

Rebels

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mourn

loss of

leader

By Joao Santa Rita

The Mozambique National Resistance has officially confirmed the death of its secretary-general, Mr Orlando Cristina.

The confirmation of Mr Cristina's death was broadcast last night by the rebels' Voice of Free Africa radio station. However the broadcast did not say where and how Mr Cristina had died.

"The Mozambique National Resistance president, Mr Afonso Dhlakama, will make a statement on the matter soon," the broadcast, monitored in Johannesburg, said.

It added that a new interim secretary-general had already been appointed but it did not name him.

The radio described Mr Cristina as a "true and tireless nationalist whose death is being mourned by the entire Mozambican people".

The death of Mr Cristina would not affect the movement's operations inside Mozambique and would serve only to strengthen the will of the MNR fighters to defeat the Frelimo Government, it added.

According to informed sources, Mr Cristina, who was shot in the Pretoria area, had been one of the founders of the Voice of Free Africa when the MNR was still operating from Rhodesia.

Yesterday the South African Police issued a statement saying they were investigating a shooting incident in which a person by the name of Mr Orlando Cristina had been shot dead.