From: Mozambique and Zimbabwe discuss deportations / AIM / 11 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/11 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - INTER INSTITUTIONS COOPERATION – EDUCATION

Mozambican Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi said that an effective partnership between the largest higher education institution in the country, the Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM), the government and the private sector could only have good results in terms of the acquisition and expansion of knowledge. Speaking during the meeting between the three parties, Mocumbi said "The biggest challenges", and added, "are, on the one hand, the need of a systematic selection of actions to be carried out, and, on the other hand, the permanent quest for quality, efficiency and excellence in what we offer in our interchange". The meeting aims to deepen and reassess the grounds for partnership between the university and society, and redefine co-operation strategies for the future. The meeting will broach the main areas of the UEM's activities, namely teaching, research and extension in economics, engineering, agronomy, social science and others.

From: Partnership between UEM, Government and Private Sector / AIM / 11 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/12 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - HUMAN RIGHTS - SOUTHERN AFRICA - LAND MINES

A regional meeting of disabled women from member states of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) concluded in Maputo, that land mines still remain a serious social problem, even in those countries where there are no armed conflicts, and urged the governments of these countries and the international community to intervene urgently. Addressing the meeting, the deputy chairperson of the Southern African Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD), Rachel Kachaje, urged the governments of Southern African countries to urgently review their policies and join the Ottawa treaty outlawing anti-personnel land mines. "The banning of land mines is urgent, because these are weapons that sow suffering since, instead of hitting the enemy, they kill innocent people, mostly women and children", she said. Kachaje, who is a Zimbabwean victim of land mines, stressed the need for women in the region, be they disabled by land mines or not, to join the campaigns for the banning of these devices. The report of the Mozambican Association of the Disabled (ADEMO) to the meeting, says that of the thousands of victims of land mines in the country, including children, most have been left to their fate. According to the report, most of them are living in a "very difficult" socio-economic situation, without the benefit of psychological, physical or socio-economic reinsertion. The meeting of SADC disabled women was running under the theme "Equal opportunities, Legislation, Gender and the socio-economic Situation of the Victims of Land Mines".

From: Disabled warn of Land Mines / AIM / 12 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/12 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - SOUTHERN AFRICA - INFORMATION - MINE VICTIMS

Mozambique is preparing to create a data bank on the victims of land mines in the country, that will mirror the situation of this population group, said the chairperson of the Mozambican Campaign against Land mines, Alberto Manhique. Speaking during a workshop that has gathered in Maputo disabled women from SADC member countries, Manhique said that the idea of creating the data bank is part of the government's efforts to improve the living conditions of disabled people, particularly the victims of land mines. He explained that with the data bank it would be possible to identify the kind of disability of each one of the victims and make his or her social and economic reintegration easier. "Efforts are under way for the project to be concluded by next year. It involves the Social Welfare Ministry, the Mozambican Campaign Against Land Mines and the National Demining Institute", he said.

From: Data Bank on mine victims to be created / AIM / 12 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/12 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS – OAU

OAU general secretary Salim Ahmed Salim has appointed Mozambique's Minister in the Presidency for Parliamentary Affairs, Francisco Madeira, as his special envoy to the Comoros. An OAU press release states that the appointment "is part of the efforts by the

Michael Dingake as leader of the official opposition while BNF struggles to retain its two seats. There are many other opposition parties as well seeking some of the political spoils. The primary ones to watch, in addition to the two parties with seats in the Assembly, are the United National Front (UNF), a merger of four of minority parties, and the Botswana Alliance Movement (BAM) which is trying to unite a "hodge-podge" — as a political scientist calls them — of small parties.

The problem, says a long-time political reporter and editor of the leading weekly, *Mmegi*, Sechele Sechele, is that the political party scene is factionalised within the ruling party and split amongst the opposition. The political centre is overcrowded with pragmatists with long associations and connections to government and civil service.

While few doubt the BDF will win, the party is worried that its safe majority could be weakened. Sechele says it still depends on how the real issues can be exploited by the opposition and how united they become. In a strict two-party race, the opposition could easily win, the question being which parties would merge to carry the mantle of change.

"It is a struggle in the BDP between old blood and new blood. Mogae is careful, clever and competent but associated with Masire's 18 years of very conservative rule. BDF's real ace is Ian Khama who will undoubtedly succeed Mogae in one or two terms. He is the one out on the campaign trail every day. He has his father's name, he is an army general, an effective administrator, a chief in his own right and very popular in the rural areas," Sechele says.

The main opposition parties have their largest support in the urban centres of Gaborone, Maun and Francistown and environs but they also suffer from a need to revitalise, although they had been growing rapidly until the split between BNF and BCP.

