

100 MNR Rebels Reported Killed in Clashes
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[Text] The Mozambique Government is claiming some fresh successes against MNR rebels in various parts of the country. They say nearly 100 rebels have been killed in clashes in the past week. But it seems that no sooner do Frelimo forces launch an offensive in one area, for example in the northwestern province of Zambezia, than rebels crop up to cause trouble elsewhere. From Maputo, Dan Moiane telexed this report:

According to the military, the clashes occurred between Wednesday last week and Wednesday this week in 8 of Mozambique's 10 provinces. A total of 36 of the rebels were killed in Zambezia Province, 14 in Inhambane, 11 in Tete, and the remainder in the province of Manica, Sofala, Nampula, Gaza, and Maputo. It seems clear from these figures that heavy fighting is still continuing in parts of Zambezia, despite the recent announcement by the Army that it has retaken virtually all the districts captured by the MNR in 1986.

Although no mention is made of the situation in northern Cabo Delgado Province, travellers from there reaching Maputo recently, have spoken of increased rebel activity in areas near the provincial capital, Pemba.

At the same time, government successes in Zambezia, where Tanzanians are also helping in the fight against the MNR, have caused two major problems. Firstly, the security situation in Nampula, to the north, has become worse, apparently, because many rebels manage to flee the government onslaught and cross into the province. Even the recent capture of several key MNR camps in parts of Nampula does not appear to have helped to remedy the worsening security situation.

The second problem brought about by the offensive in Zambezia is that of relief assistance to thousands of peasants freed from rebel hands. In its estimates last March for food and other relief aid to the international community, the government did not include thousands of people in rebel-controlled areas of Zambezia. Now that most of them are free, the question has arisen of how to feed and cloth them, as they are not covered by the present appeal for international relief aid.