

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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Government owes \$2 bn in unpaid VAT rebates

Two best books on Mozambique

The two best books in a long time on Mozambique have just been published, and should be read by anyone who wants to understand Mozambique. They are very different, but both excellent and complementary. Both authors are story-tellers, the only way to write a compelling book. US journalist Rowan Moore Gerety spent months with Mozambicans on the ground and tells fascinating stories in *Go Tell the Crocodiles*. And historian Maylyn Newitt's *A Short History of Mozambique* tells the story of how we arrived here, and how Mozambique today is shaped by its past.

Go Tell the Crocodiles - Chasing Prosperity in Mozambique, by Rowan Moore Gerety, New York: The New Press, 352 pp, hardcover ISBN: 978-1-62097-276-2 \$26.95 and e-book.

How do ordinary Mozambicans get by - "desenrascar a vida" as they say? During a year in 2011 Gerety travelled the country by bus and hitching, and stayed with ordinary people, telling their stories; in 2016 he returned to talk to these people again. Preta who sells music in Mocuba, Dias in the soyabean cooperative, Liban Ali who is a people smuggler in Nampula, Red Cross volunteers in coastal Nampula who had to flee when local people accused them of bringing cholera to the area, and Bento who sells muffins in Maputo.

Gerety has the skill and patience to gain the trust of people and then the story-teller's knack of making you feel like you are there with them both, hearing the story. And these are the stories of life in Mozambique - getting by with the support of neighbours and communities, building something up and getting knocked back and starting again, working in the interstices of the politics and corruption, and mostly enjoying life and taking time to sit and talk.

Wrapped into the book is political economy and politics as seen from the ground up. For example, thousands of people moving from Somalia, Ethiopia and the Great Lakes pass through Mozambique on their way to South Africa. In a fascinating chapter, Gerety shows how the people smuggling works.

Gerety spent a week in 2011 with the motorcade of the late Renamo head Afonso Dhlakama, in Milange district where he was very popular. The chapter shows his very tight and idiosyncratic control of every detail. The caravan of cars started only when the man everyone called "o velho" (the old man or the elder) was ready, even if it was mid-afternoon. At one point the convoy stopped at a petrol station, and Dhlakama paid for the fuel from his own pocket. "In the morning, before he

stepped outside, Dhlakama could usually be found in his room, manually entering sheets of prepaid scratch cards in a small collection of cell phones," writes Gerety. "The man spent a lot of time on the phone [and] never called twice from the same number. Understandably, Dhlakama felt he was at risk of having his phones tapped, so he bought SIM cards on the street and changed numbers as often as possible. What is harder to understand is why Dhlakama felt the need to personally scratch off the little foil film on each card and punch in the lengthy codes himself." Gerety concludes: "the megalomania of the whole enterprise was striking. In a week of public appearances in Zambézia, Dhlakama did not once mention the name of any of the [seven members of parliament] travelling with him."

One chapter is about failed attempts to manage the conflict between local people and wildlife and safari companies in western Tete, and especially the issue of crocodiles who kill several people a year. Government policy is to send hunters to cull the crocodiles; it probably makes little difference but it is politically popular. As Florencio Sixpence, a local wildlife officer, explains to Gerety, if there is no cull, when politicians come at election time, local people will say "go tell the crocodiles to vote for you" - thus the title of the book.

A Short History of Mozambique, by Malyn Newitt, London: Hurst, 256pp, paper ISBN 9781849048330 £16.99.

Many of us have used Malyn Newitt's 1995 *A History of Mozambique*. This new book brings the history up to date, and is shorter, eminently readable, and essential. His story is of how contemporary Mozambique is shaped by its colonial and pre-colonial past, and by geography and climate. He reminds us that Portugal only had a unified administration of Mozambique from 1942 and that south, centre and north have very different histories. But he also points to major population mixing: "an extraordinary 34% of the population cannot be classified as having a particular mother tongue".

Climate and recurring drought shaped economy and politics. The 1823-31 drought brought famine, a suspension of trade, wandering bands of armed men, and invasions from neighbouring states. Many Portuguese left and Ngoni invaders moved north, replacing the Karaga state. It also fed into the boom in the slave trade as destitute people were rounded up and sold as slaves; Mozambique became the major supplier of slaves to Brazil and Cuba.

