

Mozambique peace process bulletin



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Will Boutros-Ghali prevail?

The peace pendulum continues to swing rapidly between gloom and optimism, as each breakthrough is followed by a new roadblock.

In what was seen as a final chance to end local foot-dragging, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali visited Maputo 17-20 October and met with the leaders of the two sides, Mozambique President Joaquim Chissano and Renamo head Afonso Dhlakama.

Boutros-Ghali declared his whirlwind visit a resounding success, saying his talks with Chissano and Dhlakama had achieved a "real breakthrough", injecting new, dynamic energy into Mozambique's morose and uneventful peace process.

Aldo Ajello, Boutros-Ghali's special representative in Mozambique, said "I wasn't expecting miracles, but I never thought the results of this visit would be so good and so complete. All the most serious bottlenecks in the peace process have been overcome."

New timetable agreed ...

The days following Boutros-Ghali's first official visit to Mozambique as UN chief seemed to justify optimism. On 22 October Chissano's and Dhlakama's promise to the Secretary-General was fulfilled when the most important peace accord body, the Supervision and Control Commission (CSC), agreed a new peace process calendar.

On the military side, the new timetable calls for:

- beginning the assembly of troops before the end of November 1993,
- demobilisation to start in January 1994 and finish in May, and
- a new unified national army to be operational by September.

On the electoral side, it says:

- an election law should be approved in November 1993,
- registration begins in April 1994 and finishes in June, and
- the election is to be held in October.

Unlike the calendar in the general peace accord signed in Rome on 4 October 1992, the new timetable -- the UN's 28th -- avoids precise dates in favour of setting months when each event should happen, thus allowing 30 days leeway.

(The detailed timetable is on page 6.)

... but delays start quickly ...

Seasoned observers remained cautious. This peace process has been characterised by missed deadlines and unmet agreements. Indeed, under the original accord the elections should already have been held.

And within days of the Boutros-Ghali visit, there were new delays, particularly relating to the election law. Another meeting between Chissano and Dhlakama on 18 November resolved that problem, but three days later Dhlakama raised questions over the demobilisation.

By late November (when this issue of the *Bulletin* went to press), the Mozambican parliament was due to meet on 29 November to approve the election law. Dhlakama continued to promise that his troops would begin to arrive at UN supervised assembly points on 30 November.

But in an interview reported in *Noticias* on 22 November, Dhlakama complained that he had not yet received a penny of the assistance promised to Renamo at the time of the signing of the peace accord. Without money, the Renamo leader says he will lose

control of military and political staff, "because they will feel betrayed by the international community. In that case, peace and democracy could be at risk."

In particular, Dhlakama said that without money, he may not be able to motivate his members to disarm and go to assembly points.

If the money is not forthcoming, Renamo will not be able to organise itself for the elections, he said. And people will not go to assembly points and be demobilised if they are then left with nothing.

... and difficulties remain

Simply setting a timetable does not provide the resources and political will to satisfy it, and a number of problems are hovering in the wings.

Despite promising immediate action after his "break-through" agreements with President Chissano nearly three months ago, Dhlakama has still not named the 33 advisors to provincial governors that Chissano agreed to. This fuels concern that setting up locally staffed committees to monitor the police in Mozambique's 110 districts (as agreed with Boutros-Ghali) could be a never-ending task. Renamo may simply not have enough people.

Another major concern is that of 49 assembly points planned under the peace accord, only 36 have been approved -- 26 of 29 for government troops, but only 10 of 20 for Renamo. The other 13 remain obstructed by logistical difficulties or political disputes over who on 4 October 1992 controlled the territory where the assembly point is proposed.

Problems resolved:

Demob holdups

Top government army officials had argued they were ready to demobilise their troops at any time, as long as Renamo agreed to start simultaneously. But, despite a previous "break-through" agreement with Chissano in early September, Dhlakama continued adding to his list of pre-conditions for demobilisation.

On the eve of Boutros-Ghali's visit to Maputo, Renamo's conditions for demobilisation were:

- A special UN contingent of police monitors should already be operating. At their early September summit meeting, Chissano and Dhlakama agreed to request the UN to monitor the national police, re-train its crack Rapid Intervention Police force and safe-guard human rights in Mozambique -- thus providing the "security guarantees" Dhlakama said he needed to demobilise. Ajello responded favourably -- indeed he had already budgeted for a small team of 128 police officials (although not the 5,000 people Dhlakama said he wanted). A UN advance team arrived on 17 October to assess the need for police monitors, but the monitors themselves were unlikely to arrive before the end of the year.

