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# INSIGHT

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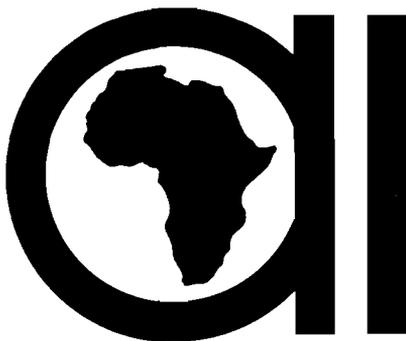
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## Comment

The African context of the regional challenge facing South Africa — *Prof P Smit*

2

## Mozambique

South Africa and Mozambique — Prospects for peaceful coexistence — *Dr G M E Leistner*

6

The Chissano era — Mozambique comes to terms with itself — *Gillian Gunn*

16

The Beira, Maputo and Nacala corridors — *Denis Fair*

21

## Politics

The international political status of the African National Congress — *Prof W P Esterhuyse*

28

## Economics

Patterns and levels of life in Sahel West Africa since the 1960s — *Prof John M Mbaku*

38

## Bookshelf

48

## Africa monitor

— *Jenny Macgregor*

49



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# The African context of the regional challenge facing South Africa

*On 8 September 1988 Prof P Smit, Chairman of the Council of the Africa Institute, gave the opening address at the Institute's Annual General Meeting, in which he surveyed the current debate on development strategies for sub-Saharan Africa.*

South Africa's relations with neighbouring countries are overshadowed by political and security issues, and these issues tend to obscure the true nature of the economic problems facing those countries. Yet, given the Republic's vital interest in economic prosperity and political stability in the region, it is essential that South Africans understand the many constraints which hamper the achievement of this objective. The development strategies pursued by these countries clearly rank among the foremost constraints. Although each country warrants a separate investigation, some useful insights can nevertheless be gained by surveying the issue of development strategies as it presents itself in present-day sub-Saharan Africa as a whole.

This matter is becoming increasingly topical on account of Africa's worsening economic plight which, according to a recent study, entails the acute danger of a "self-reinforcing downward spiral of political decay and economic deterioration."<sup>1</sup> In the words of a World Bank report, "... the long-term trend of decline persists."<sup>2</sup> Western private companies as well as governments are actively de-linking themselves from the continent.<sup>3</sup>

Much debate and controversy regarding an appropriate development strate-

gy for black Africa has been stimulated by two documents issued in the early 1980s. The first is the Lagos Plan of Action, adopted by the OAU's heads of state at meetings in 1980 and 1985. The second is the World Bank's report, *Accelerated development in sub-Saharan Africa* (also known as the "Berg Report" after its principal author, Elliot Berg), published in 1981. Whereas the Lagos Plan emphasizes import substitution and withdrawal from world markets, the World Bank advises African countries to increase their reliance on those markets and on market forces generally.<sup>4</sup>

The mounting economic problems of all African states during the 1980s, notably the external debt issue, have increased their dependence on funding from the World Bank as well as from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Both organizations are strongly committed to free-market policies. The Fund in particular obliges borrowers to reduce or abolish subsidies, privatize state corporations, provide price incentives to agricultural producers, establish realistic foreign exchange rates, and generally follow the guidance of market forces. The World Bank, which plays a leading role aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of international aid flows, urges African countries similarly.

This approach contrasts sharply with prevailing practices and above all with policies based on the particular versions of socialist ideology espoused by various African countries. Inevitably, this causes a good deal of tension which, however, can be analysed more meaningfully in terms of African realities than as a conflict of capitalism versus socialism.

## The demise of socialism

The eagerness with which many of the newly independent African states embraced "socialism" — however defined — was largely rooted in their opposition to colonial domination, which they associated with capitalist exploitation and racial discrimination. Where, as in the Portuguese territories, Soviet or Red Chinese help had been received in an armed struggle for independence, this encouraged a strong commitment to Marxism-Leninism. Virtually everywhere, however, state ownership of important production and service facilities, or at least an active role by the state, including planning and restraints on foreign companies, were confidently believed to be essential for rapid economic progress.

The generally disappointing, and in many cases disastrous, results of these policies have ended the early euphoria of nationalization and state intervention. Socialist scholars openly admit that socialism in Africa is in a deep crisis.<sup>5</sup> Practical experience as well as prodding by the IMF and the World Bank increasingly induce African governments to privatize marketing, transport and other services, and generally to place greater reliance on private enterprise.<sup>6</sup>

Whereas, earlier on, it was widely believed that Africans had a natural affinity with socialism on account of their traditional patterns of social interaction — a belief fostered by leaders like Nyerere and Kaunda — the insight has now gained ground that, given a chance, African peasants are not lacking in individual enterprise and inventiveness and are quick to exploit opportunities to improve their position.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the collective view of a conference held in Nairobi in 1986 was formulated as follows:

The key to the solution of the current African malaise is a release of the energies of the many million African producers, both men and women. The encouragement of African entrepreneurship is essential. Where indigenous entrepreneurship flourishes and markets develop, it will also become easier to attract foreign capital.<sup>8</sup>

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the majority of political and intellectual leaders have already been won over to a belief in free enterprise and the role of unhampered markets for goods and services. Socialism has not yet lost its emotional appeal, and a host of deep-rooted political and other problems still obstruct the freeing of economic activities.

### Structural adjustment programmes

For diverse reasons, most African governments are reluctant to reduce their control over economic life. However, circumstances increasingly compel them to do so. As one observer points out, "... even socialist-oriented regimes are inexorably pushed in a capitalist direction as they seek a workable economic path in the midst of economic and, often, political chaos."<sup>9</sup>

In a report issued in 1986, the World Bank states that a growing number of African countries are adopting policy

reforms aimed at giving prices, markets and the private sector a greater role in promoting development. More particularly, the Bank notes a desire to reduce administrative intervention in setting prices; to end monopolies on trade and marketing; and to reduce the government's role in allocating credit and to increase the scope for private sector activity.<sup>10</sup> Many governments have improved agricultural incentives by increasing prices in conjunction with a currency devaluation.<sup>11</sup> Notwithstanding reservations, the Bank writes that "... progress is clearly under way."<sup>12</sup>

Reporting on these reform programmes a year later, Dr Adebayo Adedeji, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, states that throughout the continent, country after country has introduced policy reforms and undertaken structural adjustment programmes "which have imposed more sacrifice on their people and which have had dire political consequences."<sup>13</sup> Adedeji is referring here to the so-called IMF riots which, among their other effects, led to the killing of President Tubman of Liberia in 1980, the toppling of President Nimeiri of Sudan in 1985, and the death of at least 15 people on the Zambian Copperbelt in December 1986.

### Problems posed by the reform programmes

The international aid organizations reason mainly in economic terms when they prescribe adjustment policies to African governments, and are annoyed when these policies are vitiated by apparently irrational political decisions. However, even though most African leaders can no doubt appreciate the potential long-term benefits of the economic reform programmes, their first priority is their own political and physical survival.

Few, if any, African leaders are secure from the risk of being ousted by a coup, and — like their counterparts in stable democratic states — they attempt to respond to what they perceive as the political demands important to their retention of power. Unlike the case in Western democracies, the loss of power in Africa often entails the loss of the leader's life as well. Hence, the arguments in favour of short-term political

expediency as opposed to the long-term political benefits of a sound economic policy are even stronger in Africa than in Western countries.

What this means is that Africa's prospects for significant economic progress are critically linked to the emergence of broadly representative and stable political power structures. This is clearly not likely in the near future, not least because the prevailing, extremely constrained, economic conditions contribute significantly towards perpetuating autocratic forms of government.

The considerations restraining African governments from following the ostensibly rational economic recipes ordered by outsiders can be outlined under three headings: social implications; administrative capacities; and conflicting objectives and structural rigidities.<sup>14</sup>

### Social implications

Urban populations dependent upon the purchase of most of their daily needs, are directly affected when subsidies on food and other essentials are reduced or abolished. Yet urban dwellers are far more likely to riot than peasants when their livelihood is endangered, particularly those organized in groups like soldiers, police, civil servants or workers' unions. State employees have proved especially sensitive to reductions in salaries or fringe benefits, let alone redundancy as a consequence of savings measures.

### Administrative capacities

In many cases, the implementation of structural adjustment programmes is beyond the administrative means of the governments concerned. This is particularly true if such programmes require institutional, legislative and behavioural changes which overtax the capacities of public administrations.

In many African countries, both the central authority and the administrative structure are so weak that one cannot meaningfully speak of a state. Richard Sandbrook uses the term "fictitious states" for countries such as Chad, Uganda, Equatorial Guinea and Zaire which, in his words "... are 'run' by warlords or groups of armed men without the benefit of functioning state structures."<sup>15</sup> He describes as "healthy" a few states — Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi and Senegal — because they are highly structured and

capable of devising and implementing diverse policies. However, the designation "healthy" is relative, and most states, in fact, display the features of "fictitious" states.

### Conflicting objectives and structural rigidities

An example of how adjustment programmes can clash with other developmental objectives, was the Côte d'Ivoire's comprehensive and rapid liberalization of imports, which led to many local enterprises having to close down.

Malawi provides another example of how the interplay of diverse measures, each of them rational in itself, can have a negative overall effect. To ease the existing balance-of-trade deficit, the kwacha was substantially devalued, and producer prices for groundnuts, an important export commodity, raised. At the same time, in order to reduce the government budget deficit, subsidies were cut, including those on fertilizer. Devaluation of the currency meant a rise in fertilizer prices, which, in turn, was aggravated by the termination of the subsidy. The resultant fall in maize production can be explained as follows: the higher cost of fertilizer placed it beyond the reach of smaller producers, who therefore had to cultivate low-yielding traditional varieties of maize instead of the high-yielding hybrid varieties; and at the same time, the higher prices for groundnuts made maize production even less attractive.<sup>16</sup>

Privatization of public enterprises (or parastatals) is among the foremost reform measures urged by international lenders, but faces strong political opposition as well as practical obstacles. In some countries, labour unions, youth groups and some intellectuals declare it a sell-out to imperialism or to local capitalism. Some feel that privatization benefits only the wealthy, and makes the distribution of wealth and incomes even more unequal, thereby rendering development meaningless for the less privileged.

Others respond politically when privatization threatens their jobs or their opportunities to dispense patronage and income. Political opposition is also aroused when the only buyers of public corporations are "foreigners" like the Lebanese or Asians. Even where there are local buyers, politicians fear the new power of the commercial class. Further-

more, governments generally want to sell loss-making ventures while retaining the profitable ones, and thus fail to attract the interest of businessmen.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, one has to reckon with the fact that socialism persists as an ideological and political movement, regardless of its failures, because — as Sklar puts it — "... capitalism is unalterably identified with social injustice."<sup>18</sup>

### The irrelevancy of foreign ideologies

The foregoing is at best an incomplete sketch of the issues related to appropriate development strategies for African countries. Even so, it should have left no doubt that the roots of Africa's economic malaise lie deeper than its leaders' commitment to either capitalism or socialism.

Gerald Bender rightly observes that it is impossible to differentiate systematically between Marxist-Leninist and other African states in regard to their policies for development or their political structures.<sup>19</sup> No Marxist-Leninist chief executive, for instance, with the possible exception of Mengistu Haile Mariam, has as much personal autonomy as do Presidents Omar Bongo, Felix Houphouët-Boigny, Daniel arap Moi, Kamuzu Banda, Gnassingbe Eyadema or Mobutu Sese Seko.<sup>20</sup> Nor can one draw clear lines in respect of policies concerning private business, foreign investment, trade union activities, marketing policies or, for that matter, human rights.

If the experience of the past three decades of African independence has shown anything, it is that no material progress can be even hoped for unless, firstly, the social, cultural, political and ecological realities of a given country are thoroughly understood, and, secondly, policies aimed at improving the lot of the people are tailored accordingly. It must be emphasized, however, that even the best designed policy cannot *per se* guarantee success, because of the possibly negative influence of international economic conditions.

Some years ago, Dr Adedeji demanded that Africans free themselves from the uncritical use of irrelevant foreign concepts, arguing that they should rather formulate their own goals and strategies:

We also made one very false assumption — we tried to fit ourselves into words such as socialism and capitalism, which have very little meaning for us, instead of asking ourselves how we really could achieve development. Development is a unique thing for each country, for each society. It is the cumulative result of its cultural, political, and social history and development. We got ourselves embroiled in ideological predilections that were more destructive than helpful.<sup>21</sup>

There should be no doubt that the nature and functions of African states have a crucial bearing on their prospects for material progress. The calls for reducing the state's share in the economy are understandable in view of the corruption, nepotism, arbitrariness and other anti-developmental practices of many governments, together with the ineptitude of their civil servants — not to mention other sound arguments. However, one must not lose sight of the positive role which the state can play by deliberately fostering an environment favourable for the unfolding of private initiative.

In his study *The politics of Africa's economic stagnation*, Richard Sandbrook points out that three of today's most developed countries — Germany, Japan and Taiwan — owe their capitalist industrialization to a revolution from above, "... carried through by traditionalist oligarchies who recognized the necessity to modernize or perish."<sup>22</sup>

In the African context, traditionalist oligarchies are unlikely to play a similar role, but it is not inconceivable that a modernizing autocratic leader might enforce structural changes such as cannot be readily brought about by measures like privatization or the freeing of markets.

### Conclusion

The foregoing survey was an attempt to highlight an important problem area confronting the development efforts of sub-Saharan Africa. Possible solutions cannot be discussed in the present context. Even ample aid and emergency funding from the industrialized countries will be of little help unless African countries themselves address their problems in a meaningful way.

Intra-African economic cooperation on a regional basis has long been

advocated by the Economic Commission for Africa as a vital policy tool to promote development. Whereas most African regional cooperation schemes have failed or have never got off the ground, even severe critics of present-day South Africa acknowledge that an informal but fairly effective regional system is functioning in Southern Africa, centred on South Africa. Given wise politics and commonsense economics on all sides, the strengthening of this system might well help the countries of sub-equatorial Africa to reverse the downward spiral of political decay and economic deterioration referred to in the introduction to this paper.

Coralie Bryant of the Overseas Development Council in Washington is one of the severe critics just mentioned. Her assessment is therefore worth noting.

South Africa seen as an integral part of the region presents a challenge and an opportunity. This region, with serious support for a regional development strategy, could be key to building a different kind of future for the southern half of the continent. The West should help to make this happen; it is in their short and long term interest as well as that of Southern Africans.<sup>23</sup>

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- 7 Vide Richard Sandbrook, *op cit*, pp 148-150.
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- 9 Richard Sandbrook, *op cit*, p 12.
- 10 World Bank, *op cit*, p 15.
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- 12 *Ibid*, p 15. See also *Africa Institute Bulletin*, vol 28, no 1, 1988, p 2.
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# South Africa and Mozambique — Prospects for peaceful coexistence

*Dr G M E Leistner, Director of the Africa Institute, explains the importance and examines the opportunities for an improvement in South Africa's relations with Mozambique.\**

Since 1975, when Frelimo assumed power in Mozambique, many South Africans have regarded the Marxist-Leninist regime as a serious threat to state security. This perception was responsible for the Republic's support for Renamo from 1980. The Nkomati Accord of 1984 did little to assuage this concern, which, to this day, is being fuelled by the anti-South African invective, and accusations emanating from Maputo.

In view of the fact that both Mozambique's ideological orientation and South Africa's domestic power structure are likely to prevail for some time to come, a number of questions arise with regard to relations between the two countries.

Firstly, given Mozambique's commitment to Marxism-Leninism, can South Africa, over the long term, expect to have good interstate relations and mutually beneficial economic ties with that country?

Secondly, what are Mozambique's prospects for economic growth and development and political stability?

\*This article is based on the text of Dr Leistner's address to the Annual General Meeting of the Africa Institute on 8 September 1988.

– Thirdly, what are the implications for South Africa of developments in Mozambique?

Irrefutable answers to these vexing issues obviously cannot be expected. In the following an attempt is made, however, to clarify the issues to some extent and, hopefully, to address some of the misapprehensions hampering understanding and co-operation between the two countries.

## **How significant is Mozambique's commitment to Marxism?**

Frelimo unambiguously declared itself a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party at its Third Congress in 1977 when it stated:

If it is to be a real vanguard force of the labouring classes, our party must be armed with a revolutionary theory which enables its members to understand exactly the laws of social development and of the Revolution . . . . This ideological and theoretical basis is Marxism-Leninism or Scientific Socialism . . . . Applied and developed creatively in the process of our struggle, it is a powerful beacon which lights the way that the labouring classes must follow in the process of constructing a new society.<sup>1</sup>

Statements such as these serve to confirm the conviction of conservatives in

South Africa and elsewhere that Mozambique is a Soviet satellite. It is argued that Frelimo's so-called pragmatism is merely a tactical device, modelled on Lenin's New Economic Policy of the early 1920s, and does not reflect a weakening of its commitment to the goal of a Marxist-Leninist society. The signing of the Nkomati Accord was accordingly perceived as a stratagem in the Soviet onslaught against South Africa.

However, Frelimo's version of Scientific Socialism is not a carbon copy of that prevailing in the Soviet Union or any other Communist country, and Neo-Marxists are disenchanted by what they perceive as Frelimo's deviation from true Marxism. Their disappointment stems notably from Frelimo's pragmatism as well as the growing similarity between the present rulers in Maputo and their former colonial masters in respect of forced labour, repression of dissenting views, the emergence of a privileged élite, and the widening gulf between the leaders and the mass of the people.<sup>2</sup>

In assessing Frelimo's commitment to Marxism-Leninism, two considerations must be taken into account which have a significant bearing on their adoption of this secular religion. The first is its significance as a reaction to Portuguese colonialism. (Marina Ottaway speaks of

an “ideology of protest.”<sup>3</sup>) The other is the practical function of that ideology in the struggle against Portuguese rule, and — after independence — as a guide in the endeavour to transform and uplift the people of a vast, underdeveloped country, the economy of which had suffered from war as well as sabotage perpetrated by the departing Portuguese. Both points are examined more closely below.

This background also helps to explain the discrepancy between the orthodoxy of official pronouncements and the pragmatic adaptations of doctrine to economic and other realities. While these adaptations are clearly viewed as temporary expedients, it remains to be seen whether practical circumstances will not increasingly weaken the commitment to orthodoxy.

### Historical perspective

Ever since Portuguese rule was established in Mozambique in the early sixteenth century, local people have resisted by force — first the Arabs, later on the Monomotapa as well as Changamire and some of the Portuguese estate-owners (known as *prazeros*). Not until 1920 did Portugal succeed in firmly securing its hold over the whole of the country. But despite the general calm that prevailed until 1960, there was smouldering unrest and resistance which occasionally flared up into violence. The anti-colonial ferment created by World War II reached Mozambique only gradually through the work of black and *mestizo* poets, painters and other artists and intellectuals. They contributed a cultural and intellectual dimension to the growing frustration and nationalist awakening that was particularly strong among high-school pupils and students.

Mounting rejection of Portuguese rule by a growing part of the population manifested itself in sporadic bloody uprisings and other forms of resistance during the 1940s and 1950s. In the early 1960s, three movements aiming at the liberation from Portuguese rule were independently established by Mozambican exiles.<sup>4</sup> Under pressure from President Nkrumah of Ghana and President Nyerere of Tanzania, these three merged into Frelimo on 25 June 1962, with Dr Eduardo Mondlane as the first president. Marcelino dos Santos was among the prominent leaders. Samora Machel joined only a year later.



Mozambique's first president, Samora Machel

Apart from nationalism and liberation as their common denominator,<sup>5</sup> the three constituent movements were rather disparate, and Frelimo's early history was marked by serious dissent caused by tribal, ethnic, ideological and personality clashes.

A power struggle developed between nationalists, who were blacks, and Marxists, who were predominantly led by *mestizos* and whites.<sup>6</sup> Several of the nationalists were assassinated, including Mondlane who, in Crawford Young's words, “was not of a Marxist intellectual formation.”<sup>7</sup> After this, Frelimo's commitment to Marxist-Leninist doctrine became increasingly explicit, and reached its height at the Third Party Congress in 1977. According to David and Marina Ottaway, this acceptance of Marxist-Leninist ideology has at times “verged on the absurd”<sup>8</sup> and “some of

the most orthodox Marxist-Leninists anywhere in the world” are to be found in Mozambique (as well as Angola and Ethiopia).<sup>9</sup>

Frelimo's adherence to Marxism-Leninism obviously has been influenced by the practical support it received first from Communist China and later from the Soviet Union during its struggle against colonial rule. However, the intensity of its commitment to that ideology is more the result of the factors indicated above than of the assistance from these two powers.

It is an open question how long this ideological ardour will last. In common with the other socialist countries in Africa, Mozambique is discovering through harsh experience how elusive the socialist ideal really is. In a study entitled “The erosion of a socialist ideal in African national movements”, and dealing amongst others with Frelimo, the socialist scholar Carlos Lopes states that the socialist ideal “. . . is increasingly absent in the applied measures of each of the four parties, despite the continued existence of discursive and intentional ‘socialism’.”<sup>10</sup> Lopes, in fact, perceives the total demise of socialism in Africa:

We are experiencing the end of a great myth: that of the possibility of a rapid attainment of socialism; and the construction of socialism in conditions specific to the countries studied here.<sup>11</sup>

### Marxism-Leninism as a nationalist reaction

Samora Machel emphasized many times that for him Marxism-Leninism was not a foreign ideology artificially imposed on Mozambican reality but rather an authentic outflow of that reality. His first political education, as he once put it, came “. . . not from writing in a book. Nor from reading Marx and Engels. But from seeing my father forced to grow cotton and going with him to the market where he was to sell it at a low price — much lower than the white Portuguese grower.”<sup>12</sup> “. . . Marxism-Leninism sprang up among us as a product of our struggle and of the debates over ideas within Frelimo itself. To underestimate this fact is to deprive Marxism-Leninism of the vital force it possesses in Mozambique . . .”<sup>13</sup>

Machel's speeches are larded with graphic descriptions of the horrors of colonial rule which he portrayed as the embodiment of all conceivable evil:

... exploitation, oppression, humiliation, social and economic discrimination, racism, tribalism and regionalism. That's what colonialism means: bribery, corruption and immorality; robbery; nepotism, favouritism and patronage; individualism and ambition; servility and subservience; prostitution; vagrancy; banditry; unemployment and delinquency; begging; orgies; bacchanalia and drunkenness; drugs; destruction of the family; social disruption, insecurity and fear — all synonymous with colonialism.<sup>14</sup>

Whatever the validity of this sweeping condemnation, it expresses a conviction shared by many of Machel's countrymen. Not surprisingly, Marxism-Leninism, the arch-enemy of Western capitalism and colonialism and the antithesis of all they stand for, proved attractive for Mozambicans seeking to rid themselves of Western influence. The fact that this ideology describes itself as a "scientific" interpretation of historical processes as well as an infallible guide to secular perfection, clearly added to its attraction. The continual use by Machel and other Frelimo leaders of the well-worn Marxist clichés "new man", "new society" and "ending the exploitation of man by man" undoubtedly reflects nationalist ideals as much as a commitment to Marxism-Leninism. Many critical foreign observers of present-day Mozambique generally consider that, notwithstanding many shortcomings, the leadership group shows more idealism and is less given to corruption than its counterparts elsewhere in Africa.

The nationalist component in Frelimo's thinking readily combines with its Marxist-Leninist credo. This nationalist element runs strongly through Samora Machel's utterances, and is clearly apparent in his statement that "Africans must use Marxism, but Marxism cannot be allowed to use Africans."<sup>15</sup> This combination of nationalism and Marxism is, of course, a well-known phenomenon, and, as two students of Afrocommunism have observed, "... nationalism does not preclude socialism on the domestic front ... nor commitment to the spreading of revolution abroad."<sup>16</sup>

### The instrumental role of ideology

Marxism-Leninism as a guide to comprehensive political control and engineered change had — and still has — an obvious attraction for Frelimo. Firstly, it provides the legitimacy which the party did not receive through democratic elections.

(In effect, Frelimo had hardly begun to mobilize the population of southern Mozambique when Portuguese authority collapsed.<sup>17</sup>) Secondly, as a theory claiming to be a guide to the complete transformation of a backward society, Marxism-Leninism was expected to furnish the answers to the stupendous economic, administrative and other practical problems confronting Frelimo in 1974/75.

The party's unquestioning adherence to the Soviet version of Marxist-Leninist doctrine reached its high-water mark at its Third Congress in 1977 when it declared itself a vanguard party, and formally embarked on the task of building a socialist society. At the congress it decided on a centrally planned economy the "commanding heights" of which were to be fully state controlled, while industry was to be the "dynamizing factor for economic development", with heavy industry in particular constituting "the decisive factor" for total independence. In agriculture, the "basis of the economy", the creation of a network of huge state farms was to receive the highest priority, to the complete neglect of small peasant farmers who were to be resettled in communal villages.

The unsuitability of the Soviet model for the transition to socialism soon became obvious. The state farms in particular, where East Bloc advisers had played a leading role, turned out to be graveyards of money and costly mechanical equipment, and utterly failed to make the expected contribution to food and cash crop production.<sup>18</sup> The errors of this policy were frankly admitted at the Fourth Party Congress in 1983 as well as the preparatory meetings, where it was stated:

... the effects of natural disasters are in part a reflex (sic) of our organisational failure and laxity.

... we often gave more attention to technical factors than to the human and to the creative initiative of the people. We are not bothering about manufacturing the hoe because we are awaiting the arrival of the tractor we must import. We are distributing canned beans, that cost foreign exchange, in a communal village that produces beans and from where no one has bothered to collect surplus production.<sup>19</sup>

Significantly, these and similar insights did not lead to fundamental structural changes of policy but only to a shift in emphasis together with demands for more discipline and greater efforts in

raising the "political and ideological awareness of the masses". Henceforth, cash-crop production on peasant farms, with the hoe the principal instrument of production, was to be stressed rather than state farms. Industry was to concentrate on incentive goods and import substitution. The private sector was to enjoy greater latitude in retail trade. Merit pay incentives for workers were to be introduced. Foreign private capital was to be attracted (in 1984 Mozambique joined the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)). Efficiency was to be emphasized in all spheres. However, in agriculture, as much as in all other spheres of economic life, state control was to be systematically extended, though with the emphasis on gradual — rather than over-hasty — change. Thus, among the party's objectives, as reformulated by the Fourth Congress, are:

2. To protect, enlarge and develop the state economic sector in the decisive areas of economic life, so that these become the determining and dynamic element of the national economy . . . .
3. To expand increasingly the state's influence in the direction, planning and control of the national economy in the state, co-operative, family and private sectors . . . .<sup>20</sup>
6. To promote the gradual socialisation of agriculture . . . .<sup>21</sup>

Frelimo's belief in the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism obviously has not been touched by the bankruptcy of its economic strategy. The candid self-criticism of the 1983 congress never questioned the premise that comprehensive state control of economic activity is the ideal path to development and to satisfying the needs of the people. What has been widely hailed as the growing "pragmatism" displayed since that congress are viewed as tactical rather than fundamental adjustments. The ideal of a socialist society remains unshaken.

To sum up, the depth of Frelimo's commitment to Marxism-Leninism has to be understood partly as a reaction to exploitation and humiliation under colonial rule, and partly as a consequence of the conviction that Marxism-Leninism provides scientific guidance for overcoming economic and social backwardness, as well as tribal, ethnic and racial strife, and for achieving true national independence. This ideological commitment blends comfortably with a strong nationalism.



Cahora Bassa, symbol of South African-Mozambican cooperation, will only become viable once Renamo sabotage ceases

## The outlook for prosperity and stability in Mozambique

For a very long time to come, Frelimo's policy-making will be constrained by critical and deep-rooted economic and related problems. Foremost among these are Mozambique's fundamentally unbalanced external trade and payments structure; the serious lagging of food and other production behind population growth rates; the absence of an efficient public service; and — last through by no means least — Frelimo's endeavour to promote economic growth and development through comprehensive state control. These issues will be examined in more detail below. The havoc being wrought by the armed struggle in Mozambique compounds these afflictions many times over.

## Economic constraints

According to a World Bank estimate, Mozambique's real per capita GDP in 1983 had dropped to approximately half the figure for 1973.<sup>22</sup> Imports in 1987 exceeded exports sevenfold (\$752,5 million against \$105 million) while debt service amounting to between \$125 million and \$175 million is currently expected to absorb about 70 per cent of the country's total foreign exchange earnings in 1988.<sup>23</sup> The total breakdown of law and order in most of the country, mainly due to armed strife, has resulted in the virtual collapse of administrative and transport structures and hence of meaningful economic activities. To describe the situation as catastrophic would be no exaggeration.

Since joining the Lomé Agreement and becoming a member of the International

Monetary Fund and the World Bank in 1984, Mozambique has been receiving appreciable assistance from these and other international institutions. All this aid, however, is to little avail until peace is restored, and even then enormous difficulties will have to be surmounted.

One can begin by enumerating exogenous economic and other factors over which Mozambique had — and has — no control.<sup>24</sup>

- The rudimentary social and economic development of the “service economy” bequeathed by colonial rule.
- The almost total absence of indigenous skilled manpower, which became painfully obvious when most of the Portuguese fled the country in 1974/75, having practised sabotage on a vast scale.
- The weakening of Mozambique's terms of trade owing to falling commodity prices and rising costs of imports, notably oil. (Whereas, for example, in 1975 an imported lorry cost the equivalent of 5,3 tons of cotton exports, this had risen to 13 tons by 1982, and over the same period the “cost” of one ton of imported steel rose from one ton of Mozambican sugar exports to four tons.<sup>25</sup>
- Diminished earnings from labour migration to South African mines as a result of Mozambique issuing fewer travel documents. The numbers employed shrunk from 100 000 in 1975 to 34 000 in 1978. Mozambique is also affected by the mining industry's policy of reducing the foreign element of its labour force over the long run.
- The International Monetary Funds's decision in April 1978 to abandon the fixed price of gold, which meant that Mozambique henceforth obtained gold from the South African Reserve Bank at the ruling market price, and no longer the official price of US\$35 per ounce, with the result that the country forfeited the premiums which in some years amounted to as much as R100 million and more.
- Decreasing revenue from through-traffic owing to Mozambique's closure of its border with Rhodesia during the years 1975 to 1980, and deteriorating operating conditions in Maputo harbour and on the Komati-

poort-Maputo railway line, together with worsening security, resulting in sharply reduced South African goods traffic through Maputo (from 6,8 million tons in 1973 to 1,1 million tons in 1983).

- Growing anarchy, destruction of infrastructures, hospitals, schools, shops, and so forth in large parts of the country owing to the activities of Renamo, ordinary criminals and marauding Frelimo soldiers and militia.
- Natural disasters, notably flood damage in the south and drought in the northern parts in 1976; the damage wrought by the cyclone Emily in the Gaza valley in 1977; the worst flood disaster to hit the Zambezi valley in a century, in March 1978; serious drought conditions starting in the north in 1979, spreading over the whole country in 1982 and, by early 1984, turning into the worst natural calamity in living memory with over 100 000 people dying of starvation and more than four million suffering serious food shortages.

Efforts to raise Mozambique's level of material welfare obviously have to address many problems — the development of human potential, investment in infrastructure and production capacity, the organization of marketing structures, and so forth. These efforts, however, are seriously handicapped by the structural shortage of foreign exchange which, in turn, is closely linked to the "service economy" inherited by Frelimo.

Even under favourable economic conditions the country depended on the earnings from services — notably migrant labour, regional through-traffic, and tourism — to cover the vast gap between imports and exports. During the decade before independence, the deficit in the balance of trade equalled the total value of exports, but up to 1969 the earnings from services were high enough to finance the annual deficit as well as a capital outflow.<sup>26</sup> And whereas, according to the official statistics, the overall payments position showed growing deficits, it has been unofficially estimated that the high premiums earned through the gold transactions in connection with South African mine labour enabled Mozambique to balance its external payments until 1976/77.<sup>27</sup>

Thereafter, the position deteriorated rapidly, owing partly to a worsening trade balance and partly to the fall in earnings from services for reasons discussed above. While in 1975, exports still financed 48,2 per cent of imports (MT5,4 billion against MT9,6 billion), this percentage had dropped to 35,1 in 1980 and 14,0 in 1987.<sup>28</sup> These very high trade deficits were decreasingly offset by service payments, while the balance had essentially to be provided from outside.

The result is a critical and persistent shortage of foreign exchange as well as a growing foreign indebtedness which can only be alleviated by external loans and grants as well as rescheduling and remissions of debt. The only effective remedy would be a substantial increase in productivity, output and exports. However, for a variety of reasons, the chances for this are slim, notably because of the unfavourable conditions on international commodity markets, and Mozambique's counter-productive socialist policy and administrative system.

