

## **Official Says RSA 'Murdered' Samora Machel**

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[Text] Maputo, 11 Feb (AIM/PANA)—Last week Marcelino dos Santos, speaker of the Mozambican People's Assembly, publicly accused the apartheid regime of murdering Samora Machel, Mozambique's first president.

This is the first time that a Mozambican official has accused the South Africans of having murdered President Samora Machel. Mr Marcelino dos Santos made this accusation in a speech at Beira, the harbor city. In his speech, Mr Marcelino dos Santos paid homage to the former head of state for having granted amnesty to South African-backed MNR bandits who repented.

President Samora Machel died in a plane crash inside South Africa on 19 October 1986. His Russian-made Tupolev aircraft was thrown off course by a false radio signal using the same frequency as Maputo airport.

At the time, President Joaquim Chissano said Samora Machel had been murdered by, quote, our enemies, unquote.

Mr Marcelino dos Santos was speaking in connection with the recent approval of the amnesty law for armed bandits surrendering to the authorities. He stressed that President Samora Machel had said in 1985 that those bandits who surrendered would be pardoned, but those who continued fighting would be eliminated.

According to the speaker of the People's Assembly, the amnesty law must not be viewed as a sign of weakness. Instead, it must be seen as a means of fighting the bandits. Mr dos Santos affirmed that we are going to annihilate the bandits because they are mere puppets in the hands of the South African regime.

The speaker of the Mozambican People's Assembly also stated that many members of Renamo had been forced to join the bandit gang and now sought to escape. He promised that those who had been forced to kill and terrorize people would be pardoned upon surrender, but he added that we will never forgive Mr Botha.