

SA helicopter 'in Mozambique'

MAPUTO. — A South African helicopter carrying an undetermined number of men is said to have landed in Mozambique near a border post this month, in South Africa's continuing programme to aid MNR rebels.

The official Mozambican news agency AIM quoted an unnamed military spokesman as saying the helicopter landed near Ressano Garcia, 90km north-west of Maputo, on September 12.

He said the military had evidence that members of South Africa's 32 Battalion were operating in the central province of Zambezia, which borders on Malawi. Mozambique has accused Malawi of helping MNR guerillas.

An SADF spokesman said: "The position of the SADF and South Africa as far as Mozambique and the MNR are concerned has been explained repeatedly at the highest level ... this position has not changed."

Mozambique says South African aid to the rebels continues in violation of a mutual security pact, the Nkomati Accord, signed 2½ years ago. Both South Africa and Malawi deny the charges.

The military spokesman said 35 guerillas, armed with explosives, knives and axes, destroyed a church on Tuesday in Mangunze village, in the southern province of Gaza.

The government-run Mozambique Radio said yesterday that soldiers killed 19 rebels this month in two skirmishes near the Malawi border. The broadcast said some insurgents fled into Malawi.

The radio quoted military officers as saying 60 guerillas were killed in the southern province of Inhambane in July and August. — Sapa AP

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