

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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No quick return to Afungi gas project, as Total CEO puts pressure on Nyusi

TotalEnergies Patrick Pouyanne on Friday 3 February visited Palma and Mocimba da Praia towns and the Afungi gas site and then met President Filipe Nyusi in Pemba. Pouyanne's message was hard, and he named an eminent French humanitarian and intellectual, Jean-Christophe Rufin, to work with the Mozambicans.

"Since 2021, the situation in Cabo Delgado province has improved significantly, thanks in particular to the support provided by the African countries that committed themselves to restore peace and security," said Pouyanne. However "The lifting of the force majeure and the resumption of activities at the Mozambique LNG project site require, in particular, the restoration of security in the region, the resumption of public services and the return to normal life for the people of the region. The mission entrusted to Jean-Christophe Rufin should enable Mozambique LNG's partners to assess whether the current situation allows for a resumption of activities while respecting human rights." He must report by the end of February. <https://totalenergies.com/media/news/press-releases/mozambique-lng-totalenergies-entrusts-jean-christophe-rufin-independent>

The choice of Rufin is very interesting in several respects. He is a doctor and was Vice President of Medecins Sans Frontières, President of Action Against Hunger, advisor to the French Minister of Defence in charge of peacekeeping operations from 1993 to 1994, and French Ambassador to Senegal and Gambia. Most importantly, he knows both war and humanitarianism, and could negotiate a resumption of the gas while the war continues, but under strict conditions.

Rufin is also a novelist and one of his novels will give him a special understanding of the Mozambican leadership today. The book is *The Dream Maker* about Jacques Coeur, the 15th century *argentier* or royal bursar to Charles VII, charged with providing goods, especially luxury goods, to the royal household. <https://h-france.net/fffh/maybe-missed/the-making-of-a-modern-man-jean-christophe-rufins-jacques-coeur/>

A review notes that Rufin casts Coeur as "essentially a modern man inserted into the fifteenth century who rejects contemporary value systems for a new understanding of the power of money and commerce to reorder human relations." He uses his power to gain control of trade and become France's wealthiest man in a "world of princes and lords, the men who had brought the country to a state of ruin." Rufin should find Mozambique's political and economic elite surprisingly similar to his

research for this novel.

Rufin has a huge challenge. First he must negotiate to bend the lesser economic powers of Mozambique to the will of the stronger economic power of Total. But from his humanitarian background, he will know he must convince Mozambique's "princes and lords" to allow more of the wealth and power to trickle down to the poor local residents,.

He may have a long way to go in his month to crack Mozambican beliefs in their own myths, particularly about the possibility of a military victory. The official statement of the Mineral and Energy Ministry (3 Feb) quoted the first part of Pouyanne's statement, about the Rwandan effectiveness in improving the war situation, but did not quote the rest of the statement setting out the difficult conditions for normality and security. Yet again it gives the false impression that TotalEnergies thinks there is a military solution.

Nevertheless Pouyanne's and Rufin's influence may have already been behind President Nyusi's admission on the same day as the visit.

A first step to negotiations?

Nyusi says insurgency head is Mozambican

The leader of the insurgents is a Mozambican national named Abu Sorraca, also known as Bin Omar, President Filipe Nyusi told diplomats at a reception on Thursday (3 Feb). Abu Sorraca, he said, "is assisted by foreign citizens and we have the names of Tanzanians who are with him".

In effect, Nyusi is confirming that this is a local war, led by named, identifiable and locally known people. Researchers have been reporting this for some time but Frelimo denied it.

Swahili speaking coastal people in Tanzania and Mozambique have family links going back more than a century. People on the other side of the ignored border are not considered foreigners.

This is a dramatic change in the official line, which previously was that leaders were faceless and nameless, and thus there could be no negotiation because they could not identify people to talk to. There were also attempts to blame some foreign hidden hand - never named but IS was called to mind.

Some in Frelimo have been calling for negotiations, and former President Joaquim Chissano has been involved in back channel discussions and making contacts important for negotiations.

Nyusi's dramatic change to admitting that this is a local war opens the way for more of these back channel contacts and possible peace talks.

History matters

Frelimo has always been allergic to too much local power, argues Lourenço do Rosario

President Filipe Nyusi has recently questioned whether there should be elected local government in the districts as required by the constitution. And there are now questions about the decision five years ago to name centrally appointed secretaries of state to keep tabs on locally elected governors and mayors, which is inevitably creating conflicts.

For historic reasons, "Frelimo does not deal well with local power," argues Lourenço do Rosario, rector of the largest private university, Universidade Politecnica, in a long interview in *Savana* (3 Feb). "During the armed struggle, when the first liberated zones were created, we also saw the first crises within the movement," including assassinations and people fleeing the movement. One of

the causes of these crises was the governance of the liberated zones. From that time the party has wanted to control local government and it "has always been allergic to too much decentralised local power."

