

Dear friends and colleagues,

As you may know, the General Attorney's Office (PGR) in Mozambique is taking to court two separate yet related cases: one against me and the other against journalists Fernando Mbanze and Fernando Veloso. The court set the trial for the 3rd of August 2015, but through my lawyer, João Carlos Trindade, I have requested it to be postponed until the 31st of August. We are still waiting for a decision, which may be made soon. But until a decision on my appeal is made by the court, the trial is set for the 3rd of August. With regard to the charges, I have been charged with crimes against State security for defamation of the then-president of Mozambique. Mbanze and Veloso, the editors of *MediaFax* and *Canal de Moçambique*, two independent newspapers that published my Facebook post, have been charged with abuse of freedom of the press.

Related to this process, I received messages of solidarity from many friends, colleagues, activists, and many other individual I did not know before. It is impossible to describe how important these words and gestures of solidarity are for me, and for the journalists Fernando Mbanze and Fernando Veloso, our families and legal teams, and we are immensely grateful for them.

I would like to take this opportunity to answer some of the questions that I have been asked in relation to my case.

I am in Manchester now and will be here until about a week prior to the trial (when exactly this is depends on when the trial's takes place, on the 3rd or on the 31st).

I was asked if I would go to Mozambique for the trial. Of course I am going. The issues at stake are much bigger than me, I refuse to be seen as being in political exile from my country, I have not committed any crime or undertaken any action that I am ashamed of. If the PGR wants to go on to trial, I will use it, to the best of my ability, as a platform to fight for freedom of expression, of press, of political debate and thinking, and for an open debate on the social and economic issues that I raised on Facebook, for which we stand accused of defamation and abuse of freedom of the press now. Of course, it would be safer and more comfortable if no trial took place and the case were dismissed. However, as it is going ahead, we should take advantage of it. Whatever the outcome, whether we are found guilty or not, if the debate is in the open we win and Mozambique wins.

Some people have asked how they can help. There are many different, yet equally important ways to help. Amnesty International is preparing a campaign – you may all receive a petition to sign, soon. The petition is then going to be sent to the Mozambican government, embassies of Mozambique around the world, embassies of foreign countries in Maputo and the media. Signing and circulating such a petition is one form of support. You can also help by circulating your own letters and sending them to the institutions I have just mentioned. Publications in the Mozambican and foreign media may also be useful and if you know interested journalists, or if you can make journalists interested, please feel free to contact them. You may write to your local representatives. You may my take advantages of my association with SOAS (School of African and Asian Studies, University of London) and IDPM (Institute for Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester), where I am an associate researcher, and the academic journals ROAPE and JSAS, two of the leading referred journals on Sub-Saharan Africa development, to raise and discuss this case. Please feel free to take advantage of any other of your networks that you think may contribute to the support base. I trust you experience

and creativity to generate many other forms of solidarity. Your solidarity gives us hope, and hope is like a lever operated by the strength of our willingness to win the debate and win the legal case.

I'd like to make one point clear. Of course, Mbanze, Veloso and I also want to win the trial for personal reasons – as you may imagine, we don't want to go to jail, particularly when we have committed no crime. Our kids, families and friends don't want to see us in jail or being punished for crimes we have not committed. However, your support, in my opinion, should not focus primarily, only, on our acquittal – that, the acquittal, should be one of the main outcomes, a very desirable one in personal terms and in terms of justice. However, the struggle should be about the issues at stake around which we fight every day. Hence, the focus should be on freedom of speech, freedom of the press, academic freedom, freedom of political debate, and of the right to exercise citizenship. The issue is also the accountability of holders of high public office for their actions, and their exposure to criticism when citizens think they have not fulfilled their responsibilities as elected officials. Further, any type of campaign should not forget to mention the intense political pressure that has been put on the judicial system from the beginning of this case. The support should develop, also, around the issues that the original Facebook post raised: organized crime, political, social and economic exclusion, poverty creating economic growth, meteoric rise of public debt to finance private accumulation of capital, use of public office for personal enrichment, etc. The journalists and I should be acquitted by winning on the fundamental issues. If we win on the fundamental issues, we win the trial, whatever its legal outcome might be. We also need to bear in mind that if the case against me collapses, the case against Mbanze and Veloso must collapse as well – they have not abused the freedom of press but taken advantage of it to publish what they saw as a contribution to the public debate about fundamental issues regarding Mozambique.