Monsoon winds made northern Mozambique part of ancient Indian Ocean trade routes. With many parts of Mozambique infested by tsetse fly, it was impossible to grow cattle, which led to an agriculture based economy and villages based on kin groups. North of the Zambezi women's control of farming led to matrilineal and matrilocal systems. Men often became migrant workers, craftsman and traders, settling gold and ivory to coastal traders. This farm based economy has always been supplemented by trade, handcraft, mining, hunting, and weaving. By the 1860s there was growing export trade of rubber, copra (coconut), peanuts, rice, and sesame. In 1881 the British consul Henry O'Neill wrote that "it is a remarkable fact" that the cultivation of peanuts and sesame "is entirely in the hands of the natives. They get no assistance, no scientific aid whatever from the whites on the coast," and thousands of hectares was being cultivated. This led to the growth of a class of Mozambican commercial farmers, often using slave labour. Indian capital and trading houses dominated the coast and traded with these farmers. In the 1890s Portugal finally began to establish a governmental and commercial presence, with plantations and forced labour, but Mozambican family commercial farming continued in parallel with Portuguese occupation up to - and beyond - independence. The key point, often ignored by Frelimo, donors, and international financial institutions is that for nearly two centuries peasants have not been "subsistence farmers", but have been integrated into market systems and have earned substantial off-farm income. There have always been a small group of peasant commercial farmers, about 5% of farmers at independence with more than 4 hectares, producing for export and selling to Mozambican trading networks. Newitt really shows that history matters in how we deal with present day agricultural policy.

Malyn Newitt is really the only historian of pre-independence Mozambique but many of us write

about the post-independence period, much of which is not properly history yet. He treads a careful line on the varying disputes, and usefully links recent events back to history. But he can also be outspoken. "To a large extent the developments of the 25 years after the war can be seen as the Frelimo government trying to accommodate itself to the changing fashions of donor concerns." An "inheritance from colonial times", Newitt points out, is that "old practices continue behind this smoke screen of compliance" - para os ingleses ver. "The Mozambique government complies on paper with the demands of the donor community and apparently tries to meet its concerns. In practice, however, little changes." One reason may be that "corruption, rife among the Frelimo elite for decades, had always in the end been condoned because of the outward compliance of the government with IMF prescriptions."

On local politics: "Frelimo and Renamo both have a mass following but they are organisations headed by a narrow elite. Their relations have been, from the start, essentially a process of elite bargaining."

His conclusion is hopeful: "Although the character of this patrimonial form of politics is similar throughout much of Africa, it is probably true that its excesses have been more muted in Mozambique than in many other parts of the continent, partly because, within Frelimo, there survives some of the idealism that had marked the independence struggle and the belief that Frelimo should be a modernising and uniting force with the country. In many respects Mozambique remains more orderly, more transparent, more abiding by the rule of law and less authoritarian than many African regimes."

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35 dead in Islamist fighting in coastal Cabo Delgado

Five people were killed last night in an attack on Namaluco, Maomia district, late last night (6 June). No more details are available. (*O Pais* online 7 June)

Seven people were killed and 164 houses and five vehicles burned late Monday night (4 June) in Naúnde village, Macomia district, just 130 km north of Pemba on the coast road. Six of the dead were killed with machetes and one was shot. They group also attacked the local mosque, burning the Koran and prayer mats. Military forces arrived in an hour, but it was a rapid and organised attack, and the group had left before the military arrived. (*O Pais* 6 June) On Monday five people were decapitated in an attack on nearby Rueia village. (*Zitamar*, @*Verdade* 6 June) Ten people were beheaded Sunday 27 May in two villages in Palma district, further north, 25 de Junho and Monjane. All the attacks are reported to be by self-proclaimed Islamist militants.

Police spokesman Inácio Dias told a press conference that the Naúnde attack was carried out by a small group of young men from Macomia district, armed mainly with machetes. This confirms parts of the study reported here last week (*News Reports* 413, 29 May). Dias said that it was part of the larger group that carried out the Palma attacks. However, Dias went on to argue that the increase in attacks in fact shows the weakness of the groups because they are being successfully damaged by the riot police and military. (*O Pais* 6 June, *Lusa* 5 June).

STV (2 June) reported that on 30 May security forces killed eight alleged Islamist militants near 25 de Junho village. Thus in the past two weeks, 35 people have been killed in the violence - 27 villagers killed by militants and 8 people killed by the security forces.

RFI (28 May) reports that six of the seven mosques suspected of having links with Islamic fundamentalism and closed in 2017 have been reopened, because authorities that they have no connection with the armed attacks in the province or have broken contact with the insurgents. Provincial Director of Justice Álvaro Júnior said: "Two months ago we reopened the mosques of

Montepuez, Palma, and, last week, Jimbombo. Seven other mosques were officially destroyed.”

