

wait for independence for the establishment of sound economic, social and educational foundations for launching the fight.

Yet others, giving a twisted interpretation of our Statutes, claim that certain local traditions must be respected and that we cannot oppose them at this stage for fear of losing the support of the masses. They then ask why there is a need to emancipate women at this point, when the vast majority of women are indifferent to the matter. After all, they conclude, emancipation would be artificial, imposed on women by FRELIMO.

This is a very serious question. It demands careful study and clear thought.

#### b. The need for emancipation

The emancipation of women is not an act of charity, the result of a humanitarian or compassionate attitude. The liberation of women is a fundamental necessity for the Revolution, the guarantee of its continuity and the precondition for its victory. The main objective of the Revolution is to destroy the system of exploitation and build a new society which releases the potentialities of human beings, reconciling them with labour and with nature. This is the context within which the question of women's emancipation arises.

Generally speaking, women are the most oppressed, humiliated and exploited beings in society. A woman is even exploited by a man who is himself exploited, beaten by the man who is lacerated by the *palmatoria*, humiliated by the man who is crushed under the boot of the boss and the settler.

How can the Revolution triumph without the liberation of women? Will it be possible to get rid of the system of exploitation while keeping one part of society exploited? One cannot only partially wipe out exploitation and oppression, one cannot tear up only half the weeds without even stronger ones spreading out from the half that has survived.

How then can one make a revolution without mobilising women? If more than half the exploited and oppressed people consist of women, how can they be left on the fringe of the struggle? To make a revolution it is necessary to mobilise all the exploited and oppressed, and consequently women as well. If it is to be victorious, the Revolution must eliminate the whole system of exploitation and oppression, liberating *all* the exploited and the oppressed. Therefore it must eliminate the exploitation and oppression of women, it is forced to liberate women.

Moreover, if we also consider the basic need for the revolution to be continued by the new generation, how can we ensure the revolutionary education of the generation which will carry on our work if mothers, the first educators, are marginal to the revolutionary process? How can one turn the homes of the exploited and the oppressed into cells of revolutionary struggle, centres for the diffusion of our line, encouraging the involvement of the family, if women remain apathetic to this process, indifferent to the society which is being built and deaf to the call of the people?

To say that women do not feel the need to liberate themselves, or that it is often FRELIMO, and not the women, which uphold women's emancipation is a paltry argument which cannot stand up to analysis. Women feel their subjection, they feel the need to change their situation. What happens is that the domination imposed by society, by stifling their initiative, often prevents them from expressing their aspira-

tions, often prevents them from thinking of how to wage their struggle. It is here that FRELIMO intervenes. As the conscious vanguard of the women and men of Mozambique, of the oppressed people, FRELIMO formulates the line and indicates the methods of struggle.

It is essential that we understand this phenomenon so as to avoid false and futile debates.

#### c. The right time to launch the fight

The other question that arises is when is the right time to launch the struggle?

We cannot limit the revolutionary process to certain people while neglecting others, because this would halt the revolution, destroy it. The roots of an evil which we underestimate and decide to pull out at a later date become the roots of a cancer which can destroy us, invading the whole body, before we get to that 'later date'.

Under the present conditions, FRELIMO is no longer able to wage an armed struggle without carrying out a revolution. The preconditions for advancing the armed struggle is to attack the very roots of exploitation. The idea of waiting until later to emancipate women is erroneous; it means allowing reactionary ideas to gain ground only to fight them when they are strong. It is like not fighting the alligator on the bank only to fight him in the middle of the river.

The armed struggle, acting like an incubator, has already created the conditions for the masses to be receptive to the ideas of progress and revolution. To avoid joining battle when conditions are ripe is lack of political foresight, an error of strategy.

This close and indissoluble link between revolution and the liberation of women also enables us to understand why this conference is taking place now and not five years ago, for example. Let us recall an experience we had, that of the Mozambican Women's League (LIFEMO). LIFEMO was created in Mbeya in June, 1966. At that meeting, attended virtually only by women who were on the fringe of the struggle, they elected a leadership which was ignorant of the struggle and of the country, and which set itself some tasks outside the real perspectives of the struggle. A few months after the LIFEMO conference, all that remained of the leadership were the names. Like a rotten fruit, LIFEMO decayed of its own accord. Why?

