REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC

PRESS STATEMENT

Mozambicans, fellow compatriots!

On the 15th of January 2015, I addressed, for the first time, the Mozambicans and my first words were: "Today we start an important stage of our historic path as a People and as a Nation, which will lead Mozambique to a new level of harmony and development" end of quote.

On another point of the same speech, I have stated that, as Head of State, I would strive to be open to constructive dialogue with all the political forces and civic organizations to promote national accord.

Thus, I was defending, the ideal of Peace, as a primary condition for an healthy coexistence amongst Mozambicans, political stability, harmonious economic development, and the importance of social equity.

Putting this commitment forward, on the 9th day of February 2015*,* less than one month after being appointed, I initiated direct contacts with the Renamo Leader, Mr. Afonso Dhlakama, so that, in a climate of brotherhood, we could discuss, in a constructive way, the paths to achieve long lasting and effective Peace.

In the following days, as you know, in my desire to look for effective Peace, I have engaged civil society, religious entities and international community in this process, including national and international mediation.

The progress was very slow and human lives were more and more at stake.

In December 2016, I have decided to resume direct contacts, via telephone, with the Renamo Leader. It was then, when we achieved, even if temporarily, the understanding to cease military hostilities. This understanding was later on extended indefinitely.

As a result of regular contacts, during the commemorations of the Mozambican heroes’ day, on the 3rd of February 2017, after a consensual decision made with Renamo's President, I have announced the creation of two commissions, namely Decentralization and Military Affairs.

Compatriots!

Twelve months after the military hostilities cessation, today, I am honoured to share with the Mozambican People, both in the national territory and in the diaspora, the results of the consensus that has already been achieved in the dialogue process on Peace, that I have been holding with Mr. Afonso Dhlakama, President of Renamo.

The statement I bring you today refers to the decentralization process I will now present:

1. During the dialogue, we tried to accommodate the wants of the Mozambicans imposed by the political, economic and social transformations that have been taking place in Mozambique.
2. The dynamics advise us to, at each time, assess if the decentralization rhythm and the format thereof correspond to the stage of our reality and the interests of the people.
3. It was based on that, that we reached the crucial finding that a **One-off Revision of the Constitution of the Republic will be required.**
4. We have talked about the advantages of the decisions being taken with the participation of everyone to make their enforcement effective.
5. The consensus achieved on the Draft Bill on Constitutional Revision reiterates, with emphasis, the **Republic of Mozambique as an unitary State.**
6. The State, that in its organization and operation respects the autonomy of the Provincial and District bodies and the autonomy of local authorities' bodies.
7. With regards to the electoral system, the consensus is the fact that the universal, direct, equal suffrage, and by personal and secret ballot will be the general rule to appoint the President of the Republic, the members of the Assembly of the Republic, the members of the provincial assemblies, the district assemblies and municipal assemblies.
8. The Province shall, after the 2019 general elections, be headed by a Governor appointed by the President of the Republic, upon a proposal submitted by the political party, coalition of political parties or group of voting citizens that obtains the majority of votes in the elections for the provincial assembly, from amongst the members of such Assembly. The Governor shall be directly accountable to the Provincial Assembly.
9. At the Province, there will be the State Secretary for the Province, who has the role of ensuring the performance of the exclusive and sovereign duties of the State, which are not subject to the decentralization process, who shall be appointed by the President of the Republic.
10. The matters exclusive to the sovereign bodies, central State bodies and institutions are not subject to decentralization, such as: (i) definition and organization of the territory; (ii) national defence, security and public order; (iii) border surveillance, (iv) issuance of currency; (v) diplomatic relations, (vi) mineral resources and energy); (vii) as well as natural resources located on the ground and underground, inland waters, territorial sea, on the continental shelf and within the exclusive economic; (viii) creation of and changes to taxes, amongst others.
11. With regards to Districts, the District Administrator shall be appointed by the Minister that oversees the State administration area, upon proposal submited by the political party, coalition of political parties or group of voting citizens that obtains the majority of votes in the elections for the provincial assembly, from amongst the members of such Assembly. The Administrator shall be accountable to the District Assembly.
12. With regards to local authorities, the president of the local authority shall now be put forward by the political party, coalition of political parties or group of voting citizens that obtains the majority of votes in the elections for the provincial assembly, from amongst the members of such entity.
13. After the Constitution has been revised, on a one-off basis, the amendments on local authorities shall enter forthwith in force, i.e., they shall be applied after the 2018 elections.
14. The amendments concerning Districts shall only enter into force after the 2024 general elections.

**15.** The provincial, district and municipal assemblies shall be subject to the oversight by the council of Ministers, and any decision regarding the dissolution of these bodies is subject to legal review by the Constitutional Council.

16. The Provincial Governors and the District Administrator may be removed from office by their respective assemblies or by the President of the Republic, in the cases explicitly provided for in the Constitution. In the event of removal from office by the President, the decision shall be subject to legal review by the Council of State.

These proposals and other complementary proposals obtained after consensus already achieved with the President of Renamo, shall be forwarded, by myself, to the Assembly of the Republic, as the highest legislative body, with powers to make amendments to the Constitution, as set forth in article no. 291 no. 1 of the Constitution of the Republic.

Compatriots!

The efective Peace that the Mozambicans look forward to, shall not come exclusively from the decentralization package. If depends on the commitment of everyone and of other related factors.

Hence, we have been achieving consensual grounds with regards to military subjects. In particular, with regards to Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Renamo forces.

We are aware that this process is awaited with great interest by every Mozambican, including our brothers from the Renamo ranks, as this is vital for an effective Peace.

In this process, the spirit of trust, openness and cooperation with the Renamo Leader shall prevail. Soon, we will inform the Mozambicans about the next steps in the field of military affairs.

For this reason and once again, on behalf of the Mozambicans I compliment the attitude of our compatriot Afonso Marceta Dhlakama, President of Renamo, for his collaborative role in this common vision, which establishes dialogue and the search for peaceful solutions for the political issues as a priority.

Before concluding, I would like to thank the Mozambican people, my Boss, for the wisdom and patience it has shown during this period, and I want to continue to plead for the continuity of this collective and patriotic spirit in this long and hard dialogue and reconciliation process.

I thank the civil society and religious communities, for their valuable support with ideas and continuous pleads on peace in Mozambique.

To the International Community, in particular to the Contact Group appointed by us, from them we hope they will continue supporting Mozambique, specially in the delicate process of **Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration.**

Fellow Mozambicans!

The agreements we have reached so far represent a giant step in the process of finding an effective and permanent Peace and consolidating our young democracy.

We are confident that the Mozambicans shall achieve the ultimate goal of this honourable common effort by moving forward with caution, responsibility but with determination.

I will conclude by using a excerpt of my inaugural speech:**" Each one of us shall be proud of belonging to an unitary and indivisible nation, without having to waive their attributes and specific cultural values for that.**

There are not those who are more Mozambicans or less Mozambicans. The multi-coloured flag covering all Mozambicans represents, exactly, this unity in diversity.

I am grateful to all Mozambicans in the national territory and in the diaspora that believe in the capacity of Mozambicans to underpin the dialogue as the highest expression of harmony amongst ourselves.

Thank you very much and VIVA MOÇAMBIQUE

Maputo, this 7th day of February 2018

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