Had the parties remained united, many think this election might have resulted in a near tie possibly forcing a government of national unity. "Great for the people, they would have got their issues dealt with properly," says analyst Titus Mbuya.

With its huge territory (581,730 sq km), diamond reserves and sprawling cattle posts, Botswana is

very rich. The diamond industry alone represents 40 percent of the country's GNP, 50 percent of government revenue and 70 percent of its foreign exchange. Its yearly profits are more than US\$750 million.

The BDP government boasts that its US\$20 billion in foreign reserves is sufficient to cover two complete budgets and four years of imports. Fiscally prudent — to a fault many human rights and gender groups argue — it rarely runs a deficit. The pula is Africa's strongest currency.

Botswana is per capita one of the richest countries on the continent and yet, at the same time 46 percent of its people live in abject poverty, especially rural women and the indigenous San or Basarwa (as the majority Tswana-speaking people call them).

Increasingly Botswana is becoming an urbanised nation and rural villages and communal lands are shrinking, creating a large number of urban poor as well. For these reasons, the opposition, most analysts and even the BDP regard rural and urban poverty and unemployment as the key election issues, related to which is the wide disparity between the ultra-rich and extremely poor, one of the widest in southern Africa.

Sechele argues that the opposition needs to become united and establish a base of trust among the highly traditional and conservative rural population which, although declining annually, still controls the majority of seats in the Assembly.

"The BDP has a strangehold because of the chiefs and their power over the people but agriculture and particularly cattle, are in serious decline — 50 percent of peasants have none while 90 percent of the country's 3.7 million cattle are in the hands of the so-called cattle barons who constitute less than 10 percent of the rural population."

Only five percent of the GDP comes from agriculture and that is almost entirely cattle.

This rural-urban split is pronounced with 50 percent of the population now living within 100 km of an urban centre, mainly Gaborone, where housing and infrastructure problems are growing, leaving people to live in ramshackle slums.

ITEM NO. 99/08/01 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - NATURAL RESOURCES

The Mozambican, South African and Swazi governments signed an agreement in the Swazi town of Pigs Peak concerning three studies into the basin of the Incomati river. These studies will be financed by Denmark to the tune of 350,000 US dollars, and are the necessary prelude to implementing the Incomati Integrated Development Programme, agreed between the three southern African states and the Danish aid agency, DANIDA. The studies must determine exactly how the river and its tributaries are currently used, and will estimate how much water is available in the Incomati basin. The Incomati is the major water source for the whole region of the Maputo Development Corridor.

From: Agreement on Incomati Basin / AIM / 1 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/03 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - HEALTH - LEPROSY ERADICATION

Mozambique's National Leprosy Eradication Campaign, that took place between 7 April and 30 June, confirmed 1,695 of the 23,586 suspect cases tested, according to the chief doctor of the Health Ministry's tuberculosis and leprosy section, Paula Perdigao. She said that the campaign covered 44 districts in the northern provinces of Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula, and parts of Zambezia. The largest number of cases was reported in Nampula, with 863, followed by Cabo Delgado, with 410, Zambezia with 330, and Niassa, with 94. "Those who have started treatment should not abandon it, because the treatment is long and requires a lot of work on the part of everyone", said Perdigao, adding that Mozambique expects to attain the target of less than one case for every thousand inhabitants by the year 2000, although she posed some doubts about Nampula province, which still reports a large number of cases. Leprosy treatment takes between six and 12 months, depending on the stage of the disease. In 1998 the number of leprosy cases was estimated at 7,375 countrywide, 3,900 of which were new, compared with 10,896 reported in 1997, of which 4,195 were new.

From: Leprosy Eradication Campaign / AIM / 3 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/06 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - ECONOMIC CONDITIONS – AGRICULTURE

Mozambican Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi denied that there was any crisis in agricultural marketing in the northern province of Niassa. This followed claims by the delegate of the state marketing body, the Mozambique Cereals Institute (ICM), in the Niassa town of Cuamba, that the ICM did not have enough money to buy surplus maize, and that food might rot in farmers' barns. "I guarantee that the Niassa maize will not stay in the farmers' hands", Mocumbi told a Maputo press briefing. "Markets for the grain exist both inside and outside the country. There should be no concern about this". He pointed out that "gigantic efforts" had been made to repair roads in Niassa, and efforts were also under way to rehabilitate the railway from the provincial capital, Lichinga, to Cuamba. Mocumbi did not believe there was a real shortage of funds. This year "the commercial banks do have resources for agricultural marketing, particularly for grain", he said. He added that the

government had ensured the ICM had funds to start the marketing campaign. Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, "went to key marketing centres, and worked with the operators, including the ICM, guaranteeing resources for the initial period of the campaign", said Mocumbi.

