



# EDUCATION IN THE REVOLUTION

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Comrade delegates to the 2nd Conference of the Department of Education and Culture,

We are happy to take part in this 2nd Conference of the Department of Education and Culture because Culture and Education are fundamental problems of our people on which the creation of a new mentality ultimately depends. We also believe that meeting and discussing our work and methods is the most reliable way of guiding our action.

This Conference is starting at a time when we are celebrating the most important date in our history. The fact that this Conference is taking place is a result of our struggle, of the fierce struggle against colonialism, and the tough and tricky struggle against reactionary forces among us. It is a victory of the many who have sacrificed their lives to drive out the Portuguese colonialists and to expose the new exploiters.

The Conference therefore takes on special significance, for bloodshed and sacrifice lie behind it. It was made possible by the clarification and consolidation embarked on amid our ranks.

We must therefore carry on the work that has just been started and avoid patting ourselves on the back for victories achieved, forgetting the very great deal that remains to be done.

Because our Education has been born of bloodshed, it is only right that we should pay tribute to those who have fallen for our country. More than anyone else, Eduardo Mondlane symbolised our struggle to free Man from the colonial yoke and from obscurantism.

I therefore request that we observe a minute of silence in his memory and in memory of all the comrades who have laid down their lives.

This Conference has set itself the task of analysing the work achieved, discovering the errors and shortcomings in our activity and, based on our principles, promoting the implementation of the tasks entrusted to the Department by FRELIMO's leading organs.

Other documents to be submitted to the Conference contain detailed analyses of the work done, of the great deal that has been done and the vast amount we still have to do. Here we wish simply to put forward a few themes for reflection which, as they express the preoccupations of FRELIMO's leadership, will help to guide us in our work.

After demonstrating the harmfulness of both traditional and colonial education, we should like to explain the educational goals we have set ourselves in relation to the new society we are struggling for.

At the same time, it is essential that we establish guiding lines which take into account the immediate imperatives of the situation, the need to unite the people, to deepen our knowledge of our country's society and environment, to advance the war and to reconstruct the nation.

Finally, we wish to formulate what seem to us the most correct methods of facing problems successfully within a revolutionary perspective.

## I. EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

Each society always seeks to ensure its survival through new generations, passing on its accumulated knowledge and experience. However, since society exists within the framework of its structures, its survival obviously involves the perpetuation of these structures, however oppres-

sive they may be. In this context, the education that is passed on, because it is a reflection of an actual society, serves to justify that society: its economic structures, its social customs, its ethical and artistic concepts, in short, the culture of that society.

In the present phase in Mozambique, there are three antagonistic types of education, two of them reflecting societies which are on their way out and the third directed towards the future.

### a) Traditional education

Although the colonialists dealt a powerful blow to traditional society, traditional education is still the dominant form of education in Mozambique.

Owing to their superficial knowledge of nature, members of traditional society conceive of it as a series of forces of supernatural origin which are to varying degrees hostile to man. Hence the fact that superstition takes the place of science in education. Furthermore, the poor development of the traditional economy based on subsistence agriculture results in the isolation of the community.

Taking advantage of the superstition among the masses and the community's isolation, certain social groups are able to maintain their retrograde rule over society.

In this context education aims at passing on tradition, which is raised to the level of a dogma. The system of age groups and initiation rites is intended to keep the youth under the sway of old ideas, to destroy their initiative. All that is new, different and foreign is opposed in the name of tradition. Thus all progress is prevented and the society survives in a completely static way.

Women are regarded as second class human beings, subjected to the humiliating practice of polygamy, acquired through a gift made to their families, inherited by the husband's family on his death, and educated to serve man passively.

### b) Colonial education

Whereas innovation and science are seen to disrupt the fossilised structures of the past, conversely capitalism uses them to exploit men more.

The more traditional society fights individualism, the more capitalism promotes it, in that it creates in the exploiter the required mentality for exploiting his victim and prevents the exploited from uniting with their comrades to overcome oppression.

In Mozambique, a colonial country, social discrimination in education is accentuated by racial discrimination. Education is reserved almost exclusively for the children of settlers, and particularly higher education, which is for the children of rich settlers.

In addition to its overall purpose of reinforcing bourgeois oppression, colonial education seeks particularly to de-personalise the Mozambican. Removed from his people whom he is taught to look down upon, isolated by the individualism instilled in him, with no dimension in time provided by his own history, ignorant of the space determined by his own geography, living on imported ideas, deformed by the decadent attitudes of colonial society, the Mozambican is supposed to become a black-skinned Portuguese, a docile tool of colonialism whose highest ambition is to live like the settler in whose image he is created.

### c) Revolutionary education

When we took up arms to defeat the old order, we felt the obscure need to create a new society, strong, healthy and prosperous, in which men free from all exploitation would cooperate for the progress of all.

