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Africa Review

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Africa Review

25X1

27 December 1985

		<i>Page</i>	
Articles	South Africa-Zimbabwe: Rising Tensions	1	25X1 25X1
	Relations between South Africa and Zimbabwe have become increasingly strained following a series of landmine attacks in November and December near their common border by ANC guerrillas operating from Zimbabwe.		25X1
	South Africa: Talks With the African National Congress	5	25X1 25X1
	The ANC has scored major propaganda victories as a result of meetings with white South African politicians, businessmen, students, and black clerics in neighboring states.		25X1
	South Africa: Opposition to Conscription	7	25X1 25X1
	The End Conscription Campaign, an affiliate of the multiracial antiapartheid United Democratic Front, has many sympathetic followers, but Pretoria's flexible conscientious objector policy is likely to siphon off serious opposition to conscription.		25X1
	South Africa: Emigration Growing	9	25X1 25X1
	Emigration from South Africa during July and August exceeded immigration for the first time since 1978—a result, we believe, of the current political and economic uncertainties in the country.		25X1
	Somalia: Uncertain Prospects Toward Economic Reform	11	25X1 25X1
	Somalia made limited progress toward improving its ailing economy in 1985, but major problems remain. Chief among these are a growing external debt, continued high balance-of-payments deficits, and slippages in implementing the 1985 IMF reform package.		25X1

Secret

ALA AR 85-028
27 December 1985

Secret

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Ivory Coast: An Apolitical Military [redacted]	15
[redacted]	

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Despite a history of military coups in West Africa, the traditionally apolitical Ivorian military would be likely to intercede only in the event of a prolonged, destabilizing struggle to succeed the octogenarian President Houphouet-Boigny. [redacted]

25X1

Swaziland: Prince Ousted [redacted]	19
[redacted]	

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The fall of Prince Mfansibili from the leadership of the Likoqo marks the latest event in a struggle for power that has plagued the Kingdom of Swaziland since the death in 1982 of King Sobhuza. [redacted]

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Briefs	South Africa: Few Incidents of Vigilantism [redacted]	21
	[redacted]	
	Mauritius: Weakened Governing Coalition [redacted]	22
	Niger: Political Infighting [redacted]	22

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Articles have been coordinated as appropriate with other offices within CIA. Comments and queries regarding this publication may be directed to the Chief, Production Staff, Office of African and Latin American Analysis, [redacted]

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Articles

South Africa–Zimbabwe:
Rising Tensions



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Relations between South Africa and Zimbabwe have become increasingly strained following a series of landmine attacks in November and December near their common border by African National Congress (ANC) guerrillas operating from Zimbabwe. Officially, Harare does not allow ANC military activity from its territory but finds it difficult to control. Despite bellicose public posturing by Pretoria and Harare, both governments are maintaining private contacts and assuring the other of their desire to avoid escalating the crisis. Nevertheless, the situation along the border remains tense. Pretoria's patience is wearing thin and, in our judgment, additional ANC activity from Zimbabwe will provoke South African retaliation against Harare.

Border Problems

The ANC has claimed publicly its responsibility for the landmine explosions, which occurred just inside South Africa's border with Zimbabwe and killed seven people and injured 12. The first of six separate incidents occurred on 26 November in the Weiße area, about 35 miles west of the town of Messina, in South Africa's northern Transvaal Province, according to press reports. The last—and most deadly—explosion happened on 15 December, killing six whites, four of them small children.

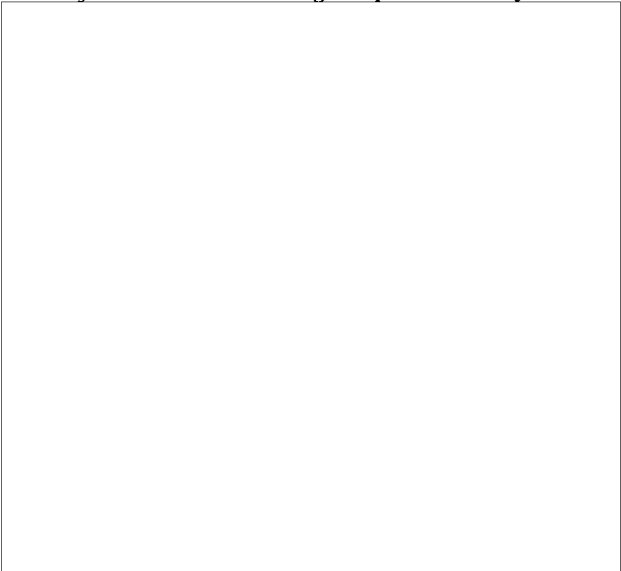


Despite the ANC claim that the mines were placed by its units operating inside South Africa, Zimbabwean Government officials are convinced that the ANC has been mounting operations from Zimbabwean territory, according to US Embassy reporting.



