

SA blamed

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LISBON. — Mozambique has accused South Africa of deliberate economic sabotage against key rail and power installations in the country in a bid to keep Mozambique dependent on Pretoria.

Maj Gen Jacinto Soares Veloso, Mozambique's Security Minister, claimed in a Lisbon newspaper interview at the weekend that South Africa was masterminding sabotage of the Cabora Bassa hydro-electric scheme's power lines and rail networks between Maputo and South Africa.

He said hardline South African military chiefs were overriding the advice of business and civilian leaders and stepping up aggressive tactics against Mozambique on the pretext of wiping out guerrilla opponents allegedly based inside the country.

The minister said Escom, the South African electricity company, had told Portugal, which administers the Cabora Bassa dam company until full debt repayment on construction costs has been completed, that it could not negotiate higher power prices because of the uncertainty of supplies from the dam.

"Yet it is the South African military authorities themselves who order the sabotage of the power lines carrying electricity to South Africa," the minister complained.

Guerrillas of the Mozambique National Resistance Movement, said to have overt South African backing, have been responsible for regular

attacks on power pylons from the dam, interrupting supplies for many months and depriving the Portuguese Government of revenue for loan repayments.

Portugal recently sent a mission to Maputo in a bid to persuade the Government there to step up its campaign against the guerrillas so that Portuguese technicians could repair sabotage damage and get power flowing to South Africa, which relies on the dam for between 12% and 16% of its total electricity needs.