

# Maputo troops kill 340 bandits

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MAPUTO.

MOZAMBICAN government forces killed 340 MNR bandits in the southern Mozambican province of Gaza between January and September, Radio Mozambique reported yesterday.

During the same period, the government troops also destroyed 21 bandit camps in the province, the radio said.

It charged that over the nine months, bandits murdered 450 people, wounded 200 others and kidnapped another 193 in the province.

It also accused the bandits of killing 60 people in an attack on October 1 against the village of Chihaqueline in the province.

Meanwhile, bandit leader Afonso Dhlakama on Tuesday asked Portugal, the country's former colonial ruler, to

participate actively in peace talks with the Mozambican government.

Dhlakama told reporters that he conveyed the request to Portuguese deputy foreign minister Mr Jose Durao Barroso during a two-hour meeting.

He said the bandits planned to present the request to the Mozambican government and Italian and church mediators in Rome where talks have been taking place over the past 18 months to end the 16-year war.

Mr Durao Barroso told reporters that Portugal was studying the request. But before agreeing to sit at the negotiating table, it had to be sure that it was what both sides wanted and the Italian government felt it would help the process.  
— Ziana-Xinhua-Reuter.