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Notícias, the Maputo daily paper, on 19 March reacted sceptically to Mr Botha's announcement of the discovery of a gang of counterfeiters and smugglers linked to the MNR. The unmasking of this network, comments Notícias, "cannot in itself serve as proof of South African enthusiasm to implement the Nkomati Accord." The South Africans, it points out, would have "taken action against the criminals in order to defend their own national interests" regardless of Nkomati. Their police action was in the first instance aimed at protecting the South African currency (the counterfeiters are accused of forging 50-rand and 100-dollar notes). The paper points out that many of the facts announced by Botha at his press conference - timed to coincide with the first anniversary of the Accord - had been known for many months, especially those relating to the theft of Mozambican ivory and precious stones, and to the violation of Mozambique's airspace by planes coming from South Africa.

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