

Mozambican Criticism of Co-operation with S Africa

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The military chief of the South African minority regime, General Malan, has been talking this week about his view of regional co-operation in southern Africa. We have heard it before of course: the independent countries of the region need South Africa because South Africa is rich and powerful and they are poor and weak. Some countries, says Malan, understand this, and therefore try to co-operate with South Africa. Other countries do not, and he names these as: Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. These four countries, according to Malan, have serious political problems. The political problems are caused by their precarious economic situation, and the economic situation is caused by their refusing to accept South Africa's friendly helping hand. Malan goes on to say that these four countries will have to learn that if they go on like this they will be politically and economically destroyed.

This is the Malan analysis of southern Africa, and it is not by chance that the four countries are suffering as a result of their refusal to co-operate with an apartheid state. It is because South Africa is taking military action against them, trying to prevent their economic development. It is not because they would suddenly get rich if they agreed to co-operate with South Africa. Pretoria commits aggression against these countries in an effort to maintain its economic strangle-hold over the southern African region.

Now, according to Malan, the kizumbas are an internal Mozambique problem, nothing to do with him. In fact, however, the kizumbas are directly controlled by the apartheid regime, and a secret kizumba document has now emerged - in London as it happens - revealing an interesting fact. After the SADCC conference which took place in Malawi last November, the South African authorities sent specific instructions to the kizumbas to cut off Malawi from Mozambique. Previous attacks on international road and rail links had been mainly directed against Zimbabwean trade. But Malawi, well-behaved until then, was getting out of line. So the friendly helping hand of Pretoria was extended to get back on the right line, the one that goes through South Africa. With friends like that, who needs enemies?