

Up to late November there were "17 South African Boers" in a camp of the MNR bandits in the central Mozambican province of Manica, according to a former bandit who has surrendered to the Mozambican authorities to benefit from the offer of amnesty for MNR members who give themselves up.

Isabel Jorge (19), who says she was a commander in the MNR's women's detachment, told Radio Mozambique's Manica provincial station that the men she described as "South African Boers" were giving military training to MNR recruits, press-ganged into the bandit ranks during raids against villages. She spoke to the radio on 30 November and said the 17 men were present in her base up to the previous week, when she ran away to surrender. The radio report did not give the exact date of her surrender.

Ms Jorge says she was kidnapped by the MNR in 1982, in Gondola district when she was just 13 years old. She was given military training the following year by South African instructors in the bandits' main base in Gorongosa district, in the central province of Sofala, and she rose to become a commander of the MNR's women's section. But she said that the tasks of the women's detachment were mainly cooking, tending the wounded, satisfying male bandits' sexual appetites, and carrying military equipment dropped by South African planes.

She said that she had gone into Gorongosa in October this year to pick up more South African supplies. She told the Radio that on this occasion South African planes unloaded military equipment, uniforms and combat rations.

Ms Jorge told the Radio that she now wished to live with her parents, who are resident in the Manica provincial capital, Chimoio.

It was on 12 September, at a meeting in the northern Mozambican town of Songo with President Joaquim Chissano, that the South African State President P.W. Botha pledged an end to all South African support for the MNR.