



# **International Boundary Study**

**No. 114 - September 8, 1971**

## **Mozambique – Zambia Boundary**

**(Country Codes: MZ-ZA)**

**The Geographer  
Office of the Geographer  
Bureau of Intelligence and Research**

**INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY STUDY**

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## **MOZAMBIQUE – ZAMBIA BOUNDARY**

### **I. BOUNDARY BRIEF**

The Mozambique–Zambia boundary is approximately 260 miles in length. Northward from the tripoint with Southern Rhodesia at the confluence of the Zambezi and Luangwa, it follows the center of the main channel of the latter river for about 48 miles to the 15th parallel south. The boundary then extends northeastward along short straight-line segments for about 212 miles to the Malawi tripoint located on the Lake Nyasa–Zambezi drainage divide. Between the Luangwa and the Malawi tripoint, the line is demarcated by 38 boundary pillars.

### **II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

In 1505 a Portuguese trading post was established on the island of Mocambique, and shortly thereafter several ports were fortified. With the formation of the Portuguese office of the Viceroy of India, a subordinate captaincy was created with headquarters first at Sofala and then on Mocambique island. Concerted efforts were made to penetrate inland along the Zambezi during the middle of the sixteenth century, at which time the river ports of Sena and Tete were taken from Arab and African traders. Difficulties in maintaining bases led to the suppression of the captain–generalship, and the East African territory was administered directly from India until 1752 when it was placed under a governor general. Except during the period from 1930 to 1951 when Mozambique was referred to as a colony, the East African territory has been defined officially since 1822 as a Portuguese overseas province.

In 1886 Portugal signed treaties with both France and Germany which in effect recognized Portuguese claims to a continuous strip of territory across Africa between Mozambique and Angola. In response the United Kingdom indicated it would recognize only claims based on actual occupation because the General Act of the Berlin Conference of the previous year stated that the possession of a territory must be effective to have validity. The seat of administration was moved officially from Mbcambique island to Lourenco Marques in 1907.

Except for occasional Portuguese expeditions, few Europeans reached the area now designated as Zambia until the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1855 David Livingstone, British explorer and missionary, reached Victoria Falls on the Zambezi, and in 1888 Cecil Rhodes, a financial power in the diamond industry of South Africa and later Prime Minister of the Cape of Good Hope Colony, concluded an agreement with a local chief for mining rights in the present-day territory of Southern Rhodesia. Also in 1888 the tract later to be divided into Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia was proclaimed a British sphere of influence. The following year Rhodes received a royal charter for the British South Africa Company which was to operate in a somewhat vaguely defined area south of the Zambezi.

In 1891 the administration of the British South Africa Company was extended north of the Zambezi into present-day Zambia but excluded Nyasaland (Malawi). The territory under the administration of the company on both sides of the river was formally named Rhodesia in 1895. In the area to the north of the Zambezi, Barotziland–North-Western Rhodesia and North-Eastern Rhodesia were delimited by Orders in Council of 1899 and 1900, respectively. In 1911 the two entities were combined to form Northern Rhodesia.

After abrogation of the British South Africa Company charter, Southern Rhodesia was annexed officially by the United Kingdom and granted self-government in 1923. The administration of Northern Rhodesia was transferred to the British Colonial Office as a protectorate in 1924. Between August 1, 1953, and December 31, 1963, Northern Rhodesia, along with Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, was a member of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

An Anglo–Portuguese treaty of June 11, 1891, delimited a boundary between Mozambique and Northern Rhodesia as follows:

From thence [point where the Lake Nyasa–Zambezi drainage divide intersects the parallel of 14° south] it runs in a south-westerly direction to the point where south latitude 15° meets the River Aroangwa or Loangwa [Luangwa], and follows the mid-channel of that river to its junction with the Zambezi.

On November 21, 1904, the members of an Anglo–Portuguese commission signed proces verbaux relative to the description of the demarcation of the Mozambique–Northern Rhodesia boundary. The demarcation was approved by an agreement of October 21–November 20, 1911, between the United Kingdom and Portugal.

