

Maputo will get guns to beat 'bandits' — Machel

RDM By JOSE CAETANO 23/6/82

PRESIDENT Samora Machel yesterday announced the mass arming of Maputo residents and warned that a late-night curfew and influx control would be introduced to curb the city's deteriorating security situation.

During his two-hour speech at a public meeting held in the capital's Independence Square, President Machel presented some members of the popular militia with arms which he said "constituted the symbolic beginning of the distribution of hundreds of thousands of arms to elements of the population (so) Maputo will be clear of thieves, killers, rapists and other bandits."

He added: "The first duty of the newly-armed militia will be the protection of the diplomatic quarters, the suburbs where foreign workers live and government offices in Maputo."

Earlier he told the meeting some white Mozambicans and foreign workers were recently victims of anonymous telephone threats to kidnap their children if they did not leave the country.

He said pamphlets had been distributed in

the capital to spread "confusion and panic".

He warned anyone caught would be tried by a military tribunal and severely punished.

In an apparent reference to the activities of the Mozambique National Resistance the president said: "Bandits attacked factories and railway links with Zimbabwe in an attempt at keeping that country as well as Zambia, Zaire and Botswana dependent on South Africa."

"We want peace not war.

"We want tranquility, not bloodshed, but cannot watch passively while these armed bands who have no political organisation or ideology destroy our property."

Referring to the recent defection of the director of Mozambique security Mr Jorge Costa to South Africa President Machel said Mr Costa "did not desert but had returned to his spiritual fathers."

He announced influx control measures will soon be introduced to curb "the uncontrolled access of undesirable elements to the capital".

The meeting was attended by senior party officials, cabinet members and diplomatic representatives in Mozambique.