

Machel Returns

*MB061939 Maputo Domestic Service in Portuguese
1900 GMT 6 Sep 85*

[Text] President Samora Machel returned to Maputo today after making a working visit to Manica Province. Samora Machel arrived in Manica yesterday morning accompanied by Alberto Chipande, minister of defense; Armando Guebuza, minister in the presidency; Aranda da Silva, minister of home trade; and Pascoal Mocumbi, minister of health.

RSA Equipment Captured

*MB080708 Maputo Domestic Service in Portuguese
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[Text] We have with us our colleague Rodrigues Bila, who has followed the joint Mozambique-Zimbabwe military operation against the armed bandits' main base in Gorongosa.

[Bila] I was one of the Mozambican journalists who accompanied His Excellency President Samora Machel to the Gorongosa base, which was taken last week by the Mozambican Armed Forces in coordination with the Zimbabwean Armed Forces. It was a joint operation launched in that zone. What I can say about the Gorongosa base, the so-called operational headquarters of the armed bandits in Mozambique, is that the base was taken and that much war materiel was seized. This equipment had been stolen from several economic and social sectors of our economy. The most important feature of that base is that it also included a number of the small bases spread around the main base. The most important base, called Banana House, is on the mountain and is flanked by two rivers. One of them is called Vanduzi River and the other is called Muazi River. We walked on foot through this zone for a long time — about 3 hours — and we saw the great hideout of the armed bandits. They left much equipment and war materiel — ammunition, stolen trucks, generators, typewriters, photocopying machines, and so on.

[Unidentified announcer] You have described the equipment left behind. Can you now describe this military operation?

[Bila] Well, to describe the operation is a bit difficult to do because I was not there when the operation was launched. I did not watch the taking of the main base. The operation lasted about 5 hours, it started at 0500 and by 1000 the base was taken. During this period many bandits were killed and many fled. The information we have is that there are many bases around the mountain and those were also taken. The Gogogo base, which the bandits call the military academy of the MNR, is to the north of Maringue District. We also have information that at that base there were many white people, but we could not verify this. We can also confirm that Afonso Dhlakama fled. He was on the base, but apparently he fled on a motorbike, leaving his glasses behind. He ran away with his assistant, and they ran in the direction of (?Guarda) where we presume he has his family. What I can say is that in no time this base will be taken, because it has been encircled.

There is an important detail about the armed bandits that we learned of at the main MNR base. We found 40 transmit and

receive radios, and these radios work with the help of a generator, as was explained to us by Brigadier (Candea) of the Zimbabwean forces. He said that the accumulators that we saw have a label on them with the date 2 July 1984; therefore, this must be South African equipment which the MNR received on 2 July 1984. Curiously enough, the Zimbabwean troops have been using the same type of equipment since 4 July 1984, thus we can see the coincidence that this supply was made at the same time, some months after the signing of the Nkomati Accord. This is further proof of the South African involvement in this war.

I do not know the total number of bases destroyed. I can not give an exact number, but I must add that there are many bases around this area that were destroyed and when we left Gorongosa, helicopters were taking off on search and mopping-up operations.