

Further Mozambican Reaction to S African Recruitment Restrictions

(a) Maputo in English for southern Africa 1800 gmt 9 Oct 86

Text of commentary:

Pressure for the eradication of apartheid in South Africa has never been as great as it is today. The pressure is being applied not only by the struggling people of South Africa themselves but also by the international community.

As the pressure grows, the Pretoria regime sees itself increasingly isolated and reacts with increasing savagery against the most convenient and vulnerable targets. These targets are the South African people themselves, who are being subjected to intensified oppression and the people of the neighbouring states who are the victims of escalating military and economic aggression by Pretoria.

Mozambique has been singled out by Pretoria as a target for some of the most vindictive and destructive acts of aggression. These include the recruitment, training, and arming of armed bandits who carry out acts of terror in Mozambique. This military aggression has continued despite the signing of the Incomati non-aggression accord of 1984.

At the economic level, the authorities in Pretoria have exploited the links of dependence on South Africa which Mozambique inherited from Portuguese colonialism. One aspect of this is migrant labour. In colonial times, the south of Mozambique became a labour reserve for South African gold mines, coal mines and farms. Through this, and through the original port and railway systems, Mozambique became effectively handcuffed to South Africa. By the time of Mozambique's independence in 1975, there were about 120,000 Mozambican miners in South Africa and their families, who remained behind in Mozambique, were dependent on their earnings.

The Portuguese colonial government had benefited directly by receiving part of the migrant miners' earnings in gold. This payment was calculated at the low official gold price then sold by Portugal at a much higher free market price. Needless to say, that favour was withdrawn by South Africa when Mozambique became independent. Pretoria also drastically reduced the number of Mozambican migrant workers in South Africa's mines, and recent estimates put the number at about 55,000. These actions were calculated to damage the Mozambican economy.

The South African government yesterday announced another move to (?serve) the same purpose. No more Mozambican workers will be employed in South Africa and the contracts of those already in South Africa will not be renewed. This is part of an undeclared war that Pretoria has been waging against Mozambique for many years. It is also an insult to the international community, which has declared the system of government in South Africa a crime against humanity and has condemned Pretoria's aggression against its neighbours.

President Samora Machel, speaking at the non-aligned Movement's summit last month, referred to the duty of the international community in relation in southern Africa. It was the duty of every country, he said, to initiate practical measures to support the establishment of peace and tranquillity and the preservation of the freedom and independence of our nations. This means intensifying the diplomatic struggle for the eradication of apartheid, which is the principal cause of destabilisation and war in the region. It also means increased international economic assistance to South Africa's neighbours and concrete material backing for strengthening the defence capacity of these countries. Yesterday's action by Pretoria and the ominous threats against Mozambique by Gen Magnus Malan serve to emphasise the need for increased international support for South Africa's neighbours and especially for Mozambique.

(b) Maputo home service in Portuguese 1700 gmt 9 Oct 86

Text of AIM commentary:

The decision by the South African government to expel 61,000 Mozambican miners at the end of their present contracts is economically nonsensical for South Africa. The decision must, therefore, be understood in the context of the undeclared war that South Africa has been waging against Mozambique for many years now.

When the Pretoria government began threatening to expel these miners, the mining companies were the first to protest against the government's intentions. Soon after the government's decision was announced, the South African Chamber of Mines reacted against the decision. There are two reasons for this. The Mozambican miners are

the best qualified, and thousands of them occupy senior posts, demanding a great deal of experience. Moreover, a mining labour force cannot be trained in a few years. In fact, any error in areas requiring skilled labour in a mine can result in tragic consequences.

Therefore, the Pretoria decision must be seen in the light of the process of destabilisation that South Africa has launched against Mozambique. South Africa is not retaliating against Mozambique because of the recent US decision to apply even more severe sanctions against apartheid. Had this been the case, Pretoria would have retaliated by expelling US nationals living in South Africa. South Africa does not retaliate. It escalates aggression.

We are witnessing a substantial increase in the process of sanctions that Pretoria began exerting upon Mozambique many years ago, hand in hand with military and psychological destabilisation and direct aggression by its armed forces and through the armed bandits. The South African government not only has failed to apply the Incomati accord, but has never had the intention of applying it. This was confirmed by the set of documents captured at Casa Banana in Gorongosa last year. Pretoria has been trying by all means to destroy the young Mozambican state and prevent the building of a nation in Mozambique. Pretoria has been trying with all means to destroy the possibility of building a united and anti-racist fatherland in Mozambique.

This decision to expel the Mozambican miners is yet another element of this warmongering expansionist and tragically irresponsible posture. Why irresponsible? It is irresponsible because, in attacking the region, Pretoria, although not destroying it, is reducing its capacity to become one of the most important areas of development in Africa and the world, from which the future South Africa could greatly benefit.

In destabilising South Africa itself, the apartheid government is contributing towards the destruction of South Africa through acts of political shortsightedness and ideological madness, which, from a technological and scientific viewpoint, are pushing South Africa back five, 10, 20 years.

In making decisions like the expulsion of miners, acts of war against the countries in the region, or threats of direct military intervention or territorial occupation outside the South African borders, the Pretoria government is evading the issue. South Africa's problems do not originate in Mozambique, Zimbabwe or any other country. The roots of the problems stem from the apartheid system, which the South African people have demonstrated they do not want to tolerate any more, regardless of the material costs of its elimination or the number of victims that are necessary for the removal of the spectre and madness of institutionalised racism from the South African nation once and for all.