

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

672 9 September 2026 Editor: Joseph Hanlon (j.hanlon@open.ac.uk)

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This is a personal project by Dr Joseph Hanlon, with no outside funding.

J Hanlon's new book "Moçambique recolonizado através da corrupção"
free on <https://bit.ly/MozRecol> (Portuguese only)

Apologies for the publication irregularity, caused by rush to finish the new book with Teresa Smart:
Mozambique Recolonised by corruption: How the IMF created the oligarch state
It will be published in March by Boydell&Brewer (James Currey) and will be open access.

In this issue

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- + IMF arrives
- + Cashew decision 30 years ago resurfaces
- + Chickens

Opposition leader Venâncio Mondlane to be tried for treason 6 October

Venâncio Mondlane has been charged with treason for his role in the demonstrations November 2024-March 2025 protesting the fraudulent elections of 9 October 2024. More than 350 demonstrators were killed by police, who have not been charged. More than 1000 demonstrators are improperly still being held in jail without trial.

Mondlane says he is accused of committing the crimes of publicly condoning a crime; publicly instigating a crime; inciting collective disobedience; instigating terrorism; and inciting terrorism. He is accused of committing these crimes during the post-election protests. ([Carta de Moçambique 24 July](#))

Because Mondlane officially came second in the presidential elections, he is automatically a member of the Council of State, with immunity. The Council lifted his immunity on 10 June at a meeting Mondlane did not attend, but this was kept secret until 25 August. But because of his membership of the Council of State, he will be tried by five members of the Supreme Court.

By law, Mozambican justice is politicised. The president and vice-president of the Supreme Court (Tribunal Supremo, TS) are named by President of Mozambique and the 11 judges are nominated by parties in parliament in proportion to their seats (subject to qualifications criteria), which gives Frelimo overwhelming control of the Supreme Court and the judicial system.

Savana (4 September) gave detailed profiles of the five judges in the Venâncio Mondlane case. (Two judges are also named Mondlane, a common name in southern Mozambique.) Luís Mondlane and António Paulo Namburete are the two leading judges for the trial. Luís Mondlane earlier was named president of the Constitutional Council (CC) by President Armando Guebuza, but resigned in 2011 when he was accused of misusing \$400,000 for personal expenses, and returned his previous post on the TS.

Namburete was named Attorney General by President Joaquim Chissano in 1998. Chissano dismissed Namburete and six of his deputies in 2000 after they were accused of not investigating

the \$14mn thefts from Banco Commercial de Moçambique (BCM). ([*Moçambique recolonizado através da corrupção*](#), pp 162-3). Investigative Journalist Carlos Cardoso was assassinated in November 2000 while he was investigating the BCM case and the seeming protection of the culprits. In 2012 Namburete was made a member of TS.

Isabel Rupia was named a Deputy Attorney General by Chissano in 2000 as part of replacing the dismissed group, and concentrated on corruption. But she was dismissed in 2005 by Attorney General Joaquim Madeira; *Savana* says she has been investigating high figures in the nomenklatura and in Frelimo. In 2009 she was proposed by Renamo for the CC, but this was blocked by Frelimo. She was named to the TS in 2024.

João Beirão was a member of the National Elections Commission 2013-5. He was named vice president of the TS in 2015 by President Filipe Nyusi and after 10 years stepped down to be an ordinary TS judge.

Carlos Mondlane was a member of the Standing Committee of the Superior Council of the Judiciary 2019–2024, and was named to the TS in 2025. *Savana* says that Isabel Rupia and Carlos Mondlane are considered ‘the most level-headed judges in this group’.

But the real issue of this trial will be Frelimo using the law for overtly political processes, against people of whom it is frightened. In the case of Venâncio Mondlane, he was first prevented from standing for parliament when his party Democratic Alliance Coalition (CAD) had its registration revoked after it was too late to stand for another party. He could stand for President because under the constitution all presidential candidates stand as individuals. That election was so corrupt that no one knows who really won, but Mondlane was officially second. He is clearly the most important opposition figure, but he was then banned from participating in the ongoing ‘National Dialogue’ because it was restricted to parties having seats in national or provincial parliaments. The move to try him for treason is seen as an attempt to prevent him standing in the next elections, by jailing him or forcing him to flee from Mozambique. But many civil society leaders argue that organising legal protests against manifestly corrupt elections cannot be seen as treason.

