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## **HLI Mozambique report—October 2007**

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*[We will present a further update on the situation in Mozambique in the next few months or as soon as the information becomes available.]*

Between September 1<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007, I was in Maputo, Mozambique's capital city for my second missionary trip. The objectives of this trip were spelt out as:

1. To run a campaign against abortion and legalization of abortion through Radio Mozambique;
2. To seek the support of the clergy in this campaign;
3. To form a seminarians for life group at the major seminary in Maputo;
4. To run pro-life seminars with view of putting in place a pro-life pioneer group.

### **Background**

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world. Most people earn less than a dollar a day. Usually people have only one meal a day. In such a situation, you would expect government development efforts to be people centered. The government should provide the most needed basic necessities of life, like clean water, agricultural equipment, good infrastructure like, roads, electricity; affordable and quality medical services. These are the things Mozambicans need. Yet, the government response to this pathetic condition of the people is more contraception, more sterilization programs and now move to legalize abortion in a country whose population is only 18 million and population density of 22 people per square km.

Population control groups, like the IPPF have capitalized government laxity and/or consent in this area to implement coercive population control programs. One of those programs is the provision of free contraceptives, including abortifacients, to the women of reproductive age. One friend told me that this project has been implemented in this country for the past couple of years. Any concerned pro-lifer would question such "philanthropic" gesture of the anti-life lobby. How is it possible for the government to provide free contraception and fail to give its people free much needed drugs against killer diseases like malaria?

Condom social marketing through the TV is highly effective. There are no condom bill boards in the country, but the country is saturated with condoms – in every medical store, food store, garages, and soft drink shops. One day, I went to buy a soft drink from a nearby garage and some change remained. When I asked what that money could buy, they responded "nothing" except condom. In this country, like many countries of Africa, including Tanzania, children are introduced to comprehensive sex education lesson in their adolescence. We all know that the earlier the sex education is taught, the earlier children engage in sexual activities. Children in Maputo, I was told, engage in these practices at a tender age, and with early sexual experience, teenage pregnancies have become a common reality most of which end up in abortion.

There is some good news, however. Despite the pathetic living conditions, the people of Maputo love life. Believe me, for every 100 women I met, one was pregnant with a

child—a sign of vitality. Unlike Dar es Salaam [Tanzania’s capital] where a 5 month pregnant mother would hide her pregnancy by putting on long and wide maternity dresses, pregnant women in Maputo wear ordinary clothes, sometimes even t-shirts. In this way you can easily see the configuration of the belly, which is full of life inside it. This was amazing and a wonder to me. They are proud of themselves. I think they want to exclaim to the world with joy, “Look! I am pregnant!”

### **The radio program**

Radio Mozambique aired two programs of one hour each for four consecutive weeks. The actual dates and topic were the following: September 6<sup>th</sup> (Abortion definition), September 11<sup>th</sup> (Side-effects on women), September 13<sup>th</sup> (Side effects on men and abortion survivors), September 18<sup>th</sup> (Side effects on family), September 20<sup>th</sup> (Side effects on society/nation) and September 27<sup>th</sup> (Should Mozambique legalize abortion: The People’s Voice!)

### **The aims of this program were**

- To alert the Mozambican people on the dangers of abortion. As this is their national radio, the message was able to penetrate to every corner of the country.
- To alert the people on the impending abortion legalization bill that was about to be presented to the parliament by their Health Ministry.
- From the above two aims, help them reject abortion and defeat the abortion bill.

### **The light shines on the darkness of the culture of death**

On hearing that HLI was in the country running a pro-life program and hearing that through this pro-life program HLI is converting many people including health officials, government leaders and more importantly the ordinary men and women, the anti-life groups were clearly worried that they were going to be losers. So they hurriedly convened to strategize and “oblige” the Health Ministry to send the abortion bill to parliament. Further delay, it was argued, would be disastrous to their plan of reducing the population of this nation.

Realizing that the HLI message was deeply cutting into their gains, that the truth was against them, they worked clandestinely with some health officials to prevent word getting out about their plans. They ordered all health workers, MDs, nurses, and para-medical personnel never to cooperate with HLI nor leak any word about the abortion legalization bill. When our journalists went to get information from the Health Ministry, they were turned away. A few of them admitted to our team, “We have been warned never to say anything”. This is what I call the government iron-hand, western intimidation of its kind. But one thing is clear; if the government of Mozambique is going to enact a law to legalize abortion it will do that against will of the people.

### **Concluding words**

HLI’s radio program against legalization of abortion in Mozambique has been a success. To me this has been a miracle. Imagine working with people you have never met before, in a foreign country, in a foreign language which I never understood. This has indeed been one of the great miracles HLI has ever experienced. The Holy Spirit was indeed

working with HLI; leading the way, interpreting the messages correctly, and hence ensuring victory.

People have voiced against the devil's intentions to kill their children, to exterminate future generations. It is upon the government of Mozambique to heed to people's voice. Should the government act contrary, it will defeat its own purpose or serving its people, it will go against African culture that cherishes human life; in essence, it will betray its people. The Church has given full support to the pro-life work HLI has started. Together we will build the culture of life in Mozambique. The pro-life group which we anticipate to start next year will pioneer the Gospel of Life in Mozambique.

I would like to sincerely thank HLI Central for facilitating this program and my trip to Maputo. I would also like to thank the Archbishop of Maputo, His Grace Francisco Chimoio for his hospitality and cooperation. I would like to thank all the clergy of the Archdiocese of Maputo for their patient listening to HLI's pro-life message and for their readiness to cooperate in building up the culture of life in their parishes. I would like to thank the Director of Radio Maputo who accepted our request to run the HLI pro-life program in State Radio and for his cooperation. Finally, but not least, I extend my gratitude to my wife and children for their patience and prayers during the whole month I was not with them. May the Almighty God bless us all!