#### **Ideological and administrative constraints**

Even if Mozambique had been spared the natural and other calamities outlined above, the maladroit and dogmatic manner in which Frelimo sought to transform the colonial structure of the economy would have been enough to create havoc. Within three weeks of coming to power, the party embarked on a radical programme of socialization. In the words of an economist with several years of personal experience in Mozambique, the remaining traces of economic dynamism were being smothered by a "bureaucratization bordering on the absurd — Portuguese administrative tradition multiplied by socialist planning bureaucracy."<sup>29</sup> In the absence of an efficient civil service and a functioning planning apparatus, gross mismanagement and waste of resources were unavoidable. The government tends to blame "sabotage" and "lack of political awareness" for failures and tries to remedy them by means of political campaigns.

When it took over in 1975, Frelimo expected the transformation of the economy to take place within the sheltering framework of the Soviet Bloc's economic system, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, known as Comecon. When its application to join

this grouping was finally turned down in 1981 — presumably because the USSR was unwilling to add to the burden already imposed by its impoverished clients Cuba, Angola, Ethiopia and Vietnam — Mozambique had no choice but to look to the capitalist countries for economic assistance. Even though some technical aid is being received from Communist countries, and a co-operation treaty was concluded with Comecon in May 1985, the Western contribution is significantly greater. The often inappropriate advice given by East Bloc technical advisers — many of whom, notably Cubans, were poorly qualified — greatly contributed towards the formulation of Frelimo's ill-conceived economic policies, especially the disastrous priority initially given to huge state-run agricultural estates at the expense of the vast majority of rural people.

Despite the 1983 Party Congress's concessions to private, and particularly foreign, enterprise and the greater incentives to agricultural producers and workers in general, the commitment to a centrally planned economy is undiminished. Effective, comprehensive planning presupposes the existence of a large and competent bureaucracy, which Mozambique is gravely lacking. Planning and implementation capacities are utterly incapable of meeting the demands posed by Frelimo's socialist development strategy — demands which could not be satisfied even by engaging experts from the socialist countries or by means of minor modifications to the strategy.

Apart from its specifically post-colonial situation, particularly the shortage of skills, and the nature of its bureaucracy, Mozambique also has to contend with the problems facing the more highly developed socialist countries attempting to reform and dynamize their economies. These include repressive government and patterns of privilege which, combined with bureaucratic inefficiency, form a structural impediment so firmly entrenched that it could be removed only by "revolutionary" change.<sup>30</sup>

#### **Conclusion**

Once peace has been restored, Mozambique will still be confronted by the deeply rooted problems of structural



For years now, rural life in Mozambique has been severely disrupted by Renamo banditry

economic imbalances and deficiencies bequeathed by the colonial era. Given the country's rich human and natural resources, these problems would be far less formidable if Frelimo were to abandon its attempts to create economic development and growth by means of state control, and give significant scope to market forces and private enterprise (which does not mean delivering its people to the whims of "greedy capitalists"). In the foreseeable future, however, the prospects for such profound re-orientation, and hence better living conditions, are not encouraging.

### Implications for South Africa

South Africa's relations with Mozambique are more significant than is generally realized. The Republic's international image is severely affected by

the widespread belief that it is responsible for the ongoing armed conflict and the tragic plight of the people of Mozambique. Maputo, as the sea port closest to South Africa's industrial heartland, has traditionally been an important and efficient conduit for South African foreign trade. The Cahora Bassa hydro-electric scheme was designed to provide a substantial part (eight per cent) of the Republic's power requirements at low cost. For more than a century, Mozambican migrants constituted a major part of the labour force on South African mines. Prior to the Frelimo takeover, Lourenço Marques (Maputo) and the Mozambican coast were prime holiday destinations for white Transvalers. South African security would be seriously threatened if Mozambique were to grant base rights to member countries of the Warsaw Pact or permit a sizable presence of, say, Cuban soldiers.

### Security aspects

When Frelimo became part of the transitional government in 1974, Prime Minister Vorster stated in the House of Assembly in August that year that "... it was not South Africa's policy to lay down what kind of government they should have there ...", but that "Irrespective of the colour of that government ...", and "... even though there may be differences in the political sphere", South Africa was prepared to "... have the heartiest co-operation ... in the economic sphere" provided a fully independent Mozambique did not interfere in South African affairs, but maintained the traditional economic ties with the Republic, and also kept up "a sound and stable government" at home.<sup>31</sup> In the same statement, Mr Vorster made it clear, however, that South Africa would "... defend itself with its full striking power in the event of its being attacked."<sup>32</sup>

The hostile attitude of the Frelimo government and the fact that the ANC operated freely against South Africa from bases in Mozambique, led South Africa to actively support Renamo after the surrender of the Smith government in Rhodesia. In January 1981 and again in May 1983, the South African Defence Force attacked ANC targets in Maputo. Ever since, the blame for any atrocity or act of sabotage anywhere in Mozambique has been automatically attributed to "South African destabilization". Categorical statements by South African leaders that support for Renamo ended with the Nkomati Accord of 16 March 1984, are met with general disbelief.

Apart from the Gorongosa documents captured in 1985, which South Africa admitted as providing evidence of "technical" breaches of the Nkomati Accord,<sup>33</sup> there is no concrete proof for the serious accusations against the Republic. In January 1988, the United States ambassador in Maputo, Ms Melissa Wells, stated there was no evidence that South Africa was currently backing Renamo,<sup>34</sup> while the International Institute for Strategic Studies, in its latest (1987-88) review of the world's military balance writes that Renamo has "no significant outside source of major military supplies, relying for the most part on material captured during its raids."<sup>35</sup>

South Africa, in turn, accuses Mozambique of harbouring ANC terrorists. In October 1986, following a landmine incident close to the Mozambican border, a joint statement by three South African cabinet ministers blamed Mozambique and announced that no Mozambicans would henceforth be recruited for the mines. In the event, however, experienced workers were exempted. Chissano, in his first press conference as president on 4 December 1986, insisted that Mozambique was not providing any operational aid to the ANC.<sup>36</sup>

To what extent, then, does Mozambique pose a threat to South Africa's security? No visitor to Maputo can fail to note the awe with which the Republic's economic and military might are viewed there, and it is inconceivable that Mozambique of its own would even contemplate provoking its neighbour by, for example, inviting Fidel Castro to place major troop contingents in southern

Mozambique. It is significant that Mozambique has consistently refused to grant Soviet warships basing rights. According to Winrich Kühne, Soviet military vessels are granted only restricted access to certain facilities on an occasional basis. The principle of not allowing any foreign military bases has been firmly adhered to.<sup>37</sup> The situation could change decisively if Mozambique were to be chosen as a staging ground against South Africa in the event of armed intervention by one or more outside powers, say, under United Nations auspices. In such an unlikely event, Mozambique might well not refuse to co-operate. But in any case, and whatever its policy towards Mozambique, South Africa would hardly be able to forestall such a contingency.

This leads to the conclusion that the Frelimo government poses a threat to South African security only in so far as it, firstly, aids or abets ANC terrorism, and, secondly, helps to foster an international climate conducive to coercive measures against the Republic. In both respects Mozambique hardly differs from Botswana and Zimbabwe, yet neither of these is afflicted like Mozambique — a fact which should be duly considered before attributing all the blame for the Mozambican tragedy to South Africa.

#### International aspects

South Africa's reputation as an untrustworthy and unacceptable member of the community of civilized states is closely tied to overseas perceptions of its links with Renamo. The Republic's own protestations of non-involvement are vitiated by the accusations incessantly spread by Frelimo spokesmen and news media, creating an unfortunate atmosphere and making normal interstate relations extremely difficult. Observers in South Africa sometimes doubt whether Mozambique is in fact even interested in better relations. After all, the benefits — such as international sympathy and aid — associated with being a "victim of South African aggression" outweigh those to be expected from a more harmonious relationship with the Republic. Mozambican leaders may, of course, be honestly convinced that the RSA is bent on impoverishing and destabilizing their country. During the writer's visit to Maputo in April 1988, this view of South Africa was expressed or implied as a

proven fact by virtually all interlocutors, indigenous as well as foreign.

It would certainly be wrong to interpret the strained relations merely as the inevitable corollary of Mozambique's commitment to Marxism-Leninism. Notwithstanding Frelimo's ideological affinity to, and sympathy for, the Communist countries, its attitude towards South Africa is no doubt determined by their interpretation of Mozambique's national interest rather than by ideology. Thus, quoting Chissano's remark that Mozambique is "a sovereign, African, nonaligned, and socialist state", Gillian Gunn considers this to be "a genuine reflection" of his world-view and his order of priorities.<sup>38</sup> This interpretation is borne out by her analysis of Mozambique's relations with Cuba.<sup>39</sup> Despite the prevailing empathy and the cordial relations between the leaders of the two countries — much warmer than Mozambican-Soviet relations — Castro and Chissano differ substantially with respect to major issues such as the future course of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa and the role of the West in Southern Africa.<sup>40</sup>

#### Economic aspects

Despite its socialist economic policy and its broad sympathy for the socialist countries, Mozambique's circumstances compel it to rely mainly on the West for its survival. In 1985, 50,8 per cent of its imports came from OECD member states as against 25,4 per cent from the USSR and other Comecon states, while 70,0 per cent of its exports went to the former and 17,7 per cent to the latter group of countries. (South Africa supplied 11,7 per cent of 1985 imports.<sup>41</sup>) In 1986, aid from the OECD member countries, the OPEC countries and multilateral organizations amounted to \$421,3 million (\$300,1 million in 1985). For 1987, aid totalling \$700 million was promised, predominantly by Western countries and institutions. A larger amount has been promised for 1988, though not the full \$835 million required. The Soviet Union has pledged 370 000 tons of oil on preferential terms, and grants of consumer goods amounting to \$50 million, compared with \$26 million granted in 1986.<sup>42</sup>

Considering that Mozambique's total debt of \$3,4 milliard in early 1987 required a debt service (after rescheduling) equal to 173,8 per cent of exports, and

that its earlier doctrinaire Marxist-Leninist economic policy had deterred private investors, Mozambique's self-interest obviously calls for a fairly accommodating policy toward Western capital and enterprise. And, as indicated above, the Fourth Congress in 1983 in fact, decided to entice Western investors by means of favourable conditions. Major multinational corporations appear to be preferred because their size makes them more amenable to state control than a host of small firms. This change in policy has led to agreements with international oil companies as well as the Lonrho concern, which invested \$40 million in agriculture, and with the US company Edlow Resources Limited, which is to mine titanium.

This more favourable climate might well encourage South African firms to invest in Mozambique or resume earlier contacts. It may be significant that in April 1988 the chairman of the Anglo American Corporation, Mr Gavin Relly, visited Mozambique, where the corporation had invested in agriculture, fishing and mining before 1974. Another South African conglomerate, Premier Milling, is operating a scheme whereby Mozambicans working in South Africa can pay for food parcels which Premier guarantees to deliver to one of three specified destinations in Mozambique. Late in 1987, less than two years after inception of the scheme, about 23 000 workers had made purchases benefitting an estimated one million people.<sup>43</sup> It is highly unlikely that, short of war between the two countries, Mozambique would single out South African companies for discriminatory treatment.

The South African government as well as public sector organizations such as the South African Transport Services (Sats), the Electricity Supply Commission, the Bureau of Standards and the Onderstepoort Veterinary Research Institute are co-operating with Mozambique in many ways. Sats, for example, is assisting the Mozambique railways with the repair of sabotaged bridges, the upkeep of locomotives and rolling stock, modernization of signalling systems, and so forth. In spite of this close interaction, Sats is still suspected of opposing SADCC initiatives for the upgrading of transport networks and harbour facilities in Southern Africa, and, worse, of being actively engaged in helping to sabotage the railway systems of some

neighbouring countries in order to preserve its so-called monopoly of intra-regional transport. The General Manager of Sats, Dr Anton Moolman, categorically rejected these suspicions as "utterly false and uncalled-for" in a speech delivered on 26 May 1988. He stated:

It would be to the advantage of SA Transport Services if a harbour like Maputo, which is the natural harbour for the Witwatersrand, was to be upgraded in order to realise its full potential and capability. In the past SA Transport Services conveyed coal from the Lowveld mines by rail to Maputo Harbour . . . where it was loaded onto SARSHIPS for transport by sea to South African ports. This arrangement served to the benefit of both parties as it relieved possible congestion on South African railroads and generated income for the DNPCF. Unfortunately this joint venture ceased when Maputo Harbour deteriorated to such an extent that it could no longer handle the traffic.

. . . South Africa stands to gain nothing by actively destroying the transport infrastructure of its neighbours.<sup>44</sup>

Similar sentiments have been expressed by the chief executive of Escom, Mr Ian McRae, when he pleaded for closer regional interaction in the field of power supplies.<sup>45</sup>

The Soviet Union has shown itself unable and unwilling to underwrite Mozambique economically. The overall impact of the food, financial and technical aid provided by Western industrial nations is severely limited. All this underlines the significance of Mozambique's long-standing economic bonds with South Africa. Even though President Chissano demands international economic sanctions against South Africa, he insists that the major powers, not South Africa's black-ruled neighbours, should take the lead.<sup>46</sup> It may or may not be a coincidence that the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, after a three-hour meeting with President Chissano said that "sanctions would have a bad effect, which could even threaten the existence of Mozambique."<sup>47</sup> For the foreseeable future, Mozambique will certainly not punish itself yet further by breaking these ties unilaterally. The current efforts to resume the transmission of power from Cahora Bassa to South Africa reflect Frelimo's desire to strengthen rather than break ties.

The signing of the Nkomati Accord in 1984 by no means signified any lessening

of Frelimo's profound ideological enmity, but did prove that this is no hindrance to mutually beneficial deals with an ideological opponent. Hence, having regard to the heavy constraints that are bound to narrow Frelimo's policy options for a very considerable time to come, South Africa, for its part, should give thought to ways and means of strengthening commercial ties with Mozambique.

While it is conceivable that the aforementioned constraints might in due course induce Frelimo to opt for an even more rigorous ideological stance and an increasingly authoritarian and repressive domestic policy, this would probably not affect the need to maintain a working relationship with South Africa.

### Conclusion

Notwithstanding ideological differences, South Africa and Mozambique can interact to mutual advantage in the economic sphere. This applies to trade, traffic through Maputo, electricity supply, tourism, private investment as well as migrant workers. To the extent that such co-operation with South Africa — together with Western aid and investment — is seen to promote economic recovery and progress, Mozambique is highly unlikely to fall back upon its initial policy of wholesale nationalization and state control over virtually all economic activities. This would be more likely if Mozambique's economy and security were to deteriorate further — a contingency which would not be in South Africa's interest, because Frelimo might become quite unpredictable if it were to believe that it had nothing to lose.

### Improving South African-Mozambican relations

In the absence of major upsets, such as SADF raids into Mozambique, relations between the two countries are likely to continue at more or less the present level for the foreseeable future. The resumption of a reasonably uninterrupted flow of Cahora Bassa power or increased Sats traffic through Maputo would certainly help to improve the atmosphere. The prospects for more cordial interstate relations are, however, slight until a more broadly representative form of government emerges in South Africa.<sup>48</sup>

Whereas South Africa could continue to live with relations as they are, there are at least four arguments why it should actively seek to promote a climate of good neighbourliness.

Firstly, Mozambique plays a key role in the functioning of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), and intensified economic ties between South Africa and Mozambique would inevitably create diverse opportunities for South Africans to establish further contacts with businessmen and functionaries from SADCC member states. If responsible Western bankers, industrialists, politicians and other opinion leaders were to perceive South Africa to be earnestly striving to bring about development and stability in the region, they would have greater confidence in the economic and political future of Southern Africa. To the extent that South Africa is widely seen as a crucial stabilizing factor in the subcontinent, its international position would be strengthened. The economic advantages are obvious.

Secondly, as pointed out above, the credibility of the South African government is undermined by the widely held contention that, despite all protestations, it is still somehow involved with Renamo, and that even if it does not actively support the movement, it does at least abet it. Accusations of "destabilizing the region" levelled against South Africa rely heavily on this contention, which gravely damages this country's international standing. Positive South African steps to improve relations with Mozambique would help to change these adverse perceptions.

Thirdly, in South Africa itself this belief in official complicity in the anti-Frelimo insurgency is fostered by those seeking to incite racial conflict. It is cited as "proof" that the South African government is actively opposing black political freedom and economic progress in South Africa no less than in Mozambique (and earlier on in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe). This propaganda helps to explain the upsurge of emotion among South African township youths after the death of President Machel in October 1986.

Fourthly, South Africa, as the pre-eminent regional power, might be expected to determine the nature of interstate relations in the region. In fact, however, its attitude *vis-à-vis* its weaker neighbours is

mainly reactive and defensive. This is understandable in view of the virtually worldwide encouragement which the so-called Frontline states receive for their antagonistic stance. However, it would clearly be in South Africa's interest to draw these neighbours closer by means of mutually beneficial commercial bonds rather than cowing them with armed strength or threats of economic coercion. Improved relations with Mozambique could help to lay the foundation for a new regional pattern.

It is by no means clear, on the other hand, that the Frelimo government is interested in improved relations. As mentioned before, neighbouring countries can count on tangible expressions of international sympathy for being "victims of South African aggression". However, thanks to the intensive international scrutiny — not all of it biased — of developments inside, or concerning, South Africa, constructive South African efforts in Mozambique (or other neighbouring countries) would greatly strengthen the hands of those in the West who want South Africa to play a stabilizing role in the region.

The following measures would help improve the atmosphere:

- South African opinion-formers should encourage sober and pragmatic thinking and discussion about Mozambique. The prevailing ideologically tinted perception tends to prevent a clear understanding of reality and does not serve South Africa's interests. Mozambique should be viewed primarily as a black African state with all the attendant problems, aspirations and sensitivities, and only secondly as a Marxist-Leninist regime with the corresponding world-view and sympathies.

- South African news media and opinion leaders should express compassion or revulsion, as the case may be, in reaction to the reports of massacres, atrocities, mass starvation and other afflictions in Mozambique. This would give more credibility to South African assurances that this country no longer has a hand in perpetuating the disastrous conditions in Mozambique. Furthermore, a greater awareness among South Africans of the human suffering on their doorstep would have a positive effect on relations between the two countries.

- Official spokesmen should publicly condemn the terrorist methods of Renamo. As a target of the terrorist methods of the ANC and PAC, South Africans have no reason to condone terror when it is practised in the name of anti-Communism.

- South Africa should publicly call for an end to the armed strife in Mozambique through talks between Frelimo and Renamo. This could be coupled with a reminder of its own efforts in October 1984 to bring about a reconciliation between the warring parties — an effort which it cannot readily resume lest it be accused of being the puppet-master manipulating Renamo.

- Current efforts to resume the flow of power from Cahora Bassa, to reactivate Maputo harbour, and to promote various development projects in which South Africans are involved, could be underpinned, and the Republic's good faith demonstrated, by publicly offering to render practical assistance in protecting these schemes against sabotage and to undertake repair work in the event of sabotage.

- Lastly, two-way trade between South Africa and Mozambique, and the use of Maputo harbour by South African importers and exporters should be encouraged.

It may well be objected that Mozambique's antagonistic attitude towards South Africa does not warrant such an accommodating approach. The question to be answered, however, is how South Africa's national interest would best be served.

Little can be gained by retaliating in kind for the vituperations and wild assertions of an essentially powerless government, and South Africa should concentrate rather on establishing regional prosperity and stability, as well as fostering Western support for its role as regional power-house and stabilizer.

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# The Chissano era — Mozambique comes to terms with itself

*Gillian Gunn, a researcher at Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington DC, provides a personal insight into the changes that Mozambique has undergone since President Chissano came to power.\**

Absence not only makes the heart grow fonder it also gives the mind perspective. Before my most recent visit to Mozambique, I had not been back to the country for two years. The change in conditions and attitudes in the capital, Maputo, was striking. My overwhelming impression was that Mozambique under President Joaquim Chissano had finally come to terms with itself.

Mozambique reminds me of a youth who dreams of being a sports star, repeatedly fails to make the team, finally accepts that he is a poor sportsman but a very good writer, and eventually values himself for the skills he possesses and stops lamenting those he lacks. Mozambique under Chissano no longer dreams of "liberating" South Africa's blacks over the short term, and no longer expects to establish a fully-fledged socialist society in the near future. Rather, Mozambique under Chissano has accepted that in the medium term it will have to live with its underdevelopment, lack of skilled manpower and geographic vulnerability to South African

actions. Instead of lamenting these problems, Mozambique is now trying to build on its strengths, specifically its strategic role in the Southern African transport and labour networks, its diplomatic abilities and its tradition of non-alignment.

## The historical context

In the pre-independence period, Mozambique's economy was based on three elements, all of which involved "hiring out" assets to foreign countries. Firstly, the hiring out of labour to neighbours reaped benefits in the form of worker remittances, and in the case of the agreement with South Africa, gold payments calculated at favourable rates of exchange. Secondly the provision of transport facilities to neighbouring countries earned revenue in the form of railway and port fees. Thirdly, the renting out of territory via "concession" agreements with large Western firms earned the territory some income and permitted a degree of development, albeit usually limited to the agricultural sphere.

After independence in 1975 and the coming to power of the guerrilla group that had fought Portuguese colonialism,

the *Frente de Libertação de Mozambique* (Frelimo), Mozambique tried to establish a new economic structure based on socialist forms of production. The new state drastically reduced relations with the two main markets for its labour and transport services, Rhodesia and South Africa, and began to aid the guerrilla groups seeking to overthrow the white minority regimes in those countries. It also adopted investment policies that, in effect if not in design, discouraged Western firms from continuing or making new investments. Mozambique also increased economic relations with socialist countries, which had no history of integration with the Mozambican economy.

These decisions were not the result of perversity or contrariness, but seemed logical to Mozambique's leaders at the time. By closing the border with Rhodesia, Mozambique merely complied with international sanctions against that minority-ruled territory, sanctions which the colonial Mozambican government had flouted. Given the hostility to Frelimo shown by Rhodesia and South Africa, the decision to reduce links with their governments and to aid their opponents was not absurd. As many Mozambican farms and factories were abandoned by their Portuguese

\*This article is based on the text of Ms Gunn's address to the Annual General Meeting of the Africa Institute on 8 September 1988.

owners during the transition to independence, and Portuguese educational and economic policies had resulted in there being virtually no indigenous entrepreneurs available to take their place, the decision to increase state ownership was not unreasonable. And, given the deep physical and psychological scars the semi-feudal, semi-capitalist colonial economic policies had left on Mozambique's African population, the decision to embrace a socialist form of production was an understandable reaction. In addition, in view of the alliance of many Western countries with the Portuguese via NATO, and the support provided to Frelimo by a number of socialist states, the decision to look Eastward in foreign policy was not unreasonable.

However rational these decisions may have appeared to Mozambique's new rulers, and however attractive politically, they had disastrous consequences. In the economic sphere, Frelimo tried to impose a structure that was incompatible with reality. In the military sphere, Mozambique provoked neighbours capable of vigorous retaliation. The two spheres also interacted, for domestic discontent caused by ill-suited economic policies created a pool of disaffected individuals available to be recruited into a guerrilla army. First Rhodesia and later South Africa exploited this opportunity, creating and then enlarging the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR).

### Machel's response

In the early 1980s Mozambique's President Samora Machel started coming to terms with the fact that Frelimo's economic and military policies were not working. Frelimo's Fourth Congress in 1983 marked the beginning of the reform of economic policy to ensure that it meshed with reality. Freer rein was given to market forces, private initiative was subject to fewer restrictions, decentralization of planning was initiated, and Mozambique began to explore the possibility of expanding its economic ties with the West. The 1984 Nkomati Accord by which Mozambique pledged to prevent the African National Congress (ANC) from infiltrating South Africa from Mozambican territory and South Africa promised to halt aid for the MNR, represented Machel's first significant

attempts to improve Mozambique's economic and political relationship with South Africa. (The Rhodesian question had been resolved by that neighbour's transformation into the independent state of Zimbabwe in 1980.)

However, President Machel was rather like our metaphorical aspiring athlete: he was beginning to realize he could not reach his goal, but he had not yet come to terms completely with the disappointment. Machel's attempts to reform economic policy were also hampered by bureaucratic inertia, entrenched interests and, in some sectors,



President Joaquim Chissano

ideologically motivated resistance. Therefore, it initially seemed that for every two steps he took forward, he took one backward.

Machel's tendency towards ambivalence was reinforced by the initial reactions from the West and South Africa. At first the West did not respond to his overtures with much enthusiasm and little aid or investment materialized.

MNR documents discovered at Gorongosa in August 1985, which strongly suggested that South Africa had not been complying with the Nkomati Accord also eroded confidence in the efficacy of the new strategy.

Thus, when Machel died in an aeroplane crash in October 1986, the new policies had not yet resulted in significant progress in either the economic or the military spheres.

### The Chissano era

Under the leadership of President Machel's successor, former Foreign Minister Joaquim Chissano, Frelimo has implemented the reform programme with far less ambivalence. Tragic though Machel's death was, in the long run it may turn out to have helped Frelimo come to terms with reality.

Chissano is less romantic and charismatic than Machel was. He is more technically minded, better educated and, some argue, more intelligent. Where Machel led from the front, Chissano organizes from the back. Chissano has accepted that the "neo-colonial" structure of the Mozambican economy cannot be changed quickly, or even over the medium term. Therefore he is essentially reverting to the Portuguese strategy of hiring out labour, transport and land assets to foreign interests. He has also accepted that, at least for the time being, Mozambique cannot afford to de-link itself from the Western economic system, and in fact would gain from greater integration. Machel had already started this adjustment in strategy before his death, but it is Chissano who has implemented it vigorously.

This is not to imply that President Chissano has abandoned the socialist dream. It simply means that he has realized that this dream is not attainable in the near or even medium term.

Chissano has also accepted the geographic and military realities of Mozambique. He has accepted more completely than did Machel that Mozambique is too weak to confront South Africa at this stage, and that it must therefore work out a *modus vivendi* with Pretoria. Whereas some of Machel's actions indicated that he saw this primarily as a short term strategy, Chissano clearly sees it as at least a medium term approach.

## The economic results

During the two years of Chissano's presidency, the fruits of his predecessor's reforms and his own more single-minded efforts have become evident. During my previous visit to Mozambique, in January 1986, the shop shelves were bare and urban vendors of agricultural produce frequently hid their goods until a foreigner with foreign exchange came along. On my latest visit (September 1988) I was pleasantly surprised to discover the Maputo market bursting with produce. Market women are once again engaging in price competition, and even after a series of devaluations which reduced the value of the *metical* from 40 to 580 per US dollar, the market price of tomatoes is now nearly the same as the *official* price during the Machel era. This represents a massive fall in the real price of tomatoes. Most other products were also available in quantities unheard of in the past few years, albeit at relatively steep prices.

Maputo's cafes presented a similar pleasant surprise. Instead of walking past blocks of boarded-up establishments, the potential diner is accosted by proprietors competing for customers.

Friends and government officials also had good news regarding developments elsewhere in the country. The policy of dividing state farms and handing them over to peasant families, long mooted by Machel, is at last being implemented. Foreign food aid is increasing. Mozambique under Chissano has also pushed on aggressively with a transport strategy initiated by Machel. This involves using Mozambique's strategic location to secure a mutually beneficial agreement with neighbouring Zimbabwe. Under the present agreement, landlocked Zimbabwe provides soldiers to protect Mozambique's Beira and Limpopo rail links, and in return gains access to the Mozambican ports of Beira and Maputo.

In addition, the new relaxation of restrictions on foreign investment, particularly the decision to permit foreign firms to retain and remit some foreign exchange profits, is leading to renewed, if still modest, interest on the part of investors.

It remains obvious, however, that until Mozambique's security situation improves, economic reform will make little difference in most rural areas

where the bulk of the population lives. A new state policy, which entails rewarding peasants for extra production by offering them scarce consumer goods in return, will work only if the trucks bearing the consumer goods can travel safely from the factory to the peasant, and the truck carrying the excess production can travel safely from the peasant to the city. In most of Mozambique that transport link is not yet secure, and shows little sign of becoming so in the near future.

## Foreign policy

Under Chissano Mozambique has accepted, more completely than under Machel, that the nation's geographic location means it simply has to get along with South Africa. Indeed, when I asked contacts in Maputo what message they wished me to relay for them, the universal refrain was "We want peace." This was voiced across the political spectrum, echoed even by those on the left wing of Frelimo. Chissano, however, does not want peace at any price, and still demands some concessions from Pretoria.

In early 1988, for example, Chissano reportedly decided to consider the possibility of a summit with South African State President P W Botha in the light of Pretoria's performance on three issues: negotiations for the rehabilitation of the Cahora Bassa power line; improvement in the security situation along the Ressano Garcia railway line linking Mozambique's Maputo port with South Africa's Transvaal province; and negotiations to increase the number of Mozambicans permitted to work in the Republic. While Chissano wanted to meet with P W Botha, he wanted the meeting to be more than simply a "photo opportunity". He wanted to have some concrete improvement in relations already in place, which the two heads of state could then build upon.

At the time when I left Mozambique the consensus was that two of the three concerns were being addressed. The Cahora Bassa agreement was being finalized. MNR sabotage of the Ressano Garcia line was subsiding, and though South Africa denied responsibility for either the earlier guerrilla activity or its subsequent decline, Chissano believed the improvement was partly due to a

decision by Pretoria to curtail MNR activities in that section of the country. While little improvement had been achieved on the labour front, Chissano nonetheless decided to go ahead with the summit.

Chissano's new approach to South Africa is also reflected in reports that he has recently argued for a moderation in language when the leaders of the Frontline states meet to discuss Pretoria. In his own rhetoric, the Mozambican President has started to omit the adjective "racist" when referring to the Republic.

Another development which reflects Chissano's determination to improve relations with South Africa is the expectation among the Mozambican populace that their country's relationship with the ANC will now deteriorate somewhat. "When we make progress in resolving our problems with South Africa," one Mozambican remarked, "we usually find our relations with the ANC become more problematic."

This anticipated improvement in relations with South Africa is not simply a product of Mozambican goodwill, it is a response to a decision Frelimo believes P W Botha has taken regarding the MNR. The Mozambican government believes that P W Botha is finally beginning to "put his foot down with the South African military", and is forcing that branch of government to curtail, though not entirely cut, supplies to the MNR. As evidence, sources cite the fact that the MNR has recently adopted tactics designed to save ammunition, relying more heavily on knives than guns in their attacks. However, these sources also fear that the respite may not last for long, and insist that the MNR still receives some supplies from South Africa by boat.

Relations with the West have also improved considerably under Chissano. To the delight of Washington, Mozambique has played an important, though discreet, behind the scenes role in the Namibia/Angola negotiations. Indeed, according to some reports, Mozambique has gently suggested to Angola's ruling *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) that it would be willing to facilitate negotiation contacts with the rebel *Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola* (Unita), should Luanda wish to use this channel. If this report is true, it partly explains why Unita sources in Washington have

spoken so highly of Mozambique recently, and why the MPLA, which is uneasy about talking to Unita, has been reluctant to permit negotiations with South Africa and the USA to be held in Maputo.

Mozambique's improved relations with the West are also evident in the increased military aid received from Europe, particularly from Britain, and the renewed possibility that the USA may provide non-lethal military assistance.

## Internal politics

One of the most striking differences between the Machel and Chissano eras has been in the divergent styles adopted by the two leaders for resolving Frelimo's internal tensions. Chissano is a listener and a consensus-builder, while Machel was a charismatic leader who, particularly towards the end of his life, consulted his colleagues less frequently than they perhaps would have desired. Under Chissano, Frelimo is undergoing a gradual but perceptible democratization process.

Several examples illustrate this shift. At a recent party conference, many Frelimo members protested that whites were not pulling their weight in the military and that blacks were suffering a disproportionate share of the casualties in the war against the MNR. Chissano allowed the discussion to continue for many hours, permitting all present to express their views at length. Finally, after all the arguments had been stated and restated several times, he reminded the conference that shortly after independence Frelimo had decided not to permit whites to take on important roles in the military as the party was unsure of their loyalty in the context of Portuguese resistance to Frelimo rule. Because whites were banned from such positions, they seldom found themselves in the front line of battle, and consequently suffered few casualties. Chissano told the conference participants that it was their decision to make after independence, and if they wanted to reverse that decision they were free to do so.

