

Chissano wants crash inquiry to continue

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HAVANA.

MOZAMBICAN president Cde Joaquim Chissano on Monday said that the investigations into the cause of the plane crash that killed his predecessor, Cde Samora Machel, should continue.

The Cuban news agency, Prensa Latina, reported at the end of Cde Chissano's four-day visit to Cuba that the Mozambican leader insisted that South Africa should rejoin the investigations.

A tripartite factual commission, consisting of aviation experts from Mozambique, South Africa and the Soviet Union, had investigated the circumstances of the crash of President Machel's Soviet-made Tupolev 134 at Mbuzini inside South African territory on the night of October 19 1986.

But after commission had produced a report, indicating that the aircraft had deviated wildly from its route

in accordance with a radio signal from a VOR (very high frequency omnidirectional range) — a standard navigation aid — the South African unilaterally withdrew from the commission and held their own inquiry. The later inquiry was not attended by Mozambique or the Soviet Union who rejected the South African conclusions.

Cde Chissano said both the Soviet Union and Mozambique wanted the investigation to continue in order to discover the exact nature of the radio signal followed by the plane. The investigation should determine where the VOR emitting the signal was located, and who put it there.

"We are not accusing South Africa, but we are seeking its participation in the investigation so that we can discover where the transmitter was and who placed it there," Cde Chissano said. — Ziana-Aim-Pana.