African National Congress Activity in Zimbabwe

To avoid provoking Pretoria, official Zimbabwean Government policy is to prohibit African National Congress members from carrying weapons or using Zimbabwean territory to infiltrate South Africa. In addition, Harare tries to closely monitor the group's presence in the country. Despite these measures, however, the ANC has managed to increase its activity in Zimbabwe during the past several years:



- The US Embassy reports that the ANC continues to operate a number of transit facilities and safehouses in both the Harare and Bulawayo areas.



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ALA AR 85-028
27 December 1985

Secret

public comments as a necessary "political" response to Pretoria's statements. He also conceded that ANC infiltrators have and could pass through Zimbabwe on their way to South Africa. []

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Talking Tough

In the wake of the explosions, Pretoria publicly charged that the ANC guerrillas responsible were seen crossing into Zimbabwe and demanded that Harare take immediate measures to prevent any further such incidents. In late November Pretoria announced that it would begin replacing its police on border duty with regular Army troops,¹ and South Africa's Defense Minister warned Zimbabwe that Pretoria would "take action against terrorists wherever they were hiding." []

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The Zimbabwean Government continues to deny any complicity in the landmine explosions and has reiterated its official policy of not allowing its territory to be used as a springboard for attacks against neighboring states. At the same time, Prime Minister Mugabe has charged Pretoria with deploying commando units along the border, and Minister for State Security Munangagwa has accused South Africa of preparing to invade Zimbabwe. []

Prospects

Most Zimbabwean officials probably believe that South Africa will strike at ANC personnel and facilities in Zimbabwe in the near future. In our judgment, however, South Africa is likely to refrain from taking retaliatory action until it has first exhausted its political and economic options with Harare. Nevertheless, the killing of six whites in the 15 December incident probably will force Pretoria to retaliate against the ANC, most likely in Zambia, Lesotho, or Botswana, and further increase Harare's worries. By using this type of leverage, Pretoria probably hopes to force Harare to crack down on ANC guerrillas in Zimbabwe and thereby remove the threat of South African reprisals. If, however, ANC operations continue to be mounted from Zimbabwe, we believe South Africa would not hesitate to act militarily. []

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Quiet Actions

Despite hostile rhetoric on both sides, Pretoria and Harare appear to want to defuse the crisis and prevent a further souring of relations. []

[] The US Embassy reports that liaison channels continue to work effectively, and Munangagwa characterized his

¹ In our view, the decision to replace police with Army personnel was most likely made prior to the landmine incidents and follows an earlier decision to withdraw police from the operational area in northern Namibia to reinforce police battling the domestic unrest. []

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The Zimbabwean military, in our judgment, would not provide a credible deterrent to South African cross-border operations against ANC targets in Zimbabwe. If the South African military did strike into Zimbabwe, Mugabe could be forced to appeal to Moscow for specialized military assistance—especially air defense assets—to counter Pretoria.



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South Africa: Talks With the African National Congress

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The African National Congress (ANC) has scored major propaganda victories as a result of meetings with white South African politicians, businessmen, students, and black clerics in neighboring states. Despite South African President Botha's condemnation of those talking with the allegedly "Communist-controlled terrorist organization," the ANC leadership has been lauded by the participants in the meetings and by some sectors of the South African media as intelligent and moderate. The talks have increased domestic and international pressures on the government to hold its own talks with the group. Many observers believe the ANC must be included in any South African political solution. The ANC, meanwhile, remains committed to its military campaign, highlighted by recent bombings near the Zimbabwean border, and has called on blacks to carry the struggle into white areas.

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Business Leads the Way

Liberal businessmen—primarily English speaking—have become outspoken advocates of reform and have urged the government to negotiate with credible black leaders. Leaders of several of South Africa's largest corporations took part in the informal discussions with ANC Acting President Oliver Tambo and other senior members of the ANC last September in Zambia. The businessmen characterized the attitudes of the ANC officials as moderate and realistic. One participant told the press that the ANC was under no illusion that the South African Government was about to collapse. In addition, he said that the quality of ANC leadership was far above the level of black leaders within South Africa. The businessmen were not convinced, however, that an acceptable solution to the country's problems required ANC participation.

