

THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT DELEGATION ATTENDS THE SECOND NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF FRELIMO

Held in a liberated zone of
Mozambique from 20th July,
1968 to 26th July: 68.

In response to an invitation from FRELIMO addressed to the Permanent Secretariat to attend its Second National Conference as observer, and according to a decision of the Permanent Secretariat to accept the invitation with welcome in view of the significant and important particular characteristic of a conference of this nature, held by a struggling liberation movement waging an armed struggle, inside the interior of a country still under the imperialist yoke although liberated in some of its main areas, the delegation of the Permanent Secretariat was formed by :



124



The AAPSO delegation about to cross the borders.

Mr. Kamal Bahaa Eddin,
Assistant Secretary General.
Mr. Bahadur Abdurrasakov,
Soviet Representative.

The delegation left Cairo



124-A
AAPSO delegation
with the delegates
of MPLA, ANC and
ZAPU



to Dar Ess Salaam on the
: In the airport, we
were surprised that neither the
representative of TANU nor the
representative of FRELIMO
were in our reception, later on th
ey informed us that they had re-
ceived no notice informing them
of our arrival. Fortunately, a
member of the U.A.R. Embassy
in Tanzania was in our recep-
tion in the airport. We booked
a double room in the Twiga Ho-
tel in Dar Ess Salaam and we
started immediately our contacts
with TANU and FRELIMO re-
presentatives. Mr. Amanas Sw
ai paid us a visit next day and
facilitated our contacts with the

FRELIMO representatives in
Dar Ess Sa'cam. Mr. Uria T.
Simango, Vice President of FRE-
LIMO, paid us a visit in the Ho-
tel and we also met Mr. Edward
do C. Mondlane, President of FR
LIMO, who briefed on the confe-
rence and advised us to equip
ourselves with the necessary ma-
terial for a trip inside Mozambi-
que (cloth bag, medicine for
purifying water: light shoes for
long tracking and water can-
teen).

On Sunday, 14th July, 1968
we left Dar iss Sa'cam Airport
on board of a two-motor Dako-
ta plane heading for the South,

in company of Mr. Edwardo Mondlane and Mr. Uria Simango together with an English journalist and writer, Mr. Basil Davidson, who also attended the conference as observer. The plane took off at 8 p.m. and stopped at Lindi, 300 miles to Dar Ess Salaam after an hour and a half flight. Resuming our flight after a 15—minutes respite we reached Mtwara in half an hour and then Songea, at a 400 miles distant from Mtwara, after more than two hours flight.

In Mtwara we met some of the FRELIMO members of whom Mr. Marcelino dos Santos who informed us that he would join us with his group, in Songea by car, which would take 12 hours travel.

In Songea we were met by FRELIMO members who accompanied us by car to a small hut hotel. The weather was rather cold and we had to stay in Songea up to Wednesday 17th July. Although we were initially scheduled to leave next day,

British writer and journalist
Basil Davidson taking photos of
the meeting

we had to stay over in Songea until some problems of delegations arrivals were settled. We spent the time in walking exercises and took the occasion to interview some of the leaders of FRELIMO.

We were immediately struck by the high morale of the FRELIMO delegates and their eagerness and readiness to fight, in spite of the extreme hardships they meet with. We learnt that a large number of delegates



had already crossed the frontiers by that time, and that they have built a camping site for the conference meeting place inside Mozambique, we held meetings with leaders of FRELIMO of whom we mentioned particularly Mr. Alfredo Wassira, considered as a prominent political figure and a delegate of the TETE PROVINCE, Mr. Francisco Manyanga, the commander of the liberation army in the new front opened last March in the TETE PROVINCE, and Mr. Lourenco Raimundo, Commander of the Liberation Forces in CABO DELGADO PROVINCE, a liberated area.

We suggested that trenches would be dug around the site of the conference as a precautionary measure against air raids or infantry attacks, as we learnt from Mondlane that raids were not unexpected and that Portuguese planes might bomb the conference with Napalm or highly explosive bombs. We learnt later on that instructions were issued to dig out communications—and—shelter trenches around the conference site.

