

27.12.21:28  
040852252+  
ALPRESS B ALGER  
6-252 AIM MO

205

1983

\*

AIM / 331283E MILITARY SITUATION

BY PAUL FAUVET

MAPUTO, 27 DEC. (AIM) MOZAMBIQUE'S CHIEF OF STAFF, LIEUTENANT GENERAL SEBASTIAO MABOTE, TOLD JOURNALISTS IN MAPUTO TODAY THAT THE CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY WAS ONE IN WHICH THE ARMED FORCES (FPLM) WERE +FULLY ON THE OFFENSIVE+.

SURVEYING THE SITUATION OVER THE PREVIOUS NINE MONTHS, GENERAL MABOTE SAID THAT THE ARMY HAD DESTROYED MANY OF THE MAJOR BASES OF THE SELF-STYLED +MOZAMBIQUE NATIONAL RESISTANCE+ (MNR) IN THE PROVINCES OF GAZA, INHAMBANE, MANICA, SOFALA AND ZAMBEZIA. MANY OF THESE, HE ADDED HAD RECEIVED THEIR SUPPLIES BY AIR FROM SOUTH AFRICA.

SOUTH AFRICAN AIRLIFTS TO THE BANDIT CAMPS GENERALLY TOOK PLACE AT NIGHT, FROM ABOUT 10 P.M. ONWARDS. VIOLATIONS OF MOZAMBIKAN AIRSPACE BY DAY NORMALLY ONLY TOOK PLACE OVER MAPUTO PROVINCE.

GENERAL MABOTE SINGLED OUT FOR ATTENTION THE CAPTURE OF THE MNR BASE AT TOME IN INHAMBANE PROVINCE ON AUGUST 23. THIS HAD BEEN THE BANDIT HEADQUARTERS FOR ALL OF SOUTHERN MOZAMBIQUE. IN TOME ALONE, SAID THE CHIEF OF STAFF, FOUR ENORMOUS DEPOSITS OF ARMS WERE FOUND BY THE VICTORIOUS MOZAMBIKAN TROOPS.

AMONGST THE OTHER IMPORTANT AREAS FROM WHICH THE MOZAMBIKAN ARMY HAD DRIVEN THE MNR, GENERAL MABOTE MENTIONED HATE-HATE AND DINDIZA IN GAZA, CHINHICA WHICH HAD BEEN THE HEADQUARTERS FOR BANDIT OPERATIONS IN MANICA, MARINGWE IN SOFALA, AND MEGAZA IN ZAMBEZIA, CLOSE TO THE MALAWIAN BORDER.  
(MORE)

MILITARY SITUATION 2

MORE THAN 3,000 BANDITS, HE SAID, HAD EITHER SURRENDERED OR HAD BEEN CAPTURED BY THE ARMY. HE DIVIDED THE BANDITS INTO THREE BROAD CATEGORIES. FIRST, THERE WERE THE +BANDITS BY CONVICTION+. THIS HARD-CORE, TRAINED IN SOUTH AFRICA, WERE A MINORITY IN THE MNR BASES.

SECONDLY, THERE WERE THOSE WHO HAD BEEN HASTILY TRAINED IN BANDIT CAMPS, AND THEN SENT OUT TO ATTACK VILLAGES OR MOUNT AMBUSHES. THIRDLY, THERE WERE THOSE WHO HAD DESERTED FROM THE BANDITS AND HANDED THEMSELVES OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES.

THE FPLM'S RECENT VICTORIES HAD CUT MANY BANDIT SUPPLY ROUTES, AND THE ENORMOUS LOSSES IN MEN AND MATERIAL THEY HAD SUFFERED WOULD CREATE SEVERE LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS. +THEIR GENERAL STAFF IN PRETORIA WILL HAVE TO EMBARK ON A REORGANISATION IF IT IS TO CONTINUE SUPPLYING THE BANDITS+, SAID GENERAL MABOTE.

