

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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Palma

Amarula Hotel reopens, with furniture bought back from soldiers who looted it

Like nearly all of Palma, the Amarula Hotel was trashed and looted when insurgents attacked in March 2021. Now it is partly reopened. "For a place that was looted, the furniture has the old rustic look that is the aesthetic of the hotel, not something that was recently bought to replace the looted ones."

Assistant manager Ritha Jaime Lucas explains that, yes, indeed it is their old furniture - they bought it back at a "reasonable" price from the looters. "Which tells you the rebels weren't the looters. They destroy and move on. In most of Cabo Delgado, after the rebels struck, the Mozambican army swooped in and looted," reports the Nairobi *East African* from Palma. (3 Apr <https://bit.ly/Palma-loot>)

This "tells one pretty much all they need to know about how Cabo Delgado was lost to IS-Mozambique. A predatory army and government alienated from the citizens; a marginalised people seizing the scraps; and an Islamist group exploiting the state's failures and grievances of the masses to establish its violent order," writes journalist Charles Onyango-Obbo.

"The army preys on the people. It wasn't uncommon to have four roadblocks along a five-kilometre stretch of road, manned by the army, the police, the local defence force, and the local administration, all of them shaking down passengers and drivers."

In Afungi where TotalEnergies "built 500 houses for the families from whom it bought land, and paid some money into their accounts. They have moved into the homes, but many of them haven't got their money [because] a network of corrupt government officials, security services, and banking staff have conspired to milk them, and they can't get their money until they pay them a portion."

Most displaced people in Cabo Delgado have not yet been allowed to go home. This "has spawned rumours that crooked government officials want the IDP camps to stay, because they are skimming off the aid being provided by humanitarian agencies, or that it is a security-driven decision because they believe the IDPs have too many relatives among Al-Shabaab, and when they go back to their homes, they will provide the infrastructure for the insurgents to rebuild," writes Onyango-Obbo.

Riot police accused of murdering two fishermen near Palma, but Rwandans stop them killing a farmer

Police officers from the Rapid Intervention Unit (UIR) are accused of torturing two young fishermen to death on 27 March near Palma, *Cabo Ligado* reports (5 Apr <https://bit.ly/CaboLigado92>).

"The fishermen from Quissenge were reportedly blown off course into a restricted area of water, where they were detained near the Milamba area on suspicion of 'terrorist' activity by patrolling UIR vessels. Some women fishing nearby reported hearing the young men screaming from the boats after they were boarded by the police officers. The women alerted the local community and the family of the fishermen were located. They approached the Rwandan Defence Force (RDF) to whom residents usually appeal in the first instance, not trusting the Mozambican Defence and Security Forces (FDS)", writes *Cabo Ligado*. The two died before the RDF could get them to hospital.

"On the same day, a man working in the fields near Palma was reportedly confronted by the FDS, who began to torture him on the spot for an unknown reason. A colleague in a neighbouring field ... called the Rwandan forces who intervened before the man was killed."

"These incidents have further strained relations between civilians and the FDS, who have previously been accused of stealing from communities and brutalizing members of the general public. The RDF are often seen to be more trustworthy, especially around Palma, in part because they can communicate in Kiswahili, unlike most Portuguese-speaking FDS units."

Cabo Delgado civil war

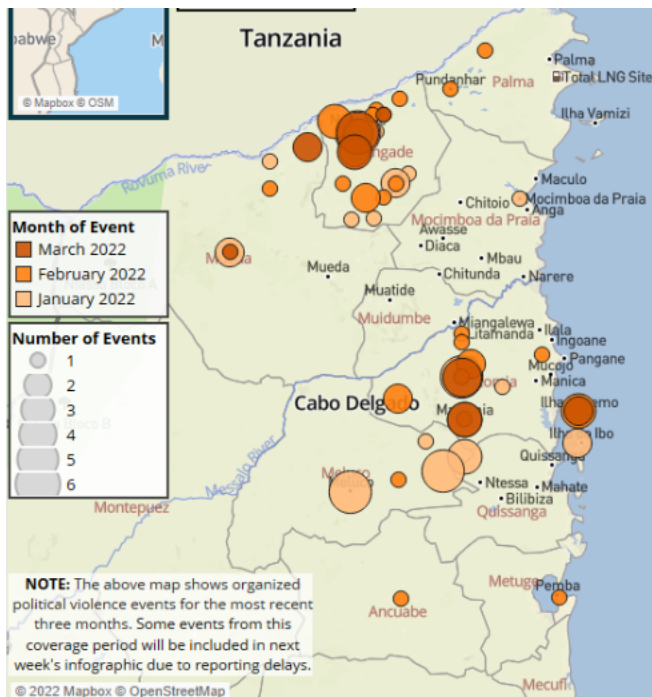
Ongoing war increases displaced to 784,564

Continued fighting forced 49,100 more people to flee in the three months December-February, bringing the total displaced to 784,564, the UN's IOM reported on 28 March. Half were displaced by insurgent attacks in Nangade, and most of the rest from fighting in Meluco, Macomia and in the Quirimbas archipelago. In February alone, at least 7,000 children arrived at displacement centres as a result of the recent attacks in Nangade and Macomia.