Officials of the Progressive Federal Party (PFP), the official opposition party in the white chamber of parliament, met next with the ANC in October.

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The ANC had earlier attacked PFP participation in the new parliament, which includes Coloreds and Indians but excludes blacks, and the PFP's close relationship with KwaZulu homeland chief Buthelezi. The politicians were nonetheless impressed by the ANC's insights on the South African scene and its good will.

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The PFP participants went so far as to accept publicly the necessity of the ANC's armed struggle to eliminate apartheid. Despite this concession, however, the ANC leadership apparently considered the meeting a failure.

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All the two sides could agree on was the possibility of another meeting.

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The government prevented a group of college students from traveling to Lusaka in October by denying them passports. This action drew criticism even from the normally progovernment Afrikaner press. Pretoria

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ALA AR 85-028
27 December 1985

Secret

also warned several church leaders that they might be arrested if they attempted to hold talks with the ANC. The government did not act, however, when students and churchmen subsequently held informal talks with members of the ANC and its smaller rival, the Pan-Africanist Congress, at a World Council of Churches' meeting in Harare in December. Following the meeting, the students and clerics claimed that the government was to blame for the ANC's turn to violence and that Botha should engage in meaningful negotiations with the group. []

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Outlook

By meeting with South African groups, the ANC succeeded in its strategy of further isolating Pretoria domestically and internationally, and it is likely to continue such meetings. It is unlikely, however, that Pretoria will agree to open-ended political talks with the group unless it renounces the use of violence. Recent bombings near the Zimbabwean border and in Durban that killed 13 white civilians—including young children—will harden white attitudes against the ANC and counter attempts by the group to portray itself to South African opinionmakers as the unwilling participant in a war directed by the Botha government. []

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The ANC has set its own preconditions to talks with the government. According to press sources it has demanded:

- The release of jailed ANC President Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners.
- The removal of troops from the townships, and the lifting of the state of emergency.
- The lifting of the ban on the ANC and political activity.

The release of Mandela would dramatically improve the climate for dialogue. ANC leaders emphasized to both businessmen and the PFP the importance they attach to Mandela's release. []

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**South Africa:
Opposition to Conscription** [redacted]

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The End Conscription Campaign, an affiliate of the multiracial antiapartheid United Democratic Front, was formed early this year to oppose South Africa's compulsory national military service. This small but vocal organization—mostly made up of white, educated, and affluent English speakers—has many sympathetic followers, but we believe South Africa's flexible conscientious objector policy will continue to siphon off serious opposition to conscription. [redacted]

Opposition to compulsory military service and the "militarization of South African society" has widespread appeal among young South Africans, churches, and some business sectors, according to the [redacted]. The End Conscription Campaign reportedly obtained about 1 million signatures on a petition to end the draft, and applications for religious objector status have increased by 35 percent this year, according to press reports. [redacted]

Police have detained some members, but, in our view, Pretoria has shown no signs of serious concern over the group's activities. A statement by the group in September that the number of men failing to register for military service had dramatically increased to more than 7,500 since the Army entered the townships was met by a rapid and detailed denial by the military and a brief crackdown on the organization's leadership, according to press reports. [redacted]

[redacted] which is one of a handful of white antigovernment organizations, receives media attention out of proportion to its influence. [redacted]

The group's efforts to stir active opposition to conscription have been hampered, in our view, by broad provisions in South Africa's national service commitment laws that provide alternatives to the two-year military service requirement. Political objectors to conscription are prosecuted and sentenced to prison terms. Conscientious objectors, however, are

categorized by the degree of their religious objection: some will wear a uniform but not carry a gun, others want no association with the military. They serve various lengths of alternative duty—from two to six years of noncombatant service to six years of community service and annual periods in government camps. The Board of Religious Objection, which handles applications, has been lenient since it was formed in 1983, [redacted]. Out of 334 decisions between December 1983 and June 1985, only four applications were rejected, according to press reports. [redacted]

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Outlook

Because of South Africa's flexible application of conscientious objector policies, we believe the End Conscription Campaign will not gain a large, active following of political objectors sufficient to cause serious concern in the military or threaten troop morale. Neither draft evasion nor desertion from the military appears to have increased, and the group apparently has little support in the Afrikaner community. Its popularity could increase, however, if continued black unrest forces a prolonged commitment of conscripts in the townships. This remains a possibility because Pretoria announced recently that the military has been granted broad police powers in areas not under the state of emergency. [redacted]

