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MOZAMBIQUE

Samora Moisés MACHEL

President

President of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) since May 1970, Samora Machel (pronounced mahSHELL) became the first President of the People's Republic of Mozambique on 25 June 1975. In addition, he controls the National Service of People's Security, the new secret police organization that has wide powers of arrest, detention and confiscation, and, as FRELIMO president, is ex officio Commander in Chief of the People's Forces for the Liberation of Mozambique.



(1974)

More a warrior than a statesman, Machel bears the marks of his colonial experience and the nearly 11 years that he spent as a guerrilla leader.

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he is a natural leader and a man of action. His dominant personality and oratorical skills have earned him a wide popular following, particularly among the party's rank and file. He is dedicated to the objective of creating "the first truly Marxist state in Africa."

Machel joined FRELIMO as a guerrilla fighter in 1963 and by 1966 had become chief of guerrilla operations—a post he held until the end of the war in 1974.

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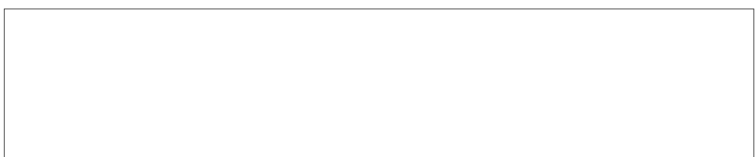
Machel led delegations to the peace talks with the Portuguese in Lusaka, Zambia, in June 1974 and again in September, when the independence agreement was signed; during the discussions he impressed the Zambians with his independent character.

Machel did not participate in the transitional government (September 1974-June 1975), but remained in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, at FRELIMO headquarters, laid plans for Mozambique's first independent government,

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Finally returning to Mozambique in May 1975, Machel made a whirlwind speaking tour of the country that ended in his triumphal entry into Maputo on the day before his inauguration.

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Machel, the President

Since independence Machel has proceeded rapidly to consolidate his power, to downgrade or purge potential rivals and to institute a regimented, militarized Marxist-Leninist state, drawing on the Chinese and Tanzanian experiences. He has become the dominant figure in the country and has completely overshadowed any rival. As head of the party, government, army and secret police, he wields tremendous power.

Theoretically Machel shares power with the other members of FRELIMO's Executive Committee, but in practice he relinquishes only as much power as he chooses. Before making policy decisions, however, he consults key figures in the various ministries. He also relies on the advice of a small group of Marxist-oriented mulattoes and Goans; this group includes FRELIMO Vice President and Minister of Development and Economic Planning Marcelino dos Santos, Minister of State for the Presidency José Oscar Monteiro, Minister of Information Jorge Rebelo and Chief of the President's Cabinet Sergio Vieira. Monteiro, Rebelo and Vieira are also said to write Machel's speeches and provide guidance to the local media.

Confident of his position, Machel travels within Mozambique with a minimum of security, mingles freely with the crowds and seems to have no hesitancy about leaving the country for meetings and official business. Through government assignments and party censure, he has undercut the power and influence of those within the administration who could challenge him. He is intolerant of opposition to FRELIMO's policies and says that he will not hesitate to use force to implement FRELIMO's programs. Those considered opponents of FRELIMO now crowd Mozambique's jails and political rehabilitation camps.

Machel's power base is the army, and his ties to the military are strong. He makes an attempt to attend all military ceremonies and manages to include senior officers in his overseas entourages. He seems to have the respect and loyalty of the army rank and file, although there has been some discontent over low wages, disciplinary measures and favoritism toward certain tribes in appointments. The only major challenge to the government was the police-military mutiny in December 1975, but it was quickly put down by loyal troops.

Domestic Policies

Anxious to destroy all vestiges of Portuguese colonialism, Machel nationalized education, law practices, mortuaries and medicine immediately after independence in June 1975. Some believe this action was motivated in part by memories of the humiliations in these areas that he had suffered under the Portuguese. Certain types of private property, such as rental properties, and abandoned buildings, were nationalized in February 1976, and an anti-religion campaign has been launched. The country's number-one economic priority is agriculture, and in this field the communal village program—

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modeled on that of Tanzania—has become the basis of development and production.

