

# The need to talk to Mozambique

EPH

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SO reports of a summit meeting between South Africa and Mozambique have been denied by both parties. More's the pity. The two sides have a great deal to discuss to their individual and mutual benefit.

Power for this country from the Cabora Bassa hydro-electric scheme, or an unbroken supply of it is the first issue that springs to mind. That prospect must be linked directly to something the Machel government would like to see - South Africa's help in curtailing the actions of the Mozambique Resistance Movement, which constantly sabotages that power link. And it is widely believed in Maputo that our Government either is giving direct aid to the MRM or turning a blind eye to rebel attacks across the border.

There are other reasons as pertinent why the two countries should try to cement some sort of relationship, despite their political differences. Not least is the economic inter-dependence that applied before the Marxist regime came to power. Remnants still exist; in Mozambique's continued (though di-

minishing) reliance on South African expertise to run its ports and railway and in the fact that, geographically, we are the only client in a position to benefit from Cabora Bassa. Economically, many other loose ends remain that could easily be tied again by a pragmatic agreement.

But a more compelling reason why South Africa should be trying to settle its differences with its eastern neighbour was contained in a warning this week by the Chief of the Air Force, Lieutenant-General Mike Muller cited in graphic terms the dangers posed by the growing Soviet involvement in Mozambique and Angola, through a build-up of arms and sophisticated missiles.

Until a settlement is forged in Namibia, there is little chance of cooling the situation in Angola. Diplomatic prospects around Mozambique, however, are rather better and the Government should pursue them. Particularly in view of the statements it makes so often about Russia's designs on Southern Africa.