

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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Can Frelimo and its backers continue to profit from the resource curse and a failing state?

The sentencing last week of the former Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak to 12 years in jail for involvement in a \$4.5 bn fraud, should provoke some deep thinking by Frelimo, Mozambique, and Mozambique's international partners. Najib was the son of a liberation leader and himself became Defence Minister and then Prime Minister and he personally stole huge amounts of money. He was voted out in 2018. Because of the scandal, the government realised it needed high level trials to demonstrate change.

This is a familiar story in southern Africa. In both South Africa and Zimbabwe, entrenched and corrupt liberation leaders were pushed out by their comrades. But corruption is now so embedded they are having serious problems cleaning up the mess. Inflation of over 250% has returned to Zimbabwe because President Emmerson Mnangagwa cannot control arbitrage - privileged people are allowed to buy US dollars at official rates, which they sell on the parallel market, buy more US\$, and so on, and that is enough to drive hyper-inflation. Mnangagwa built a coalition to overthrow Robert Mugabe, but it contains those able to drive inflation, and he cannot control them.

Internationally, the two biggest government-involved bank scandals are Malaysia's \$4.5 bn 1MDB scandal and Mozambique's \$2 bn secret debt. Mozambique also faces a civil war in Cabo Delgado, driven by growing poverty and inequality. As in its neighbours, liberation leader Armando Guebuza was pushed out - more gently than in the neighbours by being prevented from standing again. He was replaced by a son of liberation, Filipe Nyusi, who seems unable to control his Frelimo party, which is dazzled by the coming billion dollar gas bonanza. The result is Mozambique becoming another state where resources are a curse rather than a benefit for most people.

Nyusi's dubious landslide re-election last year was made possible by strengthening the Frelimo patronage network created by Guebuza. This can be seen at three levels. At the top is a group of

mini-oligarchs who control land, contracts, illegal trade in heroin and timber, and shares of international loans.

At the next level officials earn smaller but still significant rewards that come from servicing the big beasts by facilitating their land concessions and contracts. And these officials can give smaller contracts to their family and friends. Construction quality is notoriously poor, but it has to be gross to be noticed - President Nyusi walked out of a school inauguration on 24 July because the school was so badly built.

And at lower level, all civil service jobs now depend of Frelimo membership. Teachers can impregnate school girls, demand money for exam passes, and not show up to teach - if they work hard enough on the elections. Police and others assume bribes are part of their salary.

A few strong sectors of the civil service, notably health, survive. But for the most part, there has been little economic development in years. All the statistics show growing poverty, inequality, and child malnutrition. Cabo Delgado has become a flash point, with thousands of families having no livelihoods after being displaced by ruby and graphite mines and the gas project. Young people see a few gaining from the mineral wealth and see well paid outsiders coming in to work on the gas, and they also see most local people not benefitting. Islamic militants are attracting willing recruits in exactly the same way that Frelimo attracted its recruits in the same places 50 years ago, by promising a fairer sharing out of the wealth of the province. Too many young people now view Frelimo as their grandparents saw the colonial administration, and the new civil war is the result.

The international community is now choosing sides. As well as international banks, eight export credit agencies, including the US and UK, on 17 July backed a \$4.9 bn loan for the gas project. IMF Representative in Maputo Ari Anson in a press conference Wednesday 29 July said it was "very positive" that the Mozambique government received such strong backing despite the Cabo Delgado insurgency and the \$2 bn secret debt scandal. Profits from gas contracts are more important; international finance is now firmly backing the Frelimo leadership.

There is a growing wave of support for foreign military intervention in the Cabo Delgado war. If the grievances remain unresolved, this will not end the war. The most likely outcome is that as in Afghanistan and elsewhere, private security companies will be paid to guard the economic installations - gas, rubies, other minerals - and cities like Pemba. In rural areas the war will continue, and the more than 200,000 refugees will increase as government tries to drain the "sea" the guerrillas swim in.

Mozambique's young people, Frelimo, and the international community face a difficult choice. Will they accept a failed state where a Frelimo elite and international companies can be walled off from the chaos and continue to profit - at least for a few more years? Will a comfortable Maputo middle class feel it can ignore what happens in far away Cabo Delgado and that the urgent priority is earn enough for private school fees and other essentials? Or is there a will to stop the headlong rush to a failed state? South Africa and Zimbabwe show how hard it is. Malaysia shows it is possible.

Joseph Hanlon

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Cabo Delgado civil war

Pressure grows in South Africa for intervention

South African General Xolani Mankayi has ordered the soldiers of his 43 Brigade, who form the rapid intervention unit of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), to begin an intensive training programme for possible action in Cabo Delgado if President Cyril Ramaphosa decides to intervene, according to *Africa Intelligence* (29 July). (*Zitamar, Carta de Moçambique* 30 July)

Africa Intelligence points to a "lobby" for military intervention led by the SANDF chief General Solly Shoke. He has backing of Defence Minister Nosiviwe Mapissa-Nqakula and her husband Charles Nqakula, a former defence minister. Charles was High Commissioner (ambassador) in Mozambique 2012-16 and the pair retain close links with Frelimo.

