

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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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://www.lse.ac.uk/internationalDevelopment/research/mozambiqueElections/home.aspx>.

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Nyusi backs open media debate while prosecutor cracks down again on press over Castel-Branco letter

"We cannot be afraid of opposing ideas, because they are not synonymous with lies or speculation. We should not think of an artificial society in which everyone thinks alike, because it is not natural," President Filipe Nyusi told a dinner Monday 1 June to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the independent daily newspaper *O País*. Instead we have to consider differences of opinion in order to effectively confront the realities of the country, he said.

Nyusi said he did not believe that patriotism emerges from an imposed uniformity. On the contrary, "the agreement resulting from different ideas and thoughts is what forges patriotism", he said, adding that when he took office in January, "I told the members of my government to regard access to information as a right of citizenship enshrined in the constitution and in the law". (*O País* 3 June, AIM 2 June)

But he went on to stress that there are limits, and the press must act "with responsibility, defending the noble values that Mozambicans have already defined: national unity, peace and reconciliation, social harmony, development, well-being and improving the quality of life."

Those limits were made clear the next morning, when the Public Prosecutor's Office revived charges of crimes against state security for criticism of then President Armando Guebuza in 2013. Fernando Mbanze, editor of the daily newsletter *Mediafax* was summoned on Tuesday to the Public Prosecutor's Office in the Maputo municipal district of Kapfumu. Accompanied by a lawyer, he was told that he was now an accused person. He is being charged for publishing in November 2013 a Facebook post by prominent academic Carlos Nuno Castel-Branco. This was an open letter to Guebuza calling on his to resign, and using strong and hostile language. The Public Prosecutor's Office in Kapfumu said the open letter was defamatory. Under Mozambican law, libelling the President is a state security offence. Fernando Veloso, director of *Canal de Moçambique*, was also accused in December 2013.

Mbanze said that although the prosecutor told him he was now an accused person, the prosecutor did not say under what law he was being charged. The original charges were under the law on crimes against state security. The Amnesty Law passed by parliament in August 2014 as part of the agreement with Renamo applies to all security offences committed between March 2012 and August 2014, and thus should cover the Castel-Branco letter and its republication. (AIM 3 June)

Frelimo Political Commission forced end of observer mission

The military observer mission intended to oversee Renamo demobilization formally ended Monday at the 107th Renamo-government negotiating session. Set up under the peace accord last year, it never served any function because Renamo refused to demobilize without a complete reorganization and politicization of the army and police, similar to that done with the electoral machine.

The Frelimo Political Commission ordered the government to not extend the military commission, despite requests from Renamo in the Monday talks, Political Commission member Eneas Comiche said in a speech in Inhambane Sunday 31 May. (*O Pais* 1 June)

The Military Team to Observe the End of Military Hostilities (Equipa Militar de Observadores da Cessaçao das Hostilidades Militares, EMOCHM) started on 1 October 2014, and was to have 23 foreign observers from nine countries – Botswana (which commanded the mission), South Africa, Zimbabwe, Cape Verde, Kenya, Portugal, Italy, Britain and the United States. The initial mandate was 135 days, later extended 60 days. The US never sent its two observers and European countries withdrew observers after the end of the first phase. The cost was covered by the government, and the Council of Ministers was told on Tuesday 2 June that the cost had been \$15.7 million.

After two informal meetings between Nyusi and Dhlakama in February, which seemed to indicate a new flexibility, both sides have returned to rigid positions. Renamo continues to demand maximalist positions, for example that Dhlakama should have the right to appoint governors in five provinces (the same demand as in 2000) and that President Nyusi should not engage in any party political activity during the normal working days. On its side Frelimo dismisses Renamo demands out of hand, for example simply rejecting the proposal for elected provincial governments as unconstitutional, and not offering any other forms of decentralisation, patronage and money to Dhlakama.

Renamo yesterday (4 June) announced that it will hold a National Council meeting in Beira next week, 9-11 June.

