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## MNR expected to free hostages

THE Italian and British Embassies in Maputo are waiting for the release of at least two Italian priests, a British citizen and an Irishman who have been held hostage by MNR bandits at a sugar mill near Beira.

A spokesman for the British High Commission in Harare, which is monitoring the holding of the men by MNR bandits at the mill near Luabo, confirmed the men had been kidnapped on July 30.

He said he knew of only four hostages but did not exclude the possibility that more people were being

held. Some reports say there could be as many as 19 captives.

A statement from the MNR in Lisbon said at the weekend that the hostages were about to be released.

The British High Commission spokesman said the MNR had set no condition for the release of the men and that no negotiations were taking place.

He believed the Briton and the Irishman had been working at the mill.

It is understood the other two men are Fransiscan Capuchin priests from southern Italy. — Ziana.