

UK may increase anti-MNR aid to Mozambique: Thatcher H 30 3 89

By Funny Mashava
in Nyanga

BRITAIN is considering boosting its military aid to Mozambique in the battle against terrorism, visiting British Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher said at Border Camp yesterday.

Speaking after watching demonstrations by Mozambican soldiers at the battle camp near Nyanga with President Mugabe and President Joachim Chissano of Mozambique, she said Britain was proud to be helping Mozambique fight against terrorism.

President Chissano had flown into Harare yesterday morning and flew up to Nyanga with President Mugabe and Mrs Thatcher in a Casa of the Air Force of Zimbabwe.

"No country can develop peacefully while it is ridden with brutal terrorism," said Mrs Thatcher.

Britain has assigned 17 military personnel out of a total British military advisory training team complement in Zimbabwe of 45 to train Mozambicans. This is known as the Mozambique Training Team.

Mrs Thatcher said it was important that her country did all it could to help Mozambique defeat the MNR. She praised Cde Mugabe for the role his country was playing in helping Mozambique overcome her problems by helping that country fight the bandits.

Speaking on the same occasion, Cde Mugabe said he was happy that the BMATT group that was made available to Zimbabwe in 1980, had accepted the offer to train Mozambican soldiers.

BMATT had succeeded in helping the three former hostile armies of Zanla, Zipra and the Rhodesian forces to integrate and Cde Samora Machel had wanted the group to train his soldiers, Cde Mugabe said.

The President said he was very impressed by the demonstrations by the Mozambicans and said to them: "We need you and your high fighting qualities so that you can go back and raise the standard of counter-bandit activities."

Zimbabwe supported Mozambique for two reasons, he said. The two countries were neighbours and had

mutual economic interests. If the Mozambican trade routes were destroyed, then both countries suffered.

The two countries also had strong historical ties dating back to the days they both fought for their independence.

President Chissano told the young trainees of the importance of the exercise by saying three heads of government had come to the camp to see for themselves how they would defend their countries.

He said the fight against the MNR went beyond fighting against terrorism. It was a fight for peace in Southern Africa and the total defence of the people of the region.

"We will win against terrorism because we are fighting against evil; we are fighting for justice, human rights and democracy," said Cde Chissano.

Earlier in the day, the two presidents and Mrs Thatcher had arrived at Aberdeen airstrip to a tumultuous welcome by the local people. The three were met at the airstrip by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cde Nathan Shamuyarira, and the Gover-

nor of Manicalara, A. Bishop Joshua Dhube.

Mrs Thatcher inspected a guard of honour before she was entertained by local schools and traditional dancing.

The three then proceeded to the battle camp, where they went into private discussions on the banks of the Nyangombe River, where they also had lunch.

They then went to view the demonstrations after a briefing by the commander of the MTT, Major Silver-side. The Mozambicans were using tracer bullets. They also showed the two presidents and Mrs Thatcher how they would be defending the Limpopo railway line by using dug-in command posts.