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The Soviets in Mozambique: Is the Payoff Worth the Price?

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An Intelligence Assessment

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SOV 88-10007X
February 1988

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The Soviets in Mozambique: Is the Payoff Worth the Price?

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An Intelligence Assessment

This paper was prepared by [Redacted] Office of
Soviet Analysis, with a contribution from the Office of
Leadership Analysis. Comments and queries are
welcome and may be directed to the Chief, Regional
Policy Division, SOVA, [Redacted]
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SOV 88-10007X
February 1988

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**The Soviets in Mozambique:
Is the Payoff Worth the Price?**

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Key Judgments

*Information available
as of 1 February 1988
was used in this report.*

The Soviets have been pessimistic for several years about Mozambique's ability to improve its economy and defeat the South African-backed Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) insurgency.

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Moscow sees Mozambique as incapable of making efficient use of economic or military aid. Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev's speech during Mozambican President Chissano's visit to Moscow in August 1987 made it clear that he holds the ruling party—the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO)—responsible for Mozambique's dismal performance.

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Moscow is also concerned about Maputo's expanding ties to the West. The Soviets apparently recognize that the only hope of revitalizing Mozambique's moribund economy is Mozambique's continued access to substantial Western aid. Maputo's extensive economic ties to the West, however, are causing some strain in the relationship. Thus, although the Soviets have not actively discouraged Mozambique, there are signs that they are concerned about the potential political influence these links give to the West. In addition, the Soviets take a dim view of Mozambique's small but growing security relationships with Western nations,

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Mozambique's security ties to the United Kingdom—currently limited to London's promise in December 1987 of \$900,000 in nonlethal military aid and the training of 360 Mozambican Army personnel in Zimbabwe, which began in 1986, and a handful in the United Kingdom—are the most significant military relationship Maputo has with a Western nation.

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Mozambique's military and economic weakness, Soviet pessimism about the prospects for improvement in either situation, and Moscow's displeasure with some of Maputo's actions make Mozambique the African Marxist client that the Soviets would most likely abandon were they to abandon any of them. Nevertheless, despite the Soviets' misgivings about the Maputo regime, they show no signs of giving up on their client. Instead, the Soviets appear to be grappling with ways to keep Mozambique afloat without having to throw too much more good money after bad. Although military deliveries appear to have stabilized in 1987, they declined steadily from 1983 to 1986. In addition, Moscow supports the use of troops from Tanzania and Zimbabwe as a means of improving the military situation at minimum cost to the Soviets and their allies. The Soviets continue,

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[redacted]

however, to be Mozambique's primary source of military assistance, and military deliveries are Moscow's greatest source of influence. The Soviets delivered \$155 million worth of military equipment to Mozambique in 1986. [redacted]

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The broad range of Soviet interests in southern Africa provides the motivation for Moscow to continue its aid to Mozambique. Moscow's involvement serves to maintain an international perception of the USSR as a key player in the region. [redacted] the Soviets in the mid-1980s viewed southern Africa as a region of significant strategic importance because of its geographic position and richness in natural resources. [redacted] the Soviets hope, over the longer term, to improve their position to take advantage of developments in South Africa and eventually to promote a pro-Soviet regime there. Mozambique's location in the region—bordering South Africa and Zimbabwe with a coastline on the Mozambique Channel giving access to the Indian Ocean—helps make it an attractive client in support of these goals.

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[redacted]

Moscow's goals in southern Africa also include consolidating the regime of its primary Marxist client, Angola, bolstering the capability of the other Frontline States—Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Botswana, and Zambia—to resist South Africa, and improving its own credentials as an opponent of Pretoria and its apartheid policy. The lion's share of Soviet support to the Frontline States does go to Angola and Mozambique, but the Soviets are also the primary military supplier to Tanzania and Zambia, and have made offers of military equipment to Zimbabwe and Botswana. [redacted]

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The negative consequences of cutting off support for Mozambique probably will also serve to maintain Moscow's commitment. A Soviet withdrawal would raise doubts among some other Third World clients about Moscow's reliability, and these doubts could lead them to look elsewhere for support. A cutoff would certainly set back Soviet efforts to improve relations with nonclient Frontline States, who would see such a move as a betrayal of their struggle against apartheid in South Africa. In addition, the Soviets would not gain much in the West by withdrawing their assistance from Maputo because Moscow's role in Mozambique has not been a major point of contention in East-West or Soviet-Third World relations. [redacted]

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Maputo's dependence on Soviet military aid to stave off RENAMO, the limited opportunities for Western military assistance, and Moscow's reluctance to abandon Mozambique will ensure that the relationship between them remains close and may even force Chissano toward closer cooperation with the USSR. Nonetheless, we believe Mozambique's inability to absorb major new weapon systems will discourage the Soviets from making significant increases in military aid unless Maputo's security situation deteriorates. Even in this event, deployment of Soviet combat troops is highly unlikely but Moscow would probably encourage other Frontline States and Cuba to increase their military support for Maputo. Cuba currently has 800 military advisers in Mozambique. [REDACTED]

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Mozambique's growing relationships with Western countries will continue to be a cause for concern in Moscow. Economic commitments at home and Maputo's ineffective use of Soviet economic aid, however, will undoubtedly keep the Soviets from trying to compete with the West in providing aid to Mozambique. Because Maputo's inability to pay for oil will probably discourage Western suppliers, Moscow's willingness to supply Mozambique with oil on credit will continue to give the Soviets significant economic leverage. In 1985 the Soviets disbursed \$55 million in economic aid, and East European nations provided an additional \$25 million. In addition, although Maputo's inability to absorb or pay for Western arms will continue to limit its military ties to Western nations, Mozambique will probably continue its security relationship with the United Kingdom despite Soviet objections. [REDACTED]

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**The Soviets in Mozambique:
Is the Payoff Worth the Price?** [redacted]

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Soviet Views and Goals

Moscow's Current Assessment of Mozambique

[redacted] Moscow sees Mozambique as a country that is unable to make efficient use of economic or military aid and lacks a strong commitment to socialism. [redacted] the Soviets have been pessimistic for several years about the ability of the Mozambican military to make progress against the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) and the prospects for the economy to show any improvement. Other Soviet officials reportedly have referred to the economic situation as "catastrophic." [redacted]

