
A Case of Assassination? President Samora Machel and the Plane Crash at Mbuzini

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The death of Samora Machel

On Sunday 19 October Mozambican President Samora Machel's plane crashed at Mbuzini, near Komatipoort, South Africa, killing the President and 33 other passengers. An investigation of the incident revealed that when returning from a meeting of the Frontline States in Mbala, Zambia, Machel's plane had turned eight minutes too early and thus missed Maputo airport's guidance signals. Upon receiving abnormal instrument readings the crew reported that their system was faulty and were cleared for a visual landing. The plane thus began to descend at 470 feet per minute in an attempt to gain visual contact with the airport, and while the pilot held a confused conversation with the air-traffic controller they crashed into the mountains along the border with South Africa. An international inquiry into the incident by the Margo Commission reported that the crew was qualified to fly the aircraft, the craft was properly maintained, the radio navigational aids were operating satisfactorily, the weather was not a factor, runway lights at Maputo airport were operating normally, and the crew had not suffered disability prior to landing. However, the Commission found that procedures were not followed correctly during the descent and thus placed blame for the accident on the Russian crew¹. According to the report,

the flight crew failed to follow procedural requirements for an instrument let-down approach, but continued to descend under visual flight rules in darkness and some cloud, i.e. without having visual contact with the ground, below minimum safe altitude and minimum assigned altitude, and in addition ignored the [Ground Proximity Warning System] alarm.²

Nevertheless, many influential Mozambique observers were deeply suspicious that the crash was not an accident and a theory quickly developed that the plane had been lured off-course by a VOR (Very-high-frequency Omni-directional Radio) transmitter other than the Maputo airport beacon. A rumour began to circulate that a large tent had been situated 150 metres south-east of the plane's crash site and was removed on the day of the accident, the implication being that it had housed a VOR transmitter positioned there by the South African military. The Commission dismissed these allegations, claiming that the principle reason for rejecting the possibility of a false beacon was that a VOR transmitter's sole function is to indicate direction in the horizontal plane and is not a guide to descent. Only an instrument landing system could offer such guidance and as there was no suggestion of interference with that system the actions of the crew in ignoring its readings were the cause of the crash. Though the Commission did suggest that the confusion might have been caused by the accidental or inadvertent selection of the VOR transmitter at Matsapa, Swaziland, as the destination.³ While the finding of the inquiry was technically true, that the failure of the crew to heed their instrument's warnings led to the crash, it deals only fleetingly with the more important and politically contentious question of why the plane initially veered off-course. Paul Fauvet, a long-time journalist for the Mozambique News Agency (AIM), recently articulated the theory that the original plan of Machel's assassins was to lure the plane over Swaziland where it was to be shot down by a missile and attributed to Renamo. This scheme failed, though achieved the desired results, when the crew's own mistakes caused the plane to

crash into the mountains.⁴ The Commission's findings are thus virtually irrelevant to the question of whether a conspiracy to kill Machel existed. This article explores the idea that a plot to assassinate President Machel may well have led to his death, and that despite the lack of concrete evidence to support these claims, a substantial circumstantial case does exist. As is often the case in the world of war and espionage, intelligence, rumour and deduction can often be as close to the truth as one may get, and it should be assumed that every source has an ulterior motive. But while one must approach an analysis of this topic with the utmost caution, a good historian may also realise that more truth could be contained in cocktail party conversation than in the most confidential government report.

The theory that Samora Machel's death was the result of an assassination plot could be dismissed as speculation if there were not so many unanswered questions about the incident, if it hadn't occurred during a period of such heightened political tension, and if there didn't exist such a convincing circumstantial case for conspirators' motives. Some unresolved issues surrounding the crash include the questions of why, considering that South Africa's own reports of their radar capabilities divulged that they could track the position and altitude of planes in southern Mozambique, did they not warn Machel's plane of the impending accident? Why were Mozambican authorities not notified of the accident for ten hours, even though South African police had arrived at the scene six hours earlier? Why did South African authorities initially report that the plane had crashed in Natal province? What is the explanation for a heightened military alert in Transvaal province on the day of the crash? What is the explanation of mystery incisions in the necks of the two Soviet pilots that suggest they may have been killed at the scene? Why was Renamo's Lisbon office alerted on that evening that they should be prepared to release a press statement about an important event? And why did South Africa claim that the pilots had been drinking and release false meteorological charts showing that weather conditions were bad, even though the Margo Commission dismissed both of these claims?⁵ In addition there were the reports that a military tent was seen in the area of the crash and removed after the incident, including an anonymous call to the Johannesburg office of United Press International from a man who demonstrated substantial technical knowledge and claimed to be a South African Air Force officer.⁶ Deepening suspicion about the timing of the crash were the additional facts that only two weeks before Machel's death he revealed that there had been a recent attempt on his life, and that before Machel left Lusaka he accused South Africa of planning to kill him and left instructions for what to do if he died.⁷

Nevertheless, unanswered questions, anonymous information and the coinciding of Samora Machel's death with a period of diplomatic confrontation and threats against his person do not prove that the plane crash resulted from an assassination plot. If this had remained the extent of the case that a plot had existed then the circumstances of Machel's death might have become just another African mystery. However, in the post-Apartheid period a number of interesting reports revived speculation about Machel's death. An article on 14 July 1998 by *Mail and Guardian* journalist Debora Patta produced new claims that the crashed plane's black box had been tampered with and that a Mozambican airport official was paid a large sum of money to switch off the Maputo radar system. Far more startling and significant, however, was Patta's assertion that she had interviewed one of Machel's close confidants, a well-known Italian resident of Maputo named Casadei, who claimed that he had stumbled on a plot by South African and Mozambican agents to kill the President. According to Patta, those on the Mozambican side had offered their support for the plot in exchange for assistance in gaining power, while the South Africans would oversee the technical aspects of⁸ the operation. Casadei said that he informed Machel of the identities of two Mozambican

Generals who were involved in the plot, but the President refused to take action against them. Patta also maintained that she had viewed an intelligence document that named South African, Mozambican and Malawian agents involved in the plot.⁹ Then in January 2003 it was reported by the *Sowetan Sunday World* that a former Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB) agent serving a 28-year term in Baviaanspoort Prison near Pretoria, a Namibian national named Hans Louw, claimed he was involved in Samora Machel's death. According to Louw, military intelligence operatives positioned a false airport beacon to lure the plane off-course and he was part of a clean-up team that would ensure the President had died. As it turned out his team was never activated. A former Rhodesian Selous Scout operative, Edwin Mudingi, claimed to have been part of the same operation and confirmed Louw's involvement. Louw also confessed to a number of other crimes, including a similar operation that used a VOR beacon to lure an Angolan military plane off course in 1989 and killed a number of key Angolan military figures.¹⁰ Only a few months later, on 6 April 2003, the *Sowetan Sunday World* reported that former Chief of South African Military Intelligence, General Pieter 'Tienie' Groenewald, admitted in an interview with journalist Mpikelani Duma that Samora Machel's plane had been brought down by a false navigational beacon. According to Joseph Hanlon, the article disclosed that,

Groenewald also claimed that senior Frelimo officials were involved in the killing, and that senior 'individuals and [then Foreign Minister Joaquim] Chissano were appraised of the details of the plot to kill Machel'.¹¹

Though the article provoked furious denials from members of the Frelimo leadership, veteran Mozambique analyst Hanlon's assessment was that the allegations could not be so easily dismissed, especially since,

Groenewald only said that Chissano knew of the plan, not that he organised it or was in contact with South Africa... [and] Samora Machel's widow, Graca Machel, now the wife of Nelson Mandela, has publicly accused Mozambican 'generals' of being involved in the assassination.¹²

General Groenewald quickly organised a press conference in Maputo at which he denied that he had made the comments to the paper and announced that he planned to launch a lawsuit. However, the press conference only raised the suspicions of some sections of the South African media because,

when a reporter asked him if he had any business deals with Mozambican generals, Groenewald flatly denied this. But... [t]he weekly paper 'Zambeze' subsequently discovered that in 1999 he invested in demining in Mozambique, and his partner was the late Col-Gen Sebastiao Mabote, a former Chief of Staff of the Mozambican armed forces.¹³

Later in the year a biography of the leftist Mozambican journalist and editor Carlos Cardoso, written by fellow journalists Paul Fauvet and Marcelo Mosse, added further weight to the theory of Mozambican involvement in Machel's assassination. Entitled *Carlos Cardoso: Telling the Truth in Mozambique* in its English version, in sections the book details why Cardoso always suspected that Mozambicans were involved in a plot to kill Machel, primarily because of his tough stance against entrenched corruption in the military hierarchy.

