

ANC representatives leaving Mozambique

By Peter Younghusband
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — The African National Congress is withdrawing its five representatives in Mozambique following a South African threat to remove them by force if the Marxist government in Maputo continued to harbor them.

President Joaquim Chissano issued a statement in Maputo saying he had appealed to ANC leader Oliver Tambo to withdraw his people because he feared that South Africa was about to launch a military attack on his country.

A South African military spokesman dismissed this as "another attempt by Mozambique to shift the blame for its internal problems, including armed rebellion and economic disaster, to South Africa."

But Pretoria did not deny pressuring Mozambique. Sources said the South Africans informed Maputo they could no longer tolerate the continued presence of ANC representatives there following the organization's second attempt within six months to bring about a revolutionary overthrow of the Pretoria government.

This was a reference to the ANC's thwarted "Christmas campaign" of planned bomb attacks in city shopping malls and other terrorist actions.

Mr. Chissano called Mr. Tambo to Maputo last week and told him that a South African invasion or military strike in Maputo, however brief, would be disastrous for his FRELIMO government.

He pointed out that the morale of the Mozambican army was low and the mood of Mozambican civilians uncertain and sullen as a result of economic hardships and continuing attacks by anti-communist rebels. A pre-Christmas offensive by the Mozambique National Resistance Movement (RENAMO) had

captured five towns in the northern provinces, and the guerrillas had since taken a sixth.

Mr. Tambo, according to the announcement from Maputo, agreed to withdraw all five ANC representatives. They include Jacob Zuma, the chief representative and a member of the ANC's National Executive Committee, and Indres Naidoo, both former inmates of Robben Island, the penitentiary off the South African coast near Cape Town.

A third known member of the ANC delegation is Sue Rabkin, a white member said to administer the group's "welfare services" in Maputo.

Withdrawal of the ANC's so-called "diplomatic team" in Mozambique, which Pretoria claims is also responsible for planning guerrilla strikes in South Africa, is a severe setback for the organization.

In the latter half of last year, ANC terrorism in South Africa had escalated, and landmines were planted in frontier farming areas bordering Mozambique. But the Christmas campaign — detailed in ANC documents captured by South African security police — was thwarted by mass arrests, stringent press controls and other measures enforced under South Africa's state of emergency laws.

The action by the security forces proved almost totally effective and the ANC military machine appears again to have stalled.

Pretoria has also proved itself able, simply by threatening reprisals, to dislodge the ANC from neighboring black states, thus depriving the organization of its foreign bases.

This has already been achieved in Lesotho, where a South African economic embargo toppled the government of Chief Leabua Jonathan and installed a regime that immediately deported all ANC personnel at Pretoria's behest.