

Mozambique guerrillas down plane

LISBON. — Anti-Marxist guerrillas in Mozambique said yesterday that they had killed more than 40 government soldiers and shot down an air force spotter plane during operations over the last two months.

A statement by the Mozambique National Resistance, distributed in Lisbon, said its guerrillas had beaten off attacks by the Marxist government forces on their bases in central Mozambique.

At least 44 members of the ruling Frelimo party's armed forces were killed by the RNM during operations in September and October, it added.

Government air and ground forces launched a major offensive against the RNM last June, capturing a major guerrilla base near Espungabera on the Zimbabwean border.

Yesterday's statement re-

ferred for the first time to attacks on guerrilla bases near the Save River about 150km to the south and near Chimolo, a strategic crossroads city on the international railway from Beira to Zimbabwe.

The RNM listed offensive operations which included an attack on a train on the international railway on September 29 and several ambushes of military vehicles.

The guerrilla movement, which claims to have 5 000 men under arms, said it killed 10 government soldiers in an encounter near the River Save on the same day. It gave no details of its own losses.

Other operations listed in the statement include attacks on government-held villages and military posts and the shooting down of a spotter plane on October 11 near Chimolo. — Sapa-Reuters.