Crossing the Frontiers :

On Wednesday 17th July, we began to track our way by a

landrover car in company of Mr. Raul Casal Ribeiro, the second commander of the liberation army, and Basil Davidson. The landrover was stacked high with the equipments and carried twelve passengers. The route to the frontiers was narrow, arduous, threading its way with extreme difficulty for 85 miles amidst thick jungle and steep hills. We moved from Songea at 10:00 a.m. in the morning and after four hours and a half the car was stuck on the road, and we had to wait for another, which arrived half an hour later, and finally we reached the camp for FRELIMO forces, from which point we walked for about quarter an hour and then we crossed the river by boat, resumed walking for two hours through the jungle and finally reached a transit camp run by the FRELIMO and composed of several straw and bamboo huts which serve as a grouping point in preparation for another track before crossing over.

We had our supper which was composed of boiled rice, tea and biscuits : our diet, invariably, from this point until we left Mozambique for Dar Es Salaam. The weather was extremely cold, we slept with Ba-

126



sel Davidson in a small hut, our bedding consisted of bar boards of wood and we had to put on all our cloths and to ask for an extra blanket in quest of some warmth. Yet almost all FRELIMO members slept on the bare ground under the open sky and with almost no clothes on which demonstrates the extent of endurance these freedom fighters have and the extreme hardships they bare with in good spirits and a highly militant state of mind

Needless to say there was no facilities of any kind.

On Thursday 18th July, after lunch we began to move towards the frontiers, the delegations were divided into groups, each group composed about 15 persons which moved according to a certain time schedule, in single file led by one of the guerrilla. Around 3 o'clock p.m. our group moved led by a guerrilla girl fighter of around 20 years of age, we threaded our way through thick jungle for around 45 minutes, all along the path we noticed huts and camps for Mozambiquan r efugees living in extremely dire cconditions, we reached the Msinge River which is the bor-

127
der line between Tanzania and Mozambique.

Infront of us we saw Mozambique with its thick forests, towering trees and rich jungle. The groups preceeding us stood on the other side of the river on an embankment waiting for us, we crossed the river by canoe and climbed up the embankment with difficulty, finally we were inside Mozambique.

We resumed walking in separate groups, in the same order as before, amidst a thick jungle finding difficulty in threading our way on the extremely narrow jungle-track which is barely wide enough for one person to pass. We learnt later that mines were planted on both sides of the track and as a matter of fact we were warned to keep strictly to the track. After half an hour of walking in rather wide strides we reached the first point posted by PRELIMO as customs and frontiers point. We had to show our identity papers and pass through customs measures so as to enter the liberated zone in Mozambique. After another half an hour of these formalities we walked along for another hour until we reached a camp for



the guerilla fighters of PRELIMO. At the camp Casal Ribeiro, second commander of the army gave us our security instructions and regulations for residence in the camp, he explained the responsibility of the army fighters in connection with guards duty and warned us not to move outside the camp and not to show any white clothes so as not to reveal the camps site to reconnaissance enemy planes. From that point we moved again in the South of a small river until we reached the camp prepared for our residence. The camp was composed of several huts built of tree-trunks and covered with palms inside the forest and covered all around with thick trees. A small

128
hut with three punks, was allotted to us, we shared it with Bassells Davidson. The bunks were made of tree branches tied up together with palm ropes and covered with grass.

The camp was situated in the Niassa province the nearest of the nine provinces of Mozambique to Tanzania. Local time of Tanzania, we reached the camp at 7 p.m. Tanzania local time i.e. 6 p.m. Mozambique local time.

After a brief respite Mr. Casal Ribeiro paid us a visit and told us the night word which was Cuillière (spoon). We had our supper as usual boiled rice with some hashed meat. It was



LIFEMO'S chairman addressing the Congress on behalf of the Mozambican Women

extremely cold we noticed that some of the occupants of nearby huts set up a fire inside their huts to get some warm.

Edwardo Mondlane and Cimgango had not arrived by that time, they did not arrive, except next day at around 6 p.m.

On Friday, 19th July, Marcelino dos Santos promised to provide us with the list of delegates and all other available documents.

We annex herewith the official list of delegates, the Agenda of the Conference and the regulations of the conference procedure. We held a meeting with Marina Manguedya, Commander of girls detachment of Cabo Delgado.

We learnt that the Portuguese were posted at around 40 or 45 miles from our camps sites.