[redacted]

Soviet pessimism about Mozambique remains strong. Soviet propaganda, which used to praise Maputo's socialist orientation, now usually plays down Mozambique's ideological status. During the visit of Mozambican President Chissano to Moscow in August 1987, Gorbachev publicly criticized the performance of FRELIMO, seeming to attribute Mozambique's poor economic performance and failure to quell the RENAMO insurgency to FRELIMO's incompetence. Soviet diplomats have on occasion mentioned to their US counterparts the possibility that FRELIMO will have to negotiate with the RENAMO insurgents, showing a lack of confidence in Maputo's chances of defeating the rebels. [redacted]

The lack of Soviet confidence in Mozambique's military and economic stability and in its political commitment makes Mozambique the African Marxist client that the Soviets would most likely abandon were they to abandon any of them. Why have the Soviets not abandoned Mozambique? [redacted]

The Early Years: Establishing the Framework

Soviet relations with FRELIMO proceeded at a low level until Mozambique became independent—under a FRELIMO government—in 1975. Although Moscow was one of the first nations to endorse FRELIMO's struggle against the Portuguese, FRELIMO looked to the Chinese as its main political model and source of military and economic support, receiving little aid from the USSR. FRELIMO leaders saw the Chinese experience of guerrilla warfare and collectivization in liberated rural areas as more relevant to FRELIMO's needs than the Soviet model. [redacted]

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Nonetheless, after independence the Soviets were fairly successful in their attempts to win influence with FRELIMO and encouraged its anti-Western tendencies by providing arms and building political ties. The USSR signed a treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Mozambique in March 1977 that established a framework for close political, military, and economic relations. At its third Congress in February 1977, FRELIMO declared itself a Marxist-Leninist "vanguard" party, reaffirming "scientific socialist" principles as essential for the tasks facing Mozambique. This ideological development was welcomed by Moscow, which maintains that the formation of such a party is necessary for the development of genuine socialism. [redacted]

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The Soviets have a broad range of interests in southern Africa that motivate them to continue their support to Mozambique. We believe that Moscow's short-term goals in southern Africa are to consolidate pro-Soviet Marxist regimes, to bolster the capability of the Frontline States—Angola, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana—to resist

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South Africa, and to improve its own credentials in the Third World as an opponent of Pretoria's apartheid policy. The Soviets want to maintain their presence in the region and may want greater access to air and naval facilities. They have some air and naval access in Mozambique, and more extensive access in Angola—their most important client in the region—but have no exclusive basing rights in either country.

[redacted]

Mozambique's location—next to lucrative fishing areas in the Mozambique Channel and with a common border with South Africa—remains a strong inducement for continued Soviet involvement. Mozambique's mineral resources include strategically important tantalum and titanium—which are used in submarine and aircraft construction—as well as chrome, cobalt, and manganese. The Soviets are no doubt also intrigued by the potential of exploitable oil, natural gas, and coal deposits in Mozambique. A major Soviet long-term goal in the region is to control the region's natural resources,

[redacted]

Concern about the consequences of cutting off support for Mozambique is also likely to maintain Moscow's commitment. The Soviets most likely would lose credibility in the Third World if they were to abandon an ally in such dire need. Soviet efforts to improve relations with the nonclient Frontline States would be especially affected because these states would see Soviet abandonment of Mozambique as a sign of decreasing Soviet support for opposition to South Africa. Tanzanian and Zambian officials recently expressed concern that Moscow's commitment to opposing Pretoria is weakening, according to

[redacted] the US Embassy in London.

Western nations would almost certainly be able to expand their influence in Mozambique, and the Soviets would lose Third World support for their positions on East-West and regional issues. In addition, the Soviets would stand to gain little politically in the West by withdrawing their assistance from Maputo because Moscow's role has not been a point of major contention in East-West or Soviet-Third World relations.

[redacted]

Beyond Mozambique, the Soviets have a wide range of other interests in southern Africa. Although Soviet influence in Mozambique will not directly aid many of these goals, Moscow's involvement there serves to maintain its visibility in the region and the international perception of Moscow as a key player in the region.

[redacted] the Soviets in the mid-1980s viewed southern Africa as a region of significant strategic importance because of its geographic position and richness in natural resources. [redacted] over the longer term, the Soviets want to improve their position to take advantage of developments in South Africa and eventually to promote a pro-Soviet regime there.

[redacted]

Soviet interest in southern Africa is also demonstrated by Moscow's attempts to strengthen relations with all the Frontline States that are not now Soviet clients—Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia, and Botswana—to expand its presence and influence in southern Africa. It uses military relationships as the primary means of gaining additional entree into southern Africa and in the last year has supplied or offered arms to all the Frontline States. In addition to their important military relationship with Mozambique and Angola, the Soviets are negotiating a major arms deal with Zimbabwe, signed an arms deal with Tanzania in December 1986 that includes arms to be used in Mozambique, offered helicopters to Botswana in the spring of 1987, and [redacted] recently offered Zambia additional arms.

Instruments of Soviet Influence

Given Moscow's stated unhappiness with Mozambique's performance and the bleak assessments of its prospects on the one hand, and the clear opportunities that close ties to Mozambique present on the other, the Soviets appear to be grappling with ways to keep Mozambique afloat without having to throw too much more good money after bad. Under Gorbachev, the Soviets seem to be reassessing more generally their

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methods of handling their economically burdensome Third World clients. [redacted]

[redacted] are pressing Vietnam and Cuba to adopt economic reforms similar in some cases to those being tried in the Soviet Union. Although Moscow has never abandoned any of its Marxist allies, no matter how economically incompetent, it now seems more reluctant to sharply step up economic aid to them or take on any new poor Third World clients and apparently accepts the need for some of its Third World allies to expand their economic ties to the West. [redacted]

The Soviets appear to be trying to stabilize Maputo's military and economic situation by continuing aid but are limiting the amounts where possible. Despite Mozambique's repeated requests, for example, they have not significantly increased military assistance or economic aid for the past four years, [redacted]

