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MOZAMBIQUE

President Seeks Aid

The deteriorating security situation in Mozambique and the possibility of military assistance from Tanzania and Zimbabwe are believed to have been the topics of a one-day summit in Harare between President Samora Machel, President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and the Zimbabwe Prime Minister, Mr. Robert Mugabe.

No communique was issued after the meeting but sources close to the talks indicated that Mozambique's growing problems with rebels of the Mozambique National Resistance (MNA) and the scope of military support to the Frelimo Government from Frontline states was discussed.

With Mr. Machel was his Foreign Minister, Mr. Joaquim Chissano, the Defence Minister, General Alberto Chipande, his deputy, General Sebastio Mabote, the Air Force chief, General Hamo Thai and Mr. Gedion Ndobe, Secretary of State for Defence. The top Mozambican military figures are thought to have briefed the summit on Mozambique's security problems.

Since Mozambique signed the Nko-

C

mati non-aggression pact with South Africa in March 1984, this problem has grown (p. 7165). Although South Africa claims it has stopped support for the rebels, Mozambican officials say privately they believe aid and planning for the rebels come from South African territory. Rightwing Portuguese businessmen also support the MNR attacks, which have crippled the economy. According to Mozambican officials, Indian Ocean air fields are used to fly supplies to remote MNR bases inside Mozambique.

Mr. Mugabe and Mr. Nyerere have recently pledged to increase support for Mr. Machel. The Frontline states—which include Angola, Botswana and Zambia—met in March to discuss Mozambique's security problems.

In May, Mr. Nyerere gave an indication of the grave situation in the country when he said that Tanzania would not hesitate to provide a rear base for a new war to liberate Mozambique if South Africa toppled the Machel Government.

Some diplomatic sources say that Tanzania already has troops along its border with Mozambique. (GD 13/6)

Tenth Anniversary

The people of Mozambique marked 10 years of independence from Portugal on June 25th wondering what happened to the peace and prosperity that beckoned in 1975.

"The People's Republic of Mozambique will build a prosperous and independent, advanced economy," promised Mr. Samora Machel, emerging from a bitter guerrilla war against colonial rule to become his country's first president (p. 3654).

Today, Mozambique's economy is in ruins, its prospects bleak and its countryside unsafe because of rebels, comments *The Times* (UK). President Machel told Parliament in June that the country had to adopt a "war economy" because of the debilitating conflict.

The Finance Minister, Mr. Rui Baltazar, told the same session that exports dropped 22% in 1984 from the previous year and industrial production declined 25% in the same period.

Officials say policy mistakes, drought and floods are partly to blame for the dismal state of the economy. But the most obvious factor to residents and visitors alike is security.

Mozambique's agreement with South Africa to stop supporting the African National Congress (ANC) in return for Pretoria's curbing the activities of the Mozambique National Resistance has led to an increase in violence, not a decline.

Eye-witness reports over the past year tell of increasingly brutal attacks on villages, farms and buses. Their activities have made many roads impassable and peasants cannot grow their crops in peace. Power lines are sabotaged and factories are barely operating.

While hardships have increased since independence, there is no significant discontent or popular support for the *bandidos armados* (armed bandits).

Pragmatism has taken over from revolutionary fervour. Since 1983 domestic economic policies have shifted towards private initiative from state enterprise.

This month Parliament approved incentives to encourage Western investment and Mozambique has just signed its first loan agreement with the World Bank. But progress depends on achieving peace concludes *The Times*.

President Machel, in a television broadcast warned his countrymen that they "must still bear sacrifices, face war and endure hunger and wretchedness."

In 10 years, he said, the 13 million Mozambicans had not known a moment of tranquillity as MNR rebels spread terror in the countryside. (TT 26/6)

Rebel Ambush

Rightwing Mozambique National Resistance rebels have killed 24 people, wounded eight and abducted 20 others during an attack on a convoy of cars and buses, the *AIM* news agency reported on June 27th.

The agency identified only one of those killed, a Chinese technician called Tao Nao, who was working on an agricultural project in Manhica district of southern Maputo province.

The private cars and passenger buses were travelling north from Maputo to Gaza province on June 25th, when they came under fire at Patequei, 30 miles from Maputo. *AIM* said. Government troops were escorting the convoy, it added.

Rebels also blew up the power plant at a factory near Maputo making cement roofing sheets, stopping production.

AIM said.

(GD 28/6)

Last reference pp. 7600A, 7564B