

THE South African Defence Force has recently had direct involvement in the affairs of Zaire, Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda, Botswana and Kenya, according to independent Africa specialists and recent international press reports.

Information on several of these countries has been verified by *The Weekly Mail*. Most of the reports have been denied by the SADF.

This comes at a time when the government and the African National Congress are considering a draft Code of Conduct for the SADF, whose provisions include non-aggression against neighbouring states and a ban on SADF members being used as mercenaries. These measures are being strongly proposed by the ANC but are being resisted by some elements in the security forces.

ZAIRE: An international relations consultant who travelled via Zaire to Abidjan recently reported to *The Weekly Mail* that a group of SADF officers on his flight had disembarked at Kinshasa airport. And according to *Africa Confidential* sources "South African mercenaries" have recently been seen in Zaire.

Military spokesman Commandant AH Louw confirmed that the SADF had trained a Zairean army infantry column in "basic conventional infantry tasks".

According to a recent SADF press release 15 instructors from the SADF's 44 Parachute Brigade spent six weeks — from May 6 to June 21 1991 — training the Zairean soldiers. Prior to the course, an SADF work team helped prepare unused living quarters for the company, and a "limited quantity of equipment and kit" was also supplied.

"This assistance follows the assistance which was given last year to the Zairean navy as part of the RSA's attempt to establish and strengthen diplomatic relations with its neighbours".

KENYA: Four senior South African military specialists arrived in Kenya at the end of June this year, according to a recent report from Kampala by the Lisbon-based news agency Inter Press Service. It said the men were based in Eldoret in Western Kenya.

According to Steve Ellis, of the Leyden-based African Studies Centre, there have been several reports recently that Renamo has transferred its external bases to Kenya. Ellis, a former editor of *Africa Confidential*, said he received reports that when Kenya took over the Renamo training in 1988, South African military intelligence officers travelled to Kenya.

According to the documents released by the Mozambican government, Kenya has been involved in providing direct support to Renamo rebels, at least since 1988. The papers, captured from a Renamo base in Sofala province in April, indicate that the Kenyan government — with the direct approval of President Daniel Arap Moi, has provided logistical and financial support for Renamo in collusion with Malawi.

The SADF 'reaches out' to its neighbours

The SADF has continued to provided aid to defence forces and rebel movements in various African countries.

GAVIN EVANS reports

Recent reports suggest this has occurred under the direction of the director general of the Kenyan Foreign Ministry, Bethuel Kiplagat.

The SADF denies that it has been involved in liaising with the Kenyan government over the issue of support for Renamo or that any of its members travelled to Kenya recently.

MOZAMBIQUE: Since the Nkomati Accord was signed in 1984 there have been frequent reports of continuing South African support for the Mozambican rebel group, Renamo. The most recent evidence that this support has continued came with last month's statement by former SADF special forces operative Felix Ndimene that he was abducted by the SADF in Mozambique, taken past a Renamo camp and forced to join 5 Recce battalion in 1982.

Ndimene, who resigned from the SADF seven months ago, said SADF special force members have bought farms in Mozambique to continue providing support for the rebels.

He also said that up to 90 percent of the members of 5 Recce were foreign nationals, many of them abducted from Mozambique and other African countries after SADF raids.

And according to Carlitos Joao Maria, a former SADF colleague of Ndimene's, 5 Recce were involved in sabotage attacks on trains in Mozambique, in support of Renamo. The claims have been denied by the SADF.

ANGOLA: At least until April this year, shortly before the ceasefire between Unita and the Angolan government, military aircraft from South Africa were flying over Botswana at night in what appeared to be a huge airlift of supplies to Unita.

The Weekly Mail obtained detailed information from sources in Botswana which corroborated Angolan government claims that South Africa had violated Botswana's airspace to fly war material to Angola. At the time Angola was claiming that South African Hercules C130 transport planes were dropping supplies at least twice daily into Angola to bolster Unita



forces engaged in a major offensive against the strategic town of Luena, in Mexico province.

A member of a conservation team based in Botswana told *The Weekly Mail* he personally monitored Dakotas flying every night over his camp in Botswana, in the direction of Jamba, between March 8 and March 17. He said there were three flights a night, except on Sundays when there was one flight.

In response to questions from *The Weekly Mail* an SADF spokesman said in April they were aware of "humanitarian flights undertaken by relief organisations at Unita's request", and confirmed that the Botswana government had been in contact with the South African

government in connection with possible violations of its air space.

He said South Africa had a "small liaison contingent" in Jamba to facilitate communications between South Africa and Unita, and said that no military equipment was being supplied by South Africa to Unita.

RWANDA: IPS reports that South Africa is arming the government of General Juvenal Habyarimana in its war against the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF).

It says staff at Kigali airport have reported "unscheduled" South African planes making regular landings to drop military and medical supplies to the land-locked central African state. The RPF is close to the Ugandan government, while the Rwanda government is reported to be supported militarily by Kenya.

In an interview in the Ugandan newspaper, *The Weekly Topic* two months ago, RPF chairman Colonel Alex Kanyarengwe is quoted as saying that his movement had seized "considerable quantities of South African-made weaponry", including missiles, artillery pieces and machine guns.

Asked to comment, the SADF referred the question to Armscor. Armscor said it was their policy "never to comment on the international procurement or sales of arms".

BOTSWANA: The Botswana newspaper, *Newslink*, is a front for the SADF's Military Intelligence. *The Weekly Mail* has established.

The paper's former managing editor, Barry Baxter, told *The Weekly Mail* that *Newslink* was funded and controlled by military intelligence, through the Pretoria-based communications company, Dixon-Soule Associates.

According to a former military intelligence major, Nico Basson, DSA is a government front company. It handles all press releases from the Bophuthatswana government. The SADF refused to confirm or deny the report.

● According to a recent IPS report from Kampala, South Africa may also be involved in support for Ugandan rebel groups.

A Ugandan military official is quoted as saying that his country was concerned that South Africa was assisting Kenya in arming rebels seeking to overthrow President Yoweri Museveni's government.

The report claims that South Africa's military interest arises from the fact that since early 1989 Umkhonto weSizwe has had most of its bases in Uganda. According to reports from sources close to British intelligence, the Ugandan government has been using MK guerrillas to fight rebels in the north of the country.

The SADF has denied any role in training or arming opponents of the Ugandan government, and there appears to be scepticism among African specialists about the claims.

In addition, South Africa's security forces have maintained close ties with Lesotho, Swaziland and Malawi.