

B. AFRICA**S African Foreign Minister on****Mozambique***SAPA in English 1932 GMT 6 May 86*

(iii) Conflict between the Mozambican government and the resistance movement was cutting off electrical supplies from Cahora Bassa and blocking South African endeavours to help that country's economy, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Pik Botha, said today. Responding to points raised in the debate on his budget allocation by the leader of the official opposition, Mr Colin Eglin, he said South Africa was not helping Mozambique protect its [figure indistinct] kilometres of the Cahora Bassa scheme, "although this has been considered often". There were 525 electricity pylons along the line inside Mozambique that were "down" as a result of the conflict.

Mr Eglin had asked whether South Africa was taking adequate steps to assist Mozambique economically through private and public sector action. Mr Botha said the answer to this was yes, credit was available to private sector for investment in Mozambique and consideration was being given to upgrading Maputo harbour and improving the railway line. Maputo harbour was still one of the cheapest ports for South Africa, but once again the conflict in Mozambique was hampering efforts, with the private sector wanting safety guarantees before committing themselves. "The business sector is shying away from the violence there", Mr Botha said, emphasising the importance of promoting peace in the country.

Replying to another of Mr Eglin's questions, Mr Botha said that the joint operational centre set up at the Ressano Garcia borderpost with Mozambique, in terms of the Nkomati [Incomati] accord [was] not yet fully operational although a liaison committee had been set up after he met with Mozambican representatives recently, and he expected smooth functioning soon.