From: Mocumbi denies marketing crisis / AIM / 6 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/09 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS – LITERATURE

The Swiss co-operation agency has created a fund in Mozambique to support the publication of works produced by researchers, academics and all citizens who wish to make Mozambican culture better known. For that purpose, a public tender has been launched, inviting citizens to submit proposals for work to be published in the areas of human and social sciences, with particular emphasis on culture and cultural identity, dictionaries, vocabularies and conversation guides in Mozambican vernacular languages, investigative journalism, and collections of poetry and oral narratives. Speaking during a Maputo press conference, Yolanda Arcelina, Swiss co-operation programme officer in Mozambique, said that her country has made 100,000 US dollars available for the publication of books in Mozambique, this year. The manuscripts can be presented either in Portuguese or in any other Mozambican language, but if the work is presented in a language other than Portuguese, it is the author's responsibility to supervise the translation into Portuguese. A consultative commission, which has already been set up, and which includes Nelson Saute, Emilio Araujo, Antonio Sopa, Fatima Mendonca, and Joaquim Salvador will do the selection of texts.

From: Swiss support for Mozambican publications / AIM / 9 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/09 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - WOMEN - FOOD SECURITY

Mozambican Agriculture Minister Carlos Agostinho do Rosario argued that more resources should be placed in the hands of women, since they "have the greatest responsibility" in ensuring food security for their families. Speaking at the opening of a national seminar on food security in Maputo, Rosario stressed that increasing the resources under the control of women will make it more likely that the country's food security programme will be successful. He said that about 90 per cent of Mozambican women work in agriculture, representing more than 70 per cent of this sector's workforce. He noted, however, that 41 per cent of the households headed by women have less than one hectare to cultivate. Rosario said that this is why the government, through its Rural Development Programme (PROAGRI), is paying particular attention to the role of women in reducing food insecurity and poverty.

From: Minister wants more resources in women's hands / AIM / 9 August 1999

Southern African News Features

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NUMBING AIDS STATISTICS PROMPT BILLION-DOLLAR CRISIS FUND

by Tinashe Madava

A billion-dollar World Bank initiative launched in Lusaka recently could serve as a blueprint for future aid to Africa's efforts against the HIV/AIDS pandemic by making it a focus of all development efforts.

The plan, called "Intensifying Action against HIV/AIDS in Africa: Responding to a Development Crisis", would allocate up to US \$3 billion annually to the fight against the disease in sub-Saharan Africa, the worst-hit region in the world.

"The strategy stands on four pillars (from) advocacy to positioning HIV/AIDS as a central development issue and to increase and sustain an intensified response," the Bank's regional vice-president for Africa, Callisto Madawo, said at the launching ceremony.

Over 5,000 health experts and activists gathered in Lusaka recently for the 11th International Symposium on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted diseases repeatedly warned that the rapidly spreading disease could derail economic gains if countries do not form joint emergency efforts to curb its spread.

The region's statistics are chilling. Zimbabwe's life expectancy could drop from 61 to 41 in five years. An estimated quarter of adults in Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe are now HIV positive.

In South Africa alone it is estimated that there are about 1,500 new infections each day. In Zambia every teenager has a 60 percent chance of contracting the virus. There were according to the United Nations Aids programme (UNAIDS) 16,000 new infections each day in Africa during 1998, at least 50 percent of which were economically active people.

The appalling aspect of these mind-numbing figures is that Africa, with one-tenth of the world's population, has 95 percent of AIDS orphans and a cumulative death toll of 11 million. The pandemic now outstrips malaria as the top killer disease on the continent.

Aside from the obvious humanitarian tragedy of today's pandemic, the future of millions more will be blighted as the continent loses its most productive age group – those from their teens to mid-thirties – people who should be at the cutting edge of growth, development, information and technology and the hopes for Africa's renaissance.

Only through a concerted effort by all sectors of society beginning with national governments and their leaders to industry, science, academia, labour, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), church and business can some positive turnaround occur, the symposium agreed. However, many African countries have retreated in the face of the growing disaster.

Despite the urging of the AIDS activists, the opening of the Lusaka conference did not attract a single African head of state, including the host country's President Frederick Chiluba who was to have officially opened the annual global event but sent his vice-president instead. No explanation was given. None of the other 10 heads of state mentioned as key participants, attended the opening, but it is not clear if any of them were actually invited or by whom.

