NAMIBIA: Army not breaking landmine treaty

The Namibian army has denied accusations that it had violated an international ban on landmines by bringing the deadly weapons into Namibia, 'The Namibian' reported on Tuesday.

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The mines were allegedly transported through Namibia after being seized from Angolan-based UNITA rebels. The National Society for Human Rights, citing the Namibia Defence Force's (NDF) displaying of landmines taken from UNITA in Angola, said authorities were violating the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. But a Ministry of Defence spokesman, Frans Nqhilila, said: "Anti-personnel mines brought into Namibia were not meant for any other purpose than just to display that these are the weapons used to maim our people". He added that all the mines captured from UNITA would be destroyed and that the Angolan army was prohibited from transiting weapons like mines through Namibia.

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