

South Africa must stop its support for savagery

■ ON Wednesday February 14 at 11.30am a crowded train bringing passengers, mainly Mozambican miners returning home, from Ressano Garcia, was attacked, 18km from the South African border.

The line had been mined. When the train hit the mine several carriages were derailed. As passengers scrambled out to take cover in the surrounding bush they were fired on by the bandits and some were murdered with bayonets.

The death toll, initially thought to be 55 is now put at 70. Some of those killed included young children, one little girl who was on her way to visit relatives.

This attack has horrified and outraged Mozambicans and all of us who live and work here. Coming at a time when there is talk about a new era of peace in our region, it is particularly obscene. Once again indications are that it was carried out with forces acting from South African territory.

When he visited Maputo in December, State President F W de Klerk admitted that it was still possible that the MNR continued to get support from South Africa, but his government has done nothing to prevent these barbaric assaults on Mozambican civilians.

We the staff and volunteers of the undersigned organisations working in Mozambique, wish to lend our support to the Mozambican intellectuals whose letter was published in your columns recently, and to the progressive forces in South Africa who have responded to their appeal to put pressure on the De Klerk government to stop its support for the war in Mozambique.

We call on all progressive forces inside South Africa to step up their action and condemn this latest act of savagery and to put the strongest pressure on the De Klerk government to take concrete action to put an end to support from within South African territory for MNR atrocities. — Judith Head and 12 others, CUSO/SUCO (Canada), COCAMO (Canada), MAGIC (Britain), WVS (Denmark), DVS (Denmark), ARO (Sweden), Eduardo Mondlane Foundation (Netherlands), Centro Internazionale Grocevia (Italy), Maputo