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30 September 1999

A NEW MILLENNIUM FREE FROM DEATH PENALTY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA?

by Diana Mavunduse

There has been significant progress towards ending the use of death penalty in southern Africa following intense lobbying from human rights activists in the region.

Between 1996 and 1998, Angola, Mauritius and South Africa abolished the death penalty in their laws, joining Namibia and Mozambique, which had abolished it as of 1991.

"The main argument for the death penalty as a form of punishment is the belief or the expectation that death penalty reduces homicide and other violent crimes like rape and armed robbery," writes Rigmor Argen in *ZimRights News*.

In Swaziland, King Mswati III said, "death penalty should not be repealed, on the grounds that it would increase the threat of serious crimes, such as ritual murder."

Mswati also suggested that, in view of an increasing number of HIV cases, the judiciary in Swaziland should consider rape to be equal to murder in seriousness, a matter he hoped would be taken up urgently by the Ministry of Justice.

But critics see no relationship between crime and capital punishment. "Whether crime increases or not has nothing to do with the presence or absence of the death penalty," said Brain Spilg, a lawyer from Botswana.

He added, "crime is more related to subjects such as poverty, social inequality, poor housing, unemployment and the disappearance of formal or informal methods of social control."

Inter Africa Network for Human Rights (Afronet) Director, Ngande Mwananjiti said, "the most severe punishment should be life imprisonment with a view to reforming the criminal."

Studies conducted by the United Nations in 1998 concluded that there is no scientific proof that death penalty is more deterrent than lifetime imprisonment.

In Zambia, the voice leading the call for the abolition of capital punishment comes from former president Kenneth Kaunda who was mainly forced by circumstances during war time to sign scores of death warrants in his country.

"It has pained me to sign the death warrants during my tenure, I did so with utmost reluctance," said Kaunda.

The death penalty debate has become more topical in Zambia where 59 soldiers were recently sentenced to death for attempting to overthrow President Frederick Chiluba in October 1997.

In Botswana, an attempt was made to declare capital punishment unconstitutional in 1995, but regrettably the Court of Appeal held that it was constitutional.

In 1997, Malawian President Bakili Muluzi agreed to commute the sentences of all prisoners awaiting execution, and he pledged not to sign any orders of execution for the rest of his term.

In Zimbabwe, two prisoners were executed, and more than five others sentenced to death in 1998. Recently there has been an outcry by local NGOs against the sentencing of Sukoluhle Kachipare, who was convicted in March 1997 for inciting her 17-year-old maid, Masline Chibwara to murder her own new born baby.

If Kachipare is hanged, she will be the first woman to be executed in Zimbabwe since 1898, when the great spirit medium Mbuya Nehanda was hanged by the colonial regime.

"Death sentence is viewed as the most primitive way of meting out justice," said ZimRights former executive director David Chimhini. He added, "the legendary eye for an eye concept is outdated, inhumane, immoral and evil."

The main disadvantage with the use of death penalty according to Ditshwanelo, a Botswana human rights organisation, is the fact that it is the most final of all punishments. "If the convicted is later found innocent, there is no way of reversing the punishment."

Proponents of capital punishment argue that public opinion is in favour of death penalty. However, human rights organisations say that public opinion depends on how and when the questions are posed.

"The media and rumours play an unquestionable role in forming public opinion. It is likely that the public would accept abolition if governments took the lead in bringing it about," said Chimhini.

But evidence in South Africa, where it was banned, points to the contrary. There is growing public demand to re-endorse the death penalty to curb escalating crime. Early this month a Zimbabwean diplomat was murdered during a carjacking in South Africa, now considered the most dangerous country outside a war zone. (SARDC)

ITEM NO. 99/08/31 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - ECONOMIC POLICIES - TRADE FAIR

Mozambican Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi inaugurated, the 35th edition of the Maputo International Trade Fair (FACIM), which has this year 400 companies participating, 183 of which are Mozambican. Describing the trade fair as "essential" in the business world, Mocumbi was optimistic that the country will enter the next century with good prospects, as a result of the political stability and healthy economic performance of the last few years. He noted that the country's Gross Domestic Product grew by over 14 per cent in 1997 and by 9.9 per cent in 1998. As for the inflation rate, Mocumbi noted with satisfaction that it dropped from 70 per cent in 1994 to minus 1.3 per cent in 1998. He added that the depreciation of the national currency, the metical, was not more than one per cent last year. He mentioned particularly the participation of other countries of the region, which, like Mozambique, are members of SADC. This, Mocumbi said, showed the strength and dynamics of regional economic integration, for the benefit of the economies and the welfare of the peoples of the region. It took about four billion meticaïs (320,000 US dollars) to organize this year's trade fair, whereas last year's cost 3.5 billion meticaïs, and earned revenue of five billion, thus making a profit of 1.5 billion meticaïs.

