# B. AFRICA

## MOZAMBICAN DEFENCE MINISTER REVIEWS MILITARY CO-OPERATION WITH TANZANIA AND ZAMBIA AGAINST MNR

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*(i) Text of report (ME/0182 ii)*

Army Gen Alberto Joaquim Chipande told Radio Mozambique today that military co-operation between Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Tanzania has permitted vast areas of the Zambezi valley to be freed of armed bandits, following a joint offensive culminating in the disorderly flight of the gangsters. Mozambican Defence Minister Chipande met his Zimbabwean and Tanzanian counterparts in Zambezia to evaluate this important military offensive.

[Recording of Chipande] The aim of the meeting was to aluate our military co-operation, which began in 1986 when the armed bandits occupied . . . [changes thought] We know too well that the Zambezi valley was an important enemy target. In its attempt to destabilise our country, the enemy occupied the Zambezi valley. The aim was to divide the country. Various districts in Zambezia Province, and others south of the Zambezi valley, in Sofala, Manica and Tete provinces, were occupied. The occupation was more noticeable in the districts on the border with Malawi, in the Niassa, Zambezia, Manica and Tete Provinces.

Early this year, we resumemd operations in the area. The culmination early this month when we managed to free some localities of Morrumbala district, and the entire Milange district with its seven localities. In addition, pockets of Milange district residents were also liberated.

In Tete Province this year, we launched operations which resulted in the liberation of several districts occupied by the armed bandits. The same happened in Manica Province.

So, we decided to hold this meeting to evaluate the operations that were carried out. Above all we wanted to assess the joint operations to determine the positive and negative aspects of the operation.

We plan future operations, because the bandits are still active. Some have moved southwards, after the first phase of the operation. We assessed bandit reaction following the first phase of the operation. With the direct support of South Africa, the armed bandits stepped up their operations in southern Mozambique, namely in Inhambane, Gaza, and Maputo Provinces. [end of recording]

*(ii) Excerpts from report*

The joint operations by Mozambican, Zimbabwean and Tanzanian forces against armed banditry in Mozambique were evaluated by the respective defence ministers at a meeting held recently in Quelimane. National Defence Minister Army Gen Alberto Chipande, who returned to Maputo today, told our correspondent that as a result of a joint military operation, several districts and localities in Zambezia, Tete Sofala and Manica provinces have been freed of bandit criminal occupation.

[Recording of Chipande] . . . The first phase was conducted jointly by Mozambican and Zimbabwean forces, when Gorongosa was occupied. The second phase was carried out with the participation of Tanzanian forces. This culminated in the liberation of Mocuba, Mopeia, (?Chimuala), Morrumbala, Caia, Sena and other districts along the Zambezi valley.

Operations were interrupted at this stage for a number of reasons. First, we had to consolidate the liberated areas. This meant that party and government bodies had to play a role in those areas by resettling people and reconstructing infrastructure that had been destroyed. This permitted the three joint forces to carry out operations to consolidate the areas where there were still sporadic armed bandit actions. . . [end of recording]

In his interview, the Minister of National Defence disclosed that at the meeting with his Zimbabwean and Tanzanian counterparts, new search and destroy operations were planned against the armed bandit groups. Following their flight from Zambezi valley, the groups began operating in certain areas of Inhambane province, and in Nampula and Niassa provinces, as well as in southern Cabo Delgado.

[Chipande] As a result of operations in the central Zambezi valley, some of the bandits stepped up their operations in the northern area, namely in Nampula and Niassa provinces, and in southern Cabo Delgado. Accordingly, we have resumed operations involving all these provinces, in the south and north of the country. Thus the need for the joint meeting.

It was an important meeting in which we not only evaluated our co-operation and joint operations in the Zambezi valley, but in Mozambique as a whole. We evaluated the effects of the operations launched by the Mozambique Armed Forces – FPLM in areas in which they operate on their own, and in areas where we operate jointly with the Zimbabwean and Tanzanian forces.

The outcome of the meeting was positive because we have thwarted the intention of the enemy to divide the country. The enemy does not stand a chance of dividing our country. [end of recording]

Asked to comment on the military situation in Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane, Alberto Chipande said:

[Chipande] As in Zambezia, we have the initiative in Maputo, Inhambane and Gaza Provinces. We are operating without problems or shortcomings. What we must do now is to occupy the liberated areas and resettle the population. Party and government organs must organise the people in order to rebuild what has been destroyed. People must be reorganised following the disruption of their lives by the armed bandits. This is what remains to be done. [end of recording]