

Machel crash crew "disorientated" by Swazi beacon (ME/8473/ii) One of the team investigating the crash which killed President Machel, former pilot Roy Downes, has said that the crew of the aircraft was "disorientated" by a very high frequency omnidirectional radio beacon transmitting from Matsapa in Swaziland, according to the South African agency on 22nd January. Downes said that the navigator, thinking that the plane was over the sea rather than land, had ordered a right turn thinking it would put them on the right line for Maputo. The agency also said that a "nefarious person" could have steered the plane off course with a false beacon. The agency also reported a pathologist, Prof Louis Nel, as saying that from evidence of the injuries which he sustained during the crash, President Machel could not have survived the accident - Nel was replying to questions about newspaper reports at the time of the crash which said that Machel was alive for four hours after the crash.

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