Asked how Machel would have handled the controversy, an observer replied that he would probably have put an end to the debate earlier, reminded participants why whites had been discouraged

from seeking certain military posts and briskly moved on to the next issue. Chissano's technique, the observer added, might lead to the same substantive policy, but it gave Frelimo members more opportunity to air their views, and a sense that the decision was theirs, not just that of the leadership.

Another example of the democratization process concerns the role of the National Popular Assembly. For the first time since its establishment, the Assembly is departing from its role as a "rubber stamp" and refusing to approve laws. For example, the Assembly recently decided that the proposed penalties for various "economic crimes" were far too severe, and sent the legislation back for modification. Chissano, rather than being dismayed by this development, seemed gratified that the Assembly was taking more initiative.

A third example of the democratization process is evident in the plans to redraft the Mozambican constitution. In September 1987 the National Popular Assembly approved the "revision project", which must still be approved by the 1989 Fifth Frelimo Congress but nevertheless shows the gist of present thinking. Among other things the revised draft constitution changes the system for selecting Mozambique's President. Previously the President was selected directly by the party's Central Committee. Under the new procedure the President will be nominated by the Central Committee but elected by the Provincial Assemblies. The drafters remarked that direct election by all Mozambicans would be "the most advisable solution", but added that "in light of the concrete conditions in our country, we consider that it will not be possible in the near future to hold this type of election." Under the new constitution the President's term will be limited to five years. Chissano reportedly supports both adjustments to the presidential system. It is interesting to note that the new presidential selection system represents a strengthening of the role of the government at the expense of the party, for the Provincial Assemblies are state institutions.

Despite these examples of greater sensitivity to grass roots sentiments, however, Frelimo still faces a number of serious internal problems. Racial tensions remain, and although Chissano is promoting blacks in the government and

the party, many judge the pace too slow.

Frelimo's middle ranks also suffer from a sense of disillusionment. Party members ask themselves, "Are we now capitalist? Where are we going? Is it worth foregoing a secure career in Europe in order to remain in Mozambique if we are just going to build another neo-colonized state?" The spirit of self-sacrifice in Frelimo's middle ranks is waning, and self-interest is frequently accorded higher priority. Many party cadres are no longer willing to make a super-human effort simply out of nationalist or ideological loyalty. "If they want me to do it, they have to pay me" is an increasingly common refrain.

The economic hardships inflicted on certain sectors of the Mozambican population by the economic reforms is also causing a measure of discontent, and again this is most noticeable in the middle ranks. Whereas previously a mid-level government employee never had to budget, because there were too few goods in the market-place for him ever to exhaust his supply of metecais, the massive devaluation and related price increases, combined with the improved availability for many goods, mean that some families are tempted to buy more than they can afford.

The decision to increase pay differentials is also causing some discontent. Whereas Frelimo previously tried to narrow the gap between the lowest and the highest wage earners in a given enterprise it is now widening the gap to allow for greater reward of outstanding performance, and to compensate those willing to take on additional responsibilities. Understandably, this is causing resentment. When, as often is the case, the higher ranking individuals — who benefit most from the new policy — are white, Indian or of mixed race, and the lower ranking individuals — who benefit least — are blacks, this adjustment also exacerbates racial tensions.

## The security situation

While there has been some improvement in the security situation during Chissano's presidency, this is the aspect of Mozambican life that is still most problematic.

The security situation around Mozambique's major towns and cities,

and along many of its railways, has improved considerably, is due to three factors. Firstly, expanded assistance from Mozambique's neighbours, particularly Zimbabwe but also Tanzania and Malawi, has helped secure transport routes. Secondly, improved food supplies, made possible both by increased food aid and rises in food production in the "green belts" around the towns, means soldiers near urban areas are somewhat better fed and have a sense that they are fighting for something worth defending. Thirdly, Chissano has begun to retire some of the old guard in the military and to promote younger, better trained individuals with a rather more sophisticated approach to counter-insurgency.

However, across most of the countryside the security situation is not improving, and in many areas has actually deteriorated. Government forces are now conducting a major offensive in central Mozambique, but these operations are inflicting relatively modest casualties on the MNR, which is simply being chased from one province to another.

Frelimo does seem to believe that South Africa is reducing its aid to the MNR, as evidenced by MNR attempts to save ammunition. However, Frelimo also believes that indirect supplies from South Africa are continuing. The recent incident involving some West German sailors who were in a dinghy attempting to repair part of their ship when they were caught in an unexpected current, drifted to shore and were captured by MNR soldiers who had apparently just received a delivery of supplies by sea, suggests that MNR supply by ship is continuing, though it does not reveal the identity of the supplier.

Even if all outside aid to the MNR, from South Africa and elsewhere, were halted, MNR activity in Mozambique probably would not cease quickly. Earlier Frelimo policies severed the economic link between the city and the countryside, with the result that the average peasant had no interest in defending Mozambique's roads and railways, for they brought him little. This provided the MNR with an opportunity to physically cut these economically inactive links. Although Frelimo has now introduced policies that should help re-establish the links between urban and rural areas, these policies can have only limited effect because safe physical

access to the countryside is still denied, severed by the MNR. Until the physical link is re-established, Frelimo's new policies cannot be implemented, and the peasant will continue to have little reason to risk death by resisting MNR demands.

There is also some evidence that sociological factors may help MNR survival even in the absence of external assistance. Observers say they see increased evidence of witchcraft in MNR motivation and tactics. For example, when the MNR destroys a health clinic it apparently does not do so just to deprive the government of health infrastructure. Such a goal could be just as easily achieved by continuing to run the clinic, but making its services available only to MNR supporters. Indeed, such an approach would fit in with a classic guerrilla "hearts and minds" strategy. Rather, the destruction of health clinics seems to be part of the MNR's self-proclaimed battle against all things modern, and an attempt to re-instill faith in traditional ways. Thus the MNR not only blows up the X-ray machines and other high-technology equipment, but painstakingly dismantles this equipment, and goes through elaborate procedures to crush each and every part.

If witchcraft has indeed assumed a major role in the motivation of the MNR's adherents, then neither the current government reforms nor an end to outside aid are likely to bring an early end to the war. As other wars throughout history have shown, he who believes he is fighting the Devil fights longer, and resists against more daunting odds, than he who is fighting for other reasons.

### The future

In the future, islands of security and economic development will survive, and possibly even grow. These will initially be based along major rail routes and on the peripheries of towns. There will also probably be some economic and security improvement along the coast, as plans to set up a major barge transport system are implemented. However, Mozambique will find it difficult to break out of this pattern of enclave development until the MNR has been eradicated, and this seems unlikely in the short term.

Relations with South Africa will most probably continue to improve, as long as South Africa does not increase aid to the

MNR, and nothing happens to make Frelimo believe such aid is increasing. If Frelimo concludes that aid is growing, Chissano will be under pressure from some elements in Frelimo to harden his stance on South Africa. While Chissano is leaving out the word "racist" in his references to South Africa, several high-ranking but currently controllable elements in Frelimo are constantly emphasizing that adjective in their rhetoric. If South Africa behaves aggressively or appears to behave in that manner the "r" word will inevitably return to Chissano's vocabulary, with all the related implications for Mozambican/South African relations.

As long as relations with South Africa remain on an even keel, Mozambique will probably offer improved terms for trade and investment relations with the Republic. Indeed it appears that Mozambique will permit the continued importation of South African goods in direct competition with Mozambican manufactures, for the government hopes such foreign competition will force its own factories to improve efficiency.

The trend towards greater democracy within Frelimo will probably make the Mozambican government somewhat less predictable than previously. Public opinion, which is notoriously unpredictable in most countries, will play a greater role and policies could shift unexpectedly.

### Chissano's world view

I would like to conclude with an illustration of how President Chissano views the world. When I interviewed him in 1984 I asked him how he viewed Mozambique's relations with the West. He responded by drawing three circles on a piece of paper. He explained, "This is Mozambique, this is the West. And this is the East." He showed the three circles each overlapping by about 30 per cent, and added that the extent to which Mozambique's interests overlapped with those of the West had been increasing. My guess is that if he drew those circles today the Mozambican and Western circles would overlap considerably more, and there might even be a new, South African, circle in the diagram which could conceivably overlap with the Mozambican circle to a small degree.

# The Beira, Maputo and Nacala corridors

*Denis Fair, senior research fellow at the Africa Institute, continues his series on Africa's ports and harbours with a survey of Mozambique's transport and shipping network, which is so vital to many of the countries of Southern Africa.*

The Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) was established in 1978 by the Frontline states, comprising those bordering on South Africa (Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique and Zimbabwe) and those which do not (Angola, Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania). Influenced by an economic and political climate in Southern Africa dominated by the Republic of South Africa and the fact that six of the nine states are landlocked, the objective was to reduce their economic dependence on the Republic in a number of fields. They termed the strategy "collective self-reliance". Priority was given to transport and the Southern African Transport and Communications Commission (SATCC) was SADCC's agency given responsibility in this field. What this entailed was reviving and rehabilitating mainly Mozambican routes and ports used earlier and creating a more efficient and co-ordinated regional transportation system. In the 1960s some 80 per cent of Zimbabwe's and Zambia's import and export traffic moved via the Mutare-Beira, Chicualacuala-Maputo and Shaba-Lobito (Benguela) routes and only 20 per cent via South African railways and harbours. Twenty years later, 80 per cent of that traffic as well as Zaire's copper, was moving via the longer and more expensive South African route, despite the fact that by rail Harare to Beira is 700 km, to

Maputo via Chicualacuala 1 270 km and to Durban 2 060 km. What then had happened to cause this degree of dependence on the South African transport system?

## Routes to the coast

Rhodesia's unilateral declaration of independence from Great Britain in 1965 and Angola's and Mozambique's independence from Portugal in 1975 were the main events affecting five vital access routes to the coast used by Southern Africa's landlocked states. Zambia, in order not to use its outlets to the south via Rhodesia after 1965 — the border between the two countries was closed between 1973 and 1978 — combined with Tanzania to build the 1 570 km Tazara railway to Dar es Salaam as an alternative outlet. This line was opened in 1975 but, built by the Chinese, it was poorly constructed and operated, the locomotives used were underpowered and with facilities at the port of Dar es Salaam unable to cope with the traffic, Tazara's usefulness was seriously limited.

In 1975 the Unita movement refused to accept the MPLA government which took power in Angola with Soviet and Cuban assistance and in violation of the Alvor agreement which provided for democratic elections in the new state. Since then Unita, which commands

most of south-eastern Angola, has consistently kept out of commission the 1 340 km Benguela railway — only a small section of which, serving the immediate hinterland of Lobito, has been operational. As a result Zaire's and Zambia's main route to the sea for their copper exports was blocked.

In Mozambique the new Frelimo government, in support of groups fighting against the Rhodesian government, in 1976 closed the border with Rhodesia which until then used the ports of Beira and Maputo (via Chicualacuala) for 90 per cent of its international trade.

Although the lines to both ports were reopened five years later in 1980 when the new Zanu government took over power in Zimbabwe, they were in a poor state of repair and still suffered from the damage caused during the Rhodesian war. After 1981 both the railway lines and the ports, especially Beira, were subject to attacks and sabotage by the Renamo rebel movement now fighting the Frelimo government. In 1984 Renamo put the Zimbabwe-Maputo line out of action and made it inaccessible to repair teams. Thus, for the early years of its existence Zimbabwe had little option but to make use of South African harbours for its international traffic, as did Zambia and Zaire for much of their copper exports. Malawi, similarly, with both its Mozambican rail connections to the ports of Beira and Nacala broken by Renamo, had to turn to the long alternative routes

by road and rail via Lusaka or Harare to South Africa or, for special cargo, by air to that country. By early 1986, 90 per cent of the 8,5 million tonnes of exports from Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Botswana went out via South African harbours, although by then Zambia was making increasing use of Dar es Salaam.

## The Beira corridor

The Benguela railway still remained closed at the beginning of 1989, but in June 1980 the first steps to restore the links to the Mozambican ports were taken when Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique agreed to a 10-year programme then envisaged to cost US\$2 000 million. In November of that year a further conference of the nine SADCC member states and 32 donor countries and international organizations met to discuss the funding of the project and its implementation, but the results were somewhat limited. The Beira corridor, serving Zimbabwe, was clearly the one most urgently in need of rehabilitation. However, exporters and shipping lines were loath to use the port in view of its rundown condition and especially when access was so readily available to the efficient and dependable South African system.

It was not until early 1986 that the first really serious and comprehensive effort was made to tackle the rehabilitation of the Beira corridor. By this time traffic handled at the port was down to 1,4 million tonnes per year (from 5 million in earlier times) of which 0,6 million was oil for Zimbabwe. This was sent via pipeline which was reopened in 1982 after being closed since 1966 as a result of Rhodesia's unilateral declaration of independence. The new SADCC initiative arose out of the imposition and the threat of further imposition of sanctions against South Africa by Western and Commonwealth countries and the fear on the part of its neighbours that South Africa would retaliate by blocking access to its harbours. In January 1986 some \$200 million had been pledged by various donors towards a SADCC-backed ten-year rehabilitation programme for the Beira corridor.

A substantial institutional structure was set up to implement the programme. On the government side two authorities, the

Beira Corridor Authority (BCA) in Mozambique and the Machipanda-Beira Authority in Zimbabwe, have been established and are responsible for the infrastructural developments for the port, the railway, the road, the oil pipeline and the utilities in the town of Beira. The business sector, including both the private sector and the parastatals, have also established the Beira Corridor Group (BCG) based in Harare and the Empresa Austral de Desenvolvimento (EAD) based in Maputo. They are responsible for the specialized handling facilities at the port, for establishing business and other support services and for encouraging and co-ordinating investment in Mozambique and in the Beira corridor especially. Three agricultural and cattle ranching projects, for instance, were under consideration in 1987 for implementation in the 1988/89 season. The Mozambique Port User's Group (MPUG) was established in 1987, aimed at co-ordinating and smoothing the activities of the major users.

## The development plan

The plan decided on in January 1986 comprises three phases — a contingency or emergency phase, a core phase, both estimated to cost \$280 million, and an ancillary phase. The major donors are the Netherlands, Scandinavian countries, the European Economic Community (EEC), the African Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank and Italy. Of the funds, 75 per cent are in the form of grants and therefore not repayable.

The aim of the contingency phase was to upgrade to reasonably acceptable levels both the railway and the port of Beira before the end of 1987. For the port this meant dredging the entrance channel in order to accommodate ships of up to 25 000 dwt, the building of a roll-on roll-off terminal, rehabilitating the coal and cold storage terminals, repaving quays and so on, as well as instituting harbour training and management. When this phase was officially recognized as completed in October 1987, Beira's handling capacity had been raised 33 per cent to 3,2 million tonnes per year, but this included the 1,2 million tonne-capacity coal terminal. This facility remained unused, however, since no coal from the mine at Moatize, 450 km from Beira, had been delivered owing to sabotage of Mozambique's northern rail link.

Of immediate concern when the contingency phase was embarked upon was to avoid a serious lag in railway handling capacity compared with that of the port. The 315 km section from Machipanda on the Mozambique-Zimbabwe border to Beira suffered not only from neglect but also from sabotage by Renamo. The track was in poor condition and there was a shortage of locomotives, especially for the steep section leading up the escarpment of Machipanda. Measures to rectify these defects raised the capacity of the line to 3 million tonnes per year by the end of 1987 although commodities carried by rail, road and pipeline totalled 1,7 million tonnes in that year. Also partially completed was the conversion of steam locomotives to diesel at the railway workshops in Beira. Moreover, security on the line greatly improved. Zimbabwe military assistance, though costly, helped to reduce Renamo attacks on the extent that the line suffered much less disruption. Incidents of sabotage were more isolated and the damage was repaired fairly quickly, although in early 1989 trains were still operating only during daylight hours. However, rail transit times were reduced by some 50 per cent to 10 days and less between Zimbabwe and Beira. Complementing these improvements were emergency repairs to the road allowing some 30 heavy trucks per day to be used.

A problem that had to be overcome in restoring the Beira corridor was the need to improve attitudes towards the port. Despite the early rehabilitation negative views tended to persist among many Zimbabwean users because of their experience of previous inadequacies. These included the length of time in getting goods to the port, poor handling facilities, loading and unloading delays, the long turn-around times for ships, loss of goods in transit, poor management and inadequate accommodation and other facilities in the town of Beira itself. They therefore preferred to use the more efficient but more expensive South African transport system. However, the work of the BCG and the MPUG, including inspections by businessmen of the new installations and rail and port developments, has helped to improve the image and usage of Beira. An added advantage was the reduction in January 1987 of the heavy surcharge that shipping lines placed on cargoes

handled at Beira because of the delays and a shallow entrance channel which forced ships to sail only partly laden. In addition, Mozambique has reduced handling charges at Beira (and Maputo) provided certain cargo volumes can be guaranteed by users. These measures have helped offset the discounted rates which South Africa offered in order to attract traffic to its harbours. By using Beira, estimates at the end of 1987 indicated that Z\$700 (US\$400) could be saved on a 6-meter container imported there instead of through Durban and Z\$550 (US\$300) on a container for export.

Thus, at the end of the contingency phase some encouraging results could be seen. Total cargo handled by Beira rose 40 per cent in 1987 to 1,96 million tonnes. One million tonnes of this was accounted for by Zimbabwean traffic of which 650 000 tonnes were petroleum products, 470 000 tonnes was Mozambique traffic and 490 000 tonnes was Zambian and Malawian traffic. At the end of 1987 Beira was handling 27 per cent of Zimbabwe's exports and 22 per cent of regional exports — those from countries lying within its hinterland. In 1987 some 35 per cent of Zimbabwe's cotton, 10 per cent of its tobacco, 50 per cent of its tea and asbestos and almost all its coffee was exported via Beira. Zambia also increased its copper exports through Beira from 2 000 tonnes in August 1986 to 12 000 tonnes in May 1987. As the cost of railage via the Tazara railway to Dar es Salaam is less than half that via Zimbabwe and Beira, the bulk of Zambia's copper is shipped through Dar es Salaam. In its first annual report (to September 1987) the BCG stated that the Beira corridor was carrying 4 500 tonnes of cargo per day compared with 600 tonnes the previous year. The railway line was taking "all the cargo which the port can presently handle".

Although the achievements of the contingency phase were encouraging, the railway and the port were still a long way from coping with the total traffic generated by Mozambique and its neighbours. Some real problems persisted and the plan has not proceeded as smoothly as anticipated. The "two-government" administrative structure has been found "ponderous". By early 1988 the BCG reported that despite its "massive" efforts at rehabilitating the

corridor, the port still suffered from poor management of cargo, congestion, labour troubles and a shortage of transport and handling facilities in and around the harbour area. Rehabilitation should have been completed by August 1987 but six months later many berths were still not in use and work had not been completed by the Mozambican state construction company. Offers on the part of the BCG to assist had not been met sympathetically. Torrential summer rains flooded road and rail access across the Pungwe river flats and caused heavy silting of the port's entrance channel. The latter is a perennial problem calling for continuous dredging but this is not possible with only one dredger available for both Beira and Maputo. By April 1988 it was claimed by shipping companies that the port had "virtually come to a halt" with 800 containers awaiting clearance and threats being made to reimpose the surcharge lifted in 1986. Dry cargo handled had fallen to 1 000 tonnes per day from a peak of 3 500 tonnes in 1987 and 60–70 per cent of the port handling equipment was said to be out of commission at any one time.

The Mozambican authorities claimed that these charges were exaggerated and that much of the problem lay in having to cope with the closure and dismantling of certain facilities while reconstruction work was in progress. Certainly, the container terminal was not yet ready to handle its planned capacity but the maximum number of containers on any given day was not 800, as alleged, but 400. It was accepted that traffic during the first quarter of 1988 was less than that at the end of 1987 but it was still 39 per cent higher than during the same period in 1987. It was also accepted that traffic would have to be limited to about 2,2 million tonnes (including oil) during 1988–89 but by early 1990 it was claimed that, with completion of the present work, the port's capacity could immediately be raised by one million tonnes. Despite these assurances some Zimbabwean firms were again resorting to the use of South African harbours.

Overall, although dependence of SADCC countries on South African harbours has been reduced by developments at Maputo, Beira and Dar es Salaam, the influence of South African transport services is, however, still present in other ways. During 1987 South

Africa leased ten diesel locomotives and 250 railway wagons to Zimbabwe National Railways and 18 diesel locomotives to Zambia, to tide those countries over their shortages of rolling stock. In the month of September alone 7 000 South African railway trucks were in use in Zambia, Zaire, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. The South African Transport Services' financial assistance to these countries totalled over R20 million (US\$10 million) in 1986, while South African managerial personnel continued to attend the annual meetings of railway managers in Southern Africa.

### The core phase

It is hoped that Beira's 1988 problems are temporary since the programme of rehabilitation has still a long way to run. The core phase extends into 1990. By then it is planned that Beira will be handling up to 75 per cent of Zimbabwe's international traffic but more realistic considerations now put the proportion at 40 per cent. The core phase involves a number of important developments. Firstly, and financed by the Netherlands to the tune of US\$13,4 million, the entrance channel will be widened and deepened to 8,5 m to take fully laden "third generation" vessels of 50 000–60 000 dwt. Moreover, oil tankers much larger than those now in use will be accommodated, saving Zimbabwe at least US\$8 per tonne in freight costs.

Secondly, large areas of the docks will be rebuilt to accommodate the larger vessels. Three existing berths, built between 1926 and 1936, are being demolished and a multi-purpose container terminal and warehouse constructed. Work began in early 1988 and, although it will take three years to complete, the facilities will be partly operative before then. The annual turnover of containers is expected then to rise from the present 36 000 to 100 000. The oil terminal will accommodate the larger tankers and storage capacity will be substantially increased. Thirdly, the port authority of Amsterdam is assisting with the management and administration of the port over the years to 1990. Fourthly, rail links to the port continue to receive attention. Austria is assisting with the further upgrading of the Zimbabwe-Beira link while plans are afoot to rebuild and repair the line from Dondo to



the Malawi border and the branch to Moatize and Tete. Work on the first stage from Dondo to Muanza was commenced in late 1987.

The third or ancillary phase of the Beira corridor programme is described as involving projects which are considered to be necessary and economically viable but the implementation of which can be postponed beyond 1990. It includes providing further container handling equipment, completion of work on roads and railway lines focussing on Beira, improving telecommunication and airport facilities and other service projects.

According to the plan, by the end of the core phase in 1991 the port of Beira should have a capacity of 5 million tonnes per year. The full use of the port by then should allow Zimbabwe to save some US\$35–45 million per year in transport costs as against using the South African railways and harbours system. In addition, the port should be handling 50 per cent of regional traffic, the rest being handled by Maputo and Nacala, with Zambia focussing more and more on Dar es Salaam. Whether this objective will be met will depend heavily on the progress made with the current rehabilitation of the port and with increasing its management and operational efficiency.

### The Maputo (or Limpopo) corridor

Maputo is one of Southern Africa's major ports and is well equipped to handle bulk cargoes of minerals, coal and agricultural products. It was connected to the South African railway system via Ressano Garcia and Komati-poort in 1894; to Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) via Chicualacuala, known as the Limpopo corridor, in 1955 and to Swaziland via Goba in 1962 for the specific purpose of exporting iron ore from that country. In 1971, when the Portuguese were still in power in Mozambique, 14.9 million tonnes of general cargo, minerals, oil and agricultural products passed in and out of Maputo, most of it from or destined for South Africa, since it was the nearest port for the eastern Transvaal's coal, mineral and citrus fruit exports. In addition, the Mozambique Convention, now defunct, required that 47.5 per cent of

traffic to and from the Southern Transvaal use Maputo (then Lourenço Marques) in return for South Africa's right to recruit labourers from Southern Mozambique for work on its gold and coal mines.

After Mozambique's independence in 1975, the deterioration of economic conditions in that country and its continuing war with Renamo saw Maputo's traffic volume fall to 2.5 million tonnes in 1985. Swaziland traffic decreased sharply when its iron ore mine closed in 1980 and still further when sabotage of the line seriously affected its sugar exports through Maputo. With the Limpopo line out of commission since the border closure on 1976 and Renamo attacks, in 1984 Zimbabwean traffic to Maputo had to be routed through South Africa via Beit Bridge and Komati-poort but even that line, from the South African border to Maputo, came under periodic attack.

Only in 1987 were efforts made to re-open the Limpopo line. With British financial aid of US\$4.5 million, the first phase of the renewal programme on the 538 km stretch from the Zimbabwean border to Maputo commenced in August of that year. The work was carried out by National Railways of Zimbabwe, under heavy guard by Zimbabwean troops, and involved replacing damaged rails and sleepers over an initial distance of 54 km. By the middle of 1988 parts of the line were usable but *in toto* still too rundown to sustain regular, efficient and fast-moving traffic. Moreover, a bridge across the Limpopo has still to be rebuilt. The very necessary second phase requiring funding from a wider variety of donors and costing possibly US\$100 million will begin this year and may take up to five years to complete. The railway will then have a capacity of two million tonnes per year, allowing Maputo to handle most of Zimbabwe's bulk exports of sugar, ferro-chrome, steel and possibly copper. Due to the more open vegetation cover in the area through which the line passes, it is regarded as easier to defend against Renamo attacks than the Beira line. Nevertheless, strict precautionary measures are being taken by Zimbabwean and Mozambican troops to protect the line.

Substantial developments are now under way to rehabilitate and to modernize the port of Maputo in order to restore it to its former capacity as

Mozambique's major port. Among the most urgent requirements has been the dredging of the approach channel. This has now been completed ahead of schedule. The depth of the channel is 7.4 m (11 m on spring tide) and allows ships of 50 000–60 000 dwt to enter the harbour. In addition, an emergency programme to improve navigational aids will be completed by early 1989 as a forerunner to a much larger project later.

One of the major projects has been the development of a container terminal with associated storage area, new cranes and other lifting equipment and movement vehicles, mainly financed and built by the Italians. Not only can three ships be berthed at the terminal at the same time but turn-around times have been cut from 2–3 days to 24 hours. Improvements have been also made at the specialist terminals — for sugar, citrus, coal and steel — and all are now benefitting from greatly reduced loading rates. A new terminal for coastwise traffic is also being established. A British firm is involved with improving management, control and movement operations at the sugar and steel terminals. A port management school has been established which will help improve skills at all Mozambican ports.

Various countries are involved in financing and providing technical assistance in the development of the port. These include Britain, Italy, West Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. South Africa as a major user of the port has been involved in its development through improvements to, and management of, the coal, minerals and citrus terminals and in upgrading the railway line to the South African border. Embodied in the current developments at the port is a US\$75 million Maputo port master plan. There are three phases to the plan, which is due to be completed in 1992, by which time traffic through the port is envisaged to rise to 8 million tonnes per year and income earned from US\$11.5 million to US\$84 million. The South African government is helping to finance the plan with a soft loan of US\$3 million as a preliminary to further financial assistance directed at the management and maintenance of the coal, minerals and citrus terminals and subsequent elements of the plan. In addition, the South African Foreign Trade Organization (Safto) is directly involved in promoting

the continued and expanded use of the port by South African interests.

Now that the port is receiving substantial attention and the approach channel has been deepened, shipping lines, notably the Southern African-Europe Container Service (SAECS), are improving their services to the port. A report by Safto indicates that exporters now regard operations at the port as "excellent". However, security remains a problem. Attacks by Renamo on the railway lines from South Africa and Swaziland continued into 1989. To help contain the problem a special Mozambique Ports and Railways police force has been formed.

### The Nacala corridor

The port of Nacala, an excellent natural harbour, was first developed in 1950 when a deepwater berth was constructed there. It was joined by rail to the Lumbo-Nampula railway line which was subsequently extended to the Malawian border at Entre Lagos and then joined to the Malawi rail system in 1970. Until 1982, some 95 per cent of Malawi's international trade went through Mozambican ports — 65 per cent on the 650 km Blantyre to Beira railway line and 30 per cent on the 807 km Blantyre to Nacala line. In 1981 about 86 per cent of the country's tea exports and 74 per cent of its tobacco exports were routed through Nacala.

By 1982, due to increasing inefficiency in port operation combined with port congestion and deterioration of the railway link, the capacity and use of this outlet by Malawi had decreased. The situation was exacerbated in 1984 by increasing Renamo sabotage of the railway which, together with the closing of the Beira line in 1983 for the same reason, turned "a difficult position into a desperate one" as the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) described it. Malawi had to turn to alternative routes for its international trade and at exorbitant cost, believed to have been at an extra US\$50 million per year, or 30–40 per cent of its foreign earnings. These routes were by road and rail 2 660 km Blantyre via Tete in Mozambique, then via Zimbabwe to Durban, accounting for 65 per cent of the total traffic in 1987; by road and rail 3 762 km to Lusaka in Zambia and then to Durban (30 per

cent); and 1 784 km by lake and road to Mbeya on the Tazara line and thence to Dar es Salaam (5 per cent). This last route is now being more fully developed and in the near future Malawi should be moving as much as 10 per cent of its import-export traffic through Dar es Salaam.

### The development programme

By the second half of 1987 the port of Nacala was reopened to traffic. The first phase of the modernization of the port costing US\$16 million was financed by the Finnish International Development Agency with some support from Mozambique (US\$4 million). This was completed in mid-1987. This phase saw the establishment of a 400 m quay and the rehabilitation of the container terminal to an annual capacity of 25 000 containers. Phase two, now under way, increases the capacity of the terminal to 60 000 containers per year, adds new handling equipment, and rehabilitates cranes, cargo berths and marshalling yards. In addition, a container handling management system is being implemented and general management and training facilities undertaken. Although the modernization programme will be completed only in 1989, Mozambique Ports and Railways (CFM) claimed that the port at mid-1987 could have handled most of the Malawian cargo that had been diverted to South African ports.

However, increased use of Nacala by Malawi has remained impossible while Renamo attacks on the rail line continue and while rehabilitation work on the line is in progress. The rehabilitation programme costing US\$208 million has been funded mainly by France, Canada and Portugal. Completion of phase one at the end of 1986 saw the opening of the worst damaged section of 200 km between Nacala and Nampula. Phase two continues work on the 338 km section to Cuamba and then to the Malawian border. But by early 1988 it was reported that the line was operational from the port only as far as Nampula. For the rest only "a trickle of freight" was getting through from Malawi to the port, according to the EIU. It was proving very difficult and very costly to guard the line. By mid-1988 the situation was summed up by the EIU in pessimistic terms. "Optimism has faded about a spectacular improvement in the external transport situation in 1988" and shippers

were "highly sceptical" that the line to Nacala would be fully operational in the first half of 1988 — a scepticism that proved well founded.

Thus, for Malawi, the Nacala route is still an uncertainty, the direct rail route to Beira is out of commission and the road and rail routes to South Africa, although in use, are highly expensive. Malawi, as a result, has explored the opening of a northern corridor, first by steamer 400 km between the lake ports of Chipoka and Chilumba, then 250 km by road to Mbeya in Tanzania, and finally 750 km by rail (Tazara) to Dar es Salaam. The cost will be some US\$110 million and the route should be operational by 1991. It is planned to handle some 25–30 per cent of Malawi's international trade. Much will depend, however, on the ability of the port of Dar es Salaam and the Tazara railway, both now undergoing modernization, to cope with this additional traffic. It comes on top of that arising from Zambia's increasing use of the port and the railway for its copper exports and other inward and outbound traffic. However, should this route and the one to Nacala finally prove viable, then all of Malawi's international trade could be channelled via these two routes.

### Conclusion

The SADCC reports that its total transport and communications programme, broadly outlined here, comprises 207 projects and is costed at \$2.4 billion. About 37 per cent of this has been secured and another 6 per cent is being negotiated. By 1992 the SADCC states that its member countries (Lesotho excluded, presumably) should no longer have to rely on the South African railways and harbours system. By that date the annual capacity of the ports of Maputo, Beira, Nacala and Dar es Salaam should reach 18–19 million tonnes compared with a total overseas export and import traffic from and to SADCC countries of 10 million tonnes at present. If and when the Benguela railway and the port of Lobito in Angola are reopened and rehabilitated, further capacity of some 3 million tonnes per year will be available to these countries, particularly Zambia, and Zaire.

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### Maputo — bulk-handling facilities

#### McMyller tippler

Handles coal, vermiculite, clay, phosphate, clinker and chrome fines. Recently refurbished. Capacity is more than 1 million tonnes per year. Loading is done directly from rail to vessel. The quay can accommodate ships of up to 35 000 dwt. The facility is managed with the assistance of a technical service team provided by Techni Multidiscipline Services (TMS) from South Africa.

