

# Plane carrying food aid shot in Mozambique

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MAPUTO.

AN aircraft carrying food aid to a major centre for displaced people in the central Mozambican province of Sofala on Monday was shot at and holed, according to a report yesterday on Radio Mozambique.

The plane, a DC-3 belonging to the Maputo-based private company, Scan-Transportes, had been hired by a number of humanitarian organisations to operate an airlift of essential goods to the isolated town of Machaze in Manica province, and to the centre of the displaced at Casa Banana in Sofala.

The plane was hit shortly after midday, as it was coming in to land at Casa Banana. It was forced to abort its journey, and return to the Manica provincial capital of Chimoio.

It is not clear who fired at the plane, but the balance of probabilities points to the MNR bandits, who have a strong presence in Gorongosa district, where Casa Banana is located.

So far this month, Mozambican troops have killed 54 MNR bandits and captured a further eight in the southern province of Inhambane.

Meanwhile, Mozambican customs police have detained two South African citizens on charges of smuggling weapons out of Mozambique.

The two were detained at Namaacha, on the border between Mozambique and Swaziland, according to a spokesman for the national customs directorate, the weapons were destined for South Africa. — Ziana-Pana.