In the course of our struggle, in the tough fight we have had to wage against reactionary elements, we came to understand our objectives more clearly. We felt especially that the struggle to create new structures would fail without the creation of a new mentality.

Creating an attitude of solidarity between people to enable them to carry out collective work presupposes the elimination of individualism. Developing a healthy and revolutionary morality which promotes the liberation of women and the creation of a new generation with a collective feeling of responsibility requires the destruction of inherited corrupt ideas and tastes. In order to lay the foundations of a prosperous and advanced economy, science has to overcome superstition. To unite all Mozambicans, transcending traditions and different languages, requires that the tribe must die in our consciousness so that the nation may be born.

What I mean by this is that to us education does not mean teaching how to read and write, creating an elite group of graduates, with no direct relationship to our objectives. In other words, just as one can wage an armed struggle without carrying out a revolution, one can also learn without educating oneself in a revolutionary way. We do not want to

form an educated elite at the service of an exploitative group. We do not want science to be used to enrich a minority, oppress man and stifle the creative initiative of the masses, the inexhaustible source of collective progress. Each of us must assume his revolutionary responsibilities in education, regarding books, study, as tools at the exclusive service of the masses. Studying must be seen as a revolutionary task to be combined with the revolutionary tasks of production and fighting. He who studies should be like a spark lighting the flame which is the people.

The principal task of education, in our teaching, textbooks and programmes, is to instill in each of us the advanced, scientific, objective and collective ideology which enables us to progress in the revolutionary process.

Education must prepare us to internalise the new society and its requirements.

Education must give us a Mozambican personality which, without subservience of any kind and steeped in our own realities, will be able, in contact with the outside world, to assimilate critically the ideas and experiences of other peoples, also passing on to them the fruits of our thought and practice.

We need a consciousness of responsibility and collective solidarity, free from all individualism and corruption. We have to acquire a scientific attitude, open and free from the dead weight of superstition and dogmatic traditions.

We need particularly to create a new attitude in women, emancipating their consciousness and behaviour, and at the same time instill in men new behaviour and attitudes towards women.

We must make everyone aware of the need to serve the people, to participate in production, to respect manual labour, to release creative initiative and to develop a sense of responsibility. In short, what we want is a revolutionary mentality which uses science to serve the people. Our continued progress depends on the new generation. Today there are young people growing up away from colonialism, away from dogmatic traditions. There is a generation, the first, which is being formed in the heat of the revolution. This is the generation which will be called upon in the 20 years to come to carry on the task we are starting. They are the plant nursery from which will come the selected plants ensuring the ultimate triumph of the revolution.

In this respect the task of teachers and cadres in education is an extraordinarily delicate one, because like us they grew



up and were formed in the old world, and carry within them many bad habits and defects, a lot of individualism and ambition, many corrupt and superstitious attitudes which are harmful and might contaminate the new generation.

Teachers and education cadres must behave like the doctor who, before approaching the patient in the operating theatre, disinfects and sterilises himself so as not to infect the patient.

Through constant meetings, through continual criticism and self-criticism, teachers and education cadres must eliminate old ideas and tastes, so as to be able to acquire the new mentality and pass it on to the next generation.

How would we classify a doctor or nurse who contaminates patients? Who instead of caring for them and saving them, passes on diseases to them?

We must show maximum severity towards anyone among the teachers and education cadres who displays subjectivism, individualism, tribalism, arrogance, superstition or ignorance.

In short, the teacher, the education cadre, united with the masses, must wage an internal struggle, must disinfect himself, getting rid of the old and wholly internalising the new.

## II. THE PRESENT REQUIREMENTS

Apart from the long-term task of creating a new mentality, there are requirements of the present situation which education is called upon to meet. We cannot create a new society without destroying the old, without overthrowing colonialism and its

vestiges, without creating the economic foundations for advancing the war and our society.

### a) Unity and education

One of the prime concerns of education should be the unity of the people. Colonialism sought to accentuate all ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural divisions there might be among the Mozambican people. At the same time, traditional education by extolling the cult of the linguistic community to which a person belongs, instills in him an attitude of contempt, and at times even of hatred, towards other communities.

In our teaching we should bring out the similarities in the conditions of the Mozambican people as a whole. We should explain how colonialism exploits every region. The pupil needs to realise that the Mueda peasants' struggle against cotton growing is no different to the struggle of the sugar cane growers on the banks of the Zambezi, that the struggle of the stevedores in Lourenço Marques is the same as that of the miners in Tete. Workers shipped from Nampula to São Tomé or to the Lourenço Marques railways suffer the same exploitation as the men from Gaza who are sold to South Africa. The fishermen and rice cultivators in Manica e Sofala are exploited by the same foreigner as occupies the oil-fields of Inhambane. Taxes were just as crushing a burden on the people of Niassa who, like all Mozambicans, never saw a school or hospital which catered for them. At the same time, the pupil must identify with the heroic traditions of our whole country: the fight of Maguigane,

the resistance of Barué, the splendour of Sofala and the magnificence of Monomotapa.

