

Mozambique sabotage increases despite closer S.Africa links

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The establishment of contact groups drawn from the South African and Mozambique security forces is now being discussed, according to South Africa's army chief Gen. Jacobus Liebenberg. His announcement comes amidst reports that sabotage by Mozambique National Resistance rebels is trebling the cost of repairing Cahora Bassa power lines.

Border communications have already been established "with the aim of facilitating contacts between the security forces of the two sides", he said, according to reports from Maputo on January 25. Channels had also been established between Maputo and Pretoria, he said.

The Mozambique news agency noted last week that all acts of sabotage on the power supply line from Komatipoort to Maputo in 1988 were carried out after the September 12 summit meeting between Presidents PW Botha and Joaquim Chissano.

AIM said the acts of sabotage were carried out on

October 29, November 3 and 5 and December 19 and 30. All of them were carried out between 12km and 15 km from Ressano Garcia and between four and five kilometres from the border with South Africa.

Earlier the director of the strategic planning department in the South African electricity supply company Escom said the cost of building the sabotaged power lines from the Cahora Bassa dam in Mozambique had tripled in the past six months.

The increase was due to fresh sabotage by the MNR rebels. The number of pylons destroyed over the past six months is almost 900.

In the period 1984-85, 574 pylons were downed. If these figures were correct, there were now about 1,400 sabotaged pylons out of a total of 4,000 in Mozambican territory, he said.

The cost of reconstructing the pylons could be \$90m. The cost was put at \$30m when a new agreement on Cahora Bassa was reached in June last year.