

Meets Press on Arrival

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[Text] Mozambican Foreign Minister Pascoal Mocumbi today categorically rejected any attempt to link the Mozambican Government with the death of bandit ringleader Evo Fernandes in Lisbon last week. Pascoal Mocumbi said in a statement to Portuguese journalists in Lisbon this morning that attempts to connect Frelimo with terrorist actions such as this one only seek to damage good understanding and cooperation between Mozambique and Portugal, because Evo Fernandes was a Portuguese citizen.

He said that Frelimo has never resorted to terrorism since the anticolonial armed struggle. Minister Mocumbi said the death of Evo Fernandes was, "a terrorist action against an agent of terrorism, and clarification can only come from expert Portuguese authorities specializing in terrorism investigation."

Foreign Minister Pascoal Mocumbi made this statement when he arrived in Lisbon at the start of an official and friendly 3-day visit to Portugal at the invitation of Portuguese Foreign Affairs Minister Joao de Deus Pinheiro.

Asked about the motives that may lead to a meeting between President Joaquim Chissano and South African President Pieter Botha, Minister Mocumbi said that Mozambique's policy has always been to try to find ways of reviving the Nkomati Accord when the latter shows signs of flagging. Minister Pascoal Mocumbi said it was in this spirit that Mozambican Cooperation Minister Jacinto Veloso went to Pretoria this week as President Joaquim Chissano's envoy.

Minister Mocumbi described this visit to Portugal as a time to assess the current favorable state of bilateral political and diplomat cooperation. He stated that he would be discussing the rehabilitation of the Cahora Bassa Dam with Portuguese authorities. The scientific and [word indistinct] commission behind the project is expected to meet for the third time in Lisbon at the end of May. Mocumbi will also discuss the possibilities for military cooperation with Portugal and the general situation in southern Africa.

Minister Mocumbi also said that his meetings with Portuguese Government officials—notably, with his Portuguese counterpart; the secretary of state for cooperation; and President Mario Soares—will also serve to analyze multilateral relations between Portugal and the five Portuguese-speaking African countries. Mozambique is the acting coordinator of the Portuguese-speaking African countries.

Minister Mocumbi was scheduled this morning to receive the ambassadors of the five Portuguese-speaking countries accredited in Lisbon. He will hold his first meeting with Portuguese Foreign Affairs Minister Joao de Deus Pinheiro this afternoon. He is expected to be received in audience by President Mario Soares afterward.