

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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The media

Canal de Moçambique editor wins press freedom award

Matías Guente executive editor of *Canal de Moçambique*, is one of four journalists to be awarded the [2021 International Press Freedom Awards](#) for "brave, courageous journalists," the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) announced 15 June.

In August 2020 the newspaper's office was firebombed, destroying the newsroom, furniture, the outlet's archives, and all the equipment used to produce content. "But Guente and his team refused to be cowed. The next day, the staff set up an open-air newsroom outside the office to produce that week's edition of the newspaper. The headline on the front page that week was 'We will not bow to fire'," said CPJ.

"In July 2020, Guente was interrogated by local officials and charged with violation of state secrecy and conspiracy against the state. Those charges were later dropped due to the lack of evidence against him, but local officials made clear that they could be reintroduced. In December 2019, unidentified assailants beat Guente and attempted to kidnap him."

"The attacks on Guente are indicative of an alarming deterioration of press freedom in the country. By honouring him with an award, CPJ is shining a light on the intimidation of journalists seeking to cover subjects seen as sensitive by authorities, including alleged corruption, human rights issues, and the conflict in the country's northern Cabo Delgado province."

Three other three journalists honoured are from Belarus, Guatemala and Myanmar.

Journalist Ibraimo Abú Mbaruco was number 1 on the “10 Most Urgent” press freedom cases [issued by the One Free Press Coalition](#) on Press Freedom Day, 3 May. On 7 April 2020, the Palma, Cabo Delgado, community radio journalist sent a text message to a colleague saying he was “surrounded by soldiers.” He has never been seen since and there is no information about his whereabouts. The journalist’s brother, Juma Abú Mbaruco, said that the family had received no information about the journalist’s whereabouts, and did not know if he was still alive.

Zitamar reported at the time that several residents of the town also went missing on the same day, and were believed to have been abducted by security forces. *Zitamar* editor Tom Bowker has since been expelled from Mozambique, apparently because of his reporting of Cabo Delgado.

Mbaruco also worked as a human rights advocate and was part of the Sekelekani network, a local civil society organization that trains people to become citizen journalists. The One Free Press Coalition is comprised of 33 prominent international members including Al Jazeera, Associated Press, Bloomberg, Financial Times and Forbes.

Government is trying to intimidate journalists, MISA-Mozambique said on 14 June. “In recent weeks, written and verbal statements have been issued by public entities, especially those linked to the Defence and Security sector, which assume the character of veiled threats against journalists”, said the Mozambique chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA-Mozambique).

The organization adds that “in some cases it is intended to suggest a lack of professionalism and responsibility in covering the current war in Cabo Delgado”. MISA-Mozambique says that “these statements arise in a context in which actions aimed at limiting the work of journalists in Cabo Delgado were recorded, with the imposition, at times, of restrictions that constitute an interference with the normal work of journalists, in clear violation of the principles of press freedom”.

CIP journalists expose prison prostitution, forcing suspensions and investigation commission

Prison guards force women prisoners to leave a prison for prostitution. The guards receive cash payments of \$50 up to \$500 for each inmate who is delivered to a client. The inmates used in the prostitution network receive privileged treatment in the prison. Those who refuse to join the network are tortured and do not receive enough food, and most end up yielding. The guards themselves also demand sex with inmates they find attractive

The scandal was revealed in an [excellent piece of investigative journalism by CIP](#) (Public Integrity Centre, Centro de Integridade Pública) published 16 June. CIP reporters paid the prison guards for inmates, but when they were delivered, interviewed them. Former prisoners were also interviewed. The detailed report in English with pictures is on <https://bit.ly/CIP-Prison>

The report had an immediate impact. Justice Minister Helena Kida suspended the entire management of the Maputo Special Penitentiary for Women (EPEMM), better known as the Ndlavela Women’s Prison, within hours of the release of the report. Kida also established an investigation commission.