When LIFEMO was established, what stage had been reached by FRELIMO, the Mozambican revolution and women? FRELIMO did not yet have sound structures and its line had not been sufficiently well understood and internalised because it had not yet been put to test in the struggle. Its cadres and leadership had not been sufficiently seasoned by struggle and they lacked experience.

This situation, where although the line was clear it had not been internalised, where the structures were not sound, the leadership was not experienced and the cadres were not seasoned, blocked the development of our line through practice. We were unable to distinguish the essential from the secondary, unable to define our tasks correctly, establishing proper priorities. Therefore we had only reached a very embryonic stage of the popularisation of the war, the point of departure under our conditions for transforming the struggle into a revolution.

We can therefore say that at the time of LIFEMO's creation the revolutionary process was still at the initial stage. This shows why it was difficult to wage the



to incalculable risks and to the temptations of corruption in which the enemy specialises, these comrades put the interests of the people above all else, facing the risks and rejecting corruption as they create the conditions for the outbreak of armed struggle. They give us extremely valuable information and make a very important contribution to the progress of our liberation struggle.

We would also like to extend special greetings to the comrades who work in the FRELIMO camps outside the country, in various sectors of activity. As FRELIMO representatives, where they play an outstanding role in supplying the new fronts; in the secondary school where they are training the cadres who will assume our policies, discovering the secrets of science and destroying myths, so as to mobilise both society and nature in the interests of the revolution.

We also hail the comrades from the Americo Boavida hospital at Mtwara, who are carrying out our principle of putting the health services at the service of the masses, treating the sick and the war wounded, so as to make them fit to return to the struggle, and training cadres who will defend the health of our people on the front line.

The comrades of the Centre for Political and Military Training deserve special mention. They are carrying out a delicate and difficult mission — that of turning men and women hitherto guided by outmoded ideas and prejudices into politically conscious fighters, prepared to destroy the enemy's physical and ideological forces of exploitation and oppression.

The comrades in our children's home have three decisive tasks. Educating the new generation, instilling in children the new way of thinking which will make them true perpetrators of the revolution. Teaching students so that, understanding our line, they master science and become agents for the transformation of society. And making the wives of militants into active militants themselves, into true mothers of the revolution.

To these comrades, who are the hosts at this conference today, we address warm greetings, conscious as we are of their important role as educators.

We can state with pride that this Conference is a great victory, a victory against the traditions and obscurantism which doom women to passivity, a victory against the exploitative society which enslaves women and a victory for the revolution, which is liberating the exploited and the oppressed and which is releasing the creative initiative of the masses.

But victories are built and sustained through blood and sacrifice. There are many women and many men who should have been here with us today, those who in the fight against the enemy and in the internal struggle that took place, have created the political, moral and even physical conditions for our meeting here. They are not physically with us. Their sacrifice is a bridge to our future progress. Some gave up their lives in a final heroic act; for others each day of their lives was a heroic act, an example of service to the masses, of defence of our line.

We are what we are because of the sacrifices which have gone into the revolution. It is therefore fitting that as we begin our conference we observe a minute of silence in memory of the women and men who have fallen serving the people, serving the revolution.

Gathered here are women from all the provinces, from all the regions and ethnic groups of our country, with varying levels of education and culture. There are mothers and even grandmothers, side by side with young single women. We

have here teachers, instructresses, soldiers, nurses, students and also peasant women. Men will also be attending the conference, your comrades in arms not only in the liberation of the nation, but also in the very struggle for the emancipation of women.

## THE REVOLUTION AND THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

### a. The Historical Context of the Conference.

This Conference is taking place at a specific historical moment in the life of our organisation. It is this historical context that gives the conference its importance, its profound significance.

We have just celebrated the tenth anniversary of the founding of FRELIMO. Achieving the unity of the Mozambican people from the Rovuma to the Maputo provided us with an indispensable instrument for launching the process of liberation. Unity constitutes the driving force of our action. The transformation of our unity into an operative force — in other words, the launching of armed struggle on 25 September, 1964 — created the conditions for the beginning of a radical process of transformation in our country.

The recent celebrations of the eighth anniversary of the beginning of the armed struggle for national liberation take on a special importance now that the struggle has already become a revolution and as such is gradually spreading to all regions of our country, as shown by the recent opening of the Manica e Sofala front.

The eighth anniversary we celebrated also corresponds to an advanced phase in the process of collapse of the enemy's military and political effort. As pointed out by the recent Central Committee meeting, we are now entering upon the stage of generalised offensives by our forces in the politico-military field — a stage which will change the balance of forces between us and the enemy in our favour.