From: Maputo Trade Fair opens / AIM / 31 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/31 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi are to establish a triangular development programme aiming, among other things, to promote trade exchanges and investment between the three neighbours, in the context of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to Zambia, Olubanke King-Akerele, said that this programme, which is the first of its kind in Africa, will facilitate, in a first stage, the development of certain areas of Tete province, in Mozambique, Zambia's Eastern Province, and some areas of western Malawi. King-Akerele visited Tete last week, in representation of the UNDP, which is the promoter and funding body for the initiative. He held talks with Tete Governor Virgilio Ferrao, and they agreed that the initiative is essential for the development of the areas in question. This is a programme for the development of areas of neighbouring states that make up an economic zone with possibilities of integrated growth, which can be accelerated through co-operation. The idea is to identify a number of projects that can benefit neighbouring areas, and mobilise both national and foreign funds for their implementation.

From: Triangular development programme / AIM / 31 August 1999

OAU aimed at securing an early solution to the crisis that has been prevailing in the archipelago for the last two years". The Comoros has been grappling with an attempt by one of the islands, Anjouan, to secede. An agreement was reached in the Madagascar capital of Antananarivo in April this year that seeks to resolve the crisis on the basis of maintaining a single state in the Comoros, but the would-be separatists have not yet implemented it. Madeira's mandate involves "facilitating the attainment of the OAU's objectives on the Comoros, including the implementation of the Antananarivo agreement which, inter alia, provides for the preservation of the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros". It added that Madeira will be guided by the decisions of the OAU summit held in Algeria in July, in particular the need for "implementation of the Antananarivo agreement by the Anjouanese party and the speedy return of constitutional order in the Comoros".

From: Mozambican Minister appointed OAU envoy / AIM / 12 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/12 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - HEALTH – POLIO

For the second year running, the Mozambican health authorities' polio vaccination campaign has greatly exceeded its target. The first dose of the vaccine this year was given from 26 to 30 July and the Health Ministry expected that 3.3 million children would be vaccinated. This means that the campaign reached 110.3 per cent of its target figure. In 1998, the application of the second dose of the vaccine also reached more than the estimated total of under fives living in the country. The figure then was 111 per cent. This encouraging result brings Mozambique closer to receiving the World Health Organisation (WHO) certificate as a country free of polio. The second dose of this year's vaccine was applied from 30 August to 3 September.

From: Success claimed in Polio Campaign / AIM / 12 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/12 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - ANGOLA - SADC - MINES - ARMED CONFLICT

A senior SADC official not only admitted that the organisation is powerless to prevent the planting of more land mines in Angola, but even defended the Angolan government's violation of its treaty obligations under the Ottawa convention on the outlawing of anti-personnel mines, to which it is a signatory. The official in charge of the land mine area in the SADC secretariat, Joao Machatane Ndlovu, told a Maputo press briefing that there was nothing that SADC could do about the problem because Angola was at war. He claimed that, even if there were willingness on the part of the Angolan government to apply the Ottawa convention, it would make no difference since the UNITA rebels of Jonas Savimbi would continue to sow mines with impunity. The Angolan government signed the convention on 4 Dec. 1997, but has not yet ratified it. Since then there have been many reports of the continued laying of mines in Angola by both the government and UNITA. The Angolan government has made no attempt to deny the reports. During the May conference in Maputo of signatories to the Ottawa treaty, Angolan Deputy Foreign Minister Toko Seroa justified his government's attitude on the grounds that the country was still at war.

From: SADC official defends Angolan mine treaty violations / AIM / 12 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/16 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - ARMED CONFLICT – ANGOLA

Contrary to some expectations, the Angolan government has now made it clear that it will not ask fellow members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for military assistance at the heads of state summit in Maputo. According to spokesman for Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, the government has no intention or interest in other SADC countries involving themselves directly in the Angolan conflict. "The intention Angola does have is that SADC should carry out the goals for which it was created, which are to increase co-operation between the countries of the region, politically and economically", said the source. Angola, he added, expected from other SADC members "understanding for its internal problem and solidarity". He pointed out that the Angolan war is not the only problem facing SADC. "It's a difficult and serious problem, but we think there are other problems which the region must also discuss", he said, mentioning in particular the situation in the Great Lakes region, and the secessionist rebellion in Namibia's Caprivi strip.