On Saturday 20th July, we held a meeting with the military commander of Cabo Delgado Province Mr. Lourenco Raimundo and the Political Commissioner Mr. Calisto Mugico.

THE INAUGURATION OF THE CONFERENCE :

The Conference was inaugurated at 5:00 p.f. on Saturday



M. Kamal E. Fidalgo with B. Davidson discussing during a break



20/7/1968, in a special site carefully camouflaged and ingeniously prepared for the purpose, using equipments made cut of the materials available in the jungle.

130

The number of participants in the Conference was about 150 members and observers.

The inauguration was of a ceremonial character: the National Hymn of PRELIMO was sung by an honour guard of the Guerrillas in front of the PRELIMO flag. Arms were presented to Mondlane in salute. Then he gave a short speech of greeting to delegates and observers. The Political Commissioner of the Nyassa Province welcomed the convocation of the Conference in Nyassa, then the Commander of the Army, Samora Machel gave a speech, and Casal Ribeiro delivered a report on the development of the armed struggle since its inception in September 1964 up till now.

He announced that the Guerrilla troops numbered more than 8,000 fighters in the provinces in which armed struggle was waged. During this period more than 6000 Portuguese were killed, he said. He also declared that the Guerrilla forces opened a new front this year in the TETE Province, that the enemy increased its armed forces which amounts up to 60 thousands soldiers, that recruiting age in Portugal was reduced

and that youths of 18 years of age are now recruited and that the military obligatory service period was increased to four years. He also announced that 2 of the Central Committee members were killed in armed action during 1966.

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE :

On Sunday 21/7/1968, Marcello dos Santos read out the report of the Preparatory Committee of the Conference and the document on the Regulations of the Conference Procedures, which lasted, with the translation and detailed explanations, all along the five hours of the morning session. In the afternoon session, the agenda was discussed and approved. Mondlane briefed the Conference on the schedule of work which would be by delivery of messages of support from observers and friendly organizations on the same session, the delivery of the Political Report the following day and then the five commissions of the Conference would proceed with their works, for two or three days; finally the resolutions would be approved by the Conference in plenary session.



The message of the Permanent Secretariat of AAPSO was the first message delivered. It was read out by the Assistant Secretary General and was met with great appreciation and warm applause, and was followed by cheers and enthusiastic national songs.

The MPLA message was then delivered by Mr. Flavio Bombeiro, (and messages from the Guinean Democratic Party and from other progressive organizations were read out by Marcilo dos Santos as the closing item of this session.

The military commander of the Nyassa Province then stressed the importance of security measures to be strictly observed against possible attacks by infantry, paratroopers, air raids or surprise silent attacks by white arms, he also explained the measures taken by his forces to guard against and ward off any attack.

On Monday 22/7/1968 the Conference was chaired by Simanga, Vice-President of PRE-LIMO.

131
The message of the A.N.C. was delivered by Mr. Begard Souza.

Mr. Bahador Abdurrazakov then gave the message of the Soviet Committee on Afro-Asian Peoples solidarity; he also conveyed to the Conference the greetings and support of A.A.P.S.O.

Then the ZAPU representative, Mr. Conrad Combakomba, gave the message of his party, which was greeted by resounding enthusiasm.

Other messages were then read out.

On a request of Mr. Marcilino dos Santos, Mr. Bahaa Kamal Eddine gave the attendance a summary of the A.A.P.S.O. and its Permanent Secretariat activities and the programme of its action in the forthcoming period, as well as on account of the Secretary General's mission to Hanoi, pointing out the main Conferences AAPSO is preparing to organize :

On Vietnam, on Southern Africa... etc. This account found warm response and interest in the attendance.





LIFEMO'S delegation at the congress



Then Mr. Monatane began to read out the Political Report, which lasted during the morning and afternoon sessions. He started with a brief outline of the history of PRELIMO, the difficulties it encountered and overcame, the secessionary organizations splintered off it which were formed and failed or disbanded. Then he gave a fully detailed account of the activities of PRELIMO since the First Conference held in «Tanganyika» in 1962, presented the members of the Central Committee who bore the brunt of responsibility in discharging their tasks in implementation of the First Conference decisions,

He traced out the development and expansion of FRELIMO activities in various fields : Educational, Social, Medical... etc.