Because Machel has given priority to political objectives and the organization of the new government, the economy has suffered. His government has failed to provide strong and effective leadership of the economy and has delayed the formulation of an economic plan until the end of 1976. In addition Machel's fiery, revolutionary rhetoric has precipitated a large-scale exodus of Portuguese technicians and businessmen. Trained replacements are not available, and as a result, factories have closed and there has been a loss in productivity and in tax revenue—the Portuguese had paid most of the individual and business taxes. Additionally, the President's Marxist orientation and the lack of an investment code have caused private investors to shy away from Mozambique.

International Views

Machel's philosophy is a mixture of Marxism, Maoism and Tanzanian socialism. He considers the "socialist states" as natural allies and the West as the enemy and the "center of imperialism." In descending order he has listed his foreign policy priorities as follows: Africa, the liberation movements in Africa, the socialist countries, the progressive parties of capitalist countries, the democratic forces of capitalist countries and the newly independent nations who are struggling for economic emancipation. His country, he said, is working for "real peace" in the world, supports the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a peace zone and abides by the UN Charter. According to Machel, his foreign policy is dictated by internal rather than external forces.

A Short-term Pragmatist?

Machel is primarily an ideologue, but over the short term it appears he can be pragmatic in his approach to foreign affairs. During the independence struggle, he rejected dos Santos' advice that FRELIMO should depend only on "friendly" socialist countries. As well as receiving military training and equipment from the Chinese and the Soviets, FRELIMO received medical supplies and educational aid from East and West European governments and from private groups in the United Kingdom and the United States. Immediately after independence, Machel did not impose the expected economic restrictions against Rhodesia, apparently because he was weighing the economic consequences of the loss of about 10 to 15 percent of his country's foreign exchange. The embargo was delayed until March 1976.

The same pragmatism is seen in his treatment of South Africa. Verbally denouncing the white South African government as "Africa's number-one enemy," he nevertheless continues to deal with it commercially and accept technical advice. The profits from the sale of gold paid by the South African Government to the Mozambican Government for migrant mine labor have become the country's major source of foreign exchange; there are currently about 80,000 Mozambican laborers in South African mines. Other ties to

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South Africa include the upcoming sale of electricity from the Cabora Bassa Hydroelectric Project and the revenue received from the transshipment of South African imports and exports.

Africa

Machel's principal concerns in Africa are the success of the liberation movements—particularly those in southern Africa, the establishment of majority rule and the formation of likeminded revolutionary governments. He has given direct aid and support to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and is now heavily involved with the black Rhodesian nationalists. Machel provides bases and military aid to the Rhodesian nationalists and has been instrumental in forming the "Third Force"—a leftist military force in opposition to the traditional African National Congress leadership. Machel wants to unify the Rhodesian nationalist factions and create an organization like FRELIMO which could eventually assume control of the Rhodesian government.

In Africa Machel has also worked to establish links with such other leftist states as those of Guinea, Congo, Somalia, Tanzania, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Cape Verde and São Tomé. With the former Portuguese territories he would like to maintain contacts through, and eventually assume leadership of, the Conference of Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies (the umbrella organization through which the various Portuguese nationalist groups maintained contacts prior to independence).

Of the African leaders, Machel admires most Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere and has used Tanzania as a model for a number of reforms. Among his immediate neighbors he seems to have the least rapport with Malawian President Hastings Banda, whom he believes aided his enemies during the independence struggle.

China and the USSR

Machel seems to lean toward a Maoist interpretation of Marxism and has written several pamphlets in classical Maoist-Marxist terminology. He has, however, avoided taking sides in the Sino-Soviet conflict and seems intent on benefiting from a relationship with both Communist powers. Immediately after independence the Chinese seemed to have the upper hand, but their favored position was lost when they backed the MPLA's Angolan rivals. Ties with the USSR have been strengthened because of military needs, and Machel's first state visit outside Africa was to the USSR in May 1976.

The West

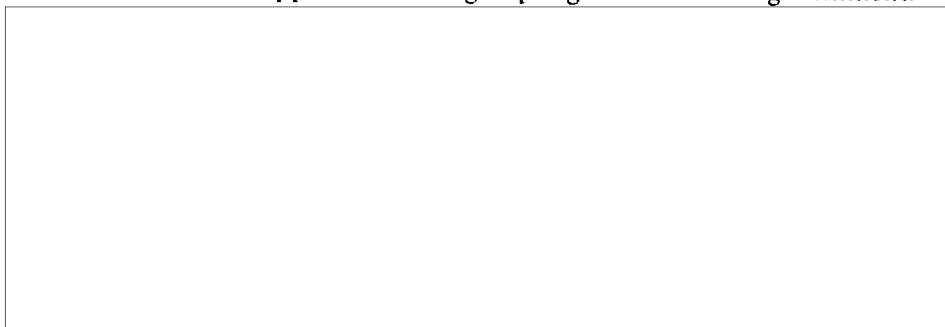
Except perhaps for the Scandinavian countries that supported FRELIMO in its struggle for independence, Machel views the West as the center of imperialism, colonialism and racism. He is suspicious of Western motives and critical of Western policies. He found Western support to its NATO ally, Portugal, during the independence struggle, incomprehensible. Consequently