The prosecution will use videos of his speeches and social media broadcasts to try to show that in promoting demonstrations he was ‘inciting collective disobedience’ and violence. The defence will be that his political statements and the civic protests were legitimate and within constitutional rights, and that he repeatedly opposed violence in his broadcasts. (*Evidências* 8 Sep)

It has already been decided that the trial will be in a small room without space for many press and public, according to Raul Sendé and Cleto Duarte of *Savana*. Civil Society is pressing for the trial to be broadcast on TV, and the decision is up to the two trial leaders, Luís Mondlane and Namburete.

IMF in town

An IMF team arrives in Maputo today (9 Sep) to begin technical negotiations lasting until 18 September for a potential new programme and loan under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF). According to the statement from the Ministry of Finance yesterday by media head Emílio Fuel, cooperation with the IMF is of paramount importance for improving macro-fiscal management and for opening up new sources of funding.

Mozambique is under IMF pressure to stop running up unsustainable debt and to cut its salary bill. Government admitted two weeks ago that it owes \$1.3 billion to suppliers, particularly contractors for infrastructure projects.

The wage bill for the 370,000 civil servants fell by 4% in the first half of the year (compared to the first half of 2025) but at \$1.7 bn for the half year was still above budget. And government yesterday confirmed it is resuming promotions which were stopped in 2022; this will increase the wage bill.

Mozambique's number of civil servants is similar to other countries, but the amount paid to them is relatively high. (*Diário Económico*, 24, 27, 28 Aug; *MediaFax* 31 Aug, 9 Sep)

Mozambique has just raised its civil service retirement age from 60 to 65, and 70 for diplomats, university lecturers and assistants, specialist doctors, magistrates, and researchers.

Destruction of cashew industry 30 years ago back in the news

The cashew industry was abruptly shut down by the World Bank in 1996, putting 10,000 women out of work and ending an important export. Suddenly that grim tale is back in the news. Ex IMF man José Sulemane says Mozambique should have refused and economist Roberto Tibana has found a World Bank ulterior motive.

José Sulemane was a national director in the Mozambique Ministry of Planning 2000-2005 and then spent 20 years in the IMF. In a talk at Universidade Pedagógica in Maputo (31 August 2026, [O Pais 1 Sept](#)) he demonstrated the IMF skill of telling Mozambique what it should have done. But as is so often the case, certain relevant facts are forgotten or never known.

O Pais reports 'For Sulemane, dependence on external funding can lead governments to accept certain proposals without properly assessing their economic and social consequences. ... As an example, the economist referred to the reforms in the cashew nut sector, arguing that, at the time [1995], there had been a lack of sufficiently in-depth national analysis of the effects of the proposed measures. "We forgot that it employed at least 30,000 people, if I am not mistaken, at the time," he said. The economist considered that the case demonstrates the importance of the State carrying out prior studies to understand the consequences of a given policy, particularly when sectors with a significant impact on the economy and employment are at stake.'

What actually happened was that Mozambique had a successful cashew industry and had a good plan for expansion, which the World Bank totally opposed. Mozambique did not forget the workers, and stressed them to the Bank in negotiations. The Country Assistance Strategy contained several 'necessary conditions' – a phase never used before or since. If they were not accepted, the World Bank would not have a Mozambique plan and all aid would stop. 'Your children will starve', Mozambican ministers were reminded. Two of the conditions were destruction of the cashew industry and the disastrous privatisation of two banks.

Just to remind Dr Sulemane, Mozambique did 'properly assess the economic and social consequences' of the World Bank's cashew demand. But it also assessed the cost – the end of a World Bank programme and all aid. Perhaps Mozambique could have refused, but in 1995 it was a newly elected government and this was its first big negotiation. With his two decades of IMF experience Sulemane knows now that the World Bank would have had to back down and withdraw the 'necessary conditions'. But cashew remains one of the best examples of the unchecked power of the Bretton Woods Institutions. (See *Do bicycles equal development in Mozambique?* (2008) [free only in Portuguese](#).)

