

**"PEACE AND RECONCILIATION: AN ACT THAT SYMBOLISES THE GREATER GOOD OF ALL MOZAMBICANS
THAT WE MUST PRESERVE FOREVER"**

**Speech by His Excellency Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, on the
occasion of the Signing of the Maputo Accord for Peace and Reconciliation**

Maputo City, August 6, 2019

Dear Heads of State and Government

Distinguished Foreign and National Dignitaries;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Compatriots!

Today is a day of celebration of concord and harmony for Mozambicans. Today, politics has overcome the abyss of division and violence that over the years has caused death and destroyed our economic fabric, dividing its people into antagonistic camps.

We have just signed the Accord for Peace and National Reconciliation; the fuse that lights the torch for Effective Peace and National Reconciliation, which are necessary conditions to rescue and ensure the sustainability of the development path that, since our independence in 1975, has experienced several moments of discontinuity.

The day becomes even more emotional, for me, because this is a day when the late Brother Dhlakama, former President of Renamo, comes to mind. Today, at the exact time and date we sign the agreement, it marks two years since I met him on Gorongosa Mountains, that is, on 6 August 2017, at the height of the conflict.

We begin by greeting everyone here at this ceremony for the signing of the Maputo Accord for Peace and Reconciliation.

We extend a special warm welcome to the Heads of State and Government of Namibia, Zambia, South Africa, Rwanda, the Vice President of Zimbabwe, the Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and the High Dignitaries here among us. I refer to the President of the African Union Commission, the Kenyan Minister of the Interior, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Policy, the Ministers of the Swiss Confederation and the Federal Republic of Germany, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Portugal, Bishop Matteo Zuppi representing the Sant'Egidio Community and the Deputy Executive Secretary of the SADC, among others who honour us with their presence.

We thank them all for having travelled long distances to honour us with their presence, joining the more than 28 million Mozambicans who jubilantly celebrate this moment in our history.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the honourable presence of key figures in our national history in the process of state-building, peace, and reconciliation of Mozambicans over the years.

Dear Guests;

The clarity of the Mozambican people's vision with regard to the foundations of their nation, its future and the future of the region and the world were always unambiguous, and their central axis was PEACE.

Our contribution to world peace has been shown since independence in various ways. Our adherence to the UN sanctions on the segregationist regime in Southern Rhodesia is an example of this. It has cost us great economic and political losses, but we have contributed to the independence of today's Zimbabwe. Our support in the struggle against Apartheid in South Africa is another example that documents Mozambique's commitment to world peace. Similarly, we suffered from this decision, but peace and reconciliation came to South Africa with the end of apartheid and the formation of the first multiracial and democratic government. Between us and in the journey of more than 50 years of search for peace and freedom, we have more than 5 agreements, starting with the Lusaka Agreement, signed on 7 September 1974, which put an end to the Portuguese colonial and fascist regime and laid the foundations for our independence.

The outbreak, in 1977, of the armed conflict that lasted for 16 years, forced the State to seek paths to Peace, and to this end signed the Nkomati Agreement, in 1984, with a view to ensuring good-neighbourliness (between Mozambique and South Africa), while internally advancing the Peace agenda.

Twenty-seven years later, let us remember with the renewed sense of hope and optimism that greeted the news of the Rome General Peace Accords on that beautiful Sunday, October 4, 1992.

We started by seeking contacts with Renamo, through Mozambican clerics, the Sant'Egidio Community, which would become the main facilitator, together with the Italian government, the Kenyan and Malawian governments, the first bridges of contact between the government and Renamo.

We managed, after over a year of negotiations, to reach a partial ceasefire agreement, confined to the Beira and Limpopo corridors and implemented through the Verification Commission, comprising members of the parties.

The implementation of the General Peace Accords (GPA) brought about significant transformations in Mozambican society, in terms of the organization of the State, the Constitution of the Republic, the structure, organization, and composition of the Armed Forces. It introduced the process of holding regular elections, every five years, to choose the President of the Republic and the Members of Parliament.

We introduced criteria and modalities for the formation and acknowledgement of political parties.

Unfortunately, after a little more than 20 years of peace, there were again political disagreements, which ended up in another armed conflict, causing much death and destruction, but above all, affecting the economy and predisposition of national and foreign investors.

To end this post-independence conflict, an Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities was signed on September 5, 2014, in Maputo, believing it would be the last time.

Time proved that it was not the latter, as one year later the post-election disagreements became more acute, culminating in a new armed conflict.

It has become clear from the lessons learned that effective and lasting peace is a construction that requires much effort and sustained commitment.

