

Swaziland's Proposed Land Deal with South Africa – The Case of Ingwavuma and Kangwane*

By *Wolfgang Senfileben*

Since the Gambia united with Senegal under a Confederation recently, Swaziland (with an area of 17 363 sq.km) has been the smallest country in mainland Africa¹ (followed by Djibouti with 21 783 sq.km), but this could change very soon. In mid-1982 it was announced that the Republic of South Africa is willing to transfer two of its land areas totalling approximately 10 000 sq.km to the Kingdom of Swaziland. Together, these two areas would increase Swaziland's size by more than 60 per cent and give the hitherto land-locked state² access to the sea with a potential port at Kosi Bay, just below Mozambique. The principal benefits for both countries are only too obvious: For Swaziland it means a realization of a long-standing dream of the late King Sobhuza II to incorporate all lands of the traditionally Swazi realm, besides ending Swaziland's status as a land-locked state. For South Africa it would be a major success of her apartheid policy (or territorial separation) by excommunicating two of its African tribal areas with a population of together 850 000 people, which would give South Africa a tacit quasi-recognition of her homeland policy, besides the advantage of creating a buffer zone between white-ruled South Africa and Marxist-orientated Mozambique for security reasons. However, such land transactions are carried out at the expenses of the local population in the respective areas of Ingwavuma and KaNgwane. Swaziland had called the land deal »the most significant political occurrence of the twentieth century«. Indeed, the land transfer, if it goes through, constitutes a geopolitical unique case unprecedented in world history. For the first time two countries are willing to transfer two substantial areas of land on an entirely voluntary and equitable basis for the mutual benefit of both. A remote parallel, however, could be seen in the quasi-forced expulsion of the State of Singapore from the Federation of Malaysia in September, 1965 on

* The study is based on a fact-finding trip to Swaziland and South Africa's Natal Province in August, 1982 during the authors's teaching assignment at the University of Malawi.

1 The best overall view about Africa's political geography can be found in *E. A. Boateng* (1978): *A Political Geography of Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

2 There is ample literature available about the geopolitical situation of landlocked states in Africa, see *Zdenek Cervenka* (edit.) (1973): *Land-locked Countries in Africa*. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies; *E. H. Dale* (1968): *Some Geographical Aspects of African Land-locked States*, in: *Annals of the Assoc. of American Geogr.*, vol. 58, pp. 485–505; *M. I. Glassner* (1970): *Access to the Sea for Land-locked States*. The Hague: *Martinus Nijhoff*; *D. Hilling* (1972): *Routes to the Sea for Land-locked States*, in: *Geographical Magazine*, pp. 257–264.

political and racial grounds; yet with the important difference that Singapore opted for complete independence which was subsequently recognized by the world community. The following treatise may analyse some of the implications involved in the land deals with regard to political and administrative factors, ethnic considerations, traffic and communications, as well as the geo-political situation in Southern Africa. However, let us first examine the geographical and socio-economic position of the two land areas involved:

1. KaNgwane (or Swazi) Tribal Homeland is South Africa's second-smallest non-independent homeland with an area of 2090 sq.km located in the eastern part of Transvaal Province. It forms a crescent-shaped sliver of land on Swaziland's northern border, originally consisting of two separate areas which now have been consolidated into one single part. The predominant agricultural use of the territory can be described as »mixed farming« between agriculture and stock-farming, but large areas are still utilized for subsistence farming. KaNgwane is cutting an arc across Swaziland's northern border through citrus and sugar-cane country to the Mozambique border. It is probably one of South Africa's worst rural slums with a complete absence of mineral resources and industrial development (African Business, June 1982, p. 4). Social and Health conditions are appalling. South Africa's 1980 cholera epidemic, for instance, originated from KaNgwane's overcrowded shanty settlements. Typhoid broke out in early 1981. Malnutrition and disease are rife, sanitation, health, educational services and basic infrastructure are all rudimentary.