The solution is not only military warned Maulana Abdul Rashid, president of the Mozambique Islamic Community, yesterday. "The government must think differently and understand the causes of terrorist activity. ... Closing mosques resolves nothing. Pursuing unsuspecting and innocent Muslims will not lead to anything; on the contrary, it will create a bad feeling in the Muslim family." (*O Pais* 7 June)

Renamo acting head moves to Gorongosa

Acting Renamo head Ossufo Momade has moved to the late leader Afonso Dhlakama's base on the Gorongosa mountain, because he feels better and safer there. "Now that I am the coordinator of the Political Commission of Renamo ... I do not feel safe in the city. Therefore I prefer to live with my colleagues. Here I feel protected," he told *Canal de Moçambique* (6 June).

But he stressed "this is not a threat to anyone. I have not gone to Gorongosa to take up arms. I have not gone to Gorongosa to make war or to pressure anyone."

Comment: Renamo is divided between an older military generation and a younger urban generation linked to electoral politics. General Momade is part of that old guard and by leading from Gorongosa rather than Maputo has opted for his old comrades.

Renamo has two urgent tasks: negotiating a peace deal and doing well in 10 October municipal elections. Dhlakama had become a more effective politician and was building links with political leaders in his own party and the MDM, so was able to move on both fronts.

Momade aligning himself with the military wing could make it easier to carry them with him in any military settlement, which surely must include serious posts in the military and security services for Renamo generals, as Dhlakama had demanded. Thus opting for Gorongosa probably might make a peace deal more likely. But Alfredo Maumisse, spokesperson for the Renamo Political Commission, told *Canalmoz* (5 June) that a month after Dhlakama's death, President Filipe Nyusi had still not spoken to Momade.

Although he is a member of parliament, Momade is not a dynamic campaigner or political leader. Will his move to the bush leave more space for parliamentary bench leader Ivone Soares and various MDM returnees to build a dynamic campaign machine, or will the traditional Renamo rigid hierarchy and deference to the leader limit what the politicians can do? *jh*

IMF's Aisen blames debt for continuing fall in GDP

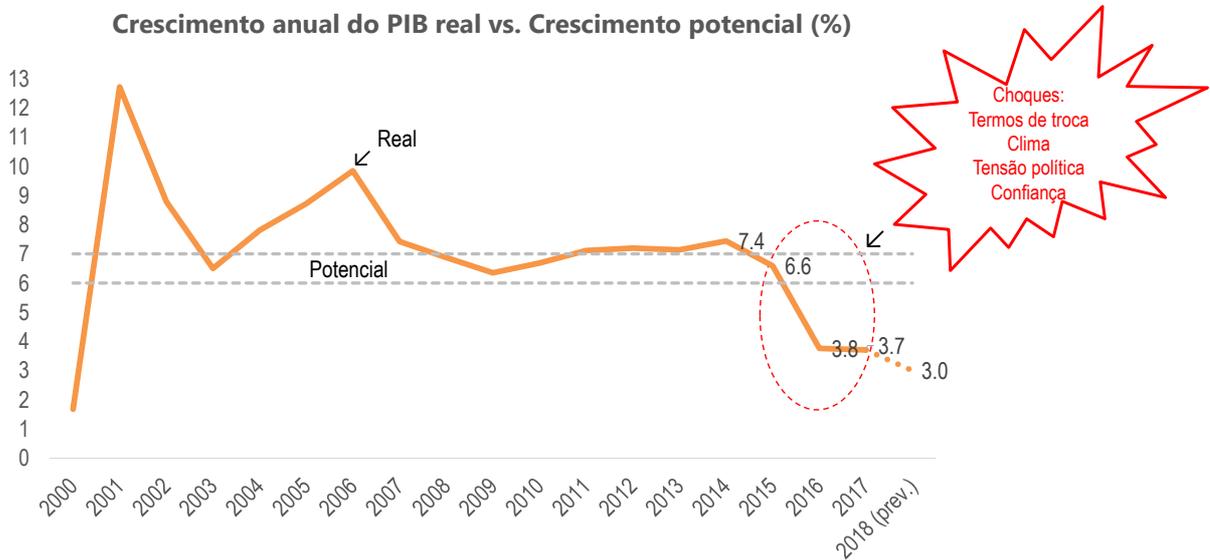
GDP growth will fall to 3.0% this year, down from 3.7% in 2017 and 7.4% in 2014, IMF Resident Representative Ari Aisen said in a talk on 4 June. The decline is caused by the fall in credit to the domestic private sector caused by the doubling of domestic borrowing by the government in the past year. The growth is built on the minerals sector and exports, plus growth in government wages and tourism. Credit is only growing to banks (who are lending to the government) and the extractive sector and is falling in all other sectors. "The private sector is carrying the main weight of economic adjustment," he said.