#### Bulk coal berth

The Matola minerals terminal was built in 1963 for the purpose of exporting iron ore from Swaziland. After depletion of the iron ore the terminal has been used by coal exporters and was recently refurbished with a capacity of 1,5 million tonnes per annum. Future planned capacity is 3,5 million tonnes. 40 000 dwt ships can be loaded at a daily rate of 7 500 tonnes. The terminal is managed by TMS.

#### Sugar terminal

Built in 1965. Can handle more than 500 000 tonnes of sugar per year and 200 000 tonnes of general cargo. Sugar being seasonal (April-mid-December) the terminal is used for general cargo for the rest of the year.

#### Steel berth

Capacity of 600 000 tonnes per year plus a 150 000 tonnes stockpile facility. Managed with assistance of a technical services team from Portia Management Services (PMS) of Liverpool.

#### Citrus terminal

Citrus is stored in two sheds with a capacity of 500 000 cases. Citrus and molasses are seasonal exports handled between April and mid-December peaking in July/August. During the off-season general cargo is handled. The terminal is managed with technical assistance from South Africa.

#### Container terminal

Can load or discharge 35 tonne lifts of 6–12 metre containers (20 and 40 foot). Container park has storage capacity of 1 000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs). The terminal is managed with assistance from PMS.

#### General cargo berth

Has a quay length of 440 metres with a special berth for large bulk carriers drawing up to 40 000 dwt. Bulk imports are sulphur and fertilizers, and exports granite, paper and pulp, chrome, ferrochrome, etc. The terminal is managed with assistance from TMS.

#### Source:

South African Foreign Trade Organization (Safto).

# The international political status of the African National Congress

*Professor W P Esterhuysen of the Department of Philosophy, University of Stellenbosch, analyses the international and diplomatic aspects of ANC strategy.*

## Introduction

A great deal has been said and written in South Africa about the ANC's "armed struggle", especially in view of the Nkomati Accord, the removal of ANC bases from Angola and attacks on civilian targets.

Necessary as such a focus may be, it tends to neglect the other equally important aspect of the ANC's strategy, which is reflected in its attempts to establish a solid international political status and to challenge the South African state on the diplomatic and political front. In fact, it is this particular aspect that is currently gaining in emphasis.

This article evaluates the ANC's political status in the rest of the world. By way of introduction, and to place the evaluation in context, it is necessary to trace the historical development of ANC strategy. As this will show, a political emphasis was always part and parcel of the ANC's overall strategy.

Since the ANC's inception on 8 January 1912, a political strategy formed an integral part of its opposition to the South African government. In fact, the organization's establishment was inspired by political motives and objectives, clearly stated in the opening address by Dr Pixley ka Izaka Seme to the founding conference — the need to form a national union and to devise strategies which would defend the rights and privileges of blacks.<sup>1</sup>

The almost simultaneous birth of the Union of South Africa in 1910 and the

ANC in 1912, moreover symbolizes the correlation between major events in white politics and major events in black politics, a correlation without which a written political history of South Africa is inconceivable, not least because much of this history has centred on the debate and political struggle over black inclusion/exclusion in South Africa's political system.

From 1912 onwards the ANC's political strategy developed in several stages. Initially the ANC opted for a strategy which could be described as primarily a non-activist advocacy of black aspirations and rights, including petitioning against specific measures. Talks and dialogue with representatives of the Union government were consciously sought, although the organization lacked political muscle.

On two occasions — in 1913/1914 and again in 1918 — deputations were sent to London to petition the British government on issues like the 1913 Land Act and the effective exclusion of blacks from the political system, the qualified franchise for blacks in the Cape and in Natal notwithstanding. These deputations achieved nothing and returned to South Africa in a mood of despondency, described in a very illuminating manner in *The African yearly register*.<sup>2</sup>

During the first phase of the ANC's existence it advocated very moderate political objectives, such as the uniting of various tribes, equal rights and justice

for blacks, education of public opinion on the aspirations of blacks and black representation. The organization was not against Union itself; its grievances were directed against black exclusion from the political process and against measures like the Land Act.<sup>3</sup>

In the course of the 1940s a second stage in the political history of the ANC started to take form, linked to the formation of the Youth League in 1943 by a number of nationalist intellectuals who introduced a discussion of more activist strategies. In co-operation with the Communist Party of South Africa, campaigns against the pass law system were organized. An agreement was also signed with the leaders of the South African Indian Council in March 1946.

These events inaugurated the phase of passive resistance and defiance campaigns, motivated by the National Party's coming to power in 1948 and a more rigid legal codification of racial discrimination. Mainly under the influence of its Youth League, the ANC adopted its *Programme of Action* in 1949, which made provision for mass action against the state. This led, on 1 May 1950, to country-wide strikes, demonstrations and rallies. In the Johannesburg area there were clashes with the police and some of the demonstrators were killed.

During 1952 the ANC and SAIC initiated the "Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign". Although the campaign was described as a non-violent form of

passive resistance, the tactics of civil disobedience made confrontation with the state inevitable. State action and a heightening of political consciousness during the 1950s led to the holding of the Congress of the People on 26 June 1955, which adopted the *Freedom Charter*.<sup>4</sup> The latter, besides providing the ANC with an important frame of political reference, inspired a more activist attitude and the idea of "national liberation". At the end of 1956 the South African government reacted to the heightened level of political activity by arresting many, some of whom were charged with high treason.<sup>5</sup>

A third stage in the political history of the ANC began in the 1960's when it, together with organizations like the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), was banned by the South African government on 8 April 1960. These developments, and the tragic events at Sharpeville and Langa which preceded them, had two very important consequences. First of all, they further "internationalized" the political position of blacks in South Africa and organizations like the ANC. It is one of the ironies of South Africa's political history that this happened in the year of the Republic's birth. Secondly, it forced the ANC to go underground and into exile, a move that was followed by the ANC increasingly committing itself to the idea of an "armed struggle".<sup>6</sup>

The stage of violent action also marked the real beginning of the ANC's international diplomatic and political thrust. Initially a South African United Front was established, with representatives from the exiled organizations taking up offices in Dar es Salaam, Accra, Cairo, London and New York. By the end of 1962, however, the ANC and PAC disbanded their united front and established separate headquarters.

The "external mission of the ANC", as it was called, was mandated with the following objectives: to make provision for the training of military cadres and the devising of strategies to infiltrate South Africa; and to mobilize political and other support in the rest of the world. It is this latter objective that forms the focus of this article.<sup>7</sup>

The diplomatic and political thrust of the ANC's strategy was enhanced by several factors. One of these was the emphasis on human rights issues which emerged after World War II and gained momentum during the 1960s. This,

together with the process of decolonization and the rise of the civil rights movement in the USA, made racism and racial discrimination a top priority in political debates, with South Africa's apartheid policies the prime example. The uprisings in Soweto and other townships in 1976, and especially Steve Biko's tragic death, were other contributory factors. In 1977 South Africa became the first ever member of the UN against which a resolution on mandatory sanctions was adopted by the Security Council.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile human rights became a domestic political issue in many countries, particularly in the United States under the Carter Administration. In short, South Africa's internal policies, and the way in which its government dealt with dissent and protest, became firmly embedded in the domestic politics of other countries.

These factors played an important role in the ANC's strategy of isolating South Africa politically, economically and culturally from the rest of the world. Sanctions, boycotts and the exclusion of South Africa from international organizations became the order of the day.

During the 1980s a new stage in the ANC's political challenge to the South African government emerged. Although the "armed struggle" remained an important element, closer attention was given to strategies of a more political and organizational nature. This had a two-fold objective: to forge the highest degree of mass unity on tactical, ideological and political issues; and to challenge the political underpinnings of apartheid with alternatives, as reflected in the ANC's constitutional guidelines of 1988. Resistance against the South African government came to be regarded as a "people's war" and not just an "armed struggle".

This led the ANC to make a concerted attempt to establish linkages on the political front with organizations inside South Africa, with a view to achieving the ideal of united, mass action. The government's constitutional reforms, which introduced a tricameral system from which blacks were still excluded, and the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in August 1983, did much to bring the black "political struggle" to the continued attention of the world. From a political and propaganda point of view, the UDF's emergence on the South African scene, and

the international profile of some of its spokesmen, contributed to the ANC's international profile. The ANC publicly supported the UDF and, in doing so, succeeded in creating an international perception of mass resistance against the new constitutional system, with the ANC playing a crucial role in the struggle for political rights of those excluded from the tricameral system.

In June 1985 the ANC held its second National Consultative Conference in Kabwe, Zambia. This meeting gave special attention to political strategies and objectives, as well as to the need for co-ordination with the "armed struggle". It took place against the backdrop of continued unrest in black townships, emergency measures by the South African state, widespread international condemnation of South Africa, and international calls for the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners. Restrictions and banning orders against individuals and organizations, detentions without trial — including those of young people — and actions against the media, contributed to an international climate which benefited the ANC's political strategy and its international thrust.

In view of all this, the question arises: how successful was the ANC in its international political thrust?

Before dealing with this question, it is necessary to discuss the method used to determine the political status of an organization like the ANC.

## Method of status-assessment

Apart from the difficulty of obtaining relevant information about the ANC's international thrust,<sup>9</sup> the problem of method and criteria for assessing the ANC's political status is a difficult one. This is related to another problem, namely the criteria in terms of which an organization such as the ANC may be granted recognition. This problem emerged with the appearance of liberation movements and revolutionary organizations on the international scene. Existing international law and criteria pertaining to official recognition, as in the case of states, did not provide a suitable framework within which to address the new situation.

As Freudenschuss has pointed out, under pressure from the OAU and the Arab League, the UN General Assembly

tried to resolve this problem by arguing that movements fighting against colonial domination, alien occupation and racist regimes on behalf of their people's right to self-determination, should be accorded recognition.<sup>10</sup> This procedure, however, would leave the door open for arbitrary judgements about a liberation movement's representativeness.

Be that as it may, recognition of an organization in terms of the above-mentioned criteria necessarily implies acceptance of its claim to represent the political aspirations and rights of its people, and, consequently, gives the particular organization legitimate status.

Such recognition, as is accorded the ANC by the United Nations, has several benefits. Foremost of these is the granting of observer status at the UN and access to facilities and even finance. It is also argued that, in the case of an officially recognized movement, captured members of that movement should be given prisoner-of-war status in accordance with the relevant Geneva Convention of 1949 and as stipulated by Protocol 1 of 1977 to the Convention. The ANC gives qualified support to Protocol 1, which explains the organization's claim in this respect on its members' behalf. South Africa, of course, does not recognize this claim.

In view of the preceding remarks, the *de facto* political status of the ANC in the international community will be assessed by distinguishing between:

- (a) official *recognition* of an organization on the one hand and unofficial *acceptance* of an organization's existence and importance as a political factor on the other (i.e. the question of legitimacy versus recognition);
- (b) official recognition/unofficial acceptance by *governments* as distinct from collective official recognition/unofficial acceptance by *non-governmental* bodies;
- (c) the status of the ANC as a legitimate *liberation* movement vis-à-vis attempts to dismiss it as a mere *terrorist* organization.

These distinctions deserve clarification.

(a) Official recognition implies that a particular organization is *formally* acknowledged as legitimately representative of a group's political rights and aspirations. Such recognition, of course, strengthens the organization's claim to legitimacy. In the case of an organization claiming to be a representative

liberation movement, legitimacy is derived from the internal support the organization can mobilize but, in the absence of conclusive criteria to determine this, recognition on the international scene can function as a preliminary instance of legitimacy. This is the reason why liberation movements devote much of their energies and resources on strategies aimed at gaining recognition.

Legitimacy is of vital importance to an organization claiming to be a genuine liberation movement, for this has significant political implications. From a political point of view, there is an inverse relationship between the legitimacy accorded to a liberation movement and the legitimacy accorded to the government against which it directs its political and diplomatic offensive. A high level of legitimacy in the case of the liberation movement indicates a decline in the legitimacy of the government, and *vice versa*.

Admittedly, the concept of legitimacy — although an important one in political science — is inherently difficult to define or explain. If by this concept one is to understand a confirmation of an organization's representativeness and an identification with its cause in the conviction that it expresses the aspirations, needs and rights of those it professes to represent, international official recognition could be described as a "strong" form of legitimization. It implies formal support of the organization, even though the latter still lacks conclusive means to prove its local following.

Mere acceptance of an organization's existence and political importance is something else. It does not necessarily entail support. What it does entail, is unofficial *acknowledgement* of a particular organization's importance as a political factor in a conflict situation and, in consequence, an understanding that the organization should be involved in talks and negotiations aimed at resolving the conflict. In this regard the focus is not so much on representativeness as such, or the question of whether to formally sanction that representativeness, but rather on the acknowledgement that the organization cannot be ignored in any assessment of the local political process. One result of this may be that an organization can be regarded as an indispensable partner in negotiations which may eventually lead to a settlement.

Unofficial acceptance can be conditional, stipulating, for example, that the organization in question should renounce violence or at least put a moratorium on violence in order to enhance the possibility of talks and negotiations. Conditions like these, however, do not lessen the acknowledgement of a particular organization's political importance.

South Africa's recently adopted position towards Swapo is an example of unofficial acceptance. Despite an official stance of "never" a number of years ago, the South African government, without officially recognizing Swapo as a legitimate liberation movement, has now accepted its existence and importance as a political factor and the need to involve it in the process aimed at achieving Namibian independence. In fact, it can even be argued that Pretoria's condition that the ANC should renounce violence, before talks are agreed to, tacitly accepts the political importance of the ANC.

A difficult question to answer is whether unofficial acceptance of the existence and political importance of an organization has any bearing on its legitimacy. Usually unofficial acceptance of an organization's political importance is reflected in foreign governments urging the ruling elite of the relevant country to hold talks with the liberation movement active in that country and a willingness on the part of these governments to talk to the movement themselves — albeit at a number of different levels.

Do such acceptance and contact imply a form of legitimization? I would like to argue that they do, for although not formally recognizing the organization's claim to representativeness, unofficial acceptance of its political importance tacitly acknowledges that claim. Not being a legal concept but an expression of political and moral evaluation, legitimacy also concerns the attitudes of persons or governments toward the aims, values and vision of an organization, the nature of the organization and the leadership thereof. If this be the case, unofficial acceptance of the existence and political importance of a particular organization is not simply a matter of tactical positioning, or even worse, blatant opportunism. It reflects a degree of identification with at least some of the objectives of such an organization. Unofficial acceptance and acknowledgement

can therefore be described as a “weak” form of legitimization.

(b) In assessing an organization’s political status one should distinguish between governmental recognition/acceptance and non-governmental recognition/acceptance. The importance of the former to liberation movements speaks for itself. Besides putting the organization in a strong political position on an international level against the government it challenges, at times it even motivates the organization to set up a government-in-exile.

Liberation movements across the world also depend on another type of legitimization in their objective to establish a solid political status, namely solidarity with their respective causes by international and national organizations and pressure groups. If an organization is successful in gaining this kind of support, this not only plays an important role in its image-building strategy, but also negatively affects the international legitimacy of the government against which it aims its offensive.<sup>11</sup> An assessment of an organization’s political status would be incomplete if this type of support is not taken into account.

An excellent example of the important political role played by non-governmental bodies in international affairs and decision-making at national level, is the sanctions lobby against South Africa. The world-wide network of organizations involved in this lobby is not only formidable but also highly effective. Backing by non-governmental networks of organizations inevitably plays an important role in the stakes for legitimacy and status, even in cases where it functions as a type of limitation on what particular governments are prepared to do to either support the besieged government or take steps against its adversary.

(c) The third distinction mentioned above is a complicated, emotive and, in practice, mostly subjective matter. Whatever the objective criteria would be to distinguish between genuine liberation movements and terrorist organizations, in the real world of policy-making such criteria have very little force.<sup>12</sup>

Given this reality, in this article I will not try to determine whether the ANC is in fact a “terrorist” organization or a national liberation movement. The question that I am trying to answer in the context of this article is: How do governments

and organizations in the international world *de facto* perceive the ANC? As a genuine liberation movement or as a terrorist organization? This question is important.

The South African government, in an attempt to counter the political influence of the ANC, portrays it as a terrorist movement, bent on violently overthrowing the South African state and striving to seize political power by every means at its disposal. Strategically it is obvious why the South African government takes this particular stance. In the Western world and increasingly within the USSR as well, organized terror is a discredited practice, as Renamo has discovered.

Labelling an organization as a terrorist movement obviously precludes any official recognition or acceptance — except in cases where terrorism is an accepted practice. On the other hand, if an organization has gained official recognition, or even informal acceptance as a political force, the chances are slim that the label “terrorist” will hold.

It should also be noted that a particular organization could be labelled “terrorist” from a legal-technical point of view, without such labelling having any effect on the political status accorded to that organization in the international world. Not being a game strictly and solely controlled by legal rules, politics cannot be reduced to decisions, attitudes, posturing and strategies in a purely legal and technical context. The world of politics, for better or worse, transcends the context of a court room. This is the reason why the legality or illegality of a particular organization has very little, if any, bearing on its legitimacy or illegitimacy. In fact, declaring an organization illegal could even enhance its legitimacy, as has happened in South Africa in the case of the ANC. In view of these considerations, this article will not deal with any legal-technical aspects of the ANC’s status. The focus is primarily a political one.

Against the background of the above, it is now possible to assess the international political status of the ANC.

### **The ANC’s political status at the non-governmental level**

The ANC received official recognition as an authentic and representative liberation

movement from the United Nations in 1974. UN Resolution 3411 G (xxx), 1974, recognized “the liberation movements as the authentic representatives of the South African people”. This marked an important political and diplomatic breakthrough for the ANC, for it accorded the ANC the status of being representative and legitimate.

Of course, the resolution did not imply official governmental recognition by individual member states. This is something different, for it implies either a formal agreement between a government and the organization in question or an implied agreement, for example by means of the official granting of offices. It is also important to note that the UN’s resolution made specific mention of “liberation movements”. Differing from the stance taken on Swapo, the UN recognized the ANC as one liberation movement among others, such as the PAC. In this respect the ANC was in a somewhat weaker position than Swapo.<sup>13</sup>

The status accorded to the ANC at the UN is undoubtedly very high. It has observer status in the General Assembly and Security Council, which provides it with the opportunity to participate in discussions on South Africa, and to play a decisive role in resolutions passed on South Africa by the General Assembly. In fact, the ANC has established itself as a kind of arbiter on South African issues, with the official government representative generally on the losing side.

Its observer status at the UN not only provides the ANC with an important platform to state its case, but also — and perhaps more significantly — gives it access to the UN’s facilities and finance. For instance, the Information Offices of the UN are at the disposal of the ANC and are frequently used to distribute information, policy statements and propaganda material against the RSA. Financial support is given through various agencies of the UN. The famous Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania is an example of a project funded by the UN’s Development Programme.

The OAU likewise recognizes the ANC as a legitimate national liberation movement representing the political aspirations of South African blacks. In OAU circles specific mention is made of “national” liberation movements. This emphasis, as explained by a spokesman,

is no coincidence. The OAU wants to establish beyond any doubt that the ANC is not a tribal or ethnic movement, but an organization which can claim representativeness and hence legitimacy.

It is interesting to note how the OAU justifies its position. According to the OAU the political status of organizations professing to be liberation movements, should be determined by assessing whether such organizations have the capacity to represent the population and whether their struggle for liberation can be evaluated as effective and efficient.<sup>14</sup> The OAU is clearly of the opinion that the ANC fulfils these requirements, despite the fact that it is difficult for the ANC to provide factual evidence of its claims in this regard. However, this latter point does not detract from the fact that the OAU's official recognition of the ANC as a legitimate liberation movement puts the ANC on the centre court as far as South African issues are concerned.

The OAU, like the UN, is careful not to recognize the ANC as the only liberation movement representing the political aspirations of South African blacks. Organizations such as the PAC are also given formal recognition. During 1968, at a meeting of the Liberation Committee of the OAU in Algiers, it was decided to increase aid to the ANC. In view of squabbles within the PAC, aid to the latter was suspended for some time. Zambia even expelled large numbers of PAC members. After the Soweto uprising in 1976, the OAU increased its aid to the ANC and PAC and it was resolved to extend maximum political, economic and military assistance to the liberation movements.<sup>15</sup>

A number of other prominent non-governmental bodies have also played a decisive role in establishing the ANC's status as a legitimate liberation movement. In these circles the ANC's legitimacy is directly related to the worldwide campaign against apartheid. As Bissell has pointed out, this particular campaign was organized by an international network of organizations which eventually had an important impact on South Africa's international relations.<sup>16</sup> The 1976 Soweto uprising not only gave new impetus to the campaign, but also enhanced the position of the ANC in these quarters.

Disregarding the international network of anti-apartheid movements,

which does not imply that their political lobbying power should be underestimated, particular mention should be made of the World Council of Churches (WCC), which compiled "A profile of the African National Congress" in January 1971.

The WCC has played a decisive role in the support and recognition the ANC currently enjoys internationally. The WCC, more than most other non-governmental organizations, contributed to legitimizing the ANC as a liberation movement, by justifying its use of violence. In debating the issue of violence, it was argued that blame for the incidence of violence in South Africa should be laid at the door of the government and the inherent structural violence of the apartheid state. According to this argument, violence is an in-built quality of the South African state, against which the oppressed have no other option than to defend themselves. This type of reasoning gave rise to support for ideas and strategies such as "the just war" and "civil disobedience". In some instances, especially since 1976, it has even been argued that, given the illegitimacy of the South African state, violence and non-violence do not present alternative strategies but different sides of the same coin of liberation.

Besides moral support, the WCC has given the ANC financial aid, to the tune of R300 000 in 1987.

Undoubtedly the WCC, in its sphere of influence, puts the South African government on the losing side as far as the latter's attempts to label the ANC as a terrorist group is concerned. The WCC's recognition and support of the ANC, and its justificatory attitude to the use of violence, contributed to a very sympathetic, if not sanctioning, attitude among the world's major churches towards the ANC. In the respect it is important to note that strong international opinion against apartheid among churches lies at the root of supportive attitudes toward the ANC. In a nutshell: the moral stance taken against apartheid enhanced the recognition of the ANC as a legitimate liberation movement.

On academic and cultural levels solidarity with the cause of the ANC is quite formidable, underscored by the academic and cultural boycotts currently experienced by South Africa. As in the case of South Africa's sporting links with the rest of the world, the ANC has

enhanced its status by establishing itself as an arbiter in these matters.<sup>17</sup>

It is justifiable to conclude that the ANC's political status in the non-governmental sphere is of a very high order. It has succeeded in gaining recognition as a representative liberation movement, mobilizing support for its cause. In these quarters the label "terrorist organization" does not hold.

Important as this type of recognition may be, the decisive question remains: What is the position on governmental level?

### The ANC's status at governmental level

Scandinavian countries are foremost among the non-Communist countries in recognizing and supporting the ANC. Support dates back to the early 1960s when it was decided to act against apartheid by giving humanitarian aid to liberation movements in Southern Africa.

The rejection of apartheid by Scandinavian countries, and their recognition of organizations such as Swapo and the ANC as legitimate liberation movements, led to the acceptance of a coordinated Programme of Action against South Africa in 1978. On 17-18 October 1985, during a meeting of Nordic foreign ministers, the programme was revised and intensified. Apart from sanctions and other actions, it was reiterated that humanitarian assistance to liberation movements and political support would continue. Direct aid aside — for food, clothing and medicine — other forms of aid are channelled through the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. In its 1987 budget proposals, Sweden, for example, allocated 57 million Swedish kronor (R19 million) to the ANC. This increase made Sweden one of the world's largest contributors to the ANC's coffers.

It is important to note that actions taken by the Scandinavian countries against South Africa conform to the ANC's call in this respect. They include measures such as the prevention of new investments, extension of the arms embargo, support to the International Labour Organization's special advisory group which assists liberation movements in Southern Africa with employment programmes, and development aid to the Frontline states.

The two major powers of the Western world, the USA and Great Britain, neither recognize nor support the ANC officially. Nevertheless, they belong to the category of governments accepting the reality and political importance of the ANC.

In the case of the USA this acceptance was significantly acknowledged on 28 January 1987, in a meeting between Secretary of State George Schultz and Oliver Tambo, the first of its kind at such a high level. This meeting, according to sources close to George Schultz, was regarded as a signal to Pretoria that the Reagan administration, although not officially recognizing the ANC, does not share Pretoria's view that the ANC is primarily a terrorist organization. Publicly the meeting was very carefully explained by an official as a "test" — "to see what is the nature of its make-up and to state to them forcefully US positions on violence".<sup>18</sup>

The position of the USA on the ANC's use of violence does not preclude it from perceiving the ANC as a very important political factor regarding any attempt to resolve South Africa's political dilemma. From discussions with US officials, however, it is clear that the ANC is not regarded as the only political force in black politics to be reckoned with. Although the USA takes a rather reserved stance on organizations such as the PAC, it considers the UDF and even organizations such as Inkatha to be a different matter. Dr Buthelezi, who had discussions with President Reagan in 1985, is not generally typified as a "government stooge".

The US position on the ANC is reflected in the conviction among officials of the State Department and politicians of both parties that Nelson Mandela should be released. Mandela's release, however, is not seen as an action which will buy the South African authorities much-needed time or lead to a reappraisal of positions taken on South Africa. It is regarded as a necessary condition for a process of confidence building, leading toward eventual negotiations. In short, his release will remove one constraint on the possibility of talks and negotiations.

In this respect it is important to note that official US positions on the ANC and the release of Mandela are related to a number of considerations. Firstly, human rights issues enjoy a high profile

in America's domestic politics. South Africa's track record in this respect does not endear the country in American circles. Secondly, there is a conviction that an Angolan/Namibian settlement necessitates a settlement in South Africa if regional development is to get off the ground. It is argued in these circles that a constitutional settlement of South Africa's political problems without the ANC's involvement has no chance whatever of generating legitimacy. A perception is growing that from a political point of view, the ANC has established itself as an important arbiter on international acceptance of South Africa.

Likewise, the British government does not officially recognize the ANC as a liberation movement. However, it does not take a dismissive stance on the ANC but unofficially acknowledges its political importance. Mrs Thatcher's official view is that the British government does not deal with organizations which use violence and armed offensives to achieve political goals.

Although making a distinction between the IRA and the ANC — the former can use the "ballot instead of the bullet", whilst the ANC is precluded from the ballot — Mrs Thatcher maintains a very firm stance on the ANC's use of violence. A meeting between her and Tambo, something the ANC dearly wants, will most probably never be realized if the ANC persists in its use of violence. She will only review her position, as was the case recently in respect of the PLO, if the ANC reconsiders its stance on the "armed struggle".

A distinction is apparently made between meetings on ministerial level and talks at the level of officials. In February 1986 a senior official in the Foreign Office, John Johnson, met with members of the executive of the ANC in Lusaka. During the same period Oliver Tambo was invited to address the Royal Commonwealth Society in London. He not only met with some British MP's, but was also received by Lynda Chalker, Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It is not clear whether this meeting had the official blessing of Mrs Thatcher.

Meetings between Tambo and the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, and Chester Crocker, US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, during September 1986, indicated the two

governments' acknowledgement of the importance of the ANC as a political factor in the Southern African region.

These meetings and talks took place against the backdrop of widespread unrest in South Africa, security measures of the South African government, claims that South Africa destabilizes the region and an increasing international interest in Southern Africa. Special mention should be made in this respect of the "Eminent Persons Group" (EPG) which visited South Africa in 1986 following the Commonwealth meeting in Nassau in 1985, where the issue of sanctions against South Africa had caused heated debate.

The EPG, through the mediation of Presidents Kaunda and Mugabe, met with members of the executive of the ANC. In a private discussion, a member of the EPG mentioned that a diplomat of the South African government had indicated that the South African government would respond favourably to an ANC expression of willingness to put a moratorium on the use of violence. The EPG's mission, however, was jeopardized in May 1986, when the SADF made cross-border sorties into Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Whichever way one looks at the EPG's visit, it helped to strengthen the acknowledgement in Commonwealth circles that the ANC is a political force. Renewed public calls for the release of Nelson Mandela, for instance, testify to this fact.

Britain clearly acknowledges the ANC as a political factor on the South African scene. Allowing the ANC to administer an office in London, implies that the British government does not perceive the ANC as a terrorist organization.

During the Commonwealth Conference in Vancouver in November 1987, Mrs Thatcher branded the ANC as "terrorists" with whom she would have no dealings. She apparently lost her temper because of the aggressive questions put to her by Johnny Makatini, an ANC official. Her remark does not, however, reflect official British practice. British diplomats in London and New York made it clear that they would continue talking to the ANC. However, it did spark serious concern among ANC officials who subsequently asked for clarification from British officials in London.<sup>19</sup>

The Thatcher government, more than that of any other Western power, is careful to point out that other black organizations and black leaders, besides the ANC and its leadership, are of importance. The open door at 10 Downing Street which allows Dr Buthelezi entry at least once every six months, bears testimony to this. The same holds true for someone like Mr Enos Mabuza of Kangwane.

It is also important to note that Mrs Thatcher takes a personal interest in the release of Nelson Mandela. Sources close to 10 Downing Street mention that his release will signal to her the South African government's ability to really come to grips with the problems facing South Africa and, *inter alia*, its willingness to embark upon the road of meaningful negotiations. She has urged the South African government on various occasions to release Mandela as well as other political prisoners.

Government positions in the Western world on the ANC's status as a liberation movement vary from recognition and support to unofficial acceptance as an important political factor. In the case of unofficial acceptance, it is argued that steps should be taken to involve the ANC in talks and negotiations with the South African government. In this sense, unofficial acknowledgement does not effect the ANC's political status too negatively. In some important instances, such as Britain, it only negatively affects the ANC's ability to hold formal talks on high governmental level.

It is significant that most of the spokesmen in Western governmental circles with whom I have had private discussions, are of the opinion that the ANC's "armed struggle" has little chance of success and that a revolution is not imminent in South Africa. Feelings are strong against the destabilizing effect that the "armed struggle" has on regional politics. It is reasonable to assume that pressures on the ANC to reconsider its commitment to the "armed struggle" will increase, fuelled by a perception that the leadership is not able to control its cadres operating in South Africa.

The ANC is recognized by most black African states on the African continent as one of the major liberation movements representing black South Africans. This is especially true for the Frontline states. After moving its headquarters to Lusaka, the ANC succeeded

in cultivating its links with African states quite successfully.

Although the principles of the OAU Charter are not binding on member states, the creation of the OAU Liberation Committee made support for the liberation movements a matter of obligation, if not compulsion. A Military Committee was even established in 1978 to assist in the liberation of Southern Africa.

It is also important to note that the Frontline states, as a type of regional political coalition, came into being with the objective of assisting the liberation movements in Southern Africa. Supported financially by a host of UN agencies, the Frontline states provide the ANC with various facilities for its projects — ranging from educational, health and transport facilities, to camps. The ANC also has observer status at annual meetings of the Frontline states and the SADCC. From a military point of view, however, the Frontline states are not in a position to play a significant role or to really put into practice the OAU's 1973 "Accra Declaration on the new strategy for the liberation of Africa".

ANC representatives indicate that links between the organization and the majority of African states are well-established. Regular talks are held and the ANC is well-informed on relations and contacts between the RSA and certain black African states. President P W Botha's visit to Zaire is a case in point. Afterwards, President Mobutu — most probably in an attempt to justify the visit — apparently tried to meet with Oliver Tambo. This meeting did not take place, however, and the ANC made very clear its negative attitude towards Mobutu's playing host to the South African State President, and subsequent reports of a visit to South Africa by Mobutu.

It seems as if the ANC's relationship with a country such as Nigeria is not as well-established as is the case with, for example, Zambia. The reason for the somewhat cool relationship between Nigeria and the ANC is not clear. It could be that Nigeria's relationship with the PAC is an inhibiting factor. Another factor could be the important role played by the Frontline states in Southern African issues. Nigeria, one of the most prominent states in Africa — and known for its aspirations to play a leading role in the continent — is not a member of this grouping. It would

dearly like to play a role in the Southern African sub-continent. Whether countries like Zimbabwe, Zambia and Tanzania take much pleasure from Nigeria's aspirations remains rather questionable.

The ANC's status and recognition as a liberation movement in East European countries are understandably of a very high order. The book by K N Brutents, *National liberation revolution today*,<sup>20</sup> makes it clear that legitimacy in this context is related to the concept "revolutionary". In East European circles the ANC is recognized as a legitimate revolutionary liberation movement. This was especially true after the adoption by the ANC of the *Report by the Consultative Conference*, held at Morogoro, Tanzania, from 25 April to 1 May 1969. The ANC then decided to establish a Revolutionary Council and to include in the "armed struggle" all those elements that had opted for the revolutionary overthrow of the Pretoria regime, irrespective of their racial origins.