South Africa's Institute for Security Studies (ISS) is also lobbying for intervention. Police raided a house in Kliprivier south of Johannesburg on 23 July, arresting a five person kidnapping gang and finding weapons, training manuals, and an ISIS black flag (eNCA, 29 July). ISS consultant Peter Fabricius wrote in *Daily Maverick* (30 July) that "some security analysts believe the Kliprivier group was only involved in raising finances, mainly through kidnapping and perhaps extortion, for terrorist operations elsewhere, including in Mozambique." Jakkie Cilliers, ISS head of African futures and innovation told *TimesLive* (28 July) that it was well known that kidnapping syndicates in South Africa use ransoms as a source of finance for other criminal networks. "Extremist organisations are able to take root when there is a collapse or failure in governance as we see happening in northern Mozambique," he said.

Meanwhile, *Africa Monitor* (28 July) reports that Ramaphosa has chosen as new high commissioners (ambassadors) to Mozambique and Tanzania two very senior ANC people who are armed struggle veterans. *Africa Monitor* says they are effectively being appointed as personal representatives of Ramaphosa to be involved in the discussions about possible SADC intervention. Zimbabwe supports intervention but Tanzania opposes it. The Mozambique High Commissioner will be Geraldine Fraser Moleketi who is also senior in the South African Communist Party but in recent years has been with the UN Development Programme and then the African Development Bank. (*Zitamar* 30 July)

Africa Intelligence claims tensions between Mozambique and South Africa on the Cabo Delgado war, in part because Mozambique does not want to share its own intelligence. The few members of the SA Defence Intelligence Division present in Mozambique were expelled just before the Covid-19 pandemic, the newsletter says, and South African officers are now turning to private intelligence companies to find out more about the insurrection.

Semi-official think-tank says Mozambique must use mercenaries

"Mozambique needs to recognise that it is facing a well-led group, that is adapting easily to the conditions imposed on it, and that it is taking advantage of the gaps and weaknesses of the country, especially the FDS [Defence and Security Forces]", warns semi-official think tank CEEI. The clear tone of its new *Security Brief* is that the Cabo Delgado war is unwinnable without mercenaries. <https://bit.ly/CEEI-3>

"Much of the progress made by Mozambique's FDS in the fight against terrorism in Cabo Delgado was due to the use of private military companies (PMCs) operating helicopters and drones," notably Dyck Advisory Group (DAG). "The withdrawal of mercenary companies does not mean that Mozambique's security forces will be able to provide security to regions that are affected by terrorism in Cabo Delgado. The final question is: would Mozambique have any other alternative but the use of PMCs, in view of the urgency and high risk that terrorists imposed on the populations of Cabo Delgado?"

The *Brief* notes that "the use of PMCs has become a common practice in the international system where their employment is done by both weak states and superpowers like the US, Russia and the UK." (Indeed, "about half of the US Armed Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan is employed by private military contractors," according to an article in *Newsweek* by academic Bryan Stinchfield: <https://bit.ly/US-PMC-BS>)

ISRI (International Relations Institute) was created in 1986 as the diplomatic school close to the security services, and within it CEEI (Centre for Strategic and International Studies) was established on the model of Chatham House or ISS, as an independent think tank but close to the

establishment. ISRI became Universidade Joaquim Chissano in 2018. Thus *Security Brief* will be taken seriously.

The report is damning about the FDS. "Mozambique will have to reformulate and restructure all of its national security structure and infrastructure, starting with the armed forces, to combat complex insurgencies. This means that Mozambique must restructure its military forces at all levels."

"Mozambique has systematically underestimated the scale of insurgent success and increasing control and influence over the population and countryside."

"Mozambique has failed to develop a coherent civil approach to encourage de-radicalisation [and] interrupt recruitment"

"Whenever they manage to regroup, terrorists return more determined, more knowledgeable of FDS tactics and with increasingly effective weapons."

External aggression or just information exchange?