The constant clarification and strengthening of our line over the four and a half years since the Second Congress have made our achievements possible and provided the guidance needed to enable us all reach this point. This is the context in which the conditions that led us to call this conference became ripe.

The opening of the conference almost coincides with 8 March, International Women's Day, the day when all of progressive mankind solemnly reaffirms its support for the struggle for women's liberation. This fortunate coincidence should be an incentive to us, since it reminds us of the fact that our struggle is not isolated, showing us that the struggle of women is the struggle of humanity and making us aware of the progress already achieved.

The main purpose of the conference is to study questions concerning the emancipation of women, to find lines of action which will lead to their emancipation. But a preliminary question arises: why bother with the emancipation of women? And another: why call this conference now?

There are people among us, as our Movement is well aware, who feel that we should devote all our efforts to the struggle against colonialism and that the task of women's emancipation is therefore secondary because it will dissipate our forces. They further add that our present situation, with a shortage of schools, very few educated women and with women still bound by tradition, does not provide any basis for embarking upon consistent action, and that it is therefore necessary to



which happens all once, but a process developed and refined over thousands of years of the society's existence.

Obscurantism is the beginning of the process. The general principle is to keep women in ignorance or give them only an essential minimum of education. Everywhere we find that illiteracy is higher among women, they are always a minority in schools, colleges and universities, even though they are the majority of the population.

Science has always been kept as man's monopoly, his exclusive domain, in the developed civilisations of the past as in capitalist society today. To keep women away from science is to prevent them from discovering that society is created as a function of certain specific interests and that it is therefore possible to change society.

Obscurantism and ignorance go hand in hand with superstition and give rise to passivity.

All superstitions and religions find their most fertile soil among women, because they are submerged in the greatest ignorance and obscurantism. In our society, rites and ceremonies are the main vehicle for the transmission of society's concept of women's inferiority, and their subservience to men. It is here too that countless myths and superstitions are propagated with the express intention of destroying women's sense of initiative and reducing them to passivity.

Family education itself emphasises and reinforces this. From infancy the girl is brought up differently from the boy and a feeling of inferiority instilled in her.

None of this is surprising. As we have said, exploitative society promotes the ideology, culture and education that serves its interests. It does so with women, just as it does with colonised people and with workers in capitalist society. All are deliberately kept in ignorance, obscurantism and superstition with a view to making them resigned to their position, of instilling in them an attitude of passivity and servility.

This is where racism comes in. The colonised man is called a second class human being by virtue of his skin. The woman is called an inferior human being by virtue of her sex. In capitalist countries in Europe, they claim that women are creatures with long hair and short ideas.

The process of alienation reaches its peak when the exploited person, reduced to total passivity, is no longer capable of imagining that the possibility of liberation exists and in turn becomes a tool for the propagation of the ideology of resignation and passivity. It must be recognised that the centuries-old subjugation of women has to a great extent reduced them to a passive state, which prevents them from even understanding their condition.

### c. The nature of the antagonism

It is important to understand correctly the nature of the contradiction or contradictions involved, for only after understanding them will we be in a position to define the target of our attack and plan the appropriate strategy and tactics for our struggle.

We have seen that the basis of the domination of women lies in the system of economic organisation of society, private ownership of the means of production, which necessarily leads to the exploitation of man by man.

This means that, apart from the specific features of their situation, the contradiction between women and the social order is in essence a contradiction between women and the exploitation of man by man, between women and the private ownership of the means of production. In other words, it is the same as the contradiction between the working masses and the exploitative social order.

Let us be clear on this point. The antagonistic contradiction is not between women and men, but between women and the social order, between all exploited people, both women and men, and the social order. The fact that they are exploited explains why they are not involved in all planning and decision-making tasks in society, why they are excluded from working out the concepts which govern economic, social, cultural and political life, even when their interests are directly affected.

This is the main feature of the contradiction: their exclusion from the sphere of decision-making in society. This contradiction can only be solved by revolution, because only revolution destroys the foundations of exploitative society and rebuilds society on new foundations, freeing the initiative of women, integrating them in society as responsible members and involving them in decision-making.

Therefore, just as there can be no revolution without the liberation of women, the struggle for women's emancipation cannot succeed without the victory of the revolution.

