

MACHEL, SAMORA

MOZAMBIQUE

Samora Moisés **MACHEL** BF
 (Phonetic: maSHEL)

MOZAMBIQUE
 BF-1

President
(since June 1975)

President of the ruling Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) since 1970, Samora Machel directed his country's liberation struggle and has been the only president since independence. To reduce persistent tensions in the region, Machel concluded a nonaggression pact called the Nkomati Accord with South Africa in March 1984. He regularly discusses regional issues with other African leaders.



After attending a mission school in Mozambique in the late 1950s, Machel worked in a hospital and took nursing classes at night. He joined FRELIMO in 1963 and subsequently received nine months of guerrilla training in Algeria. He then went to Tanzania to train 250 guerrillas, whom he later led in the initial attack against the Portuguese Government in his homeland in 1964. The following year Machel assumed responsibility for FRELIMO military training in Tanzania, and by 1966 he had become chief of guerrilla operations—a post he held until the end of the war in 1974. He did not participate directly in the transition government that oversaw Portuguese withdrawal from September 1974 until June 1975. Instead, from FRELIMO headquarters in Tanzania, he laid the plans for his country's first independent government and returned to Mozambique only the day before his inauguration as President. Currently, in addition to his other duties, he is Commander in Chief of the Mozambican Armed Forces. He holds the military rank of marshal.

Machel, who will be 53 on 29 September, speaks Portuguese and several tribal languages. Within the past year he has visited both the United States and the Soviet Union. Married, he has eight children. His wife, Graça, is Minister of Education and Culture.

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