[redacted] probably because of their doubts about the ability of the Mozambican military to absorb and use additional equipment. Nonetheless, we believe Moscow remains committed to helping Mozambique, and in fact the level of arms deliveries may even rise slightly in the next two to three years because Mozambique will probably need to replace trucks, small arms, artillery, and other supplies currently in its arsenal. [redacted]

Military Involvement: The Ties That Bind

Moscow's first priority has been to provide sufficient aid to keep FRELIMO in power and to keep the 20,000 RENAMO insurgents from making major gains. This assistance has been the cornerstone of the Soviet-Mozambican relationship and the primary source of Soviet leverage in the country. Even so, the Soviet assistance has not been able to turn the Mozambican military into an effective fighting force against RENAMO. One major reason for this is the military's poor discipline and morale. The US Embassy reports many soldiers are remaining in garrison to avoid combat, and defections and desertions are widespread. In addition, inadequate training, inappropriate equipment, and chronic resupply problems have compounded Maputo's military problems. As a result, RENAMO operates freely in many areas of the country and is able to mount numerous and effective hit-and-run attacks. [redacted]

Soviet Military Presence. The Soviets began to provide arms to Mozambique immediately after it became independent in 1975. In 1978, Soviet military aid increased sharply and the Soviets established a military advisory group (MAG), which grew to 800 men by 1984 and has remained almost constant over the last three years. Maputo has repeatedly requested increased Soviet arms in response to stepped-up activity by the RENAMO insurgents, but Moscow actually shipped fewer arms to Mozambique over the past few years than it had in the early 1980s. Although Maputo has tried to diversify its sources of military aid since 1981, when then President Machel first requested Tanzanian military aid, Mozambique has remained largely dependent on Soviet military hardware and advisory assistance (see figure 1). [redacted]

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Soviet advisers are present at the national and regional command, division, and brigade levels, closely monitoring combat operations and suggesting courses of action. There are also as many as 800 Cuban military personnel and several hundred East Europeans. Most of the advisers assist the Army. [redacted]

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The Soviet role in Mozambican military planning and logistics for operations against RENAMO is significant. Military reporting indicates that Soviet advisers supervised Mozambican planning in January 1987 for an offensive against RENAMO. In addition, the USSR in late 1986 doubled—from two to four—its contingent of Soviet-piloted and -operated AN-12 transport aircraft in Mozambique, possibly to transport Mozambican troops for offensive operations in 1987. [redacted]

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Despite occasional rumors of Soviet participation in combat, largely from [redacted] [redacted] we have no confirmation that this has occurred in the last several years. [redacted]

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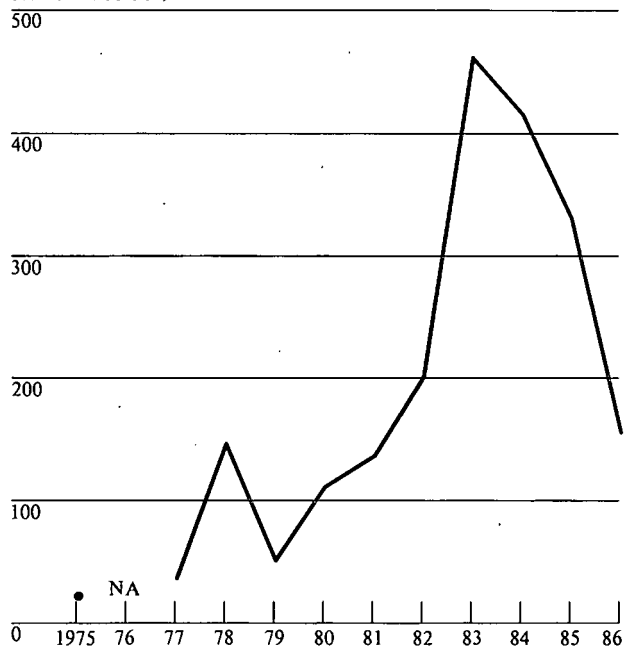
[redacted] Embassy reporting indicate Moscow's unwillingness to allow Soviet advisers to participate in Mozambican combat operations. The preparations in January for an offensive included replacing the MI-25 helicopters at Quelimane Airfield—often associated with combat against

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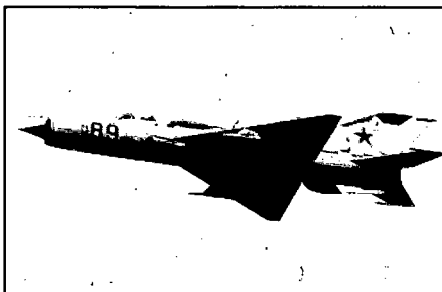
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Figure 1
Soviet Military Deliveries to Mozambique

