

Mozambique peace effort gains ground

Star 19/11/92 p.13

Star Africa Service

^{13 85}
MAPUTO — While Angola's peace process appears to be on the verge of collapse, the peace in Mozambique appears to be getting firmer by the day.

This contradicts expert predictions that Angola was much more likely to consolidate its peace than was Mozambique, where much of the violence was attributed to bandit gangs operating beyond the control of the Renamo rebels.

Despite some clashes between troops of the Frelimo government and Renamo, the ceasefire agreed to in Rome on October 4 and implemented from October 15 has held throughout the country.

The ceasefire has held despite long delays in implementing key elements of the Rome accord, notably the confining of the Renamo and Frelimo forces into designated assembly points. Only four of the 49 assembly points have so far been designated, let alone occupied. Yet

the opposing forces have by and large remained within their own areas.

The head of the United Nations military observer force, Lieutenant-Colonel G P Sinha, said both sides have pledged to order their forces to avoid any "disorderly" movement from positions they occupy.

He said the pledge was given on Monday at a meeting of the Ceasefire Commission (CCF).

The commission was to meet again today to analyse reports from teams sent out last week to investigate eight complaints of ceasefire violations — four from each side.

The most serious violations reported so far have been Renamo's capture of four towns from Frelimo after the ceasefire, but the rebels have since withdrawn from all four. Renamo said it took the towns in retaliation for Frelimo troop movements into Renamo-held areas after the ceasefire.

The ambushes that had made road travel hazardous appear to have ceased. Road traffic has as a result been resumed in much of Mozambique and has increased to a point where the air charter operators who did a thriving trade during the war are in danger of going out of business.

The biggest losses are being suffered by the state-owned TTA company on flights carrying Mozambican mine-workers to and from South Africa.

TTA's deputy general manager, Mario de Carvalho, said the company had carried an average of 600 mineworkers weekly between Maputo and Komatipoort but 95 percent of that traffic had disappeared as the workers had reverted to buses.

Carvalho said there had been an 80 percent reduction in traffic on TTA's internal flights in central and southern Mozambique.