

Top Frelimo security man defects to SA

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By EMIELIA JAROSCHEK

MOZAMBIQUE'S National Director of Security, Mr Jorge Costa, yesterday defected from his country and asked for political asylum in South Africa.

The 30-year-old director, who has been fourth-in-charge in Mozambican top security matters including espionage, counter-espionage and intelligence for the last four years, has had many direct dealings with President Samora Machel.

He made his shock announcement at Jan Smuts Airport at 7am after a three-day visit on police matters to South Africa together with two other Mozambique Government officials.

The other two officials — an adviser for the Ministry of Security and a security police colonel — listened in stunned silence to Mr Costa's announcement before departing for Maputo. The security police colonel refused to shake Mr Costa's hand.

Yesterday afternoon Mr Costa was introduced to the Press at Pretoria police headquarters by the Chief of the South African Security Police, General Johan Coetzee.

The tall, composed man, who has been working daily in the Ministry of Security with Mozambique's most coveted secrets, admitted that he had met Gen

Coetzee on previous official visits in the last three years.

He said he had been an honest worker for his government even though he had contemplated defecting for more than eight months.

Mr Costa, who left behind a wife and three children and his parents, said he felt his country was economically almost on its knees, that Frelimo plans had failed to materialise and the Soviet Union was destroying the economy.

"The Soviets want to eventually take command of the economy.

"Southern Africa with its mineral and agricultural wealth is of strategic importance to them and is their main target. In the 21st century food will be the biggest problem.

"I am not prepared to oppress my people and will not work in matters against my people just because the Russians want it.

"I have always supported the freedom of my country in the way I could. Frelimo had a good programme in the beginning but the economic aid promised to it by communist countries did not materialise."

He said one of his most recent functions was to spread propaganda in Mozambique about SA being behind the resistance movements in his country.

Mr Costa said he did not go along with Frelimo's decision in 1977 to change to a Marxist/Leninist party — but he contin-

ued working as director in the Ministry of Security.

General Coetzee said there had been regular liaison between Mozambican police and SA police on criminal matters such as drug-trafficking, border control and currency control.

He said Security Police were involved in these discussions because border matters fell into their field of work.

Gen Coetzee said the security implications of Mr Costa's defection were too delicate to discuss at this stage.

Mr Costa said he did not feel he owed his government anything.

"I was loyal and have always supported the freedom of my country. If you are a hard worker it is easy to shoot to the top in Mozambique. There is a great lack of skilled manpower. I worked with people who only had a primary school education."

He said he had planned the move eight months ago.

Mozambique's Ministry of Information was yesterday unaware of the defection of Mr Costa.

Meanwhile the Mail's Africa Bureau correspondent in Harare reports that the Mozambique embassy's Head of Chancery in Zimbabwe, Mr Antonio Andre de Rocha, is still missing after disappearing from Harare about three weeks ago.

It is suspected that Mr Da Rocha and his family might be in Brazil.