

SOUTH AFRICA "CLEARED" OF CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR MOZAMBIKAN RESISTANCE

Johannesburg in English for abroad 1100 gmt 19 Jan 88

Text of commentary

South Africa has long maintained that with the signing of the Nkomati accord nearly four years ago, it stopped support for the Mozambican Resistance Movement, Renamo. Few have believed it, and South Africa is regularly accused of continuing support for Renamo. Now, an analysis of the security situation in Mozambique prepared by the Beira Corridor support group has cleared South Africa of continued support for Renamo.

The support group was set up some time ago with international backing to open the rail link between Zimbabwe and the Mozambican port of Beira, and to reactivate economic activity in Mozambique. The group's analysis of the situation in Mozambique is contained in a paper which has been circulating in diplomatic and intelligence circles in Harare. It states that South Africa's support for Renamo wound down after the signing of the Nkomati accord in April 1984, and was finally abandoned in 1985. This has forced Renamo to seek supplies by attacking Frelimo installations and carrying out raids into neighbouring territories.

There are so many weapons in Mozambique at the present (?time) that it has been quite simple for Renamo to sustain its position by such activity, although this is now becoming more difficult and most recent reports indicate that the movement is seriously short of supplies.

The paper refers to South Africa's positive approach to Mozambique since the signing of the Nkomati accord, and quotes the signing of an agreement to rehabilitate the Cahora Bassa power lines as an example. The paper adds: It seems the position of Frelimo can only improve as its policy of economic reform takes root and Western assistance gathers momentum. South Africa's new strategy of seeking economic and political linkages with neighbouring states will reinforce this shift.