The war in Cabo Delgado is "an external aggression" and "an invasion of our territory", Mozambican diplomat Murade Murargy told a meeting of the Portuguese language community CPLP. Citing the example of France intervening to combat Boko Haram, the former executive-secretary of the CPLP said Mozambique needs military help and the CPLP should mobilise international assistance. He said the CPLP should not wait for Mozambique to ask for help, but should call an urgent meeting. (Lusa 27 July)

The bases and commanders of the insurgents operating in Cabo Delgado are abroad, according to the chief of police, Bernardino Rafael, speaking at the inauguration of a police post in Ressano Garcia. "Those who attack us, burn our houses and destroy the infrastructure are based outside the country." (VOA 29, 30 July)

Although those calling for more war are speaking louder, there is a growing voice coming from those actually researching the war, who are presenting an alternative view. Eric Morier-Genoud, a Mozambique expert at Queen's University Belfast, told VOA (30 July) there is little "evidence that the Islamic State is behind this group, which radicalized its positions in the face of many existing inequalities" in the Muslim-majority province. "The group has approached the Islamic State, but it has little influence yet." The connection between the local militant group and IS "basically has been an exchange of information up to now."

Interveners risk being linked to rights violations and exacerbating the violence

"The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is actively exploring ways to intervene, including some kind of military response. [But] SADC and member countries also risk implicating themselves in these human rights violations committed by Mozambican soldiers. ... The response from Mozambique's security forces has been characterised by coercive tactics and human rights abuses, which risks entrenching local grievances against the state. This is a challenge for any potential regional intervention: a close alignment with the Mozambican state could make it difficult to generate trust among affected communities, which is essential for any kind of peacekeeping effort.," writes Jasmine Opperman in the *Mail & Guardian* (26 July) <https://bit.ly/Opp-MG> She is part of the *Cabo Ligado* team (<http://bit.ly/CaboLigado>) and Africa Analyst at the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED).

And she warns: "There is no doubt that some kind of intervention is necessary, to prevent the situation from spiralling out of control. But caution is required. Walking in blindly – without understanding the complexities at play, and without addressing some of the socio-economic factors that underpin and exacerbate the violence – could make the situation even worse,"

"Protecting people is ultimately what any successful intervention needs to be about. Treating the Cabo Delgado insurgency as just a 'terrorist' threat, and responding only with force, risks feeding the insurgents' propaganda - and is likely to be counterproductive. Instead, as SADC mulls its response, it needs to recognise the many local drivers of discontent in Cabo Delgado - including endemic poverty and neglect by the state - and work to address these at the same time as improving security. Otherwise, no matter how many boots are on the ground, the insurgency is likely to continue unabated," she concludes.

Covid-19: Emergency measures end as cases jump

The state of emergency, decreed on 1 April, expired at midnight on Wednesday 29 July. The constitution limits a state of emergency to a maximum of 120 days, and so Nyusi could not extend it. With the end of the state of emergency, many of the restrictive measures cease to have the force of law – but in his speech to the nation on Wednesday, the President urged people to continue obeying them anyway, as a matter of public health.

Among the measures are the closure of all schools, the closure of bars and places of nocturnal entertainment, a ban on public political, religious, cultural and sporting events that are likely to attract crowds, limitations on the number of people who can attend funerals, and compulsory wearing of masks in most public places. (AIM 30,31 July)

The President must submit a report on the emergency to parliament, and he did this Friday. Parliament's Permanent Commission sent the report to the Constitutional Affairs Commission, and extended the emergency sitting of parliament to consider the report on Tuesday (4 Aug).

Nothing has been said by either the President's office or parliament as to what is to be proposed. After this gap, it would be possible to impose a new State of Emergency.

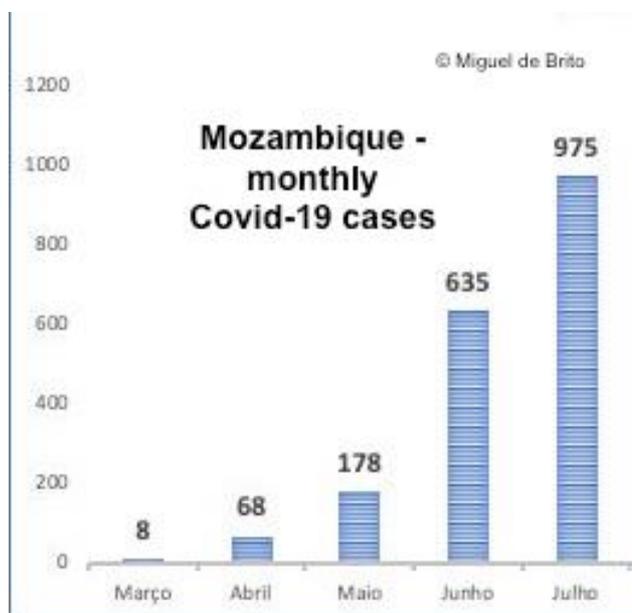
Meanwhile, cases continue to rise, with 975 new cases in July compared to 178 in May. As of Thursday, there has been 1,808 confirmed cases, of which 638 have made a full recovery and 1,157 are active cases. There have been 13 deaths of Covid-19 patients, 11 from the disease, and two from other pathologies.

