

Documents :

Documents of Frelimo—The Mozambique Liberation Front

We print below two documents of the Mozambique Liberation Front which is leading the national liberation struggle against Portuguese imperialism. Armed struggle first began on September 25th 1964 and the Second Congress of Frelimo was held in July of this year.

I. Editorial of Frelimo Bulletin of September 1968

The most important aspect of our Congress obviously was not the mere fact of the event itself: all democratic organisations hold congresses periodically to allow the people to express their opinions on the work that has been done, on the leadership, on the policy.

Holding the Congress inside our country, in the interior of Mozambique, was not the most important aspect either. Certainly, this was important: indeed, in the long history of Mozambique, it was the first Congress to be held there. Moreover, the circumstances surrounding the meeting illustrated our control over part of Mozambique: two months previously, Frelimo had announced *when* and *where* the Congress would take place. And despite this information, the Portuguese were unable to prevent or even disturb it. But we do not consider this fact as the most important: for, if we have liberated zones (and we have had them for about 2 years), it is quite natural that we should organise our meetings there.

The most important aspect of the Congress, in our view was the unity it demonstrated and the manner in which it proceeded.

Concerning unity: about two months before the Congress, certain events in Dar es Salaam led to speculation on the existence of a split in Frelimo. And in fact, the attack against the Frelimo office by a group of Mozambicans maintaining that they wanted "new leaders" might suggest the existence of rival groups. It was explained at the time that these people were Mozambican immigrants, who have been living in Tanzania for many years, unemployed, probably organised by the enemy; and that they had absolutely no connection with the revolution. But this explanation did not seem sufficient: doubts on our unity were still lingering. The Congress eliminated such doubts. Delegates from every province of Mozambique, representing the whole Mozambican people, expressed their accord with the policy followed during the six years

since the last Congress, and reaffirmed their confidence in the Frelimo leadership. It was unanimously decided to proceed with the armed struggle for liberation until the final victory. The leaders elected in 1962 were re-elected.

Friendly Discussions

Of course there were differing opinions. Indeed, the prime function of such a meeting is to call on all opinions on the different subjects, to study and analyse them. One delegate, for example, was opposed to the existence of the Women's detachment. Here we must admit a failure on our part in that our comrade had not been educated adequately in the principles of the revolution: for him, a woman's function was still a domestic one, running a home and bearing children, kept apart from any political activity. Representatives of the Women's detachments reacted immediately, giving a detailed account of their activities; his objection was soon withdrawn. Others were opposed to the policy of clemency towards captured enemy soldiers. This attitude is more understandable. After suffering constant Portuguese oppression, wholesale slaughter, destruction of villages, of vital crops, mutilation, rape—it is difficult to restrain the impulse for revenge; it is hard to vote for a law which forbids the killing of captured enemy soldiers, who form part of the oppressive machine. However, after an analysis of the political, strategic, and moral grounds, it was decided to continue with the policy of clemency.

These two examples illustrate a major aspect of the Congress, namely, that all delegates had the opportunity to express their views on all problems. Every topic was discussed exhaustively. If it proved impossible to decide on a subject by unanimity, there was a vote, and the opinion of a majority prevailed. Complete democracy was a main feature of the proceedings of the Congress.

The Congress finished. The delegates returned to

their normal work—to the battlefield, to their branches, to the clandestine cell, to their offices. Each departed with renewed confidence in the success of our Revolution. For the Congress had confirmed that all Mozambicans, from the North to the South of our country, are united in their determination to be free and to work together to obtain this freedom.

Challenge to White Supremacy

On September 25th, 1964, our people took up their guns and fired on Portuguese troops. The myth of the invincibility of the white man, built through centuries by the colonialists was shattered. Our people said Enough! to their masters, and started fighting for their freedom. Herein lies the principal significance of this day for the people of Mozambique. The first shot was symbolic. It was a challenge to white supremacy. It showed confidence in the power of the people. It demonstrated faith in the revolution. On that day there were more than 250 fighters, most of them armed only with pistols or rifles—against the whole Portuguese army, equipped with all the latest weapons: aircraft, tanks. Such a daring attack against such overwhelming odds required great confidence on the part of the people, convinced of the justice of their cause.

That first shot was also symbolic because of the motives behind it. There had been skirmishes between our people and Portuguese troops before. But these skirmishes were only aimed at expelling the

Portuguese from a specific region. The people of a tribe would fight for their own freedom. They were merely revolts. But now, however, the aim of the struggle was the freedom of the whole country, the whole of Mozambique. The fighter who fired first may have been a Jawa, a Makonde, a Changana, a Macua. But he was not just fighting for the liberation of his region. He was probably fighting in a region far from his own, amongst people of other tribes. He was fighting for the liberation of the whole of Mozambique.

