

1.SUMMARY: After decades of conflict and bloodshed, sixteen years of civil war and twenty-seven months of negotiations, the divine light of peace is breaking through for Mozambique. Thanks to those blessed Peacemakers, the Community of Sant'Egidio, it appears that the warring factions in Mozambique have reached an agreement in Rome to end the civil strife that has plagued Mozambique since its independence.

Sant'Egidio has deftly used its independent status, ties to both sides of the conflict and role as aid provider in the war-torn country to brook compromise between Mozambique's ruling party, the Frente da Libertação da Mocambique [Frelimo] and rebel movement, the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana [Renamo]. These immense efforts have been borne by Prof. Andrea Riccardi, the president and founding member of Sant'Egidio and Don Matteo Zuppi, a priest and member. Mozambique's Archbishop of Beira, Don Jaime Gonçalves and Italian Parliamentarian Mario Raffaeli have also been involved.

There are a number of factors and recent developments that helped spur this propitious outcome. Given the extraordinary role that a nongovernmental body has played in mediating an intergovernmental agreement, this cable will examine the confluence of events that led to Sant'Egidio's success in brokering peace and the implications for transnational diplomacy and global security.

2.MOZAMBIQUE: The Mozambique civil war began shortly after the nation received its independence from Portugal in 1975. The Marxist Frelimo came to power as Portugal withdrew from its colonial possession. Rhodesian military intelligence helped establish Renamo as an insurgency movement to counter the Frelimo government. With the fall of the white-minority regime in Rhodesia, the South African government stepped in to

financially, militarily and logistically support Renamo against Frelimo. The ensuing conflict between the Frelimo government and Renamo insurgency caused utter devastation on Mozambique, with nearly 1 million people killed, 1 million refugees in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Malawi and another 2 million internally displaced Mozambicans.

3.SANT'EGIDIO: Established in 1968 by a group of students, and drawing its name from the church that now serves as its headquarters, Sant'Egidio first began its work in the poorest neighborhoods of Rome. The volunteer community branched out its services to include other communities of the Lord's most fragile and dispossessed. It also expanded its scope, taking on humanitarian aid projects in several European countries as well as Latin America and Africa. Although a Catholic movement and lay association with links to the Church, Sant'Egidio remains independent of both our body [Holy See] and the Italian government, and is solely accountable to its membership; this allows the organization more leeway to deviate from our more traditional outlook and policies.

Sant'Egidio first became involved in Mozambique affairs in 1976 through its contacts with Don Jaime Gonçalves, then a young Mozambican priest studying in Rome. Gonçalves, who was named archbishop of Beira the following year, sought assistance from Sant'Egidio as the Frelimo government confiscated church property, closed church schools and institutions and curtailed of religious freedoms. Sant'Egidio worked to create dialogue between the leadership of the Italian Communist party and Frelimo to ease religious restrictions. The Community continued to serve as intermediaries between the Vatican and local Catholic leaders in Mozambique with the Frelimo government. In addition, Sant'Egidio opened lines of communication with Renamo. Initially, this contact

was in the pursuit of the release of missionaries kidnapped by the insurgent group, later in facilitating the visit of a Mozambican bishop to the Renamo base in Gorongosa and the visit of Renamo's leader Alfonso Dhlakama to Italy in 1988.

As war and famine caused humanitarian crises in Mozambique during the 1980s, Sant'Egidio worked to provide Mozambique with thousands of tons of humanitarian aid, as well as to publicize Mozambique's plight in Europe. Sant'Egidio also set up humanitarian services to help orphans, widows and other groups affected by the civil war. This work gave Sant'Egidio a "soft power" credibility in the Mozambique dynamic and would prove crucial in creating standing for its later role in conflict mediation. As the task of providing aid became more daunting in the strife-filled landscape, and as changes in regional and international affairs made "polylateralism" a reality, Sant'Egidio began moving towards a role in conflict mediation.

4.EXTERNAL ACTORS- USSR & USA: Despite providing aid and assistance to Frelimo, Soviet support for the group was never as extensive as that for the M.P.L.A. in Angola, and did not include the provision of Cuban troops like the Angolan client received. Meanwhile, the Renamo never received the substantial backing from the United States like the Unita rebels in Angola. Although Renamo was allowed to open an office in Washington, and gained support from a number of conservative American foundations, think tanks and figures like Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick, it never reached the client status of other third-world rebel movements such as the Afghan *Mujahadeen* or Nicaraguan *Contras*. American conservative congressional and foundational support decreased considerably following reports of Renamo atrocities (1987-1988). Neither Moscow nor Washington were as actively involved in

Mozambique as in other conflict areas, and the war between Frelimo and Renamo was not seen as crucial in the superpower chess match. It was this inattention by the major powers that would prove crucial for an NGO like Sant'Egidio to play a rare role in the "high politics" realm of peacemaking.

SOUTH AFRICA & ZIMBABWE: Although Pretoria had significantly backed Renamo, the 1984 Nkomati Pact between South Africa and Mozambique served to lessen its overt involvement, while covert assistance continued. Moreover, with a change in South African leadership and the rise of F.W. de Klerk, Pretoria's support for Renamo waned. As for Zimbabwe, the cost for stationing 10,000 troops in Mozambique for defense of the Beira corridor was becoming a burden on its own weakening economy, and its support for Frelimo weakened.

5. SANT'EGIDIO'S EFFORTS- Sant'Egidio's efforts are a clear indication that we have entered a new global dynamic based on the concept of "polylateralism," in which non-state entities are playing an increasingly active role in global affairs. The role of a non-state actor playing a key role in "high politics" burnishes the notion of a changing polylateral dynamic. Sant'Egidio was able to exercise roles that make NGOs successful actors in global civil society such as agenda setting by bringing attention to the plight of Mozambique, conferring legitimacy on the mediation process and most crucially, negotiating outcomes; we will wait to see how implementing solutions component will fair.

In terms of negotiating outcomes, multiple states had attempted to mediate the conflict, but all had failed due to perceived favoritism to a particular side; into the void stepped Sant'Egidio, whose contacts with both sides of the conflict through its extensive

record of humanitarian assistance and intermediary work created a perception that Sant'Egidio was a neutral mediator. Sant'Egidio took advantage of its perceived neutrality to serve as a bridge for dialogue between the warring parties. As previously mentioned, Sant'Egidio is independent from both our body and the Italian government, and this independence helped reinforce the Community's perceived neutrality by both sides. As Sant'Egidio undertook the mediation process, it hosted the negotiations for the warring parties dispute in a neutral country—Italy, at a neutral venue—its headquarters in Rome.

Sant'Egidio was willing to work slowly, patiently and quietly to mediate through the distrust and enmity that both sides held. Sant'Egidio painstakingly hosted Renamo and Frelimo negotiators for twelve negotiation sessions over 27 months. Throughout the negotiations, the peacemakers chose to discreetly push the sides together rather than any sort of public admonishment; this style of quiet diplomacy is akin to the style of another transnational peacemaker, the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Sant'Egidio worked closely with a variety of actors including Southern African nation, Europe and the US- as well as the UN and our own institution, to enhance its credibility as peace negotiators, given its limited inexperience in this role. Sant'Egidio worked to create “synergies” by combining the “institutional” and the “informal” sides of governmental and non-governmental peacemaking.

In the words of James 3:17-18: “And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” This is just the beginning to a long path that will be fraught with difficulties, let us rejoice in the holy efforts and pains of Sant'Egidio and the example they have shown, as we pray for the peace of Mozambique. [Paul] Rockower