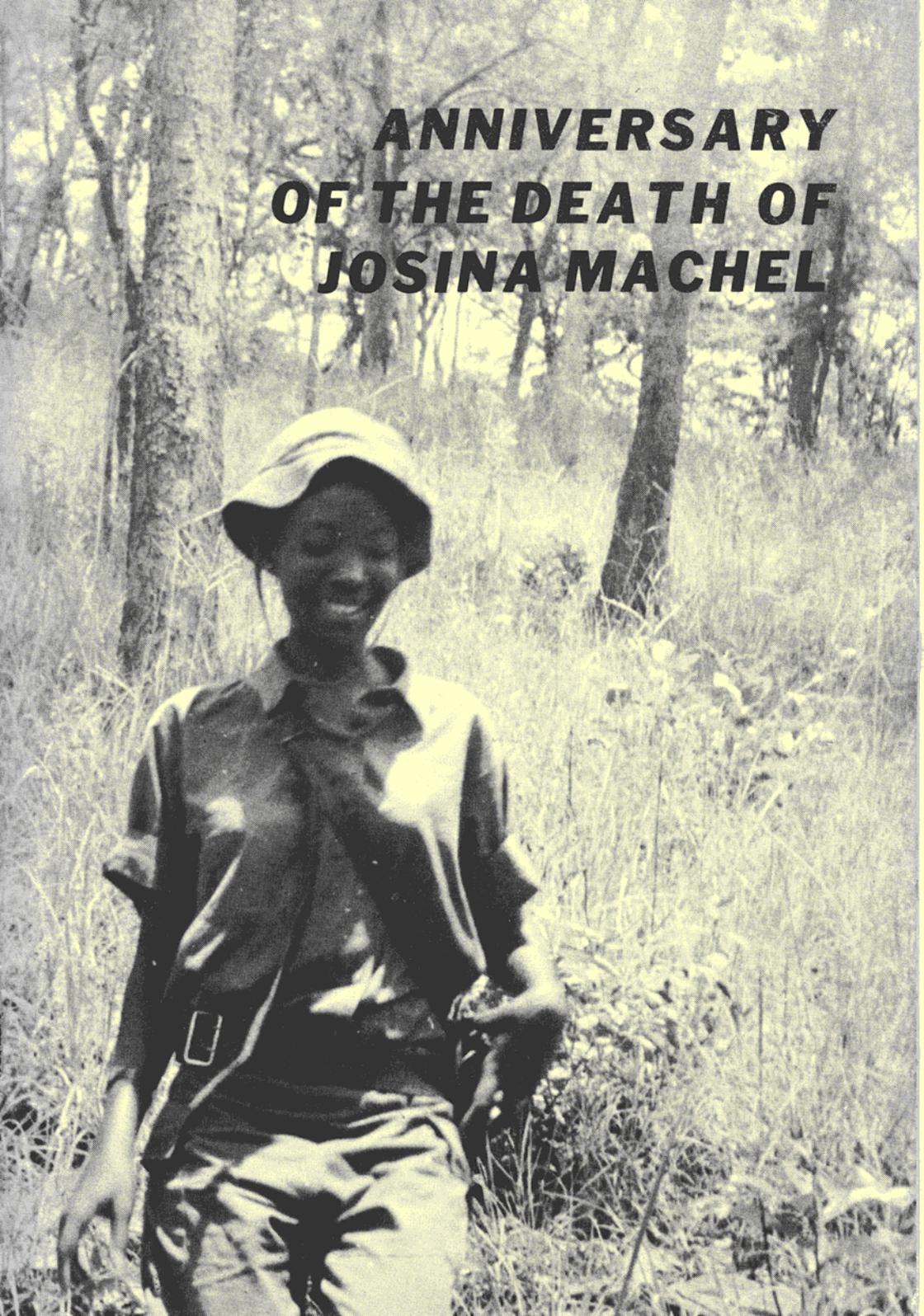


**ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE DEATH OF  
JOSINA MACHEL**





# JOSINA MACHEL

Comrade Josina was born on the 10th August, 1945, in the Province of Inhambane, where her parents were working.

Her family – Muthemba – is rich in patriotic traditions. Her uncle Mateus Sansao Muthemba, who was killed by reactionary elements in 1968, was a member of the FRELIMO Central Committee, and an active organiser of clandestine cells in Southern Mozambique. Almost all the other members of her family are in the Portuguese prisons, for their active role against colonialism. Her father was arrested in 1965 and is still in the political prison of Machava. Thus Comrade Josina grew up and was educated in a spirit of patriotism and hatred for the oppressors.