Of particular interest is KaNgwane's population situation. Of the approximately 750,000 in South Africa living Blacks of Swazi origin (de-jure population of KaNgwane), only 20 % currently live in KaNgwane Homeland, a further 6 % of the Swazis reside in one of the other tribal homelands or Bantustans (KwaZulu, Gazankulu, Lebowa, etc.), and the rest are settling on areas reserved for whites. Therefore, KaNgwane had a de-facto population of only 150,000 people, with 70 % being Swazis, the rest belong to Zulu, Shangaan and North-Sotho tribes. The formation of quasi-political parties is still in the infant stage of development. The four main political groupings can be distinguished by their attitude towards King Sobhuza II of Swaziland. The majority of all Swazis of KaNgwane, although they respect King Sobhuza as the cultural figurehead of the Swazis, have voiced opposition to being incorporated into Swaziland. After the death of King Sobhuza II on August 21, 1982 at the high age of 83, many Swazis of KaNgwane may be less inclined to recognize the suzerainty of a new Swazi monarch. Enos Mabuza, Chief Minister of KaNgwane Homeland, flatly rejects the dubious benefits of Swazi citizenship in exchange for the more valuable South African citizenship. He said: »We have no wish to be part of the medieval monarchy that rules by decree.« Indeed, political parties and labour unions in Swaziland were banned after the country's Parliament was abolished in 1973. The large majority of the people of KaNgwane are certainly united in rejecting the land transfer. Thousands of members of the tribal Inyandze movement pledged to resist the cession of KaNgwane to Swaziland at a meeting in KaNgwane's capital of Kanyamanzane.

The crucial issue is that of citizenship and employment permits. If the land transfer goes through, another 750,000 black South Africans would be deprived of their South African citizenship. The people in KaNgwane fear they will lose their South African mining jobs if they are no longer citizens. Most of KaNgwane's people work in South African mines or in nearby South African towns and would have to continue to do so, since KaNgwane has no industrial or commercial base to absorb them. This would certainly make Swaziland economically more dependent on South Africa than ever before. Another vehement opposition against the KaNgwane land deal comes from white farmers in the area of eastern Transvaal. The boundary changes would also isolate a wealthy white farming area near the border town of Komantipoort, leaving it connected to the rest of South Africa by only a narrow corridor, and the conservative, generally pro-government farmers, have also held protest meetings. South Africa's main opposition party, the Progressive Federal Party, is another principal opponent of the land transfer.

So far, the opposition has achieved some tactical victories on the legal front blocking the immediate land transfer for the time being. In June 1982 South Africa abolished the Legislative Assembly of the black KaNgwane Homeland, and the proclamation R 108 in the government gazette gave full powers to the South African Department of Co-operation and Development (Black Affairs) to administer the territory. Subsequently, the Transvaal Province Supreme Court Appellate Division declared the method adopted illegal, when KaNgwane officials challenged the validity of the proclamation dissolving their Legislative Assembly. In an out of court settlement announced in Pretoria in November 1982, the Department of Co-operation and Development agreed to withdraw the proclamation and to pay all the Homeland's legal costs. In terms of the National States Constitution Act of South Africa, the State President did not have the right to dissolve the KaNgwane Legislative Assembly, but such action could be only taken by the Parliament in consultation with the government. Therefore, this court judgement could be simply over-ruled by passing appropriate legislation in the white Parliament in Cape Town.

2. The Ingwavuma Area or Tongaland is the most northerly coastal magisterial district in the KwaZulu Homeland of South Africa's Natal Province, directly bordering Mozambique. Its area is approximately 4,255 sq.km. The District forms part of the country formerly known as Tongaland. Except for high ground along the Lebombo Mountains (700 m) on its western border to Swaziland, the land is low lying. The Mosi Swamp stretches parallel with the coast for a distance of some 24 km. A large part of Ingwavuma is Bantu reserve and part is unalienated State land. It is a scenic wilderness with no tarred roads, where hippopotamuses bath in the rivers and wild game still roam. Ingwavuma possesses few natural resources, apart from its wildlife. Most of its 80,000 people raise cattle, the traditional source of Zulu wealth. When the Jozini Dam (or J.G. Strijdom Dam) and the Pongolapoort irrigation scheme are completed, a large block of land on the Makatini Flat will come under irrigation. There are also potentials for tourism development. Kosi Bay (roughly 80 km east of Swaziland and 10 km south of

Mozambique) is the strategic town of the region and a potential site for a deep-water port.