It should be pointed out that the ideological and cultural precepts of the exploitative society which maintain the subjugation of women are destroyed by the advance of the ideological and cultural revolution which introduces into society new values, a new content to education and culture.

But apart from the antagonistic contradiction between women and the social order, other contradictions of a secondary nature also arise between women and men as a kind of reflex.

The marriage system, marital authority based solely on sex, the frequent brutality of the husband and his consistent refusal to treat his wife as an equal, are sources of friction and contradiction. If they are not correctly solved, these secondary contradictions may become more acute and produce such serious consequences as divorce.

But however serious they may be, these factors do not alter the nature of the contradiction.

It is important to stress this aspect, because we now see an ideological offensive taking place particularly in the capitalist world, in the guise of a women's liberation struggle. The aim is to transform the contradiction with men into an antagonistic one, thereby dividing exploited men and women to prevent them from fighting the exploitative society. In fact, leaving aside the demagoguery which hides its true nature, this ideological offensive is an offensive by capitalism to confuse women, to divert their attention from the real target.

We see small manifestations of this offensive appearing among us. Here and there we hear women grumbling about men, as if the cause of their exploitation lay in the difference between the sexes, as if men were sadistic monsters who derive pleasure from the oppression of women.

Men and women are products and victims of the exploitative society which has created and formed them. It is essentially against this society that men and women should fight united. Our practical experience has proved that the progress achieved in the liberation of women is the result of the successes gained in our common struggle against colonialism and imperialism, against the exploitation of man by man, and to build a new society.



### 3. STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL QUESTIONS

#### a. Our main lines of action

The fight for women's emancipation demands, as a first step, the clarification of our ideas. Such clarification is all the more imperative in that there is a profusion of erroneous ideas about the emancipation of women.

There are those who see emancipation as mechanical equality between men and women. This vulgar concept is often seen among us. Here emancipation means that women and men do exactly the same tasks, mechanically dividing their household duties. 'If I wash the dishes today you must wash them tomorrow, whether or not you are busy or have the time.' If there are still no women truck drivers or tractor drivers in FRELIMO, we must have some right away regardless of the objective and subjective conditions. As we can see from the example of capitalist countries, this mechanically conceived emancipation leads to complaints and attitudes which utterly distort the meaning of women's emancipation. An emancipated woman is one who drinks, smokes, wears trousers and mini-skirts, who indulges in sexual promiscuity, who refuses to have children, etc.

Others associate emancipation with the accumulation of diplomas, and particularly university degrees, which are regarded as certificates of emancipation.

Yet others think that emancipation consists of achieving a certain economic, social and cultural level.

All these are erroneous and superficial concepts. Not one of them either gets to the heart of the contradiction or suggests a line that will really emancipate women.

Emancipation requires action on several essential levels.

First of all, a political line of action must be laid down. For women to emancipate themselves there must be conscious political commitment. What does this mean in practical terms?

It means, firstly, that the line must be laid down by a revolutionary political organisation which, defending the interests of the exploited masses as a whole, leads them in the fight against the old society. Only such an organisation is in a position to formulate a global strategy for the fight for liberation. In our case, what this means in concrete terms is that in order to liberate themselves, women must internalise FRELIMO's political line and live by it in a creative way. Otherwise they will throw themselves into sterile and secondary battles which will exhaust them uselessly and to no effect.

To internalise and live by our line requires involvement in the tasks laid down by the organisation. Just as a plant needs to strike roots in the ground in order to grow, so does the political line take root in revolutionary practice. Revolutionary practice destroys the exploitative society, unleashes the internal struggle, demolishes our erroneous ideas and releases our critical sense and creative initiatives.

In this context women must be mobilised for internal struggle and for mass struggle, and they must be organised. They will then be able to internalise the political line to start the offensive. They must be involved in the battle for the political education of the next generation and in the battle for the large-scale mobilisation and organisation of the masses. Their commitment to the liberation struggle will then become concrete action, leading them to take part in making decisions affecting the country's future.

There also arises the need to engage in production.

Releasing the productive forces and launching the process of economic development will lead to deeper ideological understanding and a sounder knowledge of reality, of society and nature.

A third aspect is scientific and cultural education. A scientific and cultural grounding enables women to achieve a correct understanding of their relationship with nature and society, thus destroying the myths fostered by obscurantism which oppress them psychologically and deprive them of initiative.