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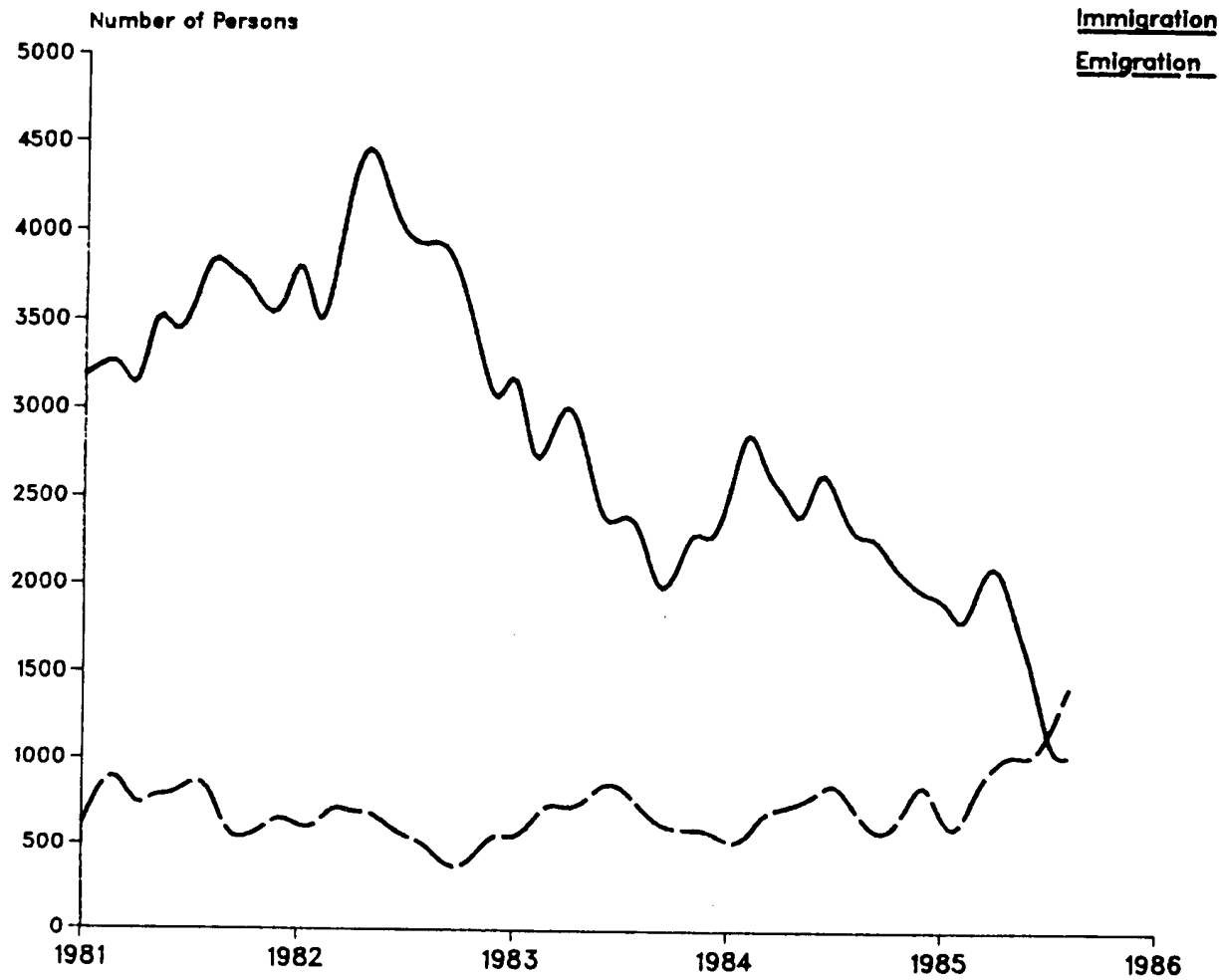
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ALA AR 85-028
27 December 1985

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South Africa: Migration



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South Africa: Emigration Growing

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Emigration from South Africa during July and August exceeded immigration for the first time since 1978, according to South African Government figures. A net population loss of 631 for the two months is a result of a 50-percent fall in immigration and a 60-percent rise in emigration over the same period last year. Historical data indicate that a similar pattern of net population loss occurred during other periods of unrest—after the Sharpeville riots in 1960 and during the two years following the Soweto shootings in 1976.

