

Disaster Breakdown Ethiopian Airlines Flight 961 Episode

References and Additional Notes

- [1] Ethiopian Airlines Flight 961 Crash Video, licensed from Associated Press:
<https://newsroom.ap.org/editorial-photos-videos/detail?itemid=e32547a61096c92a8ccdc47da1e17d70&mediatype=video&source=youtube> Video Captured by Marinda Gouws
I would like to thank a Twitter Follower "Spirit of Railways" who pointed me in the direction of this Age Restricted YouTube Upload from AP:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1gwflizen8&list=LL&index=10&t=33s&ab_channel=APArchive This video then sent me to the license to show you this footage. And all so the name of the individual who took the video, so thanks to Spirit of Railways for the help there.
- [2] Summary of 20th Century Ethiopia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethiopia> there are some really good videos right here on YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaMnWQP9jUE&t=10s&ab_channel=AfricanBiographics
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bbk54q0Jks8&ab_channel=Epimetheus
- [3] Michael Buerk's 1984 Report on the Ethiopian Famine. High Quality Broadcast:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYOj_6OYuJc&ab_channel=LiveAid1
- [4] Mohammed Amin biography:
<https://saharanvibe.blogspot.com/2007/08/through-lense-of-mohammed-amin.html>
- [5] The three hijackers were named on Ethiopian Radio:
<https://addisinsight.net/this-day-in-history-flight-961-was-hijacked-by-three-ethiopian-men/>
- [6] Documentary "Ocean Landing" Mayday/Air Crash Investigation, called all of these mid "in their mid 20s"
- [7] Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 767 Fleet History:
<https://www.planespotters.net/airline/Ethiopian-Airlines>
- [8] "Zulu" - The affectionate name given to the Aircraft by pilots - Biographic Documentary "Mo & Me" Al Jazeera
- [9] Ethiopian Airlines Route Network. Ethiopian Airlines has long had this route, particularly linking to focus hubs in West Africa
- [10] 767 Seating plan, the hijacking Final Report includes a full Passenger manifest and seating locations pg65, appendix E. Also consult the Boeing 767-200 Seating plan, the one I sourced from the following link:
<https://frequentlyflying.boardingarea.com/vintage-airline-seat-map-twa-boeing-767-200-from-1987/> This example is from a TWA 762 but the 2-3-2 7 abreast seating was standard in economy class
- [11] Mohammed Amin, CGTN Documentary "Faces of Africa". Amin's company "Cameriapix" published the Selamta Magazine for many years. At some point during the 2010s it switched to a UK based company
- [12] Selamta Fleet pages - The two copies I have are from 2001 and 2002 but still contain the same fleet page of the 1996 editions
- [13] Consult the Final Report for full details regarding the two pilots, their history and experience
- [14] Captain Leul Abate's comments from Al Jazeera Documentary "Mo & Me"
- [15] The Ethiopian Final Report gives the final details regarding the delay for connecting passengers

- [16] Account from Flight Attendant, the moment the hijacking began, Final Report pg3
- [17] The moments when the hijackers entered the flight deck. Consult final report for full chronology
- [18] Selamta, Ethiopian Airlines In-flight Magazine. I did try to track down the November 1996 edition but I was obviously limited to what I could find. I possess the July-September 2001 and 2002 editions. Both of which include the same fleet breakdown that would have been in the November 1996 one.
- [19] I want to make something clear with this diagram. I took inspiration from the Admiral Cloudberg report on this incident to make this map:
<https://admiralcloudberg.medium.com/the-dead-mans-gambit-the-crash-of-ethiopian-airlines-flight-961-1a8a8daa566b> This report contains a graphic of the plane's current range given its fuel status. I want to make it clear that this is where I derived this map from. It's just objectively the best way to display this information.
- [20] Captain Leul Abate showed the hijackers the fuel storage. Final Report pg4
- [21] First PA Announcement. Final Report pg5
- [22] Contact between aircraft and ATC, additionally the communication between Addis Ababa and Nairobi. Final Report pg5 and pg6
- [23a] Cockpit Voice Recording Transcript begins toward the end of the incident and last for just over 30 minutes. Final Report, pg41 Appendix A
- [23b] ATC Transcript begins at 11:57 local time from Nairobi, Final Report pg36 Appendix A
- [24] Ethiopian Sales Agent Numbers Page, Selamta, Ethiopian Airlines In-flight magazine
- [25] ATC Transcript, Final Report pg36 Appendix A
- [26] See Reference 25.
- [27] Captain's Account, Final Report pg7 - The Captain's intervention of following the coastline has been well documented. Captain Leul Abate has given numerous accounts over the years to the media about his intentions here. You can even find a version of this in the Cineflix Mayday Documentary "Ocean Landing"
- [28] Continuing from Reference 27. In that same documentary (Ocean Landing), Captain Leul Abate mentions he had "never heard of Comoros before". He consulted an atlas. I have my doubts about this, I sort of find it hard to believe that an African Airline Captain did not know the existence of one of his continent's countries. That's like me as a European, not knowing Malta exists.
- [29] Final Report, pg7
- [30] Final Report, pg49 and pg50 - The Final Report includes radar data up until power from both engines was lost
- [31] CVR Transcript, Final Report pg41
- [32] ",," pg43
- [33] Captain's quote. Final Report pg8
- [34] Documentary "Ocean Landing" makes a pretty big deal of this point. It can however be cross referenced with surviving passenger accounts. See reference 35
- [35] Michael Oddenyo's account of Mo Amin. Al Jazeera Documentary, Mo & Me
- [36] Al Jazeera Documentary, Mo & Me. Amin's son, told of how his father died

