

Mozambican Reaction to “The Latest South African Blackmail”

Maputo home service in Portuguese 1900 gmt 8 Oct 86

Text of commentary:

The South African government has decided to suspend the recruitment of Mozambican miners and issued orders that those who are currently working in South Africa should return to Mozambique as soon as their contracts expire. This decision by the racist government of South Africa was announced in Cape Town today and is the prelude of a series of sanctions which the Pretoria regime had been applying against our economy.

In fact, since our independence in 1975, South Africa has been applying a series of sanctions against our country destined to weaken the Mozambican economy. For example, about 150,000 Mozambican miners worked in South Africa in the colonial period. Soon after independence, South Africa decided to reduce this number to about 40,000. Moreover, in the colonial period, 60 per cent of the salaries of the Mozambican miners were paid in gold. But in 1977 the South African government decided unilaterally to end this method of payment.

Another area in which the South African government is applying sanctions against Mozambique is in the area of ports and railways. The Maputo railway and port were built in the colonial period to serve South Africa. But since independence the government of this country began to reduce its use. Accordingly, whereas Maputo port used to handle 12m tons of cargo destined to or from South Africa this figure has fallen to only 1m tons.

Another method used by South Africa to destroy the Mozambican economy is the use of armed bandits, which were created, financed, trained and sent into our country by South Africa. The economic losses resulting from the criminal actions of the armed bandits are extremely high. The armed bandits, which were created and led by South Africa, mainly target the means of communication as a way of perpetuating the dependence on South Africa of Mozambique and the southern African countries that Mozambican ports and railways.

In brief, the measure announced today by the South African government to suspend the recruitment of Mozambican miners is the continuation of destabilising actions which Pretoria carries out against our young republic and against our still fragile economy. But Mozambique will, as always, know how to find ways of resisting the latest South African blackmail, particularly now that the international community realises that the apartheid regime is the destabilising factor in southern Africa.