

CHAIRPERSON: If you would call the next witness Ms Terreblanche?

MS TERREBLANCHE: Yes. We'd like to call Mr Alvero Recio. And yes, Mr Levine will represent him.

MR RECIO:June '83 President Samora Machel through Mr Fernando Honwana and Joa Latao asked me to help with the peace process. I had been a member of Renamo for several years, up to '80. From if I'm correct, '76 - '80. My work at Renamo I was the official responsible for the propaganda and information and against information. And in '80 when President Mugabe took over of Zimbabwe, the Renamo people had to get practically all inside Mozambique and a few of them, they came to South Africa to try to get support from the South African authorities.

The secretary general for Renamo at the time stayed in my house for eight months and every day he used to go to Pretoria by the train at 6 a.m. and he comes at night, and we used to brief about what had happened. He tried to impress the South African military intelligence to get support for Renamo.

MS TERREBLANCHE: You just tell us what his name was...
[intervention]

MR RECIO: ~~Anyway, after eight months, after eight months he~~
came one day with a contract. And this contract put Renamo basically on the ends of the South African military intelligence. And of course I couldn't agree with that. Because we were a free

movement representing the interest of the people of Mozambique in their struggles against a government that was not a democratic government at the time.

How we then sidelined with a foreign power, which was South Africa; although a friendly one, they should not take over Renamo so simply like that. And I didn't agree of course, and in that next day he went out of my house and I resigned from Renamo.

I resigned from Renamo because really I couldn't be subject to the South African military intelligence. And my life at the time would be at stake.

But I spoke to the head of the military intelligence at the time, Inau Fuaz, because he wants me to go there and I said I'll meet you halfway. And we meet halfway. And I explain, and I ask him, could you do such a thing, betraying your country? Because at the time and like today I feel to be a Mozambican. I live a long time there; I love my country and my people there, and that's it.

Then on the three years after that I tried to create a lobby in South Africa helping the Portuguese people to get a better connection with the government, to be more protected. Because we were a bit pushed apart. And we create a lobby. And we have been very successful on that.

And I met lots of MP's here, and even ministers. And special Mr Alex van Breda who was the chief whip of the National Party at the time. And when I've been here in South Africa with Fernando Honwana, when we were discussing business - because they came here with delegation, they want to be a big business with me - we've been about 20 days talking....

MS TERREBLANCHE: Excuse me. Can you just give us an indication of what year that was?

MR RECIO: '83. 6 June '83. So during the time he was here, he allow me to understand in a certain way, vague way although, that President Samora Machel would like to stand more favourably with South Africa in a sort of alignment, social, political and economical. That was I understand very important information that I got. And through Mr Alex van Breda I submit this idea to President PW Botha.

And President PW Botha was very, very happy with that and give me all the green light and support to go through business and all that. But of course I thought that peace and the understanding, better relations between the two people was more important than business, so I never did any business in

Mozambique.

And we pursued since then, therefore with the green light from President PW Botha given to me through Mr Alex van Breda, that I should contact regular contacts with the

Mozambique authorities in order to create a better understanding between Mozambique and South Africa, and in the same way because I knew that was the military traditions that had Renamo, to try to get the peace agreement.

We take 10 years and I had a fairly bad ordeal to keep myself on this business because I had big problems with for example Min Pik Botha. We do things and do things and we never reach a compromise. And I believe that we didn't reach a compromise because I understood - and in a certain way I was told that South Africa need more time before make the peace with Mozambique, need more time to get a level of capacity to sit with the ANC and to talk for the future.

We had developments then after that with Angola, and it came clear that Angola and South Africa was in the same pattern.

In Angola you need an (indistinct) and should sit down at the table for peace negotiations and elections for democratic elections should be issued. Same should happen in South Africa.

But it was interesting, and that's why I am here. That was with Mr Craig Williamson, myself and President Dos Santos that firstly talk about the freedom of the exiled President Nelson Mandela. This was '88. And well...

MS PATTA: Maybe just to come in there. So you were the go-between between South Africa and Mozambique in a sense, trying to develop relations...

MR RECIO: I will not say the go-between. I was a very simple and humble man that tried to open the doors, and when the doors were opened, then the authorities should deal with the matter. I just had help really.

MS PATTA: But in fact the mission failed, because the Nkomathi accord was signed but... [intervention]

MR RECIO: No, excuse me... [intervention]

MS PATTA: As Mr Williamson himself gave evidence... [intervention]

MR RECIO: Is... [intervention]

MS PATTA: Sorry, let me just finish the question: as Mr Williamson himself gave evidence, it was merely a piece of paper that needed to be put into practice after 1984.