In 1956, after finishing primary education, she went to Lourenço Marques to do a commercial course, and completed the 4th year. As a student she was integrated into the clandestine political activities which were mobilising Mozambican youth.

After the creation of FRELIMO she became a member of a FRELIMO clandestine cell, and was an active organiser, mobilising the youth to follow her example and join FRELIMO. In March, 1964, she left her family and her studies and together with a group of comrades, left Mozambique through the underground for Tanganyika. The Secret Service of Rhodesia intercepted the whole group at Victoria Falls and sent them back to Lourenço Marques where PIDE imprisoned them.

Whilst in jail Comrade Josina was subjected to pressures and threats and was held incommunicado. Having failed with their threats, the PIDE tried to bribe her with the promise of a scholarship in Portugal. Comrade Josina did not succumb to corruption as she had not succumbed to intimidation. She refused the scholarship, and was firm in her decision to join the FRELIMO fighters.

In August, 1964, as a result of an international campaign of solidarity mobilising youth of many countries, the PIDE was forced to release Comrade Josina and the whole group. Immediately she again took up her post in the ranks of the clandestine militants and played a leading part in a massive campaign for the distribution of FRELIMO pamphlets throughout southern Mozambique on Christmas Eve, 1964.

At the beginning of 1965, together with other comrades, she attempted another escape through Swaziland. In the group were 4 of her cousins and her younger sister. They travelled underground through South Africa. On arrival in Bechuanaland the British authorities arrested them. At that time the Decolonisation Committee was meeting. The British Government was denounced at the meeting for its connivance with Portuguese colonialism, and was forced to free the whole group, after having kept them in jail for 12 days. Finally, in May, 1965, Comrade Josina and her comrades arrived in Tanzania.

The FRELIMO leadership, taking into consideration the high patriotic and revolutionary spirit of comrade Josina, entrusted her, in August, 1965, with the delicate task of organising political education in a women's unit in Niassa Province. This task she undertook successfully for 6 months.

In 1967, FRELIMO proposed that she accept a scholarship to continue her studies abroad. She asked that instead she be allowed to join the Women's Detachment which the Central Committee had just created.

In 1968, after finishing her political and military training, she was sent to Cabo Delgado Province.

In July, 1968, she was a delegate at the Second Congress of FRELIMO which was held in Niassa Province. She played a significant role, particularly in defence of the conception of a people's war; and in support of the line adopted by the Central Committee in promoting the emancipation of women. Soon after that she was given the responsibility of Social Affairs in the Defence Department.

In August, 1969, while continuing as a member of the Women's Detachment, she was given another task; that of heading the Women's Section in the Department of External Affairs.

She contributed decisively in applying the leadership's decision to reorganise social affairs to respond to the difficult problems created by the colonialist war. She was one of the promoters and organisers of the orphanages and also took an extremely important part in the re-structuring and development of the Tunduru Educational Centre.

In May, 1969, she married Comrade Samora M. Machel, who was later elected President of FRELIMO, in May, 1970. Her marriage, far from removing her from the struggle, was a factor which gave her a new stimulus.

She undertook many missions in different provinces, where at the same time she promoted the struggle for the emancipation of women and their total integration in the Revolution. Added to her tasks in the interior were those in the exterior where the voice of the Mozambican women was heard through Comrade Josina and where she contributed to the mobilisation of international solidarity with the struggle of our people, and in particular, our women.

The constant and exhausting work slowly undermined her strength. But, in spite of her serious illness, she continued her tasks. In September, 1970 she participated in the Second Conference of the Department of

Education and Culture, where she spoke out against the traditional practices which oppress the Mozambican women.

On 28 December, 1970 she started another march through Niassa Province, aimed at organising orphanages and developing the activities of the Women's Detachment. In the course of her march she held numerous meetings with the masses, militants and women.

In February, 1971, she took part in the Second Conference of the Defence Department. She discussed and clarified correct methods to eliminate the obstacles which prevent the emancipation of women.

On 6 March she went to Cobo Delgado Province, with the same objectives she had achieved in Niassa.

Her health deteriorated rapidly; and she was forced to accept to be taken to Tanzania. She died in hospital in Dar es Salaam in the dawn of 7 April, 1971.

Her high revolutionary spirit in accepting sacrifices moved the doctors and the comrades who were with her. Moments before she died, she told them: "I leave behind two preoccupations, the Revolution and my family".

Her passing deprived the Revolution of an invaluable cadre, deprived the Mozambican women of an enlightened leader.

But her work continues. In FRELIMO when a comrade falls, another will pick up the gun and continue fighting. We therefore say with our President in a poem he wrote:

The flowers which fall from the tree are to prepare the land for new and more beautiful flowers to bloom in the next season.

