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LETTER DATED 13 MAY 1966 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF PORTUGAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to send herewith the text of a press communiqué issued by the Foreign Ministry of Portugal in Lisbon, on 11 May 1966, regarding certain reports that are being circulated in newspapers that "Mozambique is now the chief source of oil supply to Rhodesia".

I shall be obliged if you direct that this press communiqué be published and circulated as an official document of the Security Council, as soon as possible.

I avail myself of this opportunity, etc.

(Signed) Antonio PATRICIO
Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of Portugal
to the United Nations

Translated from Portuguese

TEXT OF THE INFORMAL NOTE BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, LISBON,
CIRCULATED ON 11 MAY 1966

On 5 May 1966 The New York Times published an article in which "authoritative sources" in the United Kingdom were quoted as saying that in recent weeks Mozambique had become Rhodesia's main source of oil. Some other organs of the Press, such as the Rand Daily Mail and the Rhodesia Herald, have echoed similar reports. It is therefore considered appropriate to point out certain facts and to give the following explanations.

2. Mozambique is not an oil-producing territory. This product has not been imported in quantities greater than those which were normal in previous years. Naturally we could not deliver to third parties something which we vitally need ourselves. Lastly, no rationing in any form has been instituted in Mozambique. The question arises, therefore, how the oil which is alleged to be flowing into Rhodesia can be thought to come from that province.
3. It is also pertinent to note that Mozambique consumes about 200,000 tons of oil a year, and Rhodesia about 400,000 tons. Even if the facts set forth above are disregarded, it is impossible to explain how the latter consumption, even if halved by rationing, could be taken out of the former.
4. The Portuguese Government, in accordance with its policy as repeatedly defined, categorically denies that oil is being exported or re-exported from Mozambique to destinations other than those to which it is consigned.
5. Since it is only in recent weeks that the newspapers mentioned above have alleged that Mozambique has been supplying oil to Rhodesia, there is no explanation why Portugal was accused before the Security Council on 9 April 1966 at a time when, as is now admitted, no fuel was going to that country from Mozambique. It may be of interest to point out that, as is common knowledge, the last two of the newspapers mentioned are the property of British nationals; this is confirmed by the article in The New York Times, which explicitly quotes sources of the same origin.
6. Moreover all the reports about the flow of oil to Rhodesia must obviously be exaggerated; this is demonstrated by the stricter rationing just imposed by the Rhodesian Government.