

25 June 2005 marked the 30 th anniversary of the revolution in Mozambique, and the 10 th anniversary of peace in Mozambique. In 1975, after being a Portuguese colony for 470 years, Mozambique was abandoned by the Portuguese and declared independent on 25 June 1975. Despite the existence of several political parties and numerous requests for a referendum or elections, the Portuguese abandoned the country to the Marxist revolutionaries, Frelimo – without any referendum or opportunity for elections. Frelimo’s leader, Samora Machel, declared Mozambique “the first truly Marxist-Leninist country in Africa!”

## MARXIST MAYHEM

Samora Machel imposed a harsh Marxist “*dictatorship of the proletariat*” upon Mozambique. All educational institutions, hospitals, businesses, industries, agriculture and commerce were “*nationalised*”

”. All property was confiscated. A mass exodus of skilled Portuguese settlers resulted. Within a year of “*independence*”

” less than 20 medical doctors remained in the country. The Marxist revolution in Mozambique also brought the thriving tourism industry to an abrupt halt. Formerly, 500,000 South African and Rhodesian tourists visited Mozambique each year. After the Revolution, they were no longer welcome.

With the aid of the Soviet KGB, and the East German Stasi, Mozambique’s own security organisation, SNASP, was established. SNASP set up re-education centres called “*Centres for Mental Decolonisation*”

.” On Samora Machel’s first state visit - to the Soviet Union - he pledged to transform Mozambique into “*the first truly Marxist state in Africa*”

.” A military agreement was signed between the USSR and the Peoples’ Republic of Mozambique. Soviet, Hungarian, Bulgarian, East German, Vietnamese and Cuban military advisors flooded into Mozambique. Frelimo then closed the border with neighbouring Rhodesia, committing virtual economic suicide. The closure of the border with Rhodesia deprived Mozambique of more than US \$500 million a year of hard currency, causing even further unemployment and bringing the port of Beira to a virtual stand-still.

## ANTI-CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

From the beginning the Marxist Frelimo Government was vitriolically anti-Christian. One of the very first acts of the Frelimo terrorist campaign was the murder of a minister in August 1964. The “*freedom fighters*” chopped off a priest’s head and mockingly placed his head on the altar, then desecrated the church.

Samora Machel was involved in the ritual eating of human flesh during a witchcraft ceremony, where he pledged his soul to Satan, if he would be given control of Frelimo. During this cannibalistic episode, Machel vowed the destruction of the Church in Mozambique.

When the departing Portuguese delivered Mozambique into his blood soaked hands, the new President of the Popular Republic of Mozambique, at mass rallies around the country, in the now nationalised press and over the Frelimo-controlled radio, declared war on the Church. Machel called the priests “*parrots*” and “*monkeys*”. Machel lashed out at the Church, accusing it of being a “*remnant of colonialism*”, “*a tool of fascism*” and an “*instrument of division*”. Thousands of churches in Mozambique were closed, confiscated, “*nationalised*”, barred up, bolted, chained and padlocked, burned down or boarded up. Missionaries were expelled, some were imprisoned first. Evangelism was forbidden. Bibles were ceremonially burned and tens of thousands of Christians, including many pastors and elders, were shipped off to concentration camps – most were never seen again.

At least 300,000 people were incarcerated in re-education camps and 75,000 publicly executed as “*reactionaries*”, “*black marketeers*”, and “*counter-revolutionaries*”. Over 8,000 church buildings were confiscated or destroyed.

## MOTORBIKE MISSION

From 1982, I made regular mission trips into Marxist Mozambique, often travelling by off-road motorbike, by dug-out canoe and by foot through the war-ravaged country side. In “*The Mozambique Report*

” and “

*In the Killing Fields of Mozambique*

” I documented walking past burned out villages, burning crops, countless destroyed churches and unburied corpses. I interviewed hundreds of survivors of Frelimo massacres, and published their testimonies worldwide. These reports documented the hostility against Christianity from the

Frelimo government.

## HOSTILITY TO CHRISTIANITY

In Milanji district, Zambezia Province, a pastor testified: “*The Frelimo were very angry because we had children in the church. ‘You know that children may not be in church – we want all the children for Frelimo. The old people can be Christians, but the young must be Marxists!’ The pastor testified that they slit the throat of their choir-leader, chopped up their church secretary with a machete, crippled another brother and imprisoned the pastor. The Frelimo assailants declared: ‘Why are you praying? We never liberated Mozambique by prayer – but by guns!’*”

One pastor’s son from the Posto Shire district, in Zambezia Province, testified how he was forced into the Frelimo army in 1980 and how no Bibles or worship was allowed in the FPLM.

