

Machel's death:

Russia wants fresh probe

New Nation 4-10/9/92

A political storm of international magnitude around the 1986 aircraft crash in which Mozambican president Samora Machel was killed is brewing with Russian president Boris Yeltsin coming under renewed pressure to reopen the inquiry into the accident.

There is also increasing speculation that Machel's assassination may have been ordered by the State Security Council or one of its sub-committees in the same way that Matthew Goniwe's murder was schemed.

This week when asked to comment on the charge being levelled against South Africa by the Russian deputies, National Party leader FW de Klerk said he would not discuss the matter except to say that he was not a member of the State Security Council at the time.

Suggestions that sanctions be imposed against South Africa for its role in the "sabotage" in the same way that the United Nations has ordered sanctions against Libya for refusing to hand over two men suspected of having bombed an American passenger plane over Scotland, are also gaining ground.

Sabotaged

In a letter signed by a number of People's Deputies in the Russian parliament, Yeltsin is told that according to the opinion of Russian experts, Machel's plane was sabotaged by South Africa.

"Probably this fact may become (just as in the case of the US Boeing 747 sabotaged over Scotland) a

several Mozambicans who were part of Machel's entourage.

Reacting to suggestions that SA's alleged culpability in the crash should become the subject of a UN debate, De Klerk said as far as he was concerned the matter was closed, because neither Mozambican president, Joaquim Chissano, nor Yeltsin had ever raised the matter during meetings with him.

Investigations

After the crash, an inquiry was conducted by experts representing Mozambique, Russia and South Africa. According to the report compiled during the inquiry, South Africa refused to cooperate with the investigations at a point where the investigators found that a certain false beacon had waylaid the plane into mountain-



Former Mozambican president, Samora Machel who died in an aircraft crash

ous terrain where it crashed.

"The basic task of an objective investigation of this particular accident - the explanation of causes which forced the aircraft crew to turn off the

Maputo course and to steadily proceed along another course until their entrance into the hilly region - remained unsolved in the report," the Russian experts said in their comments.