

Chipande Views Joint Zimbabwean, Tanzanian Talks
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[Text] Army General Alberto Joaquim Chipande told Radio Mozambique today that military cooperation 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 Defense Minister Chipande met his Zimbabwean and Tanzanian counterparts in Zambezia to evaluate this important military offensive, and said:

[Begin recording] The aim of the meeting was to evaluate our military cooperation, which began in 1986 when the armed bandits occupied ... [changes thought] We know too well that the Zambezi Valley was an important enemy target. The enemy occupied the Zambezi Valley in its attempt to destabilize our country. 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.

We resumed operations in the area early this year. The highlight occurred early this month when we managed to free some localities of Morrumbala District and the entire Milange District with its seven localities. Pockets of Milange District residents were also liberated.

We launched operations in Tete Province this year that resulted in the liberation of several districts occupied by the armed bandits. The same happened in Manica Province.

We decided to hold this meeting to evaluate the operations that were carried out. 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 south after the first phase of the operation. We assessed bandit reaction following the first phase of the operation. The armed bandits stepped up their operations in southern Mozambique with the direct support of South Africa, namely in Inhambane, Gaza, and Maputo Provinces. [end recording]