

Mozambican Comment Critical of British Policy on Sanctions against S Africa

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Excerpts from commentary:

The call for sanctions against South Africa has gained momentum lately... Those governments and officials who have always expressed their sympathies towards the regime installed in South Africa have now begun to express their alarm and have demanded the abolition of apartheid.

However, the fact that the international community has agreed that apartheid must be eliminated does not mean that certain Western countries have agreed on how to eliminate that system, that is, what actions the international community must take to end apartheid. Whereas the international community demands the application of drastic economic measures against South Africa, a number of Western countries have found a pretext not to suffocate the South African economy, the pillar of apartheid.

One country most strongly opposed to sanctions against South Africa is Britain, which argues that such measures would largely affect the blacks. Is this the true reason? The answer is no.

It is known today that the Western countries opposed to measures against South Africa have large economic interests in that country. Great Britain, for instance, is the largest foreign investor in South Africa, with six billion pounds, which is almost half the foreign investment in that country. Some 300 British companies, including almost all its industrial giants, still have interests in South Africa... Britain depends on South Africa to obtain a number of minerals essential to its industry, such as gold and chromium...

Moreover, observers point out that London, faced with 13 per cent unemployment, fears that once sanctions are applied, many South Africans of British stock will settle in Britain, thus further aggravating the unemployment problem. The observers base

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neir views on the fact that in 1985, for the first time in more than 200 years, the number of South African residents who decided to settle in Great Britain was higher than the number of British nationals who left for the land of apartheid. In fact the 7,000 people who entered Britain last year represented an increase of over 300 per cent compared to 1984.

The claim that sanctions would affect black South Africans is, therefore, a distortion of the facts. The figures that we have given speak for themselves.