Effective Peace involves the elimination of the factors that fuel conflict, the organisation of the State to the satisfaction of all and the promotion of a better life for all, an exercise that involves the participation of all.

Building lasting peace requires respect for the rule of law and the need for citizens, political parties, and other forces in society to carry out their activities without recourse to violence, even in situations where there are differences of opinion on certain issues.

The process of implementing the General Peace Accords has taught us that decent socio-economic reintegration of former combatants to eliminate their willingness to engage in conflict is another central aspect to violence.

As we look back over the paths we have taken in the search for peace, we want to draw lessons from all that we have done right and wrong and to leverage and remedy it.

In our genuine spirit of reconciliation, we have not done this exercise to question our achievements, nor to judge or boast about the past of which we have been a part. On the contrary, we want to set our march toward definitive peace, progress, and well-being on a more solid foundation.

Compatriots,

We said it when we first addressed the Mozambican nation on January 15, 2015, and we quote, "As Head of State, I will excel in opening to constructive dialogue with all political forces and civic organizations to promote concord."

The dream of Mozambicans to cross the Rubicon was so strong that in 2016 we started direct negotiations for the first time with the late Renamo leader, Mr Afonso Macacho Marceta Dhlakama.

It should be noted that this is the first peace agreement for Mozambique that is the product of direct negotiation between the Government and Renamo.

This direct interaction turned out to be a kind of conversion of the animosity, which previously prevailed between us, and which repelled each other, to a greater rapprochement and even to the friendship level.

The direct dialogue has not only dispelled the mistrust that existed among Mozambicans but has created greater understanding and comprehension between us.

Indeed, on December 26, 2016, the then Renamo leader informed me that he had decided to order a truce, therefore instruct his men to stop using weapons to resolve conflicts. And so he did it the next day.

From there on, we have delved into the various issues that led to this understanding that are today sealed by this historic agreement that my brother, Ossufo Momade, and I have just signed.

As you know, this agreement was preceded by the recent approval of the Amnesty Law by the National Assembly, whom we thank for the speed with which they took this measure, and then by the signing of the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, which we signed on the first day of August this year.

Mozambicans,

Compatriots!

We decided to sign this agreement because we believe that, like the leaves on the trees that sprout in each season, we are firmly convinced that, with this agreement, the lives of Mozambicans, their narrative and their future will be more certain than ever that they will continue as of today.

The agreement that we have just signed is an agreement of brothers who have definitively come to the realization that, there is no longer any reason to continue killing each other.

This is no agreement between enemies, but an agreement that proves that we want no more war, no more war between us. With this agreement, we are saying that we may disagree, as is common in a family, but that we will always use dialog to settle our differences.

In a word, we are saying that: NEVER, NEVER AND NEVER AGAIN SHOULD MOZAMBIQUE BE A THEATER OF WAR. ELECTION RESULTS SHOULD NEVER DICTATE THE STATE OF PEACE IN MOZAMBIQUE.

This agreement is a tribute to the hard work and cooperation of countless Mozambican leaders and citizens - between parties and initiatives of the living forces of the Mozambican nation - who meticulously laid the foundations for the milestone we mark today to be achieved.

Hence, I want to especially acknowledge the late Renamo President Afonso Dhlakama for his understanding and comprehension throughout the almost three years of not always easy talks.

I also thank General Ossufo Momade, Mr. Dhlakama's successor and President of Renamo, for firmly continuing and ensuring a fruitful end to this process.

To the Contact Group, the Team of Experts, the International Cooperation Partners; to the SADC sister countries, to the presidents here today, we want to thank for the support, at all times.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When death, mercilessly, claimed my Brother, on that fateful May 3, 2018, we had practically agreed on everything in our agenda.

We had been building consensus around the outlined Agenda, Administrative Decentralisation and Military Affairs - Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration.

Fatality, with all the obvious consequences it creates, would not dare to evade our shared conviction that nothing should fail in the achievement of effective peace.

With the new Renamo Leadership, represented by Mr Ossufo Momade, we seal this conviction, because commanded by the supreme aspiration of our People, we continued steadfastly in the dialogue that we have come to sublimate it with the signing, on 6 August 2018, of the Memorandum of Understanding, an instrument that formalises the consensus on Military Matters.

It is by implementing this instrument that we have cemented the principles enshrined in our fundamental law, the Constitution of the Republic, that Mozambique is a Unitary State, that the rule of law prevails and that its Defence and Security Forces are non-partisan and abide by it, as well as its Commander-in-Chief in his capacity as President of the Republic.

