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S Africa Says Zimbabwe and Mozambique Planned to Attack Malawi

(a) SAPA in:English (i) 1750 and (ii) 1817 gmt 6 Nov 86

Excerpts from dispatches datelined Pretoria, 6th November:

(i) A document discovered at the scene of the crash of Mozambican President Samora Machel's aircraft on 19th October contained minutes of a meeting in Maputo at which the Mozambique and Zimbabwe governments had discussed a calculated plan to overthrow the Malawi government militarily and politically, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Pik Botha, said tonight. At a press conference in Pretoria, Mr Botha produced the original document for reporters and said there was not "the slightest doubt" of its authenticity. The document recorded the minutes of a meeting in Maputo three days before the air crash and President Machel had led the Mozambican delegation.

Mr Botha, who had paid tribute to President Machel at the site of the crash on 20th October, said tonight he had changed his views on the former Mozambican leader. "I am dismayed, disappointed, shocked and I did not expect this." Mr Botha said official messages had been sent today to the Mozambican and Zimbabwean governments on the document South Africa had discovered. The Mozambican government had been asked to make it clear whether it still supported the plan to overthrow Malawi, as agreed by President Machel. Mr Botha pointed out that although Mozambique had a new government, Zimbabwe was still under Mr Robert Mugabe. Mr Botha also said the Malawi government of Dr Hastings Banda had been fully informed of the plot today. He refused to say what Malawi reaction had been and also declined to comment on whether South Africa would assist should the threat to Malawi become a reality. South Africa and Malawi had had close ties for many years, but Malawi had not requested help and if this were done South Africa would have to consider the matter.

Mr Botha said it was not clear from the document who the full Mozambican delegation to the meeting was, but President Machel had clearly led the discussion and his Prime Minister, Mr Mario Machungo, was present as well. The Zimbabwe delegation had been led by Mr Emmerson Munangagwa, Minister of State Security. He had been accompanied by Zimbabwe's Ambassador to Mozambique, Mr H.E. Mvundura (he was ordered to leave the meeting when the plot was discussed), Mr E.R. Kadungure, Minister of State Defence, General Rex Nhongo, Army Commander, Air Marshal J. Tungamirai, Maj-Gen Maseko and Lt-Col Shumba, of the Zimbabwe National Army, and others. President Banda had been referred to as "criminal" in the talks. . .

Malawi's police and defence force would be infiltrated and strategic bridges in the country would be destroyed along with other vital parts of its infrastructure. Malawi would be cut off from Tanzania and Zambia. It was made clear it was time President Banda should go, and that the Malawi army would be able to handle the situation.

"South Africa views these "diabolical and dangerous" plans in a very serious light, Mr Botha said.

At the meeting President Machel had apparently given an interpretation of South Africa's intention in signing the Nkomati non-aggression pact with Mozambique in 1984, to the effect that the Republic would force the Frelimo government to share power with

the rebel Mozambique [National] Resistance Movement (Renamo). "Luckily he also accused the United States government of doing the same thing." President Machel had mentioned a US Ambassador Miller, who had tried to persuade him to create a puppet second political party in Mozambique so that the US could say to the rest of the world there was a democracy in that country. . .

Asked why there had been a delay of nearly three weeks in releasing the document, Mr Botha said it had only been brought to his attention the day before yesterday. The delay had come in the technical investigation teams work of piecing together wreckage at the scene of the crash and in translating the document from Portuguese into English. He felt there was no inordinate delay in releasing the document. . .

The document, in a plastic yellow and transparent holder, was stained and it appeared as if the pages had been soaked. Handwritten notes, typical of additions to the typed minutes of any meeting, were pasted into the document. . .

Responding to another question, Mr Botha said South Africa's next action concerning the plot depended on Mozambique's reaction. "I think they have a pretty good idea of how far they could go without inviting severe trouble."

