

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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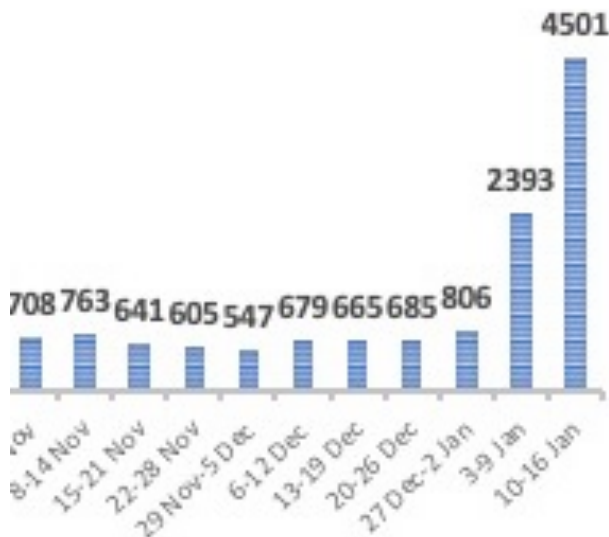
Covid-19 goes exponential

Since Christmas, the daily number of both new Covid-19 cases and deaths has doubled each week. Today (Monday 18 Jan) there were 895 new cases and 8 deaths reported. The disease is also spreading nationally.

Covid-19 had been a largely Maputo disease. On 18 December there were 1823 active cases of which 89% were in Maputo city. Today there are 8313 active cases, of which 47% are in Maputo. Every province has at least 100 active cases: Cidade de Maputo: 3.875, Provincia de Maputo: 1.401, Manica: 506, Sofala: 483, Inhambane: 461, Zambézia: 403, Gaza: 302, Niassa: 276, Cabo Delgado: 248, Nampula: 228, and Tete: 130.

Covid-19 new cases per week, since November - last 11 weeks.

