

# MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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## IMF demands austerity and devaluation

There will be no IMF agreement or loans this year, [said the IMF team which visited Mozambique 21-29 August](#). It simply said negotiations "will continue in the coming months". And it set harsh conditions including "decisive action to restore macroeconomic stability", which in IMF jargon means harsh austerity imposed quickly.

The IMF team said the "fiscal deficit", that is expenditure in excess of income, was 2.4% of GDP in the first half of 2025. It said this is because "government expenditures continue to grow at a faster pace" than income, as well as due to low tax revenue.

The IMF also demands devaluation. The exchange rate has been fixed for several years at MT64=\$1, when the real rate should be at least MT90=\$1. This makes imports cheap.

Mozambique imported \$441mn of rice last year, which could have been produced locally. But the low exchange rate means imported rice is cheaper than locally produced rice. Similarly the Maputo middle class consumes imported goods, many imported by thousands of "mukheristas", informal importers who go mainly to South Africa but also as far away as Brazil, and who pay officials to avoid paying import taxes. The middle class drives imported Japanese second hand cars, which would be unaffordable for many at the higher exchange rate and with honest customs officials.

At a middle level salaries are rising because Frelimo controls the civil service and pushed through a salary scale that gives higher salaries and allowances to senior civil servants. Illegal trade, from the mukheristas to unlicenced minibus drivers to hardwood timber traders, operate through Frelimo recognised networks of people taking bribes. Jobs and government contracts require commissions and party contacts.

The demands of the IMF cannot be met just by squeezing the poor. One priority of the new government is to meet the demands from within Frelimo's local and national elite, which increases in size with each election as more people want to join the Frelimo gravy train. The government's priority is exactly what the IMF says Mozambique cannot do.

## Cabo Delgado war intensifies

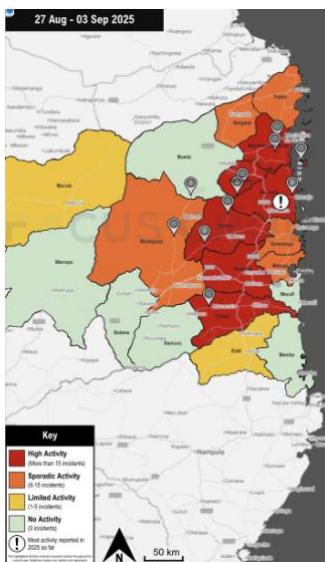
Four people were killed when insurgents attacked Filipe Nyusi (30 de Junho) neighbourhood in Mocimboa da Praia town Sunday night (7 September). This is the first attack in the district capital

since insurgents were expelled by Rwandan forces in 2021. (Zumbo FM 8 Sept, MediaFax 10 Sept, Focus Group 10 Sept).

Insurgents went to two specific houses and called out the victims by name, and killed them. Two are said to be police. The attack was confirmed by district administrator Sérgio Cipriano, who said the attack reawakened feelings of terror, panic and fear.

Initially the town had been seen as secure and the port and air strip were rebuilt and Mocimboa da Praia, to the south of the Afungi gas project zone, and Palma town, north of Afungi, were seen as transport and contractor bases for the project. The Rwandans said they could keep insurgents out of Palma and Mocimboa da Praia districts. But they failed, and there have been regular attacks, this time inside the district capital. Recently gas company TotalEnergies said it would only resume gas development if it turned the Afungi zone into a fortress with no land access.

Insurgents have free movement in large areas of Cabo Delgado and the war has intensified during the past two months, with little response from government forces. The map from Focus Group shows insurgent activity in the single week to 3 September, with red the most intense insurgent presence. Only the six light green districts had no insurgent action in that week.



Focus Group, Weekly Media Review Mozambique 573, 27 August to 3 September 2025

Borges Nhamirre, a research consultant at the Pretoria-based Institute for Security Studies, told a 25 August ISS seminar that training and leadership changes of the army and police are not making any difference, and corruption and violence against civilians continue. His view is that the insurgents "will not be defeated in the next 10 years".

## No agreement yet on gas resumption

Despite repeated promises that work would resume "soon" on the Cabo Delgado gas, little is happening. Offshore Area 1 is shared by consortia headed by the French TotalEnergies and the US ExxonMobil. The \$20 billion base to convert gas to liquified national gas (LNG) was being built onshore on the Afungi peninsula just south of Palma, but work stopped after insurgents captured Palma in 2021. TotalEnergies is moving first, and ExxonMobil says it will start a year after TotalEnergies restarts. TotalEnergies says it will restart once it converts the site into a fortress with no land access. All people and supplies must arrive by air or sea.

The reason for the present delay is unclear, but it seems that TotalEnergies has not yet come to an agreement with Frelimo and the Mozambique government. Before the 2021 Palma occupation, gas contractors and staff were based in Palma town which had become a boom town. Total Energies says all staff and contractor teams must be based inside the fortress. From Frelimo oligarchs down

to Palma service, hotel and restaurant operators there is a fear that they are being shut out of the project, reducing local income and jobs.