MR RECIO: Excuse me.

MS PATTA: And in fact South Africa never really had any intention of upholding the Nkomathi accord.

MR RECIO: Can I - yes my dear, thank you. What I have to say is this: if you keep my papers you can see that when Mr Fernando Honwana came here in the name of President Machel came here, they come to talk about business. I should have a very important business with them.

But the political matter was more important. And we stopped any negotiations about that business with Sasimo. And what happened was this: I had to tell Bank of Lisbon MD that we

were in a much better situation to first sort out the political issues and then we can go in business. And you heard the bank was already involved with other interests like (indistinct) Bank also.

And they didn't appreciate very much the idea. But when Dr Durvo Marx knew from me that was some peace initiatives and I spoke to him like I could speak to a priest - you understand, you speak to a banker like I speak to a priest - he make the best of my words to go to Portugal and revealed his peace initiatives to very high-rank government people there. Which fly to United States and put Reagan on par and Reagan sent a letter to Machel and everything then start - that South Africa was pushed to this agreement which come from outside.

And then the accord of Nkomathi, you know was the result of this but not the result - so was become as an outside interference in local business. So indeed, it take more than a year to me to be again involved on the peace negotiations, confidential peace negotiations between South Africa, Renamo and Frelimo.

MS TERREBLANCHE: So you are saying that in fact the death of President Machel caused your negotiations to break down?

~~MR RECIO: No, no. What I say is this: President Machel was~~
 very pleased that the United States and the Portuguese government be supporting him to get the peace with South Africa.
 But what I realise is this: South Africa didn't like the idea. And

the South African, one side co-operated tremendously, but nothing comes out. Renamo was even more powerful. Renamo was doing even worse things in the terrain.

So Samora Machel was put in his country in a very bad position. Because he fought with the agreement of the Nkomathi accord, he will stop Renamo and whatever. But that didn't happen. So he was put at a lot of strain.

That's when for the second time I get involved with the peace negotiations. But not really as a representative of anybody.

I was the neutral person. I was the person that both sides could trust and to put them together and to try to break the stones and to make progress.

For me, during this period I met Latao and I met Fernando Honwana. I become very friendly with Fernando Honwana because he was an extraordinary person. We become very close friends. And I must say that I cry - not you when one cry, cry - I cry very much when I knew about his death.

But I was very sorry, to be frank with you, I was very sorry that Samora Machel die. And I disinterest myself basically after that. Because that was a disgrace.

~~MS PATTA: Can you shed any light on the death of Samora~~

Machel? Do you believe it was an accident?

MR RECIO: I have a lot of responsibility on that. Because I make the things happen in a way that President Machel will make

a full agreement with South Africa. And it was months after that he was killed. He had - in a certain way he had promised that he will clean his cabinet, his party from the outlanders to get a position where he could have a realistic and positive politic in the region with the support and with the blessing from South Africa.

And that create the path to his disaster. But I cannot say that the accident was provoked by his enemies, do you understand, or was a pure accident. That I don't know. I cannot understand that South Africa could send this aircraft down, killing President Machel when President Machel was already in very good relations with South Africa.

And I got all that in my documents and through it, if you read you can understand.

MS PATTA: No, I read through them, I did - interestingly the documents that we were given stop at August 1985, and in fact from August 1985 to October 1986 relations between South African and Mozambique deteriorated rapidly.

MR RECIO: But let me to explain. As I said, I've never been the negotiator. I opened the doors. The last thing I did was that Fernando Honwana came to South Africa to put the government

~~of South Africa, his connections here, informing what was the~~
 position of Samora Machel. And the position of Samora Machel if you read a document, one of the last documents before his death, was that South Africa was very pleased with his initiatives.

And of course the moment I put them together, then I walk out always like I did in all the process.

MR MAGADHLA: Are you saying that after the Nkomathi accord, or after you had brought them together; you had opened the doors, the relations between President Machel or Mozambique and South Africa were very good? You've used the word "very good".

MR RECIO: What I say is this: I understand before accord of Nkomathi - because accord of Nkomathi was in '84. In '83 Samora Machel send some (indistinct) to talk to me to make business. On the end it becomes to make peace and agreement with South Africa and through South Africa to get influence of Renamo.

