

'Renamo destroyed schools'

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MAPUTO. — Renamo rebels in Mozambique have destroyed more than 54 percent of the country's primary schools, depriving more than 600 000 children of the chance to acquire an education, according to President Joaquim Chissano.

Opening a conference on children in Maputo at the weekend, President Chissano said at independence in 1975, only 692 000 children attended school.

By 1979 this figure had risen to 1,5 million. But the following year, due to the war, the numbers in schools began to drop.

Mr Chissano said Renamo had "cold-bloodedly and barbarously" murdered children, teachers and destroyed schools and hospitals thereby putting the health of children at risk.

The government, he said, faced urgent difficulties in the health service.