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Current Intelligence Country Handbook

MOZAMBIQUE



DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE
Office of Current Intelligence

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MOZAMBIQUE

I. Political

Mozambique is an Overseas Province of Portugal, tightly administered by Lisbon. Portugal has consistently refused to consider independence for Mozambique. Native nationalists have resorted to armed insurgency but currently pose no serious threat to Portuguese control of the province. Improved insurgent organization and more sophisticated guerrilla tactics, which cover larger and larger areas of the north and northwest, however, portend greater difficulties for continuing Portuguese hegemony.

The highest administrative authority is the Governor-General, but all important decisions are made or approved in Lisbon. The Governor-General is assisted by a partially elected consultative Legislative Council and by an advisory Economic and Social Council composed of representatives of the major interest groups. Appointive officials at the district and local levels are also assisted by legislative bodies. Anyone may vote if he meets the rather stiff requirements, but very few Africans are eligible.

All overt political activity is sponsored and regulated by the government. It consists almost exclusively of voting for a single slate of officially approved candidates for consultative bodies. Administrative officials and the secret police have effectively, [REDACTED] suppressed actual or suspected attempts to organize political opposition in Mozambique.

African nationalists are based in neighboring countries, principally Tanzania. They have virtually no political organization in Mozambique and very little support from the tribally oriented and politically ignorant indigenous Africans.

The government hopes to forestall widespread discontent through a program of social reforms. It is expanding educational and medical facilities throughout the province. It has eliminated two of the most widely criticized aspects of Portuguese rule—enforced contract labor and the legal distinction between what the Portuguese called assimilated and unassimilated Africans. The Portuguese have also attempted to make social and legal distinctions on the basis of cultural and economic attainment rather than race. Mulattoes are completely accepted in white society. [REDACTED]

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The European population of the province is relatively cosmopolitan, reflecting centuries of contacts with Arab and Asian traders. It has a tradition of political opposition to Lisbon and a sizable minority favors an autonomous multi-racial regime within a continuing Portuguese sphere of influence. The lack of any organization, however, has relegated the active opposition to an inconsequential political force. The white population as a whole is largely unconcerned with political developments as a result of political dominance by the Metropole and confidence in Portuguese military control.

The armed forces of about 40,000 are capable of dealing with any foreseeable insurgent threat. Foreign-based guerrilla operations have been successful only in sparsely inhabited areas of the province and have free movement only in the absence of Portuguese forces.

2. Economic

The Mozambique economy is based essentially on agriculture, which supplies two-thirds of the gross domestic product and employs over 80 percent of the labor force. Although subsistence farming predominates in the agricultural sector, other economic sectors have been so poorly developed that agriculture still accounts for virtually all of the province's exports.

The economic development of Mozambique has been relatively slow. Portugal's essentially mercantilist relationship with Mozambique is an important reason. Lisbon gears most Mozambique economic activity to benefit metropolitan Portugal rather than the province itself. The province provides a market for Portuguese goods and is a source of raw materials and much-needed foreign exchange. Additional factors inhibiting economic growth are limited Portuguese resources, the province's unfavorable financial position, a serious shortage of skilled labor, the red tape involved in a highly centralized economy, and the conservatism of the government and Portuguese businessmen. Portugal has recently increased development expenditures, is slowly changing its policy of discouraging foreign investment in Mozambique, and is interested in the exploitation of Mozambique's substantial but undetermined quantities of mineral resources, particularly natural gas and coal. Lisbon's policy changes have not, however, shown significant results.

Because of its underdevelopment, Mozambique has perennially suffered from a large trade imbalance. For many years this deficit was more than compensated for by remittances from about 300,000 workers

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employed in other South African countries, principally South Africa and Rhodesia, from white southern African tourists, and from the transit trade between provincial ocean ports and landlocked countries in the west. In recent years, however, Mozambique has encountered severe exchange difficulties chiefly caused by increasing trade deficits and government expenses, higher loan obligations, and recent Portuguese legislation which has resulted in large transfers of funds from the province to the Metropole.