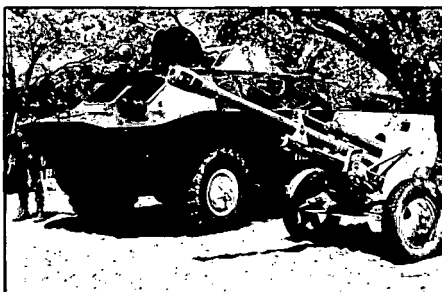
Million 1986 US \$



MI-8 helicopter



MIG-21



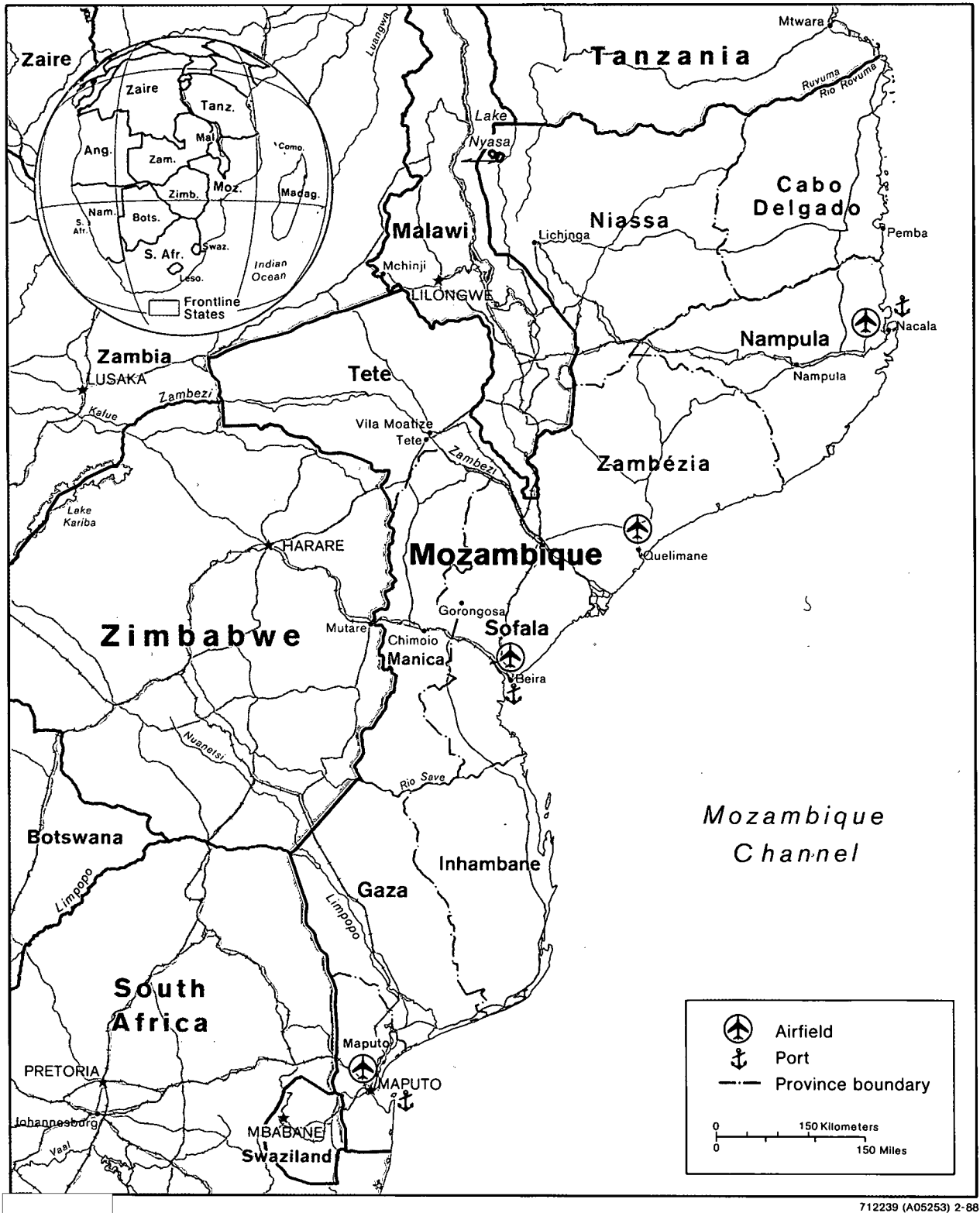
*APC and
75-mm field gun*

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Figure 2
Selected Airfields and Ports in Mozambique



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RENAMO—with MIG-17 fighters (see figure 2). A reliable source of the US defense attache reports that only Mozambican pilots fly the MIG-17 and MIG-21 fighters in combat missions. Mozambique's Air Force Chief of Staff reportedly opposes having Soviets undertake such sorties. There does not appear to be a direct Soviet or Cuban role in ground combat.

Largely because of the Mozambican Armed Forces' lack of success against RENAMO and inefficient use of Soviet equipment, the Soviets have recently been more restrained in their military support for Mozambique. In the past they provided Mozambique with a wide range of military hardware, including aircraft and tanks, as well as other arms, transport vehicles, and ammunition. In the last two years, however, Soviet arms deliveries to Mozambique have been relatively low, dropping from \$330 million in 1985 to \$155 million in 1986. We believe arms shipments remained at a low level in 1987. A Soviet official in Maputo told his US counterpart in mid-1987 that Moscow was not stepping up its military support because Maputo's primary need is to make better use of what it already has.

The Mozambican Air Force is reportedly unhappy with the poor quality of Soviet aircraft, tactics, and training, which undoubtedly limits Moscow's ability to make the Mozambican military a more effective fighting force. For example, Mozambican displeasure with the low proficiency of pilots returning from pilot training in the USSR and with the standoffish attitude of Soviet advisers has contributed to Soviet unpopularity in the Mozambican Air Force, according to [redacted]

Many Mozambican Air Force officers probably would like to become more independent of the USSR, but rumored attempts to purchase aircraft from the United Kingdom have not yet materialized, probably because of Mozambique's lack of hard currency.

[redacted] Mozambican Army personnel [redacted] largely share the Air Force's displeasure. For example, during an April 1987 visit by a Soviet military delegation, according to the US Embassy in Maputo, Mozambican military

officials complained about the nature and quality of Soviet training of Mozambican troops—which consists largely of assistance to ground forces—and the lack of Soviet supplies such as ammunition and boots.

Encouraging Frontline States To Help. As a way to limit its own military assistance burden, Moscow has encouraged Tanzania and Zimbabwe to send troops to Mozambique by providing logistic and advisory support. Moscow's support to this effort has included transporting Tanzanian forces to Mozambique, permitting Tanzanian troops to use Soviet arms delivered to Mozambique, and providing financial assistance, [redacted] In addition, the Soviets have agreed to provide some \$30 million worth of arms to Tanzania for use in Mozambique. Bulgaria and Cuba have provided small arms and supplies to Tanzanian troops in Mozambique, [redacted]

The Zimbabwean and Tanzanian presence has thus far allowed the Soviets to avoid the difficult choices of significantly increasing their military support to Maputo, seeking the assistance of Cuban troops, or abandoning the Mozambican Government if faced with a significant deterioration in the security situation. (Moscow evacuated Soviet dependents from the central provinces in March 1986 because of its concern over the security situation, according to the US Embassy in Maputo.) [redacted]

Soviet relations with Tanzanian forces in Mozambique have been somewhat strained. Although Tanzanian troops are allowed to use Soviet arms and ammunition, the amounts of Soviet equipment made available to them reportedly have been limited. [redacted]

[redacted] For their part, Soviet advisers have voiced disapproval of Tanzanian tactics, [redacted] Zimbabwean officials, on the other hand, have praised Soviet planning of military actions against RENAMO, and we see no signs of serious problems between Zimbabwean forces and Soviet advisers in Mozambique.

