

**SOUTH AFRICA: DEPUTY DEFENCE MINISTER
ON CUTS IN DEFENCE BUDGET, ARMSCOR
DIVERSIFICATION, NO AID FOR MNR**

[18]

(a) SAPA in English (i) 0938 gmt (ii) 0908 gmt 8 Feb 90

(i) and (ii) Excerpts from dispatches datelined Cape Town, 8th February

(i) Cuts in the defence budget had to be seen against the background of South Africa's tremendously successful engagement in 23 years of undeclared war, the Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr Wynand Breytenbach, said on Thursday [8th February]. Addressing an international press briefing, he said he wished to dispel the perception that the SADF had been forced into certain cutbacks. The emphasis had shifted from military to political and economic matters and the SADF fully supported these government developments. The SADF gladly took on the responsibility for its primary role of protecting South Africa's borders. . .

The withdrawal of the SADF from Angola brought about a reassessment of military priorities and a period of consolidation. . . Further rationalisation was marked by the alleviation of Citizen Force camps and the 50% cut in national service. The defence force was consequently very proud of being able to make a contribution to the economy of the country.

(ii) With a reduction of hostilities in southern Africa, Armscor [Armaments Corporation of South Africa] was ready to put its capabilities to the advantage of all other sectors, the deputy Minister of Defence, Mr Wynand Breytenbach, said on Thursday [8th February]. Addressing an international press briefing, Mr Breytenbach said Armscor would diversify its products while keeping up its export capability. Some companies involved in armaments were doing very well despite the drop in demand for munitions. The defence force was never Armscor's only client. Exports to foreign markets did very well despite the arms embargo. "Sanctions was probably one of the best things that happened to South Africa." . . . Missile development would continue and would probably be applied in the communications field, he said, but would not elaborate.

(b) Radio RSA in English for abroad 1100 gmt 8 Feb 90

Text of report

The South African government has categorically denied giving any assistance to the Renamo [MNR] movement in Mozambique. The Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr Wynand Breytenbach, said in Cape Town that the government had heard rumours of unofficial South African support for Renamo, and the authorities are trying to trace the people giving this report. Mr Breytenbach said there had been an earlier investigation inside South Africa into such claims, but no proof had been discovered and the investigation had petered out. With regard to the situation in Angola, Mr Breytenbach said the leader of the UNITA movement was willing to negotiate. He said he hoped the governing MPLA movement was also willing to negotiate because stability in Angola was important for South Africa. Mr Breytenbach said South Africa would not like Namibia to be under pressure because of problems in Angola.