

The human factor *Esireva Province Herald* 22/12/83 in our cold war

THE most encouraging thing about the Tuesday talks between South African and Mozambican Cabinet Ministers is that they happened.

So it is right to be optimistic about the implications of these historic discussions between governments of such opposite persuasions; right to feel hopeful that this could be a first step towards an accord in which both countries would undertake not to support rebel insurgents.

Of course, there will be obstacles. Wide ideological rifts exist between the two countries, broadened by mutual suspicion of the other's intentions. Such differences will not easily be breached, however much the parties involved might like to see a state of peace in the region.

But an important aspect of the talks in Swaziland is the human one. In cold print, it was a meeting between white nationalism and black Marxism. In reality, it was a coming together at a high level of individuals who should now have a very much better appreciation of one another; of their feelings, fears and attitudes.

The value of such face-to-face encounters can't be overstressed. Witness, in another regard, the Angolan Government's communique this week in response to South Africa's call for a moratorium over Namibia. Though it dismissed the proposals, the tone of that rejection was undoubtedly less strident than it would have been before the Ilha do Sol conference between representatives from Pretoria and Luanda.