Christians in Chemba District, Zambezia Province, testified how Frelimo persecuted the Church very severely, declaring: “*‘Anyone we find worshiping God is an enemy of the people.’ They would arrest or kill anyone who they found praying and preaching.*”

A pastor in Niassa Province testified how, in June 1986, an Apostolic Faith Mission minister was killed for preaching the Gospel. Frelimo told him: “*You should obey us - forget about Christ.*” When the pastor answered: “*I cannot forget about Him for He is the living Christ*”, Frelimo said: “*Then you must pray, for we will most certainly kill you.*” He knelt and prayed and was then shot and killed by the communists.

A pastor at Murumbara District, Zambezia Province, testified: “*In August 1983, Frelimo soldiers stopped our church service and gathered all the people together in the centre of Denguma village. Finding many Bibles, they asked: ‘Where did you get these books from?’ We told them: ‘Brothers from Malawi gave them to us.’ ‘Malawi is a capitalist country!’ screamed the Frelimo. ‘This shows that you are the enemy!’ Then they took the Bibles and asked if we believed the Bible. Many people nodded. ‘Then if this is the Bread of Life – eat it.’ The communists then forced Bibles into our mouths, demanding that we chew and swallow the pages. ‘If you do not eat the Bibles then you can die,’ they threatened. When everyone refused to commit this blasphemy, the communists tore the Bibles up and burned them. ... They burned down our*

*church and started shooting into all of us, killing many – over 50 of us died that day. Some of us escaped into the river... The whole village was destroyed. There are now many widows and orphans...*

A pastor in Zambezia Province testified that: *“Frelimo came and burned our church and shot many Christians. Many drowned in the river while trying to escape. All the Bibles were taken by Frelimo and burned. Then the whole village was burned down. ... Frelimo many times stopped our worship services, beating many people. Why are you preaching the Gospel? You are lying to the people. You are the enemy. ... They shot Rev. Mose in front of us all and ordered us not to preach the Gospel anymore. Rev. Mose has left a widow and four children. ...*

Pastors in Posto Shire District, Zambezia Province, testified that: *“In February, Frelimo came into our church and stopped the service: ‘Your God - we have killed Him in Maputo, there is no more God – so why do you worship Him?’ Then they beat us, burned our Bibles, stole our clothes and forbade us to gather for worship...*

## **SERVING THE SUFFERING**

I was shown the scars of bayonet and bullet wounds of several church leaders. I listened day after day to testimonies of Christians tortured, shot or hacked to death, of churches destroyed and Bibles burned. I comforted the widows and orphans of Christians martyred for their faith. I shared the sorrow of families who related how their sons or daughters, even as young as 12 years old, had been forcibly taken away by Frelimo for the FPLM (the Marxist army).

In Zambezia and Tete Provinces, in the north of Mozambique, I found the people in the rural areas thin and hungry. Many were eating insects, roots and boiled grass. Many were malnourished and sick. There were vastly more women than men: *“Frelimo has killed most of our men.*” There were far more children than adults and almost no teenagers or men in their twenties.

During one memorable mission trip in July 1986, I only saw burned down villages, burned out fields and unburied corpses. Throughout the districts I covered, I never saw a single domestic or livestock animal. The Mozambiqueans I saw had no shoes, most were dressed in rags, sacks, animal skins and clothes made from the bark of trees. One of the most enduring memories to

me was of an old pastor who had walked 5 days – 150 km's – through the bush in order to meet me and plead for a Bible. By God's grace I could send him back to his village with 3 Bibles in his language. He rejoiced: "*This is the greatest gift anyone could ever ask for – the Word of God – in my own language!*"

Some of my research and the sworn eyewitness testimonies which I documented during those missions to Mozambique make up the book: **In the Killing Fields of Mozambique.**

### **A TIME TO REMEMBER**

This year is a time to remember those many courageous Christians who died for their faith during two decades of persecution and war against God. However, it is not only the 30 th anniversary of the revolution, but the 10 th anniversary of the end of the civil war and the dramatic changes that have followed since.