- The key guarantees on territorial control agreed at the Chissano-Dhlakama summit must "be in place and

seen to work". Thus the three Renamo "advisors" to each of Mozambique's 11 provincial governors should be appointed and working to Dhlakama's satisfaction. Yet by the time Boutros-Ghali arrived, Renamo had not named any of its 33 advisors.

- Before Renamo would start demobilisation of its forces, the Government must first dismantle all irregular armies. These include the unofficial Naprama peasant force, which drove Renamo from several zones of the north towards the end of the war, as well as armed militia and private security guards. Proteg, a new security company operating in Maputo, has been labelled by Renamo as a government protection force, and the government did use Proteg guards outside the state-owned radio and television stations in Maputo when journalists went on strike in October.

With the original Rome calendar clearly written off, in September Ajello presented a new calendar. Its discussion was rudely interrupted, however, when Renamo's delegation to the UN-chaired CSC suddenly left Maputo for their Maringue base in central Mozambique, apparently to deal with internal problems.

Government indicated its agreement to the new calendar in September, but discussions were not resumed until Boutros-Ghali arrived.

Boutros-Ghali solutions

The UN Secretary-General arrived in Mozambique at a crucial moment. His spokeswoman said he aimed to get a final, definite date to start demobilisation, to resolve the election law dispute and get a firm commitment from the two ex-belligerents to holding elections by October 1994.

At the end of his four-day trip, a thoroughly satisfied Boutros-Ghali said: "There's been a real break-through. We have created a new momentum."

The Secretary General spelled out the key points of his success as:

- Chissano and Dhlakama promised to sign an agreement on a new peace process calendar by the end of the week.

- Renamo agreed that demobilisation can start at the same time as (and not only after) the government dismantles irregular forces.

- Dhlakama agreed to start demobilisation before UN police monitors arrive in Mozambique. Meanwhile, local delegations of the Compol, the commission designated in the peace accord to oversee police activity, should be set up in all districts of the country, "wherever there is a police station". The Secretary-General promised to try and mobilise funds and human resources for a UN police-monitoring contingent.

- Three nonfunctioning peace-keeping commissions should be able to work, after Boutros-Ghali helped resolved disputes over their chairs. The chair of Cominfo, the commission to deal with security matters, will be chosen by Renamo. Chissano's choice of chair

for the police commission Compol remains in place. The chair of the National Territorial Administration Commission shall rotate between Renamo and government, on a six monthly basis.

Renamo further agreed to sign a protocol, already signed by government, on the movement of UN forces.

Responding to the non-armed opposition, Boutros-Ghali promised to use "all my energies" to help mobilise financial support for Mozambique's "democratisation".

Elections:

Commission agreed

Boutros-Ghali also ended the dispute over the composition of the National Elections Commission (CNE) which had caused the multi-party election law conference to collapse in failure in September. Dhlakama and Chissano agreed that the commission would have 10 members chosen by government, seven chosen by Renamo and three by the non-armed opposition parties. The Commission should choose an independent figure as president, but if members failed to reach consensus, they should give five names to President Chissano, who would have the last word.

The two also agreed that a technical committee involving all the political parties should finalise the draft new election law, which must be approved in parliament by the end of November.

But within days, Jose de Castro, Renamo head of foreign relations, said that "not everything was resolved during the meetings between Boutros-Ghali, President Chissano and the leader of Renamo." Problems remained over the right of Mozambicans living abroad to vote, and over the composition of technical and provincial election commissions.

External votes

Mozambique's constitution allows Mozambicans living abroad to vote, and provision for this was included in the draft law. Renamo objected.

It had been rumoured that an understanding had already been reached that, as in Angola, the provision would stay in the law but the election commission would rule that for this first election the provision should be suspended because of a lack of facilities to properly implement it. And, in effect, this was what was agreed by Dhlakama and Chissano on 18 November when they decided the matter should go to the election commission to see if it was practical to implement this part of the law.

