

SA behind massacre of 278: Frelimo

MAPUTO.

THE political bureau of Frelimo declared at the weekend that the tactics of massacre now used by the MNR bandits in southern Mozambique were "conceived and planned by the racist South African regime".

Reacting to last Thursday's bandit massacre on the main north-south road 80 km north of Maputo, in which at least 278 people died, the political bureau declared in a statement that South Africa "has in recent months proceeded with massive infiltrations of bandits into southern Mozambique with the specific task of practising this extreme, horrific and inhuman form of terrorism — namely the indiscriminate slaughter of men, women and children".

The statement noted that this tactic of the apartheid regime, applied on the ground by the bandit hordes, followed the failure in an attempt to divide the country in two along the line of the Zambezi River.

"It also follows increased verbal aggression, threats and insults against Mozambique and its leaders made by

members of the South African racist regime," said the political bureau.

Pretoria's aims, the statement said, "are to sow fear and insecurity among the people of the south of the country, and to isolate our capital from the rest of Mozambique".

Increased aggression against Mozambique, it said, occurred at a time when the Pretoria regime was getting more isolated and in which attempts to promote armed banditry internationally as a legitimate opposition to the Mozambican government had flopped.

The most savage terrorism, it said, "arises as the only alternative left to Pretoria in order to continue with its designs to dominate our country".

The political bureau said, in denouncing the massacre before the public opinion of the entire world, it alerted the international community to the perils posed by the Pretoria regime's policy of aggression, practised systematically against the countries of the region.

The policy risked plunging Southern Africa into a generalised conflict.

The political bureau also called for

further moves to isolate South Africa, and increase support for Mozambique in order to help the people confront the war of aggression waged against them which was beginning to take on "aspects of veritable genocide".

The political bureau also reaffirmed the determination of the entire Mozambican people to continue the struggle until the total and complete elimination of banditry.

"Acts of barbarity" such as Thursday's massacre "strengthen the conviction of the Mozambican people that the only dialogue that is possible with the bandits is the dialogue of guns".

It said that the state will support the

costs of all the funerals, and will ensure that the bodies of the victims are transported to burial sites in accordance with the wishes of their families.

It also asked for assistance to identify the bodies, many of which were burned beyond recognition.

● "Bandits and terrorists" was how the new United States ambassador to Mozambique, Ms Melissa Wells, described the MNR killer gang as she surveyed the wreckage at Tanfaga.

Ms Wells was among a group of Western diplomats and UN personnel who visited the scene together with Mozambican and foreign journalists yesterday afternoon. — Ziara-AIM.