

Mugabe's joint forces may aid Mozambique

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The Star's Africa News Service

SALISBURY — Former guerillas and Rhodesian security force members who fought each other through the Rhodesian bush war may be thrown into action against anti-Frelimo forces operating in Mozambique.

Saturday's sudden visit to Mozambique by Zimbabwe Prime Minister Robert Mugabe follows intensified attacks on Frelimo officials and supporters there by the national Resistance Movement (MNR).

While there has been no official comment on Saturday's talks at the port of Quelimana between Mr Mugabe and President Samora Machel, it appears likely that the Mozambican leader will ask

for some sort of military assistance.

After the last wave of intensified violence by the Mozambican rebel movement Mr Mugabe flew to Beira, and on his return, announced that he had discussed with President Machel a plan for joint action against the MNR.

DUTY BOUND

"Dissidents and reactionary elements cannot be allowed to continue operating on our soil or in Mozambique," he said then.

Mr Mugabe added that if anti-Frelimo forces were launching their attacks from Zimbabwe "... then we are duty bound to get rid of them."

In the past, promises of help made between Mozambique and the new



MR MUGABE

Zimbabwe have been based largely on the debt of gratitude felt by Mr Mugabe's ruling Zanu (PF) Party towards Mozambique for that country's support during the guerilla war.

Now what was essentially an internal problem for Mozambique has taken on

more serious implications for several of the black nations of southern Africa, especially Zimbabwe.

The success of the black nations' plan to increase their economic co-operation and lessen dependence on South Africa hangs largely on transport.

The rail routes from Zaire and Zambia through Zimbabwe to the Mozambique ports of Beira and Maputo are key points in this plan.

Without them, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe must rely on the South African ports or the Benguela Railway (under constant attack by Unita guerillas) through Angola for much of their exports.