But in between, there was a month of angry dispute and unnecessary delay. Renamo argued that among Mozambican miners in South Africa Frelimo still had "dynamising groups" which spread anti-Renamo propaganda. The miners "still consider Renamo to be a group of armed bandits," Renamo said.

Fumo, the party headed by the returned exile Domingos Arouca, said that it was just an excuse by Renamo to deprive Mozambicans abroad of the right to vote, and that there is nothing to stop Renamo representatives in South Africa from campaigning among the miners. Indeed, Fumo official Carlos Jeque said that even inside Mozambique some people considered Renamo to be armed bandits, and that Renamo had best get working to clean up its image.

Monamo also backed the government, while 8 other opposition parties backed Renamo.

(This issue relates only to Mozambicans *living* abroad. There is no intention of allowing refugees to vote if they have not returned.)

Other election issues

Another dispute related to the Technical and Administrative Elections Secretariat (STAE) which is, in effect, already operating and which was always envisaged as a neutral technical body under the election commission. Renamo continues to have difficulty seeing as neutral any body which has roots in the present government, and wanted to politicise or abolish it. Chissano and Dhlakama decided that the issue could be resolved by the CNE, as had been agreed a month before in their meeting with Boutros-Ghali.

There was also the issue of provincial and local election commissions. Commission members cannot stand for a party in the elections, so Renamo and other opposition parties may have trouble finding members. Thus the final composition of these bodies is also left to the CNE.

Chissano has conceded on one key point. The Rome peace accord says that there must be a *national* threshold of at least 5% of the vote before a party can have members of parliament. This will make it virtually impossible for smaller and regional parties to elect MPs, even if they gain a significant number of votes in one or two provinces. The government proposed that the 5% threshold should apply independently to each province, but Renamo objected. On 30 October Chissano wrote to the other parties saying the government was forced to stick to the national threshold.

This means a party will have to obtain about 400,000 votes if it is to be represented in parliament. As this is an impossible task for most of the new parties, it will put strong pressure on them to form coalitions. Two possible coalitions could be formed from the eight parties which supported Renamo and the four which supported the government in the multi-party election law conference.

Rumours are circulating that Renamo may try to block the production of computerised summaries of election results, or the grounds that the computer programmes can be tampered with. The effect would be to delay by many days the announcement of a result.

In Angola, Unita charged that the computer had been programmed to exclude some Unita votes. But observers noted that this would be pointless, as it is possible for the parties to do their own manual count after the election if they doubt the outcome.

UN: no stick

Interviewed after the visit, Dhlakama denied that Boutros-Ghali directly threatened to cut off UN support if Renamo failed to compromise, and claimed all the agreements reached were through discussion between himself and President Chissano.

Boutros-Ghali diplomatically described his role as a catalyst, not an alchemist. "The Secretary-General has no stick. My role is as a diplomat, to convince the parties a peaceful solution is in their interests", he said.

But it is a high-stakes poker game, with Dhlakama constantly raising the ante while never being sure if the international community will continue to put up the money or throw in its hand and walk away.

In an impassioned, table-thumping speech, Boutros-Ghali told journalists in Mozambique what he surely also impressed upon the nation's rival leaders. "The UN cannot impose peace", he said; wherever UN peace-keeping missions have failed, the fault lies with the opposing parties who lacked political will to achieve peace.

"The new danger is, if there's no political will from the opposing parties, the UN will pull out", the Secretary-General proclaimed.

Moreover he warned Mozambicans of the danger that all Africa is increasingly marginal to the international interests of powerful countries. One more disaster would turn them against the whole continent. He pointed out that most of some US\$ 1,200 million in promised foreign grants and loans to Mozambique is on hold, until donors see advance in the peace process.

Members of the UN Security Council have stressed that continued support depends on concrete signs of progress in fulfilling the peace accord. Specifically, demobilisation must start, a new electoral law must be approved and Mozambique's first ever multi-party elections must be guaranteed for October 1994. Security Council members stressed they would be unwilling and unlikely to renew their mandate beyond October next year.

The Security Council has kept Mozambique on a short lead. The mandate of its mission, ONUMOZ, was due to run out on 31 October. On 29 October, the mandate was extended just six days to await a report from the Secretary-General. Ajello admitted that some Security Council members wanted the mandate for the Mozambique operation renewed for only three months at a time, to keep the pressure up. Then, on 5 November, a compromise was reached and the Security Council extended ONUMOZ for another six months -- subject to a review in 90 days.