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Concern About Western Military Involvement. Mozambique's increasing security ties to the West—a trend we expect to continue over the next few years—are causing deep concern in Moscow. In December 1987, London promised Maputo \$900,000 in non-lethal military aid. The British began training Mozambican troops in Zimbabwe in 1986—they are now training 360 troops a year, according to the [redacted]. [redacted] The British also train a handful of officers in the United Kingdom. Moscow regards British involvement in training the Mozambican Armed Forces—the most significant Western security link to Mozambique—as a threat to its position. [redacted] They are trying to nip these ties in the bud. During Chissano's visit to the USSR in August 1987, the Soviets warned him against military cooperation with the West, according to the US Embassy in Maputo. [redacted]

Political Ties

Relations With Senior Leaders. Moscow has fairly smooth relations with most Mozambican leaders and almost certainly has direct influence over some of their actions. This seems to be achieved through its role as the primary source of material aid rather than ideological or personal influence, although many leaders have traveled and studied in the Soviet Union and claim some allegiance to Marxist-Leninist principles. Although Mozambican officials are willing to work with Moscow, [redacted] some leaders have repeatedly found fault with the amount and quality of Soviet aid and are willing to act independently of Moscow on major issues. Soviet influence, moreover, is not strong enough to allow Moscow to dictate policy to Maputo in most instances, as shown by Mozambique's signing of the Nkomati accord (see inset), its continued search for Western military aid over strong Soviet objections, and its refusal to fully support the Soviet position on the causes of the late President Machel's fatal plane crash. [redacted]

Moscow continues to be resigned to the Nkomati accord. The Soviets did not protest Maputo's January 1987 expulsion of six ANC leaders at Pretoria's insistence, and a Soviet official in Maputo told his US Embassy counterpart that same month that Moscow

Direct Military Benefit

The Soviets have exploited Maputo's heavy military dependence on them by gaining air and naval access in Mozambique. They use this access largely for maintenance, refueling, and crew rest. Foreign bases are prohibited by Mozambique's constitution, and Maputo has never granted the Soviets exclusive access to the port of Nacala, which they have asked for occasionally. [redacted]

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Despite the ban on permanent basing, Soviet ships and planes are permitted access to Mozambican facilities. In 1985 two antisubmarine warfare aircraft flew to Maputo, the first and only such deployment to Mozambique. The aircraft did not fly any missions during their two-week visit. Also, a wide variety of Soviet naval warships often make port calls at the Mozambican ports of Maputo and Nacala when transferring between the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. In addition, [redacted]

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for supply flights to and from Antarctica. Although these flights are of limited strategic value, they highlight the importance of the availability of Maputo airfield for Soviet transport operations throughout the Southern Hemisphere. [redacted]

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believes Mozambique has no choice but to continue to adhere to the Nkomati accord. Although the Soviets oppose rapprochement between Maputo and Pretoria, Moscow fears South African military intervention in Mozambique and probably will try to minimize this risk. Over the longer term, however, we expect Moscow to continue attempts to minimize South African influence in the region by encouraging Maputo to eventually renege on the Nkomati commitment not to aid the ANC. [redacted]

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The Nkomati Accord: A Source of Disagreement

Under the terms of the Nkomati agreement, signed in March 1984 between Mozambique and South Africa, Pretoria agreed to stop supporting RENAMO in return for Maputo's pledge to prevent African National Congress (ANC) attacks against South Africa from Mozambican territory. The accord also provided for a variety of forms of expanded economic cooperation. South Africa and Mozambique continue to publicly support the accord and generally adhere to the security agreements, although Pretoria has probably continued to channel small amounts of covert aid to RENAMO and Maputo has probably likewise helped the ANC. [redacted]

The Soviets initially criticized the agreement and played down its prospects for success, arguing that South Africa could not be trusted to abide by the agreement. Since then, however, Moscow appears to have accepted the necessity for Maputo of an agreement that held out the prospect of lessening the security threat to the regime. Moreover, Maputo's economic dependence on South Africa—for some fuel, electric power, and hard currency earnings from transport and labor services—provides Pretoria with a degree of access and influence in Mozambique. Mozambique's willingness to reach agreement with South Africa probably convinced the Soviets of the limits of their influence, particularly over Mozambique's relations with third countries. [redacted]

Moscow is displeased with President Chissano's moderate line on South African issues, particularly his continued adherence to the Nkomati accord and his contacts with the South African leadership. [redacted]

President Chissano, who is considered less pro-Soviet than some other FRELIMO leaders, probably was not Moscow's preferred choice to succeed former Mozambican President Machel. The Soviets, in the view of many foreign observers, favored Politburo member dos Santos, [redacted]

Soviet Reaction to Machel's Death

Ever since the death of Mozambican President Machel—when his Soviet-built and -piloted plane crashed in October 1986—Moscow has attempted to deflect criticism in southern Africa by maintaining that a false radio beacon lured the plane off course. Although the Soviet media made some accusations of South African involvement in Machel's death and harshly criticized South African actions before the crash and during the investigation, probably to score propaganda points in the region, official statements by senior Soviet civil aviation officials placed no blame for the "false beacon." We expect the Soviets to continue a public campaign to counter the conclusions of investigators and of other African leaders that pilot error and shoddy equipment led to the crash. For its part, Maputo has walked the middle ground on this issue, publicly stating that the evidence has so far been inconclusive—it has criticized the South African inquiry on the one hand but has also mentioned errors on the part of the Soviet crew. [redacted]

Immediate Soviet reaction to Machel's death in a Soviet-piloted airplane crash was designed to stabilize the situation and retain unity within FRELIMO. Moscow's first statements after the crash urged unity and stability, and the Soviets made no apparent attempts to influence the succession process. Moscow may have preferred to use its limited influence on FRELIMO to ensure party unity rather than to try to handpick a president, a move that easily could have failed. [redacted]

