

MOZAMBIQUE

News reports & clippings

531 - 27 March 2021

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Foreigners attacked as Palma fighting continues

For the first time, insurgents are specifically attacking foreigners in the on-going fighting in Palma. Details remain sketchy, but at least a dozen British, South African and other non-Mozambicans working or contractors on the gas project have been killed. Many Mozambicans have been killed. Many Mozambicans and foreigners are missing, including some UN and NGO staff - most probably fled into the forest. There are reports of bodies in the street.

The Amarula Hotel between Palma town and its airstrip on the northern edge of town has become the preferred hotel for contract and aid workers. It was under seige from Thursday with 180 people trapped inside. Early Saturday afternoon a 17 vehicle convoy tried to break out and get to safety on the beach. But the convoy was attacked with at least seven dead.

Hundreds of people have been evacuated by air and sea, including contract and aid staff, and civil servants including the district administrator. The photo shows a message at the Palma Residence hotel, with people hoping for rescue. South African private military contractor DAG and the Mozambican military have been involved in the rescues.



It appears to have been a very coordinated attack, similar to the one which took Mocimboa da Praia last year. During several days insurgents infiltrated Palma and stayed with local supporters. Three groups attacked on Wednesday and were supported later by more insurgents arriving by truck. Roads to Palma were blocked by insurgents who ambushed vehicles and attacked soldiers trying to reach Palma.

The attackers first attacked government installations such as the police, the hospital, and three banks. Many government and commercial buildings were destroyed. The insurgent force must be at least 150 fighters, with many still in Palma.

The attacks will raise serious questions about the expected development of the multi-billion dollar gas liquification plants on the Afungi peninsula. Funding has been approved, including \$1 bn in credits from the UK. British High Commissioner NneNne Iwuji-Eme held a meeting in Pemba on 16 March to say that under the credit British companies are promised 25% of the contracts and thus to promote local British contractors to bid. People at the meeting raised security questions.

One of those killed in Palma was a British man who attended the meeting with the High Commissioner, and was building a staff compound for 2000 workers expected to arrive in Palma. How many of those workers will arrive now?

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Important external links

Cabo Delgado civil war:

Cabo Ligado weekly report <http://bit.ly/CaboLigado>

War reports, detailed maps, census data - <http://bit.ly/Moz-CDg>

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>

J Hanlon downloadable books: <http://bit.ly/Hanlon-books>

"Chickens & Beer: A recipe for agricultural Growth": <https://bit.ly/Chickens-Beer>

Data on all Mozambique **elections:** <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>

Previous editions of this newsletter, in pdf: <http://bit.ly/MozNews2021> and <http://bit.ly/MozNews2020>, which contain many more links

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