

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY MIRKO MANZONI, AMBASSADOR OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE, CHAIRMAN OF THE CONTACT GROUP AND PERSONAL ENVOY OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIGNING OF THE MAPUTO ACCORD FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION**

**Maputo City, August 6, 2019**

Excellency Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique,

Excellency Ossufo Momade, President of Renamo,

Excellencies High Dignitaries of Africa and Europe,

Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is true, it is exciting. It is a great honour to address you today as the current Swiss Ambassador to Mozambique and Chairman of the International Contact Group, the Ambassador who has accompanied this entire peace process, and also as the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres. In that capacity, I will be monitoring the full implementation of this agreement.

Today we are living a truly historic day, in which we must celebrate this definitive peace agreement between the Government of Mozambique and RENAMO.

This agreement will bring lasting peace to the Mozambican people. It will be celebrated in the region and, without any doubt, in the world, which has seen too much suffering, destruction, as a singular spark of good news, with the power to inspire hope everywhere.

I am particularly confident that this agreement will be successful because it is a peace made between Mozambicans and for Mozambicans. That is why I believe it will thrive and endure in such a way that it represents a break with the past.

The credit for today's agreement belongs to President Nyusi; to Afonso Dhlakama, the late Renamo President; and to Ossufo Momade, President of RENAMO, who succeeded and finished the task once started by Dhlakama.

The two leaders came together as brothers, even while the struggle was going on in the world arena, which inexorably led to this moment. They started off quietly at first, talking on the phone for many hours, as they developed trust. And then, face to face.

Making peace is harder than making war. It requires more courage. Both sides need to be prepared to make compromises, to lead their followers through difficult paths, which take the form of doubts by others.

It was with great, great pride that we observed these two leaders, the way in which they demonstrated the courage and strength to achieve peace, despite the obstacles and took risks, both on a personal and political level, to unite for the well-being of the Mozambican people.

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I want to pay tribute to President Nyusi, who has shown true leadership in his tireless quest for peace. He was prepared to take risks by traveling to conflict zones to meet with the other side and discuss peace.

He was prepared to overcome the doubts expressed by his supporters about the prudence of the commitments he was making. Today, that courage has paid off.

And today I want to remember Afonso Dhlakama, whom I had the opportunity to meet during this process. He used to call me his neighbour, because the Swiss Embassy is exactly next door to his office in Maputo.

We spent long hours discussing in the bush. And from the very beginning, it was clear to me that despite the history, despite the attempts on his life, despite the previous failures, he was determined to unite the Mozambican people again. His death in the bush was a tragedy. This agreement should be his epitaph.

I also want to pay tribute to President Ossufo Momade of RENAMO, who bravely showed determination and courage to bring this agreement to a successful conclusion.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate the committees on decentralisation, military affairs, and the joint technical groups, because they managed to capture the hopes and wishes of the leaders and put them into practice. They worked together in a cohesive and highly professional manner.

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

We will now enter a period of implementation of the agreement. Peace building is more difficult than peace making. Often two parties reach an agreement on paper, but then fail to put it into practice. This time, it should and will be different.

The international community must be fully engaged during the difficult period of reintegration and reconciliation. We have to honour our commitment to be present and support Mozambique in the long term. On behalf of the international community, I make this commitment today.

It has been a privilege to accompany this process as Swiss Ambassador. Switzerland has played a historic role in quietly supporting peace around the world, and it has been an honour to do so here. Switzerland will remain committed to peace implementation for as long as it takes.

It is time to look back, to celebrate the peace process, but it is also time to look forward with optimism. This is a time of great opportunities for Mozambique.

The current peace represents a stable base from which to build and the possibility to ensure the development of the whole country.

Today's signing is not an end, but the beginning of a new era for Mozambique. By building a culture of peace and dialogue, we will ensure a bright future for our children and for all Mozambicans.

One last word, for all Mozambicans, for the Mozambican child, peace is not just a signature today. Peace needs to be built day by day. Peace stays here in your heart!

Thank you very, very much!