Since the beginning of the "armed struggle" the ANC has had to rely on Warsaw Pact countries for material aid and training programmes. It is estimated that about 90 per cent of the weaponry used by the ANC is surplus Warsaw Pact material. Instructors from the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries play an important role in the training of ANC cadres, as was the case in the Angolan camps.

Through the South African Communist Party, traditionally strongly allied to Moscow, the ANC's links with Moscow are of a particular prominent and healthy nature. This explains, for example, why the ANC takes a pro-Moscow position in statements on Soviet involvement in other countries of the world.

The Moscow links of organizations like the ANC are institutionalized through the USSR's Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, which is mandated to provide moral and other forms of support to liberation movements recognized by the USSR. In the case of the ANC this recognition includes diplomatic immunity which, according to a high-ranking Moscow official in a private discussion, is not the same as fully-fledged diplomatic status as in the case of the PLO.

The ANC received its first military aid from the USSR during 1964. Since then assistance has been extended to areas

such as education, training, diplomacy and political propaganda. The exact value of aid provided by the USSR is a matter of speculation. *Facts and Reports* gave a figure of R77 million per annum in military aid.<sup>21</sup> Other sources opt for an even higher figure. Whatever the case may be, the fact of the matter is that the ANC has to rely heavily on support from the USSR for its diplomatic offensive and "armed struggle" against the South African government.

The alliance between the ANC and the Moscow-oriented SACP, prompted the South African government to argue that the ANC is a Moscow-inspired conspiracy, whose activities are dictated by the Kremlin. ANC sources are usually quick to deny this claim, arguing that the ANC, although relying on the material and diplomatic support of Moscow, is an independent liberation movement.

Whatever the truth of the matter, the ANC's Moscow ties do not seriously affect its present position in the Western world. It could even be argued that these links, far from being a stumbling-block, motivate Western governments to take qualified positive positions on the ANC in the hope of disengaging the organization from its political and diplomatic dependency on Moscow.

From time to time some Western governments do express concern about the ANC's links with Moscow. The Reagan administration was an example in this respect, something about which Tambo complained bitterly on occasion.<sup>22</sup>

With its status well established in East European countries in general and in the Soviet Union in particular, it will be interesting to see what effect Mr Gorbachev's reign and his policy positions on Soviet involvement in areas of conflict will have on the ANC's future strategies.

Late in 1986 a meeting took place between Mikhail Gorbachev and Oliver Tambo. ANC sources regarded the meeting as highly successful. The ANC was assured of continued support and assistance, and Tambo, so it is rumoured, received a signed photograph of Gorbachev.

In his speech at the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution of 1917, Tambo specifically supported *perestroika*. Joe Slovo recently also admitted publicly that he has rid himself of his Stalinist inclinations. Obviously developments in the USSR have an effect on

the ANC, and most probably were discussed at the meeting between Gorbachev and Tambo.

As far as the ANC is concerned, policy strategists in Moscow are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that the ANC's traditional brand of socialism, its rather unrealistic economic theory and its conception of the state, are ideas which some major Western governments and influential opinion-makers find very hard to digest. The negative effect these ideas have on the status of the ANC as a liberation movement is currently being recognized.

It is reasonable to assume that the "Gorbachevites" in Moscow would like to see the ANC's status determined by its political and diplomatic stature instead of its "armed struggle" and revolutionary image. A more realistic and pragmatic attitude, playing down doctrinaire and ideological positions, is emerging. This does not imply that the Soviet Union and its allies in the Warsaw Pact are considering suddenly dropping the ANC. On the contrary, what is more likely to happen is that the Soviet Union will give additional support to the political and diplomatic thrust of the ANC.

A reappraisal in this respect is currently under way in Moscow circles. Gleb Starushenko, a Soviet Africanist, indicated as much when he suggested at a conference in 1986 that the ANC should follow a programme which does not "envisage a broad nationalization of capital property as an indispensable condition"; "work out comprehensive guarantees for the white population which could be implemented after the elimination of the apartheid regime"; consider a type of parliament in which provision is made for "proportional representation" and the "right to veto on the basis of equal representation for all four major racial communities".<sup>23</sup> What the official Moscow position will be on these issues, only time will tell. At this stage it is becoming increasingly clear that African experts in Moscow do not rely on the "armed struggle" as a means for the ANC to gain political power.

## Conclusion

The ANC has suffered some serious military and logistical setbacks in recent years. This fact was surprisingly admitted by the ANC in Lusaka in 1988 during

a meeting which commemorated the ANC's 76th anniversary. The South African security forces' success in smashing an important ANC network in the Western Cape, and some others in the Transvaal, most probably played a deciding role in the making of this statement. The statement even went so far as to express the ANC's willingness to negotiate a settlement with the South African government under the "right conditions", albeit that this is qualified by the view that the ANC is of the opinion that the South African government would not be interested. It was also announced at the meeting that the ANC will step up its political and diplomatic initiative aimed at isolating the Pretoria government.

From a logistical point of view, the Nkomati Accord, and the recent removal of its bases from Angola, should be regarded as important constraints on the organization's "armed struggle".

More important than this, however, is the growing perception in many quarters that the "armed struggle" has absolutely no chance of delivering the promised political goods. Even ardent critics of the South African government currently concede its ability to effectively counter the "armed struggle".

The "armed struggle's" toll of deaths among civilians has also negatively affected perceptions of the ANC. It has led to the conviction that, despite statements to the contrary, the ANC is unable to prevent the indiscriminate killings embarked on by some of its cadres. Sympathizers of the ANC have even made trips to places such as Lusaka in order to make representations to the ANC leadership about civilian deaths.

These setbacks, and the ANC's inability to justify the OAU's requirement concerning an effective and efficient struggle for liberation, give rise to the question: Is the ANC's political status in the international world of any real consequence? What importance should be attached to it?

An answer to this question presupposes another question: Does the ANC, given its international status, have the capacity to negatively influence South Africa's international relations?

It is in the area of South Africa's international relations that the ANC's strategy has been particularly successful. South Africa's growing isolation and exclusion from many international

forums are directly related to the international status of the ANC and its role as arbiter in South African affairs. The same holds true for sanctions and boycotts.

The ANC's role in this respect is growing instead of waning. In fact, it is reasonable to assume that, in the final analysis, South Africa's full re-entry into the academic, cultural, diplomatic and other folds will not be determined by a positive answer to the question of whether South African society, and organizations representing cultural and other activities, have been "normalized" and liberated from racial discrimination. Various discussions with people in influential positions on the issue of sanctions and boycotts make it clear that a key role has been allocated to the ANC as far as revision of sanctions and boycotts are concerned. The rest of the world's acceptance of the RSA will be influenced in a significant manner by positions taken on the ANC and by the ANC.

What happened in the case of the well-publicized meeting between Dr Craven, President of the South African Rugby Board, and representatives of the ANC, is an illustration in point. While it could be argued that Dr Craven's visit gave additional legitimacy and credibility to the ANC, it would be nearer the truth to argue that the visit took place because of the important role of the ANC as arbiter. In this respect the visit, like many other similar visits, accepted the reality of the political importance of the ANC.<sup>24</sup>

On the African continent, and in view of the logistical setbacks suffered, the ANC will most probably be compensated by increasing political and diplomatic support. With the ANC's current status in Africa, the road to Africa will remain an extremely difficult one for South Africa to publicly embark upon. The same holds true for membership of the OAU.

In short, for South Africa the road to Africa runs across the bridge manned by the ANC. It is justifiable to expect that South Africa's ties and contacts with most African states will be primarily of a covert nature. The vision of an open road to Africa, proclaimed by many in view of the Angolan settlement, is extremely premature.

The *de facto* political status of the ANC in the international world is undoubtedly

of a very high order. Provided the ANC gets its act together on its constitutional guidelines, becomes less doctrinaire in its economic vision for South Africa and gives more substance to its idea of democracy, it is reasonable to expect that its international political status will improve increasingly.

Admittedly, the "armed struggle" of the ANC is a negative factor. Another is the divisions existing within black politics. These divisions, and the ANC's strategy to keep very close ties with the so-called internal "mass democratic movement", prevents the ANC from setting up a government-in-exile, the latter being a tactic among liberation movements to lobby recognition and legitimacy.

It is also important to note that the ANC, in the stakes for legitimacy and recognition, has failed to undermine substantially the international recognition and legitimacy of the South African state. In some cases diplomatic links have been scaled down and trade and military representation seriously affected. The major powers of the Western world, however — and despite sanctions — recognize the South African state as legitimate. In fact, even the Soviet Union, with whom South Africa has no diplomatic links, has in recent times had dealings with representatives of the South African state.

Despite these negative factors, it is reasonable to expect that international pressure on the RSA to reach a settlement with the ANC, will grow. The resolution of the Namibian conflict, with Swapo taking part, and indications of serious attempts to resolve the MPLA/Unita and Frelimo/Renamo conflicts will leave South Africa as the only country in the region where a major "liberation movement" remains very active.

Ironically, the ANC's international political status also puts it under international pressure to reach a settlement. To retain its status, the ANC will have no other option than to take seriously the calls for "talks on talks" and a reconsideration of the "armed struggle".

Of course, one could argue that the recognition/acceptance given to the ANC does not meet objective criteria. From a political point of view such an argument would be only academic. In the world of politics one has to accept that, *de facto*, the recognition/

acceptance of liberation movements is a matter of political judgement, interests, pressure and lobbying. And the *de facto* position is, whatever the objective criteria, that the ANC has established for itself an undeniable political status in the international world.<sup>25</sup>

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- 1 Read in this respect the background history and exposition of objectives in T D Mweli Skota (ed), *The African yearly register, being an illustrated national biographical dictionary (who's who) of black folks in Africa*, Johannesburg: 1932, particularly the piece on "Organised bodies". Skota was a General-Secretary of the ANC. Numerous books have been published on the history of the ANC and black protest, see P W Walshe, *Black nationalism in South Africa*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1973; T Karis and G Carter (eds), *From protest to challenge: a documentary history of African politics in South Africa, 1882-1964*, (5 volumes), Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972-1978; T Lodge, *Black politics in South Africa since 1945*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983.
- 2 T D Mweli Skota, *op cit*. It is interesting to note how Britain's involvement in the Anglo-Boer War was perceived in these quarters. Blacks, not having had the franchise in the Transvaal, interpreted the conflict as a war of liberation, which illustrates the abyss dividing the Afrikaner and most blacks as far as their understanding and perceptions of historical events are concerned. Another good example of this is provided by the Battle of Blood River, and the events leading up to it.
- 3 A very good example of this is to be found in a speech made by D D T Jabavu in July 1920 on: "Native unrest. Its cause and cure", a speech that has remained remarkably relevant. See D D T Jabavu, *The black problem*, (2nd edition), Lovedale: The Book Department, 1920.
- 4 In recent years the Freedom Charter has generated wide interest in a variety of circles. On 15-16 July 1988 a national conference on the Charter took place in Cape Town. The proceedings and papers were subsequently published by IDASA; see James A Polley (ed), *The Freedom Charter and the future*, IDASA, 1988.
- 5 The subsequent trial lasted from 1957 to 1961. More than 150 people were arrested and charged. Towards the end of 1957 charges against the majority were dropped. The rest of those charged with treason were acquitted in 1961.
- 6 On the night of 16 December 1961 bombs exploded in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Durban. Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) was formed to spearhead the "armed struggle". Joe Slovo played an important role in MK. Official statements by the ANC

reflect a strong commitment to armed struggle. On 28 January 1987, Oliver Tambo, for instance, enunciated this commitment quite clearly during an interview on ABC News (Nightline) when he stated that a renunciation of violence by the ANC would amount of surrender on its part.

Since its formation, MK has been involved in many acts of violence — initially against military and strategic targets (mostly buildings) but eventually also against so-called “soft targets”. The latter development presented the ANC with some serious problems in its own ranks and from among its sympathizers. This led to a statement by the ANC during August 1988 in which it tried to put the matter into perspective.

7 The ANC subsequently succeeded in establishing offices in many countries, for example: Algeria, Angola, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, German Federal Republic, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Senegal, Sweden, Tanzania, USSR, United Kingdom, United States and Zambia.

8 UN Security Council Resolution 418 of 1977.

9 This article is partly based on documented material, but also on wide-ranging discussions with informed people who either did not wish to be named or who may not be quoted in terms of current South African legislation.

10 A Freudenschuss, “Legal and political aspects of the recognition of national liberation movements”. *Millenium, Journal of International Affairs*, vol 2, no 2 1973.

11 Recent debates in theological circles on the illegitimacy of the South African state should be seen against this background — notwithstanding the moral issues involved in the debate. Acceptance of the idea that a particular state is illegitimate, puts the problem of violent resistance and revolt against that state in a new context. In such cases violence does not present an either/or but, on the contrary, an and/and. The latter becomes even more acceptable when a state is declared to be a terrorist state. See C Villan-Vicencio (ed), *Theology and violence. The South African debate*, Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1987.

12 This fact was illustrated by the USA’s Defence Department’s guideline report on terrorist movements, a report which classified the ANC as a terrorist organization. The US State Department was quick to explain that the report does not represent official policy. It is also interesting to note that the State Department produced a report to Congress in January 1987 entitled *Communist Influence in South Africa*. It was argued in the

report that the South African Communist Party derives its influence from its alliance with the ANC, thereby playing down the importance of the SACP and refraining from depicting the ANC as a Marxist-inspired and -dominated revolutionary movement.

13 Sources at the UN privately concede that, de facto, the ANC is regarded as the main liberation movement. Problems created by the UN’s recognition of Swapo as the sole liberation movement of Namibia — for instance with regard to the UN’s position on internal parties — have played a role in restraining the UN from taking the same stance on the ANC. In addition, some member countries of the UN sympathize with the PAC.

14 A Freudenschuss, *op cit*, p 116.

15 *Sechaba*, 1977.

16 R E Bissell, *Apartheid and international organizations*, Boulder: Westview, 1977.

17 At a press conference in Amsterdam during the conference: “Culture in Another South Africa”, in December 1987, an ANC official even claimed that no cultural exchange would in future be possible without the approval of the “mass national democratic structures within South Africa”, *Weekly Mail*, 18–23 December 1987.

18 As reported in *The Washington Post*, 29 January 1987.

19 Some British Members of Parliament are in favour of closer links with the ANC. Early in 1988 members of the Southern Africa Group, including Ivor Stanbrook (Conservative), Richard Alexander (Conservative) and Michael Welsh (Labour), met with J Makatini and other ANC officials in Lusaka. After the meeting a call was made for closer links with the ANC. *Southscan*, 20 January 1988.

20 K N Brutents, *National liberation revolution today*, Moscow: Progress, 1977.

21 *Facts and Reports*, vol 16, no V, 11 July 1986.

22 *Facts and Reports*, vol 17, no B, 30 January 1987.

23 *Financial Times*, 25 January 1987.

24 Over the last couple of years a significant development has taken place. Until about four years ago, it was not regarded as “moral” by white South Africans to meet openly with ANC officials. Public opinion in the white community also inhibited such contacts. In 1985, for instance, a meeting between some Afrikaner academics and ANC officials was cancelled due to these factors, and after an informal representation by a prominent government office-bearer. Meanwhile a kind of “revolution” has taken place. Meetings now take place quite regularly, without the participants worrying about their reception back home.

In fact, these meetings — with a few exceptions — do not cause any major public furore.

25 Admittedly, a comprehensive assessment of the ANC’s political status and claim to legitimacy would have to include an evaluation of its support within South Africa. This, however, has not been the objective of this article, for it would have implied some other methods and criteria. As a banned organization, the ANC is not allowed to participate in any elections. Membership is also illegal. Its support, and hence its representativeness and legitimacy, can therefore not be assessed in terms of election results or membership. Questionnaires and opinion polls, other methods to assess support, are also problematic and do not provide cut-and-dried methods. Given the state of emergency and fears among blacks that anonymity is not really guaranteed, results from questionnaires and opinion polls should be treated carefully. They should be complemented by assessing the organizational support the ANC gets, for instance, as well as support from elite groups and opinion-makers. Questions such as the following should be asked: Who on the leadership level support the ANC? Which organizations subscribe to the Freedom Charter?

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# Patterns and levels of life in Sahel West Africa since the 1960s

*John M Mbaku, Assistant Professor of Economics in the School of Business Administration at Kennesaw State College, Marietta, Georgia, looks at Sahel West Africa — a seriously underdeveloped portion of Africa that is gradually being consumed by the Sahara Desert. In this article levels and patterns of life are measured in this region since the 1960s, using the Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI). The results show that the standard of living in the Sahel has improved only marginally since the 1960s.*

The Sahel region of West Africa is made up of Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta) Cape Verde, Chad, The Gambia, Senegal, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. Except Cape Verde, which until independence in 1975 was a Portuguese colony, and The Gambia, which obtained independence from Great Britain in 1965, the countries of the Sahel are primarily former French colonies which gained independence from France in 1960.

The word Sahel comes from the Arabic language and is used to describe an “edge, border or coast”. The Sahel, as a region, consists of a strip of land that borders the Sahara Desert and measures between 192 to 288 kilometres in width. Partly because of infrequent rainfall, the region supports only low shrubs and grasses. In the past, most of the area was populated by nomadic tribes but recently the number of both pastoral and nomadic people settling in this area has increased considerably. The area has been overgrazed and overfarmed. While the population struggled to scratch a living out of the severely overworked marginal lands, droughts spread

across the area, beginning in Mauritania in 1969 and moving eastward toward Ethiopia, lasting for nearly five years.<sup>1</sup>

In 1975 the Sahel Club was formed to try to find ways to improve conditions in the Sahel through economic development. As a venture between African countries affected by the droughts and Western industrialized countries and Japan, its aim was to explore ways to prevent further erosion of the topsoil, and to develop reforestation and irrigation programmes. However, lack of financial resources and the continued political instability in the area has prevented the implementation of many of the programmes designed to solve the region’s major problems.<sup>2</sup>

By 1985, the Sahel was encountering a new and potentially more devastating problem: the Sahara Desert has been expanding southwards, consuming once fertile lands as it moves towards the heart of the continent. The process, known as “desertification”, has taken a heavy toll on the land, the people and the animals of the Sahel, and a large number of people in the area now depend on other countries for their food

supply. According to *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*:

The expansion of the desert is threatening the very existence of some countries, including Mauritania, where government officials say the Sahara Desert is moving south at a rate of four miles a year. Mauritians talk about the days when lions lived in the wooded areas of the country, the same areas that today are no more than a barren landscape of dead trees and blowing sand.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout the region, starvation and malnutrition are continuing to reduce the productive capacity of the area’s economies. While international organizations such as the Red cross co-ordinate relief efforts, intergovernmental agencies such as the Sahel Club continue to plan programmes for long-term solutions to the devastation that appears to have become endemic to the Sahel.

In order to assess the patterns and levels of living in the Sahel since most of the countries in the region became independent in 1960, we shall employ the indicators of the Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI), developed at the Overseas Development Council. The PQLI is

a composite index of the indicators, infant mortality, life expectancy at age one, and literacy.

### Economic overview of the Sahel

The Sahelian countries occupy an area of about 5 307 000 square kilometres. The region is sparsely populated. Mid-year population estimates for 1986 put the total population at 37 million people, or an average density of about 7 persons to the square kilometre. More than 80 per cent of the population lives in rural areas according to the latest estimates. Senegal is the most urbanized of the Sahelian countries with about 36 per cent of its population living in urban areas.<sup>4</sup>

According to Table 1, Senegal and Niger together accounted for more than 50 per cent of the gross national product of the Sahel in 1986. Senegal's contribution was enhanced by its relatively well-developed industrial sector and Niger's by its mining and quarrying industry,



US food aid being distributed in Burkina Faso

**Table 1**  
**ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF THE SAHEL, 1986**

Country	Population (mn)	Area 000 km <sup>2</sup>	Population		GNP Total (mn)
			per km <sup>2</sup>	Per capita	
Burkina Faso	8,1	274	30	150	1 215
Cape Verde	0,3	4	75	460	129
Chad	5,1	1 284	4	80	408
The Gambia	0,8	11	73	230	184
Mali	7,6	1 240	6	180	1 368
Mauritania	1,8	1 031	2	420	756
Niger	6,6	1 267	5	260	1 716
Senegal	6,8	196	35	420	2 856
Sahel	37,1	5 307	7	233	8 632

Source: World Bank, *op cit*, pp 222 and 289.

particularly uranium mining. Chad, Mali, and Burkina Faso were the poorest countries in the Sahel — perhaps in the world — in 1986.

#### Rate of economic growth

Since 1960, most Sahelian countries have suffered negative rates of economic growth. Chad, Niger, Senegal, and Mauritania have regressed economically in terms of gross national product per capita. Between 1965 and 1986, economic growth in Burkina Faso, The

Gambia, and Mali was marginal. As Table 2 shows, the only country that experienced any reasonable amount of economic growth during this period was Cape Verde, which registered a 5 per cent rate of growth in GNP per capita. Many of these Sahelian countries were constrained by droughts, poorly developed infrastructures and political instability.<sup>5</sup>

Although Senegal was the most industrialized of the Sahelian countries, it has not fared well since independence. The

**Table 2**  
**ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE SAHEL**  
**(AVERAGE ANNUAL RATES OF GROWTH, % 1965–1986)**

Country	Gross national product (GNP) per capita growth rate (%), 1965–1986
Burkina Faso	1,3
Cape Verde	5,0
Chad	-2,3
The Gambia	0,7
Mali	1,1
Mauritania	-0,3
Niger	-2,2
Senegal	-0,6

Source: World Bank, *op cit*.

economy has suffered several setbacks, perhaps owing partly to the fact that following independence, Senegalese industry was deprived of its broader market in French West Africa. The newly independent countries of the former French West African community set up their own manufacturing facilities and erected barriers to protect these



The Lake Chad Project — building dams and reclaiming agricultural land

fledgling entities against competition from the more mature Senegalese manufacturing sector. As a result, Senegalese industry has been operating at below capacity since independence.<sup>6</sup>

#### Utilization of labour resources

In 1965, most the labour resources in the Sahelian countries were employed in agriculture. By 1986, agriculture was still the major employer, engaging more than 80 per cent of the labour resources of most Sahelian countries. Most agricultural activities are carried out at the subsistence level and involve primarily the production of grains, groundnuts, cassava and cattle. Some development experts believe that it is possible efficiently to produce enough cereal in the Sahel to feed the population and even have some surplus to meet the needs of neighbouring countries. In order to

achieve this, both human and physical capital are needed, as well as a radical change in the antiquated farming methods that exist in the area. With irrigation from the Niger and Senegal River basins and Lake Chad, it would be possible to turn the Sahel into an efficient agricultural zone. The area is also good for rearing cattle, much more so than areas farther south where many tropical diseases present severe problems for cattle breeders. This apparent comparative advantage in cereals and cattle could be exploited by the Sahelian nations and used to develop intra-regional trade with the larger markets of coastal countries such as Nigeria and Cameroon.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the emergence of mining and quarrying in a few of the Sahelian countries in the 1970s and 1980s, agriculture still remains the foundation on which to build a solid economic base.

#### Foreign trade

As in the case of most developing countries, foreign trade is very important to the Sahelian countries. With poorly developed domestic markets and industrialization still in the embryonic stages in most Sahelian economies, these countries have to rely on foreign markets for the sale of most of their production, as well as for purchases of most manufactured goods.

In 1986, Burkina Faso earned US\$83 million from exports. Of that total, gold accounted for 39 per cent and raw cotton for 37 per cent.<sup>8</sup> Exports from Cape Verde in 1986 amounted to a scant US\$3.6 million, of which more than 75 per cent comprised fish and seafood products.<sup>9</sup>

Chad, the poorest of the Sahelian countries, continued to suffer from the effects of civil strife. Civil war broke out again in 1984 and the border dispute with Chad continued to have a disruptive effect until 1988. Partly as a result of Chad's unstable political condition, export earnings have fluctuated wildly over the past decade. Thus, in 1977 Chad's exports totalled US\$107 million; in 1982 exports amounted to only US\$58 million. By 1984 this figure had risen again to US\$110 million, of which US\$97 million, or 89 per cent, came from raw cotton. In 1985 Chad's exports fell once more, to US\$62 million, and though by 1987 the total was up, to US\$111 million, only US\$39 million of this came from cotton, because production had been disrupted and the price was also depressed.<sup>10</sup>

In the case of the Gambia, groundnuts and groundnut oil and meal account for almost the whole of the country's exports — 90 per cent in 1986.<sup>11</sup> Mali's trade figures reveal a similar dependence on the export of agricultural products. Of its US\$192 million merchandise exports in 1986, 57 per cent comprised cotton and livestock.<sup>12</sup>

Mauritania continues to suffer both politically and economically from the effects of its involvement in the war in the Western Sahara during the 1970s and of the continuing racial tensions between its Arab and Negro populations. The adoption of radical economic reforms during the period 1972–74, including a review of the agreements which it had signed with France prior to independence, a decision to leave the Franc Zone and establish its own currency,

and the nationalization of MIFERMA, a French-run firm which produced 80 per cent of Mauritanian exports, all had a dislocative effect. The 1968–1974 droughts in the Sahel, along with the rapid pace of urbanization, compounded the country's problems and threw the economy into turmoil. In 1986 Mauritania's exports totalled US\$419 million, virtually 100 per cent being accounted for by iron ore, fish and fish products.<sup>13</sup>

Uranium has provided a tremendous boost to the Nigerien economy, although expectations that the development of uranium mining would lift Niger out of poverty into a new progressive and prosperous era have unfortunately not been realized. Between 1965 and 1986, GNP per capita in Niger fell by an average of 2.2 per cent (see Table 2). The country is believed to have been the hardest hit by the 1968–74 droughts. In 1986 uranium made up 77 per cent of Niger's exports of US\$331 million.<sup>14</sup>

Senegal, the most industrialized of the Sahelian countries, appears to have had the most diversified economy. Total exports in 1978 amounted to US\$402 million. Of that amount, groundnut products accounted for 25 per cent. The next most important single export was phosphates, which accounted for 14 per cent of total export earnings. Exports of petroleum products contributed 14 per cent to total export earnings in that year. By 1984 exports had risen to US\$598 million, but petroleum earnings were down to 10 per cent of the total, while fish and shellfish accounted for 27 per cent.<sup>15</sup>

It should be borne in mind when looking at these statistics that political instability and excessive government regulation of economic activities in the Sahel countries has resulted in the development of parallel or underground sectors in the economies of these countries. As a result, the export figures presented above may understate Sahelian trade.

The principal features of the picture that emerges, however, confirm that Sahelian economies, like those of other developing countries, are dependent for most of their foreign exchange earnings on primary commodities.

#### Direction of trade and the importance of the industrial market economies

Just as it did more than twenty years ago, the Sahel region still depends largely

**Table 3**  
**INFANT MORTALITY RATE PER THOUSAND IN THE SAHEL FOR SELECTED YEARS**

	1960	1970	1980	1981	1985
Burkina Faso	252.3	235.0	211.2	208.1	..
Cape Verde	121.1	98.8	82.0	80.0	77.0
Chad	194.7	173.0	148.6	146.3	138.0
The Gambia	222.3	216.5	198.3	196.2	174.0
Mali	194.7	174.5	154.5	152.1	..
Mauritania	184.6	161.9	142.9	140.7	132.0
Niger	191.2	171.3	145.7	143.4	140.0
Senegal	181.7	164.4	146.9	144.6	137.0

Sources: World Bank, *World tables 1983, vol II*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983; World Bank, *World development report 1987*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

on trade with the industrial market economies. In 1965, Burkina Faso and Mali were the only nations in the Sahel to conduct a considerable amount of their export trade with the developing countries, primarily their neighbours. By 1985, Burkina Faso had reduced its trading activities with developing countries from a high of 83 per cent of merchandise exports to 65 per cent. Mali's export trade with developing countries declined from a high of 89 per cent in 1965 to a low of 45 per cent in 1985. East European economies received virtually no exports from the Sahel. Despite Mauritania's flirtation with the Arab League, none of the country's trade was carried out with any of its oil-rich member-countries. In 1985, Mauritania sold 76 per cent of its goods to the industrial market economies.<sup>16</sup>

It appears that the Sahelian countries are as dependent today on the industrial market economies for trade as they were in the 1960s. France and the European Economic Community continue to be the major trade partners for these countries. Attempts by some of the area's leaders to revise co-operation agreements with France, which they believe put them at a competitive disadvantage, have not been very successful. Indeed, Diori's attempts in Niger to pull away from France and to seek other economic partners led to his overthrow. Like many former French colonies, the Sahelian countries began independence with economies that were carefully integrated into the economy of greater France, each serving as an important source of raw materials. The "accords" that were signed between each ex-colony

and France strengthened this integrative process and created a paradigm of dependency that has continued to this day.

The fragmentation of the continent that came with colonization created economies which, after independence, were too weak to stand on their own. Colonial institutions created within each colony made interactions between the newly independent countries difficult. Thus, many states in Africa found it easier to interact with France or Great Britain than with their next-door neighbours. As a result, independence simply represented the achievement of political, and not economic, autonomy. After more than twenty years of independence, the Sahelian countries still depend on France and Western Europe for most of their trade.

#### Levels of life in the Sahel since 1960

D M Morris developed the Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI) to measure economic performance in developing countries. The Index consists of three indicators designed to measure quality of life: infant mortality rate, life expectancy at age one and literacy. In this section, we use these indicators to measure levels of living in the Sahel since most of the region's countries gained independence in 1960.<sup>17</sup>

As Table 3 indicates, Burkina Faso had the highest infant mortality rate in the Sahel in 1960, followed by The Gambia. By 1980, this was still the case. Cape Verde, which had the lowest infant

mortality rate in 1960 among countries in the Sahel, continued to maintain that relatively good performance in 1981.

Development performance, as measured by the infant mortality rate, can be examined by looking at the average annual rates of change of the infant mortality rates in the Sahelian countries. As Table 4 shows, between 1960 and 1981 the infant mortality rate in Cape Verde was falling at an average annual rate of 1,95 per cent, the highest rate of decline in infant mortality for any of the Sahelian nations.

**Table 4**  
**AVERAGE ANNUAL RATES OF CHANGE IN THE INFANT MORTALITY RATE FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1960-1981**

	Average annual rate of change (%)
Burkina Faso	-0,91
Cape Verde	-1,95
Chad	-1,35
The Gambia	-0,59
Mali	-1,17
Mauritania	-1,28
Niger	-1,36
Senegal	-1,08

Sources: See Table 4.

Rates have been computed using the compound formula,  $Q_{1981} = Q_{1960} [1+1r]^{21}$ ; where the  $Q$ 's represent the variable, infant mortality rate (per thousand) for each country and  $r$  is the rate of change.

The Gambia and Burkina Faso fared worst in this area with their infant mortality rates declining at rates of only 0,59 per cent and 0,91 per cent respectively per annum during the period 1960-1980.

Infants are very susceptible to waterborne diseases and the high infant mortality rates in these countries may be attributed to the poor quality of water in the region.

In some areas of the Sahel, large holes dug along roadways and allowed to fill with rainwater are often used as a source of drinking water.<sup>18</sup> Left unattended, these pits help the spread of vectorborne and waterborne diseases. If they were properly managed and kept clean, however, they could be used for irrigation and for harvesting fish, an important



Drought in Northern Niger

source of protein, and could also be used to obtain clean water for drinking.

The infant mortality rate in the Sahel is still among the highest in the world. Malaria, meningitis and other communicable diseases, tuberculosis and other pulmonary ailments are endemic to the area. In addition, onchocerciasis, trypanosomiasis and schistosomiasis are also ailments that account for the high death rates recorded for the area.