Renamo blamed

The Secretary-General's 1 November report was quite positive following his visit. But he puts the blame for delay much more openly on Renamo than in previous reports. He stresses, for example, that although government has indicated its readiness to begin assembly and demobilisation, "for a long time, Renamo had been reluctant to begin assembly and demobilisation of troops and had linked various conditions to the process."

But Boutros-Ghali also stresses the need for the international community to give money to Renamo. He wants a further \$5 million for the trust fund. And he stresses that "there are certain expenditures associated with the transformation of Renamo into a political party that cannot be easily met through a United Nations-administered fund" and governments should give some money to Renamo directly.

Do or die for UN, too

Despite diplomatic niceties, however, Boutros-Ghali clearly stressed the international community's oft-repeated, "do or die" warning -- not only to Mozambique, but indeed to the UN itself. Boutros-Ghali left Mozambique to travel to Somalia, where UN intervention has proved disastrous. The UN has done badly in Angola, as well, and he clearly hopes Mozambique will give him a much needed success in Africa.

"If member states want to give more power to the UN, it will be able to fulfil its tasks. If they don't want to give their contributions or send troops, then the UN will be a weak organisation", Boutros-Ghali warned.

But the UN faces its worst ever financial crisis with virtually all members heavily behind with their contributions. The US is planning to pull troops out of Somalia by March, and a crisis-ridden Italy may have to pull its troops out of Somalia and Mozambique by March, six months before the election.

Days after Boutros-Ghali left Mozambique, Ajello re-emphasised his message: "The Secretary General made very clear the huge responsibility President Chissano and Mr Dhlakama have at this present moment -- not only for Mozambique, but at a continental level and for peace-keeping operations through-out the world."

He added "at this time, when the international community is tending to withdraw support from peace-keeping operations, it's obvious a success story in one country would have a global impact".

Regional tide of change

Boutros-Ghali grounded his hopes for Mozambique not just on the local actors but in a changing regional situation in southern Africa. In Mozambique he also met leading political figures from South Africa and Angola -- spurring him to conclude that "there's progress in Mozambique, Angola and South Africa".

South Africa's Foreign Minister, Roelof 'Pik' Botha, was in Maputo. He met the UN chief, met President Chissano, and hoisted the flag on the trade mission which has now become South Africa's official embassy in Mozambique -- its first in a Front Line State.

Botha said one of his government's key concerns is to stem the illegal flow of arms smuggled from Mozambique into South Africa, where they now fuel a rising tide of internal violence. Many of the weapons were sent by South Africa to Renamo in the first place.

Botha meanwhile claimed it was his idea to set up local police monitoring committees, persuading Renamo to agree on demobilisation before UN police monitors arrive.

Also there to meet Boutros-Ghali was Inkatha leader Gatscha Buthelezi. Despite earlier rumoured deals with Renamo, Buthelezi kept a cool distance from Dhlakama, and met with President Chissano -- who he asked to play a mediating role on his behalf in South Africa.

Dhlakama back in maputo

Arriving the same day as Boutros-Ghali, Dhlakama prolonged his stay in Maputo for a week after the Secretary-General left. He hinted he might soon be back in the capital to stay. This time he lodged at a house formerly reserved for the Representative of the European Community, where he raised the Renamo flag in royal fashion.

Informed sources say Renamo's chief was unhappy after his first visit to Maputo, feeling some of his leading representatives misled him on the situation there. A source said "some of his men in Maputo certainly got punished in Maringue".

On his second visit to Maputo since the Rome peace accord, Dhlakama seemed to be grooming his image for presidential elections. In a performance looking like a European style party political broadcast, Dhlakama appeared on the night-time TV news visiting Maputo Central Hospital. After looking at sick children, Dhlakama told the TV he was shocked Frelimo could run such a dreadful hospital in the nation's capital city.

Journalists in Maputo doubted the public would buy that image, from a man often held responsible for destroying much of the health service during the war.

Army training begins

The most concrete area of advance in fulfilling the peace accord continues to be formation of a new, unified national army. In mid-October a second contingent of 220 Renamo soldiers left Mozambique for the British army training camp at Nyanga, Zimbabwe. Here they joined 50 government and 50 Renamo soldiers already in training to become instructors for the officer corps of the new army, and the government's second contingent of 220 men who had been waiting for them in Nyanga for weeks.