Kida said she would head the commission herself, but this brought a backlash. CIP argued it could not be independent if she was involved. So former Attorney-General Sinai Nhatitima, has been appointed to head the ten-member Commission of Inquiry. Four members have been appointed by the Justice Ministry. The other members are Raul Afonso of the National Criminal Investigation Service (Sernic), Rosa White of the National Human Rights Commission, Firoza Zacarias of the Mozambican Bar Association (OAM), Eularia Ofumane of the Association of Women Jurists, and Maria Sabata representing the Anglican Church. (AIM 16, 22 June)

Prisoners released for sex at Chimoio prison: In the opposite to Maputo, prisoners at the Penitenciária Regional Centro de Manica, known as “Cabeça do Velho” after the nearby mountain, pay guards \$50 to \$80 to be released at night to go to prostitutes or their family. The racket was exposed recently when one prisoner did not return. (*Carta de Moçambique* 21 June)

“Violence against girls at school is structural, in the sense that it is not a matter of isolated acts of aggression, but constant violent and discriminatory relations in the institution,” the Women’s Observatory, a civil society organisation, said on 8 June. Sisters of various religious orders in Nampula have condemned the behaviour of teachers who sexually harass their female students. In an interview with Rádio Encontro (27 May), the sisters said that they had knowledge of teachers who regularly solicit their students without fear of consequences. The sisters say that the most vulnerable are girls from economically disadvantaged families, who perpetrators target because they have no voice.

Arrests confirm police involved in kidnapping

An agent of the National Criminal Investigation Service (Sernic), and a policeman stationed at the Maputo City Police Command, were arrested when police freed a 31 year old businessman of Indian origin, Kapil Rajas, on 14 June. (AIM 19 June)

Rajas was kidnapped and taken to a house in the Maputo neighbourhood of Mahotas. The gang demanded that the victim’s family pay a ransom of \$600,000. No money was paid because the police acted speedily, and raided the house, setting Rajas free. They arrested three of the kidnapers, all Mozambicans, on the spot, and two turned out to be police. Later in the day, the police picked up two other people, both Indian citizens, believed to be the men who had ordered the kidnapping.

Twelve people have been kidnapped so far this year, in Maputo, Matola, Beira, Chimoio and Quelimane.

Police and GardaWorld security convicted of facilitating artisanal ruby mining

Three police officers, three men from the private security company GardaWorld, and one Montepuez Ruby Mining (MRM) security official were convicted of working together to facilitate illegal ruby mining, MRM reports. One of the GardaWorld men did not attend the trial and was tried in absentia. The seven men were fined \$2,700 each and must each pay \$800 to MRM.

Thousands of people were pushed off the 33,600 hectare (336 sq km, a block 18 km on each side) mine zone when it was granted to Frelimo Political Commission member Raimundo Pachinuapa. It has remained a zone of conflict ever since, and is so large that it is impossible to properly secure, in an area of high poverty.

The Cabo Delgado civil war

Talk to insurgents says MEP

“Paths for dialogue” with the insurgents must be found, said Isabel Santos on 17 June after a visit to Cabo Delgado. The Portuguese Socialist Party Member of the European Parliament (MEP) said “ways can be found for dialogue and recovery.”

"There are those who speak of a faceless reality, [but] there are also those who speak of faces identified in some videos and in material circulating on social networks. It is necessary to start from there," she said.

According to Isabel Santos, many of the young people who make up the rebels' ranks "didn't find an answer that would give them an expectation of the future, due to lack of training and employment. ... We have to break this cycle". (Lusa 17 June)

France to end Sahel intervention

French President Emmanuel Macron announced the end of France's anti-Islamist Operation Barkhane in the Sahel on 10 June. France intervened in the Sahel in 2013 but the insurgent campaign increased and they are now in control of vast swathes of territory. France sent in more troops last year (2020), but they were unsuccessful. France currently has 5,100 troops in the Sahel region, which stretches across Africa under the Sahara desert encompassing Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. (France24, 10 June, 15 February)

[France24](#) noted "At a summit in the French city of Pau last year, G5 Sahel leaders agreed to step up military cooperation to tackle the threat. 'We have no choice. We need results,' said Macron at the end of the January 2020 summit. But some experts believe there is a choice between focusing on a solely military strategy or viewing it as a component of a strategy that includes governance, political representation, fiscal reforms, anti-corruption as well as human rights issues."

