

Mali Correspondent

LISBON. — The possibility of a summit meeting on neutral ground between South Africa and Mozambique grew stronger yesterday with disclosures in Lisbon of intense efforts to bring about such an encounter.

The national news agency ANOP reported that during his official visit to Portugal last month South African Foreign Minister Mr Pik Botha told the Portuguese the SA Prime Minister, Mr P W Botha, was willing to meet with President Samora Machel to discuss the difficulties existing between the two countries.

This followed a similar earlier statement by President Machel during his state visit to Portugal in October in which he emphasised his country's desire for "peaceful co-existence" with South Africa.

The Portuguese despatched a senior Foreign Ministry official to Maputo hours after Mr Botha's visit, to clarify South Africa's position to the Mozambicans — giving rise to current reports that Portugal is mediating between the two countries to help reduce tensions and to improve internal security in Mozambique.

Mr Pik Botha, who returns to Lisbon today en route to

Strong prospect of PW, Machel summit

RDM
8
12
83

Johannesburg, is expected to explore further the proposed summit meeting between the two leaders, in a fresh round of talks with the Portuguese.

Lisbon has offered its good offices to both sides in opening up dialogue because of its traditional links with southern Africa. Lisbon also has two major headaches in Mozambique.

Portugal spent about R6 200 000 last year on the sabotage-prone Cahora Bassa hydro-electric scheme in Mozambique, and finds it difficult to recoup its expenditure from sales of power to South Africa because of guerrilla activity.

Portuguese nationals working in Mozambique have become a prime target for attacks by rebels.