From: Angola not seeking SADC military intervention / AIM / 16 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/16 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL INTEGRATION - SADC DAY

The president of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Laurent Kabila, failed to attend the celebrations in Maputo of the seventh anniversary of the founding of the Southern African Development Community. He was also absent from the summit meeting of SADC heads of state, even though the Congolese crisis was a major issue on the agenda. At the opening of the celebrations, host President Joaquim Chissano apologised for him, saying he had to return to Kinshasa "because of the prevailing situation in his country". The "prevailing situation" mentioned by Chissano can only refer to the outbreak of fighting in the eastern Congolese City of Kisangani between Ugandan and Rwandan troops. But Kabila must have known about this before flying to Maputo, and figured prominently in the international media.

From: Kabila absent from SADC celebrations / AIM / 16 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/17 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - SADC DAY

Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano urged his fellow heads of state of SADC (Southern African Development Community) to make every effort to turn the region "into an area where wars, hunger, and endemic diseases are things of the past". He was speaking in Maputo at the "SADC Day" celebrations, on the eve of the organisation's 19th summit. "Peace means mutual trust among states and among all actors in society", said Chissano. "It must be taken as essential. And in order to promote trust, there is a need for constant dialogue at all levels as a condition for achieving peace". He was confident that the efforts to end the wars in two SADC members, Congo and Angola, would bear fruit, and that "the benefits of peace enjoyed in other member countries will soon also be extended to these

Southern African News Briefs

SA, Mozambique to ratify trade protocol

Mozambique and South Africa have indicated they will, before the end of this year, ratify the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Trade Protocol, which aims to set up a free trade area in the region.

Mozambique's Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Oldemiro Baloi, revealed this at an annual private sector conference in Maputo. He recalled that when the protocol was signed, in 1996, it was initially envisaged that ratification would follow fairly quickly.

Some countries did indeed ratify speedily, he added, "but the weaker members, including Mozambique, thought it necessary to alert business and society to the content of the protocol, because of the drastic consequences it would have for the economy".

In a related development, South African members of parliament were urged to ratify the ground breaking free trade deal so that implementation can proceed on schedule, by January 2000. President Thabo Mbeki has been on record as saying this target date will still be met, despite the fact that it is now only three months away.

Seven countries – Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe have already ratified the protocol while South Africa and Swaziland have expressed their intention to do so before the end of the year. (*AIM*)

Miners retrenched

Mining workers in South Africa will be forced to return to rural areas and neighbouring countries as the mining industry sheds off another 28,000 jobs, according to trade union officials.

The bulk of the miners come from the rural areas and neighbouring countries where there is little prospect of finding alternative employment.

The steel and engineering industry is also suffering job losses as a direct result of the mining industry retrenchments. The steel and engineering industry is

shedding between 1,000 and 2,000 jobs per month due to loss of contracts with the mining industry. (*IRIN*)

Fund for livestock breeding

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) says that it will spend an estimated US\$2.6 million on a three-year regional project which is aimed at preserving the diminishing animal genetic resources.

Louise Setshwaelo, one of SADC's chief technical advisors said that there was need to build an inventory of the available livestock breeds and their genetic characteristics.

She also said the project would provide information to the policy makers, farmers and other stakeholders on the regions potential in overall food security and poverty reduction. (*IRIN*)

Mozambique forms committee on HIV/AIDS

Mozambique is to create a national committee to deal with sexually transmitted diseases (STD), and AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), as well as HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) before the end of the year.

President Joaquim Chissano, who made the announcement, speaking during the conference on the National Strategic Plan for the fight against HIV/AIDS, in Maputo, recently, said that this committee will include members from various sectors of society. Chissano warned the Mozambican society of the dangers of this disease.

"AIDS is not a joke," he said, adding that "the current scenario of this disease is a gloomy one". He also urged society to abandon the secrecy and taboos surrounding AIDS and deal with it with more seriousness and responsibility, "because it is the future development of the country that is at stake".

"The country's economic development may be disturbed by this disease," said Chissano, adding that "the government, civil society, political parties, and the international community should work together to check its spread".

countries". Chissano called for unity, not only among politicians, but amongst all social forces in order to turn into a reality the summit's theme "SADC in the next millennium: Working together for peace, progress and prosperity". The word "together" was intended to cover everyone, he declared.

