

# British to help Frelimo repulse rebels

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86

From JOHN BATTERSBY

LONDON. ... A British company will arm and train an elite force of Mozambican soldiers to defend a vital northern rail link against attacks by Renamo rebels.

The company will supply light arms and ammunition to the Mozambican Army and train a 600-men battalion.

News of this development came as the beleaguered Frelimo government appealed to Western countries to help it repel a rebel offensive which has brought President Samora Machel's government to the brink of collapse.

Details of the British contract to guard the Nacala rail line were disclosed in the latest issue of Jane's Defence Weekly.

The British company will use former British regulars to train the force inside Mozambique. The troops will be armed with Enfield 185a1 rifles which have not been sold abroad before and have just entered service with the British Army.

## Border talks

Britain has been quietly stepping up civil and military aid to Mozambique since President Machel visited Britain at the end of 1983.

A British Army training team based in Zimbabwe has been giving up to 60-strong parties of Mozambican officers and NCOs tactical training. The scheme - due to end next year - was recently extended for a further 12 months.

Sapa-Reuters reports that the Zimbabwean Prime Minister, Mr Robert Mugabe, and President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia met yesterday at Victoria Falls. They said South Africa was intensifying acts of aggression in the subcontinent.

(1) A mine exploded early yesterday on the railway line between the South African border and Maputo, derailing seven train carriages and damaging 900 metres of track, the Mozambican national news agency said.

(2) Sophie Tema reports from Johannesburg that the number of destitute people arriving in Gazankulu and Lebowa from Mozambique are believed to have increased tremendously in the past two weeks.

Mr Sam Nzima, former MP in the Gazankulu government, now heading the relief committee, said: "Large groups of people, including women with babies strapped on to their backs, have been arriving in the area almost daily and having walked for more than three days across the game reserve."

(3) Our correspondent reports from Paris that the Washington-based International Monetary Fund is preparing to impose crippling economic discipline on Mozambique next month.