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he did not invite the United States, France or West Germany to Mozambique's first independence celebrations and delayed establishing relations with several Western countries, including the United States, for some time after independence. [redacted] Machel feared that formal relations with Western countries would increase their freedom of action and allow them to support dissident groups against Machel's government.

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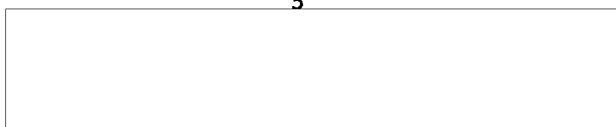
Portugal

Since independence, relations with the Portuguese have been shaky, but negotiations to solve problems continue. Machel prefers ties and maintains contact with the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) and has been unhappy with the political trend in Lisbon away from the left. During a PCP visit to Maputo in March 1976, he said the purpose of Portuguese-Mozambican discussions was "to find together types of cooperation making it possible to face reaction and obstacles in the march of the revolution in Mozambique and Portugal."

Early Life and Career

A member of the Shangana tribe, Samora Moisés Machel was born on 11 May 1932 in Bilene, Gaza District. His family were Methodists, but he attended the Roman Catholic Mission School of São Paulo de Messano in Bilene; here he was nicknamed "the rebel." Unable to finish school—either because of financial reasons or his refusal to begin seminary training—he took a job and attended evening classes. Later Machel studied nursing at the Miguel Bombarda Hospital in Maputo, where he was working as of 1961.

In 1961 Machel met FRELIMO founder Eduardo Mondlane, a US-educated Mozambican and lecturer at Syracuse University, who was visiting Africa under UN auspices. In 1962 Mondlane founded FRELIMO in Dar es Salaam, and in 1963, when Machel heard of it, he made his way to Tanzania to join. After receiving 9 months of guerrilla training in Algeria, he returned to Tanzania to train—and then lead—the 250 guerrillas who launched the initial attack against the Portuguese on 25 September 1964. Machel specialized in hit-and-run tactics and trained his men to be tough, disciplined and satisfied with a Spartan existence. In 1965 he was given the task of supervising the FRELIMO training camp at Kongwa, Tanzania. By 1966 he had become FRELIMO's secretary of defense. Later in 1966 when the



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guerrilla commander Filipe Magaia was assassinated- [Redacted]
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After the assassination of Mondlane in February 1969, Machel was named to the interim three-man Council of the Presidency. He quickly emerged as the group's strongman. One of the three, Uria Simango, publicly criticized his two colleagues, dos Santos and Machel, and was expelled from the party in November 1969. In May 1970 the FRELIMO Central Committee elected Machel president and dos Santos vice president.

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Personal Data

An austere man, Machel lived modestly in Dar es Salaam. He neither drinks nor smokes. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] Machel was nicknamed "the general" by his guerrilla troops.

Machel has been impressive in his appearances before the press, projecting a warm, witty personality and giving an articulate, open presentation. He speaks Portuguese, siSwati, broken Swahili, and some French. He understands English. Machel received the Lenin Centenary Medal in 1971 and the World Peace Council's Joliot-Curie medal in 1975. He has also received Zambia's and Tanzania's highest awards.

Family

Machel has been married three times. His first wife died prior to 1969 when he married Josina Muthemba, [Redacted]

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[Redacted] She died in a Chinese hospital in Dar es Salaam in 1971. Machel has two children, a daughter who was working as a nurse at the Miguel Bombarda Hospital as of 1974 and a son who was born in about 1962.

On 7 September 1975 Machel married Graca Simbine. She served in the transitional government (October 1974 to June 1975) as Secretary of State for Education and Culture, and since independence she has been Minister of Education and Culture. [Redacted]

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Machel has three brothers.

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17 October 1976

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