In this way, women will gradually attain all levels of planning, decision-making and implementation in organising the affairs of children, hospitals, schools, factories, the armed forces, diplomacy, art, science, culture and so on.

It should also be emphasised here that all these needs do not apply solely to women, because men are also alienated, though in different ways.

The last aspect is that of the relationship between men and women, that is, the new revolutionary concept of the couple and the home. We can already see clearly what this relationship should not be. Until now it has been based on the alleged superiority of man over woman, aimed at satisfying the male ego.

We must state here — and this is something new in society — that the family relationship, the man-woman relationship should be founded exclusively on love. We do not mean the banal, romantic concept of love which amounts to little more than emotional excitement and an idealised view of life.

For us, love can only exist between free and equal people who have the same ideals and commitment in serving the masses and the revolution. This is the basis upon which the moral and emotional affinity which constitutes love is built. We need to discover this new dimension, hitherto unknown in our country.

#### b. The organisation of women

Following the principle of mobilising, organising and uniting all our forces in the struggle, the Central Committee, satisfying the aspirations of the increasingly conscious Mozambican women, has decided to establish the Organisation of Mozambican Women (OMM). The Organisation of Mozambican Women is a body which will provide leadership and guidance for all Mozambican women in the struggle for the emancipation of women and for the revolution.

Apart from this, its central task is to mobilise international public opinion in favour of our struggle and to express the solidarity of the Mozambican women and people with the liberating and revolutionary struggle of the women and peoples of the whole world.

One battle the Organisation has to wage is that of keeping the true sense of emancipation permanently alive, reinforcing the ideological struggle against attempts to disparage the women's struggle and isolate it from the revolution. Firm adherence to the line, which must be understood, internalised and lived by in the details of everyday life, will give the Organisation and women themselves the sense of vigilance required to nip in the bud even the slightest reactionary ideological offensive.

We can be sure that the colonialist army, like other reactionary and conservative forces, will react against this Conference and its results and do their utmost to make our decisions remain a dead letter. Comrades of ours who still cling to erroneous concepts will find it difficult to understand the profound meaning of the women's struggle and they will put obstacles in its way.



But the greatest obstacle will be created by women themselves, by their habit of dependence, their passivity and the dead weight of tradition they carry over from the old society.

Women must unite. Unity is the main weapon of the struggle, its driving force. FRELIMO's political line is your platform for unity; while tribalism, regionalism and racism stand against it.

Tribalism and regionalism prevent one from realising the greatness of our country and of our struggle. They make it impossible to understand the complexity of our country and, above all, they disperse one's forces.

Racism is a reactionary attitude. The enemy has no colour. The function of racism in our case and in any struggle is to make it difficult to define the real target, creating confusion so as to divide the national revolutionary and progressive forces, weakening them and leading to their annihilation by the common enemy and exploiter. Our struggle would remain isolated from the world-wide struggle of the progressive forces against the exploitation of man by man.

Seeds planted among us by the enemy cannot be destroyed by words or magic formulas. The ideological struggle must be started among all women to make them clearly understand the harm of these reactionary ideas. At the same time efforts must be made to explain to women that their experience of suffering, exploitation and oppression in Cabo Delgado, Gaza, Niassa, Inhambane, Tete and Maputo, in Zambezia, Manica e Sofala and Nampula, is the same. All bear the same scars, all have known the same hunger, the same poverty, the same suffering, the same shackles, the same widowhood, the same orphanhood, the same tears caused by colonialism and exploitation.

We are united through the discovery of common wounds and scars, but above all unity is realised through common effort, links are forged through collective work and study, through collective internal struggle, through criticism and self-criticism, and through action against colonialism.

We must also learn from the experience of our sisters throughout the world. That will help us to understand that there are no races or peoples who are exploiters or oppressors. There are no racist peoples, no colonialist peoples. By opening our minds to the experience of others we will not only learn useful lessons, but we will also understand that all countries, all peoples, all races, are waging the same struggle as we are: a struggle against the colonialists and imperialists who have no country, a struggle against the exploiters who have no race. In this way we will be able to see how the struggle of the Mozambican women and of our people is the struggle of all of humanity, and we will understand the warmth of the solidarity between us.

We must give up the pernicious habit of identifying only with those who come from the same village as ourselves, who speak the same language and have the same culture, traditions and educational background. Those with whom we must identify and see as our sisters, giving them our friendship and affection, our help and fraternal warmth, are all those who, like us, are exploited and oppressed, and who are with us in the great struggle for the liberation of women, the country and the working people.

