

Concern over MNR rights abuses on civilians

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MAPUTO.

THE human rights organisation, Amnesty International, has expressed its concern at "the horrific abuses perpetrated on civilians" by the South African backed MNR bandits, Amnesty's secretary-general, Ian Martin, said in Maputo at the weekend.

Mr Martin is leading a three-member delegation from Amnesty International on a week-long visit to Mozambique. The delegation has held discussions with Mozambican president Joaquim Chissano, Justice Minister Ossumane Dauto, and leading officials in the legal, police and prison departments.

Mr Martin said that amnesty's reports on Mozambique "have been used by the MNR and its supporters", but made clear that this had never been amnesty's intention.

Amnesty's criticisms of the Mozambican government and security forces "should not be used by those responsible for graver abuses", he said.

Asked why the 1988 amnesty report had stressed alleged human rights abuses by the

government, while giving much less weight to the MNR's crimes against the civilian population, Mr Martin said that at the time the report was written, amnesty did not have access to information later released by the US State Department.

In April, the US State Department published findings of the refugee expert Mr Robert Gersony who, on the basis of testimony from Mozambican refugees, catalogued MNR atrocities, and estimated that the bandits were responsible for at least 100 000 civilian deaths.

● Beira has once again been deprived of electricity due to sabotage carried out by the MNR bandits on the transmission lines carrying power to Beira from the Revue hydroelectric plant 300 kilometres west of the city. The lines were cut on Thursday in the neighbouring province of Manica, said an official in the Beira office of the electricity organisation. It is not yet known how many pylons were attacked by the bandits. A team has been sent to investigate the extent of the damage.

The pylons taking electricity to Beira have been a favourite MNR target, and the repeated sabotage has led the local authorities to consider other means of generating power. — Ziana-AIM-Pana.