From: Chissano calls for dialogue and trust / AIM / 17 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/17 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - NATURAL RESOURCES - ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The largest reserve of titanium-bearing heavy sands in the world has been discovered in the district of Chibuto, in the southern Mozambican province of Gaza, according to the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, John Kachamila. This reserve is estimated at more than 100 million tonnes of the mineral. Kachamila is optimistic that exploitation of the reserve may start within the next two years, and feasibility studies have already begun. The Chibuto deposits are said to be three or four times larger than the titanium reserve at Richards Bay, in South Africa. "It is a reserve free from impurities", said Kachamila, adding that "we think there will be a greater chance to develop this deposit than the ones at Moebasse, in Zambezia province, and at Moma, in Nampula". Chibuto is essentially an agricultural district, where the only major infrastructure is a tarred road linking the district capital to the country's main north-south highway. Titanium is a metal used in paints and plastics, in the aeronautics and military industries, and in other areas of high technology.

From: Reserve of Titanium uncovered in Chibuto / AIM / 17 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/17 – MZ

REGIONAL COOPERATION - ANGOLAN CONFLICT - SADC DAY

The Angolan government has no intention of holding any further negotiations with Jonas Savimbi, leader of the UNITA rebels, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos declared in Maputo. Addressing other SADC leaders at the commemorations of "SADC Day", dos Santos noted that, having failed to overthrow the Luanda government earlier this year, Savimbi "no longer says that the government is weak and will fall. Instead he sends messages saying that he wants to negotiate". "There is nothing to negotiate", insisted dos Santos. There was already a peace plan for Angola, the Lusaka protocol negotiated in 1994. "We cannot allow groups of adventurers and bandits, benefiting from the open or disguised support of some countries, inside and outside of Africa, and from influential political and economic circles who always fought against us, to continue their destabilising action", said the Angolan President. "They prevent the normal functioning of democratic institutions, devastate cities, towns and villages, destroy property and infrastructures, and condemn entire peoples to misery, illness and hunger". He pointed out that, whereas Savimbi had not accepted either the popular will as expressed in the 1992 elections, or any of the three agreements negotiated with the government, the Angolan authorities "always implemented in good faith the tasks included in the peace agreements, and kept our promises".

From: No more negotiations with Savimbi / AIM / 17 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/17 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - INTER REGIONAL COOPERATION - ECOWAS/SADC

Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo called for closer co-operation between the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). He was speaking in Maputo as the guest of honour at the celebrations of "SADC Day", on the eve of the organisation's 19th summit. Obasanjo described SADC and ECOWAS as "two dynamic organisations with the potential to become corner stones" in building the projected African Economic Community. He called for more intensive consultations between SADC and ECOWAS on "key African questions", and said a start could be made simply by exchanging information on "projects, policies and regional priorities". Obasanjo had much bolder ideas - including freedom of movement for SADC citizens in ECOWAS countries and vice versa. He also suggested import concessions or even a common customs tariffs regime between the two regions. Obasanjo said that although ECOWAS is an older organisation than SADC, its efforts at regional integration had run into severe setbacks, not only because of armed conflicts, but also thanks to lack of leadership from the former military regime in his own country, which is the giant within ECOWAS. He stressed that the Nigerian democratic regime that he heads is committed to pushing ahead with regional and continental integration.

From: Obasanjo calls for ECOWAS-SADC Co-operation / AIM / 17 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/18 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - ARMED CONFLICT – CONGO

The Ugandan and Rwandan Presidents, Yoweri Museveni, and Pastor Bizimungu, arrived in Maputo, where they were to attend the summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as "special guests". Neither Uganda nor Rwanda are members of SADC, and they have clearly been invited because of their military involvement in Congo. It would seem that the Congolese delegation to the summit was not informed of the invitation, since Congolese Foreign Minister, Jerode Nbondasi, told reporters that he did not want to talk to Ugandan or Rwandan delegations, and "the best thing they can do is go home". A cease-fire was signed in Lusaka last month between most of the parties involved in the Congolese war, to put an end to the conflict, but some of the rebel groups have not yet signed the document.

From: Ugandan and Rwandan Presidents in Maputo / AIM / 18 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/18 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL COOPERATION - ARMED CONFLICT – ANGOLA

The heads of state summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), meeting in Maputo, agreed to give full support to the Angolan government in its war with the UNITA rebels, short of sending troops and military hardware to Angola. At a closing press conference, the new SADC chairman, Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano, said, "the Angolan delegation did not ask for weapons or soldiers. They asked for moral, political, diplomatic, and humanitarian support". He made clear that this could include non-lethal forms of support for the Angolan armed forces. "The people who are fighting also

need food, medicines and clothing", said Chissano. SADC, he added, would support the Angolan government in its efforts to extend its authority throughout Angolan territory. Asked about the dispute between Angola and Zambia over alleged Zambian support for UNITA, Chissano said, "We didn't even talk about that. We saw them (Presidents Jose Eduardo dos Santos of Angola and Frederick Chiluba of Zambia), smiling and embracing each other. They have been able to deal with this".