Although the current unrest has touched few whites directly, we believe political and economic uncertainties probably have combined to encourage emigration. The economy is expected to decline by about 2 percent this year and most forecasts indicate growth next year will be only 2 to 3 percent. Record high taxes and persistent double-digit inflation have reduced consumer buying power, making employment opportunities outside the country more attractive for professionals with marketable skills. In a recent survey of 500 whites, 12 percent said it was likely or fairly likely they would emigrate within the next 10 years.

While domestic economic recession is encouraging emigration, South Africa's international financial woes, ironically, probably are acting to restrain it. South African law permits an emigrant to take 100,000 rand from the country, but at the current depressed exchange rate this amounts to only about \$30,000—an effective deterrent to well-paid professionals who have accumulated assets.

Economic Impact

Professional and technical workers comprised the largest category of emigrants, according to government statistics. Immigrants, mostly unskilled labor, are not replacing them, however, raising concerns about a possible brain drain of technical talent. In commencement speeches at a major university recently, school officials appealed to the new graduates to defy the crisis of confidence and remain in South Africa.

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Industry representatives already are concerned that the country's shortage of technical workers—particularly engineers—will hamper high-technology undertakings, including the country's drive toward energy self-sufficiency. A continued brain drain of the already limited number of skilled white workers also would further erode South Africa's international competitiveness at a time of foreign economic sanctions and creditor demands for debt repayment.

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ALA AR 85-028
27 December 1985

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Somalia: Uncertain Prospects Toward Economic Reform

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Somalia made limited progress toward improving its ailing economy in 1985, but major problems remain. Chief among these are a growing external debt, continued high balance-of-payments deficits, and slippages in implementing the 1985 IMF reform package. Although the stabilization effort continues, Somalia's enthusiasm for economic reform in 1986 probably will be tempered by continuing opposition from many of President Siad's supporters in the government and military. Siad's overtures to Libya and the Soviet Union have netted him only limited assistance thus far. In the end, we believe Siad—despite mounting political opposition—will come to terms with the IMF in 1986 to avoid jeopardizing essential Western and Arab aid.

Background to the 1985 Reform Program

The Somali economy has not recovered from the severe drought of 1974-75 and the Ogaden war with Ethiopia in 1977-78. The war prompted a steady flow of refugees into Somalia and an end to Soviet financial and technical assistance. To counter these problems, Mogadishu substantially increased government expenditures in 1978 and 1979 while foreign grants declined, leading to high budget deficits. Government bank borrowing to finance these deficits pushed the inflation rate higher and widened the current account deficit.

Mogadishu undertook some reforms to accommodate IMF standby arrangements in the period 1981-83, but heavy borrowing kept current account deficits high. Efforts to establish a medium-term economic program in late 1983 and early 1984 were abruptly postponed, and Siad rejected a new IMF agreement in reaction to pressure from his supporters who stood to lose financially if effective reform measures were enacted. The combined effects of a failing stabilization effort, a Saudi Arabian ban on livestock imports from Somalia because of disease, and the fallout from the 1983-84 drought brought Mogadishu's economic and financial situation to crisis proportions in 1984. The inflation rate topped 90 percent (three times the

average of 1981-83), the budget deficit (including grants) increased from 3.3 percent of GDP in 1983 to 6.9 percent in 1984, and the balance-of-payments situation worsened drastically.

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The Program

Siad introduced an ambitious reform package in January 1985, along with another IMF standby agreement, in response to mounting economic pressures. The acute economic deterioration in 1984, and assurances of increased foreign aid flows, probably weighed heavily in overcoming his critics' objections to reform. The new package aimed to increase economic growth from 2.3 percent in 1984 to 4 percent in 1985, to dampen inflation from 92 percent in 1984 to 20 percent in 1985, and to reverse the balance-of-payments deficit from \$139 million in 1984 to a surplus of \$18 million.

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The linchpin of the program was a devaluation of the Somali shilling. The government allowed the shilling to float for most private foreign exchange transactions and devalued the official rate from about 4 to 3 US cents per shilling. The government also eliminated most controls on trade and payments and the licenses for most import and export transactions.

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The program also targeted fiscal and monetary improvements. It sought a substantial rise in tax revenue by applying the market exchange rate for certain transactions and by liberalizing imports. The government undertook to reduce the civil-service sector and to strengthen controls on expenditures.