British military sources say the training is going

well, with good co-operation between the soldiers on both sides. Renamo delays in sending their men means the training course has been compressed. It ends in December, when Britain hands the camp over to Zimbabwe.

According to a reliable source, the first 50 Renamo trainees all came from Niassa province, Mozambique's most under-developed and one of the least strategic. The second selection of 220 initially came from Gaza and Inhambane, in the south but still on the periphery of Renamo's heartland in the central provinces. Some of these were rejected in Maringue as too young, and others had to be called in from Nampula province in the north.

The British stipulated a minimum age of 20 for the training but the source said some Renamo trainees may be little over 16 years old.

In Renamo zones:

Crossing the 'border'

A wire is strung across the road between two posts. Government soldiers at this check point do not ask any questions, and simply lower the wire so the car can pass. Nothing says that this is the end of government control.

This is 20 kilometres north of Dondo, just outside the Beira corridor and only 50 km northwest of Beira.

Travelling another 10-15 km north, the car reaches another wire strung across the road. Photographs of Afonso Dhlakama on the two posts tell visitors they are entering a Renamo zone.

Going further north parallel to the old railway line to Sena, one eventually arrives at Inhaminga -- the largest town controlled by Renamo and its provincial capital. Every permanent building in Inhaminga has been destroyed in the war.

Around the outside of the town are groups of huts -- some have heavy weapons including mortars and anti-aircraft guns. These seem to be the military defence lines, but also where Renamo soldiers live with their families.

In Renamo areas, arms seem to be hidden in every nook and cranny. One ONUMOZ soldier said that when the roads are being cleared of mines, it is common to find arms caches as well -- particularly in abandoned railway carriages. "We have found RPGs, AK-47s, mines and mortars."

Many of these arms seem to have been abandoned by soldiers of both sides as control of the area shifted back and forth.

Renamo's high hopes

"Many organisations promised help, but none has been sent here," complained Renamo's "governor" Joao de Oliveira Bondo. Renamo's administration has problems "because we are in an embryonic phase and don't have anything" -- which is the fault of the international agencies.

For example, "we received insignificant amounts of seed, too late for planting, and with no hoes to dig the soil."

The local Renamo political representative, Francisco Caetano Bero, said he had recently visited Marromeu, a district under government control, and could confirm that "huge quantities of food go to areas under government control."

There seems little knowledge of areas outside Renamo control. Local leaders say that Renamo won the war. And they say that Dhlakama is the first leader to ever direct a war without leaving the country.

Some local Renamo officials expect large quantities of goods and money to arrive without the interference of the government. And Renamo takes credit for bringing the men and machinery which are part of the UN project clearing the mines on the Dondo-Caia road.

Bero himself earns no salary, because all Renamo's funds go "to help our officials survive in Maputo where they have to work."

Bero and Bondo say they are in regular contact with Dhlakama, and have daily meeting with local chiefs to transmit orientations from the Renamo leader.

Changes

There is change in Renamo areas. Renamo no longer controls movement and does not demand passes.

Circulation of money in this zone is increasing as there is more traffic between Renamo and government-controlled zones. But the local market has little for sale: donated maize, tobacco, chickens, and strips of dried game meat.

New timetable

Electoral

November 1993: Approve electoral law; create national election commission (CNE)

January 1994: Select contractor for registration materials

February: Distribution of registration materials

March: Train 1000 registration brigades

April-June: Registration

September-October: Campaign

October: Election

Demobilisation

November-December 1993: Open assembly areas; assembly of all forces; disband paramilitary militias and irregular forces

January 1994: 5% demobilised

February: Total of 25% demobilised

March: 50% demobilised

April: 75% demobilised

May: 100% demobilised

New army

November 1993: Begin Portuguese leadership training; begin French demining training

December: Begin Portuguese training of special forces, marines and logistics; end British training; open training centres in Mozambique

January 1994: End Portuguese leadership training; begin training first 5000 infantry troops

February: Graduate first infantry

March: End French training; begin training second 5000 infantry

April: End Portuguese training of marines and logistics; graduate second infantry

May: New army 50% operational; begin training third 5000 infantry

June: Graduate third infantry

August: End Portuguese special forces training; end training of ordinary soldiers.

September: new army operational
