

Swazi shippers back Goba corridor development

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Providing competitive advantage

BY Liesl Venter

The development of the Goba Corridor, which runs from Matsapha in Swaziland to Maputo in Mozambique, remains high on the agenda for both countries.

According to Kholwaphi Dlamini, a corporate planner for Swazi Rail, the rail corridor is crucial because Maputo is the closest port to Swaziland.

"Both governments, along with the various stakeholders, have signed an agreement to promote the Goba corridor as well as the Maputo port.

"Swazi Rail and Mozambique Ports and Railways (CFM) are working towards the full integration of the train service," he said.

According to Dlamini, the major commodity being conveyed so far has been sugar, but export containers are now also being consigned

on the corridor.

"In 2007 some 107 728 tons of sugar were transported. This year we are already at 106 000 tons with the season not yet finished, while 24 400 containers have been moved."

Dlamini said the use of the Maputo port was providing Swaziland with a competitive advantage based on the beneficial transport costs of export and import goods compared to other ports in South Africa.

The corridor, which starts in the heart of Swaziland's industrial area, Matsapha, is now also being used to import cement from Maputo, despite the quantities being limited to 700 tonnes plus per month.

"With a rail distance of only 230km we are extremely positive about the development of the corridor and the opportunities it offers to Swazi factories," said Dlamini.