

## MOZAMBIQUE - Storm

Date: March 26, 1985

Location: Maputo province

No. Dead: None reported

No. Affected: Not reported

Damage: Thirty-two electrical transmission towers between Maputo and the South African border were blown down or struck by lightning and 400 houses and 3 warehouses were damaged.

### The Disaster

On the evening of March 26, a cyclonic storm, with 100 km/hr wind gusts, knocked out thirty-two high-tension pylons, which supplied the capital city of Maputo with electric power generated from South Africa. Coming on the heels of the previous month's flooding in the south and central provinces, the storm destroyed hundreds of homes and flooded 800 hectares of farmland cultivated with maize. The disruption of electrical power in the port city of Maputo adversely affected ongoing relief activities in the famine-stricken provinces of Gaza and Inhambane, by temporarily shutting down port facilities, refrigerated warehouses, hospitals, industrial plants, irrigation schemes, and waterworks. With all electricity supplied by South Africa effectively cut off, Maputo Province was forced to rely on the generating capacity of a single, antiquated, thermal power station.

### Action Taken by the Government of the Peoples Republic of Mozambique (GPRM)

To the beleaguered nation of Mozambique, already beset by a prolonged drought and recent floods, the disruption of electrical power threatened to create a serious setback to the local economy and the continuing disaster assistance effort. The GPRM ordered the curtailment of all

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industrial activities, port operations, and public services and rationing of domestic energy consumption to five hours per day in Maputo Province. The GPRM estimated that it would take at least three months and \$1.5 million to repair the high-tension lines. In the meantime, between \$8.5 and 10 million would be needed to purchase fuel to supply the Maputo power station for three months. Fearing that the antiquated Maputo thermal plant would fail, and with no back-up installation available, the GPRM also requested technical assistance and funds to conduct a complete overhaul of the Maputo facility.

Assistance Provided by the United States Government

On March 29, Ambassador De Vos determined that the power shortage caused by the storm endangered the lives of drought victims receiving emergency assistance and declared a state of disaster for the third time in a year. The Ambassador obligated \$250,000 (including the \$25,000 disaster assistance authority) to purchase 30,000 tons of coal for the Maputo generating plant so that emergency relief efforts would not be disrupted. At the request of the U.S. Mission in Maputo, OFDA identified and dispatched an electrical engineer to make an assessment of the Maputo power station, including recommendations on necessary improvements to increase the reliability and generating capacity of the power station. The two week TDY of the electrical engineer totaled \$17,321.

TOTAL \$267,321

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported

Assistance Provided by the International Community

International Organizations

EEC - made a cash grant of \$283,660.

LWF - provided a cash grant of \$10,000 to purchase jet fuel.

UNDRO - provided a cash grant of \$20,000.

Governments

Denmark - made a cash grant of \$909,090 to purchase diesel fuel to run Maputo power plant.

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Italy - provided \$1,500,000 to repair the damaged transmission line.

Netherlands - gave \$285,000 to buy diesel fuel.

Norway - donated \$1,100,000 to purchase diesel fuel.

Sweden - contributed \$1,700,000 for diesel fuel purchase.

Switzerland - contributed \$208,333 to finance the overhaul of the diesel generator at the Maputo plant.

United Kingdom - provided services of an electrical engineer, value not reported.

Voluntary Agencies

Medecins du Monde - sent teams of doctors and nurses to Maputo and Nhamatanda, value not reported.

TOTAL        \$6,016,083