

# Reprisal

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[Editorial comment]

**SOUTH AFRICA** has stopped the recruitment of Mozambicans as a reprisal for the landmine blast in KaNgwane, near the Mozambican border, that injured six South African soldiers.

General Magnus Malan, the Minister of Defence, had warned Mozambique the previous day that there could be reprisals. And yesterday's announcement, signed by four Cabinet colleagues, is the first.

Since General Malan gave the initial warning, one must assume that military action is not excluded.

The Minister of Defence says that recent events in Mozambique are of concern to the South African Government as President Machel appears to have lost control of the country.

He accuses Mozambique of continuing to launch subversive propaganda, in spite of the Nkomati Accord, and says that terrorist activity still continues from Mozambique.

If President Machel allows a Moscow-inspired revolutionary war against South Africa, "he must also be prepared to take the consequences.

"President Machel has the Nkomati Accord in his hands. Nkomati and landmines cannot exist side by side; if President Machel chooses landmines, South Africa will react accordingly."

Official sources have told The Citizen there has been a resurgence of ANC activity from within Mozambique against South Africa in recent months, and most landmine incidents in the Eastern Transvaal have involved penetration of ANC cadres from Mozambique.

"The ANC appears to have been re-establishing its military structure inside Mozambique and this is a matter of concern to the South African Government."

Several terrorists recently captured by the security forces and held in connection with landmine blasts in the Eastern Transvaal came from Mozambique, according to these sources.

In terms of the Nkomati Accord, South Africa and Mozambique have each undertaken not to allow the use of its territory for attacks on the other.

It seemed, after Nkomati, as if Mozambique had reduced the ANC presence.

But a spokesman of the ANC, reacting to the decision of the US Congress to probe the organisation's activities, told a Johannesburg newspaper this week that, just as South Africa had failed to persuade the Frontline States to eject the ANC, so would the US Government also fail in this, should it attempt to do so.

This is a clear indication that the ANC is still active in neighbouring countries.

Local newspapers suggest that a big question mark hangs over Mozambique's ability to control the ANC.

The excuse is that the Maputo Government is hard enough pressed to contain the guerrilla activities of the MNR, let alone deal with the ANC.

But the two issues are completely different. The ANC is a foreign organisation that has nothing to do with the Mozambican civil war. It is in Mozambique in order to launch attacks on South Africa.

If it were ejected, South Africa would have no reason to take reprisals against Mozambique. Mozambique, for its part, accuses South Africa of violating the Nkomati Accord, claiming that large numbers of Mozambique National Resistance Movement guerrillas are being infiltrated by South Africa through a northern province in Malawi.

President Machel would do well not to rely on counter-accusations in the hope that they will enable him to stave off South African retaliation.

South Africa does not make threats idly, as the countries that have harboured ANC terrorists well know.

For our part, we would sincerely hope that South African reprisal raids will be avoided. Halting the recruitment of Mozambican workers is a tough enough reprisal in itself.