

# On the streets of Maputo, the word is: Murder! 24/10/86

PROFOUND shock and grief has descended on the Mozambican capital following the death of President Samora Machel.

Tuesday's edition of the daily paper "Noticias", carrying the text of the official statements on the tragedy, sold out almost as soon as it hit the streets.

There is no panic on the streets, and there have been no disturbances. Life is continuing more or less as normal; shops are open, factories are working and traffic continues at the usual, low levels.

National mourning will last for 60 days, and until the funeral all recreational, sporting and cultural activities have been suspended.

Along with grief goes suspicion. No-one is treating Samora Machel's death as an accident. The government has not so far accused anyone of responsibility, but it says the crash took place "under circumstances that have yet to be clarified".

Other observers are less restrained. Literally everybody to whom this correspondent has spoken in Maputo, Mozambican and foreigner alike, believe that Samora Machel was murdered by the South Africans.

This was also the dominant note in the editorial in "Noticias" on the president's death.

The Mozambican leader, it said, "was a target to be cut down".

Among those who have listened to the SABC coverage, or seen South African papers since the tragedy, there is a sense of deep revulsion at the way in which much of the South African media has dealt with the president's death, its causes and its consequences.

The inevitable speculation that the removal of Machel from the scene would lead to some kind of accommodation with the Pretoria-backed Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) is seen here as little more than wishful thinking.

On Tuesday night, Defence Minister

General Alberto Chipande broadcast a message on national radio to all members of the Mozambican defence and security forces. He said that the best way of honouring the memory of Samora Machel was "to step up the fight against the enemies of the country and of socialism".

Chipande, who as a young guerrilla commander fired the first shots of the war for independence in September 1964, urged the armed forces to increase their struggle to wipe out "armed banditry" (the term by which MNR activity is generally known in Mozambique) and warned that the country's foes would now "try to create divisions among us, sow discord and confusion and provoke rumours and intrigues".

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Journalists have been barred from Mozambique since President Machel's death on Sunday. PAUL FAUVET reports that there is a sense of shock and grief in Maputo, but few of the fears of turmoil and collapse being expressed elsewhere.

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The authorities have called for vigilance and have urged that any unusual movement or event should be reported immediately.

There is no sign of any additional military presence on the streets, though at night there are more policemen and soldiers checking the identity documents of passers-by than normal. The army remains on the

state of alert that was decreed on October 11 when the government warned that the South African military were preparing air and commando raids against the capital.

Under the Mozambican constitution, it is Frelimo's central committee that must appoint the successor to Machel (since the president of the party automatically occupies the post of president of the republic as well). It is thought unlikely that any successor will be named before the funeral.

All members of the 130-strong central committee will be in the capital for the funeral, and will

presumably meet next week to appoint the new president.

Among those who might be considered for the post are Foreign Minister Joaquim Chissano, secretary to the Mozambican parliament Marcelino dos Santos, and Prime Minister Mario Machungo, all members of the party's political bureau.

Frelimo leadership is a cohesive, united group of men who have been together fighting side by side for the last 15 years. No-one in Maputo believes that any kind of power struggle is a serious possibility.

Weekly Mail, Johannesburg, 24-30 October 1986