

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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Comment

Will rebuilding lay the foundations of the next war?

Five years ago, poorly educated young men selling goods by the side of the road watched the big 4x4s drive past. Inside the cars were foreigners and people from Maputo on their way to work on the gas project. And the local young men in Mocimboa da Praia realised they would never get the promised training or jobs. And they were right. Anadarko briefed bankers that they needed skilled, experienced workers to get the job done well and quickly, so they planned to bring in 15,000 workers from the Philippines. The local young men saw no other way to get a job than to join the insurgency. The result is five destroyed district capitals.

The fortunes of war have shifted, and four of the district capitals are back in government hands. And the pressure is on - to rebuild quickly and turn these towns into showpieces. Millions of dollars will be spent. Rebuilding Mocimboa da Praia is estimated to cost \$8 mn. Already agencies are putting their names on towns. UNDP (UN Development Programme) is starting in Macomia. The government's own northern development agency, ADIN, with World Bank money and headed by dynamic minister Celso Correia, is taking Palma. UNDP said that local labour will be prioritised for jobs on the project. But how many local skilled carpenters, bricklayers, supervisors, accountants, and so on are there in Macomia or Palma? How many local companies can satisfy the bureaucracy and other requirements and certificates demanded by the World Bank and UN agencies?

Perhaps local labour can dig holes and direct traffic. But the managers and contractors will come from the companies that know how to win aid contracts. And the project managers will be paid high salaries because they are working in difficult conditions. Skilled labour will come from Maputo or abroad. Of course, Frelimo will expect a say on who gets jobs and contracts.

Shades of Mocimboa de Praia five years ago.

It could be different. What would happen if all contracts required three-quarters of the workforce to be Mwani speakers aged between 18 and 30? And that this group worked on the project for half the day and then went to school for the other half day to learn mathematics and Portuguese? And that the contractor had to provide an apprenticeship standard of training?

It would transform the war zone, giving thousands of young people jobs and training. People with a future who would not see the insurgents as their only alternative.

But of course it is a dream. Donors and their subcontractors want quick results and nice pictures to show their paymasters. Frelimo wants a big share of jobs and contracts. And when Total returns, protected by Rwandan troops in a security bubble, it will want to move as quickly as possible to sell as much gas as possible before the worsening climate emergency curbs gas sales.

Poorly educated young people sitting beside the road watching the 4x4s go by with foreigners and people from Maputo will know reconstruction does not benefit them. Again the insurgents will be the only choice. But by then embassy, aid, and contractor staff will have moved to other postings outside Mozambique. Frelimo cadres will have been promoted to jobs outside Cabo Delgado. And the profits to any Mozambican companies involved will have flown to Maputo. Of course, there will be all the rhetoric about local jobs and contracts - but that will be overtaken by the urgency of reconstruction.

Government could force thousands of real local jobs and training that would transform the war zone. But government's goal is military victory, rapid aid-funded reconstruction, and the largest possible share of that money going to Frelimo. *jh*

Rwanda confirms it will guard gas zone

["We will be focusing on Palma, and Mocimboa de Praia"](#) as the major districts of our attention," Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) spokesperson Col. Ronald Rwivanga told *New Times* (Rwanda, 17 Aug) "According to the arrangement, each of the forces deployed in Mozambique have designated sectors of responsibility. SADC currently is the southern districts of Pemba, [and] they will go to Mueda," he added, effectively keeping SADC far from the fighting.

Asked if the insurgents might adopt guerrilla warfare and use the dense forests, Rwivanga replied: "Yeah, why not. We have forests here [in Rwanda], we operate in forests every other day, so we are ready for that."

MediaFax (18 Aug) reports that Rwandan forces are moving south toward the forest base of Mbau, and are facing "intense combat". The BBC (17 Aug) reports "aerial bombardment of the region which is thickly wooded and hard to access".

The Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Standby Force Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) will operate in Macomia, Muidumbe, Mueda, Nangade, and Quissanga districts, but they have not started yet and are still setting up their bases, said Defence Minister Jaime Neto, on 17 Aug. (AIM 18 Aug). "I believe that very soon the SADC offensive will start."

Neto also suggested that the official three month timescale for the SADC mission is much too short. The need for outside support will only end after serious investment in re-equipping, training and modernising the armed forces, which he said had not received any relevant investment in the last 20 years. (*MediaFax* 19 Aug)

[By the editor](#)

Ignoring the Roots of Mozambique's War in a Push for Military Victory, by Joseph Hanlon, to be published in *Conflict Trends* (2021, Issue 2), the journal of The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). <https://bit.ly/Ignore-Roots-jh>

The paper notes similarities between the current civil war and the liberation war, and stresses that "the roots of the Cabo Delgado civil war involve a complex mix of history, ethnicity, and religion, and the war has been fuelled by poverty, growing inequality, and the resource curse." It also notes

that "coastal Cabo Delgado and Nampula have a history of violence against local elites." And the paper points out that "studies of civil wars repeatedly point to group inequality and natural resource rents as central to the wars. Any definitive resolution to the war requires responding to the grievances. Thus far, Mozambique has singularly failed even to recognise the grievances."