Then he spoke of the armed struggle phase, which was initiated on September 25, 1964, the creation of Guerrilla troops, the formation of cadres of various fields, in the friendly countries such as Algeria, U.A.R., U.S.S.R. (and other countries. He delineated the development of the armed struggle from one province to the other and expressed appreciation for the role of friendly and socialist countries which backed and aided the struggle.

133

Then he set out the political programme of FRELIMO at length. We were promised to receive the full text of this report, after translation.

On the next and last open plenary session, on Tuesday 23/7/1968 messages of support from Heads of Provinces were read out amidst great enthusiasm, songs, cheers and dances.

Then Mondlane announced that the Central Committee had met the previous night and decided to add a special declaration to the Political Report. He read out the declaration which supports the struggle of the Palestinian people, condemns the imperialist-Israeli aggression of last June on the Arab peoples and enumerates the occasions in which FRELIMO denounced and condemned the imperialist Israeli aggression. He then thanked the Afro-Asian Peoples Organization for the attendance of its delegation and announced our departure.

As our task was done, the

plenary session were over and observers had no role in the closed committees' sessions, we then greeted the Conference members and took our leave.

We had been informed that the proposal for the formation of the Central Committee that was to be discussed ran as follows: instead of 22 members by appointment, as the previous Central Committee was formed, the new Central Committee be constituted by 40 members: 18 members would be elected from the Conference as whole, by general vote, 9 members would be elected from the provinces (one member for each province) the provinces (one member for each province) and 13 ex-officio members i.e. the heads of various national sections (education, information, economic, external affairs... etc. The Central Committee would then elect from its members a President and a Vice-President.

On our way back we witnessed an air-raid by Portuguese plane which dropped highly

explosive bombs on a refugees camp inside Tanzanian territory, as we learnt later on, the anti-air-craft batteries of the Tanzanian Army gave fire and the plane went back to its base, located at about 70 miles' distance.

It is believed that the plane was looking for the Conference site and that probably the intention was to bomb it.

DEPARTURE :

We reached Songea at around 10:00 p.m. on Tuesday 23/7/1968 stayed over for the night and boarded the plane for Dar Ess Salaam, by tickets issued in alias names, at around 1:00 p.m., on Wednesday reaching the Tanzanian capital at around 5:00 p.m. and left for Cairo on Friday 28/7/1968.

We therefore spent on the mission nineteen days from the 8th to the 27th July 1968.

CONCLUSION :

This mission, the first of its type, undertaken by the A.A.P. S.O. Secretariat delegates in a

134
liberated zone of a country waging an armed struggle against one of the most archaic, anachronistic and yet ferocious kinds of imperialism, combined, as it is, with blatant colonial oppression and occupation, neo-colonialist designs and exploitation, military NATO ties and affinities and open shameless racial discrimination — was highly successful and of outstanding significance.

We must stress our thanks, admiration and appreciation to the leaders organizers and members of the Conference who performed a remarkable action of bravery, competent organization, vigilance and ingenuity.

In extremely difficult conditions, and in defiance of the Portuguese imperialists and occupation troops and planes, the Conference was held successfully inside the interior of Mozambique, which is in itself a telling proof of the success achieved so far by FRELIMO as Liberation Movement and its liberation army.

We suggest that this mission would be consummated by tak-

ing concrete measures of support and solidarity with the Mozambique people in its struggle, i.e. :

— To circulate of the Political Report Declarations, Resolutions and Documents of the Conference to all member and friendly organizations, together with a brief report on the Permanent Secretariat mission.

— To issue an appeal to member and friendly organizations to redouble and intensify their support and assistance to FRELIMO and to the Mozambique people, by all means, moral, political and material, particularly through aids in military equipment, clothing, medical supplies ... etc.

— To hold a press conference and a photo exhibition on the mission and on the struggle of the Mozambique people.

— To make the widest possible use of information media to publicize the mission and the struggle of Mozambique, through television interviews, articles in the weekly or daily press, publication of a special supplement of our bulletin ... etc.

— And to stress both the political and military achievements of FRELIMO and the Mozambique people, in accordance with our principles and objectives throughout this action of support and solidarity.