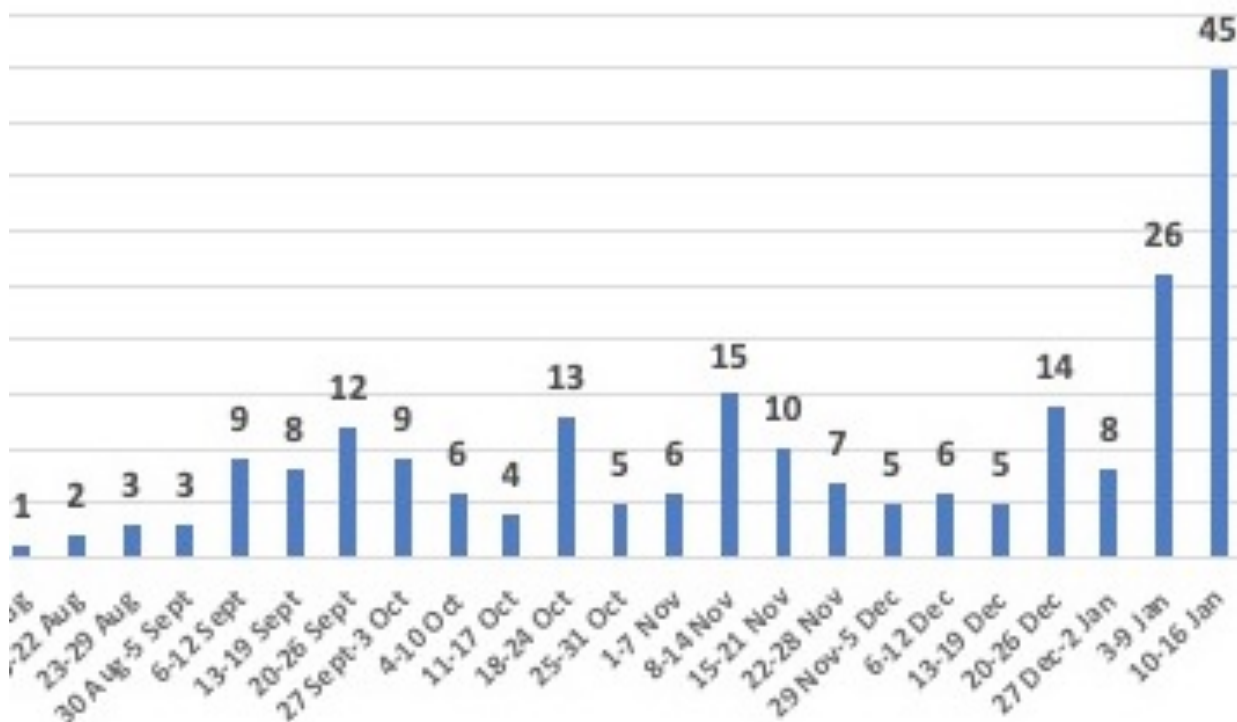
Taken from Miguel de Brito chart



Covid-19 deaths per week since August

Date of death (not date of report)

Taken from Miguel de Brito chart



Daily Covid-19 reports are published by the National Health Institute (INS) and Miguel de Brito is first to publish each afternoon. His data is easiest to use and he does good weekly graphs, <https://www.facebook.com/miguel.de.brito1> The INS posts later in the day <https://covid19.ins.gov.mz/documentos-em-pdf/boletins-diarios/>. We previously linked to another dashboard, but errors have entered there and we have stopped using it. Worldometers is also ok, updated daily with bar charts with 3 and 7 day averages. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/mozambique/>

South Africa closed all of its land borders from 12 January until 15 February, due to Covid-19. Fuel, cargo and goods will continue to pass.

Cabo Delgado

New military command

President Filipe Nyusi took firm control of the military and of the war in Cabo Delgado on 14 January when he appointed Eugénio Mussa as Chief of Staff, the head of the military, and promoted him to General. He is a former navy and then army commander, moved by Nyusi in 2016 just before the start of the Cabo Delgado war, and eventually represented the government on the military commission negotiating the demobilisation agreement with Renamo.

Bertoline Jeremias Capitine is named Deputy Chief of Staff, replacing Raúl Luís Dique. As is convention, both are former Renamo fighters.

In an odd sequencing, Mussa was first named commander of the Northern Operations Theatre, probably late last year, and became the person who spoke at meetings and to the press. There are two competing fighting forces. The paramilitary riot police (UIR) under the Ministry of Interior are better trained and better paid and did most of the fighting, and police commander Bernardino Rafael has been the only media spokesperson. The poorly trained and unmotivated conscript army

has often fled from battle and does not go out to search for insurgents. And the UIR (and Ministry of Interior) does not get on with and does not cooperate with the military (and Ministry of Defence).

Mussa has clearly been brought in to clean up the military and to put the military, not the police, in charge of the war. He has several advantages. His recent posts have not been linked to the Cabo Delgado war so he carries no baggage and can change the command and training and improve relations with the police. Importantly, coming from Moma, Nampula, he is not Makonde which matters since a complaint within the army is Makonde dominance. Finally, he is said to be close to Nyusi; he was army commander when Nyusi was Minister of Defence. Mussa is said to be charismatic and have the political weight and military experience to impose his leadership.

SADC security summit cancelled

The SADC security summit - a large meeting set for 17-20 January in Maputo with top leaders of several SADC states - was cancelled by Mozambique on 13 January, because of the growth of Covid-19 in Maputo. (Lusa 13 Jan) The meeting had only been confirmed the day before by President Filipe Nyusi on his return from a visit to Tanzania. A January meeting had been agreed at the 27 November SADC summit, to receive Mozambique's much-delayed plan to fight the insurgency in Cabo Delgado.

EU mission arrives tomorrow - if Mozambique permits

After a month of delay because Mozambique refused to agree, an EU mission is scheduled to arrive in Maputo tomorrow (19 Jan), the EU Foreign Minister Josep Borrell, said last week. But he admitted the mission still does not have permission. He hopes the mission will go to Cabo Delgado, if Mozambique permits. (Lusa 15 Jan)

The mission was agreed 15 December at the request of Portuguese Foreign Minister Augusto Santos Silva. Portugal became president of the EU Council on 1 January and Borrell appointed Santo Silva as his envoy to deal with Cabo Delgado. But Mozambique never approved the mission.