Comment

A warning from South Sudan

I worked briefly in South Sudan and Wednesday (3 June) I attended a meeting at Chatham House on the collapse of South Sudan into a messy civil war between ethnic and regional militias. It made me think back to the early days of independence in Mozambique, with its huge stress on national unity. Samora Machel in 1975 took a month-long trip from the Ruvuma River south before he finally arrived in the capital Maputo. A vaccination campaign in 1976-78 reached 95% of the population. On 8 March 1977 the national literacy campaign was launched. And the rhetoric of the government was about nation building and rejecting race and tribe. None of this happened after independence in South Sudan; there were no national presidential trips and no nationwide programmes.

All countries are different, but the stress on nation-building and national unity in Mozambique and its lack in South Sudan both had an effect. And it underlines the obsession within Frelimo with

national unity. The push by Afonso Dhlakama for authority in those areas where he did well in elections looks to many like a start down a dangerous road to divisions along ethnic, regional or language lines.

Divisions within my own country, the "United" Kingdom, over Scotland and Europe, show that these are not purely African issues. But in recent decades in Africa, the price has been very high where politics has been based on ethnicity or region. So the first point to be made is that Frelimo's stress on national unity should not be dismissed as purely self-interest; it has a real and very important basis and history.

But there is a second lesson from South Sudan, and that is the danger of failing to share the spoils - the loot, the rents, or whatever term one wishes to use. President Salva Kiir and the predominant party, the SPLA, failed to share out the oil and aid money, which led to a power struggle, fragmentation and war. Political scientists talk of "elite bargains" in which there is an implicit or explicit deal between various elite factions to share power and wealth, which creates a framework in which democracy and political contestation can occur. Such elite bargains are built into the system in Europe, the US, and Japan. One aspect of these elite bargains across the globe is the increasing gap between the wealthy elites and the rest of the population.

In more recently independent countries of Africa, these elite bargains are still being constructed, and are usually subject to two considerations. First, is the elite share acceptable to the public, or is the elite seen as too greedy, perhaps threatening its position? Second, have the various elite factions reached an adequate arrangement among themselves?

The anger at - and Mozambican press coverage of - grand and petty corruption, the Ematum bond issues, sinecures for party figures, and related issues suggests that the Mozambican elite may be reaching the limits of acceptability. But the on-going dispute with Renamo makes clear that the elite bargain has never been acceptably negotiated, and that bargaining has now moved into the public sphere. Three years ago Renamo and Dhlakama could have been bought off with a couple of hundred million dollars and a few seats on public sector boards. The relative success of Renamo's military action and Dhlakama's unexpectedly good result on the presidential elections has raised the price substantially, and made the elite bargain much harder to reach. But the other lesson from South Sudan is that intransigence on both sides can lead to disastrous errors that are much more costly than a settlement would have been. *jh*

Land grabs or speculation?

Two reports of huge farming projects in Mozambique which could displace thousands of families raise questions about their seriousness. Do these companies really have the money and government backing, or are they just speculative attempts to raise money from naïve European and Middle Eastern investors?

Ali Mahmoud, president of the international development division of the Al-Bader trading group based in Kuwait, after a meeting 26 May in Maputo with Prime Minister Carlos Agostinho do Rosario, said the company would invest \$26 billion in Mozambique. And he said that within the next six months it would restart the twice-failed Procana sugar cane project in Massingir, Gaza. Mahmoud said the project would produce ethanol, which can be mixed with petrol (gasoline). The first ProCana failure was by Phil Edmonds' Central Africa Mining and Exploration Company (CAMEC), which had close links with the Zimbabwe government of Robert Mugabe. The project was also seen as dubious because it claimed it would produce four times as much ethanol as any similar project in Mozambique. The concession of 30,000 ha was granted to CAMEC in 2007 and revoked in 2009. Edmonds and CAMEC then moved to Manica and Edmonds is behind Mozbife and Agriterra. In 2011 the Procana land was granted to Massingir Agro-Industrial, but it also failed to make a go of the project. No new biofuel project has ever succeeded in Mozambique, and with oil prices now much lower than at the time of the biofuel boom eight years ago, it is hard to see how Al-Bader will succeed.