Comment: Lesson from Afghanistan - guerrillas melt away and regroup

The fall of Afghanistan should cause shivers in Mozambique, because it makes so clear the difficulty of defeating a guerrilla movement militarily. An excellent article in the *New Yorker* (13 Aug) "[The return of the Taliban](#)" notes "their comeback has taken 20 years, but it is a classic example of a successful guerrilla war of attrition." Jon Lee Anderson concludes: **"the truth is that they [the Taliban] were never really beaten. They merely did what guerrillas do in order to survive: they melted away in the face of overwhelming force, regrouped and restored themselves to fighting strength, and returned to battle. "**

Finally, those with long memories will realise that this is a long term victory for the US, because the US effectively created the Taliban. The US created an Islamic jihadi force to fight the Russian in the 1980s, when the USSR controlled Afghanistan. Some of those militants became the Taliban. "[The Taliban blowback](#)" is the title of an excellent 2008 article in the London *Guardian*.

Quotes:

"The enemy is Mozambican, is a person who was born among us, who played football with us, who studied with us and who, at a certain point, became radicalised and explored the social contradictions existing in Mozambican society," [said OMR's João Feijó in a DW interview](#) (17 Aug) **"What matters is demystifying the idea that the enemy has no face."**

He adds: "We see power, not as a relationship, not as a space in which we have to negotiate, but as something we have to possess. We look at the possibility of making concessions as a sign of weakness. Hence, when we have this arrogant political culture, it becomes difficult to enter a negotiation space, because we already enter the space with a dominant attitude. I think this can be a lesson not only for the Government of Mozambique, but for society as a whole."

"There is no possibility" of talking to the insurgents, Governor Valige Tauabo told Lusa (18 Aug). "The terrorist is in the bush and we have no contacts: not even to be able to dialogue and know who he is or what he wants". He also claimed that the constant changes in the nature of the insurgent groups makes it difficult to understand their motivations, ruling out the possibility of dialogue.

"I was a guerrilla fighter and I know that the state and the security forces must be very careful, because when a guerrilla leaves a place he will settle in another place," Renamo leader Ossufo Momade told Lusa (17 Aug) He noted that the reoccupation of Mocímboa da Praia by government forces without much resistance could be a sign that the insurgents had strategically withdrawn and would open new bases.

Experts warned that the insurgents "have very good information" and so withdrew from Mocímboa da Praia before Mozambican and Rwandan troops arrived, keeping their forces "intact". Lusa 15 Aug.

"I was the acting ambassador in Liberia in mid-1990, as the rebels closed in on the capitol" and became "someone who was in charge of an embassy during a major evacuation", write [Denis Jett, former US ambassador to Mozambique](#), in an 18 August blog. "The corrupt, incompetent government at least held together enough to have some territory still under its power even though it was only a few square blocks of downtown Monrovia. The Liberian army, after years of American military training and hundreds of millions in military assistance, had

been brutal in their treatment of civilians and performed miserably when confronting the insurgents."

That sounds depressingly familiar to Mozambique.

