

FRELIMO, MRM in heavy fighting

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MOUNT SILINDA – Heavy fighting between Frelimo and the Mozambique Resistance Movement in western Mozambique is causing a flood of refugees into this remote mission station 200 km south of Umtali

Villages have been razed and the peasants are fleeing into the surrounding mountains and into eastern Zimbabwe or are being forced into consolidated villages near Espungabera, according to some of the refugees here.

Mother of two, Mrs Lucia Mhlanga, said she and her husband had fled after Frelimo troops, on the hunt for MRM insurgents, had burned down their village.

The MRM, which was supported by Rhodesia during the war, has been conducting a sporadic campaign against the Marxist Maputo regime for some years.

It is understood that fighting in Mozambique has greatly intensified since the independence of Zimbabwe though it is not clear where the MRM insurgents are now based.

The refugees, most of whom having fled only with the clothes they are wearing or what they can carry in small bundles, confirmed the heavy fighting.

They said they had not seen MRM troops but had heard gunfire and heavy explosions at night near their villages.

● The MRM is an anti-Frelimo group of Mozambicans and led by Albert Simango. The group was believed to have been trained and equipped by Rhodesian security forces during the guerilla war here.