The French failure in the Sahel involvement since 2013 must raise questions about French willingness to send troops to Cabo Delgado to protect the Total installations. Security experts raise the same issues about a largely military response in Cabo Delgado. Macron's position is further complicated because he said that France could not work with governments in the Sahel that continue to negotiate with Islamist militants. Yet it is widely accepted that civil wars usually end with negotiations with the insurgents and that will be essential in Cabo Delgado.

['War on Terror': Are big military deployments over?](#) is an interesting analysis by Frank Gardner, BBC security correspondent (BBC, 20 June). Commenting on the French pull-out, he suggests the era of thousands of boots on the ground may be over because they are vulnerable and the cost in blood and money is too high.

Gardner notes: "Trends emerging from recent conflicts have prompted a radical rethink in strategic priorities. The brief war in the Caucasus between Azerbaijan and Armenia saw the latter's tanks getting decimated by cheap, unmanned, armed drones supplied by Turkey and directed to their targets at almost no risk to the operators." And, citing Mozambique, he notes that mercenaries "have been making a comeback."

There was talk some months ago of a possible rapid response base on the island of Vamizi, just off the coast of the Afungi peninsula. It would control drone warfare and have a rapid response team that could be helicoptered in quickly. That could create the security zone demanded by Total. Possible?

A possible lesson from history

In 1935, at the depth of the Great Depression, there was mass unemployment in the United States, and the elite worried that the might be a communist insurrection. US President Franklin D Roosevelt (FDR) launched the Works Progress Administration to create jobs. By 1938 it employed 3,3 million people, 2.5% of the entire US population. Most of the jobs were building public infrastructure of the US, such as parks, schools and roads, and planting 3 billion trees. Education levels were low in the US then and the WPA provided it's workers with basic education and skills training, which proved to be important for the industrialisation for the Second World War.

The WPA was a massive success. FDR was re-elected three times. There was no insurrection and essential buildings and roads were built across the country.

The WPA paid all workers the minimum wage and only one person from a family with no job could be employed by WPA. Combined with the huge number of jobs available, this reduced corruption.

There are lessons for Cabo Delgado where unemployment has already created an insurrection. The current population of Cabo Delgado is 2.5 mn of whom 700,000 are displaced. The WPA created jobs for 2.5% of the US population at its peak; 2.5% of the Cabo Delgado population would provide 60,000 jobs.

Preference might be given to war displaced people and to insurgents seeking amnesty. There are probably only 3000 insurgents and it appears most would accept jobs and training. Projects could start outside the war zone, but they could also involve rebuilding towns such as Macomia and Quissanga destroyed by insurgents but now back in government hands.

The US showed 85 years ago that it is possible. The US says it wants to help end the insurgency in Cabo Delgado, and its own WPA is the model of how to do it. Would the US, EU and World Bank back a Mozambican WPA, and move fast enough to create jobs quickly? Could Frelimo understand that a successful WPA would make them popular again?

Can Mozambique learn a lesson from history?

US views on roots of war are divided. It appears that some in the United States administration do not support the policy priority on the Cabo Delgado war as external IS terrorism. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, US ambassador to the UN, was asked by journalists 18 May what she saw as the way to address the root causes of the war. She replied that it is "making sure that central government reaches those communities [so that those communities don't feel isolated from the central government](#)," and therefore more susceptible to insurgent movements. It is about addressing the development needs of communities. she said.

Reports and analysis - Cabo Delgado

Especially since the Palma attacks, the Cabo Delgado civil war has become a global issue. We will try to keep up with the publication explosion.

Do money and power explain Maputo's aversion to SADC support?

[Institute for Security Studies \(Pretoria\)](#), 18 June. "Interviews conducted in Mozambique reveal a perception among the political elite that SADC's involvement could represent a greater threat to the regime - and the elites themselves - than the insurgency happening 2 000 km from the capital, Maputo," argues ISS. "Frelimo's leadership has developed and maintained its grip on power through a strategy of extraversion. This sees the ruling elites siphoning off the fees generated by international aid and foreign direct investment for their enrichment at the expense of the country's intended beneficiaries."

