

MNR bandit tells of SA arms supply

A CAPTURED Mozambican MNR bandit told state radio that South Africa delivered arms to the MNR base last November, two months after President P. W. Botha pledged to halt support to the bandits.

Mr Botha was reported to have told Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano at a September summit that Pretoria would not support MNR bandits.

The prisoner, Moises Macaxaze, was quoted on Monday as saying he saw a South African plane deliver arms to the MNR on November 12 in Chibuto district in Gaza province.

He said the plane unloaded anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, explosives, mortars and ammunition under cover of darkness.

The radio report did not say whether the plane had dropped the supplies or actually landed at a bush air strip.

It said Macaxaze was captured on an espionage mission for the MNR at Chimolo in Manica province. The date of his capture was not given.

An MNR defector and a Mozambican refugee have testified in recent months that South African support for the MNR was continuing, despite Mr Botha's pledge and in violation of a 1984 non-aggression pact between the two countries.

Last month the president of the Mozambican parliament, Cde Marcelino dos Santos, accused special units of the South African armed forces of destroying

MAPUTO ^{2/2}
89

about 900 pylons in 1988 which carry electricity from Cabora Bassa dam to South Africa.

Meanwhile, the military attache at the Soviet embassy in Maputo, Col. Vlatcheslav Glagolev, yesterday pledged that the Soviet Union "faithful to its internationalist duty, will continue to provide the necessary assistance to the Mozambican armed forces so that they could carry out the tasks entrusted to them".

He was speaking at a Press conference to mark the 71st anniversary of the foundation of the Soviet armed forces.

Col. Glagolev said "we shall work, as always, to raise the level of our co-operation in the military field, seeking new forms of this co-operation that correspond to the demands of the current situation in Southern Africa and in the world in general".

Asked whether this meant that the Soviet Union intended to increase its military aid to Mozambique, he replied that the Soviet Union would comply with all the accords it had signed with Mozambique.

The Soviet Union had "no right to intervene in the internal affairs" of Mozambique, he said.

He rejected suggestions that the Soviet's withdrawal from Afghanistan implied a change in the Soviet Union's support, military and otherwise.

"The Soviet Union will continue to honour the agreements it signs with other states," he insisted.

Asked about South African threats to take military action against Zimbabwe should this Frontline State acquire Soviet MIG-29s, or Western combat planes, Col. Glagolev said "we don't think that the reorganisation of Zimbabwe's armed forces implies any aggressive intentions towards South Africa".
— Ziiana-Reuter.