Local businesses in Palma announced a strike starting today (Wednesday 10 September). Maxime Rabillard, the Managing Director in Mozambique of TotalEnergies, on Saturday (6 September) met business owners from Palma district. "I want to make it clear there is no intention of reducing purchases from local businesses," he said. Although there is no official restart, there are 2000 workers already on site preparing the fortress and LNG base. Rabillard stressed that much of the food for those 2,000 workers in Afungi is already purchased in Palma, both from agricultural producers and other local suppliers.

But equally important Total Energies on 1 September signed an agreement to give the Northern Integrated Development Agency (ADIN) \$10mn for development initiatives in Palma and Mocímboa da Praia districts. ADIN is tightly controlled by senior Frelimo people in Maputo, who will see the \$10mn as a way to appease the Cabo Delgado oligarchs.

## **Archbishop blames Frelimo for land seizure**

Archbishop Inácio Saure of Nampula gave a press conference on 3 September denouncing the illegal occupation of Catholic church land. The land was occupied during the protests early this year. Courts on 16 May and 12 August ordered the squatters to leave, but local government did nothing. Archbishop Saure said: "Officials who were sent there were chased away. This arrogance leads us to believe that there is a powerful and invisible hand" behind the invasions, guaranteeing impunity for the occupiers.

He believes that the land seizure may be retaliation for the bishops speaking out over electoral fraud and other issues. Saure met with Nampula governor Eduardo Mariano Abdula who did nothing. This was probably because Saure had earlier forced Abdula to publicly apologise for the provincial head of the veterans association saying "Frelimo will govern until Jesus Christ returns to Earth."

Dom Inácio Saure concluded "We have lawyers, we have documents, but the law does not work when it comes up against powerful people." (*Jornal Ngani*, 8 Sept; *Vatican News* 4 Sept)

## **National Dialogue began today**

Mozambique's "Inclusive National Dialogue" was launched this morning, Wednesday 10 September, by President Daniel Chopo. Proposed by Chopo in March in response to the demonstrations, the Dialogue was approved by parliament on 2 April.

The Dialogue reports to Chopo and is controlled by him. Chopo announced the 10 September start in his speech at a rally in Katembe, Maputo city, on 30 August. On 7 May Chopo announced that Edson Macuácia would be head of the commission, and he named the 17 commission members from various political parties, and various other posts. The full list of members and officials is on <https://mznews.co.mz/en/edson-macuacua-lidera-a-comissao-tecnica-para-dialogo-nacional-inclusivo/>. Macuácia is state secretary of science and higher education, and has been used in the past by government as a political fixer.

On Monday, 1 September, the commission selected academics José Jaime Macuane and Eduardo Chiziane as consultants. Macuane is a political scientist with extensive experience in Public Administration reforms and a professor at Eduardo Mondlane University. In 2016 he was a known public commenter, particular on STV's "Pontos de Vista" programme where he heavily criticised President Nyusi. He was beaten and shot on the morning of 23 May 2016 and dumped in Maputo's Marracuene district. He was treated in the UK and returned to Mozambique. The attackers were never identified. Chiziane heads the Faculty of Law at Eduardo Mondlane and has also been a critic of government.

The dialogue will have ten working groups: constitutional, electoral, fiscal, economic, public administration and depoliticization, natural resources, defence and security, justice, reconciliation and national unity, and decentralization and de-concentration. Each working group will present recommendations. Each group will be composed of ten individuals.

Macuácua explained that the first stage will be a three-month national and diaspora public consultation, "interacting with civil society, political parties, academia, and all social strata". The second stage will develop proposals to submit to a national public debate. The third phase aims to "build consensus and develop proposals for agreements", to be transformed "into legislative initiatives" for submission to parliament.

It seems a very formal, long and cumbersome process to try to keep civil society and the opposition talking until it is too late to change laws before the next elections, in 2028 and 2029. Frelimo has a majority in parliament, and President Chapo can veto legislation. In 2023-24 the parties had an extended discussion which led to agreement on electoral law changes which were passed by parliament in 2024, but then President Nyusi vetoed the law at the last minute, and elections were held under the old law.

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## Important external links

Books by Joseph Hanlon can be downloaded, free: <https://bit.ly/HanlonBooks>

Flood, cyclone and weather: weather <https://www.inam.gov.mz/>

rainfall [https://www.inam.gov.mz/images/DAPT\\_Previsoes/Manha/Previsao\\_Manha.pdf](https://www.inam.gov.mz/images/DAPT_Previsoes/Manha/Previsao_Manha.pdf)

Daily flood and monthly dry season reports - <https://bit.ly/Moz-Flood-2024>

Cyclone trackers, <https://bit.ly/Reunion-cyclone>, <https://www.metoc.navy.mil/itwc/itwc.html>

(which uses Z time which is UCT - Coordinated Universal Time) and <https://www.cyclocane.com/>

Two LSE working papers - World Bank questions its Mozambique 'success' where oligarchs brought high inequality, poverty and corruption - <https://bit.ly/Moz-LSE-208c> and How the IMF and World Bank caused a resource curse and civil war in Mozambique - <https://bit.ly/Moz-LSE-209>