With suspicious circumstances and a tense political context surrounding Samora Machel's death, the recent confessions of involvement in a plot by a number of former Apartheid operatives, and the publicly expressed belief by some prominent Mozambique analysts that not only was Machel assassinated but that important Mozambican figures were involved, it is worth examining whether a coherent argument for the theory can be constructed. For those whose knowledge of Mozambique's post-independence history is based on key secondary texts that examine the period, claims that Machel's death resulted from a major rift in the Frelimo hierarchy might seem surprising. After the frequent splits within Frelimo during the 1960s, and the confrontation between Samora Machel's radical faction and conservatives such as Lázaro N'kavandame and Uria Simango that followed Eduardo Mondlane's death and led to the expulsion of those dubbed 'the new exploiters', it is assumed in most of the literature that Frelimo emerged with an extremely tight-knit and unified leadership. Writing in the wake of Frelimo's 1983 Fourth Party Congress Hanlon notes that a 'state group' was involved in a class struggle within the Congress against emerging capitalist interests, but he nevertheless asserts that Frelimo's leadership remained exceptionally unified, partly due to consensus decision-making and the tendency to institutionalise conflicts within the party and ministries by employing opposing elements in positions of close collaboration.¹⁴ Writing more than a decade later Margaret Hall and Tom Young confirm this image in their history of the period, *Confronting Leviathan: Mozambique Since Independence*. According to Hall and Young,

The Frelimo regime was completely dominated by the leadership group (essentially the party politburo and some of Machel's close associates), among whom there was a remarkable capacity for consensus and who, over a long period, rotated all the key offices of party and state between themselves. The longevity of the core Frelimo leadership (hardly changed until the late 1980s) is notable by any standards. Within the leadership group Machel was the central figure and the voice of the regime. His prestige with the army and the central positions held by [Alberto] Chipande and [Sebastião] Mabote secured the loyalty of the armed forces.¹⁵

However, a closer examination of Mozambique's post-independence history reveals that after only a few years in government latent tensions within the Frelimo party and the military began to surface. Though 'radicals' had won the ideological battle for control of Frelimo in the early 1970s, there was no widespread purging of the elements within the organisation and its military forces that looked forward to the rise of a black bourgeoisie after independence. Frelimo's 'Marxist' ideology was vague enough in its detail to allow those driven by self-interest as well as principle to believe there would be opportunities for enrichment following Portugal's defeat.

Divisions within Frelimo

Following independence there were a number of years in which the Frelimo leadership began the implementation of state control over economics, though they held only loose control over the state itself. Hans Abrahamsson and Andres Nilsson note that a portion of the Frelimo membership had capitalist aspirations so,

when political decisions held back private entrepreneurs, many began to seek positions in the public sector in order to accumulate public resources by making a career in state enterprises, cooperatives, the state apparatus and the party. Their arena was transferred from private activity to the political apparatus. Becoming a director of a state enterprise came to be a coveted alternative to being a private entrepreneur.¹⁶

During this uncertain transitional period, throughout which the new government was diverting significant attention to its war with Rhodesia and support for Zimbabwean freedom fighters, the newly victorious military and security forces were also allowed free reign to deal with opponents of the new regime. According to a report by Amnesty International, “between 1975 and 1978, inmates of ‘re-education’ camps reported that torture, beatings and corporal punishment were used extensively, in particular against suspected opponents of the FRELIMO”, and SNASP were able to hold suspects indefinitely, incommunicado, without charge or trial. The worse excesses of detention came to an end in 1978 when the government took more direct control over the camps and by the early 1980’s many camps had closed.¹⁷ From 1979 President Machel started trying to impose greater order over the state and military by advocating the authority of managers to make decisions as the representative of peoples’ power, and the creation of a clearer hierarchy in the military. However, rank within the party also began to bring benefits such as access to better quality consumer goods and health facilities, while the creation of a secretive and centralised National Planning Commission prevented sectors of industry from communicating directly and gave tremendous power to technocrats, which they could leverage for personal gain.¹⁸ With Zimbabwe’s imminent independence Machel decided the Mozambican state could afford to turn its attention inwards and launched a series of surprise visits to factories, warehouses, ports, shops and social service centres from March 1980. According to Marcelino Komba,

the President came across instances of gross inefficiency, corruption and deliberate sabotage. In the event, he let his axe fall on a number of people who were believed to be responsible for the bureaucratic rot. The first casualties included three cabinet ministers, one of whom was a ranking member of Frelimo’s Central Committee.¹⁹

Then, after South Africa’s January 1981 commando raid against ANC safe-houses in Maputo, Machel admitted that the raid “had been possible because of army corruption and incompetence... Eight traitors were subsequently identified, one being the head of General Mabote’s own office”.²⁰ Machel thus began an offensive against corruption in the military, admitting a few months later that there had been many complaints about the army’s involvement in intimidation, repression, armed robbery, rape, torture and bribery. By mid-1981 92 members of the Ministry of Defence’s own workshops had been tried for corruption.²¹ Needless to say, Machel’s personal campaign against corruption in the state apparatus and military made him many enemies amongst those who enjoyed the power and privilege of office.

President Machel’s crusade against corruption had already begun to split the Frelimo party and military into sections for and against his tough stance, but the offensive was far from over. At a rally in Maputo on 5 November 1981 Machel admitted the abuses that had occurred in the re-education camps after independence and promised to bring the perpetrators to justice. He also charged that, “many commanders [had] acquired a taste for comfort, for the easy life, and even for luxury”.²² According to Fauvet and Mosse, Machel targeted abuses by the defence and security forces and police, pledging,

to wage a ‘legality offensive’ which would ‘dislodge the traitors and kidnapers, the corrupt, the arrogant, the power-hungry, the negligent, the incompetent, the abusers, the thieves, the rapists, the murderers, those who want to ride on the backs of the people’... Diplomats from the Soviet bloc states were amazed. No leader of any other socialist

country had ever castigated his own security forces in this way. Were such statements not the height of recklessness? Was Machel not inviting a coup d'état? But there was no coup.²³

Some took Machel's threats very seriously, however, and the National Director of Security (head of SNASP) Jorge de Costa fled justice by defecting to South Africa in early 1982. In the wake of his defection around 100 SNASP officers were detained for several months.²⁴ By mid-1982 elements within the leadership itself were being criticised for becoming too used to luxury and allowing the solidification of a technocratic elite who lacked political conviction and technical capacity. In the year-long build-up to the Frelimo Fourth Party Congress of April 1983 the Frelimo leadership really became aware of their isolation from their supporters. "It was made clear that people were free to speak at the Congress preparatory meetings, and bottled-up complaints came flowing out, showing that peasants thought they had been forgotten", and that there was widespread disaffection with overcentralisation in the state and the Frelimo Party.²⁵ A South African situation report from July 1984 notes that in November 1982 Machel singled out Politburo members Mariano Matsinhe and Armando Guebuza in particular for criticism due to the abuse of power by civil servants under their authority, especially the unnecessary detention of individuals.²⁶ One Malawian report implies that this conflict between Machel and Guebuza may have had roots in Machel's efforts to impose order in the late 1970s, noting that Guebuza,

was one of the most feared and hated men. He was guilty of terrorising both civilians and members of FRELIMO. To reduce his power, he was demoted from Minister of Interior [1975-1977] to Deputy Minister of Defence [1980] and finally to Governor of Sofala Province [1981-1983].²⁷