The Soviets continue to show strong interest in party unity by supporting Chissano publicly even though their endorsement is mixed with some criticism. After he assumed the presidency, the Soviet press was quick

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to praise his leadership ability. In private, [redacted] [redacted] Moscow has been disappointed with Chissano's acceptance of Western military aid, his foreign policy opening to the West, and his moderate line on South Africa. Nevertheless, during Chissano's August 1987 visit to Moscow, even as the Soviets publicly lectured him about FRELIMO's shortcomings, the Soviet press reported that the atmosphere of the talks was "warm and friendly," and Gorbachev mentioned Chissano's previous visits to the Soviet Union. [redacted]

We believe Chissano will continue to work closely with the Soviets—at least on the military front—but his views of the USSR are more negative than those of his predecessor. According to the US Embassy in Maputo, he is suspicious of both the United States and the USSR, once defining nonalignment as "a pox on both the superpowers." Moreover, [redacted]

[redacted] Chissano is frustrated with the quality and quantity of Soviet economic and military aid, and supports a more active role for Maputo in the Non-aligned Movement. In addition, according to the US Embassy in Maputo, Chissano's public statements have been much more evenhanded in their treatment of the United States and USSR than those of Machel. [redacted]

Moscow apparently wants to retain good relations with Chissano—as it did when he was Foreign Minister—despite displeasure with some of his recent actions. Soviet press coverage of Chissano's visits to the Soviet Union, for example, has generally been positive. Coverage of his trip to Moscow in November 1985 was generally upbeat, although the US Embassy in Maputo reported angry disagreements with the Soviets over Mozambique's UN votes on Afghanistan and its continuation of the Nkomati accord with South Africa. Press coverage of Chissano's trip to Moscow in August 1987 was similarly positive despite Soviet criticism of FRELIMO's performance in handling economic problems and the RENAMO insurgency. The US Embassy in Moscow reports that a Soviet Foreign Ministry official recently spoke favorably of Chissano's attempts to improve the performance of Mozambique's Armed Forces. [redacted]

Other senior Mozambican leaders are generally considered more hardline Marxists than Chissano and may be more susceptible to Soviet influence, although all factions within FRELIMO are backing Chissano:

[redacted]

- According to press reports, Politburo member dos Santos has traveled frequently to the Soviet Union and Bloc countries and maintains close ties to Soviet and Bloc representatives in Maputo. As Economics Minister in the early 1980s, dos Santos successfully negotiated a number of trade agreements and other economic treaties with the Bloc.

- Lieutenant General Guebuza, supported by radicals in the military, strongly opposed the Nkomati accord with South Africa. Nonetheless, we believe he is a Chissano loyalist whose possible Marxist leanings are tempered by a strong sense of nationalism. [redacted]

Although some Mozambican leaders—such as Politburo member Veloso, Major General Gruveta, Chissano confidant and Minister of Culture Honwana, and Foreign Minister Mocumbi—are less positive about the Soviets, these leaders are currently much less influential than the pro-Soviet leaders. Veloso, [redacted] has had wide-ranging differences of opinion with Soviet military advisers. [redacted] Gruveta in February 1986 said he was dissatisfied with Machel's relationship with Moscow and blamed the Soviets for Mozambique's economic problems and prolonged civil war. Gruveta reportedly criticized Soviet personnel for the privileged status they enjoy in Mozambique and said other military officers shared his discontent. [redacted]

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Selected Senior Leaders of Mozambique



Joaquim Chissano
President
(since November 1986)

Has consolidated control during past year by strengthening ties to senior military and party officials . . . popular, particularly in southern Mozambique, stronghold of his own Shangan ethnic group . . . nationalist with strong socialist leanings . . . a growing "anti-Marxist" insurgency and a lackluster economy are his primary concerns . . . is pursuing two-track policy of reaffirming ties to "socialist states" while simultaneously furthering relations with the West . . . cautious consensus builder, say US diplomats . . . long service as Foreign Minister (1975-86) has given him considerable negotiating skills . . . habitually tailors his remarks to his audience, according to Embassy reporting . . . is head of FRELIMO and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces . . . educated in Portugal and France . . . talented linguist . . . 48 years old. [redacted]



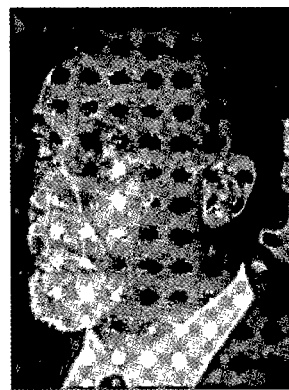
Gen. Alberto Chipande
Minister of National
Defense
(since 1975)

Key Chissano ally . . . popular in military . . . FRELIMO Politburo member . . . favors strong political and military relationship with Moscow, but for economic reasons also supports Chissano's efforts to improve ties to West, according to Embassy reporting . . . military training in USSR (1978-80) . . . belongs to small, northern Maconde ethnic group . . . 48 years old. [redacted]



Lt. Gen. Armando Guebuza
Minister of Transport and
Telecommunications
(since January 1987)

Second most powerful official in Mozambique . . . FRELIMO Politburo member . . . extremely popular in party and military . . . long identified with FRELIMO's pro-Soviet faction, but now appears to be aligning himself with nationalist element, according to Embassy reports . . . has good relationship with Chissano and supports his efforts to improve relations with West, say US diplomats . . . current Cabinet post gives him responsibility for revitalizing transportation routes, including economically and psychologically important Beira Corridor . . . formerly Interior Minister (1976-87) and Minister of State to the Presidency (1984-87) . . . was prominent guerrilla commander in independence war against Portugal . . . belongs to Macua, country's largest ethnic group . . . International Visitor Program grantee, 1987 . . . 43 years old. [redacted]



