

MOZAMBIQUE

# Guerrillas shatter Frelimo: it's war, says Machel

Mozambique is at war. This was admitted by Frelimo last week in a military communique followed by a proclamation from the all-powerful Permanent Political Committee that showed signs of panic. The country is reeling under the combined effects of an escalation of guerrilla warfare by the anti-Frelimo Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana and pre-emptive strikes by Rhodesian forces against terrorist bases. The situation is outlined by TO THE POINT's José Ramalho:

Was it really a Frelimo military communique, in the first days of 1979, or a throwback to the Press briefings at the Nampula headquarters of the Portuguese High Command, in early 1974? Mecito, Changara, Tete, Zobué, Manica, Espungabera, Chimoio, Mavonde, Guro, Inchope, Mavita, Beira. The same places where harassed Portuguese troops

ing their successes deep inside Mozambique. Five days later, the successes were confirmed in a Frelimo official communique released by the Ministry of National Defence. There was only one point of disagreement: Maputo identified the National Resistance fighters either as "groups of agents of the enemy" or "enemy groups".

Although making a deliberate attempt to create confusion between Rhodesian pre-emptive strikes and Resistance guerrilla actions, an analysis of the communique shows the difference quite clearly. Listing the enemy actions by provinces (as numbered on the map) the Frelimo communique says:

## 1. TETE

On December 17, an enemy group blew up a bridge on the railway line from Muturara to Moatize, 8 km from Mecito, near the Malawi border. A locomotive and four trucks plunged into the Nécombezi river, killing three crew members and injuring

two. The bridge was destroyed. On December 20, a motorised convoy of the Popular Forces for the Liberation of Mozambique (FPLM) was bombed by enemy aircraft in the Changara area.

On December 23, an enemy group attacked with hand grenades one of our positions in the road junction from Zobué to Angonia.

On December 27, an enemy attack on the bank of the Zambezi river, across from the town of Tete, killed 20 people and injured another four.

## 2. MANICA

On November 12, enemy paratroops were dropped at 3 am by 11 helicopters, escorted by four Mirage fighters.

On November 29, the enemy bombed



*Frelimo army: the People's Forces?*

FPLM positions at Espungabera. An aircraft shot down by our forces, crashed on the Xilunda mountains, near the border.

On November 29, the enemy blew up a petrol tank 4 km from the town of Chicualacuala. Two vehicles were destroyed by the explosion.

On December 18, positions at Mavita suffered an enemy attack. Our forces captured the leader of the enemy group.

On December 20, a military convoy returning between Guro and Changara was attacked by aerial bombing that destroyed three vehicles. The same day, enemy aircraft bombed Guro district offices.

On December 24, a group of agents of the enemy, attacked a coffee farm at Mavita. Eleven tractors, three tractors, a motorcycle and a bicycle were burned. The enemy stole money kept for staff payments.

On December 28, a group of enemy agents planted explosives on the railway line between Sofala and Manica, in the Inhambane area, blowing up two trucks.

On December 28, a group of agents of the enemy attacked a passenger coach in Inchope, killing 20 people.

## 3. SOFALA

On December 18, a grenade exploded at the Oceana Restaurant, in Beira. Five people were killed instantly.

On December 29, at 2.15 pm, the Rhodesian air force launched a terrorist attack against a refugee camp at Nhangau, in the Beira district, killing seven people. Rhodesian aircraft was shot down.

## 4. GAZA

On December 17, 18 and 21, enemy forces attacked several positions, including Laguardia, 10 km from Chicualacuala. Eight FPLM soldiers were injured in the attacks.



*Frelimo guerrillas turned against Frelimo: reviving memories*

now faced devastating hit-and-run attacks from the Frelimo guerrillas. Bridges and trains blown up, troop convoys ambushed, army barracks attacked, bush camps destroyed. The same places, the same tactics, five years later.

No wonder. The Resistance guerrillas now waging a relentless war against Frelimo are the same men who fought for Frelimo against the Portuguese. They are the bitterly disillusioned defectors turning their arms against "a minority regime committing all kinds of crimes and violence against the freedom and the rights of the Mozambican people", in the words of former Frelimo commander Daniel Lacerda Caetano, who has just joined the Resistance ranks (see box).