The pro-Renamo historian João Cabrita claims that in early 1983, shortly after Mariano Matsinhe and Armando Guebuza were censured, the two Politburo members and Minister for Foreign Affairs Joaquim Chissano conspired to overthrow the President. According to Cabrita, Security Minister Jacinto Veloso warned Machel of the plot and Machel attempted to expel Guebuza and Matsinhe in a showdown in the Politburo. However, Machel was defeated when Chissano and Alberto Chipande united to support them.²⁸ By this time the Frelimo leadership was clearly factionalised and the split would be carried into their Fourth Party Congress. The major issues which may have inspired Machel's enemies to attempt a take-over of the leadership were those major challenges that faced the nation: the civil war and national economics. Machel had already targeted Guebuza and Matsinhe and the security services under them as part of his offensive against corruption and abuse of power, and new initiatives in the war-effort may have alarmed them even further. On 17 December Machel's supporters Sergio Vieira and Jacinto Veloso met with South African representatives at Komatipoort to lessen tensions between the countries. This would not have pleased elements that opposed negotiated peace for ideological or financial reasons. In addition Machel had approached the British government for an expansion of aid, which would be channelled through the private defence company Defence Systems Limited. According to Cabrita,

Initiated in 1983, the program had met veiled opposition from various FAM quarters, particularly the old and ill-trained members of the Mozambican military establishment. Committed to a conventional approach to the Renamo problem, some of them felt threatened by the likelihood of a new elite emerging in the country. Others, for whom the war had become a profitable venture, feared that their schemes would be undermined with the introduction of new blood.²⁹

In regards to the other issue of economics, before the Fourth Congress the massive growth of the black market was seen as potentially as important as the war, as the leadership felt it threatened state control over the economy. Meanwhile, many of those who had wanted to become part of a black bourgeoisie, but had been forced to channel their efforts into the bureaucracy, saw that the largely Asian commercial community that was involved in trading lived very well. This led to a growth in racism amongst the nationalists in Frelimo, who also resented Machel's promotion of non-blacks to key political positions. The economic crisis and resentment against traders led to the introduction of harsh penalties such as flogging and the death penalty for economic crimes. Hanlon thus noted that the Fourth Congress encompassed a class struggle, with the 'State Group' under assault by those who wanted to expand the market in Mozambique, but that no group was strong enough to defeat the other. The struggle led to a massive expansion of the Central Committee from the 54 mostly high-ranking party members to 128, the majority of whom were peasants, workers and guerrilla veterans. This greater representation was also an attempt to reduce the alienation of the population from the government, which was further addressed through the introduction of secret and more democratic elections within party cells, and greater decentralisation of power in the factories. The Fourth Congress also made concessions to the private sector, with a suspension of state domination for three years.³⁰

Following the Fourth Party Congress, on 21 May 1983, President Machel addressed a rally in Maputo announcing a number of changes in the Frelimo cabinet and the ministries. The *Indian Ocean Newsletter* reported that, in response to the heavy criticism levelled at the state during the Frelimo Fourth Party Congress, "Machel placed much of the blame on the ministries responsible for 'maintaining discipline' – defence, security, interior and justice".³¹ Machel's political opponents Chipande and Matsinhe had occupied the portfolios of Defence and Interior respectively, though Machel's ally Jacinto Veloso had been Minister for Security. A cabinet reshuffle after the Congress moved Matsinhe into the Security portfolio; Armando Guebuza became Minister for the Interior; Sergio Vieira was made the Governor of Niassa Province; Marcelino dos Santos replaced Guebuza as Governor of Sofala; and Jacinto Veloso was brought into the new Ministry of Economic Affairs in the President's Office. Taking into account that the role of provincial governor was a powerful position and that, "[t]hese changes reflect[ed] the president's desire to strengthen the administrative power of the provinces, decentralize the state bodies and ensure better communication between the districts and the capital"³², an analysis of these changes can be made which argues that Machel was reasserting some degree of control. Machel had moved his trusted allies dos Santos and Vieira into the provinces and brought Matsinhe and Guebuza into two (still-powerful) portfolios based in the capital. Chipande kept his title as Minister for Defence, but Machel himself effectively took over the position and began major reforms within the Ministry, while Chipande was made the Governor of Cabo Delgado, the only province as yet unaffected by the war. The movement of Jacinto Veloso into Economics demonstrated that, even though the Fourth Congress had approved limited free market reforms, Machel wanted to maintain a steady hand on the process. Veterans of the liberation war were integrated into all ministries, in the hope that their personal loyalty to the Frelimo leadership and Party might assist in the eradication of corruption in the ranks.³³ Machel also pushed ahead with rapprochement with South Africa, with Ministers Vieira and Veloso again meeting South African representatives at Komatipoort on 5 May 1983. A far less fortunate outcome of the Congress was the implementation of the notorious 'Operation Production', a programme born out of the sheer desperation caused by the war and economic crisis which would be,

a massive campaign to rid the cities of ‘parasites’ – those who produce nothing but continue to consume scarce resources. The army, police and militia groups are to carry out house-to-house investigations, evicting the unemployed and those who do not pay their rent, and sending them to the rural areas to produce food.³⁴

The programme’s implementation from July to September 1983, which must undoubtedly be seen as one of the Frelimo government’s greatest mistakes, transferred up to 50,000 urban unemployed to the countryside.³⁵ Though the move seems to have been quite popular with many people living in the capital, the programme failed to produce any positive economic effect, was extremely traumatic for those involved, and provided Renamo with a potential recruitment pool of thousands of now displaced urban poor. While it appears Operation Production had support from throughout the cabinet, the South African Situation Report from July 1984 suggests that Armando Guebuza, the Minister of the Interior at the time who oversaw the programme, later experienced severe criticism from his cabinet colleagues for his handling of the project.³⁶

Opposition to Nkomati

In the meantime, as the war with Renamo continued to rage throughout the country, Machel proceeded with moves to reach an understanding with South Africa. This was not popular in the Central Committee, Fauvet and Mosse noting that, “plenty of people in the leadership had their doubts about the strategy outlined by Machel...”³⁷ However, Machel outflanked his own government by making public the talks Vieira and Veloso held with South African representatives in Swaziland on 20 December 1983.³⁸ More detailed sub-ministerial talks followed in mid-January 1984, which created the necessary conditions for the Nkomati Accord. But Machel’s opponents would not let him win the debate so easily. Though negotiations between Mozambique and South Africa were reaching an advanced stage, a Malawian diplomatic report from March 1984 claimed that, while some welcomed the talks,

others are against it. Those who are against are presently enjoying themselves. They do not feel the pinch of poverty and shortages. They think that if things changed they might be replaced by more efficient personnel. As a result of this, it is alleged that an attempted military takeover in Maputo was foiled in its embryonic stage. It is understood that the security officers loyal to the President Machel when discovered of the plot (sic), acted promptly. The coup was scheduled to take place between 16th and 23rd February, 1984. Following the defusion of the plot, President Machel sent for all top military personnel on 24th February, 1984 for questioning. Major General Fombe who is based in Inhambane was one of them and he confirmed of the plot to one of our source (sic). It is alleged that three Ministers were behind the coup or had prior knowledge of it. They are Joaquim Chissano, Alberto Chipande and Armando Guebuza.³⁹

The report continues,

You may wish to know a little background of these officers who are reported to be one of the sinister men in Mozambique (sic):

(a) Joaquim Alberto Chissano... Mr Chissano is said to be a brightly intelligent and well educated man as well as being the most dangerous of all Machel collaborators... When he is abroad, it is alleged that Mr Chissano changes his closely guarded front of formality to one of immorality and big lavish spending and fast women are his style. Although Mr Chissano deliberately tries to create a fatherly image in public but others

see him sinister man with no friends... Clever and sinister, Mr Chissano wants power so badly.

