

We found Machel alive, say locals

DURBAN.

PRESIDENT Samora Machel of Mozambique was still alive four hours after his plane crashed in South Africa, the Durban-based mass-circulation daily *Ilanga*, said on Monday.

Quoting eyewitness accounts from Mbusini village in the Natal province, close to the Mozambican border where the aircraft crashed, *Ilanga* said residents who arrived at the scene within minutes of the crash saw Cde Machel alive and badly injured.

Cde Machel was clad in his famous military attire and his whole body was covered in blood, the residents claimed.

The residents said that when South African police arrived at the scene at 3 am and chased them away, Cde Machel was still breathing, the paper said.

The newspaper quotes a nurse from the village clinic 10 km from the scene of the crash who confirmed that the residents told her Cde Machel was still alive when the police chased them away from the scene.

But when she arrived on the scene, the nurse said Cde Machel's body and those of the other victims were already covered in blankets. — IPS.