MOZAMBIQUE: Massacres alleged

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The Lisbon bureau of Mozambique's rebel *Renamo* movement issued a statement on June 18 accusing Maputo government troops of massacring four days previously civilians who had gathered in the villages of Chemba and Molima to receive food aid from the *International Committee of the Red Cross*. Mozambican and Zimbabwean soldiers firing from helicopters were alleged to have killed 17 people and wounded 65 others. On June 8 the rebels had accused government forces of killing 217 villagers who had also gone to three places in Zambezia and Manica provinces to receive ICRC aid.

I.O.N.- *The agreement between the Mozambican authorities, Renamo and the ICRC which came into effect in April for the resumption of deliveries of food and medical supplies by air to remote areas has so far been restricted in its implementation to the Sofala region. Its extension to the provinces of Manica, Zambezia and Nampula has not been possible, after the refusal of the Maputo authorities to allow movement because of the fighting. Even in Sofala the ICRC only supplies one area under Renamo control, three times a week. The international agency provides chiefly clothing, cooking utensils, medicines and blankets. The negotiation of the agreement had been difficult because of the refusal of Maputo to allow the ICRC to act in regions controlled by the guerrillas. The dispute focussed on the problem of people displaced by the fighting: the government hoped that they would flee into areas under its control, but instead the number heading for neighbouring countries reached such proportions that the authorities had to relax their stance and agree to let the ICRC help victims of the conflict even in Renamo-held zones.*