(b) General Alberto Joaquim Chipande. Minister of Defence of Maconde tribe from Cabo Delgado... General Chipande is said to have never been more than a ceremonial defence Minister to (sic) keeping the title and his post on the politburo because of the respect he earned as FRELIMO Military Commander during the struggle. General Chipande was a war hero and owes his position to his close ties with the FRELIMO freedom fighters now integrated into the Mozambique Army. His opponents say he is more loyal to Maconde interests than to President Machel.⁴⁰

Thus by early 1984 the split between Machel and elements of the Frelimo leadership and military, which had emerged because of the President's crusade against corruption and abuse of power in the late 1970s and early 1980s, had reached the point where Machel's Presidency was threatened by a military coup d'état backed by members of his own cabinet. The success of negotiations between Machel's representatives and the South African government was seemingly the catalyst for the abortive rebellion. The motives of those involved in the coup plot were undoubtedly varied, but some of the most likely can be suggested here. Ideologically some may have opposed negotiations because the Nkomati Accord would require the sacrifice of support for the ANC. Guebuza was known to have strong ties with the ANC, and the South African freedom fighters worked closely with the Mozambican military and police. Stephen Chan and Moisés Venâncio claim that, "the hard-liner and then interior minister Armando Guebuza, viewed the signing of Nkomati as a capitulation by the regime", though they also assert that, "moderates such as the then foreign minister, Joaquim Chissano, saw Nkomati as a means of preventing the total destruction of Mozambique".⁴¹ Another motivation for aspirant capitalists in the administration may have been Machel's continuing reluctance to fast-track free market reforms for the Mozambican economy. There are indications that a significant bloc within the Frelimo party and military was nationalist in perspective rather than socialist, and they had little interest in Machel's ideological agenda. Writing in 1985 US-based Renamo supporter Luis Serapião noted that,

The comrades, in almost twelve years of control, have failed to realize that the military section of FRELIMO has been predominantly a nationalist group. The nationalists, most of them black, constitute the bulk of FRELIMO's army.⁴²

However, perhaps the most potent motivation for members of the military and political leadership may have been naked self-interest. Corruption was widespread in the military at all levels. Along with the simple theft of money destined for military projects, corruption also took the form of members of the military hierarchy using military equipment for private business activities, such as transport planes that were used to fly private passengers and building materials while troops starved without rations in isolated areas.⁴³ Fuel was also stolen by the tonne from air bases and sold privately. At the end of the war the process of decommissioning exposed another long-practiced money-making venture, when the Mozambican armed forces were found to have 12,000 soldiers less than previously thought. The most likely explanation is that military officers would not declare deaths in order to receive more rations than necessary, and corrupt officials kept dead or discharged soldiers on the payroll so they could embezzle the money.⁴⁴ At the Second Conference of Mozambican Youth in March 1986 some made public allegations that military officers were siphoning off supplies and selling them on the black market, while others spoke of officers selling uniforms to their own men.⁴⁵ The profit of war may thus have been enough reason to oppose negotiations that could bring peace. Chipande and Guebuza were closely connected to the

armed forces, one article stating that the more modern and Soviet-orientated forces within the military may have been more loyal to Guebuza than Machel.⁴⁶ For Joaquim Chissano the possibility that he would be Machel's successor may have been interest enough.

By May 1984 the possibility of a coup d'état had not subsided. A Malawian diplomatic report states that,

The officials in the Embassies of the socialist countries are among the people who are spreading quite disturbing rumours about a coup d'état or [a Renamo] take-over of the Government. They believe that [Renamo] would not stop the war until the Government surrenders and see no good prospects for President Machel whom they regard as having failed to provide food, clothes, and security to the people. The Soviet Ambassador, for example, was recently overheard at King Moshoeshoe's birthday party in Lesotho as saying that there would be a coup d'état in Mozambique... On the basis of the rumours... the Russians are suspected of trying to ferment trouble within the Government. The Minister of Interior, Honourable Gebouza (sic), for example, is suspected of planning to overthrow the Government at the instigation of the Russians.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, on 12 May Machel publicly criticised Armando Guebuza, Mariano Matsinhe and Chief of the Armed Forces Sebastião Mabote at a neighbourhood council meeting, which foreshadowed a cabinet reshuffle on 15 June. Apparently deciding that it was more important to have allies controlling the security services than administering the provinces, Machel brought Sergio Vieira back to Maputo as security minister and sent Matsinhe to be Governor of Niassa. Guebuza was removed from the Interior portfolio and made Governor of Nampula, though he refused the position, and José Carlos Lobo was demoted from Minister for Mineral Resources to Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. Oscar Monteiro replaced Guebuza as Minister of the Interior, and Abdul Magid Osman occupied Lobo's portfolio. At least one report noted that Guebuza, Matsinhe, and Lobo were all pro-Soviet 'hard-liners', which might connect Machel's actions to the rumours mentioned by the Malawian Ambassador. General Mabote was not affected by the reshuffle.⁴⁸ A South African Situation Report also noted that 90 senior civil servants were shifted from their positions at the same time.⁴⁹ The Situation Report observes that the reason for the removal of these politicians might be similar to why they were criticised in November 1982, and comments that,

Guebuza is a controversial politician who has already been named in connection with several rows and division in the Politburo of Frelimo on account of the discontent caused by certain policies. According to an unconfirmed report, he was one of the opponents of Machel's decision to sign the Nkomati Accord with [South Africa]. In January 1984 Guebuza was deprived of an influential post on the political commission of the Mozambique armed forces (which he had long occupied).⁵⁰

Thus South Africa was well aware of the split within the Mozambican Politburo and saw it as a potential point of weakness. A report on the Total Strategy for Mozambique from July 1984 noted that Machel had strengthened his government through the replacement of Guebuza and Matsinhe with his 'loyal supporters' Colonels Vieira and Monteiro.⁵¹ The report further predicted that,

The high intensity of Renamo operations since March 1984 is in opposition to Frelimo/FAM expectations that the severity of actions would subside after the signing of the Nkomati Accord, has had the effect of lowering the fighting spirit within the

FAM... In the case that Renamo can maintain the present pressure on Frelimo, this may strengthen the hand of the Nationalist group in Frelimo, as well as other moderate pressure groups like the Roman Catholic Church, in compelling Frelimo to arrive at a compromise with Renamo.⁵²

However, it was Machel who dragged the Frelimo government into negotiations with Renamo, allowing the Mozambican Christian Council to establish contact with Renamo during early 1984, authorising Jacinto Veloso to hold low-level talks with Renamo representatives in Europe during July, and sending a delegation of his trusted allies to South Africa in October for face-to-face negotiations with members of the Renamo leadership.⁵³ Even around the time of the ceasefire talks in South Africa some observers noted that Frelimo remained politically split, and that the army seemed divided between those training in conventional warfare and those with a guerrilla past. Machel also seemed to lack confidence in his own security forces to accurately inform him about the progress of the war.⁵⁴ In late 1984 Machel appointed Guebuza as Minister of State in the Presidency as part of efforts to re-forge unity, (though one report noted that it was “probably to allow... Machel to keep an eye on him”).⁵⁵

1985: Return to the military solution

Following the failure of the October negotiations and Mozambique’s loss of faith in South Africa’s commitment to the Nkomati Accord, though President Machel maintained communication with some elements within Renamo such as Manuel Bulhosa, he seems to have shifted a greater emphasis to a military resolution to the war. This may have reduced tension within Frelimo and the military during 1985. The focus on a military solution resulted in the series of joint operations with Zimbabwean forces from the middle of the year and climaxed in the capture of Renamo’s Gorongosa headquarters in September. However, the victory at Gorongosa had a very contrary effect on Machel, who personally toured the base after its capture and inspected Renamo’s massive stockpile of weapons, most of which appeared to be Mozambican-issue. The army had informed Machel that the war was going well, but upon seeing the hoard of weapons and equipment he was again convinced that Mozambique could not defeat Renamo and that a negotiated settlement was the only solution.⁵⁶ Only a fortnight later, on 13 September, journalist Carlos Cardoso witnessed Machel’s disaffection with the military itself when he spoke publicly about his concerns in front of Politburo members and about a hundred people involved in organising the tenth anniversary of independence celebrations. Fauvet and Mosse relate Cardoso’s recollection that,