These are all sacred tasks for the Organisation of Mozambican Women, because it is the women's responsibility to bring up the next generation free from tribalism, regionalism and racism, free from the archaic attitude of oppressing women or passively accepting oppression, free from superstition and imbued with our class feeling and internationalism.

It is also necessary to fight against certain very negative subjective attitudes. Many

women comrades think of their commitment as temporary, while they are single, and have a tendency to give up their revolutionary duties as soon as they are married. It is considered normal for wives to return to the village, and for being a wife to become a woman's sole duty. In many cases this is encouraged by the husband himself who still sees the woman as his private property, dependent on him, existing by virtue of him, and tied to him, almost like a piece of luggage, whom he can use as he pleases, who is obliged to go where he goes. This conflicts both with the requirements of the national liberation struggle and with the women's struggle for emancipation.

We must mobilise all women, so that they feel the need to participate in concrete tasks, to feel responsible, and to be actively engaged in the transformation of society. In this respect, married women especially must concern themselves with setting a positive example to the younger single women and show them in practice that marriage is an incentive for the pursuit of revolutionary tasks.

### c. The Structures of the Organisation of Mozambican Women

In order to function, to carry out its tasks of leading and guiding women in the struggle for their emancipation, and to involve them ever more deeply in the tasks of the revolution, the Organisation of Mozambican Women needs to be properly structured. We are sure that the participation of many comrades engaged in the different sectors of the struggle, the experience they have accumulated and will synthesise here, and their knowledge of the existing difficulties and needs, will enable them to define the basis for the structures to be created and their functions.

However, some questions arise. Who should join the Organisation of Mozambican Women? How should it function and what should its relationship with the Women's Detachment be? What should its place be within FRELIMO as a whole?

We have said that the duty of the OMM is to involve all Mozambican women in the struggle for emancipation and revolution. It must therefore form the broadest possible front, mobilising, organising and uniting all the women who until now have remained outside the process of transformation of our new society, young and old, single and married, educated and non-educated, militants and non-militants. The OMM must organise Mozambican women, wherever they are to be found, at places of work, in schools, hospitals, detachments, co-operatives and nurseries, organising women in every base, circle and village.

The OMM is a new wing of FRELIMO to reach and involve the women whom we have not yet properly reached or involved.

But to carry out this process requires experienced leadership, people who have understood and internalised the line, and lived by it in the process of engaging in the everyday tasks of the revolution. The members of the leadership must therefore have had politico-military training and experience, the indispensable prerequisite for grasping the complexity of the situation and for always being able to see clearly the path to be followed.

The Women's Detachment, because it involves women in the central task of the present phase — direct combat against the colonialist and imperialist enemy — is the vanguard body for the women's participation in the struggle, and it is now playing an extremely active role in the transformation of society. It therefore constitutes the driving nucleus of the OMM, its main source of cadres.

But the Women's Detachment is not the OMM and the OMM is not the Women's Detachment. The Detachment is an integral part of our army, of the People's Forces



for the Liberation of Mozambique, an armed political body. The OMM on the other hand, involves all women, from those who have remained marginal to the struggle until now, to those who are combatants on the health, education, production, army and other fronts.

The relationship between the two must be complementary and based on mutual help, the Women's Detachment being a driving force, a source of cadres, and the OMM a mobilising force which expands our base and provides new forces for the Women's Detachment.

In order that the OMM may be in a position to take up and carry out the important tasks with which FRELIMO entrusts it, FRELIMO's Central Committee has decided to organise a training course for women cadres, to be held under the leadership of the Executive Committee.

Integrated in FRELIMO, inspired by FRELIMO's revolutionary line, acting as a part of our revolutionary family's harmonious body, in the context of the structures of FRELIMO, the OMM will accomplish the difficult task which the people, the women and the revolution has entrusted to it.

Comrades, the proceedings of the First Conference of Mozambican Women are about to start.

Millions of Mozambican women, who for centuries have been oppressed, are anxiously and hopefully waiting the dawn of freedom which will be born here. The Mozambican people, the Mozambican revolution, need your commitment, your struggle. You have a decisive weapon in your hand which is FRELIMO's political line on the emancipation of women. We must once more underline the most important aspects of our thought.