From: SADC to support Angola, but not with troops / AIM / 18 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/18 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL INTEGRATION - SADC SUMMIT

The SADC has taken unspecified measures to ensure that the main Congolese rebel group, the Congolese Democratic Movement (RCD), will sign the cease fire agreement reached in Lusaka on 10 July. According to a final communiqué, from SADC heads of state summit, held in Maputo, the cease fire accord, once it is signed by the rebels, "will prepare the ground for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Congo". The heads of state appeared to agree with the position expressed publicly by Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos that there is "nothing to negotiate" with UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi. As for the goal of regional integration, the summit claimed "praiseworthy progress" since the SADC treaty came into force in 1993. The most important factor, it said, was "the undeniable undertaking by member states to establish a unified and economically viable southern African region". It pledged that the SADC trade protocol would take effect in January 2000. To achieve this goal, nine of the 14 member states must ratify the protocol. Seven have already done so, while three others (South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia) have promised to ratify by the end of 1999. Other protocols, which are already in effect concern, shared watercourses, illicit drugs, transport, communications and meteorology, and energy. Protocols on mining and on education and training are not yet in force, because not enough members have ratified them. The summit urged member states to speed up ratification. The heads of state signed two new protocols during the summit - one on health, and one on wildlife preservation and law enforcement.

From: Final Communiqué, from SADC Summit / AIM / 18 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/19 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - REGIONAL INTEGRATION - SADC SUMMIT

The SADC heads of state summit, held in Maputo unanimously elected Chissano as SADC chairman, and Namibian President Sam Nujoma as Deputy Chairman. The next summit will be held in Namibia in the year 2000. The summit also decided that the SADC Council of Ministers would assess the operations of all SADC bodies including the controversial Defence, Politics and Security Organ. But it also agreed that for the time being this body would continue to operate under the chairmanship of President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. The summit confirmed that SADC Executive Secretary Kaire Mbuende would soon be leaving the post. And concluded saying "there is an uneasy relationship between the Executive Secretary and most, if not all, members of the Council of Ministers". The new SADC chairman said the problem had been discussed "in a very friendly way" with

Mbuende and "he decided, in a very humble fashion, to help the organisation by proposing that he be replaced. This was accepted and we shall discuss with him the modalities and the period".

From: Chissano elected chairman of SADC / AIM / 19 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/20 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - SOUTHERN AFRICA – SADC

The executive secretary of SADC, Kaire Mbuende, offered his resignation because of severe criticisms made of the functioning of the secretariat by the SADC Council of Ministers, said the Mozambican Foreign Minister Leonardo Simao. Briefing the press on the outcome of the SADC heads of state summit held in Maputo Simao said that at times the secretariat "has not done its job properly, in terms of organising meetings on time, and sending out documents on time". This was not a trivial matter, he argued, since, if documents were only received at the last minute, that would affect the quality of meetings and the ability of SADC governments to bring sectors of civil society into the preparatory discussions. Simao said that the heads of state last year decided that French should be a SADC language, and asked the secretariat to draw up a study on the financial and other implications of this. But to date no such study has been produced. Simao said there had also been "failure to abide by the rules of SADC, and although Mbuende may not be personally guilty, he has overall responsibility for the secretariat". He did not elaborate on these "breaches of rules". At the summit, "Mbuende was informed of these criticisms, and he thought it better to offer his resignation, which he will put into writing shortly", added the Minister.

From: SADC: Mbuende's resignation explained / AIM / 20 August 1999

ITEM NO. 99/08/24 – MZ

MOZAMBIQUE - EDUCATION – LANGUAGES

Teaching in the Bantu languages that are the mother tongues of most Mozambicans will be introduced in the country's primary schools, but no pupil will be forced to study these languages, according to Simao Mucavele, director of the National Institute for the Development of Education (INDE). He was speaking to reporters about the new curriculum for basic education, which will take effect as from 2004. Mucavele assured his audiences that learning Bantu languages would be optional. The new curriculum proposes a form of bilingual education: Portuguese will remain the main medium of education, but pupils will have the opportunity to learn to read and write in their mother tongue. Mucavele said that the new curriculum would be less exam-oriented. Instead pupils will be continually assessed. This will avoid children being forced to repeat years, just because they fail an exam. He admitted that this would require higher professional standards and greater motivation from the teaching staff. English will be introduced into primary school as from sixth grade, he added, and there will be a new discipline of "moral education".

From: Bantu languages in schools, but not compulsory / AIM / 24 August 1999