Machel bitterly regretted the relaxation of 1980. ‘We were drunk of the victory over Smith. We gave no importance to training the army,’ he admitted. They had fallen into ‘populist’ errors. ‘There are officers without quality, but we promote them. Now we don’t demote anybody. During the armed struggle, a commander who lost more than five men was demoted’... Machel wanted new blood in the army: ‘Generals aged 58 or 63 should retire.’ Such remarks in front of an audience of over a hundred were bound to find their way to the generals concerned, who might not be enthusiastic about the idea of forced retirement... Cardoso would later recall this meeting as a sign of malaise within the armed forces, and of Machel’s increasing isolation.⁵⁷

Thus, from late 1985 Machel again began working towards negotiated settlement, which displeased many inside Frelimo.⁵⁸ The *Indian Ocean Newsletter* reported that an attempt by the Italian Catholic group *Centro Internazionale d’Assisi* to organise a meeting between

Frelimo and Renamo representatives in Rome in 1986, an initiative supported by Machel, was scuttled by opposition within Frelimo.⁵⁹ And according to Fauvet and Mosse,

In 1986 Cardoso was called several times to the presidential palace for off-the-record briefings with Machel. During these talks he received the distinct impression that the president was an increasingly lonely figure. Years later Cardoso recalled one occasion when Machel called him and Alves Gomes to the palace... Cardoso recalled two startling phrases used by the president. He told the journalists, 'I have no strategy' and 'I am lost.' Later Cardoso would reflect that this conversation was 'a further indication that behind the staged unity of the Frelimo leadership, Samora Machel was almost completely isolated at the top'.⁶⁰

Nevertheless Machel continued to manoeuvre for peace. Having learnt from the failure of the Nkomati Accord Machel decided that effective negotiations could only occur outside of South African influence, and he chose to make contact with Renamo Secretary-General Evo Fernandes, who he saw as an independent and trustworthy representative of the guerrilla group.⁶¹ Machel had a covert communication channel to Fernandes, as it seems that SNASP had achieved a significant level of infiltration of Renamo's external representation, and the SNASP agent Mateus Lopes, whose real name was José Alfredo da Costa, had maintained contact with Fernandes in Lisbon since 1985.⁶² Lopes seems to have approached Evo Fernandes and Gimo Phiri in Malawi during 1986 and offered to facilitate negotiations with Frelimo as "an envoy of 'the old fighters', a 'negrophile' strain within FRELIMO which favoured negotiations between FRELIMO blacks and RENAMO, to the exclusion of whites, Indians and coloureds".⁶³ This may not have seemed unusual since there is evidence that various black military officers had been in contact with Renamo during previous years. In 1985 Roberto Frequera, the Frelimo Political Secretary for Gorongosa district, admitted to passing military information to Renamo, and Chief of the Armed Forces Sebastião Mabote was said to have met with Renamo, eventually leading to his removal from the position on Zimbabwean advice that he was too close to the rebels.⁶⁴ Lopes gained Fernandes' trust and was allowed to work with Renamo operatives near the Malawi-Zambézia border, including Gilberto Fernandes (known as Magid) and Gimo Phiri, and witnessed the support network of Portuguese, South Africans and American Evangelical Christians at work. He was also able to travel to Renamo's Gorongosa headquarters and meet Afonso Dhlakama there.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, Fernandes seems to have taken up the invitation and met with Machel's representative Fernando Honwana in Geneva. Machel aimed to have negotiations only involving African mediators and to achieve a peace deal by the end of 1986.⁶⁶ In addition, while in Washington during June 1986 the Machel loyalist Abdul Magid Osman visited the Heritage Foundation, known supporters of Renamo, to seek advice on what measures would be necessary to secure peace. Joaquim Chissano, on the other hand, continued to publicly emphasize his unwillingness to negotiate with Renamo.⁶⁷

In the meantime a Politburo meeting from 18 February to 3 March 1986 resulted in Alberto Chipande being brought back to the Defence portfolio and Armando Guebuza being appointed as Minister for Agriculture. Exactly what led to these reappointments is unknown, though a statement released following the meeting announced that "within the framework of the war economy, existing economic and financial resources (must) be channelled as a priority to the war effort".⁶⁸ By this time it was recognised that the war was not progressing well. Though Renamo's Gorongosa headquarters had been captured in late 1985, the rebel forces had merely moved their offensive into Zambézia province, and had in fact recaptured Gorongosa from government forces in February 1986. There was great discontent within the

army as FPLM units lacked supplies of food, ammunition and pay, creating low morale and forcing soldiers to turn to theft. A Zimbabwean intelligence report leaked in 1987,

stressed the ineffectual state of the government forces, the low morale, and the sympathies which existed amongst government forces for RENAMO... the government forces were characterised by a severe lack of discipline, bad treatment of ordinary soldiers by officers, low pay (which more often than not arrived late), and a general lack of planning and logistics.⁶⁹

Though the diversion of resources to the war effort may have pleased militarists in the administration, it also seems that the Politburo may have agreed to a retreat from free market economics, as central planning advocates Mario Machungo and Abdul Magid Osman were appointed as Planning Minister and Finance Minister respectively, and together with Guebuza they were given the mission to increase production and to “struggle against racketeering and speculation”. Machel loyalist Jacinto Veloso was also appointed as head of the Ministry of Co-operation, which would deal with all of Mozambique’s foreign economic relations, including negotiations with the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.⁷⁰

Machel’s final year of struggle

In this context President Machel continued with his secret bid for peace. However, from the Gorongosa base recaptured by Renamo in May 1986, Renamo President Dhlakama declared that,

The solution to the problem of war will no longer come with an agreement with Machel. Now we will accept only negotiation with Frelimo’s operational soldiers... we have our sources and we know that, inside Maputo, not everybody agrees with Machel. We believe there could be a coup at any moment.⁷¹

Pro-Renamo journalist Peter Youngusband claimed that diplomats in Maputo also shared Dhlakama’s assessment that a coup was imminent.⁷² This could be dismissed as mere Renamo rhetoric if Machel had not been killed only a few months later. It is possible Dhlakama’s source may have been SNASP agent Mateus Lopes himself, who could have made the claim to bolster his own standing in Renamo’s inner circle. Lopes seems to have become quite close to Gimo Phiri and Dhlakama, and to have been involved in lobbying for Evo Fernandes’ demotion from Secretary-General in mid-1986, perhaps due to a failure of negotiations between Fernandes and Mozambican representatives.⁷³ However, there were ever-growing connections between the Renamo leadership and members of the Mozambican military that could equally have been a direct source of the rumour. The overwhelming corruption within the armed forces and even political sympathy for Renamo by nationalist elements led to the development of covert communications between the sides. Cabrita claims that in the late 1980s elements within the armed forces “began collaborating with the guerrillas. Government soldiers are said to have given information to Renamo through the latter’s network of informers, the *mujiba*”.⁷⁴ As these relationships developed,

government soldiers radioed Renamo to warn the guerrillas of military plans or of attacks in the offing. Renamo says it was kept informed of changes in FAM’s telecommunications codebooks. Air traffic controllers at the Beira Air Force Base are said to have informed the Renamo Headquarters at Maringué of pending air raids.⁷⁵

Even more significantly a commercial relationship developed between Renamo and corrupt elements within the military.⁷⁶ Cabrita states that,

Renamo has also claimed that FAM units failed to carry through their operations, deliberately abandoning war materiel, which they knew would end up in rebel hands, or actually making it reach guerrilla bases. After the war, the official Mozambique news agency (AIM) reported that FAM had regularly supplied military equipment to a Renamo base in Sofala. According to AIM, 'Mozambican air force helicopters often landed at Renamo bases in Gorongosa, apparently to unload supplies'.⁷⁷

Former member of the Renamo leadership Raul Domingos confirmed this, claiming that Renamo's urban agents contacted members of the military who subsequently began providing information and ammunition to the rebels, mainly from 1987. Loot from Renamo's raids on villages would be sold and the money used to buy materials from the FPLM. Supplies would be dropped off for pick-up under the pretence of a battle, and it would later be claimed that Renamo had captured them.⁷⁸ This relationship continued to progress to such a point that a South African report from June 1987 observed that,

Limited cooperation between FAM members and RENAMO already puts the latter in a position to continue its actions against the Beira corridor and also hamper the operational effectiveness of the ZNA [Zimbabwean National Army].⁷⁹