Tongaland (comprising more or less the Ingwavuma District), a Natal tract of land with undefined boundaries, had some political significance toward the end of the nineteenth century. Tongaland became important to the Swazis in the 1890s, as the South African Republic (since 1884 a sovereign state consisting of the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State) wished control over Swaziland, because Swaziland could give the South African Republic access to Tongaland, and in turn an ocean outlet with a potential port at Kosi Bay. A railroad between eastern Transvaal and Kosi Bay across Swaziland was already projected. The British ended this thinking by concluding an agreement with the rulers of Tongaland, and by annexing Tongaland in 1895. Thus, the South African Republic lost much of its interest in Swaziland. So, once before in the 1890s, Ingwavuma (Tongaland) was a hot geopolitical issue and a disputed territory in the power struggle for an outlet to the sea.³

The ethnic composition of the Ingwavuma region presents a rather complex and diverse picture.⁴ The principal tribal group is made up of Tongas who never created an empire or developed a clear territoriality. They were constantly vulnerable to attacks from the Zulus and the Shangane who ruled over them between the 1830s and 1890s. All the tribal groups of the Ingwavuma area, however, belong to the large Nguni tribal family. The Zulus are traditionally rivals of the Swazis whom they call »dogs«. Most Zulus strongly believe that Ingwavuma is traditional Zulu tribal territory. Ingwavuma contains the burial place of the revered Zulu Chief Dingaan whose unsuccessful attack on the Boers in 1839 was so violent it is known as »the Battle of the Blood River« (Newsweek, 9. Aug. 1982, p. 15). According to Zulu beliefs, Ingwavuma had never at any time been under Swazi rule. According to Swazi sources, however, four chiefs from the Ingwavuma magistral area were all Swazis, but the Zulus say these chiefs had come to the Zulu Royal house to pay allegiance to King Goodwill Zwelithini, Chief of the Zulu people. Indeed, Zulu passions run deep on the land issue. The Zulu political leader, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, is leading the opposition against the land deal and staged a series of mass protests in the region and the KwaZulu capital of Ulundi. The Zulu King called a »ndaba« (Consultation of the Zulu people), the first since the Zulu War of 1879 to tell his people about the impending crisis. Motions run high, the situation remains sensitive and some people argue that angry Zulus could make common cause with the illegal

- 3 See particularly: *N. G. Garson* (1957): *The Swaziland Question and a Road to the Sea, 1887–1895*, in: *Archives Yearbook for South African History*, Cape Town: Parrow, vol. 2, pp. 263–434 and *A. Griffin & L. C. Reynolds* (1956): *Report on the General Problem of Communications in Swaziland Having Regard to Existing Routes and Political Development*. A Report Prepared for the Swaziland Government. Mbabane: Government Printer.
- 4 On the ethnographic situation see *P. Becker* (1979): *Land Tribes of Southern Africa*. London & New York: Granada; *B. A. Marwick* (1940): *The Swazi – An Ethnographic Account of the Natives of Swaziland Protectorate*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; *D. M. Doveton* (1937): *The Human Geography of Swaziland*. London: Institute of British Geographers Publication No. 8; and *A. T. Bryant* (1964): *A History of the Zulu and Neighbouring Tribes*. Cape Town: C. Struik.

»African National Congress« (ANC) as a consequence of the »unjust« land transfer. On 14th June, 1982 Proclamation R 109 issued by the South African State President excised Ingwavuma from KwaZulu. But in terms of an order given by the Durban Supreme Court on the 25th June, 1982 the South African Department of Co-operation and Development was called to relinquish control of the Ingwavuma area to KwaZulu. The government then issued a second Proclamation R 121 under different legislation, the Black Administration Act of 1927 which grants the President of the Republic of South Africa the right to alter boundaries of KwaZulu without consultation. The second Proclamation was also found to be invalid by a full bench of the Natal Supreme Court. Then the government lodged an appeal at the Appeal Court at Bloemfontein (O.F.S.), South Africa's highest judicial body. In September, 1982 the Appeal Court rejected the transfer of Ingwavuma from KwaZulu to Central administration, arguing that under the 1971 Constitution Act, KwaZulu has original and not delegated legislative capacity. However, these court rulings are insignificant. The long protracted legal struggle between the Central and KwaZulu governments over Ingwavuma could be abruptly ended by simply pushing a bill through Parliament in Cape Town making it lawful for them to take the land.