We did that with very good success. But then the agreement of Nkomathi stop at my involvement. And only near one year later, because the Nkomathi accord was not giving any success, I was again asked to be involved in the process through the Mozambique people. And I've been.

And in '85 Samora Machel was ready to co-operate in the vision with South Africa. Just before he die.

~~MR MAGADHLA: Are you saying therefore that it would be~~
highly unlikely for him to have been killed by South Africa or through South African influence because there had been this

relationship, there had been this agreement to normalise relations?

MR RECIO: Yes. That was sincerely my opinion Sir.

MR MAGADHLA: Are you aware of South Africa's position or allegations that Frelimo was threatening, or Machel's government was threatening Malawi because Malawi harboured Renamo?

MR RECIO: I did understand that Sir, yes. I did understand that relations with Mozambique and Malawi had become very apart because of that, yes Sir. And I understood that some support to Renamo was passing through Malawi, yes.

MR MAGADHLA: Are you aware then that just before President Machel's death he had been to Zambia where the question of Malawi's collaboration with the South African government was the main topic of their discussions?

MR RECIO: That's true Sir. I understand just on the time basically where President Machel die in the crash, that was negotiations in Zambia, yes. That came on the newspapers, all over.

MR MAGADHLA: Not negotiations, but the fact that most of the African states, friends of Frelimo, friends of Mozambique ~~were also on the side of Machel in their condemnation on the~~ involvement of Malawi with Renamo?

MR RECIO: Malawi. Yes, I could understand that is true Sir.

MR MAGADHLA: And you also know that Renamo's main supporters and main facilitators were South Africa?

MR RECIO: Yes. That's why I resigned Sir.

MR MAGADHLA: Even more than Malawi. They only sought a base in Malawi. But the whole facilitation came from South Africa.

MR RECIO: Well that on the field I don't know really, because my relations with... [intervention]

MR MAGADHLA: What I'm saying - I mean what I'm saying is that if there were those developments, those things, I fail to understand why you would be saying - I'm not saying that the suspicion and the rumours and whatever that flies around to say that South Africa was involved, that I'm convinced that South Africa was involved. But I'm saying how does your view reconcile with the fact that if you are saying that there had been these good relations that had been developed, that causes you to think that the South Africans could not have been involved in the crash where President Machel was killed.

MR RECIO: Sir, I did really help the relations between Maputo and Pretoria, I did help. And the relations had been up to a point

~~very good. And when they stay very good, I had to leave because~~

I had opened the doors for that. Fernando Honwana start coming to South Africa and discuss with South Africa how the things

should change in Mozambique and in what way in order to have this reconciliation between the two countries.

MR MAGADHLA: How did you regard these relations to be very good when Renamo was still in the hands of South Africa?

MR RECIO: Apparently Renamo play a very independent role, says they were independent. And therefore South Africa everybody knew and Mozambique knew that South Africa got a hand on Renamo. And by making the peace with South Africa you have a better understanding, a better relationship. And President Samora Machel had a feeling that... [intervention]

MR MAGADHLA: But don't you realise that that relationship or that... [intervention]

MR RECIO: But it never did fall secret Sir.

MR MAGADHLA: Was not genuine? That was not genuine?

MR RECIO: Excuse me Sir. What I know is what I deal with. What I deal with was realism, secret realism. What President Machel had done, it's no - if you believe in me and you believe in what I write at the time Samora Machel can support South Africa and ask South Africa to support him against Renamo to have a better understanding. To have a resolution democratically for

~~Mozambique. That's what President Machel was expecting. And~~
all this was secret with South Africa. I mean why...
[intervention]

MR MAGADHLA: How would you respond if there was a feeling therefore or a suggestion, that in fact you were being used to deceive President Machel, that if he agreed with what South Africa was suggesting, then all hostilities would be over. And yet the hostilities were not over and you knew that they still helped Renamo, but you went and spoke or had this dialogue with him which would lead him to accepting South Africa's suggestions.

And you do say that indeed, after that everybody was happy. And yet you know that Renamo was still there.

MR RECIO: Excuse me Sir, you didn't listen to me when I told this assembly...

MR MAGADHLA: Yes.

MR RECIO: That I had left Renamo because South Africa was having a strong hold over Renamo. And President Machel choose me exactly because of that because I am honest person.

MR MAGADHLA: Okay. Sorry, I wasn't here when you were still in... [intervention]

MR RECIO: Oh yes, I'm sorry.