Under the Chissano presidency this corruption grew unabated, the *Indian Ocean Newsletter* claiming that at an armed forces meeting in early June 1989,

One lieutenant rose and declared before the delegates that RENAMO had two command posts – one in South Africa and one in Maputo... [Young officers] accuse the old generals of profiting from the war. They cite recent cases of Cuban rations destined for the army turning up in captured RENAMO camps.⁸⁰

But the Mozambican armed forces were not the only bastion of corruption. Elements within the Zimbabwean security forces were also profiting from the war. The personnel of Zimbabwe's Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) didn't change radically with the 1980 transition to majority rule, and ties with South African military intelligence were never truly severed. Members of the CIO, probably in collaboration with South African operatives, arranged for arms transfers to Renamo forces and made a commission from their activities.⁸¹ Elements in the CIO also worked with members of the Zimbabwean armed forces to create a trafficking network for ivory poached from elephants and rhinos in Mozambique, as well as narcotics. The murders of ZNA Captain Edwin Nleya and ZNA Lieutenant Shepard Chisango seem to have been connected to this network.⁸² Whether Renamo was directly linked to this smuggling network is unknown, but the rebels did have a history of smuggling ivory and gems to fund the war effort. Peter Stiff claims that when the Rhodesian SAS transferred to South Africa during the transition to majority rule, they also took two tons of elephant ivory that had originated from Renamo and brought out of Mozambique in Rhodesian Air Force helicopters.⁸³ Throughout the 1980s various reports continued to emerge that Renamo was involved in large-scale smuggling of precious gems, ivory, lion and zebra skins, hardwood and narcotics, including a statement in 1984 from Renamo defector Constantino Reis. In 1986 68 kilograms of narcotics were recovered from a Renamo base in Zambézia, and in 1987 19,700 elephant tusks were found in central Mozambique, apparently waiting to be picked up for transfer by plane to South Africa. Poaching mainly took place around

Gorongosa and in the Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe, and the smuggling network used routes through South Africa, Zimbabwe and Malawi.⁸⁴ Though at the time of Machel's death the relationship between Renamo and elements in the FPLM had not reached yet reached its peak, these were certainly the type of corrupt connections that were being forged.

By September 1986 Machel and his fellow Frontline leaders Robert Mugabe and Kenneth Kuanda were taking a much more hardline stance against Malawian support to Renamo, threatening to block Malawi's trade routes and even to place missiles on the Malawian border. The success of these threats and the apparent plan to subject Zaire to the same type of pressure were amongst the factors that increased tension with South Africa in the days prior to Machel's death. Following the fatal air-crash documents South Africa claimed to have recovered from the scene indicated that while in Lusaka Machel,

had discussed plans with Kuanda and Mugabe to overthrow Banda's government by organizing a 'liberation army' from among Malawian exiles... The authenticity of the documents has never been established, although Kuanda was reported to have confirmed its accuracy and said he had refused to take part in the plan when it was put to him.⁸⁵

Meanwhile, on 11 October 1986 Machel held his last informal meeting with selected sections of the Mozambican media. According to Fauvet and Mosse, journalist Mota Lopes had the impression that Machel had, "great concern, not only with the external and regional situation, but also (perhaps above all) with the internal situation, particularly at the highest levels of the Frelimo leadership".⁸⁶ He also spoke of the ongoing negotiations with the International Monetary Fund, expressing his displeasure by saying, "[p]rivatisation of the railways and ports, of the schools, of the hospitals. That's what the IMF is saying in the negotiations. They've attacked our revolutionary gains and our life."⁸⁷ In addition, only a few days before his death Machel held a dinner at which he announced the new civilian administrator of the military, replacing Chief of the Armed Forces Sebastião Mabote who was being sent to Cuba to study.⁸⁸ Fauvet and Mosse claim that Machel had long wanted to change the FPLM's military strategy and to deploy former colonial commandos,

as shock units in the war against Renamo. These highly trained soldiers had caused problems for Frelimo in the 1970s, and Machel respected their military skills... Machel wanted new units, headed by these men, to wage counter-guerrilla warfare – and they would be under his command, independent of the general staff. But the rest of the military hierarchy objected, and the idea never got off the ground. Similarly, attempts to promote rapidly young officers trained in the Soviet Union met with obstacles... By 1986 Machel had decided on a thorough reorganisation of the military, and he was honest enough to announce it in advance.⁸⁹

Mabote's transfer to Cuba was the first step in a major restructure of the military hierarchy that Machel planned to carry out in October 1986. Journalist Carlos Cardoso later wrote that Machel,

told his adversaries within the armed forces general staff and... the party leadership... what he intended to do: dismiss almost the entire general staff, replacing them with the young officers trained in the USSR. And he even told them the date of the changes: 20 October 1986. A meeting to change the leading figures in the armed forces was set for

07.00 that morning. But on the night of the 19th, that meeting with the general staff was postponed *sine die* because the presidential aircraft crashed at Mbuzini.⁹⁰

Thus by the time of President Machel's death he had been engaged in a struggle with elements within the leadership of the Frelimo Party and armed forces for more than half a decade over the issues of corruption, peace negotiations with Renamo and the maintenance of state control over the Mozambican economy. The Frelimo leadership had become deeply divided over these issues and on at least two occasions Machel's enemies had attempted to remove him from the Presidency through political manoeuvring and a military coup. In the months prior to the fatal plane crash Machel had intensified his efforts against corruption and incompetence in the Mozambican state, re-initiated peace negotiations with elements in Renamo and backed away from free market reforms. Then in the week of the crash Machel made comments that he was unhappy about demands for economic reform by the International Monetary Fund, and began implementing plans for a major restructure of the military hierarchy. Hence at the time of Machel's death there was no shortage of individuals in Mozambique who may have benefited from his demise and would thus have had motives to collaborate with South Africa in his assassination. Joaquim Chissano in particular succeeded Machel to the Presidency and many of Machel's enemies regained key positions within the Frelimo leadership. Two decades later Armando Guebuza himself would also become Mozambican President.

Conclusion

The death of Mozambican President Samora Machel remains a controversial event in the history of southern Africa. Though some researchers have dismissed theories of an assassination, and others have produced it as further evidence of Apartheid's malevolence, of greater importance to the analysis of Mozambican history and present-day politics is what Machel's death reveals about Frelimo's internal machinations. Whether the plane crash at Mbuzini resulted from pilot error or political conspiracy the intrigues within Frelimo over the preceding decade, and the abrupt political changes in Mozambique that resulted from Joaquim Chissano's ascension to the presidency, signal that beneath Frelimo's façade of unity power blocs struggled for influence. These blocs, which probably shifted in their membership and goals as various developments arose, were motivated by a combination of ideology and corruption. Following Machel's death his successor Chissano would also have to satisfy the divergent agendas within the Frelimo party, doing so by marginalising pro-Machel elements in Mozambique's political and military leadership, accelerating economic and political liberalisation, and delaying a negotiated end to the civil war as long as possible. Much is to be gained from future research into the precise factional fault-lines that existed within the Mozambican government, and the light that it may shed on those who today still hold power.

¹ *Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Accident to Tupolev 134A-3 Aircraft C9-CAA on 19th October 1986*, (Pretoria : South African Department of Transport, 1986).

² Tom Chalmers. "Machel Crash Enquiry: Russian Aircrew Blamed", *World Airnews*, Vol 15, No 6, August 1987, pp.2-4, 40. Also see Augusta Conchiglia, "The Death of Samora Machel", *AfricAsia*, No 35, November 1986, pp.9-12; Paul Fauvet and Marcelo Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso: Telling the Truth in Mozambique*, (Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2003), p.161.

³ Chalmers, "Machel Crash Enquiry", pp. 2-4, 40.

