

Mozambique deports Red Cross official

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MAPUTO — Mozambican security officials on Tuesday showed journalists a sample of the uniforms confiscated from a warehouse of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Beira last week.

Following the discovery of the uniforms among what was supposed to be a humanitarian shipment of used clothing destined for civilians living in zones controlled by the Renamo bandits, the interim ICRC delegate in Beira, Hans Ulrich Spiess, was deported.

A sample of each of the five varieties of military shirts and jackets was sent from Beira to Maputo. The ICRC has claimed that the clothing confiscated was civilian but "military in style".

But in fact four of the five items of clothing shown to the

journalists were obviously military in nature, in that they had attachments at the shoulders for insignia of rank.

One was the type of uniform commonly known in Mozambique as *Pingo de Chuva* (rain-drop), and similar to that worn by units of the Mozambican police. This is in olive green, with small brown streaks — hence the name.

There was also a khaki jacket, a black military shirt, and a navy blue jacket. The only one that did not have fittings for insignia was a heavy green jacket.

Also found in the warehouse were several insignia, and these too were shown by the security officials. There were four of these insignia, three with one star, and one with four stars.

Nonetheless, ICRC officials continued to insist that there had been no intention to send military uniforms to Renamo.

An ICRC spokesman in Maputo, Martin Alleman, blamed those who had collected the clothes in Germany.

"The German Red Cross should have made a better selection of what was fit for distribution", he told Aim.

The ICRC Maputo office

also distributed a statement denying claims made in Beira by the Sofala Provincial Security Director, Carlos Custodio, according to which there had been 21 flights from 10 to 16 June to the Renamo held areas of Canxixe, Magunda and Canda, but only seven relief flights to government held zones over the same period.

But the ICRC claimed it made just one flight to Canxixe, on June 30, with the aim of evacuating the Red Cross team that was working there. The statement claimed there had been no flights at all to Canda.

Naturally, the ICRC statement refers only to flights registered with the Beira control tower. There have been reports that the ICRC also makes unregistered flights.

The ICRC's version is that it only makes flights with the prior authorisation both of Renamo and of the Mozambican armed forces, and that on the day of the flight it reconfirms it with the provincial military command.

The ICRC statement claims that any prohibition imposed by the Mozambican authorities is "strictly obeyed"