3. Swaziland's Position: The incorporation of all traditional Swazi areas into the Kingdom of Swaziland will be a fulfilment of a dream of the late King Sobhuza II that began back in the 1920s around the time he succeeded to the throne. Sobhuza believed that the areas to the north and southeast of the Kingdom's present borders were pilfered from Swaziland during the reign of Sobhuza's father. Ingwavuma and KaNgwane areas were annexed from Swaziland by »unjust« treaties in the 1890s. Both regions are claimed on historical grounds as part of the traditional realm of the Swazi monarchs.⁵

In anticipation of some vehement opposition against the land deal by the Organization of African Unity (O.A.U.) and some African states Swaziland has sent out delegations to other African countries to explain the Swazi arguments for the land transfer. Swaziland's deputy prime minister, B.M. Nsibandze, for instance, led a delegation to Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe to explain the land issue and boundary adjustments between Swaziland and South Africa. The Swazi foreign minister, R.V. Dlamini, has gone to Nairobi to see the current chairman of the O.A.U., and to the pre-summit meeting of the O.A.U. in Tripoli armed with a quote from the South African historian Peter Becker to justify his country's proposed takeover of Ingwavuma. The quote which comes from Becker's book »The Rule of Fear« says that the Zulu King Dingaan was killed by Swazis after he had fled across the Pongola River . . . , »beyond his territories« . . . , following the defeat of his army.⁶

Indeed, the arbitrary defined borders between Transvaal and Swaziland resulted in the

5 Among the multiple works relating to Swaziland's history and territorial boundaries, the following one can be recommended for further reading: *J. S. A. M. Masebula* (1972): *A History of Swaziland*. Cape Town: Longman.

6 *P. Becker* (1964): *Rule of Fear, the Life and Times of Dingaan, King of the Zulu*. London: Longman.

exclusion of a considerable area of land to which the Swazi nation laid claim. In 1866 the first attempts were undertaken to survey the boundary between Transvaal and Swaziland, but only in 1880 a Royal Commission demarcated the Transvaal-Swaziland boundary. Between 1890 (First Swazi Convention) and 1905 there were close administrative connections between Transvaal and Swaziland, and only in 1905 the administration of Swaziland separated completely from that of Transvaal. In 1908 the territorial delimitation of the country was finally completed. Thus, when colonial administrators drew up the boundaries, it happened that more Swazis resided in South Africa than in the Kingdom themselves.⁷

The tremendous benefits of the land deal for Swaziland are obvious: Control of Ingwavuma would give Swaziland access to the Indian Ocean and a potential harbour at Kosi Bay. A front-page article in »The Times of Swaziland« of 28th July, 1982 proclaimed proudly:

»Kosi Bay will be ours«. The caption describes the Bay which is included in the controversial land transfer, as »the probable location of a new Swazi port and our future gateway to the world«.⁸ Kosi Bay is a tropical paradise containing some of the rarest forest, fauna, and flora, a sanctuary teeming with rare fish and turtles which will undoubtedly be a valuable asset to Swazi's tourist industry. The mountain Kingdom could supplement her geofomals of upland tourism (spas and gambling facilities) by offering seaside facilities at the coast. Ingwavuma has two small national parks: The Kosi Bay Nature Reserve has a lake system where, gulls, terns, waders and other aquatic birds occur, and where there is abundant fish-life in unusually clear water. The Ndumu Game Reserve has as its principal attraction the bird-life centred around several large pans and the adjoining indigeous forest. Game to be seen includes hippo, rhino, and several species of antelope. Both parks would be a welcome addition to Swaziland's touristic offers. Above all, the addition of Ingwavuma means the tiny Kingdom will no longer be landlocked. On the other hand, KaNgwane brings with it much farmland and forestry. But the most significant impact on Swaziland will be people – so many that the population will double (Newsweek, 5. July, 1982, p. 25). Swaziland would also acquire a number of small wealthy towns in the Eastern Transvaal, one of them being Witbank, a rich coal mining centre.