"Maputo's political elite don't see SADC as a partner but as an adversary in raising funds for the insurgency response. A regional military intervention might improve security in Cabo Delgado but would interfere with Mozambique's direct access to its traditional donors if they chose to channel aid through SADC."

"Some in Maputo could see the Cabo Delgado war and the ensuing humanitarian crisis as a chance to continue receiving large sums of foreign aid – and possibly even increase the amount. The recent request for European Union help and the mobilisation of \$764 million from multilateral partners to finance the Integrated Northern Development Agency are likely part of Mozambique's strategy of extraversion."

Also, "Certain conservative Frelimo factions believe that any foreign military assistance in Cabo Delgado could erode the party's legitimacy and image and threaten the regime's survival."

Cabo Delgado: "Pior cenário é Moçambique transformar-se no Afeganistão", Esquerda (20 June). [Interview with the editor of this newsletter](#), Joseph Hanlon, with links to a range of other material. Mariana Carneiro has been doing a regular [series of interesting interviews](#) with knowledgeable people on the Cabo Delgado war. (Portuguese only)

Mariana Carneiro has just (10 June) told her own story [Filha da Guerra](#) about growing up with her father, who in the colonial army was badly wounded and disabled in Montepuez. He became part of the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) that overthrew the fascist government in Portugal on 25 April 1974, largely to stop the colonial wars. Growing up with a father who was haunted by the horrors of the colonial war and thus fought for progressive change. (Portuguese only) At a time when the UK, Portugal and other former empires are trying to rewrite history to claim that colonialism was not all that bad, it is important to remember the horrors of colonialism on both sides.

The Council of Europe told Portugal that it must do more to confront its colonial past, and role in the slave trade. (Reuters 24 March) "Further efforts are necessary for Portugal to come to terms with past human rights violations to tackle racist biases against people of African descent inherited from a colonial past and historical slave trade," the Council of Europe said in its yearly report on Portugal, urging Lisbon to rethink how it teaches its colonial history.

Portuguese ships carried 6 million slaves across the Atlantic. This is the origin of the common Portuguese expression "para inglês ver" (for the English to see) which means to pretend to do something. In 1807 Britain prohibited the slave trade, and in 1831 Brazil, under British pressure, passed a law banning the slave trade. But it was only a law "para inglês ver". Slavery was only ended in 1988, 50 years later, and the Portuguese-Brazil slave trade continued for decades after 1831. The slave trade in northern Mozambique continued into the early 20th century.

[Other reports and analysis](#)

Navigating Socialist Encounters: Moorings and (Dis)Entanglements between Africa and East Germany during the Cold War. A new [open access book](#) with five chapters relating to Mozambican workers in the former GDR (East Germany).

[Mining](#)

Two Vale protestors were shot by riot police and wounded on 7 May. This is part of a two-decade-long dispute in which 836 local brickmakers say their access to their workshop and the river has been cut off by Vale, without compensation or alternative employment. Farmers had joined the protest saying they could not get to the river to collect water.

The brickmakers blockaded the mine headquarters on 5 May and government representatives promised a meeting two days later. But when the brickmakers arrived, they were met by the riot police. (Lusa 12 May, Zitamar 13 May)

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[Important external links](#)

Covid-19 daily updated data <https://www.facebook.com/miguel.de.brito1> and <https://covid19.ins.gov.mz/documentos-em-pdf/boletins-diarios/>

Daily flood and monthly dry season reports - <http://bit.ly/Moz-flood21>
Cyclone trackers, <https://www.cyclocane.com/> and <https://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/jtwc.html>
Cabo Ligado weekly report on civil war <http://bit.ly/CaboLigado>
Previous editions of this newsletter: <http://bit.ly/MozNews2021> and bit.ly/MozNews2020
Downloadable books: <http://bit.ly/Hanlon-books> Election data: <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>
My Mozambique archive: <http://bit.ly/Mozamb>

Cabo Delgado

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>

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
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>
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>

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>

Nine 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) is on <https://bit.ly/Chickens-Beer>
Há Mais Bicicletas – mas há desenvolvimento? (2008)
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)
Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots (1991)
Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire (1984)
Apartheid's 2nd Front (1986) <available shortly>

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)
Beggars 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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