At present the Portuguese Government considers the overseas province of Mozambique to be legally an integral part of Portugal. Northern Rhodesia became independent on October 24, 1964, as the Republic of Zambia.

### **III. ALIGNMENT**

The alignment of the Mozambique–Zambia boundary determined by an exchange of notes on October 21 and November 20, 1911, which constitutes an agreement to accept the boundary description of the Anglo–Portuguese commission of November 21, 1904<sup>1</sup>. The boundary is demarcated from the Southern Rhodesia tipoint at the confluence of the Zambezi and Luangwa (approximately 30°25'30" E.) to the Malawi tripoint marked by boundary pillar or Beacon 38.

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<sup>1</sup> The British note of October 21, 1911, to the Portuguese Minister transmitted memoranda describing the course of the Anglo–Portuguese boundary both north and south of the Zambezi, respectively, together with two signed copies of a map of the boundary, in seven sheets, compiled by the Geographical Section, General Staff of the United Kingdom Government.

The following is a description of the boundary as agreed between the British and Portuguese Commission in their proces-verbaux, signed on the 21st day of November, 1904:—

Commencing at the confluence of the Rivers Loangwa and Zambesi, the frontier follows the centre of the main channel of the River Loangwa, passing to the west of the rocky island Niakatenga, situated in latitude 15 °29' south, at the head of the Lupata gorge;

Thence it follows the main channel west of the sandy island Niazawe and east of the sandy islands Ngoza and Kapondoro, situated in 15 °4' south latitude, to the point where the main channel is intersected by the 15th parallel south latitude in longitude 30 °13'16" east of Greenwich; thence in a straight line to—

*Beacon No. 1.*—A dry rubble pile of stones, with a cemented top, situated on the left bank of the River Loangwa, in latitude 14 °59'58" south, and longitude 30 °13'23" east;  
thence in a straight line, bearing 25 °, distance 0.2 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 2.*—A masonry pyramid on a circular base situated on a bluff overlooking the river, bearing from Nyesi Hill 284 ° and from Utala Hill 198-3/4 °;  
thence in a straight line, bearing 74 °34', distance 1.8 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 3.*—A cement masonry pillar situated on the summit of a small conical hill, bearing from Nyesi Hill 305 ° and from Utala Hill 175 °  
thence in a straight line, bearing 76 °35', distance 9.4 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 4.*—A dry rubble pile of stones, with a cemented top, situated on a summit of Chikongoro Hill;  
thence in a straight line, bearing 62 °12', distance 7.3 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 5.*—A cement masonry pillar situated on the summit of Nyamiseje Hill;  
thence in a straight line, bearing 68 °26', distance 6.3 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 6.*—A cement masonry pillar, situated on the summit of a hill 1 mile east of Ucha River, and bearing from Kanyamambo Hill 310-1/2 ° and from Mwezi Hill 99-1/2 °;  
thence in a straight line, bearing 67 °4', distance 8.4 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 7.*—A dry rubble pile of stones, with a cemented top, situated on the summit of Loriasoro Hill;  
thence in a straight line, bearing 69 °53', distance 8.2 miles to—

*Beacon No. 8.*—A cement masonry pillar situated on a very low hill, bearing from Mt. Usala  $26^{\circ}$ , Nyati Piri  $116^{\circ}$ , and Kanyamambo  $35\text{-}1/2^{\circ}$ ;  
thence in a straight line, bearing  $76^{\circ}56'$ , distance 10.8 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 9.*—A cement masonry pillar on the highest (northern) summit of Kassekete Hill;  
thence in a straight line, bearing  $76^{\circ}18'$ , distance 8.5 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 10.*—A cement masonry pillar on the highest (northern) summit of Fingue Hill, bearing from Mt. Chitusa  $279^{\circ}$  and from Luenga  $217^{\circ}$ ;  
thence in a straight line, bearing  $71^{\circ}8'$ , distance 4.4 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 11.*—A cement masonry pillar on the summit of the low rocky hill Iniawaro, bearing from Mt. Chitusa  $9^{\circ}$  and from Luenga  $113^{\circ}$ ;  
thence in a straight line, bearing  $72^{\circ}11'$ , distance 9.2 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 12.*—A cement masonry pillar on the summit of the remarkable conical rock Longwe;  
thence in a straight line, bearing  $80^{\circ}$ , distance 4.7 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 13.*—A cement masonry pillar on the summit of the low rock Kasuche;  
thence in a straight line bearing  $78^{\circ}29'$ , distance 5.8 miles to—

