

SOUTH AFRICA'S WAR CONTINUES

MASSIVE BANDIT INFILTRATION INTO GAZA PROVINCE

South Africa has infiltrated about 1,000 bandits of the self-styled "Mozambique National Resistance" (MNR) into the southern Mozambican province of Gaza, according to the 14 June edition of the armed forces radio programme 'Voz de Combat' (Voice of Combat). The programme said that these bandits were infiltrated over the last two months, and join 500 other South African sponsored gunmen who entered the province earlier.

According to aid workers who have returned from Gaza and spoken to AIM, some of the bandits have been landed on the Gaza coast, while others have been infiltrated across the long frontier that separates Gaza from South Africa's Transvaal province.

Gaza includes one of Mozambique's major food producing regions, the Limpopo valley. The railway from southern Zimbabwe to the port of Maputo runs through the middle of Gaza. Bandit attacks have kept it closed to international traffic since 1984, however. Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe has spoken of the need to reopen this railway, using Zimbabwean forces to guard it if necessary.

The possibility of the Limpopo line reopening to Zimbabwean traffic may well be one of the reasons for the new infiltration. Another could be the defeats that the MNR has suffered in the central provinces of Zambézia and Sofala, leading to a South African strategic decision to switch resources to the southern front.