Your life continues in those who continue the Revolution.





The Executive Committee of FRELIMO announces with profound sorrow that Comrade Josina Abiatar Michel, wife of the President of FRELIMO, Comrade Samora Moisés Machel, died on April 7, 1971, from illness. She was 25 years old.

Comrade Josina Abiatar Machel was a militant in the struggle for the liberation of our country, always dedicated, courageous and never faltering.

A fighter in the front line, she was one of the leaders of the Women's Detachment of FRELIMO – the women's fighting corps of the People's Forces for the Liberation of Mozambique. She was Head of the Section of Social Affairs and was responsible for External Affairs in the FRELIMO Women's Section.

The example of her life as a militant of the Mozambican Revolution and the contribution she made, particularly in promoting the role of Mozambican women will always remain with us and will be a guide and encouragement to continue the struggle against Portuguese colonialism and imperialism until final victory.

The Executive Committee of Frelimo

8th April, 1971

## Messages From Liberation Movements

On this day, we the women of the African National Congress join you in remembering Josina Machel – a brave young FRELIMO militant, a fighting woman who sacrificed her life for her country.

Josina Machel lived and died so that Mozambique should be free. She represents the courage and dedication, the glorious spirit of the fighting women of FRELIMO. But she belongs not only to FRELIMO. Josina belongs to all women everywhere who are fighting for liberty. We are all proud of Josina Machel.

Her memory will never dim; it will always remain as a source of inspiration to all women fighting for liberty and justice. She will always remain a symbol of youth, of courage, of high ideals and great sacrifice.

The revolutionary spirit of Josina lives on in all her comrades in her sisters fighting side by side with their menfolk in Mozambique. We women of the African National Congress salute the revolutionary courage and spirit of the women of FRELIMO. We salute the precious memory of our comrade Josina Machel.

*The Women's Section of the  
African National Congress of South Africa.*

Comrade Josina,

One year has gone by since your departure. But you are to us, women who participate in this common struggle of our peoples against the same oppressor, you are to us like a star guiding us on the hard path to victory. In the name of the Angolan Women's Organisation, once again we pay homage to you and through you we pay homage also to all the Mozambican women who, with courage and energy fight for the freedom of their motherland.

The Angolan Women of OMA see in you a sister that gave her life for the revolution, for the same ideals we are fighting for: to free our land from imperialist exploitation and to give our sons a free country. We will follow your example of a young freedom fighter, of a brave and dedicated revolutionary woman!

A Vitória é certa!

*The Organisation of Angolan Women*



## JOSINA YOU ARE NOT DEAD

Josina you are not dead because we have assumed your responsibilities and they live in us.

You have not died for the causes you championed were inherited by us in their entirety.

You are gone from us, but the weapon and rucksack that you left, your tools of work, are part of my burden.

The blood you shed is but a small drop in the flood we have already given and still have to give.

The earth must be nourished and the more fertile it is the better do its trees flourish, the bigger are the shadows they cast, the sweeter are their fruits.

Out of your memory I will fashion a hoe to turn the sod enriched by your sacrifice . . . And new fruits will grow.

The Revolution renews itself from its best and most beloved children.

This is the meaning of your sacrifice: it will be a living example to be followed.

My joy is that as patriot and woman you died doubly free in this time when the new power and the new woman are emerging.

In your last moments you apologised to the doctors for not being able to help them.

The manner in which you accepted the sacrifice is an inexhaustible source of inspiration and courage.

When a comrade so completely assumes the new values he wins our heart, becomes our banner.

Thus more than wife, you were to me sister, friend and comrade-in-arms.

How can we mourn a comrade but by holding the fallen gun and continuing the combat.

My tears flow from the same source that gave birth to our love, our will and our revolutionary life.

Thus these tears are both a token and a vow of combat.

The flowers which fall from the tree are to prepare the land for new and more beautiful flowers to bloom in the next season.

Your life continues in those who continue the Revolution.

Samora M. Machel

---

**Messages to the FRELIMO Central Committee  
on the 1st Anniversary of the Death of  
Comrade Josina Machel  
(excerpts)**

---

**I From the Provincial Committee of Cabo Delgado.**

“... we shall fight until the total liberation of our country, following the example of our Comrade Josina Machel, who was always absolutely dedicated to the revolution, courageous, and with a high political consciousness . . . On this day, commemorating her death, we are honouring the work she did; we are pledging to assume the tasks she left unfinished; we are reaffirming that we shall undertake our revolutionary tasks with the same spirit as hers . . . She has left us physically, but will always be with us . . .”

