

Row over fees as South Africa hands over gift ¹⁸/₁₀

Political Staff

MAPUTO — South Africa has given Mozambique medical supplies worth R72 000 at a brief presentation ceremony here involving the new Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr Leon Wessels.

Make that R74 300 if one includes the landing fees. Or R74 800, if you toss in the freight handling fees for 20 minutes' work.

Freight handling fees? Correct. For Frelimo government soldiers to offload 2 000 kg of desperately needed, free medicines and equipment from an SA Air Force C-130 Hercules transport aircraft at Maputo airport.

There was something cock-eyed about that. Why should a goodwill party from South Africa pay to make the ges-

ture? Was this a case of trying to pull the gift horse's teeth?

So went the reasoning of South African officials and Air Force pilots in persuading an airport official that they shouldn't have to pay the fees. They took a full 30 minutes to convince the clerk that he should take his medicine and waive the fees.

Mr Wessels handed

the consignment to Mozambican Labour Minister and president of the Economic Commission, Mr Aguiar Mazula.

It was part of the Cahora Bassa hydro-electric project rehabilitation deal in which South Africa had pledged R10,5 million of non-lethal equipment to its neighbour.

Most of the equipment was delivered by the S A

Navy at Beira in November last year.

"We are witnessing a great confirmation of the effort we are making to give life to the Nkomati Accord," Mr Mazula said on the runway apron as the soldiers loaded supplies into military trucks. He noted that this showed the two countries were seeking peace in Mozambique and in the re-

gion. *Star (wkly)*

"It would be very nice for all of us if we could later see people without the need for such medicine," he said in an apparent reference to Mozambique's ongoing civil war and the country's economic devastation.

Mr Wessels said the consignment demonstrated South Africa's serious intention to be party to the repair of

the hydro-electric giant. ¹⁸/₁₀ 89

Europe had to contribute to the development of southern Africa, he said. "People, African-orientated expertise and finance are required.

"Mozambique has the people and the needs, South Africa has the African experience and African technology, and Europe has the finance," Mr Wessels said.