

Relief all round as SNASP put in the clear

Siam,
4(29)
25-7-89
p 223

MAPUTO/ To sighs of relief in both Lisbon and Maputo, the Mozambican security service, SNASP, has been officially cleared of any involvement in the murder of Evo Fernandes, the former secretary general of the Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo/MNR).

Fernandes was shot dead near Lisbon in April 1988, and accusations in March this year about Maputo's supposed involvement led to strained relations and the expulsion of a junior Mozambican diplomat from Lisbon, *writes a correspondent.*

In a judgment handed down on 18 July in Cascais, near Lisbon, the Portuguese judges said allegations of Mozambican involvement had not been proved. The main accused, Alexandre Chagas, was sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment for what the court considered "premeditated" involvement in the murder.

His accomplice Joaquim Messias got eight and a half years for his involvement, and for illegal possession of arms.

The court ruled that the third accused, Manuel Pinto da Costa, was unaware of the plan to kill Fernandes. He was not in the country at the time of the murder. Chagas and Messias must also pay an indemnity of Esc16.5m (about US\$110,000) to Fernandes' widow Ivete, who has recently begun to take a more active role in MNR affairs in Lisbon.