

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

648 24 February 2025

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

Publication continue to be irregular until the book is finished.

Personal view

Chapo says protests are subversive extension of Cabo Delgado war

'The demonstrations are part of a subversive agenda to destabilise our country. It is the continuation of the terrorist attacks in Cabo Delgado province,' President Daniel Chapo told diplomats Thursday 20 February. 'We have no doubt that these attacks are aimed at creating chaos in order to squander our strategic mineral resources,' emphasised Chapo. He thanked ambassadors for the 'reaffirmation of support' and 'solidarity' he has received from 'friendly countries.' (LUSA 20 Feb)

But Chapo wants unquestioning support and not advice. The EU Elections Observation Mission reported in Maputo on 30 January. 'There is no political solution to this crisis without a dialogue that is truly inclusive and in which Venâncio Mondlane participates,' declared the head of the European Union (EU) mission, Laura Ballarín. 'The political dialogue that can bring a political and peaceful solution to Mozambique must be inclusive, that is, Venâncio Mondlane must be at that table,' she said. (LUSA 30 Jan)

Mondlane gained the second most votes in the election (by Frelimo's count) and thus is a member of the official Council of State. But Frelimo hardliners will not let Chapo talk with him. This refusal to look at internal roots of conflict does go back to the Cabo Delgado war. Military support from Rwanda, the EU and others has not ended the seven year old war, because it does not have a military solution.

In October 2021 four of the key donors - World Bank, EU, ADB and UNDP - presented a proposal [ERDIN](#) for stopping the war through development. It said that "at the root of this insurgency are perceptions of inequality, exclusion and marginalisation [and] perceptions of injustice in the distribution of benefits and opportunities arising from extractive activities." And it called for more "inclusive and equitable access to public services" and to "strengthen inclusive governance, with a focus on citizen participation [and] fighting corruption". Then-President Filipe Nyusi refused to allow the proposal to be presented to the Council of Ministers. The refusal to deal with the roots of the insurgency means that three years later the war continues.

But Frelimo knew there was a growing problem. A majority of voters are young and with a growing sense that there are no jobs and they have no future. In the 2023 municipal election they backed Venancio Mondlane and he received a majority of votes for mayor of Maputo city, and we saw the results sheets proving this. But Frelimo-dominated courts and election commission gave the election to the Frelimo candidate. Frelimo knew it could not win the national election in 2024 so it organised an unprecedented fraud. EU observers saw results being openly changed. Young voters

had overwhelmingly backed Mondlane for President, but no detailed results were made available and Chapo was declared president.

Young people had tried to do it by the book, through voting. And the results reinforced their perceptions of inequality, exclusion, marginalisation and injustice. Initial small protests grew quickly and became protests about poverty and lack of jobs and a future. Police shot and killed more than 300 demonstrators, but the protests grew.

And the protests have moved back to Cabo Delgado and elsewhere. New style civilian protests have won concessions from coal, heavy sands, graphite and gas companies - in all cases simply to carry out earlier promises.

The only weapons young people have are themselves and the ability to disrupt. They realise that without lethal weapons, their only power is disrupting the economy - blocking main roads and attacking toll booths that provide an indirect income to the government. But the Frelimo elite refused to listen. So some youth turned to violence attacking government, Frelimo and police buildings. And it did turn to looting and attacking houses of Frelimo leaders. Mondlane has become less a leader than a voice of youth in brief rallies in Maputo and other cities and in regular social media broadcasts. And he used social media to call for an end to looting, which did then largely stop.

In Cabo Delgado the insurgency could have been stopped by creating a few thousand jobs, at a cost much less than the Rwandan mercenaries. Now Frelimo is allowing substantial damage to the national economy rather than listen to the grievances of the young.

Chapo says violence does not bring concessions, but it did. He recently reduced VAT on a few basic goods and reduced fuel prices. But he is really just reversing increases which were demanded by the IMF for a recent agreement. Following IMF instructions VAT was charged on a few additional basic goods and a fuel subsidy was discontinued. Will the IMF allow them to be reversed?

Young people know that Mozambique is already in a serious financial crisis and their non-violent protests are being heard. Rather than concede Chapo wants to increase the pressure. He has put the army on the streets and said the protesters are terrorists. But a hard line has not worked in Cabo Delgado, where regular insurgent actions continue, and will not work in the rest of the country either, where widespread daily road closures continue.

There are many players in this. Donors have continued to support Frelimo because they want Mozambique's minerals, but the war and protests has disrupted mining and gas. The IMF wants to keep its reputation as the hard man imposing neoliberalism and austerity, but it cannot claim success in a failing country. Frelimo oligarchs grow wealthy through commissions and rents but transport disruptions hit that. So they may be prepared to sacrifice a small part of their income and pride by taking less money. And negotiations including Mondlane could lead to agreement as to how best to use extra money to benefit young people.

But saying jobless protesters are terrorists will not work in Maputo any more than it has in Cabo Delgado. *jh*

Other news

Insurgents pushed out of Macomia coast move west and south



At the end of last year a push of Rwandan and Mozambican soldiers pushed many insurgents out of areas they controlled near Mucojo on the coast of Macomia district. Insurgents remain in the areas and are reported to be buying food from local people. But many insurgents moved north along the coast and then west along the heavily forested Messalo River. They moved into Mocimboa da Praia, Muidumbe, and western Macomia districts. The same or a different group was active in Meluco and Montepuez districts. There are over 2000 Rwandan troops in Mozambique.

Another group also went along the Messalo River until Chai, on the N380 road. There was an attack on Chai and there N380 last week and a confrontation with Rwandan troops based nearby on 12 February. Insurgents then went south passing Macomia town, and into Quissanga district where they attacked an army base in Bilibiza in the centre of the district on Thursday 20 February. There was no response from government forces. Public officials have again fled Quissanga district.

Insurgents control the N380 road north and south of Macomia town, which is now isolated. There have been attacks on the road. (Focus, AIM, MozTimes)

Further fiscal squeeze

There is a serious shortage of foreign currency. The Confederation of Economic Associations of Mozambique (CTA) said 63 companies have waited more than six months to pay a total of \$402mn of import invoices for raw materials and goods. This was blamed by CTA on very high reserve requirements, which were cut in January from 39% of deposits to 29%.

Mozambique cannot borrow abroad so government borrows domestically. Bank of Mozambique reported that domestic borrowing by government increased by \$325mn last year. The cost of servicing the foreign debt rose by \$280mn last year.

The bankrupt state airline LAM's has been passed on to the three profitable state companies - Hidroelectrica de Cahora Bassa (HCB), the Ports and Rail Company (CFM) and EMOSE, the country's largest insurance company. The companies will pay the government \$130mn. Flights to Lisbon were immediately cancelled, after a loss of \$21mn last year.

The Mozambican government will pay \$17mn back pay for overtime to teachers and health professionals in two phases due to lack of money. The first phase of overtime payment will take

place by March and the second half in the second quarter - April-June. Government also admits it owes \$23mn to suppliers of goods and services.

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Elections

CIP Mozambique Elections Bulletin is published by Centro de Integridade Pública (CIP) <https://www.cipmoz.org>; <https://cipeicoes.org/eng/cip@cipmoz.org>.

To subscribe or unsubscribe: <https://bit.ly/MozBul-sub> Past election newsletters are on <https://bit.ly/CIP-EI>

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> Election data: <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

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/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>

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:

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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