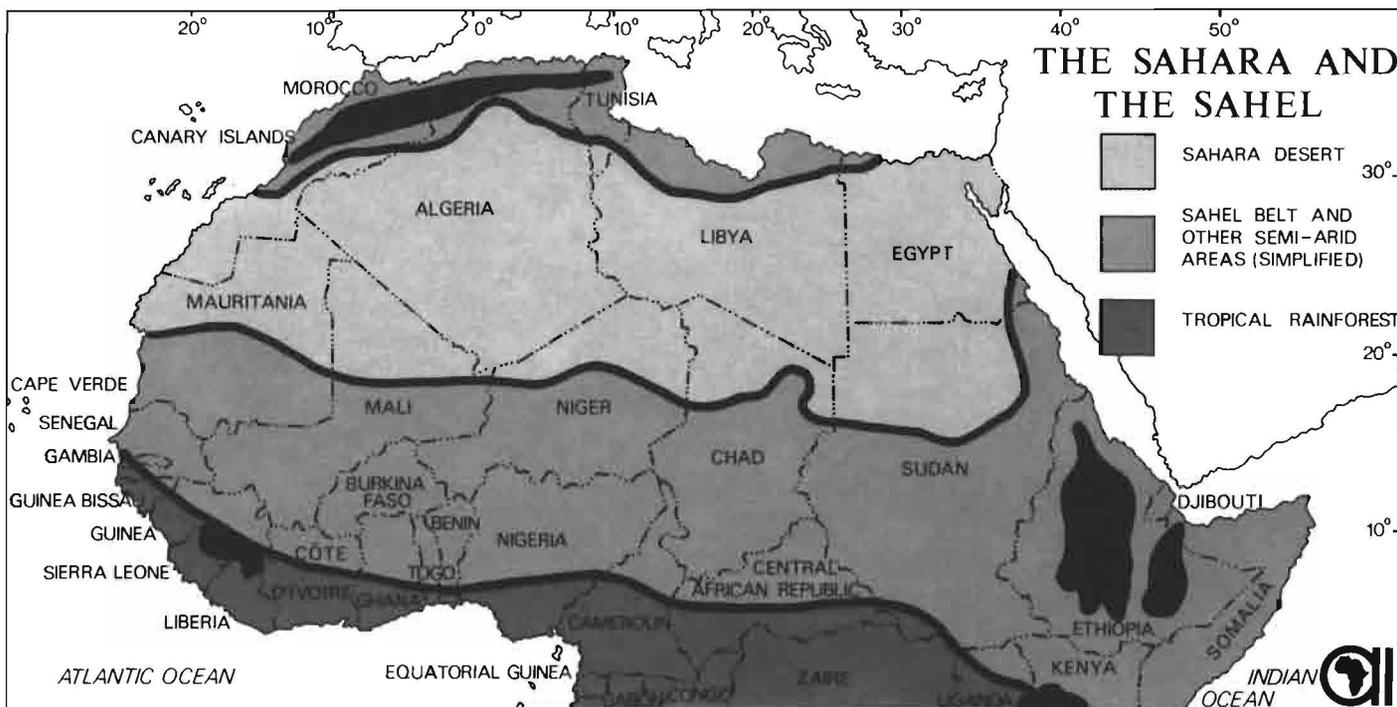
In addition to infections from an assorted number of diseases, many infants suffer from malnutrition, which has been made worse by the population's inability to use efficiently the available foodstuffs. Tradition often reserves the right to the available foods to the grown men in the family, forcing women and children to wait to receive what is left over after the man of the house has finished eating.<sup>19</sup>

Infant mortality rates generally have two components: neonatal mortality rate and postnatal mortality rate. The neonatal mortality rate refers to deaths within the first 28 days of birth and these deaths are related to the mother's state of health before the child was born and the medical attention she and the baby had during pregnancy. Postnatal deaths are a reflection of the living conditions of the mother, the quality of care available

for children and the availability of medical care for treatable conditions such as infections.<sup>20</sup>

It appears that the economies of the Sahelian countries have not been very successful in addressing the major health problems of the area. Since 1960, infant mortality rates for those countries classified by the World Bank as "low-income" have dropped from 142 per thousand in 1960 to 122 in 1975. Cape Verde is the only Sahelian country whose infant mortality rate was below the two sets of averages given above.<sup>21</sup> Most of the programmes designed to improve health conditions have been concentrated in the urban areas; as a result, most of the health needs of the rural populations have yet to be met. What is needed is a comprehensive system of both preventive and curative health programmes designed primarily for the rural areas. Education on the use of these services is also essential in order for the region to control its infant mortality problem. In addition, a proper programme of population control should also be put into effect.

Around the world, the life expectancy of women, on the average, is longer than that of men. Data on life expectancy at birth show that in 1960, men in The Gambia were expected, on the average,



to live only to age 32, the lowest life expectancy in the Sahel. Women in The Gambia fared only a little better.

Except for men and women in Cape Verde, most of the people in Sub-Saharan Africa had a life expectancy in 1960 of less than 50 years. Sahelian countries, except for Cape Verde, however, continue to have the lowest life expectancies of all the low-income countries. In fact, in 1982 The Gambia's life expectancy for men was one of the lowest in the world, at 35 years. By 1986, life expectancy in The Gambia had risen to 43 years; Cape Verde's had risen to 65 years, the highest for all Sahelian countries in 1986.<sup>22</sup>

Although nutrition and health-related information shows that the population per physician has been falling since 1960, many people in the region, especially those who live in the rural areas, still have no access to health care. Most of the funds allocated for health care in the Sahel are devoted to the support of facilities in the urban areas. For example, Lateef reports that in Mali, about 75 per cent of allocations for health care is used to support 10 hospitals, while programmes for preventive medicine receive less than 15 per cent of the health budget. Such a pattern is not unique to Mali; it is characteristic of the whole Sahel region.

Other allocative problems exist. Most of the money allocated to hospitals is used primarily to pay personnel, with very little left over to purchase drugs, equipment and supplies. Lack of resources and the inefficient use of the available resources are problems that must be examined thoroughly in order to design programmes that will help improve health conditions in the Sahel.<sup>23</sup>

Lack of foodstuffs is a major problem in the Sahel, and is compounded by the poor or inefficient use of available food supplies. The well-publicized droughts of 1968–74 brought the world's attention to starvation in the Sahel, but despite massive international assistance hunger still abounds. This is probably because most of the aid programmes were directed at rescuing the thousands of people who were close to or near death and not at finding long-term solutions to malnutrition and its associated problems in the Sahel.

Education, either formal or informal, should increase the awareness level of the individual. In general, higher levels of education may be associated with higher marginal productivity and consequently with higher wage rates. Thus, as the population becomes more educated, time becomes more valuable, resulting in an increasing opportunity cost

for labour resources immobilized by sickness. The tendency would be towards an increase in the demand for and consumption of preventive and curative health services. Of course, higher marginal products imply higher levels of production in the economy. Under such circumstances, we should expect increases in national income. Thus, educational levels may provide a fair reflection of the standard of living of the population.

The PQLI uses the literacy rate as an indicator of the educational level of the population. Sanders has remarked that a major hindrance to the proper measurement of literacy is retention. Children who learn to read and write in the urban areas may not be able to retain their skills when they return to the village where reading materials may not be available.<sup>24</sup> For example, in Niger, in 1977, total newspaper ("daily general interest") circulation per thousand people was only 0,6, compared with 204,7 for France and 282,2 for the United States in the same year.<sup>25</sup>

Table 5 provides some data on literacy in the Sahel. Cape Verde appears to have the most literate population of the Sahelian countries. The data also show the educational disparity between the sexes. In all the Sahelian countries, as is

**Table 5**  
**EDUCATION IN THE SAHEL: PERCENTAGE OF LITERATES AMONG TOTAL POPULATION, AGE 10 YEARS AND OVER, BY SEX**

Country	Year	Total	Female	Male
Burkina Faso	1975	10,0	4,4	15,7
Cape Verde	1960	29,3	18,7	42,4
Chad <sup>a</sup>	1964	5,6	0,6	12,1
Mali	1960-61	2,9	1,0	4,9
Mauritania <sup>b</sup>	1977	17,4	(NA)	(NA)
Niger	1977	9,5	4,6	14,6
Senegal	1977	10,0	..	..

<sup>a</sup>Refers to ages 15 years and over.

<sup>b</sup>Refers to ages 6 years of over.

Sources:

Jeanne S Newman, *Women of the world: Sub-Saharan Africa*, Washington DC: US Department of Commerce, 1984, p 67. World Bank, *World tables, 1983, Volume II, op cit*, p 78. Also see UNESCO, *Statistical yearbook, 1988, op cit*, pp 1-15 and 1-16 and World Bank, *World development report, 1988, op cit*, p 280 for further data on education in the Sahel.

the case in most of Africa, the percentage of literate males continues to be greater than that of females.

Despite concerted efforts by many governments since independence to provide formal schooling for both sexes, female educational opportunities continue to lag behind those for males in most of the Sahelian countries. From 1960 to 1970, the percentage of girls aged 6 to 11 years enrolled in primary schools in Sub-Saharan Africa doubled from 17 to 35 per cent. Comparable figures for boys reflected an increase from 46 to 63 per cent. Growth in enrolment for both sexes in the 1970s was minimal.<sup>26</sup>

In 1970, of a total primary school enrolment of nearly 22 million in Africa (excluding Arab states), 39 per cent were females. By 1985, that percentage had risen to 44 per cent.<sup>27</sup>

Table 6 shows that the Sahel is one of the most illiterate areas in the world. Within the region Burkina Faso is the worst off in this respect with an illiteracy rate in 1985 of 86,8 per cent. Opportunities for female education once again continue to lag behind those for males, and the illiteracy rate among females is higher than that for males in all the Sahelian countries. Compared to other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Sahelian countries have performed relatively poorly in their efforts to increase educational levels among their populations. For example, in 1985 the illiteracy rate in Cameroon was 43,8 per cent

(31,6 per cent for the male population and 55,3 per cent for the female population) and that in Togo was 59,3 per cent. Nearly 20 years after independence male and female Sahelians alike continue to suffer the highest illiteracy rates in Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>28</sup>

**Table 6**  
**PERCENTAGE OF ILLITERATES IN THE SAHEL IN 1985**  
**(AGE GROUP: 15 YEARS OF OLDER)**

Country	Total	Male	Female
Burkina Faso	86,8	79,3	93,9
Cape Verde	52,6	38,6	61,4
Chad	74,7	59,5	89,1
The Gambia	74,9	64,4	84,9
Mali	83,2	77,1	89,0
Niger	86,1	80,6	91,4
Senegal	71,9	62,6	80,9

Source:

UNESCO, *Statistical yearbook, 1985, op cit*, pp 1-17. Also see UNESCO, *Statistical yearbook, 1988, op cit*.

Opportunities for secondary school education have not been plentiful in the Sahel, or for that matter in Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. According to UNESCO, secondary school enrolment raised its share of total enrolment from 10 per

cent in 1975 to 15 per cent in 1980. Participation of girls in secondary school education increased at an even slower rate. In 1960, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the secondary school enrolment of girls accounted for only 0,7 per cent of total secondary school enrolment. By 1970, that percentage had risen only to 3 per cent. For all Africa (excluding Arab states) the percentage of females in total secondary school enrolment was higher than that for Sub-Saharan Africa but still lower than that for boys.<sup>29</sup>

The trends in the Sahel are no different. In Burkina Faso in 1960, for example, the total secondary school enrolment ratio was 0,5 (0,3 for the female population). By 1980, or 20 years later, the rate had risen to only 3,0 for the total and 2,0 for the female population. In Niger, the situation was not that much different. From a total secondary school enrolment ratio of 0,3 in 1960, Niger advanced to a rate of 6,0 in 1981.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to favouring the male population, Sahelian educational systems are designed primarily to benefit those residing in the urban areas. Schooling is still regarded by many as a way to get into the civil service. Education is not recognized as a means of increasing human capital, and thus the productive capacity of the economy. The educational system must be redesigned to address the problems of the economy so that the two systems will grow together, each benefitting the other.

Employment can also be looked upon as a reflection of quality of life. Available data for labour force participation rates for both the male and female populations in the Sahel show that there is a large disparity between participation for men and that for women. Cape Verde and Mauritania record the lowest participation rates for women.<sup>31</sup> Even with an education, employment opportunities in the Sahel appear very few. Most job opportunities are available in farming or raising cattle. The manufacturing sector is small and so employment opportunities in that area are rare. About a third of the urban employed do find work in commerce, transportation and related services. The civil service in the Sahel appears to be a very large employer.

Unemployment is quite high, especially in Cape Verde, Senegal and Chad. Rates of unemployment of 50 per cent have been reported for Mauritania.<sup>32</sup>

In terms of PQLI values, the quality of life for most of the citizens of the Sahel has either not improved since the 1960s or has done so only marginally (see Table 7).

**Table 7**  
**PQLI VALUES FOR THE SAHEL**

Country	1970s	1980s
Burkina Faso	16	19
Cape Verde	48	..
Chad	18	24
The Gambia	25	..
Mali	15	18
Mauritania	17	23
Niger	13	19
Senegal	25	25

Sources:

E Wayne Nafziger, *The economics of developing countries*, Belmont CA: Wadsworth, 1984, pp 13-19; D M Morris, *op cit*, pp 138-144.



Street scene — Agadez, Niger

## Obstacles to the improvement of the human condition in the Sahel

The preceding analysis shows that levels and patterns of life in the Sahel have not improved considerably since most of the area gained independence in 1960. Some improvements seemed to have been made in life expectancy and infant mortality, but such advances were only marginal. The Sahel still lags behind most of the developing and developed world in terms of quality of life. Certain forces appear to be frustrating efforts to improve the quality of life in the Sahel, such as droughts and desertification, a poor natural resource base, many endemic diseases, a generally inadequate infrastructure, lack of capital, and excessive regulation of economic activity.

### Droughts and desertification

The Sahel suffered its most severe droughts between 1968 and 1974. The severity of the droughts may be attributed to a series of factors. Firstly, the last 20 years have seen a tremendous increase in population, which has put a great strain on the area's resources. Secondly, productivity in agriculture

declined tremendously, forcing farmers to increase the amount of land under cultivation. Thus, more marginal lands were brought into farming in order to keep up with an ever-expanding population. Thirdly, it has been estimated that in the last 50 years the Sahara Desert, in its continued push southward, has consumed close to a quarter of a million square miles of arable land. Assisted by these three factors, the droughts helped destroy the area's ecosystem and subjected a large part of the population to starvation. The refugee problem created by the droughts required a massive relief effort by both government and non-government agencies from all over the world. International aid infusions, however, were merely temporary solutions. Long-run solutions must still be found.

The droughts cost the Sahel dear. In addition to lost production and subsequently a decrease in savings, there was further taxation of public services. The massive aid from abroad was helpful, but the psychological damage done to children suffering from malnutrition may be irreversible and could affect future production.<sup>33</sup> Despite massive foreign aid, the economy of the Sahel remains precariously vulnerable to nature's uncertainties.

### Poor natural resource base

Most of the Sahel is landlocked and possesses few natural resources. The area is exposed to very harsh environmental conditions. Diseases such as sleeping sickness and river blindness abound. As a result, scarce labour resources are wasted through death or incapacitation. The fact that over 37 million people inhabited the region in 1986 proves that the Sahel is not a wasteland. Despite its apparent inhospitable conditions, with proper measures productivity in the area can still be improved enough for the area to support a healthy population.

### Poor infrastructure

The kind of infrastructure needed for steady and continued economic growth in the Sahel is still to be developed. As Lateef has stated, the area needs to develop a "capacity to produce wealth". A framework that consists of a properly functioning educational system, banking system, transportation, communications, and so on, is needed before the region can embark fully on the process of producing wealth. Development policy must provide for both short-term emergencies such as drought and long-term goals that take into account the increasing population.

The relief efforts mounted in response to the 1968–74 droughts revealed the Sahel's transportation problems. Without airlifts from various international donors, the relief programme might well have collapsed owing to poor inland transportation.

Associated with the poor infrastructure is the fact that domestic markets in the Sahel are poorly developed. As a result, many of the large industrial projects in the area are aimed primarily at production for export. The economy, then, must continuously subject itself to the changes in demand conditions abroad.

### Problems of capital formation

Lack of capital (both physical and human) is one of the most important constraints to the development of the Sahel. Low capital levels keep both human and resource productivity at very low levels. How can a nation increase its stock of capital? A country's stock of capital can be increased through investment. As soon as the size of the labour force increases relative to the stock of capital, human and physical capital should be adjusted to reflect changes in the capital-labour ratio. With these conditions in place, one can explain the growth of total output and that of per capita income by the savings rate (rate of foregone consumption) and the rate of growth of population. Thus, if the savings rate is equal to the rate of growth of the population, then growth in per capita income will be zero. Similarly, if the savings rate is greater than the population growth rate, then per capita income growth will register a positive rate.<sup>34</sup>

### Excessive regulation of economic activity

The excessive regulation of economic activity is a problem for many countries. For the developing country, the problem is especially serious since it cannot afford the waste of resources associated with regulation. Regulation often leads to the establishment of monopolies. In addition to the traditional social costs of monopoly (usually designated by the Harberger deadweight loss triangle), economists now recognize the costs associated with rent-seeking activities as additional and sometimes more serious costs to the economy. The term "rent-seeking" is used to refer to the use of

resources in an effort to capture transfers created by government restriction of economic activity. The endemic nature of bribery and corruption in Sahelian economies is consistent with rent-seeking behaviour. It would be very naive to think that less government activity in the economy would put an end to bribery in the Sahelian economies. Absence of regulation, however, will reduce opportunities for rent-seeking and free resources to be employed in more productive uses.<sup>35</sup>

### Summary and conclusions

This analysis of patterns and levels of life in the Sahel shows that since the 1960s the quality of life in the Sahel has improved only marginally, and in many countries has actually deteriorated. Many factors have contributed to this decline, including severe droughts, desertification, lack of capital and general mismanagement of available resources.

During the 1968–74 droughts, the world responded by sending large doses of aid. These efforts were, however, designed to meet only the immediate needs of the drought victims. Long-term solutions to the development problems of the area are not expected to come from international charity. Development programme in the Sahel must emphasize involvement by the private sector.

The rapid economic growth enjoyed by the West and Japan during the last century may be explained primarily by capital formation and progress in technology. The severe shortage of capital in developing countries, especially in the Sahel, implies that planners and prospective entrepreneurs may have to look at technologies in which labour can be substituted for capital. Despite the harsh conditions in the Sahel, data show that more than 37 million people inhabited the region in 1986, proof of the tenacity of the people. With proper management, this huge reservoir of labour resources could be used to produce enough foodstuffs to meet the needs of the people and even provide for an export trade.

In addition to making efforts to increase human capital through education and training, planners must continue to make the region more attractive for private investment. Since the Sahel has to compete with other areas for foreign investment, attempts must be made to

reduce the area's risk characteristics so as to make it more attractive to foreign investors. Expropriation of foreign assets, as was undertaken in Mauritania in 1974, would increase the risk of investing in the area. Although they are not expected to stop flows of foreign investment, such activities can slow the rate at which badly needed capital flows into the area.

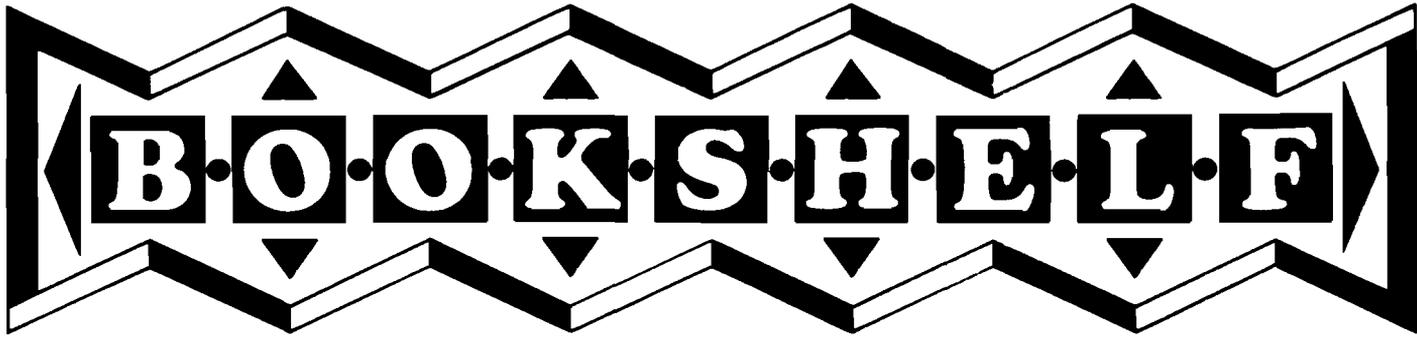
It must be emphasized here that an abundance of natural resources is only secondary to the achievement of a high standard of living. The ability to achieve higher levels of income will depend greatly on the nation's ability to properly use its available resources.

The nature of specialization and trade should be determined by the law of comparative advantage. It would, therefore, not be economically inefficient for many of the Sahelian countries to import most of their manufactured goods and export primary products, if comparative advantage rules dictate that pattern of trade.

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**Democracy in developing countries: Volume 2: Africa** edited by Larry Diamond, Juan J Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner and London: Adamantine Press, 1988, 314 pp. ISBN 0 7449 0006 9.

This is the second volume of a four part series about the current democratic ferment in developing countries. Focussing on Africa, this work is written against the background of growing international concern about human rights, including the right of citizens to engage in political activities and to choose democratically the government under which they live. The authors of the case studies on Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Uganda attempt to explain the factors fostering or obstructing the emergence and consolidation of democratic government in those countries. Among the themes examined are the ways in which ethnic and other sectional cleavages may be accommodated within a democratic framework, the role of political institutions and political violence, and the place of competitive elections in the development of democracy.

**The economics of deforestation: A case study in Africa** by Dennis Anderson. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press for The World Bank, 1987, 86 pp. ISBN 0 8018 3552 6.

In many developing countries deforestation is causing erosion and degradation of the soil, aggravating the already serious problems of economic development. The author translates the ecological benefits of afforestation into economic terms and shows how investments can benefit both ecology and economy simultaneously. He discusses the reasons for deforestation in Africa, and suggests policy changes which would promote the planting and care of trees. There is also an extensive case study of the arid zone in Northern Nigeria.

**The African poor: A history** by John Iliffe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, 387 pp. ISBN 0 521 34877 3.

This comparative history of the African poor traces the emergence of a new kind of poverty in the continent, that afflicting people without access to land. Natural disaster virtually ceased to be a cause of mass mortality during the colonial era; now it has again emerged as a major killer in areas where the impact of drought has been compounded by administrative breakdown. The author explains the current forms of African poverty by contrasting them with those of earlier times and analysing the reasons for this change.

**Refugees and development in Africa** edited by Peter Noble. Uppsala, Scandanavian Institute of African Studies, 1987, 121 pp. ISBN 91 7106 272 6.

This book reports a seminar which brought to an end a three-year research project on refugees and development in Africa. It discusses the reasons why refugees flee their homes, how and whether they become integrated in the societies that receive them, the relationship between development assistance and refugee assistance, and the legal status of refugees.

**Power and need in Africa: Basic human needs and development policies** by Ben Wisner. London: Earthscan Publications, 1988, 351 pp. ISBN 1 85538 300 1.

The author argues that need-oriented development policies have never been seriously tried in Africa. Instead of taking as their starting-point the real needs of the poor and the powerless, developers assumed that their own perceptions of need were accurate. Communities merely participated in the attempt to achieve goals set by "experts". Wisner makes a case for a radical basic-needs approach to replace the conservative developmental "pragmatism" now in vogue.

# AFRICA MONITOR




**Africa Monitor**  
**September–December 1988**

*Jenny Macgregor*

## AFRICA

Despite the fear that Africa's **refugee population** increased by some 800 000 in 1988 to about 4.5 mn, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is cutting its 1989 budget allocation for the continent by 25 per cent to \$154 mn. This figure does not include the estimated \$50 mn the UNHCR will have to raise through public appeals for the repatriation of 58 000 Namibians mostly from Angola, if regional peace arrangements succeed. The bulk of the planned expenditure will be in four countries which are host to about three million refugees — Somalia \$32.9 mn; Sudan \$26.5 mn; Ethiopia \$23.6 mn and Malawi \$18 mn (AA 6/1). (See also *South West Africa/Namibia and Burundi*.)

North and West Africa are experiencing the worst plague of **locusts** for 30 years, fostered by unusually heavy rains in the normally arid Sahel, and it is feared that unprecedentedly high winds may cause the locusts to spread to the eastern and central regions of the continent. Mauritania is the worst affected country, with four million hectares infested, of which only 7 per cent has been sprayed. In Sudan the invasion is causing even greater concern than the floods, which were the worst for a century. For Sudan, Ethiopia and Chad alone, \$90–\$100 mn is needed to prevent large-scale food-crop losses (ARB 30/6; H 7/7; A 7–8/88; AC 28/10). (See also *Chad, Ethiopia, Mauritania and Sudan*.)

## NORTH AFRICA

### Algeria

Food shortages and the recent austerity measures introduced by the government in the face of rising inflation and unemployment

sparked the outbreak of **riots** on 5 October, the first serious disturbances the country has seen since 1980. The violence quickly spread from Algiers to other parts of the country and resulted in the introduction of a state of emergency. An estimated 250 people were killed in street clashes with troops. After six days of violence, which Pres Bendjedid said had threatened the country with civil war, he restored calm by announcing far-reaching political reforms to complement economic austerity. Algeria's bid to boost economic progress has been severely hit by the slump in oil revenues, which account for more than 95 per cent of the country's export income, since 1985. Algeria's population of 26 mn is growing at an annual rate of 3.3 per cent, another factor seriously constraining economic reform (IMFS 29/8, 8/10, 13/10; H 8/10; C 10/10; DN 12/10; E 15/10, 26/11; ARB 31/10, 15/11, 30/11).

In the 3 November **referendum** on the **constitutional changes**, a 92 per cent "yes" vote was received. There was an 83 per cent turnout. The reforms are designed to loosen the monopoly on power held for 26 years by the nation's ruling party, the National Liberation Front Party (FLN). The following day, the president asked his health minister, Kasdi Merbah, to form a new government to pursue wide-ranging economic reforms which essentially involve privatizing some of the vast and highly inefficient state farms and factories. A technocrat, Merbah was chosen to replace Prime Minister Brahimi following his resignation after the riots. In early December Pres Bendjedid made a number of significant leadership changes, ushering in younger, more professional officers and technocrats into senior positions in the army, the civil service and the many state companies; president of the FLN, he also relinquished his post of secretary-general of the party to Abdelhamid Mehri (SS 16/10; ACon 14/10; C 4/11; DT/11; ACon 11/11; E 3/12, 10/12; WR 9/12).

In a surprise move, **presidential elections** were held on 24 December, 4 months earlier than expected. Pres Bendjedid was overwhelmingly re-elected for a third five-year term. The sole candidate, he received 81.7 per cent of the votes cast in the elections which saw an 89 per cent turnout (ARB 15/12, 15/1; SN 24/12). (See also *Morocco*.)

### Chad

**Libya** and Chad announced on 3 October that they had restored **diplomatic relations**, just over a year after signing a ceasefire. They have pledged to settle the issue of the territorial dispute over the Aouzou strip peacefully. Satisfaction and relief over the rapprochement have been widely expressed. An intensive mediating effort by Togolese president and president of the OAU, Pres Eyadema, preceded the pledge. Despite the resumption of relations, which involves the return of remaining POWs, Chad is continuing to hold on to more than 2 000 former Libyan POWs who have switched allegiance to support Libyan opposition leader Muhammad Magarrief. Prior to the restoration of relations, Libya handed over 214 Chadian POWs (SWB 4/10; AC 7/10; AED 7/10, 14/10; SS 16/10; ARB 15/11). (See also *Libya*.)

The rebel National Front, led by Acheikh Ibn Oumar, signed a **peace pact** with the government on 18 November. The historic agreement provides for an immediate ceasefire, the return of refugees to Chad, the involvement of the Front in the committee assigned to draft a new constitution, and participation in the administration. Following the agreement, 312 POWs of the National Front were freed. Oumar was a minister in Goukouni Oueddei's government in exile, Gunt, and leader of the CDR, the armed wing of the National Front. With the return to Ndjamená of several opposition leaders,

including Gunt representatives, and groups in response to Pres Habré's calls for national **reconciliation**, Oueddei now stands alone in his opposition to Habré (SWB 7/10, 15/11, 21/11; AA 25/11; AC 25/11; SWB 29/12).

### Egypt

Pres Mubarak desperately needs to reach an agreement with the **IMF** if he is to secure access to vital foreign aid and relief in the servicing of the country's vast \$44 bn foreign debt. The IMF is, however, demanding that Egypt's government embark on a crash programme of **economic and fiscal reform** which will sharply reduce subsidies on food and energy, reduce the budget deficit and make exports more competitive. Though agreement in principle seems possible, Mubarak is worried about the political risks implicit in such measures and is arguing for their gradual implementation. His fears are understandable in the light of recent occurrences in Algeria, and the country's own recent experience of industrial and militant Islamic unrest, particularly in Upper Egypt where opposition to the government is strongest. Islamic militants are already attacking the idea of an agreement with the IMF, the effects of which will undoubtedly be felt by the poor, in an economy where inflation is already running at between 30–40 per cent annually.

At the end of September, Pres Mubarak visited Britain, partly to talk about developments in the Middle East, but also to secure support for his position in his deadlocked negotiations with the IMF (ARB 15/10, 15/11, 30/11; AA 25/11; C 4/10; AC 21/10; ACon 16/9).

### Libya

Prompted by a costly war and by wider efforts to end its diplomatic isolation, Libya restored diplomatic ties with Chad on 19 November. (See *Chad*.)

The **military setback** in Chad, **scarcity** of basic necessities, international isolation, internal discontent of the populace and the low morale of the armed forces accompanied by the major slump in oil revenues have compelled Col Gaddafi to steer the revolution into a **new era** of "freedom and prosperity". In a speech marking his twentieth year in power, Gaddafi stated that Libya was moving away from war and hardship to peace and self-enrichment. During 1988 a number of domestic and foreign policy changes have effectively transformed the position of Gaddafi's government, improving its stability. Political prisoners have been released, many of the estimated 100 000 exiles have visited the country in apparent safety, there is evidence of a new foreign policy of reconciliation, and economic liberalization has taken place, (AA 16/9; WR 16/9; ACon 9/9, 23/9;

ARB 15/10; AC 21/10; DT 26/10; ION 29/10; S 28/11; WM 15/12; JA 21/12).

**Zaire** and Libya have agreed to resume diplomatic ties after a six-year break caused by Zairean diplomatic relations with Israel (ARB 15/11).

Col Gaddafi has denied British and US reports that Libya is producing **chemical weapons**, saying that the disputed plant is a pharmaceutical factory. Located near Robta, a desert town about 50 km south of Tripoli, it is defended by surface to air missiles (C 16/9; ARB 15/11; SWB 12/10, 17/11; S 28/11).

### Morocco

Morocco's \$940 mn external debt for the period July 1988 to December 1989, owed to the creditor countries of the Paris Club, was rescheduled on 26 October. Foreign debt totals \$17 bn (ARB 30/11).

Impressed by the "important and substantial progress" that Morocco has made in reducing the imbalances which have beset the economy in the past five years, the World Bank has lent Morocco \$200 mn to finance an economic **structural adjustment programme** designed to achieve sustained economic growth in order to create jobs and an acceptable standard of living (WBN 8/12; DT 8/12).

The conditional UN **peace plan** for the **Western Sahara** agreed to on 30 August was threatened in mid-September when Polisario forces of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) attacked Moroccan troops based on the Oum Dreiga section of the defensive "wall". There was speculation that Polisario had mounted the offensive in order to demonstrate its ability to inflict substantial damage on Morocco without assistance from Algeria, which is urging restraint. The attack coincided with an Algerian and Moroccan agreement to construct a pipeline to carry Algerian natural gas across North Africa to Spain — the first major joint enterprise since the two countries restored relations in May after a 12-year rift caused by the Western Sahara problem (ACon 23/9; ARB 15/10).

Subsequent to the peace plan, the UN general assembly has called on King Hassan of Morocco to open **negotiations** with the SADR, a move he has previously rejected, despite calls by Polisario for talks, on the grounds that this would amount to tacit recognition of the existence of the Polisario Front. The issue of direct negotiations is one of a number of stumbling blocks which still exist in the way of peace (ACon 29/10; WA 7/11; NA 12/88).

### Sudan

Twenty-two deputies of the opposition Union of Sudan African Parties (USAP), which is composed of Communists and several southern factions, stormed out of parliament

on 19 September when the government tabled a draft of the **Shari'a** (Islamic) laws. They threatened to resign if the laws were passed. Submitted to the legislative committee on 5 October, the draft laws were rejected by the Umma party, headed by the Prime Minister, and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). The acceptance of this legislation was the condition on which the NIF agreed in April to enter government. The Umma and DUP party are supportive of Islam, but reject the NIF's hard-line stance of insisting on full and immediate implementation of Islamic laws (ION 8/10; AA 28/10; AE 11/88).

With assistance from the World Bank and bilateral donors, the government is to start an emergency programme to repair the damage caused by the recent **floods**. Preliminary estimates put the damage at \$2 000 mn, but the final tally is expected to be much higher. At a World Bank meeting in November, about £300 mn in aid was pledged by a group of 10 industrial nations and 11 international organizations (AED 22/9; AB 10/88; WBN 1/12; AA 9/12; AED 16/12).