Four years have passed. The results we have achieved prove that our revolutionary faith was justified. The tiny army of 250 fighters grew to 10,000. The quality of our weapons improved—from pistols to machine guns, mortars and anti-aircraft guns. The disparity of forces between us and the enemy is thus diminishing quickly, as more people join our army every day and more weapons are either captured or offered to us. We have liberated large areas of our country, and started building a new life for the people. We have achieved great successes. Our conviction that the might of the people would triumph has proved correct.

But we do not anticipate a rapid victory. Indeed, our Second Congress, after analysing the situation in Mozambique, recognised that our struggle will be hard and long.

On the fourth anniversary of the beginning of the armed struggle in Mozambique, we reaffirm that we shall continue fighting until our country is free.

II. Military Report

Some remarkable developments have taken place since our liberation struggle started, four years ago. At that time our fighters, with poor weapons and small numbers, were organised into small groups, and their operations were confined to ambushing enemy patrols. Gradually, however, we developed to platoons and companies; and more recently we established specialist artillery units, specifically trained in handling mortars, anti-aircraft guns and cannons. We are now able to attack enemy bases and camps in companies and to organise frequent ambushes followed by assaults in which the enemy is completely wiped out and large quantities of weapons are captured.

Our war has therefore advanced to a new phase. It is still a guerrilla war, since this is the only way of opposing such a strong enemy—with a well equipped army of 60,000 (six Portuguese soldiers to one Frelimo fighter) with an airforce, navy, police, PIDE and the so-called “Provincial Organisation of Volunteers” (OPV). They have modern transport facilities. They still control the basic economy of

the country. They have a constant supply of modern weapons furnished by their imperialist allies in NATO. They have foreign troop reinforcements (several South African companies were located by Frelimo intelligence in Tete province, around Cahora Bassa: in Chiccoa, Chioco, Mague and Zumbo).

Our main strength, on the other hand, lies in the support of the people and in the solidarity of the progressive countries. It was this support and solidarity which enabled us to build up our army, and hence enter a new phase of operations.

The position therefore is that our final victory is certain, as it is impossible for the enemy to get much stronger: already Portugal has been forced to call up disabled men and women; she had to extend military service to four years; more than half of her budget is spent on the war. We on the other hand are going from strength to strength. With each advance into new zones, more people join our army. More weapons are captured. With the progress of the struggle, international support in-

creases; more weapons are given to us. As for the support given to Portugal by the racist regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia, this will soon be curtailed by the development of the people's struggle in these areas. The colonialists in Mozambique are therefore doomed.

One Year's Achievements

This is easily demonstrated by our achievements in the past year. A few examples are given below:

—In March this year we opened a new military front in Tete Province. Our fighters in that front are scoring important victories.

—The Mozambican women decided to become directly involved in the armed struggle, by the creation of their own military detachments. Their participation in the front lines, in the mobilisation of the people and in production has proved to be exceptional.

—Important Portuguese bases were attacked and some were destroyed—in Diaca, Nangada, Mutamba, Dos Macondes, Chiwaya, Munhandica, Namoto, Chiconono, Sipaki, Chitucula, Nambude, etc.

—In the liberated zones the enemy are almost completely confined to their posts, thus allowing us complete freedom of movement: members of the Central Committee travel through them con-

stantly; foreign journalists enter to report on our progress; a six-man military delegation of the OAU spent 10 days in Niassa Province; the Second Congress of Frelimo was held in Niassa, unhindered. The Congress was undoubtedly the most important single event during the past year. It was both a demonstration to the outside world of the progress we have made in our struggle; and, more important, it gave the Mozambican people renewed vigour and enthusiasm for their long struggle. Indeed, only a few weeks later 12 Portuguese aircraft were destroyed in a single attack, and three more were shot down two days later.

One interesting sideline to our successes has been the reaction of the enemy. In certain areas (particularly in Niassa), the Portuguese have adopted a new tactic: instead of terrorising the people with cruel reprisals, as they have done in the past, they are now trying to coax people to return to them, by using intensive propaganda and promises of material benefits. Moreover, they are also attempting more subtle methods of hindering our movement, by trying to cause disruption at our headquarters in order to discredit Frelimo—as was seen in Dar es Salaam a few months ago: but they failed miserably, as those events were seen by everybody for what they were, and Frelimo emerged stronger and more unified than ever before.