

# Mozambican troops not moving to assembly points fast enough

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**MAPUTO — The cantonment of Mozambican government and Renamo forces in UN-run assembly points has almost ground to a halt.**

Figures made available yesterday by the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) show that on Monday just 53 troops — ten from the government and 43 from Renamo — arrived at the assembly points.

Of the 35 assembly points that are now open, 13 (eight government and five Renamo points) are still unused. ONUMOZ has not reported a single arrival at any of these. A further 14 assembly points have yet to open. 8 211 government troops and 3 793 Renamo fighters have arrived at the assembly points.

When all 49 assembly points are functioning they will be able to hold 46 360 men. So far, just 26 percent of this capacity is being used.

But if the demobilisation

process is to run according to schedule, all the assembly points should be full by the end of the year. In January, the soldiers will be divided into two groups: those who are to be incorporated into the new, unified armed forces, and those who are to be demobilised.

As they move out of the assembly points, a second "shift" of troops will move in. For the total number of troops to be processed is over 80 000 — almost twice the capacity of the assembly points. If this complex process is to work, so that demobilisation is complete by May, then the rhythm of troop arrival in the assembly points must be stepped up dramatically.

Meanwhile, Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama has announced that he will visit his men at the Chiramba assembly point in the central province of Sofala.

According to Radio Mozambique, Mr Dhlakama has ex-

pressed concern at reports that Renamo forces at Chiramba are receiving an inadequate diet.

Meanwhile, the spectre of famine is looming over a large part of Mozambique's northern province of Niassa while thousands of tonnes of grain are lying unsold in the neighbouring province of Cabo Delgado, the Maputo daily *Noticias* reported yesterday.

Regional relief official Matias Silvestre was quoted in the paper as saying the situation was "desolate" in the Niassa districts of Cuamba, Metarica, Nipepe and Maua.

He said about 31 000 people, still living in centres for those displaced by the 16-year civil war which ended a year ago, were at risk. There was an urgent need for food aid and for farm implements so people could resume farming.

— Ziana-Reuter