Another problem with ProCana is that there are land conflicts with the Limpopo trans-frontier park which have never been settled. The new issue of *Journal of Peasant Studies* has an interesting article by Jessica Milgroom based on interviews in Massingir in 2007 and 2008 looking at the whole ProCana process and the various conflicts. Free access on <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/03066150.2014.991721>
See *News Reports & Clippings 206* 17 October 2012 for more details on Edmonds' projects.
Al-Bader: <http://www.al-bader.com/>

Meanwhile, a campaign by the Spanish NGO Grain and other international groups is growing against an alleged proposal for two dams on the Lurio river and 240,000 ha of irrigated farmland. The project is said to cost \$4.2 billion and would displace 100,000 people. The project is said to have been proposed by the Companhia do Vale do Rio Lurio (CVRL), owned by the Mozambican company TurConsult, with a history of hotel and tourism development, and AgriCane, a South African sugar company. <http://triplecrisis.com/history-repeats-as-farce-giving-away-land-without-consultation-in-mozambique/>

Again, no plantation agriculture project of that scale has succeeded in Mozambique since independence, and large scale irrigation projects in Africa are notoriously difficult to make work. Could they raise \$4 billion from foreign investors?

Meanwhile, the new Minister of Lands, Environment and Rural Development, businessman Celso Correia, opened a land seminar on 27 May by - perhaps unintentionally - highlighting ambiguities in the implementation of the land law. He announced a new programme called Terra Segura ('Secure Land') which primarily aims to issue DUATs (license to use land) for all land held by the Mozambicans who have a right to the land through occupation. When Mozambican or foreign investors want new land, they must present an investment plan, and Correia called for the removal of DUATs from those who have not implemented the plan and left that land unused. But that leads to the third issue - identifying underused land. Community groups fear that Terra Segura could be a way of identifying land not being actively farmed and just giving peasants a DUAT for the small area they are currently using.

Police part of \$1 million rhino horn theft

Rhinoceros horns and elephant tusks are now so valuable that Mozambicans are willing to risk their lives to hunt them, and dozens of Mozambican poachers have been killed in South Africa. Inevitably, the police are corrupted.

Police seized 340 elephant tusks and 65 rhino horns from a house in Matola on 12 May, and arrested two Chinese citizens. This was by far the largest capture of ivory in Mozambican history, with a value of perhaps \$8 million. Two weeks later, 12 of the horns had vanished, replaced by replicas made out of cattle horns.

On 2 June the spokesperson for the General Command, Pedro Cossa, admitted that police were involved, and that four police had been arrested, including an inspector and head of the local brigade of the Criminal Investigation Police (PIC), a chief inspector, a sub-inspector, and a sergeant. Also arrested was a member of the Maputo Provincial Directorate of Land, Environment and Rural Development, and the two makers of the replica horns.

But the value of rhino horn is simply too high - up to \$100,000 per kilogram, and a horn weighs 1-3 kg. So the dozen horns were probably worth more than \$1 mn. By contrast, elephant tusks are worth about \$5000 - much less but more than most Mozambicans can earn in a lifetime.

Mozambique's last rhinoceros was killed in 2013.

Mozambique's elephant population has fallen by almost half in five years, from just over 20,000 in 2009 to around 10,300 in 2014, according to the most recent census. This is due to poaching. Ninety-five percent of the total loss occurred in northern Mozambique where the elephant population declined from 15,400 to 6,100. In the Niassa National Reserve, the number of elephants fell from around 12,000 to an estimated 4,440. In the census, 43% of all elephants seen in the Niassa Reserve were carcasses. (AIM 27 May, 1, 2, 3 June)

In Tanzania, 60% of elephants have been killed in five years, and the numbers have dropped from 109,000 to 43,000. (*Guardian*, London, 3 June)

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Chickens and beer: A recipe for agricultural growth in Mozambique

by Teresa Smart and Joseph Hanlon

E-book for Kindle and iPad, for \$9.32 from US Amazon -
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Outside Mozambique, we have a few copies we can send from London.
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tinyurl.com/justgivemoney

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This mailing list is used to distribute two publications, both edited by Joseph Hanlon. This is my own sporadic "News reports & clippings", which is entirely my own responsibility. This list is also used to distribute the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, published by CIP and AWEPA, but those organisations are not linked to "News reports & clippings"

Joseph Hanlon

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Mozambique media websites:

Noticias: www.jornalnoticias.co.mz

O Pais: www.opais.co.mz

On Facebook:

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Macauhub English: www.macauhub.com.mo/en/

AIM Reports: www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news

Carlos Serra Diario de um sociologo: <http://oficinadesociologia.blogspot.com>

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