At the Sulemane talk were three key figures present at the time, Roberto Tibana, Tomaz Salomão and Abdul Carimo, who painted a different picture (*MediaFax* 3 September 2026). 'The problem does not end with our technical ability to negotiate,' Tibana said. The problem 'begins with the asymmetrical power that international institutions hold over countries'

'What happened was that the World Bank lent money to India to develop the cashew industry, starting with the farms and moving on to the factories,' Tibana said. 'But the project had been poorly designed. The factories had reached the stage where they were starting to produce, but the farms were not yet supplying the cashew nuts. ... India needed to start servicing the debt.' So, Mozambique was forced to supply cheap raw materials to Indian industry precisely to make a World Bank project viable which would otherwise have defaulted.' Tanzania and Guiné-Bissau also had to close cashew factories to supply India. 'I was there from the start. I heard about the plan to close the factories,' Tibana said. Only now is the World Bank releasing the key secret documents.

[What they don't tell us, because it tells the wrong story](#)

State support and family farmers behind the global chicken boom

The Financial Times (26 Aug 2026) started a multi-article series 'How chicken conquered the world', and how Brazil is the largest exporter of chicken. In both Brazil and the US half of chickens are grown by family farmers. But the 40-year Brazilian story of how it leaped ahead of the US is the story that is not told by the World Bank and IMF.

The Brazilian government decided to reduce local protein costs and support family farmers with a huge programme through the Brazilian National Development Bank (BNDES), which is larger than the World Bank. It was a four-way collaboration of the private sector, government, BNDES, and farmers. BNDES funded years of research on farming and feeding methods to reduce cost and raise quality. It also funded small farmers and co-operatives. A key part in the value chain is that big companies supply the day old chicks and process, freeze and market the fully grown chickens. And BNDES investment made it an important investor in the Brazilian chicken companies, including holding 18% of the largest meat processing enterprise in the world, JBS. Finally, the state does the health inspection and quality control.

The Brazilian state development bank has part ownership of companies also owned by local oligarchs, and attracted foreign investment, while also promoting rural development and supporting family commercial farmers. One might expect widespread support for development that would support both family farmers and Frelimo oligarchs, and draw in foreign investment not linked to resource extraction.

So in his 2004 presidential election campaign, Armando Guebuza promised to set up a development bank (and he had the backing of BNDES). Donors were outraged and said they would not accept it. The idea had to be dropped. The IMF has historically and publicly opposed BNDES. Brazil is too big for the Fund to do anything – but for two decades the IMF and donors had the power to block similar actions in Mozambique.

We raised the issue again in 2014 in our book *Chickens and beer: A recipe for agricultural growth in Mozambique* in English on <https://bit.ly/Chickens-Beer> and in an [Oxfam blog in 2016](#). It was again ignored. And today the priority is still foreign controlled resource extraction. But it is still possible to promote locally organised rural development and a linked processing industry.

There is again a push for chicken production in Mozambique, but always based on big companies. In April this year Mozambique agreed a chicken factory in the Moamba special economic zone to produce 1.2 million chickens per month. But the lesson of Brazil is a mixed value chain. The big companies provide training, feed, medicines and day old chicks to peasant farmers. Then they guarantee to buy the grown chickens, which they process in big factories. It is an outgrower system which stimulates the family economy. But no one mentions this in Mozambique. *jh*

Correction: Some versions of the 27 July 2026 newsletter and the short-link were numbered incorrectly as 701. The correct number is 671. Apologies.

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Election study collaboration: We have detailed election data from 1999 through 2014 and are inviting scholars to use this data collaboratively. <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>

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

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

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

Background reading

Special reports

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

Special report on four poverty surveys: 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

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

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

"Moçambique recolonizado através da corrupção" (2025) <https://bit.ly/MozRecol> (Portuguese only)

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:

Galinhas 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)

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
O País: 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).
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