Over a third of Mozambique's trade is with Portugal, but South Africa, Great Britain, and to a lesser extent West Germany, India, and the United States are also important. Its principal exports are raw cotton, cashew nuts (virtually the entire Indian trade), sugar and tea. The emphasis in imports is on heavy manufactured goods and textiles.

3. International Relations

Because Mozambique is an Overseas Province, its foreign relations are conducted by the Portuguese Government. Portugal's refusal to grant self-determination to Mozambique has caused virulent attacks by other African governments, condemnatory resolutions in the United Nations, and strained relations with the US and several other NATO allies.

Most independent African governments place high priority on the independence of Mozambique. Many of them, particularly militants such as Tanzania, Algeria, Egypt, and until recently Ghana, have given overt political and material support to exile nationalist organizations. One of the major nationalist groups is based in Tanzania, and Mozambique's relations with the government of that state have been tense. Exiles also have had offices in neighboring Zambia and Malawi. Both these countries, however, depend on access routes across Mozambique territory, and they have tended to be more interested in keeping an eye on the nationalists than in assisting anti-Portuguese insurgency. Portugal encourages them to remain effectively neutral to Pan-African support of independence movements by not demanding that they cease recognition of the nationalist groups and by expanding Portuguese transit capacity to allow the two countries to increase their own trade. Portuguese relations with the conservative Malawians have been particularly cordial, and the two governments have cooperated in controlling armed insurgency directed against either of them.

Portugal's relations with the white-dominated governments of the Republic of South Africa and Rhodesia are close, despite differences in social aspects of their racial policies which are embarrassing to the Portuguese. Lisbon has recently established closer economic rela-

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tions, and should African pressures become genuinely menacing, the three governments might consider formalizing and broadening ad hoc mutual security arrangements. The Portuguese are said to be concerned that intimate economic ties could lead to South African economic domination in southern Africa. The Portuguese also prudently temper their relations with Salisbury lest Portugal be too closely identified with the white Rhodesians' independence efforts. In such an event, international opposition to the rebel government could extend to encompass Mozambique.

4. Subversion

The most important nationalist group attempting to oust the Portuguese from Mozambique is Eduardo Mondlane's Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo), with headquarters in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Frelimo began directing raids into Mozambique in September 1964 and has steadily expanded its operations south. Frelimo has claimed that 3,000 guerrillas are fighting the Portuguese. Although many of them are poorly trained and armed, Frelimo forces have shown increasingly sophisticated organization, skill, and weaponry. Nevertheless, they have carefully avoided testing themselves in pitched battles with government units. Composed almost exclusively of northern tribal groups, they generally have free movement only in the absence of Portuguese troops in sparsely settled and economically unimportant northern areas. Advance into areas which are populated by other tribes or which the Portuguese are more determined to defend has been difficult. Frelimo's resources have come mostly from abroad. Although Mondlane was educated in the US and is a moderate, he accepts aid from sources of all ideologies. Tanzania, and, to a progressively lesser extent, Algeria and Egypt, have provided training bases. Arms and funds have come from several sources, generally channelled through the Tanzanian government and OAU groups or embassies in Dar es Salaam. Communist aid has been mostly in the form of arms.

Frelimo's pre-eminence in the independence struggle has been ineffectively challenged by Paulo Gumane and Hlomulo Gwambe, who in 1965 joined forces to form the Mozambique Revolutionary Committee (Corcmo), based in Lusaka, Zambia. Although most of their ill-used training and funds have come from radical African and Communist countries, Mondlane's rivals are probably more opportunistic than leftist. With very few followers, the two have been responsible for very little of the anti-Portuguese guerrilla war.

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Chronology of Key Events

- 1498 First Portuguese land in Mozambique.
- 1951 (June) Portugal declares Mozambique to be an Overseas Province.
- 1962 (June) Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo) formed; Eduardo Mondlane elected President.
- 1964 (September) Frelimo initiated guerrilla warfare with raids into northern Mozambique.