Mozambique's cultural wealth does not belong to any one region. The contribution of the Zavala marimba players is as much a source of pride to us as Makonde sculpture and the gold filigree work of the Tete goldsmiths. In this connection, we should like to hail the decision to invite Mozambican sculptors to teach the boys and girls at the Tunduru Pilot School the wonders of their art. We hope that there will be more and more similar initiatives in the fields of painting, goldsmithing, iron and copper working, artistic handicrafts, mat-making, basketry, etc.

Regionalism, tribalism and the attitude of looking down on other communities are the result of ignorance, of lack of knowledge of other values. No one loves what he does not know.

This is why we regard the First Cultural Festival the DEC proposes to hold as a valuable contribution to our national unity, for the development of our culture. It is to be hoped that regional and provincial festivals will be held prior and subsequent to the First Cultural Festival. Let art seek to combine old form with new content, then giving rise to new form. Let painting, written literature, theatre and artistic handicrafts be added to the traditionally cultivated dance, sculpture and singing. Let the creativity of some become that of all, men and women



young and old, from the North to the South, so that the new revolutionary and Mozambican culture may be born of all.

In the schools, on the classroom benches in the houses and canteens and in production, we should always endeavour to join pupils and teachers from different regions, so that through day-to-day familiarity we rid ourselves of regional reflexes and acquire Mozambican feelings and consciousness.

It is by uniting in work that we really unite. Teachers and pupils should work side by side at all tasks, because there are no greater or lesser tasks in the Revolution, only revolutionary tasks. Because words have no life without practice, a body without flesh is a skeleton and a body without bones cannot stay upright on its own, it is necessary constantly to transform the assertion of unity into the practice of unity. Uniting with one another means knowing and understanding one another. It is in joint effort, in sweat expended at the same time, in the tree trunk torn out by combining our strength, in the dance composed through the creativity of minds working together that knowing and understanding come into being and unity is consolidated.

#### b) Society and environment

In our struggle against the colonialists one of the decisive factors for our victory is that we are struggling in our own country, that is, in a society and on a terrain which are ours and which we know better than anyone.

The development of our struggle requires that we constantly deepen our knowledge of our country, that this knowledge become increasingly scientific.

Studying the history, geography, zoology, botany and mineralogy of our land will enable us to know how to use our resources better.

It should be considered especially that our people have a great deal of knowledge about the resources of nature, even though this knowledge is empirical and often distorted by superstition. In our education we should encourage teachers and pupils to compile the empirical knowledge of the masses and analyse it critically and objectively so as to develop our knowledge and science for the benefit of society.

It is also necessary to promote constant discussion and study on the usages and customs of each region, so as to know them better, assimilate them and purify them through criticism.

Each of us must understand that the task he is called upon to perform is in Mozambique. In other words, Mozambique is not a given region, village or province, but a vast country with a great diversity of conditions which we need to understand if we are to be effective.

#### c) The mastering of technology

We are confronting an enemy army which is backed by all the resources of modern technology, and in order to face up to the growing needs of the masses and the war we are obliged to continually increase and diversify production. At the same time, our social and administrative needs require the use of more personnel and more complex technology.

While it is true that it is in military camps and especially in the field that we discover the ways of destroying the enemy's military machine, it is still necessary to impart a minimum of scientific knowledge to militants, to cadres, to enable them to increase their mastery of military technology.

Production requires ever more attention. In facing up to the needs of the masses under war conditions we should rely above all on our own efforts. However, diversifying production, improving techniques, using nature to fight against natural calamities, digging wells and irrigation channels, building dams and so forth, requires of us knowledge we do not always have.

We want pupils to acquire such practical knowledge at school. Cotton spinning and weaving should be taught with the natural sciences; the theory and practice of building dams and irrigation channels should be combined with arithmetic and physics; there should be practice in building water wheels, mills turned by animals and windmills. In short, there is a great deal of scientific and practical knowledge which would help us to develop our agriculture and promote the establishment of such craft-based industries as cabinet making, carpentry, masonry, pottery, soap making, spinning and weaving, making furnaces for iron production, kilns for bricks, etc.

Combining education with production means above all the theoretical and practical acquisition of knowledge to be made available for production, administration, social services and combat.

### III. THE EDUCATION METHODS

It is obvious that if we are to solve all the problems that face us successfully we

must use methods suited to our situation. To be effective, our methods must derive from our principles and practice, they must be based on that which constitutes our strength.