[37] This is my own interpretation of the Cockpit Voice Recorder Transcript in combination with the takeaways from Captain Leul Abate's numerous media appearances. Consider this, this videos Plagiarism Protection

[38] The Boeing 767 like other Boeing and other aircraft in fact, have an autopilot override when enough force is applied to the control wheel. For more information I would consider checking out Boeing's own documentation regarding the Boeing 767:

<https://www.boeing.com/commercial/767/> I was going to link the Boeing 767 Operations Manual and Quick Reference Handbook but they are paywalled

[39] Final Report pg9 - The Final Report makes a point of notifying the reader that a number of passengers had inflated their life vests. See Reference 41

[40] First Officer assisted in deflating the inflated life vests. Final Report pg9

[41] DON'T INFLATE YOUR LIFE VEST INSIDE THE PLANE: (a)

<https://www.self.com/story/plane-crash-survival-tips#:~:text=The%20life%20jacket%20meant%20to.is%20inflated%2C%E2%80%9D%20Hubbard%20explains> . (b)

<https://www.escape.com.au/travel-advice/the-one-thing-you-shouldnt-do-when-wearing-a-life-jacket/news-story/147a1c221c64a263f4c80d4cde4ad34d> (c)

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/travel/16101014/flight-attendant-life-jacket-warning-crash/>

[42] The RAT, Ram Air Turbine is pretty common on commercial aircraft and not exclusive to the Boeing 767. Captain Joe over on YouTube has a great quick explainer video if you'd like to learn more: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9yz6Gd216o&ab_channel=CaptainJoe

[43] Flight Tracking Data. It is unclear exactly where the plane flew once engine power was lost. The systems that were lost would have included the Flight Data Recorder and Transponder. Radar Data from Comoros ATC is unavailable to my knowledge. We know however from the flight data that is in the Final Report and where the plane ultimately ended up, that the plane flew north, turned multiple times before crashing near to Galawa Beach

[44] Captain losing sight of Moroni Airport. Documentary "Ocean Landing" Mayday/Air Crash Investigation

[45] Final moments on the flight deck - Final Report pg10

[46] See Reference 1. The AP Link gives a description with context about these two

[47] Marinda Gouws' video recording was licensed through Associated Press. Digital License. See Reference 1

[48] Turning the plane into the waves. Final Report, pg10

[49] <https://adst.org/2014/10/ethiopian-flight-961-the-worst-hijacking-in-history-before-911/>

[50] CNN article from 1996:

<https://web.archive.org/web/19990117075208/http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9611/26/comoros.crash/index1.html> This is one of the oldest links related to this accident, from back in the early internet. Incredibly the download link for the video still works. It is an example of a report not

crediting the Marinda Gouws as the primary source of the video

[51] Two Hijackers were unemployed. One was a Nurse:

<https://addisinsight.net/this-day-in-history-flight-961-was-hijacked-by-three-ethiopian-men/>

[52] Kanaidza Abwao recollection, Washington Post:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1996/12/02/ethiopian-hijacking-remains-mystery/bb8ce2e1-77cb-414a-9153-77259179c661/>

[53] Ovechkin Family Hijacking:

<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1988-03-11-mn-1323-story.html>

[54] Image of Aeroflot 3739 Wreckage, sourced from RT Documentary (Yes, RT, I know)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-eW0cmP5QM&ab_channel=RT As a result of the sanctions on Russia, this video is not available in my country of the UK anymore but I still had the link from the sources of my Aeroflot 3739 video. I suggest using a VPN if you wish to access it

[55] Disaster Breakdown Episode 74 "The Soviet Family Who Hijacked a Plane:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8zK4Spu5vw&t=480s&ab_channel=DisasterBreakdown

[56] Captain Leul's First Hijacking (1992):

<https://aviation-safety.net/database/record.php?id=19920412-0>

[57] Captain Leul's Second Hijacking (1995):

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/a-look-at-plane-hijackings-by-ethiopians/>

[58] Fire Axe Recommendation, Final Report pg35

[59] 9/11 clip: https://archive.org/details/Myers_clip6

[60] Air Travel Measures Implemented after 9/11:

<https://www.npr.org/2021/09/10/1035131619/911-travel-timeline-tsa>

<https://apnews.com/article/how-sept-11-changed-flying-1ce4dc4282fb47a34c0b61ae09a024f4>