Geographical distribution of the 1,808 confirmed cases, by province where they were diagnosed, was as follows: nearly all cases in four provinces - Cabo Delgado, 444; Nampula, 408; Maputo city, 352; Maputo province, 340 - and the others - Tete, 49; Inhambane, 47; Sofala, 43; Gaza, 40; Zambézia, 39; Niassa, 29; Manica, 17.

The two biggest mining companies

in Cabo Delgado, Montepuez Ruby Mining (MRM) and Syrah Resources graphite, have shut down, officially due to Covid-19, but also due to the war. MRM has suspended 840 workers for at least six months and Syrah cut more than 400. At least 10 MRM staff have been diagnosed with Covid-19. Kenmare reports at least 5 cases in its Larde, Nampula, heavy sands (titanium) mine. Total's Afungi gas work camp reopened in June after it was closed when dozens of cases were found.

The global economic crisis caused by Covid has also hit mining. Syrah had already planned to reduce mining because global demand for graphite has fallen. Vale stopped mining thermal coal in Moatize, Tete, in June because of a fall in demand, and will not resume this year.



Survey shows many more covid-19 cases

A National Health Institute sample survey in Pemba in early July showed that 2.5% of the city's people had been infected by Covid-19. The population of the city is over 220,000. Thus the survey suggests 5,500 cases. Yet official statistics show only 444 cases in all of Cabo Delgado, and many of those were in the Afungi gas workers camp in Palma. A survey of Nampula city in June showed 5% infected there, but with official figures showing much lower cases.

Officially there have been 1,808 confirmed cases nationally. Yet the Nampula and Pemba surveys suggest that the number must be at least 40,000. And Mozambique reports only 13 deaths and a handful of hospitalisations, which seems incredibly low.

The picture is so different from neighbouring South Africa that it raises questions. Yesterday total cases passed the half million mark there. Khayelitsha in Cape Town has overflowing hospitals and high death rates, yet there are no similar reports in dense neighbourhoods in Mozambican cities. South Africa reports 135 Covid-19 deaths per million population, Mozambique reports 0.4 per million. Does South Africa really have a death rate 400 times that of Mozambique?

Mozambique has a mostly rural population which is less mobile and is young, which would reduce the infection and death rate. Also, most people who die of Covid-19 have underlying illnesses. Perhaps with a high rate of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, when people die at home the cause is assumed to be the underlying condition and the Covid-19 link is simply not mentioned.

The Pemba survey showed the highest percentages of people who had been infected were in three neighbourhoods, all densely packed housing near the beach and where war refugees are landing in small boats: Ingonane (7.3% infected), Carioco (5.5%) and Paquitequete (5.4%).

As well as neighbourhoods, the Health Institute did non-random surveys of key groups and found market traders had the highest rate (6.8% infected), followed by refugees 6.1%, health workers 5.5%, shop workers 5.4%, fishers 5.4% and transport workers 4.8%.

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Important external links

Cabo Delgado civil war weekly report - Zitamar, MediaFax, ACLED - <http://bit.ly/CaboLigado>

Covid-19 daily updated data and graphs <https://covidmoz.netlify.app/>

Previous editions of this newsletter: bit.ly/MozNews2020

Downloadable books: <http://bit.ly/Hanlon-books> Election data: <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>

Other Mozambique material bit.ly/mozamb

Background reading

Special reports

Mozambique heroin transit trade

English - LSE - <http://bit.ly/Moz-heroin>

Portuguese - Pt - CIP - <http://bit.ly/HeroinaPT>

2001 first article - 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

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

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

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

Minimum wage and exchange rates 1996-2018 -- <http://bit.ly/MinWage18>

\$2bn secret debt - in English

Kroll - Full report on \$2bn debt - <http://bit.ly/Kroll-Moz-full>

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

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 newsletters are on <http://bit.ly/2H066Kg>

Eight books by Joseph Hanlon can be downloaded, free: <http://bit.ly/Hanlon-books>

Bangladesh confronts climate change (2016)

Chickens and beer: A recipe for agricultural growth in Mozambique (2014)

Há Mais Bicicletas – mas há desenvolvimento? (2008)

Moçambique e as grandes cheias de 2000 (2001)

Paz Sem Benefício: Como o FMI Bloqueia a Reconstrução (1997)

Peace Without Profit: How the IMF Blocks Rebuilding (1996)

Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots (1991)

Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire (1984)

Two more will be available shortly to download:

Apartheid's 2nd Front (1986)

Mozambique and the Great Flood of 2000

These are still available for sale:

Galinhas e cerveja: uma receita para o crescimento (2014) (free in English)

Zimbabwe takes back its land (2013)

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: <http://clubofmozambique.com/>

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

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

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

Mozambique media websites, Portuguese:

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/>

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