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SNASP front company

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In a move which appears to be aimed at the former Security Minister in Mozambique, Mr. Sergio Vieira, who was recently dismissed, the Mozambique Government has ordered an enquiry on the affairs and accounts of a company known as SOCIMO, which is known to be a front for the Mozambique political secret Police SNASP. The enquiry will also probably hit another former Security Chief, Mr. Jacinto Veloso.

The profits of SOCIMO, which come from services rendered in intermediary operations in business deals, are used to fund SNASP's operations, mainly the undercover work done abroad.

ALTHOUGH in legal terms SOCIMO appears as a private trade company with public and private stock, SOCIMO was created by Jacinto Veloso

who has always been a senior SNASP official. The staff of SOCIMO, from the Director General, Carlos Alberto Andrade, to junior clerks, are all appointed by the Minister of Security. The accounts and profits of SOCIMO have been kept secret and the reports are submitted only to the Minister. The profits are channeled to the Ministry. Some of the money (cash) is in SNASP's vaults but large amounts are known to be deposited in foreign banks. The funds are used by SNASP's networks abroad.

The official enquiry ordered on SOCIMO is being seen as a direct attack against Sérgio Vieira (an Indian who is rather unpopular in party and Government circles in Mozambique). Vieira has been accused of incompetence and of having neglected the safety and security measures around President Machel in the months which preceded his death.

SOCIMO's commercial operations concerned mainly, large projects and international tenders. SOCIMO acted as the man-in-between prospective investors and the Mozambique Government. SOCIMO made this service for money. There were also frequent associations with international consortia involved in large projects in Mozambique. In such operations, SOCIMO did make very large profits.

Such front-companies exist in a number of communist countries. SOCIMO also had a number of branches abroad, such as Soclangol in Luanda, Tropic in Brasil. It also had links with companies like Sudhemis in Paris which has as one of the main share holders a Brazilian national, Carlos Arrais, who is a personal friend of Mr. Jacinto Veloso. In Portugal SOCIMO is represented by a front-company operated by the Portuguese Communist Party, the ETEI