Some of you asked if they could make financial contributions towards our legal expenses. I have not defined any budget yet and my lawyer has been working out of solidarity so far. But things might change and I may come to need financial support. Indeed, my oldest daughter Ruth is working towards setting up a fund to help defray legal and solidarity campaign costs in this and/or such future cases. Ruth and her networks will also set up a Facebook page to help disseminate information and garner support. In sum, those of you interested in working along these lines and have experience and ideas about how to manage such a thing properly and rigorously may let me know and I may put you in contact with Ruth.

I wish to address another question that was posed to me, about why did I write such a post and whether I was not aware of the consequences. At the end of October 2013, in the midst of an extremely explosive political and economic context, president Guebuza gave an interview to the national media in which he said four things that crystallised the tensions and contradictions of his years of governance: 1) that he trusted completely the security forces and their command and saw no need for reorganisation, despite the sharp raise in organized crime, kidnappings and assassinations without anybody being brought to justice, and the role of police and the security forces in political repression. 2) That the media were responsible for the climate of instability and return to war that existed, while the government was open to initiatives. 3) That the criticism of his closed links with private business and his crony capitalism was undeserved because he had transferred all his personal business to his daughter, sons and his friends and family when he became president. And 4) poverty was not falling as fast as expected (it was not falling at all, despite significant acceleration of economic growth) because of people's mentality and culture of being poor. At the end, as usual, he called his critics anti-patriots. Things like these were said everyday that masked or contradicted reality. People talked and

complained about these everywhere but not many were coming forward to challenge them. So, I did. It was my right and duty as a citizen.

As for the consequences, I had different expectations:

1) I did not expect that a Facebook post on my timeline would take me to court charged with crimes against State security. This happening, only confirms that my Facebook post was right in asserting that President Guebuza type of governance was taking the country along lines very close to a fascist State.

2) I expected that the political actions and thinking denounced and criticised in my Facebook post, that led to, encouraged or did not prevent real crimes against State security and the well-being of the people, would be investigated (pervasive conflicts of interest by higher FRELIMO figures between serving the State and personally benefiting from decisions by that State, meteoric increase in public debt, political, social and economic exclusion resulting in a rise in the number of poor despite acceleration of economic growth; return to war, organised crime and impunity, etc.). Such crimes have not been investigated, not even upon request, and have resulted in violence. A recent request by opposition parties in parliament for an inquiry about procurement rules and practices of the Mozambican electricity board (the state owned company EDM), given strong suspicion and preliminary evidence of corruption involving EDM and companies owned by top political figures and their families and business associates, was rejected by the majority of FRELIMO members of parliament, without any credible explanation. The debate about the fishy business of a company called EMATUM, which is supposed to be a tuna fishing company, whose project added an additional US\$ 850 million to public debt, and that shows very clear signs of corruption and use of borrowed money for unchecked military expenditure, has been challenged by inner party personalities who have declared EMATUM a question of national security – so, they are trying to install fear and close the debate. Organized crime is prospering with little action being taken by the authorities. After ten years in power, direct family members and business associates of the former President have emerged as some of the richest people and economic groups in Mozambique. This state of affairs shows that my Facebook post was right in asserting that political power was being used for personal enrichment, financing of the emergence of national financial oligarchies, at the cost of increasing poverty, social, political and economic exclusion and political repression.

3) I expected the tone and intensity of criticism and debate of the state of the nation to increase and expand, and that has happened and is still happening. I am not saying that there is a causal relationship between my FB post and the debate's intensity, but only that my post was part of a trend in national political debate, even if this post somehow contributed to encourage such a broad based debate to develop from the beginning.

Please, feel free to ask me any questions you wish and make any suggestions you may have.

Please, do not forget that we are part of the same fundamental struggle against economic neoliberalism and its financial dominance, against political repression and elimination of the rights to protest, strike, contest, and chose real alternatives, and a struggle for defining what the real alternatives are or could be. The Tories' attack on workers' rights in the UK and Europe, the Troika attack on Greece and Portugal, the South African State's and mining capital's attack and assassination of miners, the financial capitalism and fascist State attack on alternatives and freedom in Mozambique, are all part of a whole – globalized, financial monopolist capitalism trying to force citizens to pay for the global crisis of accumulation and

resisting to challenges and trends towards change. Let's fight and win these struggles together. We can only win together.

I would like to thank you, once again, for your showing of solidarity and support.

A Luta Continua!

Carlos Nuno