

MOZAMBIQUE

Lisbon Reports Power Cables Destroyed by Saboteurs

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[From the "Cape of Good Hope" program]

[Text] About 300 pylons carrying high-tension cables from the Cabora-Bassa Dam in Mozambique's Tete Province to South Africa have been brought down. A technician working for the HCB [Hidroelectrica de Cabora Bassa] confirmed to our program that at least 150 pylons have definitely been sabotaged, but that this figure might be much higher since the area so far checked by the company's technicians is not very wide.

Unable to elicit any reaction from the HCB administration in Songo, in the People's Republic of Mozambique, we approached the company's office in Lisbon which confirmed that the power line is indeed out of action. However, the same source was unable to tell us exactly how many pylons have been brought down.

RENAMO [Mozambican National Resistance] guerrillas fighting Samora Machel's regime have systematically sabotaged the pylons for the past 2 years, which means that the losses incurred by the HCB are almost impossible to assess.

The Cabora-Bassa power lines run for about 900 km across Mozambique before entering South Africa. Being the majority shareholder in the HCB, Portugal is the most affected party by this abnormal situation. South Africa and the People's Republic of Mozambique are the two major beneficiaries of the hydroelectric complex. The dam is operating at less than 1 percent of its total capacity, with power unable to reach the Apollo station in South Africa where it must be transformed before it can be supplied to Mozambique. So, summing up, at least 150 pylons carrying high-tension cables from the Cabora Bassa dam have been brought down: A company technician approached by us in Lisbon told us, however, that the actual figure might be as high as 300.