

Resistance to change limits growth for Maputo port

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BY Liesl Venter

The lack of balanced cargo flow and resistance to change continue to hamper the effective use of the Port of Maputo.

According to Jan Bekker, new business development manager for Mozambique International Port Services (MIPS), many shippers are not giving the port a chance.

"Despite the problems at South African ports the shippers in South Africa are very resistant to change and use the Maputo port as an alternative. Maputo offers several advantages such as its geographical location, the road and rail infrastructure and the competitive distance from the South African economic hub. If one takes the congestion in Durban (including rail, road and port) into consideration, then the Port of Maputo is a very viable option."

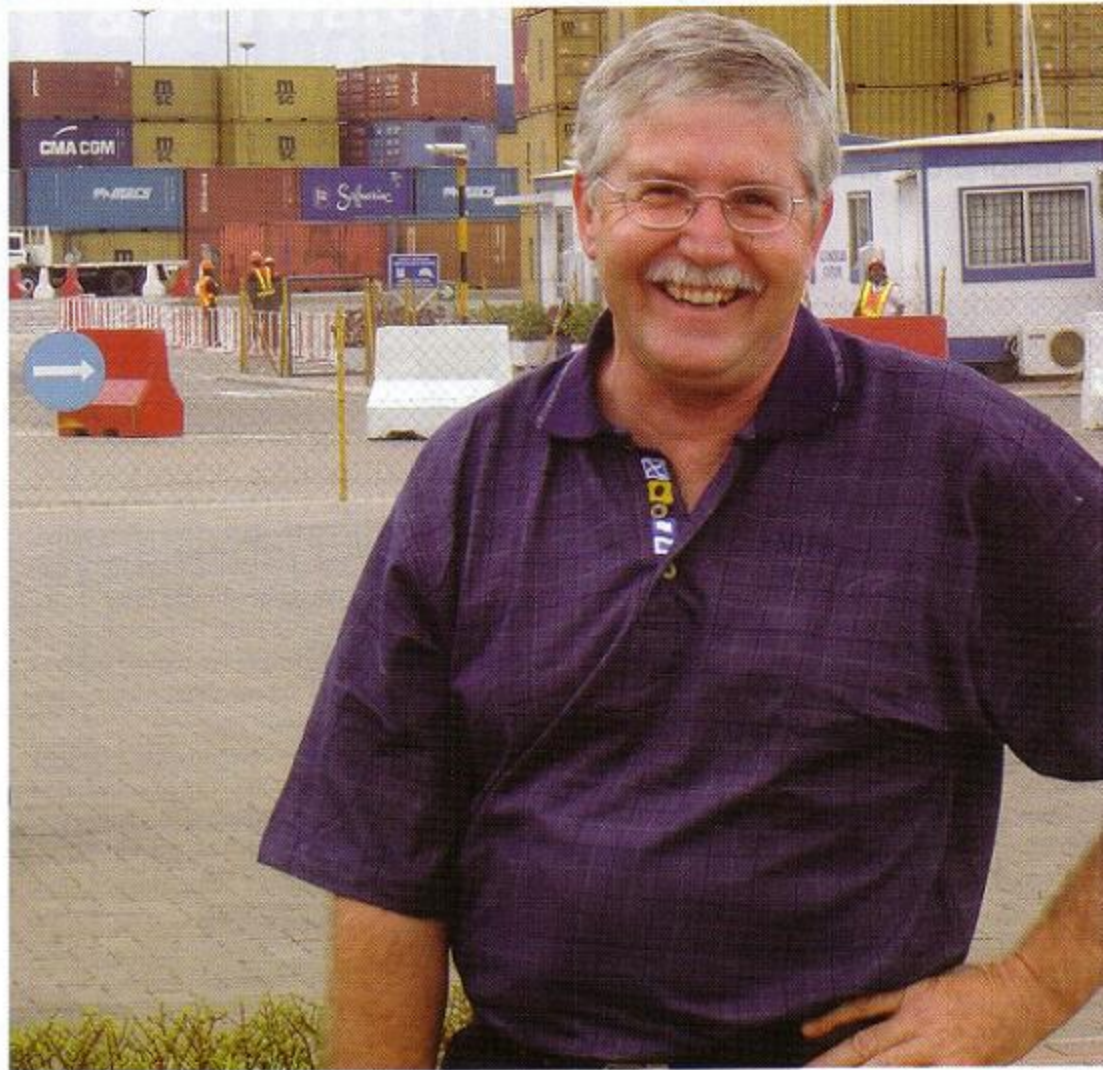
According to Bekker comparing Maputo to South Africa's ports proves it to be a very competitive alternative for shippers.

"Costs for 20 foot heavy containers using Maputo are calculated at around R5137 compared to Durban which is R5107. This is proof that our costs are very similar to the South African ports. Also we do not charge cargo dues."

Bekker said a major constraint was the lack of balanced flows, which was often the reason for less competitive rates.

"At least 34% of the moves through MIPS are empty containers. There are, however, major opportunities for road and rail haulage. As a port we are working on our procedures to ensure cargo flows smoothly. We have made major improvements and are a competitive alternative to South Africa's ports."

Bekker said companies needed to realise there was no reason to expect the Maputo port to be a difficult alternative. "It works exactly the same as the South African ports – we offer the same opportunities if not more. There is nothing different about the operations."



Jan Bekker ... no cargo dues charged.