

# MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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## \$1 mn taken from Palma banks

\$1 mn was taken from Standard Bank, BCI and BIM in Palma in sophisticated attacks, according to TVM (11 Apr) [https://youtu.be/s2OmrR-5m\\_c](https://youtu.be/s2OmrR-5m_c). ATMs and safes were broken open and the insurgents started the bank generators to provide electricity for power tools, including cutters with diamond saw blades.

In addition the video showed major damage to telecommunications - burned offices, cut cables and destroyed generators. But some mobile phone service has since been restored.

## Frelimo leaders attack army & police looting

A group of Frelimo leaders writing as "Frelimo Palma" have gone on the web to attack army and police looting of houses. It took two army pick-up trucks to loot a civil servant's house, with his family there. Another reported being stopped by the police in Quitunda near the Total compound and they took his mobile phone and \$50, leaving him only \$3.

The security services "are authentic traders of all products from rice to soup and also sell alcoholic drinks such as red label and black label. Where did you get them?" said one person who fled to Pemba.

## Is army looting the norm?

After publishing my article on army and police looting Sunday, I received a note to say this happened last year in August when the army retook Diaca, attempting to reopen the road from Mueda to Mocimboa da Praia. Swedish investors had a forestry business including sawmills etc in Diaca. Insurgents had done nothing. When the security forces finally got into Diaca they ransacked and plundered all the installations and did the same in the Diaca village.

## One of 12 dead said to be Zimbabwean

There is still no formal death toll for the Palma attack, and conflicting estimates. Police claimed they has buried 12 white men in a grave near the Amarula Hotel, but at least one of those dead has been identified as a black Zimbabwean, Nyasha Mugwagwa, who worked for hotel and

catering company Remote Site Solutions. Zimbabwean Brian Madzvimbo spent two days in the bush after his vehicle was ambushed while working for KEA Projects, and after his return to Zimbabwe he said many Zimbabweans working on the gas projects had changed their names by acquiring fake Mozambican identity documents. He said some many never be identified, and knew two who were dead, including Max, a mechanic.

## ***Inside al Shabaab***

### **Insurgents join due to injustice, poverty; many would quit, so 'best counter-insurgency strategy' is development, jobs**

An important new picture of the inside of al Shabaab is provided by interviews with 23 women who had been captured and eventually escaped, in a study published yesterday by João Feijó, one of the most important investigators of the Cabo Delgado war. Feijó is technical coordinator of OMR, the Rural Environment Observatory, and the study (in Portuguese) is on <https://omrmz.org/omrweb/publicacoes/or-109/>

Most of the fighters are young, from Cabo Delgado, angry at the government and less interested in religion, while the leadership is foreign (mostly Tanzanian), educated, and religious. Al Shabaab "proved adept at capitalising on the local population's historical feelings of exclusion, compounded by resentment towards state violence, leading them to rebel against the state but also against their communities of origin," Feijó notes. There is "great resentment towards the government, and it can be seen that the motivation is predominantly material." This leads to wide divisions within al Shabaab, and reports of discontent and desertions because of lack of money.

The new study shows many fighters want to leave al Shabaab and others only join for jobs and money. So jobs should be used to attract the disaffected - encouraging those in al Shabaab who want to leave, and giving an alternative to those angry with government who plan to join the insurgents.

This leads Feijó to argue that "the best counter-insurgency strategy [is] reducing adherence of young people to violent groups" through socio-economic development based on labour intensive farming and fishing, "as well as the extension of quality public services (health and education, but also agricultural extension)."

In this article, we quote extensively from the report. These are my (jh) selections and translations. Interviewers were careful to determine what the women actually saw and were reporting first hand.

**Who.** Most members of al Shabaab come from the northern coast of Cabo Delgado, with individuals from Mueda, the coast of Nampula (Angoche, Nacala), and central Mozambique. Muani and Swahili are the most common languages, followed by Makonde and Makua.

There is a growing internationalisation of the movement," writes Feijó. Leaders include a growing number of foreigners, from the African east coast (mainly Tanzania and a few from Somalia) and "whites", presumably from Arab countries and Gulf states. One woman said they were interviewed by a man they could not see, who spoke only English and not Portuguese or Swahili.

Some Tanzanians said they are Islamic State (IS) but some from Somalia said they were not IS, but from a different radical group.

Two of the leaders in Mocímboa da Praia were Mozambican. One of the interviewed women said she talked to a young leader from Mocímboa da Praia. "He told me that he had spent 10 years outside of Mozambique being prepared to be a commander. He went to Congo. He went to Arabia. He speaks Arabic fluently as well as English, Portuguese, Swahili and local languages. He was

extremely intelligent and well prepared, both intellectually and militarily. And he knew the Koran as well." Another Mocimboa leader was from the centre of the country, allegedly a deserter from the Mozambique armed forces.

Hundreds of women (discussed below) and young men have been captured or kidnapped. Boys aged 12-14 have been kidnapped to become children soldiers.

