

Top defector's startling claim of continuing SA links with MNR

MAPUTO: A former top level member of the Mozambique National Resistance movement (MNR) has made sensational and damning claims of South African Military Intelligence's involvement with the rebels.

Paulo Oliveira, former MNR chief representative for Europe, defected to the Frelimo Government about two weeks ago and Mozambique's own intelligence services are now studying dozens of documents he is alleged to have brought with him.

At a packed press conference here this week, attended by local and foreign journalists, Mr Oliveira related bizarre incidents of political intrigue and murder involving the South African, Portuguese and West German secret services, contacts with American and French top level politicians and in-fighting between rival MNR factions and foreign secret services for influence and control of the organisation.

Mr Oliveira, who lived in South Africa until 1984 when the Nkomati Accord forced him to leave for Portugal where he became the movement's chief European representative until August last year, alleged:

- South African Military Intelligence is continuing to support the MNR rebels in a clear violation of the Nkomati Accord signed with Mozambique in 1984.

- When President Samora Machel died in a plane crash inside South Africa in 1983, South Africa told the MNR offices in Lisbon to be on standby because the MNR might have to claim responsibility for downing the plane. Later they were told not to worry about the matter.

- The South Africans were behind the murder in Pretoria in 1983 of the MNR Secretary General, Mr Orlando Cristina, "because he no longer served the purposes of South African Military Intelligence". The murder of Mr Cristina in Pretoria at the time when Maputo and Pretoria had started negotiations that led to the Nkomati Accord was confirmed by South Africa but mystery still surrounds his death.

- South African Military Intelligence was also aware of the plans that led to the murder in 1983 by the MNR of Adriano Bomba, a Mozambican jet fighter pilot who defected to South Africa in his MiG-17 plane in 1981 and who had been encouraged to take a stand against Cristina.

- South African Military Intelligence murdered Mr Bomba's brother Boaventura, who had been promised he would replace Cristina as secretary general.

- South Africa could also be behind the recent mysterious death in Malawi of a top level MNR official, Mateus Lopes, who belonged to Mr Oliveira's faction and who opposed the strict South African control of the organisation.

- A South African army officer whom he described as "a brigadier" gave "green light" for the MNR guerrillas to start attacks inside Zimbabwe. These have been increasing since last year.

- The South African military sabotaged the 1984 peace talks in Pretoria between the MNR and the Mozambican Government which had been mediated by South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs. They ordered MNR's president Afonso Dhlakama to pull out of an agreement signed under the auspices of Foreign Minister Pik Botha.

When Mr Oliveira's defection was announced earlier this week the MNR tried to reduce the impact of his statement by saying that the movement always suspected he was an agent of the Mozambicans and that he certainly would allege South African control of the MNR.

This week an SADF spokesman said Mr Oliveira's statement was part of a propaganda cam-

paign involving the Mozambique news agency, AIM.

Mr Oliveira said in January this year the head of the MNR's research department and one of the rebels leaders, Mr Evo Fernandes, had entered Mozambique from South Africa in a South African Air Force DC-3. On his way out he had been accompanied by Artur da Fonseca, the West Germany-based MNR's foreign relations secretary.

He named Brigadier Charles van Niekerk, a Brigadier van Tonder and a Colonel Grobblar as officers who dealt with the MNR.

A military intelligence officer named Du Preez had operated inside Mozambique with the MNR last year after crossing into the north-western province of Tete from Malawi.

A telephone and communications centre with the MNR continued to operate in the Phalaborwa area and he believed a MNR military base was still operating there.

Logistics and training support for the MNR had been given by South Africa's 7th Infantry Regiment and from the 5th Reconnaissance Regiment which he referred to as "Five Recce".

Brigadier Van Niekerk had been in Lisbon last year to help setting up communications equipment in Mr Oliveira's home.

Mr Oliveira said Mr Evo Fernandes had strong links with a top figure of West Germany's secret services, the Department or the Defence of the Constitution (PND). He named him as "Wolfgang" saying he was "No 3 in the organisation".

"Wolfgang is the godfather of one of Mr Fernandes children," said Mr Oliveira. Mr Fernandes was the man South Africa most trusted within the MNR.

The Portuguese military intelligence services, DINFO, had also had contacts with the MNR and at one stage had sent medicines and books to a post box number in Phalaborwa.

The Portuguese armed forces chief of staff, General Lemos Ferreira, was aware of these contacts.

He said fighting between different factions of the MNR, which had resulted in his dismissal was a result of the "Washington-Paris axis" trying to break the South African control of the MNR.

The United States had been trying "to have a word to say over the control of the MNR" but this had been blocked by Pretoria.

American pressures had generated contradictions inside the MNR, he said.