

Zimbabwe: Sekeramayi Tells Media Zim May Be Interested in Russian Jets and Copters

MOSCOW, Sept. 19, 2016 (New Zimbabwe) -- Zimbabwe may be interested in acquiring Russian artillery, fighter jets and helicopters being showcased at the on-going Army-2016 international military and technical forum near Moscow, Defense Minister Sydney Sekeramayi told Sputnik Wednesday.

"It is a very good exhibition and the ground forces assets that have been shown are very impressive. There are some that we are very interested in and that will be discussing with the relevant authorities. At this point in time we are still assessing and are coming to a conclusion on what we want to acquire from here but that could be artillery, jet fighters, helicopters," Sekeramayi said.

The Army-2016 expo, organized by the Russian Defense Ministry, kicked off on Tuesday and is due to last through Sunday. The forum is held in the military-themed Patriot Park in Kubinka near Moscow and in a number of locations in Russia's military districts.

The event brings together representatives from the Russian defense industry, research institutes, universities, as well as foreign companies. Over 800 Russian and foreign participants are expected to be involved in some 7,000 exhibitions throughout the week. The forum's participants and guests are attending a number of conferences and roundtables to discuss the future development of military technology.

Zimbabwe has, for nearly two decades, had minimal access to international weapons market with the west saying selling arms to Harare was akin to abetting government's human rights abuses. China has been one of the few sources of weapons for Mugabe's isolated government.

A few years ago, workers at South Africa's Durban harbour refused to download a shipment of arms purchased by Harare from China, saying they feared the weapons would be used to suppress democratic initiatives in Zimbabwe. **(END)**

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Monday, 19 September 2016 12:24
