

Mozambique accuses

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SA of massacre

MOZAMBIQUE'S ruling Frelimo Party has accused South Africa of being responsible for last week's massacre at Tanninga, 50 miles north of here, in which at least 278 people are known to have been killed. The massacre took place when rebels of the South African-backed Mozambique National Resistance ambushed a convoy on the country's main north-south road.

Just 500 yards from the ambush other vehicles had gathered to form another convoy, on which the MNR also turned their guns. Terrified passengers were shot down

by the Pretoria Government.

South Africa's intentions, the communique added, were "to sow fear and insecurity among the people of the south of the country, and to isolate the capital city from the rest of Mozambique".

Military sources believed that the raiders came from Calanga, a coastal zone where the MNR is known to have established a large base.

The Tanninga outrage appears to have strengthened Frelimo's resolve not to negotiate with the MNR. The communique continued:

By Paul Fauvet in Maputo

as they fled from cars and lorries. Others died as packed passenger buses were set on fire. Bodies were still being recovered from the surrounding bush at the weekend.

In an angry communique, the Frelimo political bureau, the country's most powerful body, declared that the MNR's tactics were "conceived and planned by the racist South African regime".

South Africa "has in recent months proceeded with massive infiltrations of bandits into southern Mozambique with the specific task of practising this extreme, horrific and inhuman form of terrorism — the indiscriminate slaughter of men, women and children".

"Bandits" is the term used by the authorities to describe the MNR who, they argue, do not constitute a political opposition, but are merely an instrument used

"Such acts of barbarity only strengthen the conviction of the Mozambican people that the only way to talk with the bandits is through the barrel of a gun."

The massacre took place a day after MNR saboteurs cut the railway from Maputo to Swaziland. A train hit a mine, and the blast injured three crewmen and damaged about 50 yards of track. Early last month, saboteurs blew up two small bridges in quick succession on the Maputo-South Africa railway. Among the vehicles destroyed at Tanninga were lorries belonging to Dutch, Swedish, Italian, and US aid or development agencies. These organisations last week faced an acute dilemma: should they continue exposing their drivers to mortal peril, or should they stop using the main road — thus suspending much of their work here?