

# Mozambique counts cost of SA hostility

## MAPUTO.

**MORE** than 100 000 Mozambicans have lost their lives through South African destabilisation, and the total cost of South Africa's undeclared war against Mozambique is about US\$5 billion, Prime Minister Mario Machungo told the Mozambican parliament, the People's Assembly, on Wednesday.

While the most dramatic expression of this is the banditry of the South African-sponsored MNR, South Africa has also used a series of economic

mechanisms against Mozambique.

Cde Machungo cited the South African boycott of the port of Maputo. In 1973 Maputo handled 6.8 million tonnes of South African goods. This dropped to just 960 000 tonnes in 1985.

South Africa also cut back drastically the number of Mozambicans working in its mines. The number of Mozambican miners in South Africa fell from about 113 000 in 1970 to some 45 000 in 1982.

Cde Machungo pointed out that the reduction in migrant labour had led to a substantial increase in unemployment in southern Mozambique, while lost miners' remittances were estimated at around US\$568 million.

The South Africans also unilaterally cancelled the gold agreement of 1928. This stipulated that 60 percent of the salaries of Mozambican miners in

South Africa would be paid in gold at the fixed rate of R29,75 an ounce. When the world market price of gold rocketed, the colonial regime and later the Mozambican government was able to sell the gold on the world market and make windfall profits.

The South Africans abruptly cancelled the fixed gold price on April 10 1978. From 1978 to 1982 the amount of foreign currency that Mozambique lost as a result of this move has been calculated at US\$2,6 billion — roughly the same as the total foreign debt of Mozambique in 1982.

Cde Machungo pointed to the South African-inspired destruction of bridges, locomotives, electricity pylons, factories and other installations as an important factor in the debilitation of the Mozambican economy.

The objectives of South African aggression, he said, were to strengthen Mozambique's economic dependence on South Africa, and to make regional co-operation between the member states of SADC unviable. — Ziana-ADM.