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POLÍTICA MOÇAMBICANA

Friday, November 20, 2026 I Year VIII, n.º 776 I **Director:** Prof. Adriano Nuvunga I **www.cddmoz.org**

MONITORING THE TRIAL OF VENÂNCIO MONDLANE

Summary of the Third Day of Hearings

- On the third day of his trial, Venâncio Mondlane denied allegations of incitement to violence, terrorism and the destruction of infrastructure. He maintained that the demonstrations were peaceful and accused the State of creating the climate of terror that marked the post-election period.



The trial of Venâncio Mondlane, a former presidential candidate and president of the National Alliance for a Free and Autonomous Mozambique (ANAMOLA), resumed on Thursday, 19 November 2026, at the Supreme Court in Maputo. Case No. 52/2025P concerns the post-election protests of 2024 and 2025. On the third day, Mondlane answered questions from the panel of judges, alleged political persecution and denied responsibility for the violence, deaths and destruction of property that occurred during the demonstrations. He also alleged that members of the security forces and intelligence services had infiltrated the protest movement to provoke violence and lay the blame on demonstrators. The trial was expected to resume on Friday, 20 November, with questioning by the Public Prosecution Service and the party assisting the prosecution.

COURT LIMITS SHAMIR MENDES'S ROLE ON THE DEFENCE TEAM

At the start of the hearing, the question of Shamir Mendes's participation in Venâncio Mondlane's defence team remained unresolved. Mendes stayed in the courtroom and continued to assist lead counsel Escova Mutola. The Court did not permit him to address it directly.

Mondlane explains why he called the protests and what he meant by "taking power"

During questioning, Justice Paulo Nambute, the reporting judge, asked Mondlane why he had called demonstrations without giving prior notice to the authorities. In response, Mondlane outlined his reasons for calling the protests, referring to the dispute over the election results and the conduct of the authorities.

Mondlane said that he had sought to mobilise citizens to defend the integrity of the election results. He described the language he had used in his appeals, including the reference to "taking power", as political and metaphorical. He said it referred to mobilising the public to restore electoral justice and denied that he had intended to promote a coup d'état.

MONDLANE TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR CALLING THE PROTESTS

Asked by Justice João Beirão about his use of "I" and "we" in his public statements, Mondlane said that he had decided the dates, times and form of the demonstrations. He accepted responsibility for calling the protests and setting their political direction. He denied that this meant he had ordered acts of violence or destruction.

MONDLANE SAYS THE PROTESTS WERE PEACEFUL AND ACCUSES SECURITY FORCES OF VIOLENCE

Justice Isabel Rupia asked Mondlane what he knew about the effects of the demonstrations and the incidents of violence reported during the protests. Mondlane maintained that the demonstrations he had called were peaceful and denied instructing participants to commit acts of violence.

Mondlane used the term "false flag" to describe what he alleged was an operation by members of the security forces to infiltrate the demonstrations, provoke violence and lay the blame on protesters. He also accused the Defence and Security Forces (FDS) of committing acts of violence and destruction while suppressing the protests.

MONDLANE ADDRESSES THE POLITICAL CONTEXT AND ALLEGES STATE SURVEILLANCE

Justice Carlos Mondlane's questions covered the subversion of the constitutional order, disruptions to the functioning of institutions and the relationship between the defendant's statements and events during the demonstrations.

Mondlane disputed any direct link between his statements and the acts attributed to him. He also referred to a communication from the National Criminal Investigation Service (SERNIC), dated 2 October, which he said contained accusations concerning alleged plans for terrorism and radicalisation.

Mondlane also questioned the use of information and telephone intercepts in the proceedings. He alleged that he had been placed under surveillance during the election campaign and that measures had been taken against his accounts and mobile wallets. He said these actions occurred while he was a presidential candidate and characterised them as part of a strategy of political persecution.

MONDLANE DENIES RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEATHS OF RAPID INTERVENTION UNIT OFFICERS

During questioning, Mondlane denied any responsibility for the deaths of officers of the Rapid Intervention Unit (UIR). He denied that his statements had caused or encouraged the events that led to their deaths.

Asked about the phrase "sweep them into hell", Mondlane said it had a religious meaning. He rejected the interpretation that it amounted to a threat or an order to kill anyone.

Deputy Attorney-General Amabélia Chuquela called for respect for the institutions and asked the Court to prevent Mondlane from referring to prosecutor Paulo Armando Sitoi. Justice Luís Mondlane, who presided over the section, granted the request.

MONDLANE DENIES ORDERING THE DESTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND DISPUTES LIABILITY FOR ECONOMIC LOSSES

Asked about the economic harm associated with the protests, including the destruction of infrastructure, roadblocks and failures to meet tax obligations, Mondlane denied ordering the destruction of property or infrastructure. He maintained that the protests were political and argued that his calls to protest could not automatically be linked to every act committed during the demonstrations.

He denied responsibility for the economic losses and property damage attributed to him, disputing any causal link between his statements and the actions of third parties.

MONDLANE ACCUSES THE STATE OF CREATING A CLIMATE OF TERROR

Addressing the terrorism allegations, Mondlane denied responsibility and maintained that the State itself had created the climate of terror through the actions of the security forces. He reiterated that his public statements formed part of his challenge to the election results and his efforts to mobilise citizens politically.

Questioning also covered roadblocks and the suspension of institutions in the context of a proposed "shadow government". Justice João Beirão and the reporting judge, Justice Paulo Nambute, put questions to Mondlane as the panel examined the aims and effects of the demonstrations.

COURT ADMITS EVIDENCE SUBMITTED BY THE DEFENCE

The Public Prosecution Service and the party assisting the prosecution objected to the admission of evidence submitted by the defence, citing Article 200 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The defence contested the objection, and the Court admitted the evidence for consideration at trial. Justice Carlos Mondlane announced the ruling.

The Court adjourned at 13:30 and resumed at 14:30. Later, given the time already spent on the proceedings and the need to continue the hearing, the Public Prosecution Service requested an adjournment. The parties agreed.

TRIAL TO RESUME WITH QUESTIONS FROM THE PROSECUTION AND THE PARTY ASSISTING IT

The third day concluded with the Court scheduling the resumption of proceedings for Friday, 20 November. With the panel of judges having completed its questions, the Public Prosecution Service and the party assisting the prosecution were due to question Mondlane.

The Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (CDD) will continue to monitor and report on the trial until judgment is delivered. It will pay particular attention to safeguards for the defence, the parties' opportunity to respond to arguments and evidence, compliance with procedural rules and the conditions governing media access to the hearings.

Centro para Democracia e Direitos Humanos

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