

# MNR bandits urged to attend direct peace talks

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ZIMBABWE is committed to the search for peace in Mozambique but is unhappy that the MNR bandits are now avoiding direct talks with the Mozambican government, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cde Nathan Shamuyarira, said yesterday.

Cde Shamuyarira said Zimbabwe was pleased that the Mozambican government had agreed to have direct talks with the MNR bandits in a neutral country. He was speaking at Mozambique's 15th independence anniversary celebrations in Harare yesterday.

## Direct talks

He said it was now left to the MNR bandits who were now refusing to engage in direct talks using the question of venue and other demands as an

excuse not to hold the talks.

Direct peace talks between the Mozambican government and the MNR bandits, which were scheduled for Malawi last week failed to take place due to "difficulties experienced by Kenya and MNR bandit delegations".

The MNR leader, Afonso Dhlakama, refused to meet a Mozambican government delegation in Blantyre. The bandits, who have repeatedly said they wanted peace talks to be held in Kenya, said the Malawi talks would be a security risk.

However, the Mozambican President, Cde Joaquim Chissano, promised the bandits that their lives would not be in danger if they attended the peace talks in Malawi. But the bandits have said

they would prefer to meet in Kenya, where indirect contacts took place over the past year.

Cde Shamuyarira said such talks were being supported as these would stop turmoil and bring peace in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and the whole of the Southern African region.

## Terror

He said the MNR bandits were now looking for excuses to avoid the peace talks by making many demands. One of the demands put up by the bandits was the withdrawal from Mozambique of several thousands of Zimbabwe troops who guard the country's trade routes to the Indian Ocean.

Speaking at the same occasion, which was attended by the Mozambican Deputy Foreign Minister, Cde Salome Moiane, the Mozambican Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Cde Lopes Tembe Ndelana, said Mozambique's 15 years of independence were not years of peace and tranquillity.

He said soon after

Mozambique's independence, some external forces aware of the valuable wealth and resources in that country, did not give the Mozambican people a rest and had immediately embarked on an intensive campaign of terror aimed at undermining the independence and peace of Mozambique.

The campaign included among other things, economic sabotage and armed actions mostly against civilian targets such as women and children.

The Mozambican government had embarked on an exercise aimed at bringing peace to that country. — Herald Reporter.