**SPLA** attacks on trucks and aircraft ferrying emergency supplies to government-held Juba for famine-affected areas of southern Sudan have halted the World Food Programme's efforts to blunt the effects of the famine. Relief agencies have warned that an estimated 300 000 people in the cities of Juba, Torit and Yei are starving to death. In October the SPLA scored a major success by cutting off Juba, the southern capital. Despite this, a military stalemate has apparently been reached, with both sides abandoning serious claims of an eventual victory (AED 7/10, 18/11; H 8/10; ACon 28/10, 4/11; AA 28/10; E 5/11; TWR 9/11; AC 16/12).

Hopes of a possible breakthrough in the war have been raised by the **agreement** in principle on 14 November between Col John Garang, the leader of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the DUP, one of the three coalition parties, on proposals to end the five-year civil war. The government itself did not take part in the peace talks, although Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi gave his blessing to the DUP initiative, despite a cabinet decision in October to end all contacts with the rebels. The peace accord involves a ceasefire, an end to military agreements with other countries, the "suspension" in the south of Shari'a law, and a constitutional conference to take place before the end of 1989. Approval of the **peace pact** by the cabinet was subsequently given on 1 December. The third coalition party, the NIF, did not give its support to the peace proposals, but agreed to participate in the constitutional conference. The NIF leader, Deputy Prime Minister and Justice Minister Hassan el-Turabi, has threatened to withdraw his party from the government if plans to reintroduce the Shari'a are suspended, as

provided for under the peace agreement. The SPLA has refused to hold negotiations with the government until it approves the agreement (ION 22/10; S 15/11; C 16/11; ACon 28/10, 18/11; TWR 23/11; E 26/11; ARB 15/12; AC 16/12; AED 28/10, 9/12, 23/12).

Unofficial reports of a failed **coup attempt** and a number of arrests preceded the declaration on 20 December of a state of emergency (AED 23/12).

## Tunisia

The government has **legalized** two marginal **opposition** parties, bringing to six the number of parties allowed to operate. Only the Islamic Tendency Movement (MTI), the Islamic fundamentalist group whose suppression helped precipitate ex-president Bourguiba's removal, and the small popular unity movement remain illegal (ACon 16/9). The move was followed by the signing on 7 November of a national pact enshrining the principle of multi-party democracy. The pact, which marked the end of long consultation between the authorities and the opposition, was signed by the six parties, trade unionists and a representative of the MTI. The agreement also reinforces Ben Ali's new emphasis on the country's Islamic and Arab identity, in contrast with the determined European trend of Bourguiba's years (ARB 15/10, 15/12; DT 10/11; ACon 11/11). To mark the first anniversary of his accession to the leadership on 5 November, Pres Ben Ali announced the holding of parliamentary and presidential **elections** on 9 April 1989. The presidential elections will be the first held since 1974. The anniversary celebrations also brought the pardon of 88 political prisoners, among them leaders and militants of the MTI who had been in detention since September 1987. Since November 1987, more than 8 000 people have benefited from a presidential amnesty (DT 10/11; E 10/12; ARB 15/12).

## WEST AFRICA

### Côte d'Ivoire

The recent marriage of Pres Houphouët-Boigny's granddaughter to a Lebanese businessman will impact on Ivorian politics, sealing the alliance between the president and the important Lebanese community and confusing the presidential succession issue further (AC 26/8).

Prof Laurent Gbagbo, advocate of a multi-party system and leader of the "Ivorian Popular Front", recently returned to the country after living in exile in France since 1982. He returned with the agreement of Pres Houphouët-Boigny, and has taken up a government

teaching post. The president has also recently reinstated the 24 members of the former executive of the National Union of Secondary Teachers, who were suspended for opposing the authorities, and their leader was released from detention (WA 26/8; ARB 15/11).

South African President **Botha** paid a brief visit to Pres Houphouët-Boigny in October following a nine-day visit to Europe. It was the first visit to the country by a South African head of state in more than a decade (S 17/10; WA 24/10). (See also *South Africa*.)

Despite donor and banking pressures to modify the government's **cocoa** marketing strategy, the president has refused to change cocoa producer prices for the 1988/89 season. With the fourth consecutive record crop expected, bankers and creditors have warned that failure to reduce the price, to reflect the fall in the world market price, will exacerbate the country's already severe financial crisis. A 200 000 tonnes world surplus output is expected for this season. The decision has hindered Côte d'Ivoire's rescheduling talks with the London Club, but talks with France on proposed financial assistance to reduce the surplus cocoa stocks have been welcomed (AED 14/10; AA 28/10).

### Gambia

Confidence in Gambia's **economic reform** programme, which has reduced inflation from 46 to 13.2 per cent, has resulted in the IMF granting the country an enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF) worth \$26.8 mn. It is hoped this will enable economic growth to outstrip population growth (AED 18/11).

### Ghana

The Ghana Democratic Movement (GDM), the country's major opposition group in exile, is calling on Ghanaians to boycott the **district council elections** scheduled to start on 6 December and end on 28 February 1989 (SWB 18/10; AA 28/10).

The IMF has given Ghana a credit of \$493.3 mn under its extended structural adjustment facility (ESAF) granted on 10 November to replace the current extended fund facility (currently the only one in operation in the world) and structural adjustment loan. The ESAF will mean a decrease in the annual net outflow of money from Ghana to the IMF, and a reduction in the Fund's interest charges. It also raises prospects of attracting further international funding for the structural adjustment programme in which the government hopes to maintain a balance of payments surplus, and finish clearing its external debt payments arrears by 1990 (AED 23/9, 18/11; AB 10/88; ARB 31/10).

Ghana Highways Authority (GHA) has announced an \$828 mn road development

plan for 1988–92, of which the foreign exchange component is \$629 mn. About \$200 mn of the work will be paid for with concessionary finance from abroad (AED 9/12).

### Guinea

Foreign Affairs Minister Maj Jean Traoré has been appointed by Pres Conté to head a commission charged with drafting a **new constitution**. In October Conté announced his government's intention of drawing up a "fundamental law" to replace the constitution suspended in April 1984 when the military took power after the death of Pres Sekou Touré. He said that the past four years of military rule should be considered as a "transitory period which has now come to its end" (AED 28/10, 15/11; WA 31/10; ARB 15/11).

### Guinea Bissau

The government has announced increases of between 53 and 180 per cent in the price of fish, the staple diet for most of the population. The increases — which result from the government's pledge to remove subsidies under the current IMF and World Bank-backed structural adjustment programme — are the second within 18 months, and follow rises in fuel prices during May. A recent IMF report has shown that the three-year programme launched in 1987 has resulted in a radical **restructuring** of the country's **agricultural marketing** system, allowing a much broader role for the private sector, while the decline in exports has been reversed (AB 9/88; AED 23/9).

### Liberia

All those involved in July's alleged attempted **invasion** of the country, led by the late Gen Podier, have been granted a pardon by Pres Doe, who ordered their release from detention on 15 November. Among those freed are the two US citizens arrested four months earlier and charged with treason, and four Liberians. Released as a "goodwill gesture" to US president-elect Bush, the move is seen as an attempt to maintain good political and economic links with the USA (AED 16/9, 25/11; WA 28/11).

The 17 financial advisers seconded from the US Agency for International Development to improve economic management are to end their assignment at the end of 1989, a year short of the original two-year contract. The advisers felt there was little value in continuing with the contract unless they were accorded greater powers to deal with what they described as "extra-budgetary expenditures" (AED 2/12, 9/12).

## Mali

Seventy-eight prisoners, including a number of political detainees sentenced to death following a failed coup attempt against Pres Traoré in 1978, received a presidential **amnesty** on September 22, on the 28th anniversary of Mali's independence (ARB 15/11).

Mali's adoption of a **structural adjustment programme** has resulted in the Paris Club agreeing to reschedule part of Mali's external debt obligations, using for the first time the new formulas for debt relief to poorer countries approved at the Toronto summit of industrial countries in June (AED 4/11).

## Mauritania

The EEC has granted \$221 mn to help combat the **locust** invasion now affecting 4 mn hectares in the south and south-east. Locust density in the affected areas varies between 40–100 a square metre. Nouakchott issued a further appeal on 7 October to the international community for help in fighting locusts threatening countries in western and north-western Africa (SWB 10/10; AED 7/10). (See also Africa.)

The government has adopted a new programme for the 1989–91 period to revive and consolidate the economy. The programme for the period 1985–88 achieved growth of 3.6 per cent, and reduced the inflation rate from 14 to 5 per cent (ARB 31/10).

## Niger

Niger, which still faces a 40 000 tonne **food deficit** for this year, now has one of the fastest growing populations in Africa. Provisional census figures released in September 1988 give Niger a population of 7 257 000, which represents an increase of 2.3 per cent per annum and a 40 per cent increase over the numbers of the previous census 11 years ago. Although Niger is sparsely populated, the arid nature of most of the country severely restricts food production (AA 14/10).

In September 1989 Niger will return to a **normal constitutional system** under which both the civilian and the military coalition will hold power. Parliamentary and presidential elections will be held during the year. Announcing the decision, Pres Saibou reiterated his opposition to multi-partyism, which has been forbidden since the military coup d'état of April 1974, and he excluded the possibility of the army simply returning to barracks. A draft constitution will be put to the people at a national referendum during 1989 (ARB 15/12).

## Nigeria

Nigeria has secured a 20-year **rescheduling** arrangement for its \$5.2 bn debt to commercial banks, ending negotiations which have

lasted a year. The agreement will help relieve the burden of servicing the country's external debt, which is estimated to total \$26 bn. Nigeria has been accepted by the World Bank management as eligible to benefit from the resources of the International Development Association, the World Bank affiliate that lends on concessional terms to the poorest countries. The reclassification should improve Nigeria's case at the Paris Club of official creditors and make the country eligible for IDA project funding. The World Bank says it will lend \$1 bn to the country in the next 12 months subject to the condition that the government continues with its structural adjustment programme (ARB 31/10).

The Emir of Kano has declared that **traditional rulers** in the country are not looking for additional responsibility in the new constitution being drafted for the nation, but want constitutional recognition which will provide them with protection from any possible interference arising from the frequent changes of government (SWB 7/11).

A 24-hour curfew was imposed in the northern city of **Sokoto** after ten people died and government buildings were set on fire in two days of **rioting** following the 6 November announcement that a new spiritual leader had been chosen for the country's estimated 60 mn Muslims following the death of Sir Siddiq Abubakar III on 1 November. The appointment of Ibrahim Dasuki, a prominent businessman, former diplomat and secretary-general of the supreme council for Islamic affairs as the 18th Sultan of Sokoto, reversed an unofficial announcement on 3 November that Muhammadu Maccido, the eldest son of the late sultan, would succeed his father. Sir Siddiq Abubakar III died without naming a successor. The initial choice, popular in Sokoto, was annulled by the military leadership (AED 11/11; AA 11/11; ARB 15/12).

In the first eight months of this year, Nigeria's federal and state governments and their agencies overspent by nearly 100 per cent their total N2.1 bn foreign exchange allocation. After years of refusing to accept International Monetary Fund loan packages out of a strong sense of national pride, in September Nigeria reached agreement in principle with the IMF on a stand-by credit, clearing the way for a stream of desperately needed foreign aid and debt relief. Britain subsequently offered Nigeria an extra \$100 mn in British aid on condition it agrees to carry out economic reforms along lines suggested by the IMF (BD 9/10; AA 11/11).

The government has directed the **Constituent Assembly** to stop further debate on the issue of **Shari'a** (Islamic) Court of Appeal because the contentious subject is seen to be impeding progress on the writing of the constitution. The 1979 constitution limits the establishment of Shari'a courts to states where they are required (AC 2/12; SWB 25/11, 2/12; WR 9/12).

## Senegal

Diplomatic relations with **Libya** were restored with effect from 5 November, having been broken off by Senegal in June 1980, on the grounds that Libya had been responsible for "inadmissible interference" in its internal affairs (AED 11/11).

## Sierra Leone

A recent dispute between Sierra Leone and **Liberia** has been resolved, with both heads of state expressing a commitment to strengthen their relationship. The expulsion by the Liberian authorities in July of 63 Sierra Leonean nationals who were there illegally, was behind the deterioration in relations (ARB 15/9, 15/10; H 19/9).

Four of the 16 people condemned to death for involvement in an abortive March 1987 coup attempt have been freed, but the remaining 12, including former vice-president Minah, have had their death sentences confirmed (AED 30/9).

## Togo

National cotton production is expected to increase by 60 per cent as a result of a \$37.5 mn project aimed at boosting production through increasing agricultural extension and other services. The cotton industry accounts for 10 per cent of export earnings (ARB 31/7).

## CENTRAL AFRICA

### Cameroon

The IMF has approved a \$150 mn **lending programme** to cover loss of revenue following the unfavourable financial and economic losses incurred as a result of the fall in commodity export earnings over the last three years. It is the first time since 1960 that Cameroon has resorted to the Fund for assistance although it still remains the only francophone African country not to have incurred external arrears over the same period. The IMF programme will be augmented by a large structural adjustment loan (of \$150 mn–\$250 mn) from the World Bank, expected to be finalized in the coming months. Reforms are likely to focus on the parastatal and the banking sector and efforts to rein in public spending (AED 30/9; WA 10/10, 14/11; ARB 31/10).

France's *Caisse Centrale de Cooperation Economique* (CCCE) has agreed to lend \$197 mn to assist the financial and economic recovery programme for 1988–89. Aid will be directed at easing the social impact of the government's adjustment programme (AED 7/10, 18/11).

The World Bank is lending \$146 mn to meet the entire cost of an urban development project centered on Douala and Yaoundé. Investment in urban infrastructure is one of the priorities under the 1986–91 development plan. However, capital spending was reduced by 45 per cent in the 1988/89 austerity budget adopted in June 1988 (AED 11/11).

### Congo

The politburo of the ruling *Parti Congolais du Travail* (PCT) has announced a **reduction in salaries**, allowances and bonuses for all civil servants and party officials. The measures, which will affect some 15 000 people, aim to reduce recurrent expenditure in line with the structural adjustment measures initiated in 1986 (AED 4/11).

### Central African Republic

Despite sliding world prices, producer prices for coffee and cotton, the main export crops, will be unchanged for the 1988–89 season. Pres Kolingba has resisted international donor pressures to cut farm prices, on the grounds that this would undermine rural living standards to an unacceptable degree (AED 28/10).

Two **South African** Foreign Ministry officials had a brief meeting with Pres Kolingba at the end of September on the subject of South Africa's peace talks with Angola and Cuba in Congo. It was the first official visit by South Africans to the country (BD 30/9). (*See also South Africa.*)

### Equatorial Guinea

Equatorial Guinea has received financial pledges for the next three years of more than \$250 mn, the full sum requested. It is unlikely that the donors, who include the World Bank and the IMF, would have agreed to the aid package had the country not bowed to pressure to discontinue its plan to allow **toxic waste** dumping on the island of Annobon. Pres Nguema says, however, that the present austerity measures will have to continue. With a \$260 per capita annual income, average life expectancy of 44 years, infant mortality rate of 144 per 1 000, and a 70 per cent illiteracy rate, Equatorial Guinea is already one of the poorest nations in the world (AA 2/9, 9/12).

The secretary-general of the **opposition** Progress Party, Jose Luis Jones, who earlier this year returned to the country after several years in exile, was among seven people sentenced to between 12 years and life imprisonment for fraud, espionage and attacking state security. Two other opposition sympathizers, both army officers, were executed (AED 16/9; ARB 15/10, 15/11).

### Sao Tomé & Príncipe

Twelve bilateral accords were signed during a three-day visit of Portugal's Prime Minister Anabal Cavaco Silva, the first by a Portuguese premier since Sao Tomé's independence in 1975. **Portugal**, the country's third most important trading partner after the Netherlands and West Germany, agreed to finance a hydroelectric power station on Principe island and an experimental television studio (AED 18/11).

Economy and finance minister Torres has resigned, in a move informed sources say reflects differences within the government over the pace of implementing the IMF/World Bank-backed economic recovery programme. Differences within government focus on the application of austerity measures within the public sector and the degree to which the dobra should be further devalued. Although the prime minister remains strongly in favour of the liberalization program and has been pushing through privatization measures in several sectors, the government has failed to take the necessary action of reducing the budget deficit by cutting the public sector payroll by 20 per cent (AED 2/12).

### Zaire

Pres Botha of **South Africa**, his minister of foreign affairs and minister of defence, met Pres Mobutu at his invitation on 1 October for talks on diplomatic relations and peace initiative in Africa. Discussions were also held on Nelson Mandela and the "Sharpeville 6" (BD 3/10; C 3/10). (*See also South Africa.*)

A World Bank project officer has predicted that the increase in **AIDS** deaths in Zaire could wipe out all progress made in Zaire during the last 25 years in improving child survival and overall life expectancy. The epidemic threatens to increase the country's infant death rate by 20 per cent, and the young-adult death rate by 50 per cent within the next ten years. It is estimated that as many as 18 000 deaths may occur during 1989, and if the disease is not controlled this number could reach 100 000 annually by the year 2000 (WBN 15/9; ARB 15/11). (*See also South Africa.*)

Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) **opposition** leader Tshisekedi wa Mulumba has been released from house arrest. Detained nine times since 1980, he has been under arrest, along with nine other UDPS members since January (AED 30/9; NA 11/88).

Zaire and **Libya** have agreed to resume diplomatic ties after a six-year break caused by Zaire restoring relations with Israel (DT 26/10; AED 28/10; ARB 15/11).

On 10 October Zaire announced that it will resume cooperation with the **IMF**. Relations soured in July 1988 when Zaire refused to

raise both fuel prices and interest rates. The day after announcing the resumption of negotiations, Pres Mobutu appointed a new prime minister and replaced a third of the cabinet in what observers see as a prelude to a fresh agreement with the IMF. The main feature of the reshuffle is the return of Kengo wa Dondo as first state commissioner (prime minister) replacing Sambwa Pida Nbagui. Wa Dondo was prime minister from 1982–86, when the government carried out an economic reform programme supported by the fund. Nguza Karl-i-Bond is to share his portfolio with Mobutu's eldest son, Nyiwa, who takes over the post of international cooperation; Karl-i-Bond remains foreign affairs minister. In early November an IMF mission visited the country at the invitation of Mobutu in the hope of achieving an outline agreement on acceptable policy reforms that would enable the fund to resume disbursements. The IMF team is expected to return early in January to continue and possibly complete negotiations on a 1989 economic programme. Zaire's growing arrears to the fund have added urgency to the negotiations — they now total over \$136 mn, and will top \$272 mn by March 1989. Total outstanding external debt is estimated at \$7 000 mn; total debt service for 1988 is put at \$820 mn (AA 30/9; AED 21/10, 4/11, 2/12, 9/12, 23/12; DT 30/11; SWB 29/11, 10/12; AB 12/88; ARB 30/11, 15/12).

Pres Mobutu paved the way for a new accord with the IMF by devaluing the currency by 10 per cent in relation to the dollar to \$1=ZZ206 at the beginning of November. The rate of the zaire has been fixed by the inter-banking market since 1983. By reducing the gap with the parallel market, the new official rate should help to halt inflation, which this year could reach nearly 100 per cent, and alleviate IMF concerns about the slide in the official exchange rate. The price of petrol was raised at the same time to 35 cents a litre (AED 11/11; AC 4/11; ARB 31/12).

A **Belgian** debt-relief proposal to reduce Zaire's bilateral debt obligations which was strongly criticized by some members of its coalition government, who raised the issue of **corruption** in Zaire and personally attacked Mobutu. The issue escalated into a major crisis on 3 December when the Zairean government ordered its nationals to sell their assets in Belgium and demanded the return home of its 2 000 students. An estimated 15 000 Zaireans live in Belgium (ARB 30/11, 31/12; C 5/12; AED 23/12).

## EAST AFRICA

### Burundi

On 4 September Pres Buyoya said peace had returned to the country after August's tribal

**massacres.** The authorities have repeatedly denied claims of the involvement of government troops in the massacres. International aid has started to trickle in to help communities displaced by mid-August's bitter ethnic fighting, but the government's refusal to admit a team of international observers has led to just a fraction of the \$15 mn requested being granted. About 33 000 Burundian refugees remain in the camps in Rwanda, but UN officials say the vast majority of the exiles will have been repatriated by mid-March 1989 (AED 9/9, 16/9, 30/9, 2/12; ARB 15/10).

The military committee for National Salvation, the country's supreme body, announced the creation of a consultative commission on **national unity** on 30 September and the launching of national unity information campaign throughout the whole country (ARB 15/11, 15/12).

After completing a national tour aimed at promoting reconciliation between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, Pres Buyoya announced a new cabinet on 19 October, appointing a prime minister, Adrian Sibomana, from the majority Hutu tribe and naming more Hutus as ministers. Thirteen of the 23 cabinet members are Hutu (S 21/10; AED 28/10; ARB 15/11).

### Comores

The government has appointed a commission to **revise the constitution** for each of the archipelago's three main islands. Pres Abdallah is reported to be seeking amendments to the constitution that would allow him to stay in office for a third term when his six-year mandate expires in 1990. The three commissions, of five to 15 members each, are apparently dominated by government politicians and senior civil servants. They are also expected to recommend the revival of the post of prime minister, which was abolished in 1985. A public campaign promoting the idea of a third term of office for the president is under way (ION 26/11, 17/12; AED 2/12).

### Ethiopia

**A declining economy** which has grown only 1.9 per cent a year over the past decade while the defence budget has grown 13-fold since 1974 (when Pres Mengistu took power) to \$725 mn, the fall in the peasant-dominated farm activity and the defeats suffered by Ethiopian government forces in the past year have now obliged Pres Mengistu to renew calls for peace. The Soviet Union has also openly stated its support for a negotiated settlement to Ethiopia's secessionist conflicts. There are growing signs that Ethiopia is eager to find a solution to the fighting in **Eritrea** and **Tigray** with the government making diplomatic overtures to win support and to show its willingness to the conflict. Col

Mengistu has made a concerted effort over the past two years to show Arab leaders that, unlike the government of Emperor Haile Selassie, his regime respects Islam. He has also made overtures to **Sudan**, and tried to interest Italy and Britain in finding a solution to the fighting. Most recently, in October, he made his first official trip to Syria to discuss the conflict. The diplomatic offensives are being accompanied by new economic policies more palatable to Western countries — the boosting of private investment, application of fiscal reforms and an increase in the producer price of coffee. Talks are currently being held with the IMF for a balance of payments loan; the government is also considering a devaluation of the birr. Announcing the radical **liberalization** reforms on 8 November, Pres Mengistu emphasized that they in no way undermine the socialist ideals of the party, but were necessary because of the countries disastrous economic situation. Ethiopia's external public debt amounted to \$2,434 bn in 1987 (ION 15/10, 12/11, 17/12; ARB 31/10; EASA 11/11; AC 18/11).

Amid growing signs that the government is considering opening negotiations with the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, the rebels released 127 prisoners of war on 20 October (AED 11/11). In an effort to counter the diplomatic offensive which the Ethiopian government has been conducting in Europe, Eritrean leader Issayas Afewerke visited West Germany, France and Britain in November to launch a peace initiative to end the 27-year war. All the Western governments have so far refused to have direct dealings with the EPLF, preferring to continue their ties with the Ethiopian regime. Although the Organization of African Unity also refuses to accede to Eritrean demands, several African countries support the Eritreans (TWR 2/11).

On 1 January 1989, Ethiopia is to become a member of the United Nations **Security Council** for a two-year term. Ethiopia is to take Zambia's place on the Security Council and will occupy one of the non-permanent seats (ION 5/11).

### Kenya

Nationwide **Kanu party elections** were held at the end of September, two years ahead of schedule, amid widespread allegations of ballot rigging and political manipulation. Called with only a weeks notice, the elections further consolidated the power of both Pres Moi and Vice Pres Karanja, who was elected vice-president of the party after former national vice-president Kibaki withdrew. The elections, which appeared to be principally aimed at removing Kibaki and thereby solving problems caused by having two vice-presidents, resulted in a major **realignment of power** at executive level (ION 17/9, 24/9, 1/

10; WR 23/9; AA 30/9; ARB 15/10; NA 11/88).

Pres Moi concluded a four-day official visit to **Iran** on 17 November. Iran promised to boost technical assistance to Kenya, notably in the field of oil exploration. The trip represents a major coup for Iranian diplomacy in that Kenya, because of the military facilities which it has accorded to the USA, is one of the latter's main allies in Africa (ION 19/11, 24/11, 26/11).

On 23 December Kenya announced the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with **Israel**. Despite the closure of the embassy in 1973, Israel had maintained a diplomatic interest section in Nairobi (AA 6/1; ION 7/1).

At a meeting held in October under the auspices of the World Bank, representatives from 14 donor countries and seven international organizations agreed to grant \$1.1 bn worth of aid to Kenya for 1989, a clear improvement on the \$600 mn for 1986. About 40 per cent of the sum will be quick disbursing loans and will take the form of either a balance of payments aid or a budgetary aid. Much of the money will be given under concessionary terms in order not to increase Kenya's foreign debt, which is currently estimated at \$3.7 bn. The pledges were made on the basis of the results of the 1983-88 fifth development plan and a preview of the sixth plan (ION 29/10; ARB 30/11).

**Japan** is set to become Kenya's biggest ever donor with estimated aid commitments for fiscal 1988 of around \$361 mn. This is Japan's largest single aid commitment in Africa this fiscal year, and is more than Japan has given Kenya in the whole of the last five years. The World Bank, the next largest donor, is expected to commit about \$200 mn (AED 18/11).

### Madagascar

Madagascar is the second African country, after Mali, to have been accorded a special rescheduling of its external debt by the Paris Club. The agreement follows the IMF's decision to grant a 10-month standby loan in August and the application of an economic and financial adjustment programme. Madagascar's gross national product per head has shrunk by an average of 4 per cent a year in the last decade to \$200 a head (AED 4/11; ION 5/11; ARB 30/11).

A bill allowing Pres Ratsiraka to call early **elections** was passed by the national assembly on 6 December. The amendment to the constitution was voted on by the ruling *Avant-Garde de la Revolution Malgache* (Arema) party, which has a majority in the assembly. With the increasingly unstable political and economic climate, the president who says he intends to seek a third seven-year term, is expected to bring the elections forward from November 1989 to February. Leaders of the *Mouvement pour le Pouvoir Proletarian*

(MFM) and *Elan Populaire pour l'Unité Nationale* (Vonjy/VTM) opposition parties strongly protested against the bill (AED 16/12; ION 10/12).

### Mauritius

A leading figure in Mauritian politics at the beginning of the 1980s, Harish Boodhoo, officially relaunched the **Mauritian Socialist Party** (PSM) on 24 June. He had dissolved it in 1983 when he created the Militant Socialist Movement (MSM) with the present Prime Minister, Sir Aneerood Jugnauth (ION 25/6; ARB 15/8).

Foreign affairs minister Sir Satcam Boolell took over as Deputy Prime Minister on 15 August, following the **resignation** of **Sir Gaetan Duval** and his brother, industry minister Herve Duval. Leader of the Mauritian Social Democratic Party (PMSD) which held four of the 46 coalition seats in the government, Sir Gaetan's resignation followed disagreements with the cabinet over the Prime Minister's handling of a labour dispute and the October municipal elections. He has previously had differences with the cabinet over his pro-South African attitude (SWB 15/8; AED 19/8; AA 19/8; ION 20/8; AED 26/8; ARB 15/9).

The *Mouvement Militant Mauricien* (MMM) and the *Mouvement Travailiste Democratique* (MTD), were the overwhelming victors in municipal elections held on 23 October, winning 70 per cent of the 126 town council seats. Duval's PMSD party won only 30 per cent of votes and failed to gain a seat. The ruling MSM did not contest the elections, and urged its supporters to abstain (ION 29/10; ARB 15/11; AA 25/11).

**Price controls** on staple goods have been reintroduced after several years of liberalization and deregulation. The government has resorted to this measure in an attempt to stem **inflation**, which is expected to shoot up from its June 1988 level of 1.5 per cent to 15 per cent by June 1989. According to an official of the finance ministry, the measure has been reluctantly taken by the government and should in no way be interpreted as undermining the current liberalization of the economy (ION 19/11; AA 11/11).

### Somalia

In September Somalia launched an appeal for international assistance to enable it to cope with some one and a half million Somalis who fled last May and June's fighting between government forces and the rebel **Somali National Movement**. Located in areas bordering on the zones affected by the conflict, there are an additional 300 000 refugees living in UN refugee camps on the Ethiopian side of the border. The Minister of the Interior said that 63 per cent of public and

private buildings had been destroyed or damaged in the war zone, and the roads linking the main centres extensively damaged (ION 10/9).

The government indicated its willingness to reach an accord with the IMF by **devaluing** the shilling by 20.7 per cent to \$1=SS 247 in mid-August. Somali remains ineligible for IMF finance because of arrears of debt repayments totalling \$61 mn at the end of June (AED 7/10; ARB 31/10).

On 20 December, following a three-day visit by Pres Siad Barre to **Libya**, the two countries announced the signature of an economic, cultural and social cooperation **accord**. The accord marks the completion of a reconciliation process between the two countries begun in 1985 when Libya ceased supplying arms to the opposition Somali Salvation Democratic Front (ION 24/12).

### Tanzania

Gen Ernest Mwita Kiara has been appointed head of the armed forces to replace Gen David Musuguri, who retired at the beginning of September. Gen Tumainiel Kiewelu becomes new chief of staff in place of Gen Mwakalindile, who moves to the foreign affairs ministry. The changes, the first important ones since Pres Mwinyi took over as head of state in 1985, are seen as strengthening Mwinyi's control over the army (SWB 7/9; ION 10/9; AED 16/9).

**Zanzibar** has introduced wide ranging **press curbs** allowing the authorities to jail journalists for up to five years for writing articles judged critical of the government. In addition, journalists working on the island without government accreditation face a possible \$300 fine or three years jail (AED 22/9).

On 7 November Tanzania announced a 22 per cent **devaluation** of the shilling to \$1=Tsh119.39. The cut followed the successful conclusion of late-October talks between the government and the IMF on conditions for releasing second-year structural adjustment drawings. Announcing the politically unpopular decision to sign a new accord on further reforms, Pres Mwinyi said it was an imperative requirement for survival. Grain marketing and other crucial areas of the agricultural sector are to be the main focus of the economic reforms.

Subsequent to the agreement, the World Bank intermediary, the IDA, announced two loans, one of \$135 mn for the rehabilitation of the industrial sector and a trade adjustment programme, and another for the modernization of agricultural research services (AED 11/11, 18/11; EASA 11/11, 21/12; ION 12/11, 24/12; ARB 30/11; WBN 15/12).

Tanzania has secured \$187 mn in external finance to repair its main roads network. Backed by seven donors one of the main projects involves the rehabilitation of the Tan-Zam highway (EASA 21/12).

### Uganda

Uganda is to move ahead with **economic reforms** aimed at restoring growth with the help of \$550 mn in aid pledged by a group of donor nations and international organizations at the World Bank consultative meeting on 27–28 October. Representatives praised the government's bold programme of economic reforms, which have resulted in increased agricultural and industrial production, but stressed the need for reform and rehabilitation of the civil service as a necessary condition for sustaining recovery. The government is rigorously applying measures to reduce the fiscal deficit from 4.5 per cent of the GNP for 1987–88 to 2.8 per cent for 1990–91, and to reduce inflation from its present level of 200 per cent to 60 per cent in 1988–89 (AED 22/8, 28/10, 4/11; ION 5/11; EASA 11/11; ARB 30/11; AC 4–10/11).

Following the agreement with the IMF the shilling was **devalued** by 10 per cent to \$1=US\$165 on 3 December, and the price of fuel raised. Inflation between June–October averaged 5.2 per cent a month, against 10 per cent before the budget. In a further effort to reduce costs, the government has announced that at least 40 000 civil servants will lose their jobs in a move to **trim** the 240 000-strong **civil service**, which is plagued by inefficiency and corruption (AED 9/12; ARB 31/12).

The government is to appoint a 15-man commission to draw up a **new constitution**. Its recommendations will be presented within 24 months. Announcing the decision in October, Museveni reiterated his pledge to return Uganda to constitutional government in 1990 (SWB 13/10; ARB 15/11; ION 17/12).

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

**Pope John Paul II** arrived in Zimbabwe on 10 September on the first leg of his ten-day visit to five Southern African countries. Drawing huge crowds during his tour, the Pope called for peace and reconciliation, and spoke out against violence as a means to solve internal problems. Pope John spent four days in Zimbabwe before spending one day each in Botswana and Lesotho, briefly stopping over in Swaziland and concluding his tour with four days in Mozambique.