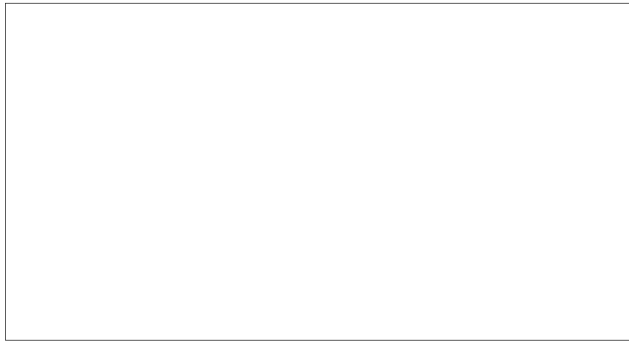
Marcelino dos Santos
Chairman, People's Assembly
(since January 1987)

Pro-Soviet ideologue and de facto head of FRELIMO's radical faction . . . senior member of Politburo . . . garners considerable respect as one of FRELIMO's founding fathers, but his racially mixed background has always limited his influence, according to Embassy reporting . . . does not appear to be close to Chissano . . . political importance is declining, according to US Embassy . . . has consistently opposed good relations with West . . . married to white South African Communist . . . 58 years old. [redacted]

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Party-to-Party Ties. The Soviets and East Europeans have developed extensive party-to-party ties to FRELIMO—formalized by the 1977 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the USSR and Mozambique and similar agreements with Bulgaria, East Germany, and Cuba. Dozens of delegations from the Soviet Union and Bloc countries visit Mozambique each year. The program of interparty contacts includes visits from CPSU representatives at the Politburo, Central Committee, and provincial levels. Although we have little information on their activities, Soviet Embassy personnel in Maputo almost certainly have extensive contacts with FRELIMO officials. [redacted]



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Moscow uses its influence at various levels of FRELIMO to offer advice on how to deal with Mozambique's problems and to organize the political structure along Soviet-approved lines. Moscow also uses these contacts to influence Maputo's position on East-West and other issues. [redacted]

Cultural Links. Moscow uses its extensive cultural ties to Mozambique to bolster the political relationship by promoting positive Mozambican perceptions of the USSR and its worldwide activities. Media influence is one prominent method. There are 11 Soviet media personnel in Mozambique. The Soviet news agency Novosti maintains offices in Maputo, and another Soviet news agency, TASS, provides articles to Mozambique's news agency, the Mozambican Information Agency. In addition, the Soviets place numerous articles directly in the Mozambican press on international affairs—largely concerning disarmament and regional conflicts—highlighting the positive role of the Soviet Union, according to US Information Agency (USIA) reporting. The articles also highlight Soviet aid to Mozambique. [redacted]

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East Germany advises FRELIMO on party organization, according to the US Embassy in Maputo. An East German delegation led by Politburo member Kleiber—who is responsible for economic issues—visited Maputo in March 1987. According to the US Embassy, the delegation discussed governmental and party cooperation. [redacted] told a US official that the East Germans will soon send advisers to work with the FRELIMO Central Committee and Secretariat on organizational matters. [redacted]

Moscow, with its East European and Cuban allies, sponsors an extensive scholarship program for Mozambicans as a means of providing visible aid and attempting to gain influence among future elites at relatively low cost. Thousands of Mozambican undergraduates and hundreds of graduate students have studied in the Soviet Bloc, almost all on scholarships.

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The Soviets maintain a close intelligence relationship with Mozambique that includes KGB officials sitting in Mozambican security service offices. [redacted]

The programs appear to be proceeding vigorously, with over 7,000 students currently studying in the USSR, Eastern Europe, and Cuba, according to USIA [redacted] Approximately 850 students departed Mozambique for training in the USSR and Eastern Europe in 1986. Most students in the USSR study technical and scientific subjects. Nonetheless, the experience has not always had the desired effect, and some returning students have expressed disillusionment with Soviet-style Communism and the racism in the USSR, according to the US Embassy in Maputo. [redacted]

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[redacted] These links add marginally to Mozambican dependency on Moscow, but give Soviet intelligence officers additional opportunities to influence Mozambican officials by providing misinformation and increasing Soviet access to Mozambican officials. [redacted]



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Table 1
Soviet Bloc and Cuban
Presence in Mozambique

Number of People

	Diplomatic, Media, and Cultural	Military	Economic
Soviet	65	800	900
East European	30	500	1,175
Cuban	15	800	900

The extensive Bloc scholarship program adds to Moscow's influence by increasing Maputo's dependence on the Soviets for needed technical training.

Economic Involvement: Moscow's Weak Link

Moscow's economic program in Mozambique, while a secondary factor in Soviet-Mozambican ties, is designed to help keep the regime afloat, particularly in terms of energy needs, while providing another avenue for Bloc penetration. There are 900 Soviet economic technicians—along with some 900 Cubans and 1,175 East Europeans—in Mozambique. The technicians play a particularly important role in Mozambique's fishing and mining sectors.

Although Moscow has long been one of Maputo's largest donors of economic aid, Soviet Bloc aid accounts for only about 20 percent of Maputo's total aid, with the West—primarily France, Italy, and the United States—supplying almost all of the rest. The Soviets have not been willing to compete with the West in the scale of their economic aid to Mozambique, preferring to rely primarily on military aid to sustain its influence. The Soviets probably are also reluctant to sink resources—that they could put to better use at home—into Mozambique's dismal economy. We believe Moscow will remain unwilling to provide enough aid to significantly improve Mozambique's economy or lessen Maputo's dependence on Western donors (see tables 2 and 3).

Table 2
Aid Disbursements to
Mozambique in 1985 ^a

Million US \$

Total	406
Total Communist	90
Soviet Union	55
Eastern Europe	25
China	10
Total Western	316
France	78
Italy	67
United States	47 ^b
Sweden	34
Netherlands	25
Norway	21
Others	44

^a Mozambique also receives \$88 million in multilateral assistance.

^b Mostly emergency food assistance.

Table 3
Economic Aid Deliveries
to Mozambique

Million US \$

	1975-80	1981-85
Soviet	25	140
East European	25	100
Non-US Western donors	565	875
United States	60	100

Nonetheless, the Soviets seem determined to remain a significant economic player in Mozambique. They offered limited amounts of additional aid immediately after Chissano's visit to the United Kingdom in May 1987, and signed three economic protocols that provided for \$60 million in loans during Chissano's visit to the USSR in August.