**Divisions.** The growth of the group has also increased its diversity, both in terms of religious conviction and level of violence and motivation. This heterogeneity and rivalries for prominence generate tensions, conflict and divisions, but also successive waves of defections, depending on the material benefits.

In leadership roles were people older than 30 who were usually foreigners or at least more internationalised, strictly following orthodox interpretations of Islam, and more emotionally controlled. On the other hand, there are reports of younger, materialistic individuals, particularly resentful of the excesses of the defence and security forces, disgusted by socioeconomic poverty, who saw in al Shabaab an outlet for their revolt. One interviewee reported that some had a "hatred towards what they had experienced. One of them said: 'I was not al Shabaab, they arrested me saying I was al Shabaab. They beat me up.' So he joined the group." These young people tend to be much more uncontrolled and violent, including towards women and in attacks on civilians.

The leadership group tends to follow to the letter the precepts of what they consider Islam, being careful to pray at the right times. Among the local insurgents there is a more casual attitude to religion, and an attempt to avoid prayers. "We have the ideological group and the group that are there for financial interest," said one interviewee.

**Military Power.** "Eyewitnesses report a great deal of military power by the machabos [local word for the insurgents], sometimes well in excess of that of the Mozambican army. Much of it was taken from the defence and security forces (namely armoured vehicles, Mahindra jeeps [used by police], weapons and ammunition), but also numerous motorbikes taken from civilians," reports Feijó.

The large military power raises suspicions of external supply, Feijó notes. One interviewee suggested they may have satellite phones, because of apparent communication between bases.

The insurgents' military strategies rely on rapid attacks, often at night, and constant camouflage. According to reports from the women, the insurgents have four advantages: 1) growing numbers; 2) growing military power and logistical capacity; 3) the ability to camouflage themselves by wearing the uniforms of the armed forces, confusing the population and the enemy, or even by fusing with the population and using them as human shields; and 4) a vast network of observers and access to information.

In contrast to the defence and security forces, which have demonstrated disorganisation, indiscipline and lack of motivation, the insurgent group has shown high morale and conviction.

**Bases.** There are three kinds of bases. First are the main permanent bases, located in dense forest. There are two camps some distance beyond Naquitengue, a village 30 km south of Mocimboa da Praia, which they called "home". At least one other is in Macomia district.

Second are near occupied zones, for example around Mocimboa da Praia municipality, with the purpose of defence and military patrol, with various sub bases, each of which has "about 100 armed youths". The insurgents occupy abandoned houses, using them for sleeping, access to water and sanitation, and cooking.

The third type of bases are temporary, used perhaps for two weeks. They are 30 to 40 km from the sites under attack, usually in abandoned villages. These are used to hold abducted people under

military guard. Sometimes the kidnapped are taken by lorry and sometimes they have to walk to the temporary base.

Within the bases, individuals have defined functions, with a strict separation of tasks. Men are in charge of leadership and combat functions, both in defence (surveillance and patrol), searching for hidden government soldiers, and attack (including destruction, looting, kidnappings and assassinations), but also in politico-religious indoctrination. The reports reveal the existence of mechanical services (repairing motorbikes), of communication and filming activities, and of nursing, always carried out by men. In the front-line camps, where there are no women, food preparation activities are carried out by men:

**Ideology.** For several days after their capture, the women were given politico-religious indoctrination. One woman said that her group was taught by two Tanzanians who knew the Koran well. "They did a reading from the Koran, brought up the whole issue of injustice in the country, of social abuse, of corruption." They asked if some had experienced police violence or corruption, and some said yes. Then the teachers said "with their new government, they were going to end injustice. That all people were going to be respected. There would be no more theft, no more corruption in the government. One of the things they said the most was that democracy was demonic, because in Mozambique it allowed the politicians to steal and the people to continue to starve and die without any kind of care."

These sessions stressed exclusion and social injustice, in an attempt to capitalise on individual resentments. The messianic promise of social order, combined with the distribution of concrete benefits - food, clothing and protection - have a seductive effect on vulnerable populations.

**Women.** Women are mainly wives or mistresses for soldiers. But they also do observation and espionage, recruitment and the loading of goods. Small numbers of women were identified handling weapons in attacks, including in command positions.

In Mocimboa da Praia and Quissanga, armed and uniformed women were in command positions. One woman reported that in Quissanga a woman commander "freed me; she told me, you can go down to your house in Quissanga Praia. The men didn't say anything, this woman was the one in charge."

Some of the most beautiful and very young girls said they were going to Tanzania to learn English. It is assumed that they were going to be trafficked in some way, perhaps sold to raise money.

The full study (in Portuguese) is on <https://omrmz.org/omrweb/publicacoes/or-109/>

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"Mozambique News Reports & Clippings, number XXX", DATE, [bit.ly/Mozamb](http://bit.ly/Mozamb), accessed XXX.

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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](http://bit.ly/MozNews2020)

**Downloadable books:** <http://bit.ly/Hanlon-books> Election data: <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>

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

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## **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>

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## 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)

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### 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](http://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz)  
O País: [www.opais.co.mz](http://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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