

Zimbabwe union with Mozambique predicted

PRESIDENT

Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique has forecast an eventual federal union between his country and Zimbabwe as the logical culmination of current co-operation ventures between the two.

Chissano's prediction — in an interview with Zimbabwe's semi-official *The Herald* newspaper — brings this possibility into the open.

It has been the subject of mounting speculation in Zimbabwe as Robert Mugabe's government commits more and more manpower and resources to defeating the Frelimo rebels, rehabilitating Mozambique's transport routes

and, only with a few interruptions, it was announced that Zimbabwe was expected to receive credit to Mozambique to expand trade.

In the first public allusion to the idea of a union or Zimbabwean co-operation, the possibility of political union between the two countries, Chissano said *The Herald*: "We know through the contacts



● CHISSANO

MICHAEL HARTNACK

and the real work we do together. "When you reach a point when you can say that you do not see any differences, and that we are one, then you have made an association of countries — and you will have a confederation.

"We cannot prejudge it now. What we prefer do is work for unity."

The Mozambican leader acknowledged the Zimbabwean task force in Mozambique — believed to number more than 8 000 men — had expanded its role from the original one of defending Zimbabwe's road, rail and oil-pipeline links with the Indian Ocean.

"For some time now, as everyone knows, the Zimbabwean comrades are not just confined to that task. They are getting involved in the anti-terrorist and anti-bandit raids in Frelimo, Manica and Sofala provinces.

"We welcome this spirit of the Zimbabwean comrades. They are not mercenaries; they are fighting at home for the common interest of both Mozambique and Zimbabwe and, in fact, of the whole region."

Chissano said Mozambique would insist — at the next meeting



● MUGABE

of the Mozambique-Malawi joint security commission, scheduled to be held in Maputo this week — that Malawi co-operated with Front line states' efforts to eradicate the MNR.

"We want Malawi to do more than just clean up her end, to prove she has nothing to do with banditry," he said. "What we want is positive action from Malawi. We want Malawi to participate positively because it is in Malawi's interest."

Chissano gave no suggestion that his new administration was ready to announce its unilateral abrogation of the Nkomati Accord with SA.

"We are putting pressure on SA to comply with the rule of good neighbourliness, at least," he told *The Herald*. "The international community has got to step up pressure on SA to try to respect the international rules, or at least respect what she had signed herself," he said, in a clear reference to the 1984 Nkomati pact.

He said Malawi had been used by SA to launch destabilisation attacks against Mozambique.