On January 1, the Resistance command issued one of their rare communiqués report-

On December 22, the enemy used Mirage fighters in an attack on Mapai. Our forces shot down three of their aircraft.

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A different interpretation of the events is given in the Resistance communique released a few days earlier. It gives as their priority objective the disruption of Frelimo's means of communication and the spreading of panic among the FPLM garrisons which "terrorise the rural population".

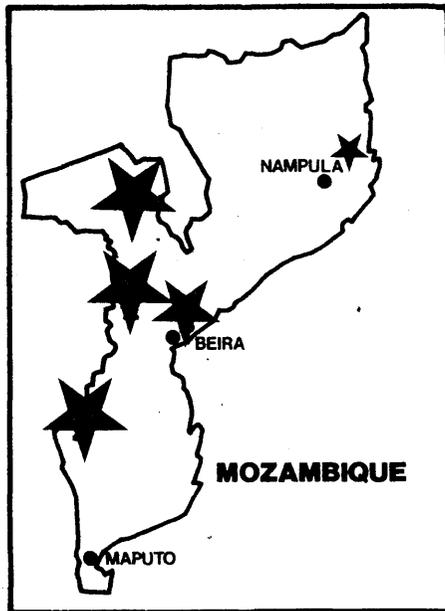
Responsibility is claimed by the Resistance for the blowing up of the Mecito railway bridge, which brought rail traffic to a halt between Beira and Tete, and for the ambush of an FPLM column on the road from Guro to Inharrim, placing the action at Mungari.

The Resistance claims that since mid-September, the main road from Beira to Inharrim has been under guerrilla control. But it points out that civilian travellers have been able to travel to fear provided they obey the instructions of the Resistance fighters.

In the areas of Tete, Manica and Sofala, on the southern coast, Frelimo has reported several "enemy" bases.

The guerrillas also claim successful operations against Frelimo positions at Mungari, Bonde, Sussudenga, Vanduzi, Rotanda and Borongosa. Their communique puts the number of Frelimo soldiers killed at more than 200 and claims 40 vehicles destroyed.

While Frelimo circumscribes "enemy" activities to the central and southern provinces of the country, the Resistance communique reports major successes in the northern province of Nampula.



It is claimed that in four ambushes laid by the guerrillas on the road to Nacala, four military convoys were destroyed and 15 Frelimo soldiers killed. "As a result of these ambushes, morale among the FPLM forces hit an all-time low and several soldiers defected to the Resistance bases", says the communique.

The Resistance claims that in the beginning of November, "the Machel government had no alternative but to send from Maputo to Nampula a large force of 'Tanzanian mer-

cenaries' in a futile effort to bring the situation under control."

Encouraged by their successes, the anti-Frelimo guerrilla forces seem poised for more daring exploits. Their pledge: "With the momentum of our fighting increasing progressively and with new recruits, who have finished their training, ready to go into battle, the Resistance proposes to extend its revolutionary war to the province of Maputo."

And an appeal has gone out through their clandestine broadcasting station "Voz da Africa Livre" (The Voice of Free Africa): "The time has come for all those who really cherish freedom and democracy to join the Mozambique National Resistance."

"What shall we do?" asks the all-powerful Permanent Political Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Frelimo Party. Answer: "Let us organise the defence and protection of our houses, our possessions, our equipment, our trains, our trucks, our buses, our tractors, our telephone lines, our roads, our bridges, our railways. Let us repair without delay everything that is destroyed."

And as the supreme solution: "Let us all carry out faithfully the resolutions of the 4th session of the Central Committee."

One solution, and probably the one which has brought upon Mozambique most of its woes, is "to strengthen Frelimo's support to the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe".

While Mozambique burns, the obvious solution for the Maputo leaders is to keep playing the Rhodesian violin. And also to spread communism throughout Africa, as Caetano told Voz da Africa Livre. (See box).