

# Barratt calls for SA denial of MNR links

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**Staff Reporter**

IF the South African Government was covertly supporting the Mozambique National Resistance Movement (MNR), it would be contributing to the political and economic disintegration of Mozambique and the severe economic problems of Zimbabwe and Malawi.

This was said by the Director-General of the South African Institute of International Affairs, Professor John Barratt, at the annual meeting of the institute's Cape Town branch last night.

"Claims that South Africa is supporting the MNR are believed throughout the rest of Southern Africa and the West," Professor Barratt said.

"If the allegation is not true then there is a need for a specific, categorical and detailed denial at the highest level from the South African Government, because of the negative effect the reported intervention is having on attitudes towards South Africa."

Professor Barratt said Mozambique's economy, which had never been

strong, had deteriorated since independence. In addition the MNR, in its attempt to overthrow the Frelimo government of President Samora Machel, was "ravaging" large areas of the centre of the country. The effect on the whole region, including countries like Zimbabwe and Malawi, made the situation more serious.

"The South African Government has brought pressure to bear on the government of Mozambique, not only by its actual and threatened military strikes, but also by the covert military support it is widely believed to have been giving to the MNR."

"Apart from denials of interventionist activities, there is a need for South Africa to demonstrate a positive attitude by indicating, for instance, willingness to assist... in the reconstruction and development of Mozambique, for the mutual benefit of all the countries in the region," Professor Barratt said.