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Limited Successes and Deep Problems

The economic reform efforts have achieved mixed results. Despite a shortfall in government revenue, Somalia probably came close to meeting targets set

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ALA AR 85-028
27 December 1985

Secret

for the budget deficit and for banking system credit to the government, according to IMF data and Embassy reporting. Although inflation is still in excess of IMF targets, it is down by more than one-half to about 40 percent, according to IMF estimates. Exports were expected to increase by 60 percent because of favorable weather conditions over the past year, efforts to diversify export markets, and the lifting of the Saudi ban on noncattle livestock. Furthermore, real GDP will come close to government targets and grow by about 4 percent during 1985, according to IMF estimates. []

Despite these modest gains, difficulties remain. External debt is mounting steadily—to an estimated \$1.5 billion—and balance-of-payments problems persist. The IMF projects a \$68 million balance-of-payments deficit for 1985, due in part to lower-than-expected exports and aid donor receipts, and high debt servicing requirements. External arrears totaled an estimated \$61.3 million for 1985, according to the Embassy, up from a previous IMF estimate of \$27 million. Mogadishu also has fallen behind in its repayments to the IMF []

Exchange rate adjustment continued to be a major issue of contention between the Fund and Mogadishu in 1985. The government ceased making monthly adjustments to the official rate in mid-May, leaving the official rate at 2 cents per Somali shilling, while the free market rate has hovered at just over 1 cent. The government continues to resist unification with the market rate because it not only fears the potential negative effects on the exchange rate, the budget, and inflation, but also because it is unwilling to lose control over foreign exchange and the benefits of the cheap official rate, according to the Embassy. The two sides have yet to reach an agreement on when or if unification will take place. []

Mogadishu continues to avoid taking effective steps to reform government-owned businesses. Under the 1985 program, the Somalis were to classify existing public enterprises into three categories: those to be phased out of operation, those to be privatized or converted into joint ventures, and those to remain in the public sector. According to the US Embassy, however, the

Somalis dragged their feet on replying—probably fearing losses of patronage and control—and are attempting to keep in the public sector all businesses that benefit top Somali officials and their friends and relatives. []

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Disappointed Expectations of Western Aid

Siad launched the 1985 program with the hope that the IMF, the United States, and other donors would quickly come to his aid. He has come under increased criticism from senior government and party officials over the past year, however, for failing to acquire enough amounts of Western assistance to reverse the country's economic and military decline, despite adopting reforms and providing the United States with military access. []

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[] The critics say the economy has not benefited appreciably from the partial dismantling of the regime's socialist economic structure and the military has grown weaker. Those officials who opposed the 1983-84 reform program and IMF agreement, and profited from the corruption the previous system allowed, are again pressing Siad to reimpose socialist economic policies. []

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To counter mounting criticism, Siad is seeking to improve relations with the Soviet Union and Libya in hopes of gaining additional aid and limiting military and political support for Somali dissidents. At the same time, he has become increasingly critical of Western donors, particularly the United States but also the IMF, blaming their "stinginess" for Somalia's economic and military woes. So far, Libya has provided some \$20 million for a joint agricultural project, but the Soviets have replied to his overtures with political conditions that are unacceptable to Siad, according to US officials. He may believe, however, that his renewed contacts with Moscow and Tripoli will give him some leverage in the difficult negotiations over Western aid and Somali economic reform in 1986. []

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Outlook

We believe that Mogadishu's commitment to reforms is far from certain but judge that Siad is well aware that the economic crisis will worsen if he does not take

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some action. The country's underlying structural deficiencies—a resource gap stemming from a level of consumption exceeding domestic production, high import dependence in combination with few export products and markets, and low productivity of investment—will probably persist for many years despite reform, requiring continued foreign assistance to keep the economy afloat. Unrescheduled debt service for 1986, including arrears, will be \$224 million, almost twice the projected level of exports (\$130 million) for the year, according to the Embassy.