Borrell stressed that any EU initiatives could only be developed after "the agreement of the authorities in Mozambican, which is a sovereign country". By announcing that the mission was ready to go, he may have been putting pressure on Mozambique to agree. Borrell pointed to possible military training and equipment, humanitarian aid and coastal surveillance.

Comment:

Outside interference not welcome

SADC and the EU are putting increasing pressure to become involved in Cabo Delgado, but Mozambique had repeatedly made clear that it does not want the involvement of international organisations or a SADC, EU or UN multi-lateral force. It understands it needs outside help to fight the insurgents, but wants to retain total control of their involvement. Foreign governments with specific programmes such as training or equipment supply, mercenaries on contracts, and UN agencies caring for displaced people are welcome - if they stay strictly under Mozambican control.

Frelimo fears that the UN, EU or SADC will look closely at Cabo Delgado, draw their own conclusions, and make unacceptable demands for strategy and policy changes. The repeated refusal to give SADC the "plan" to win the war that it asked for, while giving it lists of equipment it needs, and the last minute cancellation of the summit, makes that point clear. The long delay in accepting an EU mission makes a similar point, and Borrell's response, stressing Mozambican sovereignty and offering specifics like equipment and coastal surveillance suggests he wants to show he understands.

Human Rights Watch in its World Report 2021 released last week says "State security forces were implicated in grave human rights violations ... including arbitrary arrests, abductions, torture of detainees, excessive force against unarmed civilians, intimidation and extrajudicial executions. The government did not take any publicly known step to investigate those abuses or punish those implicated." Other reports have stressed that growing poverty and inequality are fuelling the war. Government fears international bodies have the confidence and power to voice such opinions. The EU observer report on the 2019 elections was particularly critical, and Frelimo does not want a similar report from a Cabo Delgado mission or an EU multi-lateral force. Key here is that any helpers must accept the Frelimo view that the war is purely Islamic terrorism and the solution is purely military. Government wants help from people who won't stick their noses into policy debates and ask hard questions about how we arrived here

Probably the main reason for the cancellation of the SADC summit is that the various Frelimo factions still cannot agree on a strategy, and the three big beasts are still at loggerheads. The Interior Ministry and its paramilitary riot police (UIR) have been doing most the fighting, hired DAG mercenaries, and want to hire more support from private security companies. The Defence Ministry opposes this, and wants a long term programme of building up a big permanent military force; it wants equipment, training and money. The third big beast is the group of oligarchs that control the Cabo Delgado economy and have effectively caused the war by ensuring that all the profits from mining go to the rich and not ordinary people. Can a strategy gain support of all three?

Nyui's appointment of his man, Eugénio Mussa, as head of the military and as head of all operations, is clearly an attempt to take control and make the two fighting forces work together. But it also appears to accept the military view that there are no quick fixes, that the military must be trained and professionalised, and that this will take time and thus the war will continue for another couple of years, at least. That does leave space for the creation of a larger security cordon around the Afungi peninsula, probably with UIR, private security companies, and French coastal patrolling.

Four countries want to provide help, but three are probably unacceptable. Some in former colonial power Portugal want to prove a point with troops on the ground where they were expelled 47 years ago. The United States covertly backed Renamo in an earlier war, always demands to be the dominant partner, and would continue to press for a military base in Mozambique. And Russia has a poor record against guerrilla forces; Soviet training was inappropriate against Renamo and Russian semi-government mercenaries Wagner had to withdraw from Cabo Delgado mainly because of their inability to fight a jungle war.