- ⁴ Paul Fauvet and Marcellino Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso: Telling the Truth in Mozambique*, (Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2003), pp166-171. Mozambique News Agency: *Agencia de Informação de Moçambique*.
- ⁵ Pietro Petrucci, "Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique: A President in Search of Peace", *AfricaAsia*, No 40, April 1987, p. 8; Mozambique: Pandora's Boxes", *Africa Confidential*, Vol 17, No 23, November 1986, pp.1-3; Phyllis Johnson and David Martin, *Frontline Southern Africa*, (Peterborough (UK): Ryan Publishing, 1989), p.42; Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, pp166-171. Many of these questions were also raised in a report by Dutch researcher Klaas de Jonge to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 1996. A copy of this report can be found on the internet at http://www.contrast.org/truth/html/samora_machel.html, (accessed August 2006).
- ⁶ Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, pp.166-171.
- ⁷ Allen Isaacman, "The Malawi Connection", *African Report*, November-December 1986, p51; Hilton Hamann, *Days of the Generals*, (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2001), pp.116-118.
- ⁹ Hamann, *Days of the Generals*, pp.116-118.
- ¹⁰ "Former CCB Killer Confesses Part in Machel Death", South African Press Association (Johannesburg), 12 January 2003; "Samora Was Murdered, Says Former Apartheid Operative", *Agencia de Informação de Moçambique*, 13 January 2003.
- ¹¹ Joseph Hanlon, "South Africans Admit They Killed Samora, but Say Mozambicans Helped", Southern Africa Documentation and Co-operation Centre, 8 May 2003.
- ¹² Hanlon, "South Africans Admit They Killed Samora". Hanlon points out that the term 'generals' can also refer to political leaders, as most of the Frelimo leadership also held a military rank.
- ¹³ "General Sul-Africano Diz Que é Tudo Cabala", *Notícias*, 29 May 2003; "Apartheid General Lied About Business Links", www.SNNi.org, 10 June 2003.
- ¹⁴ Joseph Hanlon, *Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire*, (London: Zed Press, 1984), pp.206-209, 249. Hanlon later noted that splits within the Politburo in the early 1980s led Machel to take on a more autocratic leadership style, a centralisation of power and unwillingness to delegate authority. Joseph Hanlon, *Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots?* (London: James Curry, 1991), p.26.
- ¹⁵ Margaret Hall and Tom Young, *Confronting Leviathan: Mozambique Since Independence*, (London: Hurst and Company, 1997), p.73.
- ¹⁶ Hans Abrahamsson and Andres Nilsson, *Mozambique: the Troubled Transition: From Socialist Construction to Free Market Capitalism*, (London: Zed Books, 1995), p.75.
- ¹⁷ *Reports of the Use of Torture in The People's Republic of Mozambique*, (New York: Amnesty International, April 1985), pp.2-6.
- ¹⁸ Hanlon, *Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire*, pp.191-193.
- ¹⁹ Marcelino Komba, "Mozambique's Return to Arms", *Africa*, No 118, June 1981, pp.52, 61-62.
- ²⁰ "A 'Worst-Case' Security Scenario for Mozambique", *Africa Now*, No 32, December 1983, pp.86-88.
- ²¹ "A 'Worst-Case' Security Scenario for Mozambique"; Komba, "Mozambique's Return to Arms", pp.52, 61-62.
- ²² Hanlon, *Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire*, pp.202-204; *Reports of the Use of Torture*, pp.2-6.
- ²³ Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, p.81.
- ²⁴ "Mozambique: A Parting of the Ranks", *Africa Confidential*, Vol 25, No 16, 1 August 1984, pp.1-4; "Mozambique: What is the MNR?", pp.5-6.
- ²⁵ Hanlon, *Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire*, pp202-204.
- ²⁶ "MACHEL het reeds in November 1982 'n veldtog teen magsmisbruik van stapel gestuur waartydens MATSINHE en GUEBUZA ook om dieselfde rede gekritiseer is". "Situasierapport 99/84: Aktuele Aspekte van die Bedreiging Teen die RSA soos op 29 Junie 1984", 2 July 1984, South African Foreign Affairs Archive, file 1/113/3, p.4.
- ²⁷ "Situation in Mozambique: Reconciliation Talks", from Malawian Ambassador to Mozambique Itimu to the Malawian Secretary for External Affairs, 14 March 1984, Malawian National Archive, reference MAP/C/6/68, p.6.
- ²⁸ João M. Cabrita, *Mozambique: The Tortuous Road to Democracy*, (Basingstroke, Palgrave, 2000), p.222.
- ²⁹ Cabrita, *Mozambique*, p.249.
- ³⁰ Hanlon, *Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire*, pp206-209.
- ³¹ "Mozambique: Government Reshuffle", *Indian Ocean Newsletter*, No 83, 28 May 1983, pp.1, 3.

- ³² “Mozambique: Reshuffle and Decentralization”, *Indian Ocean Newsletter*, No 84, 4 June 1983, pp.1, 5.
- ³³ “Mozambique: Government Reshuffle”, pp1, 3; “Mozambique: Reshuffle and Decentralization”, pp1, 5.
- ³⁴ “Mozambique: Government Reshuffle”, pp1, 3
- ³⁵ Alex Vines, *RENAMO: From Terrorism to Democracy in Mozambique?*, (London: James Currey, 1996), p101.
- ³⁶ “Skerp kritiek is in die verlede deur van sy kabinetkollegas uitgespreek oor sy omstredende hantering van ‘Operasie Produksie’ ingevolge waarvan duisende werkloos uit die stede verwyder is om produktief op die platteland aangewend te word”. “Situasierapport 99/84: Aktuele Aspekte van die Bedreiging Teen die RSA soos op 29 Junie 1984”, p4.
- ³⁷ Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, p124.
- ³⁸ Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, p122.
- ³⁹ “Situation in Mozambique: Reconciliation Talks”, 14 March 1984, p.4.
- ⁴⁰ “Situation in Mozambique: Reconciliation Talks”, 14 March 1984, pp.4-6.
- ⁶² Stephen Chan and Moisés Venâncio, *War and Peace in Mozambique*, (London: Macmillan, 1998), p.13.
- ⁴² Luis B. Serapião, *Mozambican Foreign Policy and the West 1975-1984*, (Pasadena (CA): Munger Africana Library Notes No 76, August 1985), p.11.
- ⁴³ Conversation with a Former Mozambican Intelligence Agent, Maputo, 19 June 2003.
- ⁴⁴ Joseph Hanlon, Gil Lauriciano and Rachel Waterhouse, *Mozambique Peace Process Bulletin*, No 10, July 1994, pp.1-5; Chris Alden, “The UN and the Resolution of Conflict in Mozambique”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. Vol 33, No 1, 1995, p.118; Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, pp.249-251.
- ⁴⁵ “Mozambique: In Desperation”, *Africa Confidential*, Vol 27, No 10, 7 May 1986, pp.7-8.
- ⁴⁶ “Mozambique: A Parting of the Ranks”, pp.1-4.
- ⁴⁷ “Situation in Mozambique”, from Malawian Ambassador to Mozambique Itimu to the Malawian Secretary for External Affairs, May or June 1984, Malawian National Archive, pp.1-3. Though the document is not dated, a draft notes that it is written after the Nkomati Accord, and the references to King Moshoeshoe’s birthday (2 May) and Armando Guebuza’s position as Minister of Interior place the document in May or early June 1984.
- ⁴⁸ “Situasierapport 99/84: Aktuele Aspekte van die Bedreiging Teen die RSA soos op 29 Junie 1984”, pp.3-4; “Mozambique: A Parting of the Ranks”, pp.1-4; Phil Cohen, “On the Trail of the MNR”, *New African*, October 1984, pp.12-15; Cabrita, *Mozambique*, pp.223, 225.
- ⁴⁹ “Situasierapport 99/84: Aktuele Aspekte van die Bedreiging Teen die RSA soos op 29 Junie 1984”, p.3.
- ⁵⁰ “GUEBUZA is ‘n omstredende politikus wie se naam reeds verskeie kere gekoppel is aan verdeeldheid in die politburo van Frelimo vanweë sy ontevredenheid met sekere beleidsrigtings. Na onbevestig is, was hy ook een van die opponente van MACHEL se besluit om die Nkomati-verdrag met die RSA onderteken. In Januarie 1984 is GUEBUZA die invloedryke pos van politieke kommissaris van die Mosambiekse gewapende magte (wat hy jare lank beklee het) ontnem”. “Situasierapport 99/84: Aktuele Aspekte van die Bedreiging Teen die RSA soos op 29 Junie 1984”, p.4.
- ⁵¹ “Pres Machel het daarin geslaag om sy posisie in die regering te verstyg deur die vervanging van die Minister van Nasionale Veiligheid, Mariano Matsinhe, en die Minister van Binnelandse Sake, Armando Guebuza, met twee van sy lojale ondersteuners, nl kolonels Vieira en Monteiro onderskeidelik. Guebuza, wat na bewering teen die Nkomati-verdrag gekant is, is heeltemal uit die kabinet gelaat”. “Riglyne vir ‘n Totale Strategie vir Mosambiek: Sewentiende Monitorverslag: 1 April tot 30 Junie 1984”, Secretariat of the South African State Security Council, 23 July 1984, South African Foreign Affairs Archive, file 1/113/3, p1.
- ⁵² “Die hoë intensiteit van Renamo-operasies na Maart 1984 teenoor Frelimo/FAM se verwagting dat optrede na die ondertekening van die Nkomati-verdrag skerp sal afneem, het ‘n lae verglus binne die FAM tot gevolg... Indien Renamo sy huidige druk op Frelimo kan volhou, kan dit die nasionalistiese groep in Frelimo, asook ander gematigde drukgroepe soos die Rooms-Katolieke Kerk (RKK), se hand sterk om Frelimo te dwing om tot ‘n vergelyk met Renamo te kom”. “Riglyne vir ‘n Totale Strategie vir Mosambiek: Sewentiende Monitorverslag: 1 April tot 30 Junie 1984”, p.2.
- ⁵³ Chan and Venâncio, *War and Peace in Mozambique*, p.19; “África do Sul Dialoga Com Resistência Moçambicana”, *Diário do Minho*, 17 August 1984; “Mozambique: Machel’s Dilemmas”, *Africa Confidential*, Vol 25, No 19, 19 September 1984, pp.4-6.
- ⁵⁴ “Mozambique: Machel’s Dilemmas”, pp4-6; Mario Azevedo, “Mozambique and the West: The Search for Common Ground, 1975-1991”, *Conflict Quarterly*, Vol 11, No 2, Spring 1991, p.41.

