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# Route into Maputo

By GIL LAURECIANO  
RENAMO rebels have mounted a new phase in their insurgency with repeated attacks on the suburbs of Maputo, Beira and Nampula — and there are indications they are using the country's fuelwood crisis to infiltrate into the cities.

Evidence supplied by peasant farmers from the Matola-Gare and Tenga regions, some 35km from Maputo, suggests that some woodcutters and transport operators are working hand in glove with the rebel movement.

Truck drivers and woodcutters have to travel up to 100km out of Maputo to find suitable trees for felling because of the extent of deforestation around the city. This takes them into territory controlled by the rebels and local militiamen suspect that some of them make deals with the insurgents, providing them with passage into the suburbs, in exchange for the right to cut trees in rebel-held areas.

A member of the militia protecting a suburb called "KM-15" on the outskirts of the city told *The Weekly Mail* that, after being tipped off by a young child, he found six

rifles under a pile of firewood being carried into the city as well as two Renamo insurgents who were trying to pass themselves off as assistants.

"What happened after that was we ordered that all the lorries coming into the city with supplies of wood be searched. But it is difficult to enforce the regulation because the drivers come with cigarettes and money and offer these to the regular soldiers along the road, who order us not to stop the lorries," says the militiaman.

An assistant to one of the biggest suppliers of wood to bakeries in the city said he knew that "from time to time we carry sacks of flour to people cutting wood out there in the bush". The assistant said it was clear that these could only be Renamo members.

Another factor that aids the movement of insurgents and weapons into the city is the abolition of control posts along the roads leading into Maputo. Mozambique's new constitution, effective since 1990, guarantees the free movement of people and their goods around the country.

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