

Mozambican tells why he defected

Russians taking over he says

JOHANNESBURG — Mozambique's National Director of Security, Mr Jorge Costa, yesterday defected from his country and gave his reasons for seeking political asylum in South Africa.

"I'm not prepared to defend the interests of Russia," he told members of the press at Pretoria police headquarters yesterday afternoon.

"If I stay in my country I will have to work against my people. I'm not prepared to oppress my people.

"Frelimo had a very good programme for the country in the beginning but we now have a Marxist-Leninist government and there is a conspiracy by the Soviet Union to put defeat into my country."

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

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

"Just leave my bags in the boot," — Mr Costa, said on arrival at the airport yesterday.

His colleagues, an adviser to the Ministry of Security and a security colonel, stared at him in silence.

Undeterred Mr Costa asked for political asylum in South Africa.

Knowledge of Mozambique's most guarded secrets — lie at his fingertips.

He says he has not yet decided what to do with himself or his knowledge in the near future.

Yesterday afternoon, well-groomed and dressed in a fawn pin-striped suit, 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 composes man, admitted that he had met General Coetzee on previous official visits in the past three years.

He pointed out that 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.

"The Soviets want eventually to 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."

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

"I even drew maps of where South Africans infiltrated the country. These were used in Mozambican papers recently."

Mr Costa said he did not go along with Frelimo's decision in 1977 to change to a Marxist-Leninist party — but he remained as an honest worker in his capacity as Director in the Ministry of Security.

He went on to say he may have been stopped from taking a counter-intelligence course in Russia because of his tendency to stop certain plans which had to pass his desk.

"Instead I was sent on a course in Bulgaria which when I arrived turned into a 25-day holiday in the mountains."

Mr Costa said life in Mozambique was a life of black market shopping at exorbitant prices.

"There is a shortage of everything. There is not enough economic strength to continue run-

ning factories — and export of timber is down to nothing.

"Our exporting of prawns is 40 per cent of what Frelimo planned."

Mr Costa said one could eat prawns only on the black market because Russian trawlers were fishing prawns in vast quantities by sucking them off seabeds.

A bottle of whisky cost R100 on the black market and one was limited to a litre of cooking oil a month.

He admitted that he felt "terrible" about leaving his wife Goakina, 32, and three children Helena, 9, Graca, 6, and Ricardo, 4, behind but says the family relationship was on a breaking point anyhow.

"In my position divorce was not desirable," he said.

At yesterday's conference General Coetzee said there had been regular liaison between Mozambican police and South African 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.

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

Mozambique's Ministry of Information was yesterday unaware of the defection of Mr Costa. A spokesman for the ministry said: "We know nothing about it." — DDC.