

MNR opens office in Washington—Shamuyarira

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Mermaid Reporter
THE MNR bandit organization in Mozambique has been allowed to open an office in the United States. The Minister of Information, Posts and Telecommunications, Dr Nathan Shamuyarira said in Harare yesterday.

Speaking at the opening of the fifth ordinary session of the inter-governmental council of the

Pan African News Agency, Cde Shamuyarira said the United States government was openly supporting banditry in Southern Africa.

Jonas Savimbi, leader of the South African-sponsored Angolan counter-revolutionary organization, Unita, had been given a "warm welcome" on his visit to the United States in January, said

Cde Shamuyarira.

"Now we are told that the MNR bandit organization in Mozambique has been allowed to open an office in Washington in the United States. A large sum of money has been voted for Unita, while in South Africa the information of aggression against Frontline States and Africa has been stepped up," said Cde Shamuyarira.

who is the chairman of the inter-governmental council of Pana.

He said the battle for the air waves had started again, adding that the American government was spending \$1.5 billion this year on transmitter development in order to increase its worldwide propaganda activities, especially the Voice of America and two key

projects, "Project Democracy and Project Truth".

"Propaganda by both East and West is bound to be stepped up in Africa. In this context we need to take vigorous steps to consolidate Pana and to increase our linkages with the pool of non-aligned news agencies and other agencies of the Third World," he added.

Cde Shamuyarira said the Reagan administration had given legitimacy to state terrorism by its attack on Libya.

"When events like that occur, it is imperative that we in Africa inform our people correctly about such actions and we define the aggressor correctly. State terrorism and the support for banditry in Africa must be put

squarely at the door of the USA. We need our news agencies to do this," he said.

In Southern Africa, Africa needed Pana more than in any other regions.

The poor telecommunications network in Africa was one of the major problems in the development of Pana. Radio broadcasts from the bureau offices did not

reach some members.

However, the Pana-Aftel micro-wave link had now reached some African countries. But the answer to Africa's problems in that area was the complete penetration of the Pana-Aftel network to all countries and areas of the continent and the introduction of satellite communications.

The African Develop-

ment Bank had provided about US\$5 million for a feasibility study for African regional satellite communications.

"The next few years should see rapid progress in this area," he added.

Pana was fulfilling one of the major objectives of the new international information and communication order by delinking African news from control by international news agencies which had headquarters in the developed countries.

The United States embassy yesterday immediately reacted to Cde Shamuyarira's statement that the US had allowed MNR bandits to open an office in Washington.

The statement said: "The facts are that an American citizen claiming to represent the MNR does have an office in Washington.

"Such an office does not require the approval of the United States government. The minister could have avoided this mistake had he checked the facts. In his speech, the minister was also wrong in his comments about 'Project Democracy' and 'Project Truth'. The minister had available to him the facts (conveyed in a letter from the embassy dated April 7 to the ministry's permanent secretary), and he clearly chose to ignore them.

"Project Democracy" is actually the National Endowment for Democracy, which is a creation of Congress, not the US administration.

"It has a bi-partisan board of directors (equal numbers of Democrats, Republican, trade union leaders, corporate leaders, etc) approved by Congress.

"It is very closely scrutinised by Congress and operates in a totally public way. 'Project Truth' is a programme of the United States Information Agency to expose and counter Soviet and East European disinformation."