Asked if there were any other documents retrieved from the plane's wreckage that were sensitive to South Africa's security interests, Mr Botha said evidence was still being sifted through. "There might be. . . [agency ellipses] I don't know". . . (SAPA in English 1917 gnt 6 Nov 86)

(ii) Russians and Cubans were involved in the joint Mozambican and Zimbabwean plot to overthrow the Malawi government militarily and politically. . . At the meeting, President Machel is recorded as having said he wanted to talk, at ease, with "the military men", and in the absence of Zimbabwe's Ambassador to Mozambique. . . Discussing the plan, President Machel, said the "military men" had to place "all available means in Zambezia", the province bordering Malawi. . . "We have some special forces for special operations, we have about 41 MiG-21 (jet fighters) . . . [agency ellipses] the victory is being planned . . . [agency ellipses] it demands cold-bloodedness." The transport of troops and equipment of Zambezia and Tete provinces was discussed, with the vital role Zimbabwe's transport facilities would play here, and the organisation of medical services and food. President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, who is mentioned briefly in the minutes, had not guaranteed the closing of his border with Malawi, and his "answer was not satisfactory". President Machel said "we have been at this table with the Mozambicans, Cubans and Soviets since last Friday (10th October) and we said that we should go immediately to Zambezia". . .

President Machel also warned the meeting not to underestimate South Africa "because it can transport armed bandits by sea, using submarines and ships . . . [agency ellipses] she is desperate because we uncovered Malawi." The vital information for logistical planning was still being awaited, but had in fact been expected in time for the meeting. President Machel said he wanted to transfer his MiG-21s from Maputo to Beira so they could depart from there. The MiG-17s would be going to Zambezia, together with (helicopter) gunships.

Summing up the logistical planning and the cost of the operation, President Machel said "we will be ready to act if we have all this. We must make sure that if Malawi diverts its goods to Tanzania we will destroy the bridges linking Malawi to Tanzania . . . [agency ellipses] they must be bridges which took four to five years to build. If the goods are diverted to Zambia, we will not destroy the Zambian bridges but we will destroy the Malawian bridges which provide access to the Kazangula/Botswana route and to South Africa. If we destroy the bridges to Tanzania and Zambia we will have Malawi in our hands". . .

He also said he did not want to provoke those who sided with Malawi . . . [agency ellipses] "I don't want to increase enemies . . . [agency ellipses] I can't do that".

The military action had to be backed by political action and Malawi had to be persuaded to allow Zimbabwean troops to cross its territory into Zambezia. The people of Malawi had to be convinced the Mozambique and Zimbabwe forces were in "solidarity" with them and not their government.

Mr Munangagwa told President Machel, "there is a force ready to go", but that there were preparations that had to be jointly made with Zimbabwe. Problems with the transport of military hardware from Mozambique harbours were also raised. . .

(b) Johannesburg television in English 1800 gmt 6 Nov 86

Excerpts from video recording of a report on the news conference held by South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha in Pretoria on 6th November:

[Botha] I have asked the Mozambique government to furnish the South African government urgently with explanations because there is a new government in Mozambique and I think we are entitled to know whether this new government associates itself with the accusations of the former government and with the plans to overthrow other governments of southern Africa and the plans to interrupt the trade routes through other African countries, including trade routes used by South African importers and exporters.

It must be clear to you that this is a conspiracy. While there is a new government in Mozambique there is not a new government in Zimbabwe, and Zimbabwe went to Mozambique and eagerly took part in the plotting and drawing up of this conspiracy of aggression and violence. We have also sent a note to the Zimbabwe government urging that government to cease and terminate its aggressive plans immediately and pointing out to it that the South African government has chosen and is committed to the peaceful resolution of differences in our region and warning them that the whole of southern Africa will pay a heavy price if these plans are put into operation.

I am sure you would like to read the documents. That is about all I wanted to convey to you. I thank you for your interest. I may just say, in conclusion, when I look at the preamble to the Nkomati accord I see the words containing the commitment of the Republic of South Africa and the government of the People's Republic of Mozambique to the principles of strict respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, considering the internationally recognised principle of the right of peoples to self-determination and independence, the obligation of all states to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, the obligation of states to settle conflicts by peaceful means and thus safeguard the international peace and security and justice, the responsibility of states not to allow their territory to be used for acts of war, aggression or violence against other states.