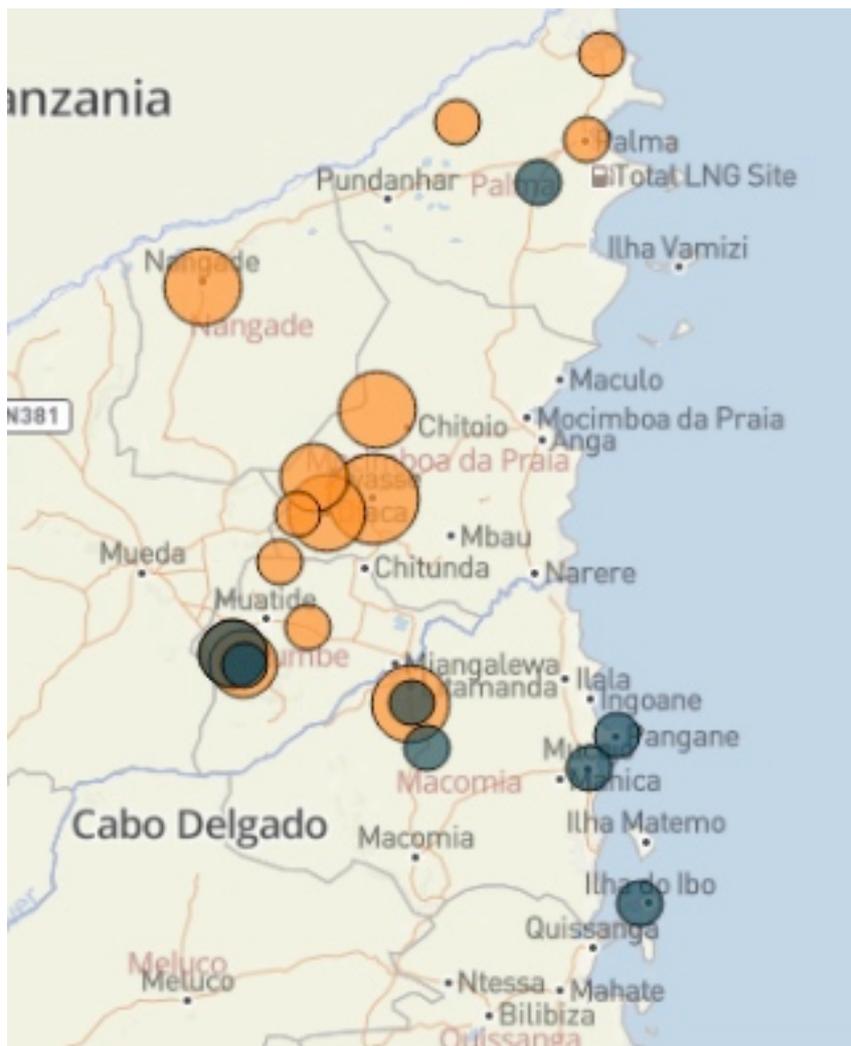
Comment: Jett was US ambassador to Mozambique 1993-6, chief of mission in Liberia 1989-91, and Deputy Chief of Mission (and Chargé for two years) in Malawi 1986-89. In 1995 Jett banned embassy and USAID personnel in Maputo from talking to me, so we have a history. Jett was in two key posts. He was in charge in Malawi just when South Africa was using Malawi as base to push Renamo guerrillas into Mozambique, escalating the war. The Renamo war was a US cold war proxy war and South African support for Renamo had clear US backing. And he was ambassador in Mozambique just at the end of the Cold War, when the US was imposing "shock therapy" on Russia, eastern Europe, and Mozambique in attempt to rapidly turn socialists into capitalists. In all those countries, shock therapy and the imposition of neo-liberalism did immense harm, creating oligarchs, widespread corruption, and poverty - as well as huge spaces for large western corporations. The US did massive damage in Mozambique when Jett was in charge, and the resource curse is a direct result. Dennis Jett is now Professor of International Affairs, Penn State School of International Affairs, and I wonder what he tells his students about his Mozambique experience. *jh*

Evidence of breaking into small groups

Cabo Ligado now publishes both weekly and monthly bulletins, with the best detailed reporting of the war (working with *Zitamar* and *MediaFax*). The monthly has a good map of all incidents during the month. The map below

is for 1-30 July. Orange dots are battles, black dots are violence against civilians. Larger circles indicate more than one incident. The cluster of battles in the centre is the Rwandans retaking the Awasse road junction. The move east to take Mocimboa da Praia is not on the map as it happened in the first week of August. (To subscribe, free, go to <https://www.caboligado.com/> and there is a mailing list form at the bottom of the home page.)

What is notable is the wide spread of incidents, which indicates that the insurgents were already working in smaller groups. Notable were battles and attacks in Muidumbe and Macomia districts, and along the coast of Macomia and Ibo.



Battles (orange) and attacks (black) 1-30 July 2021, *CaboLigado*

In the first two weeks of August, sporadic fighting has continued across the war zone, beyond the area around Mocimboa da Praia area which was recaptured on 3 August.

CaboLigado (17 Aug) reports that on 10 August, Mozambican helicopters fired on and killed two people who ran from them on the road near Mucojo, Macomia district. The two turned out to be civilians on the way to Mucojo to fish. The same day, state security forces arrested and beat a man in Rueia, near Mucojo, who said he was trying to travel to the coast to fish.

Nangade district near the Tanzania border has continued as a centre of fighting. Insurgents riding motorbikes attacked at least four towns and set houses on fire and shot at civilians in Mandimba, Chacamba, Nune, and Quissama villages between 4 and 8 August. On 14 August, there was a clash between insurgents and Mozambican troops at Chicuaia Velha in Nangade district. Sources variously suggest that Tanzania, Botswana or Rwanda troops involved. *MediaFax* today (19 Aug) reports that two government helicopters were "bombing" near the village of Litingina, 20 km from Nangade town, on 18 August.