4. South Africa's Position: For white-ruled South Africa the handover would be a major diplomatic and political victory. Moreover, a member of the O.A.U. and

7 See: *J. Crush* (1980): The Colonial Division of Space – The Significance of the Swazi Land Partition, in: Intern. Journal of African Historical Studies, vol. 13, Nr. 1, pp. 71–86; *B. Greaves* (1954): The High Commission Territories. Edinburgh: Edinburgh House Press; and *J. J. Nquku* (1936): Geography of Swaziland. Bremersdorp. Swaziland: Servite Fathers.

8 Road and railway access to the sea was always a vital question for Swaziland and the following references give a vivid account of recent developments in the struggle for an outlet to the sea: *A. C. G. Best* (1966): The Swaziland Railway – A Study in Politico-Economic Geography. Michigan State University: African Studies Centre; *L. A. W. Hawkins* (1964): Swaziland and its Ocean Outlet, in: African Roads, vol. 21, Nr. 4, pp. 12–13; and *G. Whittington* (1966): The Swaziland Railway, in: Tijdschrift voor econ. en sociale geografie, vol. 57, pp. 68–73.

S.A.D.C.C. would be giving tacit recognition to the viability of the apartheid program of ethnic »self-determination« (African Business, June 1982, p. 4). The magic formula of white Nationalist politics in South Africa is »racial segregation«, for which the Afrikaanse term of »apartheid« has been coined by Daniel Malan in 1948. The doctrine of quasi-independent »tribal homelands« (Bantustans) can be seen as the cornerstone of the whole apartheid system. With sectarian fanaticism the absurd »territorial fragmentation« of South Africa's landscape was put into practice. Since 1959 the policy has been extended through the creation of supposedly »independent« Bantustand. »Territorial apartheid« is achieved by decanting the »surplus« African population of the white areas into then so-called homelands and Bantustans, of which four have already been granted »independence« from South Africa: Transkei, Bophuthatwana, Venda and Ciskei.⁹ However, the international community has refused to recognize these Bantustans as sovereign independent political entities. The suggested land deal would bring South Africa one step nearer to the ultimate goal of denationalizing the African population. South Africa clearly feels it would gain by such a land transfer, particularly from a security point of view. The incorporation of Ingwavuma into Swaziland would provide South Africa with a buffer zone to the Marxist-ruled black neighbouring state of Mozambique, which, according to South African claims, harbours black nationalist guerillas. The land deal could result in Swaziland taking a softer line against South Africa at international forums.

5. International Opinion: International voices about the proposed land deal are still scanty. However, major opposition can be expected from the O.A.U. A doctrine has been adopted by the O.A.U. in its well-known resolution of July 1964 which »solemnly declares that all member states pledge themselves to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence«. Colonial boundaries in Africa are sacrosanct (inviolable) and any attempt to redraw them on tribal-ethnic lines will be strongly condemned by the O.A.U.¹⁰ Historical ground are not recognized as valid reasons for territorial expansion and boundary changes. However, the proposed land transfer is not a »boundary conflict« strictu sensu, since a boundary conflict exists only when territorial ambitions of at least two parties are irreconcilable. South Africa's territorial fragmen-

9 South Africa's homeland policy can be regarded as the cornerstone of the apartheid system. A number of geographical works have appeared recently on South Africa's homelands, see: *A. J. Halbach* (1976): Die suedafrikanischen Bantu-Homelands, Konzeption, Struktur und Entwicklungsperspektiven. Munich: Weltforum Verlag; *A. Lemon* (1976): Apartheid – A Geography of Separation. Farmborough, Hants., Saxon House; *D. Lincoln* (1979): Ideology and South African Development, in: South African Geographical Journal, vol. 61, Nr. 2, pp. 99–110; *A. Nel* (1962): Geographical Aspects of Apartheid in South Africa, in: Tijdschrift voor econ. en sociale geografie, vol. 53, pp. 197–209; *M. E. Sabbagh* (1968): Some geographical Characteristics of a Plural Society – Apartheid in South Africa, in: Geographical Review, vol. 58, pp. 1–28; *D. M. Smith* (edit.) (1976): Separation in South Africa. London: Queen Mary College, Department of Geography Occasional Papers Nr. 6; and *D. M. Smith* (1983): Living under Apartheid. Hemel Hempstead: George Allen & Unwin.