It was under this assumption that we integrated Renamo officers into the command and management structure of the FADM, and we are doing the same in the Police of the Republic of Mozambique (PRM).

The Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration process of our Renamo brothers continues, in accordance with the revised timeline of the Memorandum of Understanding. We are committed to doing everything we can to make sure that nothing impedes the implementation of our consensus.

We are here today to tell all Mozambicans, from Rovuma to Maputo and from Zumbo to the Indian Ocean, as well as in the Diaspora and the entire international community, which is well represented here by the presence of Heads of State and Government of sister countries, foreign individuals from cooperation partner countries and regional and international multilateral organisations, that the process we have begun is irreversible.

That we no longer want war, we no longer want to see brothers against brothers! We never want to see the blood spilled to free ourselves from the colonial yoke, devalued and vilified by a struggle between brothers.

We have no illusions that, from now on, everything will automatically be a bed of roses in the process of building the country of peace, harmony, progress, and well-being for which we strive.

What we are sure of is that we Mozambicans have the capacity to come together again, to remain united around the national interest, the will of the People and our identity values, and as Mozambicans who share a common destiny, we are sure that we will win.

In conclusion, this time around, we should capitalise on the positive aspects of the Rome GPA and the Agreement signed on 05 September 2014 in Maputo and value the lessons learned in relation to what went less well.

The experience we have gained throughout the peace building process will be the beacon that will guide us towards the consolidation of the designs for Peace, Reconciliation, and Inclusive Development.

Sustaining Peace is a cheaper mechanism than feeding a war. On the Government's part, you can continue to count on our good faith to comply with all the understandings embodied in the legal instruments we have been concluding, including this Agreement.

We also urge all fellow Mozambicans to do their utmost to ensure that this desideratum is achieved and consolidated, for the good of us all and not just for the sake of mere commentary. We call on you to welcome our demobilised Renamo brothers and sisters and help them with their socio-economic reintegration.

Without neglecting our responsibilities, we appeal to the international community, which has been listening to us to continue to support us until we reach this stage, especially in the context of the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of the Renamo armed men.

Allow me to express my utmost gratitude to all those who with their knowledge and dedication made this auspicious occasion of the signing of the Accord for Peace and Reconciliation possible, in particular, the Facilitators of the Dialogue, the Contact Group, coordinated by Swiss Ambassador Mirko Mazoni, the Government and Renamo Teams, as well as the International Component.

Special thanks go, posthumously, to Mozambique's friend, the former President of Botswana, Masire, who devoted himself in difficult times to bringing peace to Mozambique.

Personally, I express my admiration and reverence for the first group of friends who agreed, at the height of the conflict, in the middle of the rainy season, to climb mountains to meet the late President of Renamo, at my request, to prepare my first trip to Gorongosa. I am referring to Mr. Jonathan Powell and Neha Sanghrajka, as well as the coordinator of the Contact Group and some members of Renamo.

To my Peers, Heads of State and Government, as well as other dignitaries present here today, we reiterate our gratitude for the privilege you have offered us of witnessing this act of rapprochement and reconciliation of the Mozambican family, and for your words of comfort and encouragement, a gesture that gives more responsibility to Mozambicans and fills us with hope.

Mozambicans!

Distinguished Guests!

While Mozambicans are engaged in establishing effective and lasting peace with the exercise we are witnessing today, the northern districts of Cabo Delgado province are experiencing terror, killings, looting and destruction of property perpetrated by still faceless individuals.

The evildoers recruit innocent young people, entice them and there is confirmed involvement of some foreigners in these macabre acts.

The Government and the people of Cabo Delgado will remain firm in the fight against these evil doers until security and stability is restored.

We call on all the people of Mozambique to be ever more vigilant, reporting all suspects from every neighbourhood, residence, or workplace.

Before ending, I would like to paraphrase Pope Francis, who will soon visit us: "May this occasion inspire and give strength to all here today and throughout Mozambique so that we may build together a future of reconciliation, justice and peace for all the children of this beloved Mozambique for Peace is a daily commitment."

Compatriots!

As we said last 31 July in the National Assembly, with the safe steps we are taking today towards definitive peace, with the economy stabilising, with a growing trend in terms of the resumption of trust with development partners, with the recent Final Investment Decision for Area 1 of the Natural Gas Exploration and Liquefaction Project, in the order of US\$23 billion and the Laying of the foundation stone of the Liquefied Natural Gas Infrastructure of the Anadarko Project in Area 1, Mozambique has everything to succeed.

Today, Mozambique is a country of Hope and a Promising Horizon.

Thank you very much for your attention!