(<http://www.imf.org/~media/Files/Countries/ResRep/MOZ/Portuguese/reo-moz-por-final.ashx> slides 31-47)

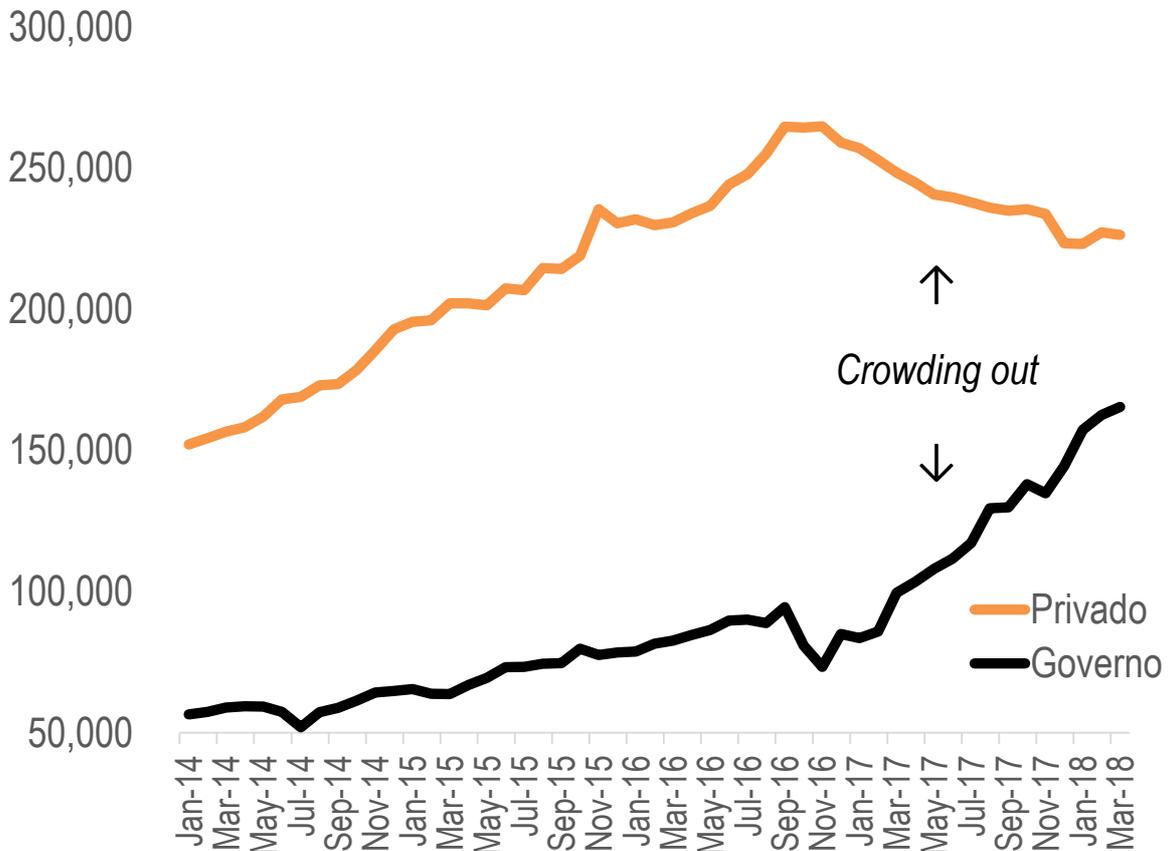
On the plus side, "inflation has slowed considerably, and this is a big gain for the economy; international reserves have increased and the exchange rate has stabilised." But Aisen warns that

the \$3 bn in reserves has been built up partly by not paying debts. (@Verdade 6 June) "Fiscal debt remains high and public debt is unsustainable." And interest rates charged by the banks remain high, even though the government has eased monetary policy.

Aisen concluded that support for Mozambique at the moment is only technical assistance.



Crédito bancário a economia (milhões de MT)



Government owes \$2 bn in unpaid VAT rebates

Industry and Finance Minister Ragendra da Sousa admitted that the government has unpaid VAT rebates of \$2 bn, 12% of GDP. Da Sousa was speaking at a Mozambique investment conference in Portugal 5 June. (*O Pais*, 6 June)

This is about 120 bn Meticaís, which when added to unpaid debts to suppliers is as large as government's official borrowing as cited by the IMF's Ari Aisen. da Sousa said he hoped to resolve the problem through foreign borrowing, perhaps a bond issue, "but under the present conditions this is not possible."