MR MAGADHLA: I came in late... [intervention]

MR RECIO: But you should resist this.

~~MR MAGADHLA: Pardon?~~

MR RECIO: And if you read through my papers that is very clear that I knew very well that South Africa was supporting Renamo. And that's why I walk out. Not because of the support,

because they control it. But you can say the same with Unita for example. And after all these years since '93, President - I say this government had allowed that Unita played war games in Angola.

MR MAGADHLA: So if there was... [intervention]

MR RECIO: When Angolan President Dos Santos had supported ANC for so long time. So... [intervention]

MR MAGADHLA: So if even in your opinion they were so dishonest therefore that in fact you had... [intervention]

MR RECIO: Politics are... [intervention]

MR MAGADHLA: You had even to leave them because of that dishonesty.

MR RECIO: Yes.

MR MAGADHLA: How would it happen that if there is this all-round suspicion that they were involved in that crash, that you feel really that they would not have been involved?

MR RECIO: No. Sir, I cannot comment on that because I don't have nothing to do with that, you understand? The problem is this: in South Africa you had people in the government that liked the peace and economic development in the region and I knew people that go against it. For example, President De Klerk that everybody thinks he was a masterpiece [intervention]

MR MAGADHLA: Ja, that's a good example, ja.

MR RECIO: Do you understand?

MR MAGADHLA: Yes.

MR RECIO: You know, he make a mock of the Angola peace agreements and everything. And I can prove it; I've got all this documents to prove it. And he receive the Nobel Prize.

MR MAGADHLA: In other words you accept that...
[intervention]

MR RECIO: Politics are... [intervention]

MR MAGADHLA: In fact you were fooled by these people, for them to make you think that they were genuine in fact, and now you know they were not genuine.

MR RECIO: What I can say is this: in my opinion Mozambique people and President Samora Machel had been more genuine, and Dos Santos had been more genuine than what happened with the government of South Africa. But let me to say here this: the government of South Africa apparently needs time to resolve internal problems to get in the table with the ANC. And who suffered really was Mozambique and Angola. This is what is my belief, Sir.

MR MAGADHLA: There has been talk that just before Machel was killed, or before he died there were several attacks on his palaces in Mozambique. Do you know anything about that?

MR RECIO: No, Sir.

MR MAGADHLA: Are you saying you don't know anything about it, or are you saying it did not happen?

MR RECIO: I don't know nothing about it, or the Mozambique people have told me nothing about it.

MR MAGADHLA: There's something that says that - you know Julius Nyerere Avenue in Mozambique?

MR RECIO: I know that... [intervention]

MR MAGADHLA: Near Polana Hotel?

MR RECIO: Oh yes, I know. Yes Sir?

MR MAGADHLA: Now this says that in 1983 or '84 there was a passing car that fired shots at the gates of the palace. Did you ever hear anything about that?

MR RECIO: No. No Sir. Well, you know I start talking to Fernando Honwana as I said on June '93 (sic) and since then until he died he never told me nothing about that. June '83 yes. Oh no, in '83, sorry.

MR MAGADHLA: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: Any further questions?

MS TERREBLANCHE: Not now Mr Chair.

CHAIRPERSON: Can the witness now be released?

MS PATTA: I think so. Ja, I think.

CHAIRPERSON: Well, thank you very much Mr Recio. And...

~~MR RECIO: Thank you Sir. And I would like if you permit me,~~
to say this: I was shocked with the death of President Machel. I start in the beginning when he went to Mozambique to dislike him in a certain way. When I was in Renamo which should be in '87

maybe, was in the first visit of President Machel to Swaziland where he was going to stay at the Chinese Hotel there...

CHAIRPERSON: In 1987 he was already dead.

MR RECIO: No, I mean 1977, I'm sorry. First time he went to Swaziland.

CHAIRPERSON: I see.

MR RECIO: He went to stay with his committee in the Chinese Hotel. In that day that he was going there, I receive a phone call from Harare today, from Christina which was the secretary from Renamo, asking... [intervention]

CHAIRPERSON: Orlando.

MR RECIO: Orlando Christina. He asked me to go to Swaziland immediately. Because at a certain place on the hill in front of the hotel I should find four men; one I knew. And he told me that they were going to assassinate Samora Machel. And I should go there and stop it. But I said how can I (indistinct). And he said tell them that if they do that, their names will appear tonight on the program of Free Africa.