#### a) Education and the mass line

Our chief strength, the primary cause of all we do, is the people. In solving our problems we should rely first on them, following a mass line. In other words, we should rely on the people in defining our objective interests and struggling to achieve them.

Only by following this line can we distinguish the essential from the secondary, the immediate from the long term, defining what are our interests and distinguishing that which belongs to the enemy from that which is ours. These principles also apply to our work in education.

The chief characteristic of the situation in education in our country is the illiteracy prevailing among the overwhelming majority of our people, as well as the obscurantist practices caused by colonialism and superstition.

The main battle in the field of education is therefore against illiteracy and obscurantism. If we are to succeed, we must mobilise the masses in this battle, making them aware of the need to learn and showing them the catastrophic consequences of ignorance. Without the active participation of the masses in the battle against illiteracy it will not be possible to wipe it out, and without an understanding of the evils introduced by obscurantism nothing will make them struggle against it.

It is also by following the mass line that we define the priorities and establish the education programme. How are we to know, for example, where we should devote the greatest efforts, whether in literacy teaching, higher education, training primary school teachers or establishing secondary education? Should a pupil who has completed primary education carry on with his studies or should he devote himself to teaching literacy? Should we be content to state that 20,000 children in the liberated areas are receiving schooling when in those same areas there are still hundreds of thousands of children who have no contact with any school? Should we give priority to children or to the army, which is the backbone of our movement?

These are extremely serious problems requiring deep thought. The priorities in our education work have not as yet been properly established, and this 2nd Con-

ference must make a careful study of the problem.

#### b) Learning war in the war

This problem stems mainly from the concept that a pupil needs continuous education, that is, that the pupil must remain in school from primary level until he obtains his higher education diploma.

However, the circumstances under which we are living, of war and massive illiteracy, demand concepts and methods which meet both our future objectives and our most immediate objectives, for unless these are solved there will be no future. This means that instead of continuous education we should give priority to permanent and progressive education. We mean that all militants should at all times be able to raise their technical, cultural and political level. At the same time it means that after priorities have been established, some people will be selected for special crash courses, so that they can then impart their newly-acquired knowledge to broader sectors of the people.

In the final analysis, this is the method we have already been using successfully for some years in our war. As soon as a fighter receives a minimum of training, he goes into battle where he further develops his practical knowledge and passes it on to others. Some are selected from the battlefield for more advanced training, and they then return to raise the general level. We do not wait to train generals in order to fight battles.

#### c) Relying on our own forces

Stemming from what we have just said is the principle of relying on our own forces. We do not wait for others to come and solve our problems for us. We do not wait for help from outside in order to face situations we come up against.

We are all aware that to solve the problems of education and to prepare textbooks and programmes, highly specialised personnel is required.

It seems to us that more productive use should be made of the higher cadres in education — both national and foreign. We feel that these people should devote themselves primarily to training and refresher courses for education cadres, the drawing up and supervision of programmes and correspondence courses. In short, the programmes should be directed towards raising the general level, which is a fundamental need in our war. In line with this, we think it would be wasteful to use foreign teachers solely for

teaching secondary school pupils, who will only be productive in the long term, when the very requirements of education call for cadres with a minimal scientific base to teach literacy to children, the army, workers in cooperatives and the militia. This approach might land us in the situation of some independent countries which have a few hundred graduates on the one hand, and a vast mass of illiterates on the other, without the middle cadres needed to ensure a proper output from the higher cadres. It is like a house with a roof but no foundations.

Let us pool our little knowledge and it will add up to a great deal. Let us discuss frequently, subjecting our ideas and knowledge to criticism and practice, studying a lot, holding regional and provincial seminars to increase our knowledge and exchange experiences. Let us try to organise correspondence courses to raise the knowledge of teachers and cadres.

## CONCLUSIONS

If we rely on the masses, learning war in the war and relying on our own forces, we shall be able to win the battle of education.

We have already achieved a great deal and this 2nd Conference shows us the distance we have covered since 1962, when education meant only the Mozambique Institute and good will in helping a few militants in Dar es Salaam.

Today our education means thousands and thousands of children in schools in liberated Mozambique, hundreds of teachers, adults studying, secondary education being re-organised, and about two hundred Mozambicans following technical and higher education courses abroad.

It is appropriate here to congratulate all the comrades who have made this reality possible, and in particular to pay tribute to the memory of our beloved President Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane. We must also congratulate his wife, Comrade Janet Mondlane. These two comrades were among the first to understand that the destruction of obscurantism, of ignorance, was a fundamental task in our struggle. May this Conference, may the Department of Education and Culture put into practice the watchword we are here issuing:

**EDUCATE MAN TO WIN THE WAR,  
CREATE A NEW SOCIETY AND DEVELOP OUR COUNTRY.**