

Mayhem

by MNR

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witnessed

MOAMBA (Mozambique)
— A delegation of representatives of United States non-governmental and religious organisations have witnessed for themselves the onslaught by South Africa against Mozambique's health service.

The Americans visited the ruined health centre at Moamba, a town about 50 km north-west of Maputo, attacked by Pretoria's MNR bandits on February 6.

The bandits looted the health centre, then lobbed mortar shells into it and set it ablaze. Today it is no more than a desolate shell.

Entering the ruined health centre, one treads through a thick layer of soot and ashes. Bits of charred timber lie on the floor and there are gaping

holes in the roof.

The rooms in this small building once contained an emergency ward, a consultation room, the local dentist's surgery, a pharmacy, a laboratory and administrative offices. All are now reduced to ashes and burnt metal.

Of the beds, just the frames and the springs remain. Ruined medical implements lie among the debris. A nurse shows a tray full of wrecked dental instruments. "These were brand new before the bandits burnt the centre down," he says sadly. The metal skeleton of what was once a dentist's chair can still be made out.

One peculiar apparatus lying in the ashes puzzled the delegation for a moment. Then they noticed two wheels attached to metal legs — this was all that was left of a wheelchair — even the crippled do not escape Pretoria's fury.

After witnessing this destruction, the Americans flew southwards to see the other face of Mozambique — that of post-independence construction and development. They toured the Pequenos Libombos Dam, on the Umbeluzi River, 35 km west of Maputo, a project entirely conceived and implemented since Mozambican independence in 1975.

Among the organisations represented on the American delegation, are the Disciples of Christ Overseas Ministry, the American Friends Service Committee, and the Unitarian Universalist Association. — Ziama AIM.