

MNR to allow food convoys in bandit areas

MAPUTO — MNR bandits leader, Mr Alfonso Dhlakama, has changed his mind yet again on allowing food aid convoys to pass unhindered into areas his forces occupy.

In an interview published in the British newspaper The Observer, Mr Dhlakama said he was now prepared to allow trucks carrying emergency food aid to enter areas controlled by the MNR bandits.

Late last month, Mr Dhlakama had told the United States Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Mr Herman Cohen, that MNR would not hinder the passage of food aid vehicle. But only a few days later, MNR reversed its position, and, in a statement from its Lisbon office, said it would

not allow any such "corridors of peace" on the grounds that the government would "take advantage" of them.

Now Mr Dhlakama has decided that the convoys may move unhindered but only if they are "effectively and independently monitored, with no government or MNR soldiers involved".

Mr Dhlakama also gave The Observer his terms for a ceasefire. These include forming a new national army, half to be drawn from the existing armed forces and the other half from MNR, and suspending articles in the constitution which he claimed gave the president dictatorial powers. — Ziana-AIM.