- ⁵⁵ “Mozambique: An Infamous Accord”, *Africa Confidential*, Vol 25, No 24, 28 November 1984, pp.4-7; “Mozambique: In Desperation”, pp.7-8.
- ⁵⁶ Conversation with a Former Mozambican Intelligence Agent, Maputo, 19 June 2003.
- ⁵⁷ Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, pp.143-144.
- ⁵⁸ Conversation with a Former Mozambican Intelligence Agent, Maputo, 19 June 2003.
- ⁵⁹ “Mozambique: Dos Santos and Machungo in US”, *Indian Ocean Newsletter*, No 377, 22 April 1989, p.3.
- ⁶⁰ Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, p.154.
- ⁶¹ Conversation with a Former Mozambican Intelligence Agent, Maputo, 19 June 2003.
- ⁶² Paulo Oliveira, *Os Domos da ‘RENAMO’*, (Maputo, May 1989), pp.98, 101; “Mozambique: Plausible Deniability”, *Africa Confidential*, Vol 29, No 24, 2 December 1988, pp1-2.
- ⁶³ “Mozambique: Negotiations?”, *Indian Ocean Newsletter*, No 371, 25 February 1989, p3.
- ⁶⁴ “In Brief”, *AED*, 18 January 1985; “Mozambique: Black Listed”, *Indian Ocean Newsletter*, No 485, 29 June 1991, pp1, 3; “Mozambique: Confusion at Home, Silence Abroad”, *African Confidential*, Vol 32, No 14, 12 July 1991, pp6-7; “South Africa: Renamo White-Farmers’ Recruiting Agent”, *Indian Ocean Newsletter*, 27 July 1991, p6.
- ⁶⁵ Oliveira, *Os Domos*, pp99.
- ⁶⁶ Conversation with Former Mozambican Intelligence Agent, Maputo, 19 June 2003.
- ⁶⁷ “The Resistance Can Win in Mozambique”, *National Security Record*, The Heritage Foundation, June 1986, pp1-3, 6.
- ⁶⁸ “Mozambique: In Desperation”, pp7-8.
- ⁶⁹ “Mozambique: In Desperation”, pp.7-8; Chan and Venâncio, *War and Peace in Mozambique*, pp.10-11.
- ⁷⁰ “Mozambique: In Desperation”, pp.7-8.
- ⁷¹ Ricardo de Mello, “MNR Leader Speaks”, *Star*, 22 May 1986.
- ⁷² Peter Younghusband, “Rebels Have Samora Machel at Bay”, *Insight*, 28 July 1986, p.33.
- ⁷³ “Mozambique: Negotiations?”, p.3.
- ⁷⁴ Cabrita, *Mozambique*, p.259.
- ⁷⁵ Cabrita, *Mozambique*, p.260.
- ⁷⁶ Conversation with a Former Mozambican Intelligence Agent, Maputo, 19 June 2003.
- ⁷⁷ Cabrita, *Mozambique*, p.259. In stating this Cabrita references *Mozambiquefile*, September 1993, p.22
- ⁷⁸ Conversation with former Renamo National Council member Raul Domingos at the Mozambican Assembly Building, Maputo, 11 June 2003.
- ⁷⁹ “Beperkte samewerking tussen FAM-lede en RENAMO stel lg reeds in staat om sy optrede teen die Beira-korridor voort te sit en belemmer ook die operasionele doeltreffendheid van die ZNA”. “Mosambiek: Monitorverslag”, for Mr D Vosloo, 15 June 1987, South African Foreign Affairs Archive, file 144/8/19/2, pp1-3.
- ⁸⁰ “Mozambique: Time to Talk”, *Africa Confidential*, Vol 30, No 13, 23 June 1989, pp.1-2.
- ⁸¹ Conversation with a Former Mozambican Intelligence Agent, Maputo, 19 June 2003.
- ⁸² Cabrita, *Mozambique*, p.259. In addressing this issue Cabrita references *The Star*, 13 March 1990, p.8, and *Africa Analysis*, 23 August 1991, p.4.
- ⁸³ Peter Stiff, *The Silent War: South African Recce Operations 1969-1994*, (Alberton (SA): Galago, 1999), p.303.
- ⁸⁴ South African National Intelligence Service document, 18 December 1984, South African Foreign Affairs Archive, file 1/113/3; *BBC Summary of World Broadcasting*, 18 March 1985; “Mozambican Military Claim”, *BBC Summary of World Broadcasting*, 21 July 1986; “Documented Incidents of SADF Actions in Mozambique Since the Capture of the Casa Banana, Gorongosa, Part 2”, *Southern Africa Dossier*, December 1988, p.30; “Africa do Sul Continua a Abastecer o Banditismo”, *Notícias*, 7 March 1989; Phyllis Johnson and David Martin, *Apartheid Terrorism: The Destabilization Report*, (London: James Currey, 1989), p.11; “MNR Cashes in on Rhino and Elephant Poaching”, *Herald*, 13 April 1990; Stiff, *The Silent War*, p.303.
- ⁸⁵ Colin Legum, “The Southern African Crisis 1986-1987: An Embattled Republic of South Africa Versus the Rest of the Continent”, *Africa Contemporary Record* 1986-1987, Vol 19, pp.A3-A79. Also see Alan Cowell, “Pretoria Accuses Neighbours of a Plot”, *New York Times*, 7 November 1986; and “Zimbabwe and Mozambique

Deny Plan for Coup in Malawi”, *BBC Summary of World Broadcasting*, 10 November 1986; Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, p.156.

⁸⁶ Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, pp.158-159.

⁸⁷ Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, pp.158-159.

⁸⁸ Conversation with a Former Mozambican Intelligence Agent, Maputo, 19 June 2003. Anecdotally, a number of sources have maintained to this author that Mabote would not have been involved in a coup against the President because he was far too loyal and obedient to Machel.

⁸⁹ Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, p.176.

⁹⁰ Fauvet and Mosse, *Carlos Cardoso*, pp.177-178.