THE BANDITS' AIM, HE CONTINUED WAS NOT +TO OCCUPY OUR COUNTRY+. THIS WAS +IMPOSSIBLE+, SINCE +THEY HAVE NO SOCIAL BASE+. INSTEAD, THEIR OBJECTIVE WAS TO DISRUPT THE MOZAMBIKAN ECONOMY. HE POINTED TO THE ATTACKS ON COMMUNICATIONS ROUTES WHICH CAUSED DAMAGE NOT ONLY TO MOZAMBIQUE, BUT ALSO TO ITS PARTNERS IN SADCC (SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION CONFERENCE). THE PURPOSE OF SUCH ACTS, HE SAID, WAS +TO FORCE THESE COUNTRIES TO DEPEND ON SOUTH AFRICA+ FOR THEIR OUTLETS TO THE SEA.  
(MORE)

ASKED TO COMPARE THE MILITARY SITUATION THIS YEAR TO THAT PREVAILING IN 1982, GENERAL MABOTE SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN +A GREAT IMPROVEMENT+.

+MATTERS IN 1982 WERE NOT GOING IN OUR FAVOUR+, HE SAID. +THE BANDITS CAME OUT OF SOUTH AFRICA AND WENT WHEREVER THEY LIKED WE WERE NOT WELL ENOUGH ORGANISED TO PURSUE THESE GROUPS+. BUT NOW, IN 1983, +WE HAVE MORE MEN, WE HAVE MORE WEAPONS AND WE ARE BETTER ORGANISED+.

+IN 1982 THE BANDITS ROAMED ABOUT THE BUSH UNHINDERED+, HE CONTINUED. +BUT NOW WE HAVE OCCUPIED THE BUSH. WE HAVE TRANSFORMED THE BUSH INTO A THEATRE OF OPERATIONS+.

A JOURNALIST ASKED GENERAL MABOTE HOW HE ACCOUNTED FOR THE APPARENT POSSESSION OF SOVIET WEAPONRY SUCH AS AK-47 MACHINE GUNS BY THE MNR. HE REPLIED THAT MANY OF THESE HAD BEEN CAPTURED BY THE SOUTH AFRICANS IN NAMIBIA, OR BY IAN SMITH'S ARMY IN THE WAR IN ZIMBABWE. THE MOZAMBIKAN ARMY HAD ALSO LOST MANY OF THESE WEAPONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE CROSS BORDER RAIDS BY RHODESIAN FORCES IN THE LATE 1970S.

BUT GENERAL MABOTE WAS CONVINCED THAT MOST OF THESE WEAPONS WERE IMITATIONS PRODUCED IN SOUTH AFRICAN MUNITIONS FACTORIES. MANY OF THE WEAPONS CAPTURED FROM THE BANDITS, HE POINTED OUT, BORE NO MARKINGS TO INDICATE THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN.

QUESTIONED ABOUT THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ARMY AND THE POPULATION IN AREAS WHERE THE BANDITS HAD BEEN ACTIVE, HE SAID THAT WHEN THE FPLM HAD RETAKEN TOME, CHINHICA AND MARINGUE, +WE FOUND THE POPULATION NAKED. THEY WERE WEARING STRIPS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PARACHUTES AS CLOTHES+. A PRIORITY FOR THE ARMY HAD THEREFORE BEEN TO SUPPLY THESE PEOPLE WITH FOOD AND CLOTHING. IN THESE LOCALITIES, THE PEOPLE HAD NOW BEEN REORGANISED, AGRICULTURE HAS RESTARTED, AND IN GENERAL PEOPLE ARE RECOVERING FROM THE DEPRADATIONS OF THE MNR.

GENERAL MABOTE PRAISED THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FPLM AND THE LOCAL PEOPLE. +THE RELATION BETWEEN OUR SOLDIERS AND THE POPULATION MUST BE THAT BETWEEN FISH AND WATER+, HE ADDED. +OUT OF THE WATER THE FISH CANNOT SURVIVE+.

(ENDS)

PF/PF

NNNN

ALPRESS B ALGER  
6-252 AIN MOMMMMN  
014.0 MIN

04

6-252 AIN MO  
27.12 21:58  
09653520+

04

COUNTRY+. THIS WAS +IMPOSSIBLE+, INSTEAD, THEIR OBJECTIVE WAS TO DISRUPT THE MOZAMBIKAN POINTED TO THE ATTACKS ON COMMUNICATIONS ROUTES WHICH CAUSED DAMAGE NOT ONLY TO MOZAMBIQUE, BUT ALSO TO ITS PARTNERS IN SADCC (SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION CONFERENCE). THE PURPOSE OF SUCH ACTS, HE SAID, WAS +TO FORCE THESE COUNTRIES TO DEPEND ON SOUTH AFRICA+ FOR THEIR OUTLETS TO THE SEA.  
(MORE)