

Zambia opens embassy in SA

By JOY CHULA

ZAMBIA is to establish a representative office in South Africa soon following parliament's approval of the Foreign Affairs ministry budget.

Foreign Affairs Minister Vernon Mwaanga who announced this yesterday told visiting South African deputy Foreign Minister Reiner Schoeman that Zambia would be able to open an office by May or before that.

He also appealed to all parties involved in negotiations for peace in South Africa to find ways of ending violence which has become rife especially in the Natal province, warning that if this was not done now, the situation would get worse.

He said Zambia which is a member of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and Commonwealth observer groups shared the same concern with other countries in trying to ensure that there were talks that paved the way for a free and democratic election.

"That is why we have balanced contacts with all who are involved in the talks. The purpose is to

encourage the parties to negotiate and work out a constitution that would be fair to all," he said.

And Mr Schoeman has urged countries involved in the observer groups in South Africa, to help strengthen the existing infrastructure which he said would be useful in the peace process.

He said the reinforcement of the current organisations would also help curb the violence that has hit his country and assured Zambia that his government was committed to rooting out violence in the country.

He noted that violence could only be minimised or stopped altogether if his government received cooperation from the various rival political leaders and if there were free and fair elections.

The Youth African deputy minister is in the country for a three day visit in which he is expected to meet top government officials to discuss bilateral relations between the two countries, brief the government on the situation in his country and also discuss regional cooperation.

VISITING South African deputy Foreign Minister Mr Vernon Mwaanga at his office yesterday. Picture by OSWELL CHIMAVU.



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