I went there with then my wife, we flash to Swaziland like mad. And I knew that I could be killed by them, but I could stop

~~them before they could kill President Machel. And this was~~

Renamo actions, because we believed that we were not during a war or whatever, to kill presidents and politicians.

When we do the war, we thought we were doing the war to achieve the peace and negotiations. We had always believed in that. And because of that I am very proud to have saved the life of - eventually - of President Machel at that time. When I was still the enemy of President Machel.

Afterwards through Fernando Honwana I become very interested about President Machel and I start liking him very much. He was an extraordinary man. He was a simple man, but extraordinary man. He was really a leader. And I am very proud to have tried to help to make the peace at the time.

Was not against anybody; was really because - and I allowed to be involved in these negotiations because I was one of the second men that thought about to create Renamo. And I had a big responsibility, because after I left we lose control, do you understand? And sometimes I couldn't even sleep properly because of all these killings in Mozambique which was absolutely incredible.

So in name of peace I have may been used as you said. But who aren't? But I did that with the - to try to achieve peace because I love my country. And I also had loved South Africa and I respect South Africa like I respect Angola and love Angola.

So I've been 10 years making my time free to support and to go anywhere, risking my life whatever, just to help. My arch

enemy here was Min Pik Botha per example. And I don't know how I am still alive. But I had some people that keep me alive.

CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MR RECIO: One of those men had been Craig Williamson.

CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MR RECIO: And the MP Koos van der Merwe for example. Because they want to kill me. I don't know why.

CHAIRPERSON: Talking about that - it may not be part of this inquiry - do you have any views as to why Orlando Christina was murdered?

MR RECIO: Yes, I've got strong views. And I don't know why this Commission never tried to inquire why he's dead.

CHAIRPERSON: No, we have been inquiring. That's why I'm asking the question.

MR RECIO: All right. Are you? Because Orlando Christina was a fantastic person, an extreme person. In the northern of Mozambique the natives there, the people there call him the Son of God. He was a very good man. He was a man that don't care about money, but he got a very big problem. He was eager of power. The politics transform him. And then was not anymore

~~Renamo, was himself.~~

And when he did the agreement with South Africa that he will comply with the agreement, a week before he died, he was assassinated, he was as I said the week before he had intended to

go out of the country and to go to the States, supported by the Germans and all this, to make a separate peace with Frelimo. And he was killed because of that, by the South African operatives.

CHAIRPERSON: I see.

MR RECIO: And I'm very sorry of that. Because if I had been advised, I could maybe have helped the situation positively in some way. I told him, when you make an agreement you have to respect it. You understand?

CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MR RECIO: That's why I didn't make the agreement.

CHAIRPERSON: Well, thank you very much. As I say Mr Recio...

MR RECIO: Thank you Sir.

CHAIRPERSON: I would hope that your testimony has been able to shed some light on this tragedy.

MR RECIO: And again Sir, I'm very sorry for the assassination or the disaster of President Samora Machel which I have in great esteem and consideration and special for the killing of my good friend Fernando Honwana. I'm really very sorry.

CHAIRPERSON: Indeed. Indeed. Well, you are excused. And

~~I'm sure Mr Levine, that also marks the end of your appearance~~
today.

MR LEVINE: It does Mr Commissioner. May I merely reiterate that both of my clients are happy to assist in any manner whatsoever, and they can be reached through me.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much.

MR LEVINE: Thank you Mr Commissioner, for hearing us as quickly as you did. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Thank you.

MS TERREBLANCHE: Thank you very much for all your trouble. And we might inquire with you about the documents in terms of Angola at another stage.

MR RECIO: Sir, I had always respected this confidential documents that I kept with - I never publish nothing, I never talk about it to nobody, but I could not ask now President Machel and Fernando Honwana if I could show this to you. I asked General Coetzee to ask President PW Botha if I could present, and they said you can present whatever you - you know, the true are and speak about the truth. I also would like to mention that to you.

And I am very humble and I don't like publicity about these things. But you are in a very honourable position trying to get the true about these facts that have been happening in the past

~~and I am absolutely with you to procure the true. And I will be~~

absolutely - I will travel here anytime by my cost, not any other people's cost, to travel if you need me to any other thing.

Do you want me to deliver the Angolan copies? I would like first if you don't mind, to ask President Dos Santos if I can do that.

MS TERREBLANCHE: No, certainly. We will give you notice.

Thank you very much once again for all your trouble.

MR RECIO: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: All right.

WITNESS IS EXCUSED