The exploitation of women is an aspect of the general system of exploitation of man by man. This exploitation creates the conditions for the alienation of women; it reduces them to passivity and excludes them from the sphere of decision-making in society. The antagonistic contradictions which thus exist, are between women and the exploitative social order. These contradictions are between all the exploited masses in our country and in the world, and the exploiting classes. Only revolution can definitively resolve this contradiction, because it alone is the incarnation of the interests of the exploited masses; it mobilises, organises and unites them for the struggle; it alone can destroy the old social order. Revolution puts the exploited masses in power, the masses who lived under oppression and were forced into passivity.

Our people's armed struggle against colonialism and imperialism is the fundamental starting point for the Mozambican revolution; the moment of the unleashing of the process of liberation of our land, women and men. The armed struggle which is gaining in popularity in our country acts like an incubator in which the revolutionary process starts to take root.

The centuries-old experience of exploitation and suffering of the women and men of Mozambique and the discovery of the freedom born of the people's power in the areas under our control, have made our people receptive to ideas of progress and revolution. The conditions are ripe for an offensive on the women's liberation front, an important moment in the revolutionary struggle.

We already know what our strategy and tactics should be in the struggle, in which we will not only have to fight against the colonialist enemy, but will also have to face the opposition aroused by erroneous concepts rooted in the minds of

both women and men.

It is essential that women be involved in FRELIMO, for only FRELIMO is in a position to take up all the interests of the exploited masses of our country and thus formulate the concrete line of battle.

The OMM which is being formed is emerging in the FRELIMO structure as a new arm of our revolution which must reach the broad masses of women who until now have remained marginal to the process of transformation which is taking place in our country. The OMM must draw into the struggle for the emancipation of women and into the national revolutionary struggle the millions of our countrywomen.

Our struggle is not an isolated struggle. The Mozambican Women's fight, the Mozambican people's fight, is an integral part of the world-wide front of struggle against colonialism and imperialism, against the exploitation of man by man, and for the construction of a new popular social order.

For this very reason we feel that the struggle of our sisters and brothers in Angola, who, under the leadership of the MPLA, have been fighting Portuguese colonialism and imperialism for twelve years is our own. We feel that the struggle of our sisters and brothers in Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde, who, led by the PAIGC have been fighting Portuguese colonialism and imperialism since 1963, is our own struggle.

Hence we feel bereaved by the recent assassination of our comrade Amílcar Cabral, Secretary-General of the PAIGC. This barbarous crime, like the assassination of our first President, Comrade Eduardo Mondlane, is an attempt to stop the revolutionary advance of our peoples. It failed in Mozambique and it will fail in Guinea-Bissau.

The fight for the consolidation of independence and for revolutionary development in Tanzania and Zambia, Somalia, Congo, Guinea and the whole of Africa is our fight, the fight to consolidate our strategic rear.

The recent victory of the heroic peoples of Vietnam and Indochina, is a great incentive in our struggle. The women and men of Vietnam, of a small country, of an economically backward country, succeeded in defeating the largest and most cruel imperialist power in the world, the United States of America.

We feel encouraged by the successes achieved by our sisters and brothers in the socialist countries, who are building a new society of freedom and progress for women and men.

The women and men of Mozambique congratulate the Portuguese people for the intensification of the struggle against colonial war and fascism in Portugal. The opening of the fourth battle front against Portuguese colonialism in Portugal itself, consolidates the solidarity and friendship of our peoples.

We salute all peoples, we salute the women and men of all continents, who anonymously are like us, fighting to build a new society. To all of them we say that our people's struggle will be intensified, our revolution will be consolidated and triumphant, thus contributing towards the common victory.

Long Live the First Conference of Mozambican Women!

Long Live the Struggle for the Emancipation of Women!

Long Live the Mozambican Revolution!

Long Live the Struggle of the Mozambican people, united from the Rovuma to the Maputo!



Long Live Africa!  
Long Live the Organisation of Mozambican Women!  
Long Live FRELIMO!

A LUTA CONTINUA. INDEPENDENCIA OU MORTE. VENCEREMOS.

# 4 EDUCATE man to Win the War, Create a new Society and Develop our Country

*Speech at the Second Conference of the Department of Education and Culture, September 1970.*

Comrade delegates to the Second Conference of the Department of Education and Culture,  
Comrades,

We are happy to take part in this 2nd Conference of the Department of Education and Culture because Culture and Education are fundamental problems of our people on which the creation of a new mentality ultimately depends. We also believe that meeting and discussing our work and methods is the most reliable way of guiding our action.

