

Pipeline sabotaged again

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From Stephen Taylor
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Mozambican rebels have again sabotaged the oil pipeline to Zimbabwe amid a fuel crisis which has brought the country almost to a halt.

The Mozambicans claim that the depot was sabotaged not by the MNR but by South African commandos who slipped ashore

Whether true or not, informed sources believe it is significant that the attack came only weeks after Zimbabwe finally gave in to appeals by President Samora Machel of Mozambique for military assistance and sent in up to 1,200 troops. Although they were under orders to only assist in protecting the pipeline, there were attendant risks that the conflict with the Pretoria-backed MNR would spread.

South Africa, which has a surplus of domestically produced fuel, as well as a strong incentive to keep its black neighbours dependent, has indicated it is willing to meet Zimbabwe's needs and there have been a spate of rumours that a deal was imminent.