[redacted]

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Siad probably will face increasing pressure to reject an IMF stabilization package in 1986, especially if donor assistance continues to fall below Somali expectations. More government leaders, however, have become increasingly aware of the seriousness of the economic situation and the need for an IMF agreement, according to the Embassy. We believe Siad—with little viable alternative—will accept an IMF agreement to promote the flow of aid from Western and moderate Arab sources, but will try to test the tolerance of the IMF to hold him to the unification of the official exchange rate, the full payment of arrears, and other reforms. We concur with the Embassy assessment that the Somalis, fearing the potential economic consequences, are less likely to enter an agreement if the IMF insists on a unified foreign exchange rate rather than on a modified dual system. [redacted]

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We believe Siad will persist in his criticism of the West to counter his domestic critics and will seek ways to mitigate the effects of the adjustment on his favorite supporters. We do not believe Siad will risk a break with the West, however, given Somalia's strong need for economic and military aid and the low probability that the Soviet Union and Libya will respond sufficiently to his overtures. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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[redacted]
[redacted] Last fall,
the [redacted] over
the possibility that another Bete might replace the
retiring Army Chief of Staff. [redacted] also
notes a nascent undercurrent of unrest among some
junior officers from the north dissatisfied with what
they view as the inequitable distribution of wealth in
favor of southern tribes during Houphouet's reign.

Grumbling Over Austerity. The country's relatively
prosperous economy and the government's attention
to the military's operational needs have, in our
judgment, nurtured the apolitical and stable position
of the armed forces. The Army now has a vested
interest in the system because the President has
created some lucrative opportunities for many officers
to augment their incomes in businesses, agriculture,
real estate, and state-owned enterprises, according to
[redacted] for example, Houphouet
excluded the military from major deductions in
housing allowances for government employees. [redacted]

Despite evidence this year that the economy has
stabilized after five years of decline, the government
continues to operate under an IMF-recommended
recovery program. [redacted]
some officers believe military support for the political
system will fall if austerity measures reduce each
service's capability to perform minimum national
security functions. [redacted]

[redacted] Although the government's 1985 operating
budget increased defense expenditures by 1 percent—
maintaining the military's 7-percent share of the
country's economic pie—real buying power decreased
by 1 percent, [redacted]
[redacted] that cuts in government spending
recently prevented the armed forces from purchasing
fuel for its trucks. [redacted]

Lack of Advancement.

[redacted] lack of opportunities to
advance to command positions is a continuing source
of frustration among junior officers, who believe a
reduction in senior officer tenure is overdue. Despite
Houphouet's policy of absorbing senior officers into
civilian jobs, junior officer promotions are often
delayed by the meager military budget, sometimes
forcing them to fill positions normally occupied by
higher grade officers. In August [redacted]

[redacted] In their view, a steady salary, self-enrichment,
and personal favors, not professionalism or patriotism,
were the primary motivating factors among junior
officers. [redacted]

French Role in the Military

The French presence and influence in Ivory Coast are
probably greater than in any other Sub-Saharan
African state. France stations a 450-man marine
infantry battalion there under the provisions of the
1961 Defense Accord, which provides for France to
assist in the defense of the country in the event of
external attack and to evacuate French and Western
citizens if threatened. In addition, this force is
responsible for evacuating the President—either to
the 43rd French Marine Base at Port Bouet or out of
the country, during a terrorist incident or coup
attempt—and assisting him in retaining control.

[redacted] are attached to the various services, and some hold
significant positions within the Ivorian military
establishment—French officers, for example,
command the Presidential security services and the
Bouake Airbase. France conducted a major joint
exercise with Ivory Coast in November 1984, which
included 2,000 French military personnel, aircraft,
and ground units, and a sea exercise was conducted
from January to March 1985, with seven French ships
calling at the port of Abidjan. [redacted]

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Swaziland: Prince Ousted [REDACTED]

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After months of maneuvering behind the scenes, a coalition of royal family members and government leaders has successfully wrested political control from Prince Mfansibili, leader of the influential 15-member advisory body known as the Liqoqo. Mfansibili's fall marks the latest event in a struggle for power that has plagued the Kingdom of Swaziland since the death of King Sobhuza in 1982. [REDACTED]

Mfansibili's Decline

Prince Mfansibili was dismissed, as was George Msibi, his chief ally in the Liqoqo, and Police Commissioner Simelane, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Their removal was successful, in part, because the Prince had lost much of his political influence. The Liqoqo, which had overshadowed the Queen Regent's authority, had become divided as a result of infighting between Mfansibili and Msibi, according to US Embassy reporting. A further indication of the Prince's decline was his absence from public ceremonies for the Crown Prince. In addition, the Lisango—an advisory organization made up of the late King's sons and other senior princes who opposed Mfansibili's political maneuvering and questionable business deals—was granted broadened authority and countered the Liqoqo. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] About half the Cabinet supported Mfansibili's departure because the Prince planned to replace several Cabinet members with individuals loyal to him, according to US Embassy reporting. [REDACTED]