In 1995, after 3 decades of civil war, first against the Portuguese, and then against its own people, Mozambique was a shattered nation. *Operation World* notes that in 1995 Mozambique was reckoned to be the world's poorest nation. At the height of the war in 1992, more than 40% of the population were refugees, including 4 million internally displaced and 1.8 million extra refugees in neighbouring countries. Deaths from the civil war were estimated at more than 1 million.

### **TRANSFORMATIONS IN ANSWER TO PRAYER**

However, by God's grace, and in answer to prayer and international pressure, the Frelimo Government renounced Marxism, opened up the economy and accepted a multi-party democracy. Church buildings or lands were returned to the congregations that they had been confiscated from, firearms that had been confiscated were returned to those still alive, the borders were opened, missionaries were welcomed into the country for the first time in its history, and religious freedom was announced.

While conditions in most of the country are still often harsh, travel difficult, disease common and the cities violent, Mozambique is wide open to the Gospel and spiritually hungry.

### **MISSIONARY SUCCESS**

When I made my first mission trip into Mozambique, Operation World declared it the least evangelised country in the Southern Hemisphere, with less than one Bible for every thousand people. At independence in 1975, Evangelicals were 3.7% of the population. Today, over 6million Mozambiquans are members of a Protestant, Evangelical or Independent Church (out of a population of 20 million). Mozambique now has religious freedom for the first time in its history. In the last 10 years the number of Evangelicals in Mozambique has literally doubled.

## **MISSIONARY CHALLENGE**

However, Mozambique is still a pioneer mission field and many more missionaries are still needed for this task. The greatest need is for all levels of leadership training, youth and children's work, translation work and medical missions. Most of the population are still illiterate, there is a lack of Scriptures in numerous of the indigenous languages. There is much syncretism with animism, and a widespread lack of understanding of Biblical repentance, faith and the new birth. There are many conversions, but much less disciples. Discipleship and leadership training remain the greatest spiritual needs in Mozambique.

Two decades of Marxist indoctrination created a society that is morally bankrupt and where life is cheap, violent and short.

## **PRAY FOR THE UNREACHED PEOPLES**

Pray in particular for the Makuwa who are mostly Muslim, and for the Makonde who are mostly animist and partly Muslim, and for the Yao of Niassa Province which are 96% Muslim. These mostly unreached people still need to be thoroughly evangelised.

## **LEARN MORE ABOUT THE INCREDIBLE STORY OF MOZAMBIQUE**

To understand the incredible true story of Mozambique, this once Catholic country, which became communist, and is on its way to becoming converted to Christ, obtain and read "[In The Killing Fields of Mozambique](#)

" (100 pages with 42 pictures and maps) from Frontline Fellowship, P.O. Box 74, Newlands, 7725, Cape Town, South Africa, or email

[admin@christianlibertybooks.co.za](mailto:admin@christianlibertybooks.co.za)

(In the USA you can phone: 1-888-918-4100)

[In The Killing Fields of Mozambique](#) includes the incredible, shocking, true stories of the atrocities committed under communism, and the inspiring testimonies of courageous Christians who faced the cruelty and carnage. This book includes the dramatic story of the capture and prison experience of a Frontline mission team in Mozambique. The book also includes chapters on Witchcraft, Media Disinformation, the Man-made Famine and Abuse of Foreign Aid, Some Surprising and Little Known Facts about Mozambique, and other historical insights.

## A TRAINING GROUND

It was traumatic to travel and minister in the killing fields of Mozambique during those terrible years of persecution, but it was in the killing fields of Mozambique that the mission of Frontline Fellowship was truly formed. God used our missions to Mozambique as the training ground which forced us to spend much time praying the Psalms, and studying the Scriptures to find answers to the compelling questions which assailed us:

Why do bad things happen to good people?

How did communism come to take over in Mozambique?

How can we share God's love with people who have suffered so much cruelty and violence?

What constitutes legitimate government?

What can we learn from the persecuted Church?

These and so many other difficult and disturbing questions shook me to the core in the 1980's and forced me to re-evaluate my faith, my doctrine and our missionary strategy.

If you have never read [In The Killing Fields of Mozambique](#), this 30 th anniversary of the revolution, and 10 th anniversary of peace, in Mozambique provides a good occasion to do so.

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