

MOZAMBIQUE 220

News reports & clippings

25 June 2013

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NOTE OF EXPLANATION: This mailing list is used to distribute two publications, both edited by Joseph Hanlon. This is my own sporadic "News reports & clippings", which is entirely my own responsibility. This list is also used to distribute the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, published by CIP and AWEPA, but those organisations are not linked to "News reports & clippings" Joseph Hanlon

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More attacks on EN-1; rail also affected

There were one or two attacks yesterday (Monday) on the main north-south road (EN-1) between the River Save and Muxunge, despite a heavy military presence and traffic moving along the 100 km segment of road only in military convoys, and only during daylight..

Gunmen shot at the first southbound convoy yesterday, hitting two buses, a car and a lorry, but causing no injuries to people. Soldiers with the convoy fired back, and the attackers disappeared into the bush. (Noticias, O Pais, 25 June; <http://www.verdade.co.mz/newsflash/37859>)

A second attack, at 20.30 local time last night, has been reported on @Verdade's Twitter feed. (@democraciaMZ; <https://twitter.com/democraciaMZ>) There is no confirmation, but @democraciaMZ has been the first to accurately report previous attacks.

The attacks and Renamo threats are now causing serious disruption. Lusa reported last night that the Portuguese government has advised its citizens not to travel on the EN1. (<http://www.rtp.pt/noticias/index.php?article=661761&tm=7&layout=122&visual=61>)

And rail traffic is being reduced. O Pais reports today that passenger service has been suspended on the Sena line from Tete to Beira. Noticias reported yesterday that the number of coal trains from Tete to Beira has been cut from 6 to 3. Coal companies are unlikely to object, as they are now trying to reduce output in the face of sharply falling prices – coking coal has fallen from \$170 to \$140 per tonne in the past two months. (<http://coalportal.com>)

The 7th round of negotiations between Renamo and the government Monday failed to break the deadlock. Renamo wants to negotiate changes to the electoral process and then have the agreed document submitted jointly to parliament, with both Frelimo and Renamo instructing their MPs to vote in favour. The government team, headed by Frelimo Political Commission member Jose Pacheco, refuses, saying Renamo must submit its proposal directly to parliament. Renamo notes it has already done so, and its proposals have been rejected by the Frelimo majority in parliament. Government continues to stress it is happy to negotiate - but not about this. Renamo has insisted that electoral law should be the first issue to be discussed, which means there have been no formal discussions about other issues such as money for Renamo.

The Council of Ministers met yesterday but made no statement on the attacks. Ministers normally meet on Tuesday morning, but today (25 June) is a holiday, independence day, and the meeting was brought forward to Monday.

Many details remain unclear and reports are inconsistent. CanalMoz reported claims (almost certainly made informally by Renamo) that 7 soldiers pursuing yesterday morning's attackers were killed, but this is not confirmed and probably not true.

Victor Igreja, a researcher sympathetic to Renamo, reports that he is currently doing fieldwork in Vila Paiva-Gorongosa and has found himself "surrounded by governmental troops. ... This evening - 24 Jun 2013 - new and more contingent of government troops have arrived in Vila Paiva. The climate is very tense. People are in panic. It seems that the government plan is to assault the base-house of Afonso Dhlakama, the leader of Renamo who moved with his troops to a nearby village - Sadjundjinra, Vunduzi - in Gorongosa last year, October 2012."

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This mailing is the personal responsibility of Joseph Hanlon, and does not necessarily represent the views of the Open University.