This is what we agreed to. I will leave it to you to just how the government of Mozambique under the late President Machel regarded these principles. He made it clear at this meeting that banditry to him means the creation of South Korea [as heard]. According to him that is a state consisting of bandits. Taiwan is a state of bandits. As far as he was concerned that is only made clear now. He planned a typical Mao Zedong strategy to overthrow a legal government of southern Africa. I can only trust that the new government in Mozambique will find it possible to disassociate itself from these diabolical and very dangerous plans threatening the peace and stability in the whole of southern Africa.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] Responding to US charges, and Chester Crocker's charges two days ago that South Africa is still backing Renamo [Mozambique National Resistance Movement].

[Botha] I responded to that yesterday evening. I denied those charges. I am aware of these accusations. On former occasions the Americans did insinuate that we

were assisting Renamo. I have asked them for proof. Their standard reaction is no. If they must submit proof they might reveal their sources. So, I am not prepared to entertain charges of that nature unless the government levelling them (?sees) it to make clear or to submit to me the evidence, and that the American government has not done. Not up to now, but I believe in the light of the facts that we are now revealing Dr Crocker may just regret his charges.

[Q] [Words indistinct] charges from the frontline states that these documents are forgeries. Can you tell us whether your government is making available photostats of these documents to Zimbabwe and Maputo.

[A] Certainly, yes, yes. It is difficult to reach Maputo today. Everything was closed down apparently. And we will make it available and certainly in any case here is the original. There is not the slightest question as to its authenticity. There are even notes pasted by themselves at the back of these documents in the handwriting of members of the delegation or members who attended the meeting. These are obviously notes as is normally done at meetings of this nature, reminding President Machel of some point or the other. But for the rest of it, we do not possess the stationery, we do not bind documents in this way. The style, the language is there and I say to you this document was found on the site, and I say to you it does not matter who alleged the opposite. That is a record of a meeting that took place in Maputo, and you can inspect it if you like.

[A] Foreign Minister, has your government been in contact with the government of Malawi about these allegations?

[A] As could be expected that government has been handed copies of the relevant documents today.

[Q] (?What did they say?)

[A] I am not prepared to discuss that.

[Q] [Words indistinct] despite the fairly sophisticated intelligence operation the South African government has at its disposal.

[A] We do not listen to conversations of the heads of states of other governments. Only the Americans and the Russians do that. This meeting took place in Maputo on 16th October. It is quite clear that they discussed with President Banda before 16th October the possibility of closing the border between Zambia and Malawi, and President Banda did not like the idea at all [corrects himself] President Kaunda, pardon. They discussed with President Kaunda the possibility of Dr Kaunda closing the border between Zambia and Malawi, and President Kaunda [changes thought] the idea did not appeal to him.

[Question indistinct.]

[A] Yes, I think you were there yourself.

[Q] [Words indistinct] afford to revive some appreciation of him?

[A] Yes, I am dismayed, disappointed, sad. I did not expect it, I did not expect it.

[Q] Would South Africa consider any (?policy) other than diplomatic action against Mozambique if these documents proved true?

[A] It depends on the actions of that government. I think they have now a pretty good idea of how far they could still go before there is real trouble.

[Question indistinct.]

[A] I said I think they would have after this a pretty good idea of how far they could go without inviting severe trouble. I hope that is clear. . .

[Q] [Words indistinct] have you any idea of the government's (?side) when this attack against Malawi was taking place?

[A] Oh yes, it was imminent. They planned to move a large number of Russian MiG aircraft and helicopter attack aircraft into the Zambezia area, as they had already moved in large numbers of Soviet personnel - Tanzanians, I think, and Zimbabweans - they were going to force President Banda to give them permission to move their troops, Zimbabwe and Mozambique troops, across his territory quite clearly to assist in the overthrow of his government. They would have gone in and under pretext of assisting President Banda to repair certain of his roads, blow up his bridges, they were going to infiltrate his police, his defence force, but they were going to assure, as President Machel said it, that politically and militarily that regime is overthrown and destroyed. It was imminent, they were in a big hurry and the plans were already under way, and some of the plans were already implemented.

An [word indistinct] of Soviet experts who are going to do surveys - President Machel required all sorts of surveys - they were going to establish a camp of 1,500 men, methods of this nature. It was not just idle talk, it was a firm, definite plan and agreement.
