

## B. AFRICA

### Mozambique Warns of S African Military Preparations

Maputo in English for southern Africa 1800 gmt 5 Nov 86

Text of report (ME/8409/B/3):

South Africa is increasing its barrage of propaganda, military threats and aggression against Mozambique. The latest move by Pretoria has come from Foreign Minister Roelof Botha, who has reiterated allegations made by a spokesman of the South African-backed MNR [Mozambique National Resistance Movement] terrorists in Lisbon that Cuban troops are about to arrive in Mozambique. Mr Botha is quoted by the Johannesburg 'Star' newspaper today as saying that if these claims about Cuban troops coming to Mozambique are true then tension in the region was bound to rise. Mr Botha and the MNR spokesman did not give any indication of how they have concluded that Cuban troops are supposedly on their way to Mozambique.

The Mozambique news agency today quoted a political analyst as saying that the MNR spokesman in Lisbon raised the story about Cuban troops because he had been told to do so by Pretoria. The analyst stated that Roelof Botha was now using this as a platform to make further threats against Mozambique. In Maputo there has not been the slightest indication that any contingent of troops from Cuba or anywhere else are about to disembark. The South African allegations have added to the growing concern in the Mozambican capital as to South Africa's intentions.

The allegation about Cuban troops has come as the Johannesburg 'Star' newspaper also reported today that Mozambique had recognised its involvement in landmine explosions in South Africa. The newspaper claimed that Mozambique had accepted that two guerrillas of the ANC, allegedly entering Transvaal province from Mozambique, had placed the landmine which killed a South African soldier near Barberton on Sunday [2nd November]. The Mozambican government today categorically denied the newspaper claims, adding that the authorities in Mozambique have not even received any official information from the South African government on this matter. It is widely believed that Pretoria is increasing its threats as a pretext for new aggression against Mozambique.

This mounting anti-Mozambique campaign by Pretoria has also come amid revelations by South African sources that a concentration of South Africa's special forces took place in the eastern Transvaal province just over two weeks ago. This information, confirmed to the Mozambique news agency by a source in Mozambican security, indicates that the military airport at Nelspruit has been strengthened with a squadron of mach two Impala fighter-bombers. Impalas were used by South Africa to attack Matola, near Maputo, in May 1983. While the squadron of Impalas arrived at the Nelspruit military airport, a squadron of Puma transport helicopters was stationed at the town's civilian airfield. Each of these helicopters can carry 17 soldiers.

The airport at the nearby border town of Komatipoort has also been strengthened and the town's barracks have received troops from the special reconnaissance commando force, usually known as the Recce in South Africa. Fresh infantry units as well as Eland and Ratel armoured cars were also sent in. Troop movements and warplane manoeuvres also increased near the border with Mozambique. All these military manoeuvres took place during the period immediately preceeding the tragic air crash in which President Samora Machel was killed, and around this period commando units were also infiltrated into Mozambique.

In another recent development, on Monday the scheduled flight to Maputo by South African Airways didn't show up, allegedly for technical reasons. The last time that this happened was on 23rd May in 1983 and before that in January 1981, both occasions on which South Africa's armed forces attacked residential and industrial areas near the Mozambican capital.

Meanwhile, a source in Mozambican security today told the Mozambique news agency that seven South African commandos, belonging to the Recce's crack units, are in charge of MNR terrorist operations in the north-western province of Tete. Three Portuguese commandos, currently working in the South African army, are also leading bandit actions in the area of Inchope in Sofala province the vital Beira-Zimbabwe highway.