Minimum wage & exchange rate charts, tables 1996-2022 <https://bit.ly/MozMinWage2022>

Previous editions of this newsletter: <https://bit.ly/MozNews2023> and <https://bit.ly/MozNews2022>

My Mozambique archive: <http://bit.ly/Mozamb>

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## Cabo Delgado

Cabo Ligado weekly report on civil war <https://www.caboligado.com/>

Archive with reports, detailed maps, and census data <https://bit.ly/Moz-CDg>

### Special reports on the war

Evolution of the war: global vs local. 27 Feb 2020 <http://bit.ly/CDelgadoOrigins>

Religion is shaping Cabo Delgado civil war. 30 April 2020 <https://bit.ly/CDelgadoReligion>

Intensifying argument over roots of war. 28 June 2020 <https://bit.ly/Moz-492>

Are the drums of war silencing any hope of peace? 26 July 2020 <http://bit.ly/Moz-496>

A history of violence presages the insurgency. 13 August 2020 <http://bit.ly/Moz-498>

Military & economic intervention. 3 Sept 2020 <https://bit.ly/CDelgadoIntervene>

Cabo-Delgado-Free-for-all. 20 Apr 2022. <http://bit.ly/Moz-593>

### Mozambique heroin transit trade

English - LSE - 2018 - <http://bit.ly/Moz-heroin>

Portuguese - CIP- 2018 - <http://bit.ly/HeroinaPT>

2001 first article- Metical - English and Portuguese <https://bit.ly/MozHeroin2001>

### Gas for development?

Gas\_for\_development\_or\_just\_for\_money?\_2015 <bit.ly/MozGasEng>

Gás\_para\_desenvolvimento\_ou\_apenas\_dinheiro?\_2015 <bit.ly/MozGasPt>

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## Background reading

### Special reports

Social protection report - 2017 Mozambique - <http://bit.ly/MozSocPro>

Special report on four poverty surveys: [bit.ly/MozPoverty](http://bit.ly/MozPoverty)

### \$2bn secret debt - in English

Secret debt trial (Aug-Oct 2021) press reports <https://bit.ly/Moz-secret-debt>

Kroll - Full report on \$2bn debt - <http://bit.ly/Kroll-Moz>

Kroll report summary - <http://bit.ly/Kroll-sum>

Key points of Mozambique parliament report - Nov 2016 - <http://bit.ly/MozAR-debt-En>

Following the donor-designed path to Mozambique's \$2.2 bn debt - <http://bit.ly/3WQ-hanlon>

### In Portuguese:

Parliamentary Report on the Secret Debt (complete) [bit.ly/MozAR-debt](http://bit.ly/MozAR-debt)

**2018 Constitution** - <http://bit.ly/2KF588T>

### Eleven books by Joseph Hanlon can be downloaded, free: <https://bit.ly/HanlonBooks>

Zimbabwe takes back its land (2013) <https://bit.ly/Zim-takes-land>

Bangladesh confronts climate change (2016)

Chickens and beer: A recipe for agricultural growth in Mozambique (2014) is on <https://bit.ly/Chickens-Beer>

Há Mais Bicicletas – mas há desenvolvimento? (2008)

Civil War Civil Peace (2006): <https://bit.ly/Civil-War-Civil-Peace>

Moçambique e as grandes cheias de 2000 (2001)

Mozambique and the Great Flood of 2000 (2001)

Paz Sem Benefício: Como o FMI Bloqueia a Reconstrução (1997)

Peace Without Profit: How the IMF Blocks Rebuilding (1996) <https://bit.ly/Peace-wo-Profit>

Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots (1991) <https://bit.ly/Shots-Moz>

Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire (1984)

### These are still available for sale:

Galinhos e cerveja: uma receita para o crescimento (2014) (free in English)

Just Give Money to the Poor: The Development Revolution from the Global South (2010)

Do bicycles equal development in Mozambique? (2008) (free in Portuguese)

Beggar Your Neighbours: Apartheid Power in Southern Africa (1986)

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### Mozambique media websites, English:

Club of Mozambique (free): <http://clubofmozambique.com/>

Zitamar (paywall): <http://zitamar.com/>

### Mozambique media websites, Portuguese (all with partial paywall):

Notícias: [www.jornalnoticias.co.mz](http://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz)

O País: [www.opais.co.mz](http://www.opais.co.mz)

@Verdade: <http://www.verdade.co.mz>

Carta de Moçambique <https://cartamz.com>

### Mozambique think tanks and pressure groups, Portuguese:

Centro de Integridade Pública: CIP <https://cipmoz.org/>

Observatório do Meio Rural: OMR <https://omrmz.org/>

Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos: IESE <https://www.iese.ac.mz/>

Centro Para Democracia e Desenvolvimento CDD <https://cddmoz.org/> (some CDD in English)

Also CDD now controls Fórum de Monitoria do Orçamento - FMO (main debt group) <http://www.fmo.org.mz> and RMDDH - Rede Moçambicana dos Defensores dos Direitos Humanos (a human rights group).

To subscribe to all CDD publications: <http://eepurl.com/qO9l6v> (English or Portuguese).

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