Other Cabo Delgado

Support for internally displaced is underfunded and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) needs another \$58 mn, said IOM director António Vitorino on a visit to Metuge, across the bay from Pemba, which hosts 125,000 war displaced. (BBC 18 Aug) Although not mentioned in the report, Vitorino will also have been trying to negotiate better access. A major complaint from international agencies is that Frelimo wants to control aid to displaced people. World Food Programme has been allowed to start flying food to Macomia (*MediaFax* 19 Aug), but is notably quiet about who distributes the food delivered by the planes.

War displaced people are no longer arriving in Pemba. Six or more boats per day were arriving at Paquitequete beach, the only permitted landing point, but recently this has stopped. (*O Pais* 18 Aug)

What can SADC mission do to help fight Mozambican insurgency? An analysis by Borges Nhamire on News24 (18 Aug). "The Rwandan military presence in Cabo Delgado has seemingly changed the balance of powers in the conflict," notes Nhamire. "At the political level, SADC can be useful in persuading Maputo to fight the insurgency beyond the security perimeter of Afungi, the future gas city. Since the beginning of the terrorist attacks in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique has shown little ability or even interest in protecting local communities that were killed by insurgents and their homes and livelihoods set on fire. Rather, the government has channelled all the best-trained military and police units and means available to protect Total's gas exploration site.

"It will be necessary for SADC leaders to tell their counterparts in Maputo that the security issue in Cabo Delgado goes far beyond the protection of natural gas exploration and processing fields. They need to emphasise that it is necessary to protect the local populations and their properties and eliminate the terrorist threat to allow the resumption of life in the region."

Fake attribution and fake photos: The Palma map captured in Mocimboa da Praia and published here in the previous issue was first shown on STV news in Mozambique in a direct report from Mocimboa on the night of 12 August, and can be seen on <http://videos.sapo.pt/ZCvncVee9vZ5KNqaMgid?t=0h51m0s>. This was presented by Nuno Rogeiro on his Portuguese TV show and his Facebook page without credit, and is actually a photo of the STV presentation. Earlier, he presented photos claiming to be of weapons captured in Awasse which in fact come from BurkinaFaso <https://twitter.com/LGalrao/status/1425427516190302209>. This is not the first time he has been shown to be using fake photographs in his reports on the Cabo Delgado war.

Follow up

The 20th anniversary of the murder of Siba-Siba Macuacua was on 11 August. He was the head of banking supervision as the Bank of Mozambique (BdM) and was put in to clean up the mess at Banco Austral, which has been corruptly privatised and gave bad loans to senior Frelimo figures. Siba-Siba was thrown down stairwell from the 14th floor of the bank building in the baixa.

No one has been charged or tried, and the main suspect for the murder, a senior Frelimo figure, goes about his business as if nothing happened. Marcelo Mosse noted in *Carta de Moçambique* (11 Aug) that "at the time, the BdM Governor, who sent Siba Siba to temporarily manage the Austral Bank, was Adriano Maleiane, now Minister of Economy and Finance. Luísa Diogo was the Minister of Planning and Finance. She was decisive in cleaning up the bank, after a forensic audit, forced by donors, which revealed damaging management at Austral, which was never taken to court. Diogo is now PCA of ABSA."

Justice Minister Helena Kida changed her mind that it was a good idea to have senior staff with experience of prison, after reports in *Carta de Moçambique* (9, 11, 18 Aug, also reported here 15 Aug). Herminia Nhamundze and Ramos Zambuco were appointed on 5 August to head two major prisons; both were in prison after being arrested in 2019 and charged with helping the 2014 escape of Nini Satar, who murdered journalist Carlos Cardoso. Both were dismissed on 17 August, after just 12 days on the job.

Also dismissed is Alfredo Pires, recently appointed National Director of Administration and Finance, who turns out to be under criminal investigation in Inhambane on suspicion of embezzlement and loan sharking. But National Director of Human Rights Cláudio Mate is still in post, despite being jailed for six months for domestic violence.

Updated link with Justiça Ambiental documents on Mphanda Nkuwa -

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WLI0jNf0VwNtRznADEibRxX7BfHzC4F8?usp=sharing> JAI!
is on <https://justica-ambiental.org/>

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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 <https://www.caboligado.com/>

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/HeroínaPT>

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)

Beggar 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).

To subscribe to all CDD publications: <http://eepurl.com/gO9I6v> (English or Portuguese).

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