*Beacon No. 14.*—A cement masonry pillar on the low flat rocky ledge Chongoni, situated close to and south of the village of Mwanjawantu;  
thence in a straight line bearing  $72^{\circ}21'$ , distance 5.2 miles, to—

*Beacon No. 15.*—A cement masonry pillar on the summit of the remarkable rock Chifisi;  
thence in a straight line, bearing  $60^{\circ}8'$ , distance 4.5 miles, to—

## APPENDIX

### I. DOCUMENTS

1. General Act of the Conference of Berlin, relative to the Development of Trade and Civilization in Africa; the free Navigation of the Rivers Congo, Niger & c; the Suppression of the Slave Trade by Sea and Land; the occupation of Territory on the African Coasts, & c. Signed at Berlin, February 26, 1885. Edward Hertslet, The Map of Africa by Treaty, 3 vols., 3rd edition (London: Harrison and Sons 1909). Vol. 2, pp. 468–86.
2. Agreement between Great Britain and Portugal, recording a Modus vivendi respecting the Spheres of Action of the two Countries in Africa. Navigation of the Zambezi and Shire Rivers, & c. London, November 14, 1890. Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 1014–6.
3. Conditions on extending the Field of the Operations of the British South Africa Company to the North of the Zambezi, February 13, 1891. Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 277–9.
4. Treaty between Her Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of Portugal, defining their respective Spheres of Influence in Africa, Lisbon, June 11, 1891. Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 1016–26. Also see Great Britain Treaty Series: Portugal No. 1 (1891) C. 6375.
5. Agreement between Great Britain and Portugal relative to Spheres of Influence north of the Zambezi. May 31–June 5, 1893. Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 1027–30.
6. Agreement between Great Britain and Portugal prolonging the "Modus Vivendi" of 1893, respecting the Boundaries of their respective Spheres of Influence to the North of the Zambezi. Signed at London, January 20, 1896. Ibid., Vol. 3, pp. 1034–5.
7. Protocols of Agreement signed by the Commissioners of Great Britain and Portugal for the Delimitation of the Boundary between the Possessions of the two Countries to the North and South of the Zambezi. November 21, 1904–October 24, 1905. Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 1077.
8. Agreement between the United Kingdom and Portugal respecting the Boundary between British and Portuguese Possessions north and south of the Zambezi. London, October 21–November 20, 1911 [with map]. Great Britain Treaty Series No. 16 (1912), Cd. 6265.

## II. MAPS

1. Zambia (Northern Rhodesia): scale 1:50,000; 1961-70; published by Directorate of Overseas Surveys, United Kingdom; sheets 1431 C1, 1432 A3, and 1432 A2.

2. Angola-Portuguese Boundary (North and South of the Zambezi): scale 1:250,000; 1907; Topographical Section, General Staff No. 2132, War Office, United Kingdom; sheets I, II, III and IV.

3. Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland: scale 1:250,000; 1962-3; published by the Federal Department of Trigonometrical and Topographical Surveys, Salisbury; sheets SD-36-13 (Feira), SD-36-9 (Petauke), SD-36-10 (Katete), and SD-36-11 (Dedza).

4. Carta de Colonia de Mocambique: scale 1:250,000; 1938; published by Instituto Geografico e Cadastral, Portugal; sheets 2 (Zumbo), 1 (Zumbo), 3 (Maravia), and 13 (Angonia-Macango).

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