It was the late Renamo head Afonso Dhlakama who put elected local leaders back on the agenda. As a former traditional local leader, he understood that local power and elected governors would give Renamo power in those provinces where it gained a majority. In negotiations with President Nyusi, Dhlakama forced the acceptance of elected governors and the promise in the constitution of district elections next year. But many in Frelimo continue to resist.

Personal view

The US is spending \$2 trillion on a green new deal, doing everything the IMF says is not allowed in Mozambique. This shows the real IMF goal is recolonisation, not development

In the past two years the US Congress has made \$2trn (mn mn) available "to reshape the economy. The idea is that, with government action, America can reindustrialise itself, bolster national security, revive left-behind places, cheer up blue-collar workers and dramatically reduce its carbon emissions all at the same time," writes the *Economist* (2 Feb 2023)

This violates just about everything in the IMF austerity rulebook that Mozambique must follow. It includes huge government spending directed to support green industry, with a major research component.

This follows two other huge US government interventions to build the country. First the 1930s New Deal which partly pulled the US out of the Great Depression, with huge infrastructure projects such as roads and electrification, and massive job creation. The 1950s, 1960s and 1970s saw huge subsidies for research and development, for example of the internet. There were huge subsidies for building a middle class. Social Democracy in Europe had a similar success. And it was the age of decolonisation and the start of development, with a stress on local processing of local resources instead of exporting raw materials.

The 1930s and the so-called "golden age of capitalism" from 1950 to 1980 also saw a reduction in inequality with less wealth for the very rich. With the end of the cold war and the end of the fear of communism, the IMF moved to reverse the gains of the golden age. It imposed the policies called by various names - neoliberalism, Washington Consensus, or Shock Therapy. This imposes the free market, free trade, sharp cuts in government involvement in the economy, and wage cuts. The current era has seen a huge transfer of wealth to the super rich and away, particularly, from the middle class.

Mozambique's graphite mining shows how the new system works. Graphite is essential for the anode of lithium ion batteries and in increasing demand for electric cars and other non-fossil-fuel systems. Anodes are not complicated and could be manufactured in Mozambique, as they might have been 50 years ago when policy supported local processing. This is exactly the sort of green industry Mozambique needs. But now mine owner Syrah has been given a subsidy of \$220mn to build the anode factory in Louisiana, one of the poorest US states, to create 221 US jobs with Mozambique graphite. Of course this goes against IMF rules, so Mozambique would not have been allowed to do the same thing.

Again Mozambique is pushed by the IMF and World Bank to return to the colonial era of exporting raw materials and paying low wages - and not doing the things that the US is doing now and did so successfully in the 1930s and 1950-80. Does this feel like recolonisation? *jh*

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

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 data: <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>

Important external links

Books by Joseph Hanlon can be downloaded, free: <https://bit.ly/HanlonBooks>

Minimum wage & exchange rate charts, tables 1996-2022 <https://bit.ly/MozMinWage2022>

Debt trial press clippings in English: <https://bit.ly/Moz-Debt-Map-Trial>.

Daily flood and monthly dry season reports - <https://bit.ly/Moz-Flood-2023>

Cyclone trackers, <https://www.cyclocane.com/> and <https://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/jtwc.html>

Two LSE working papers - **World Bank questions its Mozambique 'success'** while oligarchs have brought high inequality, poverty and corruption - <https://bit.ly/Moz-LSE-208c> and **How the IMF and World Bank caused a resource curse and civil war in Mozambique** - <https://bit.ly/Moz-LSE-209>

Previous editions of this newsletter: <https://bit.ly/MozNews2023> and <https://bit.ly/MozNews2022>

My Mozambique archive: <http://bit.ly/Mozamb>

TSU_Tabela-Salarial-Unica - law, decrees, points system (2 Mb) <https://bit.ly/Moz-TSU>

Cabo Delgado

Cabo Ligado weekly report on civil war <https://www.caboligado.com/>

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>

Cabo-Delgado-Free-for-all. 20 Apr 2022. <https://bit.ly/Moz-593>

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

\$2bn secret debt - in English

Secret debt trial (Aug-Oct 2021) press reports <https://bit.ly/Moz-secret-debt>

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>

Eleven books by Joseph Hanlon can be downloaded, free: <https://bit.ly/HanlonBooks>

Zimbabwe takes back its land (2013) <https://bit.ly/Zim-takes-land>

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)

Civil War Civil Peace (2006): <https://bit.ly/Civil-War-Civil-Peace>

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) <https://bit.ly/Peace-wo-Profit>

Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots (1991) <https://bit.ly/Shots-Moz>

Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire (1984)

These are still available for sale:

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

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).

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