The Military Council of **Lesotho** declared a **state of emergency** just three weeks before the Pope arrived; no reasons were given. The visit of the Pope to the country was marred by the hijack drama staged to coincide with his visit, and the delay by 10 hours of the Pope's arrival due to the diversion to South Africa of his airliner because of bad weather. An unexpectedly small number of people turned out for the main event — the beatification Mass of **Father Joseph Gerard** — with only 10 000 pilgrims arriving; official estimates

were put at 500 000. His visit to Lesotho was followed by a 6 hour visit to Swaziland on 16 September. In a highly unusual incident, the Pope had to stop the mass as King Mswati arrived late for the service. During the Pope's four day visit to Mozambique he made a strong appeal for peace in the country, urging dialogue, while appealing to the government to allow the church more liberty to work towards the end of war and poverty (H 13/9, ST 11/9; TS 13/9; C 17/9; S 7/9, 16/9, 19/9; ION 24/9; SS 18/9; WA 28/11). (See also *Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe*.)

## Angola

Following the removal of **South African troops** from Angola at the end of August and the implementation of the **ceasefire** agreement, talks were resumed in **Brazzaville** to discuss a timetable for the withdrawal of Cuban forces. These negotiations, held from 7-9 September, were overshadowed by reports of the massive reinforcement of **Cuban forces** in Angola, allegedly in preparation for a renewed government offensive against Unita. This round of talks ended inconclusively, against a background of accusations and denials of breached undertakings. By the middle of September MPLA and Unita troops had indeed been engaged in fierce fighting around Cangumbe, and the next round of talks was not held until 26 September. Some progress was reported from Brazzaville after four days, but still few details were forthcoming. In the meantime, on 21 September, Dr Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of the UN, visited South Africa and then Angola to discuss the implementation of **UN Resolution 435**. There were also rumours of plans for a broader regional summit, later discounted.

On 7 October talks resumed in **New York** between Angola, South Africa and Cuba, and new proposals were tabled. On 17 October Pres dos Santos left on an overseas visit to Tanzania, China, the USSR and Czechoslovakia. The press speculated that he was pressed by his hosts to finalize a settlement of the Cuban and Namibian issues. Nevertheless the original "deadline" of 1 November for the implementation of Resolution 435 passed with no final agreement reached, apparently because both Angola and Cuba wanted to await the result of the US presidential election. Talks scheduled for Geneva at the end of October were aborted when the Angolan and Cuban delegations failed to arrive.

The **Geneva** meeting eventually took place between 11 and 15 November, with the USSR more directly involved than hitherto. Apparent agreement was now reached on a plan for the scheduled withdrawal of Cuban forces and the implementation of Namibian independence. This agreement was to be

referred by the delegations to their respective governments for **ratification**. The governments of Cuba and Angola gave announced their acceptance on 18 November, but South Africa delayed its consent until 22 November, after having consulted the **Unita** leadership.

Arguments about the arrangements for the verification of Cuban withdrawals constituted a late threat to the signature of the peace protocols. Talks were resumed in Brazzaville on 30 November, but the South African delegation returned home on 3 December without signing the protocol. South African misgivings were apparently dispelled by the US undertakings, however, and the **protocols** were signed in **Brazzaville** on 13 December. Among the terms agreed was that 1 April would be the date for the implementation of Resolution 435. The final peace agreement was signed at UN headquarters in New York on 22 December (C3/9, 6/9, 9/9, 10/9, 16/9, 21/9, 26/9, 27/9, 30/9, 4/10, 7/10, 11/10, 18/10, 29/10, 31/10, 14/11, 15/11, 16/11, 19/11, 21/11, 23/11, 3/12, 13/12, 14/12; SS 4/9, 9/10, 23/10, 13/11, 20/11, 4/12; S 5/9, 8/9, 10/9, 20/9, 23/9, 28/9, 12/10, 31/10, 16/11, 23/11, 29/11, 30/11, 5/12, 13/12, 14/12; R 4/9; FM 9/9; AED 9/9, 23/9, 21/10, 28/10, 9/12; BD 15/9, 2/11, 17/11, 23/11; E 24/9; B 20/9, 10/10, 21/10, 24/10, 16/11, 21/11, 14/12; H 26/9; ST 9/10, 30/10, 13/11, 4/12; SWB 17/11, 24/12).

Angola is rapidly emerging as a world-class **oil producer**. The recent spate of offshore discoveries and increase in exploration activities means that Angola's oil industry, already the fastest growing in Africa, is likely to continue to expand at a brisk pace throughout the 1990s (DT 6/9; BD 27/10; ARB 30/11).

**Diamond sales** are expected to top 1 million carats this year, earning about \$180 mn, an upturn which is seen to reflect the success of Endiama, the state company, in its restructuring of the industry in the past two years (AE&M 8/12; AA 25/11; AED 2/12; ARB 31/12).

## Botswana

The Botswana National Front (BNF), the country's largest **opposition** party, has expelled eight of its officials and indefinitely suspended three others. The group, all of whom come from southern Botswana, claimed that they were the original BNF, and called on the party leader to stop the "communist-inclined youth" from creating another political party within the main one (C 12/12; SWB 6/12, 13/12; BDN 8/11).

The foreign affairs ministers of Botswana and **South Africa** met in September for talks focusing on security matters and economic cooperation. South Africa does not have any formal agreement with the country regarding the movement of ANC insurgents whom it alleges are using Botswana as springboard for attacks. South African media reports that Dr Chiepe admitted during a press meeting that

members of the **ANC** are using Botswana to infiltrate South Africa, were strongly denied by Botswana. Subsequent to the meeting, the SA government reiterated warnings of its right to take action to prevent ANC attacks via Botswana. A second meeting between the two countries was held on 6 December, at which agreement was reached to hold regular talks aimed at addressing the security concerns of both countries (C 17/9, 20/9, 21/9, 27/9, 29/9, 7/12; BDN 19/9; S 27/9; AED 7/10, 6/1; AA 14/10).

Two South African men, Johannes Basson and Theodore Hermansen, were sentenced on 13 December to an effective 10 years for their part in an **attempted raid** on Gaborone in July. Shortly after their trial opened in early September, the authorities arrested their Motswana lawyer and a black South African for attempting to rescue the men from jail. The case against a third SA citizen, Barry Vivier, was dropped. Another SA couple who were implicated in the attempted raid, were also acquitted on the charges of high treason (S 7/9, 13/10; SWB 22/9; ARB 15/10; C 21/9, 15/10, 17/10, 13/12; BDN 9/12).

Relations with South Africa were put under further strain 3 days later when Botswana blamed South Africa for the 28 December **bomb explosion** in Gaborone that killed a young boy. The bombing followed a raid on a border village earlier in the month, in which two people were killed (C 13/12; AED 23/12).

A cooperation agreement for developing the **Sua Pan soda ash** deposit was finally signed in Gaborone by the government and South Africa's African Explosives & Chemicals Industries (AECI) on 21 November. The R920 mn development could save SA more than R150 mn a year in foreign currency. AECI signed on behalf of a consortium of SA firms that will take 52 per cent of the operating company, Soda Ash Botswana; the Botswana government holds the remaining 48 per cent. South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and other African countries are expected to buy the soda ash, which will replace imports from America (AA 2/9; BD 23/11; AED 25/11; ST 27/11).

**Trade relations** between Botswana and **Zimbabwe** are returning to normal with the signing of an amended customs agreement which does away with custom duties and import restrictions on goods grown, manufactured or produced in either country. Relations have been strained for more than a year after allegations that products not originating in Botswana were being exported to Zimbabwe in contravention of the original agreement (BDN 13/9; AED 16/9; ARB 31/10).

## Lesotho

Pleas by Lesotho's five main opposition leaders to **South Africa** to intervene diplomatically

to encourage the military council to step down in favour of a civilian government have been turned down by Pres Botha as being in contravention of a policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries (SAB 23/9).

During his visit to **Nigeria** in October, King Moshoeshe II appealed for international guarantees to help Lesotho reduce its dependence on South Africa. The two countries agreed at the meeting to formalize their cooperation agreement on education and culture (C 18/10; SWB 21/10).

A bus carrying **pilgrims** from the mountainous southern region of Lesotho was **hijacked** by four armed men, just hours before the arrival of the **Pope**. Thought to be members of the banned Lesotho Liberation Army, the men held 71 people hostage and demanded to meet the Pope and King Moshoeshe. The drama ended outside the British High Commission in Maseru when a South African police task force stormed the bus, killing three of the hijackers; two hostages died in the shoot-out. The fourth hijacker died in custody (S 14/9, 16/9; BD 15/9; AED 23/9; LT 22/9).

**King Moshoeshe II**, an outspoken critic of South Africa, paid a surprise courtesy visit to Pres Botha on 25 October. The talks focussed on future developments in relations and cooperation between the states (S 26/10; LT 3/11; WA 28/11).

Following soon after the government's adoption of a policy framework paper with an ambitious agenda of **policy reforms**, donors pledged in excess of \$390 mn for Lesotho's development plans over the next three years at a round-table convened by the UN Development Programme. The government presented development plans for all sectors of the economy, except for the Lesotho Highlands water project (AED 23/12).

## Malawi

After completing talks in **Mozambique** with Pres Chissano, Pres Botha of **South Africa** paid his first official visit to Malawi, the only state in black Africa that has diplomatic relations with SA. Regarded as a breakthrough in improving Southern African relationships and peace in the region, the talks focussed on bilateral relations and regional economic development and cooperation (C 12/9; SWB 5/9; S 16/9; DT 23/9; SAT 11/88). (See also *South Africa*.)

On 27 December the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Mozambique and Malawi signed an accord on repatriating, voluntarily, Mozambican **refugees**, and they established a joint commission to deal with related issues. There are an estimated 600 000 refugees living in Malawi. Between 250 and 500 people have been repatriated every week since July 1988 (DT 26/9; NA 8/88; SWB 25/11, 23/12, 28/12; MIO 5/1).

Malawi had a record **tobacco** crop of 75 mn kg, with receipts further boosted by record prices because of world shortages. Sales totalled MK389 mn, up from MK278 mn last year. Accounting for over 60 per cent of all exported commodities, tobacco sales are expected to rise a further 20–25 mn kg in the 1988/89 season (AED 18/11; DT 18/11; ARB 31/12).

## Mozambique

At their historic meeting at Songo, Mozambique, on 12 September Pres Chissano and **South African Pres Botha** pledged to revive the 1984 Nkomati Accord on non-aggression, to rebuild and defend the Cahora Bassa power lines and to step up economic cooperation. Chissano also confirmed that he has accepted an invitation from Pres Botha to a future summit in South Africa, and assurances were given by South Africa that no assistance is being given to the Renamo rebels. The Joint Cooperation and Development Commission (JDC) approved at the meeting will deal principally with matters connected with the functioning of the **Cahora Bassa** dam, the rehabilitation of ports and railways, support for agricultural projects and training for Mozambican technicians (C 12/9; S 13/9; BD 13/9; MNR 15/9; ION 17/9; DT 29/9; ARB 15/10; SAT 11/88; ARB 30/11; NA 12/88). (See also *South Africa*.)

Subsequent to the Songo meeting, SA has pursued an active policy of encouraging and assisting the Mozambican government in its plans for national reconstruction. About R10 mn worth of non-lethal **military equipment** was donated to Mozambique in November for use by a special unit of the army which is being created to guard and patrol the 900 km stretch of electricity pylons which runs from the Cahora Bassa dam to South Africa. Further consignments will follow. The JDC has also agreed to develop a new transport corridor, the **Nkomati Corridor**, at a cost of R50 mn, from Komatipoort to Maputo, providing protection against insurgent attacks. In October South Africa signed a R3 mn loan agreement for the upgrading and expansion of Maputo harbour. On 25 October South Africa officially opened a new building for its trade mission in Maputo (SAB 4/11; AA 11/11; S 16/11; C 16/11, 17/11; BD 30/11, 5/12; S 5/12; ARB 15/12).

The rapid rehabilitation of the vital **Limpopo railway** linking Zimbabwe directly with Maputo now seems virtually assured following the pledge of a further \$51 mn by Britain. It brings the total given or pledged by six donors for the rehabilitation to more than \$210 mn, close to the target of what is needed to get the line fully operational. (Foreign commitment to rehabilitation and development of transport totals between \$400 mn and \$500 mn) (H 19/9; AED 23/9; AA 11/11).

Recruitment of **Mozambican workers** in **South Africa** is going ahead again following the signing of an agreement in terms of which the 1985 restrictions on Mozambican workers by South Africa are to be lifted in both the agricultural and mining sectors. At the November meeting, South Africa also offered assistance for the creation of training and work centres in Mozambique (SWB 4/10; C 15/11, 16/11; DN 17/11).

A 6.4 per cent **devaluation** of the metical was announced on 17 October. The devaluation, which brings the official exchange rate to \$1=MM620, is the third this year, and the fifth in less than two years. Devaluations have been aimed at restoring the currency's value and improving export competitiveness (AED 28/10; ARB 30/11).

External financing requirements of about \$1 380 mn for 1989 have been met following a 3–4 November consultative group meeting organized by the World Bank to examine Mozambique's aid requirement for the next three years. Requirements were based on an annual growth rate of 5 per cent for the period 1988–91 and include debt relief. A total of \$820 mn has been committed for 1989, mostly in the form of balance of payments aid. The high level of donor support reflects appreciation of the government's efforts to proceed with economic liberalization — successive devaluations, increased agricultural producer prices, and more economic pricing of consumer goods and rents which have helped to restore economic growth to 5 per cent in the first half of 1988. Despite the aid package, Mozambique, however, still faces a financing shortfall of \$97 mn for 1989. A total of \$3.6 bn is owed to external creditors; debt service payments account for about 60 per cent of export receipts, even after rescheduling (WBN 10/11; AED 11/11; AA 11/11; ION 12/11).

The Mozambican Ecumenical Council of Christians is setting up a Commission for Peace and Reconciliation with the intention of **mediating** between the Mozambican government and **Renamo**. The project has received the support of Pres Chissano, but he says that this in no way means that the government is ready to negotiate with Renamo, but is in favour of an extension of the amnesty for Renamo rebels (ION 26/11, 24/12; ARB 15/12).

**Tanzania** has announced that it has withdrawn its troops, most of whom have been deployed north of the Nacala line in the northern province of Zambezia since 1987. The withdrawal, completed in November, was said to be for financial reasons (EASA 2/12; ION 10/12; TS 5/12).

In an unprecedented move, **Portugal** has supplied 12 tonnes of ammunition to the Mozambican government. At the joint Mozambican-Portuguese commission held on 6 December, a military cooperation protocol was signed which provides for Portuguese logistical and training support to

Mozambique's armed forces. Portugal has also agreed to a rescheduling of Mozambique's \$130 mn debt. Renamo has strongly condemned Portugal's "collaboration with government forces" (SWB 9/12; MNR 15/12; ION 17/12; AED 23/12).

The first **cooperation congress** between countries whose official language is **Portuguese** was held on 20 December in Portugal. Participants from seven countries (Portugal, Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tomé & Príncipe), representing 200 mn people, discussed three main themes: cooperation between Portugal and its former colonies, sources of financing for economic development and the study of a new model of cooperation between the Seven (ION 24/12).

On 19 December, **Renamo** rebels sabotaged the electric cable feeding Maputo from South Africa, for the fourth time in two months. The Director of Eskom, South Africa, has estimated that Renamo rebels have destroyed a daily average of three pylons since April 1987, 674 to date. Of the 4 000 pylons, a total of 1 200 have been destroyed since the early 1980s. In September South Africa agreed to supply Mozambique with logistical support worth R16,25 mn to protect the electricity transmission lines (S 23/9; C 5/12; BD 5/12; ION 8/12, 24/12).

### South Africa

The plight of **detained political activists** was highlighted in September by the escape from hospital of three detainees who took refuge in the United States consulate in September. The three, who remained in the consulate in Johannesburg for five weeks, left the building on 19 October free men. Initially turning down the government's offer of freedom, they used their sit-in as a bargaining tool for the lifting of the state of the emergency and release of detainees. Referring to the fate of Suttner and Sisulu, who have been subjected to restriction orders, they left the embassy with the assurances that they would not be subject to banning or house arrest (ARB 15/9; C 14/9, 17/9, 20/10; S 14/9, 17/9, 24/9; SAB 4/11). Recently released detainees law lecturer Raymond Suttner, editor of the *New Nation* Zwelakhe Sisulu, and Eric Molobi, who have been in detention for more than two years, have had severe restrictions placed on them (S 6/9; C 15/10, 3/12; ST 4/12).

On 23 November, the day after approval of the Namibian independence plan, Pres Botha announced that he had commuted the death sentences against the "**Sharpeville 6**". Unprecedented diplomatic and other international calls for their clemency had been made. This was followed on 24 November by confirmation that ANC leader **Nelson Mandela**, who has been treated in Cape Town for an illness, would not be returning to Pollsmoor prison, but would be transferred to a

house in the city. He was given a life sentence in 1964. At the end of November two long term prisoners, Harry Gwala, a veteran ANC leader, and Zephania Mothopeng who helped form the Pan Africanist Congress in 1958, were released on humanitarian grounds. Their release has reduced the number of people serving life sentences for "political" offences to 21 (S 12/10, 24/11; BD 29/11; SS 3/12, 10/12; WA 5/12; WM 22/12).

Three leading members of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and an advocate of black consciousness were found guilty of **treason** and sentenced to between five and twelve years in jail in South Africa's longest treason trial, the **Delmas trial**, which ended on 9 December. The other seven men on trial were convicted of terrorism. Eleven of the original 22 were acquitted (SS 3/12, 10/12; WM 22/12).

Amid tight security, sporadic bombings and stayaways in the main urban centres, voters throughout the country went to the **polls** on 26 October to elect **municipal authorities**. Although (for the first time) the elections included all population groups, voters could only participate in the elections in their respective group areas. Restrictions imposed on individuals and organizations in terms of the emergency regulations stifled widespread opposition to the elections and the calls for a boycott. A month later, the Conservative Party-controlled town council of **Boksburg** closed all amenities except the library to blacks and rescinded an earlier resolution that the Central Business District may be opened to black traders. A number of other municipalities threatened to do the same. The government policy of "own affairs" means that each municipal area is free to reintroduce petty apartheid in terms of the Separate Amenities Act and Group Areas Act. A consumer boycott by "coloured" and black residents followed the reintroduction of the measures in Boksburg (ARB 15/11; SAB 4/11, 16/11; C 16/10).

A lone white gunman killed six black people and wounded 14 others in the centre of Pretoria on 16 November. The **Wit Wolwe**, the ultra right-wing organization of which the killer was allegedly a member, was banned the following week (S 17/11; SWB 23/11; C 9/12).

Three liberal parties, the Progressive Federal Party (PFP), and the newly formed National Democratic Party and the Independent Party, have expressed their support for their leaders' attempts to form a **unified opposition** party. The question of leadership remains a point of contention. The move has arisen out of the liberal oppositions waning support and its demise as the official opposition in parliament when it lost seats to the right-wing opposition Conservative Party (C21/11, 13/12; S 12/12; FM 9/12; WM 22/12).

Pres Botha's new and assertive **foreign policy**, which took shape against a back-

ground of real progress in the peace talks between South Africa and Angola/Cuba, was evident during the last quarter of 1988 when he took the initiative in visiting several African countries and, in the wake of these diplomatic successes, he also visited **Europe**. His visit to **Mozambique** from 11–12 September was seen as highly successful, with the formation of a Joint Development Commission. At the talks with Pres Banda on 13, South Africa promised **Malawi** 3 000 tonnes of maize and rescheduled Malawi's debt. On 29 September Pres Botha stopped over briefly in the **Central African Republic** to discuss with Pres Kolingba the status of the peace initiatives in Angola. Some time was also spent the following day with Pres Mobutu Sese Seko of **Zaire**, who has direct interests in the peace talks as he supports the rebel Unita group. In early October Pres Botha made a nine-day three country visit to Europe. Diplomatic sources noted the appreciation in Europe for what is perceived to be a dynamic new approach to the region's problems. During his visits to West Germany, Switzerland and Portugal, Pres Botha lobbied hard for additional capital to be invested in South Africa and in Southern Africa, particularly for joint projects between South Africa and its neighbours. En route back to South Africa, Pres Botha stopped over in Côte d'Ivoire for talks with Pres Houphouët-Boigny (C 6/10, 8/10, 11/10, 12/10, 15/10; S 9/10, 14/10, 15/10; FM 14/10; ST 16/10; SAD 28/10). (See also *Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic, Malawi, Mozambique and Zaire*.)

### TBVC States

**Transkei** — Former Prime Minister Chief **George Matanzima** was released on bail of R5 000, after appearing in court in September on four charges of bribery and corruption. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information has said that only when all **corruption** has been effectively cleaned up will civilian rule be reintroduced; he estimated that Transkei has lost about R40 mn through corruption. The Harms Commission has been instructed to inquire and report on the involvement of persons, organizations or institutions in acts indicating irregularities in transactions with Transkeian or Ciskeian interests. Hotel magnate Sol Kerzner and a former Cape Town mayor have been subpoenaed to appear before the Commission. Transkei's military ruler, Gen Holomisa has said that no more gambling or casino licences will be issued in Transkei until the Harms Commission has completed its probe into the alleged payment of bribes to former Prime Minister George Matanzima. Gen Holomisa has stated that Transkei expects to be involved in any constitutional settlement in South Africa and could even consider rejoining as an integral part — though not under the

present dispensation (S 6/9, 8/9, 23/9, 16/11; SWB 7/9; C 8/9, 13/9, 27/9, 29/9, 18/10; BD 4/1).

Transkei has embarked on a programme of **economic revitalization** which will involve privatization, deregulation, land tenure reform, the breaking of monopolies and innovative schemes to promote manufacturing and exports. The programme means a clean break with the policies of the former government and is being supported and promoted by the Transkei Development Corporation (TDC) (S 1/12).

**Bophuthatswana** — Pres Mangope has **banned the People's Progressive Party** for its alleged links with the abortive coup in the homeland earlier this year (SAB 4/11).

More than 2.7 mn tourists, including at least 70 000 from overseas, visited Bophuthatswana in the 1987–88 fiscal year (S 20/9).

**Venda** — On 20 October, Headman Frank Nduna **Ravhele** was elected unopposed as the new State President of Venda (S 21/10; SWB 22/10).

**Ciskei** — Six policemen have been charged with the **murder** of Eric Mntonga, the former UDF leader and Idasa co-director who was murdered in June during his detention. Head of the security police, Maj-Gen Ngcanga, is one of the six top security men on trial. They have all been released on bail, an unprecedented move in a trial for politically-motivated murder (WM 22/9, 6/10, 1/12; C 15/10).

Announcing a minor cabinet reshuffle at the end of December, in which two ministers were dropped, Pres Lennox Sebe said that he is to take over command of the armed forces (C 31/12; SWB 4/1).

### South West Africa/Namibia

Announcing the ceasefire in the Angolan conflict, South African Foreign Minister, Pik Botha has said that responsibility for implementation **costs**, which could amount to R1,5 bn — was an issue which still had to be addressed. In addition, the issue was raised of where the independent territory will obtain aid funds to replace those currently paid by South Africa. **Budgetary assistance** to Namibia in the current financial year amounted to R350 mn and R750 mn worth of loans were underwritten — in addition to this, the war in Namibia is estimated to have cost the South African government millions each day (a 1982 estimate put the figure at R1,2 mn a day). The problem of who is to guarantee Namibia's public debt of R750 mn remains another contentious issue in the solving of Namibia's transition to economic independence. The UN Commissioner for Namibia has said that Namibian independence could be hindered if South Africa withdraws its economic assets and forces the country to pay its debts (BD 10/8, 26/10; FM 12/8; AED 2/9).

France, Italy, Spain, Canada, Sweden and Denmark have agreed to supply logistical support for **United Nations troops** who will maintain order in Namibia during its transition to independence. It is estimated that the operation could cost as much as R3 bn (SS 16/10).

Namibia will join the ranks of the world's **gold** producers when the Navachab goldmine near Karibib in central Namibia becomes operational in September 1989. The mine will be developed by De Beers and Anglo American (BD 6/10, 19/10; AA 14/10; ARB 31/10).

Pres Botha has assured residents of **Walvis Bay** that the enclave will never become part of an independent Namibia. He has also warned that a future independent Namibia will be allowed to use the harbour only if its behaviour towards South Africa is "responsible". Walvis Bay is the only deep water harbour between Luanda and Saldanha Bay (S 13/12; SAB 16/12).

### Swaziland

Amid spectacular traditional ceremonies, King Mswati III married his fifth wife in October. The 19-year old bride is the only wife whom he has personally chosen; wives of the other marriages, which were not officially announced, were all chosen for him by tribal elders (C 17/10; S 17/10).

A **decree** which brought consternation to the business and legal community and seriously threatened to deter potential investors, the Deeds Registry (Amendment) Decree, has been effectively neutralized by the simple statement from King Mswati that the "misunderstanding" over the decree "has been taken care of". Amending legislation is now being drafted. The initial decree, which empowered the Minister of Justice to override any provision of the property market, and enabled him to determine what should be sold when and at what price, had fairly widespread support, with many Swazis eager to reclaim the foreign-owned farmlands which they see as their usurped birthright (TS 3/11; AED 4/11; SWB 5/11; SN 12/11; AA 28/10, 25/11; EASA 2/12).

Export receipts from the sale of **diamonds** rose 77 per cent in the first half of 1988 to E7 mn, pushing net export earnings from the mining sector to 18 per cent above 1987's half-yearly figure. A small proportional rise in earnings was recorded for asbestos and coal. Should the value of diamond sales continue to rise at the present rate, diamonds could become the major export earner in the mining sector (TS 22/11). Favourable weather and later than normal picking have resulted in net seed cotton production during 1988 reaching its highest level ever, with sales revenue up more than 100 per cent on the previous season. The kingdom's main dryland crop, cotton is a valuable earner of foreign exchange (TS 22/11).

At the December summit meeting of the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) (whose objective is to reduce trade with and economic dependence on South Africa), a five-year extension was granted to Swaziland and Lesotho to pull out of the Customs Union with South Africa. Prime Minister Dlamini told the PTA that Swaziland gains considerable benefits from membership of the union, receiving almost 80 per cent of its annual revenue from its share of the common customs union pool (C 6/12).

### Zambia

Pres Kuanda was sworn in on 31 October for a sixth five-year term, after receiving a massive "yes" vote in the **presidential elections**. The sole presidential candidate, Kaunda received 1.4 mn votes, or 95.5 per cent of the ballots cast. There was a 56 per cent voter turnout, well down on the 66 per cent of 1983. The parliamentary general elections, which were conducted simultaneously, produced shock results with four cabinet members losing their seats. The new and smaller cabinet of 16 has undergone major restructuring, Kaunda merging or abolishing five portfolios in his new cabinet. He retained his key advisers, largely in their old posts, but dropped 10 cabinet ministers. New to the cabinet is Kaunda's son, Wezi, who takes the post of Minister of State for Home Affairs. Government concern over its lack of popularity because of high inflation and unemployment, widespread shortages of basic goods and high-level corruption was seen to be the reason for the arrest on 7 October of nine people for subversive activities. The six military officers and three civilians were detained for allegedly plotting a coup (AC 2/9; SS 9/10; AA 14/10; AED 2/9, 14/10, 4/11, 11/11; C 26/10; AE 12/88; ARB 15/12).

More than 75 500 people are reported to have died of **malaria** in the past three years, 50 000 of them children — according to the Ministry of Health (DN 17/11).

Citing increased copper and farm output, Pres Kaunda said at the opening of parliament, that the economy was improving thanks to his 18-month go-it-alone Interim National Development Plan, and that growth of 2.2 per cent is expected by the end of 1988. Increased demands for copper, particularly by newly industrialized nations, coupled with low stocks, resulted in record copper prices in the last quarter of 1988 bringing a much needed boost in revenues. Increasing production from other producers is expected to bring generally lower prices in 1989 (AA 28/10; C 19/11; DT 24/11; So 12/88; S 22/11, 13/12).

On 12 November Pres Kaunda announced proposals to **ration maize meal** in urban areas to reduce food subsidy spending. Only a specified amount of subsidized meal may be bought each month per family. The removal of all subsidies is being aimed for (ARB 31/12).

In accordance with the post-election promise of **new economic policy** initiatives, the government devalued the kwacha by 20 per cent to \$1=ZK8. The move is aimed at curbing the 65 per cent inflation rate and maintaining export competitiveness, but with the parallel rate of \$1=ZK50 on the black market, the government has further to go in exchange and interest rate policy if it is to achieve this aim (AED 18/11; ARB 30/11).

## Zimbabwe

**Student riots** and demonstrations at the end of September which resulted in violent confrontations between students and riot police, led to the brief arrest of 478 students. Ten people are facing charges of inciting public violence. Allegations of corruption in the government, notably that certain party leaders have refused to implement a Mugabe-proposed leadership code limiting officials to one house and barring them from acquiring too much wealth, were made by the students. A Kenyan law lecturer was deported in the week following the demonstrations. Pres Mugabe, who was in Britain for talks with Prime Minister Thatcher on bilateral and regional issues, dismissed the students' arguments, although he has also criticized his top ministers for enriching themselves in violation of socialist principles (H 29/9; C 30/9, 3/10, 14/10; S 21/10; ARB 15/11).

Edgar **Tekere**, a member of the central Committee, founder and former Secretary-General of Zanu (PF) has been fired from the party for continuously breaching party protocol. This is the first time that a member of the

ruling party, and a senior one at that, has had his membership withdrawn. A prominent and popular leader from eastern Manicaland, Tekere has been increasingly critical of corruption in government and the planned creation of a one-party state, saying he feared a dictatorship. Tekere has pledged to continue his crusade against government corruption (H 22/10; S 25/10; AA 11/11; ARB 15/11).

The Chief Justice has slashed the prison sentence on South African spy **Odile Harrington** from 25 to 12 years. The judge, Justice Dumbutshena, said the trial judge did "not apply his mind judiciously to the evidence before him" — an indirect reference to the torture that Harrington had suffered (C 16/11; FM 2/12).

Three Zimbabwean men alleged to be **South African agents** have been sentenced to hang for murder following a car-bomb attack in Bulawayo on an African National Congress house in January 1988. The two white men, Kevin Woods and Michael Smith, claimed to have planted the bomb on behalf of the people of South Africa. A dramatic bid to rescue them following their arrest failed and resulted in the arrest of another South African, Charles Behan. If their sentence is upheld by the Supreme Court, Smith and Woods will be the first Zimbabwean whites to hang since independence. All three men are due to be tried again in March 1989 on charges of taking part in earlier bomb attacks on ANC property in Zimbabwe. A total of 13 whites accused of being South African agents are in detention or awaiting trial in Zimbabwe, and at least three more trials are due to follow this one (H 19/11; ST 20/11; S

12/10, 6/11, 8/11, 20/11; ARB 15/12; AE 12/88).

Almost 400 Zimbabweans living at Dukwe camp in Botswana have voluntarily returned home, but about 1 000 are refusing to return because they believe that the friction between Mashonaland based Zanu (PF) and Matabeleland based PF-Zapu still exists (DT 9/12; H 15/12).

## Sources

A — *Afrika*; AA — *Africa Analysis*; AB — *African Business*; AC — *Africa Confidential*; ACon — *Africa Concord*; AE — *Africa Events*; AED — *Africa Economic Digest*; AE&M — *Africa Energy & Mining*; AIB — *Africa Institute Bulletin*; ARB — *Africa Research Bulletin*; BD — *Business Day*; BDN — *Botswana Daily News*; C — *Citizen*; DN — *Daily News*; E — *Economist*; FM — *Financial Mail*; F&T — *Finansies & Tegniek*; H — *The Herald*; IMFS — *IMF Survey*; LT — *Lesotho Today*; ION — *Indian Ocean Newsletter*; JA — *Jeune Afrique*; MIO — *Mozambique Information Office*; MNR — *Mozambique News Review*; NA — *New African*; NN — *New Nation*; R — *Rapport*; S — *Star*; SAB — *SA Barometer*; SAD — *South African Digest*; SAT — *Southern Africa Today*; So — *South*; SN — *Swazi News*; SS — *Sunday Star*; ST — *Sunday Times*; SWB — *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*; TS — *Times of Swaziland*; TWR — *Third World Reports*; WA — *West Africa*; WBN — *World Bank Notes*; WR — *Weekly Review*; WM — *Weekly Mail*; ZN — *Zimbabwe News*.



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