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"Mozambique News Reports & Clippings, number XXX", DATE, bit.ly/mozamb, accessed XXX.

Previous newsletters and other Mozambique material are posted on bit.ly/mozamb

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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/MozElecData>

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Other books and reports by Joseph Hanlon

Special report on four poverty surveys: bit.ly/MozPoverty

Comment: something will turn up: <http://bit.ly/28SN7QP>

Oxfam blog on Bill Gates & chickens:

<http://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/will-bill-gates-chickens-end-african-poverty/>

Bangladesh confronts climate change: Keeping our heads above water

by Manoj Roy, Joseph Hanlon and David Hulme

Published by Anthem Press

<http://www.anthempress.com/bangladesh-confronts-climate-change-pb>

Chickens and beer: A recipe for agricultural growth in Mozambique by Teresa Smart and Joseph Hanlon

In pdf format, 6 Mb file, free on <http://bit.ly/chickens-beer>

E-book for Kindle and iPad, <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00NRZXXKE>

Galinhas e cerveja: uma receita para o crescimento

by Teresa Smart & Joseph Hanlon.

Copies are in Maputo bookshops (Karibu at airport, Livaria UEM, Bazar Pariso, Mivany) or from

KAPICUA, which recently moved to Av de Maguiguana (nr Lenine), Maputo; Tel: +258 21 413 201.

Telm.: +258 823 219 950 E-mail: kapicudir@tdm.co.mz / kapicuacom@tdm.co.mz

Outside Mozambique, we have a few copies we can send from London. Please e-mail j.hanlon@open.ac.uk.

Recent reports

Special report on social protection <http://bit.ly/MozSocPro>

Mozambique corruption articles 2016-7 <http://bit.ly/2upF8XI>

Secret debt documents and report:

Kroll full report (80 Mb!) <http://bit.ly/Kroll-Moz-full>

Kroll audit Executive Summary <http://bit.ly/Kroll-sum>

Parliamentary Report on the Secret Debt (complete, in Portuguese) bit.ly/MozAR-debt

Key points from the Parliamentary Report on the Secret Debt <http://bit.ly/MozAR-debt-En>

Mozambique should not pay the hidden debt <http://bit.ly/Moz-do-not-pay>

Following the donor-designed path to the \$2.2 billion secret debt <http://bit.ly/3WQ-hanlon>

Other books and reports:

Government's detailed flood reports: <http://bit.ly/flood-17>

Local media monitoring of Mozambique elections (background of election newsletters)
<http://bit.ly/LSE-newsletter>

Chickens and beer: A recipe for agricultural growth in Mozambique book by Teresa Smart and Joseph Hanlon, **free** English download <http://bit.ly/chickens-beer>

Há mais bicicletas - mas há desenvolvimento? book by Joseph Hanlon and Teresa Smart, **free** Portuguese download <http://bit.ly/Mais-bicicletas>

Gas for development or just for money? <http://bit.ly/MozGasEn>

Minimum wages & exchange rates 1996-2018 <http://bit.ly/MinWage18>

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Zimbabwe takes back its land

by Joseph Hanlon, Jeanette Manjengwa & Teresa Smart is now available from the publishers

https://www.rienner.com/title/Zimbabwe_Takes_Back_Its_Land also as an e-book and

<http://www.jacana.co.za/book-categories/current-affairs-a-history/zimbabwe-takes-back-it-s-land-detail>

Do bicycles equal development in Mozambique? by Joseph Hanlon & Teresa Smart

is available from the publisher <http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/store/viewItem.asp?idProduct=13503>

Há mais bicicletas - mas há desenvolvimento? free download of Portuguese edition (5 Mb)

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

by Joseph Hanlon, Armando Barrientos, and David Hulme

Most of this book can be **read on the web** tinyurl.com/justgivemoney

NOTE OF EXPLANATION:

One 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

Mozambique media websites, Portuguese:

Notícias: www.jornalnoticias.co.mz

O País: www.opais.co.mz

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

Diario de Moçambique (Beira): <http://www.diariodemocambique.co.mz>

Carlos Serra Diário de um sociólogo: <http://oficinadesociologia.blogspot.com>

Mozambique media websites, English:

Club of Mozambique: <http://clubofmozambique.com/>

Rhula weekly newsletter: <http://www.rhula.net/news-announcements.html>

Zitamar: <http://zitamar.com/>

Macauhub English: <http://www.macauhub.com.mo/en/>

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

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