The removal of Mfansibili, Msibi, and Simelane met no opposition from the security forces. Simelane, an Mfansibili appointee, did not have the support of the officers and rank-and-file police. Moreover, the Swazi Defense Force Commander remained neutral, in line with his traditional stand of not getting involved in the political machinations of the royal family, according to US Embassy sources. [REDACTED]

Outlook

Although the coalition was strong enough to remove Mfansibili from power, it may lack enough cohesion to take over fully. The failure to implement quickly several measures suggests some indecisiveness on the part of the new leaders. In any case, Mfansibili's successors, as well as the Crown Prince, who is expected to be coronated in April, will continue Swaziland's pro-Western stance and its moderate domestic policies that were fixed by the late King. [REDACTED]

² The Queen Regent is the nominal ruler until Crown Prince Makhosetive, 17, assumes the throne. US Embassy reporting indicates that the crown prince's coronation will take place on 25 April 1986. Queen Regent Ntombi will serve as comonarch following Makhosetive's coronation, in accordance with Swazi tradition. [REDACTED]

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ALA AR 85-028
27 December 1985

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Briefs**

South Africa**Few Incidents of Vigilantism**

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Vigilantism in South Africa remains well below expected levels despite 15 months of black unrest. Purchases of firearms by whites have increased dramatically since the unrest began, according to press reports, but white vigilantism generally has been limited to sporadic incidents of individual whites acting to protect their property or themselves against mob attacks. White residents of Kraaifontein in Cape Province formed a "civil unit," but there have been no reports of vigilante action by the group, presumably because of stern government warnings. The police apparently are more tolerant of nonwhite vigilantism. According to press reports, vigilante groups have been formed by residents of two black townships—one in Cape Province and one in Orange Free State Province—to combat unrest and rampant crime, in both cases operating with the knowledge and support of police. The government of the nominally independent Ciskei homeland has called on township residents to form vigilante groups to combat antiapartheid protest.

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Secret**Mauritius****Weakened Governing Coalition**

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Prime Minister Aneerood Jugnauth's moderate three-party governing coalition, the Alliance, lost decisively to the leftwing opposition Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM) in municipal elections in December, a defeat that probably damages the coalition's prospects for the general elections to be held by 1988. The MMM swept all five urban municipalities. The Alliance had touted the elections as a referendum on successful government efforts to improve the economy and create jobs, but US Embassy reporting indicates that the Alliance alienated voters by soliciting support only from the majority Hindu ethnic group—the coalition's chief constituency. On the other hand, the MMM broadened its appeal among the smaller Muslim, Asian, and Creole communities in the urban areas. The government also probably lost votes by attacking rather than attempting to co-opt its chief contender for the Hindu vote, the pro-West Mauritian Labor Party (MLP), led by a former coalition partner and Jugnauth's rival, Satcam Boolell. The Embassy reports that MLP supporters probably cost the Alliance a victory in at least one municipality. In addition, the decision to withhold end-of-year bonuses to civil servants, most of whom live in the municipalities, also probably hurt the Alliance. Despite its electoral losses, the Alliance will retain some leverage over the opposition through government control over municipal budgets.

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The death this month of independence leader and first Prime Minister Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, a Hindu, will have, in our view, a more profound impact on the Alliance's prospects in the general elections. Ramgoolam, widely revered as the "Grand Old Man" of Mauritian politics, supported Jugnauth as the leader of the strongest Hindu party and had worked with both Jugnauth and MLP leader Boolell for a reconciliation to ensure a united governing Hindu party. Without Ramgoolam's influence, unity between Jugnauth and Boolell will be difficult to achieve, and the Hindu vote is likely to remain divided, bolstering the leftist opposition in the general elections.

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Niger**Political Infighting**

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Niger's Supreme Military Council recently blocked a move by President Kountche to remove several influential members from the ruling body. Kountche hoped to replace over half of these members—entrenched senior military officers and regionally powerful prefects—with younger officers loyal to him, according to the US Embassy. The Council's opposition marks its first major challenge to Kountche's authority since the group was formed in 1974 following Kountche's successful coup. According to Embassy reports, the President was surprised by the setback, which follows a Cabinet reshuffle and administration reorganization last fall aimed at strengthening his hand in carrying out tough economic measures. Kountche's unsuccessful bid to reorganize the Council may have set the stage for future confrontations. The Council may now want to play a more active role and could complicate Kountche's efforts to follow through on economic reform.

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