Selected Factual Data

LAND (U)

292,000 sq. mi.; 30% arable, 1% cultivated; 56% woodland and forest; 14% wasteland and inland water

PEOPLE (Confidential)

Population: 7 million; males 15-49, 1,651,000; 835,000 fit for military service

Ethnic Divisions: 97.5% native Africans, 2.5% Europeans and Asians

Religion: primarily animist, 10-15% Roman Catholics, a few Protestants, and Muslims

Language: Portuguese official; many tribal dialects

Literacy: 2%

Labor force (1960 est.); 44,000 non-African wage earners, 850,000 African wage earners, most unskilled; unemployment serious problem; most native Africans provide unskilled labor or remain in agricultural sector; thousands of native workers migrate to Republic of South Africa and the Rhodesias to work in mines

Organized labor: approximately 26,000 non-Africans registered in labor syndicates which are administrative arms of the government

GOVERNMENT (Confidential)

Capital: Lourenco Marques

Regional breakdown: provinces divided into districts administered by district governors; municipalities governed by appointed official

Type: overseas province of Portugal, strictly controlled by Portuguese government

Branches: governor-general appointed by Lisbon is chief executive officer for internal administration; he also has certain legislative powers which he exercises with a legislative council; all action in province may be vetoed by Minister of Overseas in Lisbon; judiciary is constitutionally independent

Government leader: Governor-General Augusto da Costa Almeida

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Suffrage: extremely limited; based principally on ability to read or write Portuguese and payment of certain taxes

Political parties and leaders: National Union, Gongalo Mesquitela; no legal opposition political parties; the National Liberation Front, led by Eduardo Mondlane, operates primarily from Tanzania

ECONOMY (U)

Agriculture: chief cash crops—lint cotton, cane sugar, cashew nuts, copra, sisal; other crops—corn, wheat, peanuts, potatoes, beans, sorghum, cassava

Major industries: processing of agricultural products, cement production, oil refining, beverage manufacturing, primary metal extracting, textile products

Electric power: 182,000 kw. capacity (1962); 240 million kw-hr produced (1962)

Exports: \$108 million (1964); lint cotton, sugar, cashew nuts, copra, tea, sisal

Imports: \$157 million (1964); machinery, textiles, vehicles, iron and steel products, wines, petroleum products

Trade: Portugal major partner; also South Africa, India, U.K.

Aid: Portugal supplies approx. US\$20 million aid a year; no other foreign assistance

Exchange rate: 28.75 escudos = US\$1 (official)

Fiscal year: calendar year

COMMUNICATIONS (Confidential)

Railroads: 1,719 mi., 1,631 mi. 3'6" gage, 88 mi. 2' 5½" gage

Highways: 14,290 mi.; 560 mi. paved, 995 mi. crushed stone and gravel, 4,350 mi. earth, 8,385 mi. track

Inland waterways: Lake Nyasa, 60 mi. of Limpopo River

Pipelines: crude oil, 174 mi.

Ports: 2 principal (Beira, Lourenco Marques), 9 minor

Civil air: 9 major transport aircraft

Airfields: 240 total, 201 usable; 9 with permanent-surface runways;

2 with runways 8,000–11,999 ft.; 19 with runways 4,000–7,999 ft.;

5 seaplane stations

DEFENSE FORCES (Secret)

Defense is responsibility of Portugal

Personnel: army 29,000, navy 1,300 (540 afloat), air force 3,350

Major ground units: 21 battalions

Ships: 2 escorts, 6 patrol, 1 auxiliary, 7 amphibious craft

Aircraft: 74 (non-jet), including 20 transports and 54 other aircraft

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Military budget: for fiscal year ending 31 Dec. 1966, \$19,265,000;
about 14% of total budget

National Intelligence Survey (NIS) Material

The following sections of the NIS are relevant:

NIS Area 58 (Mozambique)

- Sec 21 Military Geographic Regions
- Sec 22 Coasts and Landing Beaches
- Sec 23 Weather and Climate
- Sec 24 Topography
- Sec 25 Urban Areas
- Sec 30 Introduction—Transportation and Telecommunications
- Sec 31 Railway
- Sec 32 Highway
- Sec 33 Inland Waterway
- Sec 35 Ports and Naval Facilities
- Sec 38 Telecommunications

Gazetteer

NIS Area 8 (Portugal)

- Sec 52 Structure of the Government

Map

The best available general reference map is: Ministerio do Ultramar;
Carta de Moçambique; 1:2,000,000; 1959

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