

Samora Moises MACHEL
(Phonetic: mahSHELL)

MOZAMBIQUE

President

Addressed as:
Mr. President



President of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) since May 1970, Samora Machel became the first President of the People's Republic of Mozambique on 25 June 1975. The newly independent state will be a one-party state, and Machel will retain his party position. In his inaugural speech Machel pledged to create the "first truly Marxist state in Africa" and declared Mozambique's natural allies to be the socialist countries.

Machel joined FRELIMO in 1963, engaged in guerrilla operations against the Portuguese and by 1966 had become FRELIMO's minister of defense. He was named commander in chief of FRELIMO's guerrilla forces in 1968. In February 1969 FRELIMO president Eduardo Mondlane was assassinated, and for the next 15 months Machel served as the party's de facto leader. In May 1970 the FRELIMO Central Committee elected him president.

The son of a farmer, Machel was born in October 1933 in Gaza District. Forced to interrupt his secondary school studies to earn a living, he went to Lourenço Marques, where he became a male nurse in a hospital. In 1961 Machel met Mondlane and found in the latter's ideas and plans an outlet for his nationalist sentiments. In 1963 he went to Tanzania to join FRELIMO. He then received 6 months of guerrilla training in Algeria before returning to Tanzania to set up the first FRELIMO training camp. The first armed struggle against the Portuguese was launched in September 1964.

Machel has traveled widely for FRELIMO. He is a widower. He speaks Portuguese and some French.

6 August 1975