---

**II From the Provincial Committee of Niassa.**

“In every military base, in every village and school and hospital we are today commemorating the 1st anniversary of the death of our comrade Josina Machel. We took this initiative because we feel that the activities she undertook for the struggle and her exemplary behaviour, in which she placed the revolution above everything else including herself, makes her a heroine . . .

She died as a result of her work, which undermined her health . . . She therefore died fighting as in the front line . . . Her contribution to the Revolution, her work among her people and internationally, leading the Mozambican Women on the path of their emancipation and making their voices heard abroad was invaluable . . .”

---



### **III From the Cadres of the Defence Department.**

“It seems a strange thing to commemorate the death of someone. But in this case it is important to do it, for our people to be stimulated by the example of Comrade Josina’s life at the service of the people in the struggle for national liberation, for the building of a new society, and in particular for the emancipation and integration of women in the revolution . . . The obstacles created by the reactionary conceptions about women, existing in the traditional society or brought by colonialism, started to be fought by the example of Comrade Josina who spoke out openly against them . . . On the occasion of the 1st anniversary of her death, the Defence Department wishes to express its deep admiration and respect for the courage, total determination and dedication and revolutionary spirit shown by Comrade Josina during her life . . .”



## WE CONTINUE WITH YOU

Josina,

It was still dawn when you departed.  
We had no time to say farewell:  
you departed suddenly,  
silently,  
like a shooting star.  
A gun which stood without owner  
A child who cried in the night  
were mute witnesses to your absence.  
It was still dawn when you departed.

Do we mourn for you?  
It is too soon for us to mourn.  
Absence hurts  
in relation to time  
and understanding.  
Yesterday you were with us,  
together we were building our world.  
You tended the children whom the revolution  
had placed in your care.  
You carried with you the seed and shared the fruit  
of freedom.  
Today you are no more . . . for ever!  
What does this mean?

(Ah, if only our hands were heavy hammers  
that could beat and break the earth  
that enfolds you!)

Our reason admits your absence,  
but our hearts  
refuse to understand  
or to accept.  
It is too soon for us to mourn.

Will we learn to live without you?  
Who will teach us the right words  
to sustain and console us  
in our moments  
of human hesitation and uncertainty?  
Who will show the world the strength  
the courage and the grace  
of the women of our country?  
You were the symbol of purity,  
the sister, the comrade,  
the embodiment of the revolution.  
When you departed, the meaning  
of many things  
ceased to be so clear . . .

But listen:  
When the struggle demands: Forward!  
we shall advance.  
You will be with us.  
In our marches, in our battles,  
in the schools, in the shambas,  
in all our missions,  
you will be with us.  
Halted at 25  
your youth will be eternal,  
inspiring us, encouraging us.

No, we do not need to learn  
how to live without you.  
We continue  
with you  
our struggle.

*Jorge Rebelo*

## JOSINA MACHEL CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

Josina Machel, citizen of the world,  
your heart knew all the words,  
all the languages,  
all the idioms;  
in it everyone had a place.

Your heart of music and steel  
knew only to beat out  
the rhythms of freedom  
and of love.

You gave forth the strength of truth  
and its light burned  
like a sun.

You taught us to see the world  
in a manner clean and true.  
Your example showed us  
that there are men and no races,  
that in all the world's veins  
the same red blood runs.

From you, Josina, we know  
that to give ourselves is to save ourselves;  
that the offer of ourselves to our people  
is something beautiful . . . more:  
is ineluctable, necessary as the bread we eat,  
the air we breathe.

Josina, sister, teacher,  
exemplar, seed, comrade,  
you are not dead, will never die.  
Love and freedom  
can never be killed.

*Rosária Tembe*

## THIS IS THE TIME

This is the time we were waiting for.  
Our guns are light in our hands  
the reasons and aims of the struggle  
clear in our minds.

The blood shed by our heroes  
makes us sad but resolute.  
It is the price of our freedom.  
We keep them close in our hearts  
from their example new generations  
— revolutionary generations —  
are already being born.

Ahead of us we see bitter hardships.  
But we see also  
our children running free  
our country plundered no more.

This is the time to be ready  
and firm.  
The time to give ourselves  
to the Revolution.

JOSINA MACHEL



ORIGINALLY PRINTED BY  
**FRELIMO**  
**P.O. Box 15274, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**

REPRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED BY  
**Toronto Committee for the Liberation of  
Portugal's African Colonies (TCLPAC)**  
**121 Avenue Road, Toronto 5**

1-10 copies	.35 each plus postage
Bulk orders	.20 each plus postage

TYPESET BY  
**Annie Buller Typesetting**

PRINTED BY  
**Better Read Graphics**  
**12 Hart House Circle**  
**Toronto**

