

***Gaborone, Botswana, December 3 (Infosplusgabon) - Botswana has allayed media reports suggesting that Zimbabwe's former vice President Phekezela Mphoko was deported from the country.***

Mphoko has been holed up in Botswana following Zimbabwe's 'bloodless coup' that saw President Mugabe resign from the presidential post and purging of his cronies

"In the context of media reports, speculation and inquiries, this is to note for the record that the former Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Mr. Phelekezela Mphoko, was not deported or otherwise forced to leave Botswana," said a statement issued by Botswana's spokesperson, Dr. Jeff Ramsay, on Saturday.

Dr Ramsay said Mphoko entered Botswana on the 22 November, 2017, from a third country.

"He departed for Zimbabwe yesterday (Friday) of his own free will," Dr Ramsay said.

Phelekezela Mphoko was the second deputy appointed in 2014 by long-time strongman Mugabe, along with current President Emmerson Mnangagwa.

Mphoko had flown to Japan on official business the day before the army took over the country in an operation that culminated in Mugabe's ouster after a 37-year rule.

But instead of returning home at the end of his mission, Mphoko sought sanctuary in Botswana, where he remained until Friday.

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## **Botswana denies deporting Zimbabwe's former VP**

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