

# SA continues to support MNR says former SADF man

H. 29/8/91

MAPUTO.

THE South African government has never honoured the Nkomati non-aggression accord that it signed with Mozambique in 1984, and has continued support for the MNR bandits up until today, according to a former major in South African military intelligence, Mr Nico Basson.

Speaking at a Maputo Press conference on Monday, together with two Mozambicans who had been press-ganged into the South African army, Mr Felix Ndimene and Mr Carlitos Joao Maria, Mr Basson insisted that "the entire government" was still involved in supplying the bandits.

"It's not just an isolated act by the defence force," he added.

Asked if President F. W. de Klerk himself was involved, Mr Basson said this was a "very difficult question", but he was inclined to think that "if De Klerk doesn't know about it, he's still responsible, because he's in charge of the government".

Mr Maria was kidnapped by the SADF in 1978 in the Ponto de Ouro area, near the border with the South African province of Natal, and Mr Ndimene was abducted from the town of Namaacha in 1982. They were both press-ganged into the Fifth Reconnaissance Commando, one of the notorious "special forces" in the SADF, deeply involved in the destabilisation of neighbouring countries.

Mr Ndimene recalled that shortly after the signing of the Nkomati Accord, all the Mozambicans in Five Recce were evacuated to a base in the Caprivi Strip in northern Namibia. "In that camp we continued to have contact with MNR," he said. "MNR was being trained in the same camp as Unita."

Asked to comment on the statement by Mr de Klerk at his July 30 Press conference that South Africa had not press-ganged anyone, Mr Ndimene accused the South African president of lying. "I personally am an example of an individual kidnapped by the SADF, and Five Recce is made up of individuals of various nationalities — Mozambicans, Zimbabweans, Angolans, Zambians, Zaireans," he said.

Meanwhile, the Mozambican armed forces attacked an MNR bandit base which the MNR referred to as the "Presidential Office" of its leader Afonso Dhlakama in the central province of Sofala on August 21, according to a source in the FPLM general staff cited by yesterday's issue of the Maputo daily Noticias newspaper. — Ziana-Pana.