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The Soviets supply a wide variety of goods and technical assistance, including credit for a large portion of Mozambique's petroleum needs. In addition, in 1987 Moscow supplied \$30 million worth of consumer goods on concessional terms, and Mozambique and the USSR in March 1987 signed an economic cooperation accord including plans for new and continued Soviet involvement in mining, oil refining and transportation, and training for economic technicians. Mozambique's fishing industry is particularly dependent on Soviet assistance, and a joint Soviet-Mozambican company—which depends on the Soviets for acquisition and maintenance of its ships—accounts for about 70 percent of Mozambique's catch. [redacted]

Minerals are an important reason for Soviet economic interest in Mozambique. In March 1987 Moscow offered to buy Mozambican tantalum ore at twice the world market price in return for continued mineral rights in Zambezia Province, according to the US Embassy in Maputo. The Embassy also has reported that the Soviets may be using Mozambique's \$1 billion debt to the Bloc as leverage for obtaining greater involvement in more profitable projects in the mineral sector. [redacted]

Clumsy Interference. Moscow's clumsy and tightfisted economic approach toward Mozambique was a major cause of Maputo's turn to the West for trade and aid:

- Moscow supported Mozambique's nationalization of industry and service sectors after independence, probably hoping it would increase Bloc influence. Nationalization, however, contributed to a disastrous economic performance in the late 1970s, which, along with effective RENAMO exploitation of rural economic grievances, led FRELIMO to allow limited privatization of agriculture and industry and improve price and market incentives.
- Partly because of Mozambique's poor economic performance, the Soviet-dominated Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA) rejected Mozambique's 1979 request for membership and still has not accepted Mozambique.

- Soviet and East European economic aid since 1975 has been small scale compared to Western aid or to Mozambique's needs. In addition, before 1982 most of the assistance required repayment in hard currency.

- Mozambique has been dissatisfied not only with the amount of economic aid but also with the overall low quality of Soviet Bloc goods and advisers. Moscow probably has exacerbated the latter problem by charging Maputo high prices for the services of Soviet technicians. In addition, a Soviet-sponsored mining project was costly and provided few economic benefits for Mozambique. Maputo has also protested Soviet violations of bilateral fishing agreements. Soviet physicians, moreover, have earned poor reputations. [redacted]

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The Soviets appear to be acquiescing in Mozambique's desire to seek expanded economic ties and continued aid from the West. [redacted]

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[redacted] Moscow accepts the fact that the Soviet Bloc cannot provide the bulk of the economic aid Mozambique requires and wants the West to assist Mozambique. The Soviets, moreover, have apparently learned from their mistakes in advising Maputo on economic policy. They no longer seem to be pushing Maputo to nationalize its economy further, and a Soviet commentator last year referred to Mozambique as a case where there were incentives to "use private and foreign capital and encourage the mixed sector in the interests of national development."

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However, the Soviets' offer of limited additional aid just after Chissano's visit in May 1987 to the United Kingdom indicates their concern about the possible political gains for the West resulting from closer Mozambican economic ties to Western nations. Moscow apparently prefers taking that risk, however, to sharply stepping up its own support to Maputo. Soviet influence is probably weakest in the economic sector, and we do not believe Maputo would heed any advice from Moscow to limit economic relations with Western countries. [redacted]

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Bloc Assistance. Cuba and East Germany also make significant economic contributions to Mozambique. East Germany provides about \$10 million per year in aid, which supports a variety of economic projects, including training for the fishing industry. Approximately 250 Mozambicans departed for Eastern Europe, mostly to East Germany, for technical training in 1986, and over 2,000 Mozambicans—mostly secondary students—are studying in Cuba. In addition, Cuba conducts projects in health care, education, construction, agriculture, and fishing and mining, according to the US Embassy in Maputo. [redacted]

Outlook

Mozambican dissatisfaction with the Soviets' heavy-handedness, racism, costly military program, and failure to provide adequate economic assistance has probably kept their influence somewhat below what might be expected, given the extensive military assistance program and cultural, political, and economic ties. Partially as a result of this dissatisfaction, the Soviets have not had enough influence to dictate policy to Maputo. For example, Mozambique believes it must limit its ties to the ANC to avoid South African retaliation and will probably continue to proceed along these lines regardless of Soviet advice or pressure. [redacted]

The Soviets will probably continue to make some effort to remain a significant economic player in Mozambique, but their economic influence may wane as Mozambique's desperate need for aid beyond what the Soviets are willing or able to provide continues to encourage a turn to the West. Economic aid to Mozambique will remain a far lower priority for the Soviets than military aid. A Foreign Ministry official told a US official in Moscow early last year that, without progress in Mozambique's war against RENAMO, economic aid would be superfluous. Moscow's willingness to supply Mozambique with oil on credit, however, will continue to give the Soviets significant economic leverage in Mozambique since Maputo's inability to pay will probably discourage Western suppliers. [redacted]

If, as we expect, the status quo holds over the next two years, with the military initiative shifting from time to time but neither the insurgents nor the regime gaining a decisive edge, we believe the Soviets will continue to help FRELIMO to hang on but will continue to look for ways to limit their burden. Mozambique's continuing need for military aid to stave off RENAMO and the limited opportunities for Western military assistance will, in our view, force Chissano toward closer cooperation with the USSR—possibly including allowing expanded Soviet military access rights. Chissano probably will continue to look to both East and West for economic and military aid but will be cautious in pursuing initiatives to the West to avoid alarming Moscow and pro-Soviet FRELIMO officials. [redacted]

If Maputo's security situation worsens the next two years, we believe Moscow is likely to respond by increasing military aid and encouraging other Front-line States—and Cuba—to step up their own military support to Maputo rather than by direct Soviet military intervention. The USSR's reluctance to get involved in combat so far and its basic dissatisfaction with Mozambique's performance and loyalty as a "socialist" ally would, in our view, make the deployment of Soviet combat troops highly unlikely. Although the Soviets have a substantial commitment to Mozambique, this commitment does not appear sufficient for Moscow to take on the risks and expense of the extensive military campaign that would be necessary to blunt a direct military threat to the regime's survival—which could only come with extensive direct South African support. [redacted]

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