However France will surely be allowed to provide maritime security because that will be arms length. But there will have to be some deal to allow illegal trade (such as heroin) to pass under French noses, probably by France agreeing that they are patrolling against insurgents and not contraband. *jh*

The Trump administration offered military training and equipment to Mozambique in a meaningless meeting in Maputo 8 January, as Trump officials tour the world and issue statements in a rush to make their mark before the inauguration of President Joe Biden on Wednesday. To try to block the blitz, the Department of State banned all travel of officials from 12 January. But on 14 January USAID rushed out a new policy saying that the top priority of USAID's economic-growth programs will be to "Benefit the US economy and the American people". Anthony Tata wasted the time of Minister of Defense Jaime Neto and Minister of Interior Amade Miquidade on his 8 January visit. He carried the title of "performing the duties of (PDO) under secretary of defense for policy", because he was nominated by Trump last June but was never conformed by congress because of a string of Islamophobic and racist comments on Twitter. He called President Barack Obama a "terrorist leader" and he has been a Fox News regular defending Trump. (*Zitamar* 11 Jan).

Risk is relative and the consultants Control Risks consider Mozambique relatively low risk compared to other parts of the world. On 11 January it published a set of global risk maps <https://www.controlrisks.com/riskmap> The Africa risk map treats Mozambique as well as South

Africa and Tanzania is "medium" security and political risk except for eastern Cabo Delgado which is high security risk. Malawi and Namibia and low risk. All of Mozambique, including the Cabo Delgado coast, is considered low maritime risk. By contrast, the coasts of Ghana and Nigeria and of Kenya are seen as high maritime risk.

Other news

Cyclone Eloise might hit Sofala or Inhambane Sunday (24 Jan) with winds of 100 km/h or more. The cyclone is now in the Indian Ocean moving west and will cross the north of Madagascar Wednesday 20 January. Can be tracked on <https://www.cyclocane.com/> and <https://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/jtwc.html>

More than 140,000 hectares of land in Gaza allocated to commercial farmers is not being properly used and will be taken back by the state, Júlia Mwito, provincial director of Land, Environment and Rural Development, told *Notícias* (21 Dec). Occupants have an automatic right to land, but investors can be issued a DUAT (Direito de Uso e Aproveitamento de Terra, Right to use and benefit from land) based on a plan. But in 92 cases, these plans are not being carried out, and the DUATs will be cancelled. Such statements have been made regularly over the years but then forgotten, usually because land is controlled by important people.

January reading -1

Donor deadlines produce a flood of reports in December while the January holiday in Mozambique gives time for writing, all increased by Covid-19 lockdowns. As we read our way through the pile of papers, we will provide some comments and suggestions.

Reflections on greed and the failing state (in Portuguese) come from two of Mozambique's important thinkers and professors.

João Mosca asks how we explain that the same people have passed from socialists and defenders of a strong state "to weakening the state to facilitate the theft of natural resources and various forms of trafficking?" "Its ideological flip-flops were only short-term strategies, always keeping in mind the reproduction of the monopoly of power." He does a quite useful periodization: 1962-68 nationalism, 1968-76 populism, 1977-86 socialism, 1987-2010 neo-liberalism and free market, and 2011-20 "without ideology, savage capitalism, and looting". <http://bit.ly/Mosca-flicks> and *Savana* (15 Jan)

João Mosca is director of the Rural Observatory and professor at Universidade Politécnica.

António Francisco takes a cynical and humorous look at the \$2 bn secret debt and particularly at former Finance Minister Manuel Change, who recently completed two years in jail in South Africa fighting extradition to the US. To illegally commit Mozambique to a \$2 bn debt that was 17% of the country's GDP he must have been a "sublime optimist" and believer in national myths. In fact, he was participating in the modern version of Robin Hood, stealing from the poorest country in the world to give to the rich - and themselves. "Are con-men and politicians the most optimistic?" Or are they both gaining the confidence of people they cheat? António Francisco is research director of IESE and professor at UEM. <https://www.diarioeconomico.co.mz/2021/01/13/tropear-no-optimismo-infortunio-de-um-amigo-do-alheio/> I would point Francisco and other readers to Herman Melville's 1857 novel *The Confidence Man* about people on a Mississippi river steamboat and who may, or may not, be con-men. Written more than 160 years ago, it remains an accurate picture and satire of the American dream and the way con-men work by building on dreams and trust, applicable to US and Mozambican politics today.

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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 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)
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)
Fórum de Monitoria do Orçamento - FMO (the main group following the \$2 bn secret debt - now run by CDD) <http://www.fmo.org.mz>

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