

# BOMBA: Follow me to South Africa

by Ron Golden

**LIEUTENANT** Andriano Bomba, the Mozambique pilot who defected, hopes to set an example to others in his country to make a bid for South Africa.

Heard this at a Press conference at Hoedspruit Air Base in the Eastern Transvaal yesterday when it was announced that his brother, together with his brother's wife and child, had also asked for asylum in South Africa.

They crossed the border from Swaziland 36 hours after Lieutenant Bomba had landed a Frelimo MiG-17 at Hoedspruit.

Lieutenant Bomba, highly intelligent and fluent in four languages, said: "My air force colleagues in Mozambique are probably not surprised at what I have done — we share the same ideals.

"I am well aware that what I have done may awake the same feelings in others in my country.

"My act was indeed a political one, and I hope it will make people see what can be done," he said.

He and his brother had not discussed defection to South Africa. His brother and family happened to be in Swaziland when they heard that Lt Bomba had made his dramatic dash from Mozambique.

"My brother must have felt he would like to be with me and also come to South Africa," Lt Bomba said.

He said his parents and sisters were still in Mozambique, but he did not think they were in danger because of his defection because the Mozambique Government had no "concrete case" against them.

## My decision

"It was purely my own decision to come to South Africa.

"It was a very difficult decision to make. I was afraid, but when I saw the chance I took it."

Immaculately dressed in his Mozambique greens, and flanked by Brigadier Dries van der Luth, chief of Airstaff and Intelligence, Lt Bomba faced the Press for more than two hours.

Asked about South Africa's internal policies, he said he did not know what to expect.

"But I was surprised how whites and blacks interact," he said. "It was not at all what I was led to believe in propaganda in Mozambique.

"When I came to South Africa I did not come to get involved in the country's internal politics. My situation will be decided by the authorities."

He said when he was in the tenth grade at school he was forcibly taken out and sent to Russia to be trained as a pilot.

There he was "traditionally" brainwashed. When he returned he became disillusioned by events in Mozambique. During the colonial period people could have a say, but afterwards they were fed on a basic diet of President Machel's speeches "because there is no food in the stores."

Asked if it was coincidental that he had defected to South Africa, he replied: "When I decided to defect, it was South Africa and no other country."

Now his greatest ambition is to further his education. He is especially interested in engineering.

Both he and his brother have applied for permanent residence in South Africa.