

Peace still expected in Mozambique after pullout

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THE recent withdrawal of Zimbabwean troops from Mozambique is not expected to disturb the security situation along the south-eastern border, analysts have said.

Security sources have said peace was expected to prevail along the border even after the pullout, due mainly to a ceasefire signed by former foes in the 17-year Mozambican war, which appears to be holding.

The analysts apparently based their predictions on the situation which obtained in south-eastern Zimbabwe before the troop withdrawal. Military sources, including Colonel Sibusiso Moyo, the commanding officer of the last task force to occupy the Limpopo Corridor, were hopeful that the ceasefire would hold.

Up to 2 000 soldiers from the 6 Brigade last Thursday came home after spending four months in Mozambique guarding the Limpopo Corridor — one of Zimbabwe's important transport routes to markets abroad.

The withdrawal ended 10 years of Zimba-

bwe's military presence in Mozambique where the army joined the Frelimo government in fighting the Renamo who were attacking the country's economic lifeline.

The officer commanding Chiredzi police, Superintendent Albert Nyadenga, said police had remained at Crooks Corner and Dumisa border posts to look out for potential border jumpers as the threat of MNR incursions had diminished considerably since the October peace pact was signed.

Several hundred villagers in the Chikombedzi area who had been frightened out of their homes by sporadic MNR raids have gone back into the villages following the lull in fighting.

Chiredzi South MP Cde Aaron Baloyi, who also fled his home at the height of MNR banditry, said life was now back to normal in the area. He was hopeful that peace would remain in place in Mozambique.

There have been no incidents of attacks on cargo traffic moving along the Beira Corridor since the signing of the Rome Accord

and businessmen presently consider the route to be safer than the South African routes.

The managing director of the Beira Corridor Group, Mr David Zausmer, said yesterday contrary to fears that the withdrawal of Zimbabwean troops from the corridor would trigger off fresh attacks on truckers, the route was now perfectly safe.

Mr Zausmer said the main road linking Beira and Maputo had been reopened although it badly needed repair. Many other roads leading up to the corridor were also being reopened.

Italian troops operating under the United Nations peacekeeping force have taken over from the Zimbabwean soldiers in guarding Zimbabwe's lifeline to the sea.

Zimbabwean exporters and importers have started a major campaign to promote the use of the Mozambican ports of Beira and Maputo as alternative routes to the sea.