This Conference is starting at a time when we are celebrating the most important date in our history. The fact that this Conference is taking place is a result of our struggle, of the fierce struggle against colonialism, and the tough and tricky struggle against reactionary forces among us. It is a victory of the many who have sacrificed their lives to drive out the Portuguese colonialists and to expose the new exploiters.

The Conference therefore takes on special significance, for bloodshed and sacrifice lie behind it. It was made possible by the clarification and consolidation embarked on amid our ranks.

We must therefore carry on the work that has just been started and avoid patting ourselves on the back for victories achieved, forgetting the very great deal that remains to be done.

Because our Education has been born of bloodshed, it is only right that we should pay tribute to those who have fallen for our country. More than anyone else, Eduardo Mondlane symbolised our struggle to free Man from the colonial yoke and from obscurantism.

I therefore request that we observe a minute of silence in his memory and in memory of all the comrades who have laid down their lives.

This Conference has set itself the task of analysing the work achieved, discovering the errors and shortcomings in our activity and, based on our principles, promoting the implementation of the task entrusted to the Department by FRELIMO's leading organs.

Other documents to be submitted to the Conference contain detailed analyses of the work done, of the great deal that has been done and the vast amount we still have to do. Here we wish simply to put forward a few themes for reflection which, as they express the preoccupations of FRELIMO's leadership, will help to guide us in our work.

After demonstrating the harmfulness of both traditional and colonial education,



With the exception of the strictly military programmes, political, educational and cultural programmes in the CPPMs have not been as successful as was hoped due principally to lack of continuity. We begin things, then interrupt them, and they die. The usual excuse is that the person in charge of the programme was busy, absent, sent on a new mission, etc. . . .

This makes no sense and it must stop. One of the reasons why many national level cadres are appointed to the leadership of CPPM is to ensure regular and unbroken continuity of all programmes. The great responsibility of the appointed cadres requires that they have sufficient flexibility and ability to pursue the programme of a colleague who may for some reason be unable to continue it himself.

14. Leadership is collective and although each member of the leadership has a specific task, there are no hard and fast compartments.

The duty of every member is to be concerned with all the work, see that it is carried out and to put forward ideas and criticism. Leadership is collective and responsibility is collective.

# 3 THE LIBERATION OF WOMEN is a Fundamental Necessity for the Revolution

*Opening Speech at the First Conference of Mozambican Women, 4 March, 1973.*

Comrade members of the Central Committee,  
Comrade members of the Executive Committee,  
Comrade delegates,  
Comrade observers,  
Comrades,

This is a historic and glorious moment in the life of our organisation. For the first time we are holding a conference of Mozambican women engaged in all sectors of activity within our revolution. For the first time FRELIMO militants are meeting together to pool their efforts and jointly work out a strategy for the emancipation of women.

We should like first, on behalf of FRELIMO's Central Committee to express warm greetings to all the delegations present here.

Allow us to extend a special welcome to the delegates from the war provinces, who have left very important sectors of work so that through their presence and experience they may contribute to the success of this conference. Their presence here is both proof of their understanding of the value of this conference, and a guarantee of its success.

We hail the women comrades from Cabo Delgado who are fighting heroically on every front, many since the start of the war, advancing and consolidating the revolution and dealing tremendous blows against the colonialist and reactionary forces.

We hail the comrades who have come from Niassa, such a large province with a small population. These comrades are facing great difficulties, but they have proved that they are able to overcome them, showing unbreakable determination and revolutionary spirit, daily defending our organisation's central ideas, transporting equipment, mobilising the population, producing, feeding the guerrillas, creating conditions whereby in Niassa FRELIMO's presence remains undisputed.

The comrades from Tete have a special responsibility. This province is of great strategic importance; it represents the door to the liberation of the whole of Southern Africa and is a centre of direct conflict between the forces of revolution and reaction. We warmly welcome the comrades from Tete and congratulate them for having so completely assumed the watchwords of our Movement, so that in only about four years, alongside the men, their comrades in arms, they have been able to carry the torch of freedom throughout the whole of Tete province, now also taking it into Manica e Sofala to light the way there.

We should like to hail the comrades doing clandestine work in the zones still occupied by the Portuguese colonialists. Working in the midst of the enemy, subject