

Maputo defector 'not prepared to fight for Reds'

Crime Reporter

"I AM prepared to fight for the freedom of my people, but not for Russia."

This was said in Pretoria yesterday by Mr Jorge Costa (30), Mozambique's National Director of Security, who had applied for political asylum in South Africa.

Mr Costa, who stressed that he had done so voluntarily, was relaxed and wearing a grey suit when interviewed by the Press in Pretoria.

"Mozambique is losing a little bit of freedom every day because of the Marxist government, which has a good relationship with the Soviet Union and other communist countries.

"The Russians do long term planning and ruined our economy. They are thus in the position to put the pressure on us. They will help us to survive, but on their conditions. Their main target, however, is southern Africa — no matter how long it takes them."

Mr Costa said he had been Director of Security since 1978 and had worked in co-operation with the South African Police during the past three years.

"I visited South Africa on previous occasions and was considering my defection for the past eight months.

"Our problems started in 1976.

I am not prepared to work against my own people just because the Russians want it. Frcllmo was good in the beginning when they were a front for freedom. They fought for our freedom until 1977, but they are not a front anymore, they are a full-bred Marxist party.

"They are not interested in military action in Africa themselves — they use other people to do it for them and they have the influence and time to succeed. You must, however, understand that the Mozambique Resistance Movement has not quit — they are still fighting in the field.

R100 Scotch

"To come back to the economy — we are on our knees. About no timber is being exported, and less than 40 percent of our normal quota of prawns. If you want to eat prawns or buy a bottle of whisky, you have to buy it on the black market. A bottle of whisky costs you R100."

He said there were still people with money in Mozambique, but certain articles were unobtainable, especially inland. Food was cheap, but there was none to buy.

The standard of education was very low. Most people only completed primary school.

Mr Costa said the reason for his visit to South Africa was to have talks with the narcotics bureau about drug-smuggling between

South Africa and Mozambique, via Swaziland.

"My wife Goaqina (32), children Helena (9), Grace (6), and Ricardo (4), as well as my parents are still in Maputo. What's going to happen to them now, is an open question," said Mr Costa.

"I have no plans for the immediate future, but I am going to have a good rest for the next two weeks."

The head of the Security Police, Lieutenant-General Johan Coetzee, said Mr Costa applied for political asylum at Jan Smuts Airport at 7 am. He was part of a three-man delegation on an official visit to South Africa, and refused to board the aircraft when it was due to leave for Maputo. He gave his two colleagues their air tickets and told his host, who took them to the airport from their Silverton hotel, that he wished to stay behind.

General Coetzee made it clear that the Security Police did not co-operate with the Mozambique security department directly. "They only co-operate with the South African Police on pure police and crime — especially drug smuggling — matters."

The General said the only contact his department had with Mozambique was through the border posts, which fell under the Security Police.

"By no means did we influence or force Mr Costa to take the decision," said General Coetzee.