

Mozambique soldiers riot over pay delay

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MAPUTO. — An angry crowd of demobilised government soldiers rioted in the streets of Chimoio, near the border with Zimbabwe, Radio Mozambique said.

The soldiers took to the streets yesterday to demand the demobilisation pay due to them in terms of a peace accord which ended 16 years of civil war, the radio said.

It gave no details of the riot, but said it followed an uprising by government troops in the Catandica troop assembly area near Chimoio on Sunday.

Three government soldiers were wounded in that incident when the government's crack Rapid Intervention Police put an end to the riot.

The police intervened when

government soldiers from the United Nations-supervised assembly area blocked the main road from Chimoio to the northern province of Tete, demanding immediate demobilisation.

The first of 49 UN-supervised assembly areas was opened in November, but demobilisation began only in March. Hundreds of soldiers endure rudimentary conditions in the camps with growing impatience.

Government sources said an inquiry had been launched into the Catandica affair.

But observers of Mozambique's troubled peace process say the most worrying issue is the problem of non-payment of demobilisation compensation. — Sapa-AFP.