

## Renamo pledges to halt attacks on Eskom's Cahora Bassa plant

ESKOM CE Ian McRae said yesterday the electricity corporation had made contact with Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama who had promised not to sabotage electricity pylons near the Cahora Bassa hydro-electric plant.

Speaking at an Africa Institute Conference in Pretoria yesterday, McRae also said he had held talks with Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) officials in Windhoek recently.

The meeting constitutes a breakthrough in relations with the SADCC, which was established to lessen the Frontline States' economic dependence on SA.

The SADCC announced at its annual conference in Gaborone recently that it

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intended to investigate the possibility of a regional electricity grid and transport network.

McRae said he was struck by the openness and trust which was developing between the countries in the region. "We are developing a common vision."

He said Eskom was confident it would be able to restore electricity production at Cahora Bassa within the next few years. The problem, he said, was that 1 400 towers — one third of the towers in the region — had been sabotaged.

McRae said his confidence sprang from signs that political stability would return to Mozambique, one of which was re-

bel leader Dhlakama's statement that he was no longer interested in sabotaging the Bassa scheme.

Dhlakama even told Eskom he was prepared to cooperate in the reconstruction of the project.

But McRae said he was not sure he could convince investors to commit themselves to the project because the political process would always come first.

He said there were dramatic changes in the IMF which for the first time was approving projects which included SA.

The fund was also becoming more proactive — identifying possible projects, but McRae urged southern African countries to seek opportunities for project finance.