

Extra training for Chissano's troops

Maputo rebels 'must be defeated'

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NYANGA. — Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher yesterday offered Mozambique extra military training to help defeat Right-wing rebels, British officials said.

Speaking to Mozambican soldiers after watching them train with British and Zimbabwean instructors at an army camp in Zimbabwe, she said the three armies had one objective: "To defeat terrorism in Mozambique."

She said the Mozambican National Resistance (MNR) rebel movement

practised terrorism of a cruel and brutal kind, adding "it must be defeated".

British officials said Mrs Thatcher offered President Joaquim Chissano a significant increase in the 360 men it trains per year under a three-year-old training programme.

The MNR was formed by Rhodesia in the 1970s and expanded by South Africa. Pretoria says it no longer supports the rebels.

The movement has paralysed huge areas of Mozambique and has been accused of atrocities against civilians by the US State Department.

Mrs Thatcher had talks with Mr Chissano after they lunched with Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe.

Her visit to the training camp, where 12 British officers share with Zimbabweans the task of giving infantry training to Mozambican troops, was praised by Mr Chissano and Mr Mugabe.

"Long live Great Britain," Mr Chissano shouted to his troops giving a clenched-fist salute.

He told Mozambican soldiers just beginning their training in the rocky hills near Zimbabwe's border with Mozambique that their fight was not only against terrorism.

"We see beyond the fight against terrorism, against Mozambique, it is a fight to bring peace to the whole of Southern Africa," Mr Chissano said.

Mrs Thatcher promised him R40 million aid next year, a further R12 million for refugee relief and

15 000 tons of cereals.

She and the two presidents watched from armchairs on a shaded platform as Zimbabwean and Mozambican soldiers fired AK-47 automatic weapons.

Wearing a red and black silk dress that made no concessions to her surroundings, she inspected trenches used for training and watched a medical orderly dress a mock wound.

"If I am prepared to go down there, then you are prepared to follow me," she said to Mr Mugabe and Mr Chissano and she tiptoed into a trench to join two surprised Mozambican soldiers.