

Defence agreement signed with Maputo

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ZIMBABWE and Mozambique signed a military co-operation agreement in Maputo this week during a two-day consultative meeting on defence and security which ended on Thursday.

The final communique of the meeting, made available in Harare yesterday by the Secretary for Defence, Cde Willard Chiwewe, said the agreement was signed "to permit the further strengthening of the fraternal relations between the two brotherly armies forged during the common struggle for freedom and national independence".

No details of the agreement were available.

The delegations at the Maputo meeting were headed by the two countries' ministers of defence, Cde Enos Nkala for Zimbabwe and General Joaquim Alberto Chipande for Mozambique.

Relations

"The meeting," said the communique, "reviewed the positive development of co-operation between the defence and security forces of the two countries and defined mechanisms to continue deepening and consolidating such relations in the spirit of the mutual interest which guides the existing bilateral relations.

"In this context, the meeting declared that as long as the apartheid regime's aggression and destabilisation against the peoples of Southern Africa continued, both countries will orchestrate all their efforts to defend their freedom and hard-won independence."

Both delegations vehemently condemned the criminal activities perpetrated by armed bandits against defenceless people and economic and social targets. Both "reiterated their intention to continue with their joint operations" to eliminate armed bandits.

Amnesty

The two sides congratulated each other on the positive results achieved in the implementation of amnesties in both countries, said the communique. They hailed the success achieved in reintegrating those who accepted amnesty and handed themselves over.

They appealed to those still in the bush "to hear the voice of reason and join the just cause of peace, freedom and national independence".

Both parties to the talks appreciated the recent signing of the unity agreement between Zanu (PF) and PF-Zapu "which was an exemplary political achievement and a victory in the common struggle for peace and social progress in the region".

They saluted the recent military victories by Angolan armed forces against South African occupation which frustrated the plans of the racist enemy and its puppets.

During the meeting the functioning of the State and Public Security Committee (Police) was reviewed and hailed.

During its stay in Maputo the Zimbabwean delegation paid a courtesy call on the Mozambican prime minister, Dr Mario Machungo, during which the fraternal links of friendship and co-operation existing between the two peoples and countries were reaffirmed.