10 The OAU's politics in regard to boundary conflicts are discussed in: *Ph. Kunig* (1981): Das völkerrechtliche Nichteinmischungsprinzip. Zur Praxis der OAU und des afrikanischen Staatenverkehrs. Baden-Baden: Nomos, pp. 146.

tation will certainly not be sanctioned by the O.A.U. or other African institutions, since it is contrary to the idea of the indivisibility of political entities in the process of independence. However, there is a remote precedent in favour of South Africa and Swaziland, when the former British Cameroon was desected in October 1961, with a small northwestern section joining Nigeria and the rest joining the independent Cameroon under a Federal structure.

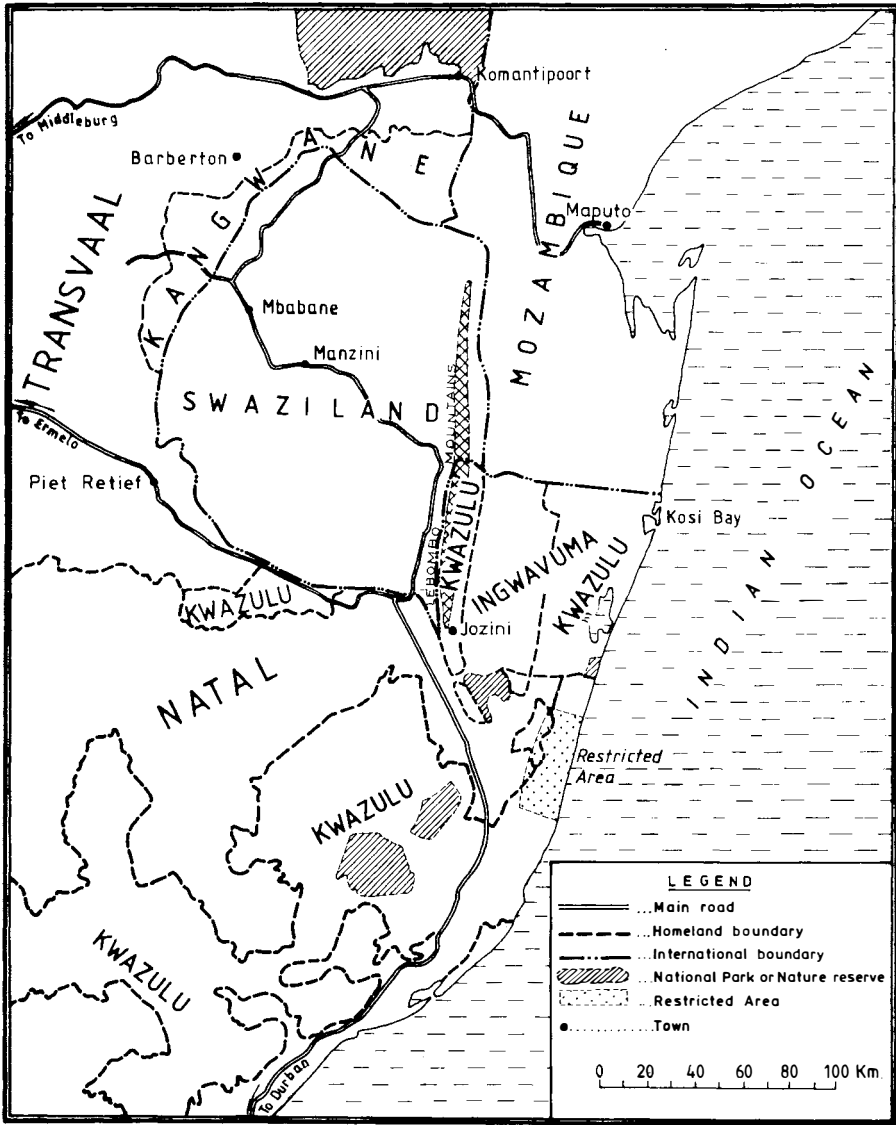
Zulu leader Chief Gatsha Buthelezi of KwaZulu and the »African National Congress« of South Africa have already appealed to the O.A.U. and the African heads of states to help them opposing the land deal. Under extreme circumstances, Swaziland could face to be expelled from the O.A.U. and »derecognized«, if the land deal goes through. Besides jeopardizing Swaziland's membership in Pan-African institutions, the country might also end her right to receive financial aid from African organizations. However, the O.A.U. has long recognized the »special relationship« between South Africa and the neighbouring semi-enclosed states of Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana. Few foreign governments have revealed their attitude toward the land deal so far. The Libyan foreign secretary said that Libya supported Swaziland in her claim to the disputed land. According to the United States ambassador to Swaziland, Mr. Robert Phinny, the land deal is a bi-lateral matter between two sovereign states. However, other U.S. officials have carefully avoided taking a position on the controversial issue themselves. There are also outside charges that the land deal is merely a pretext to give the U.S. Navy an Indian Ocean port at Kosi Bay so that it can avoid the embarrassment of having to dock in South Africa (Newsweek, 5. July 1982, p. 25).

