

Thousand MNR bandits killed

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UNITS of the Mozambican armed forces killed about 1 000 bandits of the South African-backed MNR during 1989 in the central province of Sofala, according to a source in the provincial military command, quoted on Tuesday by Radio Mozambique.

During the same period the armed forces captured more than 200 bandits and destroyed 23 MNR camps.

Sofala was at the heart of a major Mozambican offensive during the middle of the year, when joint Mozambican and Zimbabwean forces overran the internal headquarters of MNR leader Afonso Dhlakama, located in the district of Maringue, just north of Gorongosa Mountain.

The offensive resulted in the recapture of the small towns of Muanza, Maringue, Chemba and Inhaminga, so that for the first time in six years all the district capitals in Sofala province were in government hands.

In Harare, the Mozambican government yesterday urged the international community to help it create favourable conditions for the voluntary return of Mozambican refugees in exile.

"The changes that are taking place in the world, as well as peace initiatives in which our region is involved, make us think seriously on the possibility of the situation in our country getting out of control due to the massive and unpredicted return of Mozambicans," the Mozambican national director of the Office for Support to Refugees and Liberation Movements, Cde Fernando Fazenda, said. — Ziana-AIM-Pana.