

CONFRONTATION between SA and its black neighbours mounted yesterday with claims from Mozambique suggesting that seven SA reconnaissance commandos and three Portuguese commandos from SA are leading "bandit operations" by the Mozambican Resistance Movement (MNR).

'SA troops in Maputo raids'

DOMINIQUE GILBERT
and Sapa

An SADF spokesman said last night SA's position as far as Mozambique was concerned had been clearly and repeatedly explained by Defence Minister Magnus Malan as well as other members of the Cabinet. He had nothing to add to those statements.

Recently Malan said SA had given no support to the MNR since the signing of the Nkomati Accord, but added: "SA's approach is clear: Either peace and co-operation, or conflict — landmines and terror."

Quoting Mazambican security sources, the country's official news agency Aim said the seven SA reclkies were operating in the district of Mu-

tarara in the north-western province of Tete — a narrow strip of land sandwiched between the Malawian border and the Zambezi River.

The three Portuguese commandos, said to have possibly come from a station in Natal, were allegedly leading bandit operations in Inchope in the central province of Sofala, an important area for the defence of the Beira Corridor.

Aim also claimed that information reached Maputo the week before President Samora Machel's death that there were SA soldiers in Tete. It said people fleeing from Mutarara spoke of "South Africans commanding the MNR".