

Britain steps up link with Mozambique

By David Adamson,
Diplomatic Correspondent

THE Foreign Office is planning to appoint a defence attaché to the British Embassy in Maputo following this week's visit to Britain of President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique.

The appointment represents a slight upgrading of military relations. At the moment, the defence attaché accredited to the Mozambique Government is part of the British High Commission in Harare, the Zimbabwean capital.

Foreign Office and Ministry of Defence officials say that there is no plan to put a military mission in Mozambique, or to transfer the training team from Nyanga, in Zimbabwe's eastern highlands, to Mozambique.

£15m support

The British training team has recently been increased from eight to 14 to deal with a doubling of Nyanga's intake of Mozambique Army officers and NCOs.

The view in London is that it can carry out its work more effectively in Nyanga, which is close to the Mozambique frontier, than in Mozambique amid a civil war.

The main reward Mr Chissano will carry home, when he leaves London today, will be £15 million in balance of payments support.

The money is intended to help tide Mozambique over the difficult period which will follow the introduction of the programme of financial reforms insisted on by the International Monetary Fund.