

The Star's Africa
News Service

MAPUTO -- Assassinated South African academic, Professor Ruth First, was buried here yesterday alongside the graves of 13 African National Congress members killed in the Matola raid in Mozambique last year.

Some 3 000 mourners, among them Professor First's husband, Joe Slovo, attended the funeral, according to the Mozambique government news agency, AIM.

Six pall-bearers from the ANC carried the coffin which was draped by an ANC flag.

First buried near Matola raid casualties

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Speakers at the funeral included the Frelimo party secretary for economic policy, Mr Marcelino Dos Santos, and the general secretary of the South African Communist Party, Mr Moses Mabhida.

"Ruth First had been assassinated by apartheid," Mr Dos Santos

said.

Speakers stressed that although Professor First had been a member of the Communist Party Central Committee and a leader of the ANC she played no direct role in planning ANC actions in South Africa.

Professor First was

killed when a letter bomb addressed to her at the Centre for African Studies in Maputo, exploded last week.

President Samora Machel praised Ruth First before the funeral and at the same time replied to South African Defence Minister General Magnus Malan's claims that Mozambique is accumulating sophisticated weapons.

"No sensible person could believe that an underdeveloped country like Mozambique constitutes an economic or military threat to South Africa," Mr Machel said.