6. Outlook: Following the death of King Sobhuza II of Swaziland in August 1982 and the present political and economic uncertainties in that country, the Swaziland government has kept a low profile on the land issue, but has always declared her persistent commitment to the land deal. South Africa, faced with the internal opposition by the KwaZulu and KaNgwane tribal leaders and the tactical defeat through court rulings, decided not to steamroll the land incorporation through. A tripartite Commission of Inquiry headed by a South African legal figure, Mr. Justice Rumpff, was appointed to look into all aspects of the land transfer. It is widely believed that the Commission will eventually come out in favour of some kind of incorporation (African Business, January 1983, p. 7).

The signing of a non-aggression pact between South Africa and Mozambique in mid-February 1984¹¹ and a mutual security pact between South Africa and Swaziland in April 1984 to »collectively combat threats« has added a new dimension to the complex geopolitical situation. With these partial diplomatic breakthroughs concerning her Eastern neighbours South Africa seems to be less inclined to risk new confrontation and political controversy with regard to the Ingwavuma and KaNgwane issues.

11 There is a trend towards »derecognition« in the OAU's attitude in regard to states which do not follow an »African rule« of government. See: *Ph. Kunig*, op. cit., pp. 177.

12 Text: Africa Research Bulletin 21 No. 3, pp. 7166.



POSITION MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF KANGWANE AND INGWAVUMA AREAS.

Finally, an attempt is made to show the formation processes of public opinion and decisions.

Characteristics of the political structure in the Bangladesh village thus are:

- a strong tendency towards autonomy of decisions of households and groups and, thus,
- a segmentary structure which leads to
- a lacking or limited ability to cope with more complex tasks and challenges.

Swaziland's Proposed Land Deal with South Africa – The Case of Ingwavuma and Kangwane

By *Wolfgang Senfleben*

In mid-1982 a proposal was made public to incorporate a substantial land area of South Africa's tribal homelands of Kangwane and KwaZulu into the Kingdom of Swaziland. If such a transaction should be completed, it would give hitherto land-locked Swaziland access to the sea with a potential port at Kosi Bay, and would incorporate all areas of ethnic Swazi population into the kingdom. In return for South Africa the land transfer would mean a tacit approval of her apartheid policy, besides the advantage of creating a buffer zone against Marxist-orientated Mozambique. However, vehement opposition against the land transfer has been registered internally from the native population involved as well as from the international community, particularly from the O.A.U. Recent legal setbacks through court intervention in South Africa, the current power struggle in Swaziland after the death of King Sobhuza II, as well as South Africa's impending change of the parliamentary system and her recent diplomatic and political initiatives towards her neighbours, have shelved the land transfer issue for the time being. However, the land deal, if it succeeds, would constitute an exchange unprecedented in world history.