The total number of fatalities so far in the war is 3885, according to Acled.

The map on the next page shows incidents in the past three months, highlighting heavy fighting with insurgents for control of three corridors.

The first corridor at the top of the map is close to the Tanzania border, with heaviest fighting in Nangade district and insurgents maintaining a route through Nangade, northern Mueda, and into Niassa province. ACLED recorded 39 organized political violence events in Nangade district for the first quarter of 2022, compared to 14 in the final quarter of 2021. Insurgents attacked villages in northern Mueda on 24, 26 and 29 March, killing at least two local women.



Cabo Ligado 30 March 2022

The second corridor is the north-south N380 road in Macomia district where insurgents have at least partial control and some bases near Chai and the Messalo River. This vertical column of points in the middle of the map is the only paved road to the gas zone. Rhula (7 Apr) reports a confrontation between insurgents and FDS on 5 April at Chai.

The third area is between Ibo and Matemo islands and the coast, with both insurgents and government forces trying to control an important coastal shipping route.

Rwandan forces control Palma and Mocimboa da Praia districts, but Nangade, Mueda, and Macomia are the responsibility of the FDS and SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) who are having little success. South African foreign minister Naledi Pandor confirmed that additional personnel and resources are arriving, including a reported airlift of South African National Defence Force (SANDF) equipment to Pemba in the last two weeks; a further 1,000 combat troops are expected. The South African navy has also redeployed the navy frigate SAS Spioenkop off the Cabo Delgado coast. But South Africa is having trouble finding money to pay for the deployment.

Military and security operations against the insurgents are costing \$300 mn per year, President Filipe Nyusi told a meeting in Aqaba, Jordan on 24 March. He added that Mozambique needs another \$320 mn per year to rebuild the army. Nyusi has done substantial travelling in the past two months to try to raise money to pay the Rwandans, and other costs of the war.

Insurgents are allowing kidnapped people to leave their bases in Macomia, Muidumbe and Mocimboa da Praia. (*Zitamar* 25 Mar) This is the "hungry season" at the end of the rains before new crops are producing, and the insurgents are facing food shortages. Many raids are for food, and it appears up to 200 people have been released.

100 civil servants and 45 community leaders have returned to Mocimboa da Praia, following a 16 March order to return, but displaced people have not yet been allowed to return.

Cause of war? Young people were lied to by insurgents, says Mocimboa head

Unknown people came into Cabo Delgado with money, who built mosques, "instrumentalised the population", and gave incentives to young people. "They were given space because of the

existence of a huge group of young people who needed opportunities," explained João Saraiva, the man in the hot seat in Mocimboa da Praia. He continued that "they created disrespect" for authority, fabricating stories that the police and military were violent.

Unusually, Saraiva has a dual post as permanent secretary and substitute administrator of Mocimboa da Praia, which makes him the man in charge on the civilian side. He returned to Mocimboa in October with his team, who are working from tents because the entire infrastructure of the town has been destroyed.

The long interview by Armando Nhantumbo in *Savana* (25 March) does not ask challenging questions, so Saraiva is free to paint his picture. His response to many questions starts with "it is complex". He stresses that "the central message for investors is to accept and believe that the Mocimboa da Praia today of yesterday is not the Mocimboa da Praia today, which is clean and has space for investment."

But he does not paint a picture of change for the "huge group of young people who needed opportunities." Instead, "the population must maintain the confidence that they have always had in the government" and he believes that in future they will not let people come into the area to lie and influence them.

Only 3% of people have returned admits Saraiva in the interview, about 4000 people of a pre-war district population of 128,000. These are all in Diaka administrative post, bordering Mueda district on the western edge of Mocimboa district. Many did not flee the zone, but sheltered in their fields away from villages and military action. The market has resumed in Oasse, 40 km west of Mocimboa da Praia town, he said.

Saraiva also points out that the initial attack of the war on 5 October 2017 on Mocimboa was larger than was reported at the time. It included a coordinated attack on the police command post, the border guard headquarters, and on the control post in Oasse, which is not in Mocimboa town.

Local youth involved in Niassa attacks, says administrator

An intense series of attacks south from the Tanzanian border through Mecula town to Marrupa. This is the only road through the sparsely populated Niassa reserve, and from 24 November to 22 December there were a series of attacks on villages and police and military posts along 200 km of road. Most people fled and in February villages were still empty according to Armando Nhantumbo (*Savana* 11 March) in a detailed on the ground report.

Nhantumbo discovered that as in Cabo Delgado, militant preachers had come into the area in 2013. And Mecula district administrator António Paulo confirmed the participation in the attack of "not a small number" of local youth.

And continuing a discussion

Fighting Russia to the last Ukrainian?

The Ukraine war is looking increasingly like the proxy war in Mozambique 40 years ago, where the US fights Russia in a third country whose citizens die. Noam Chomsky discusses this in an excellent and very detailed C-Span interview (3 April, <https://www.c-span.org/video/?518289-1/depth-noam-chomsky>). He points out the missed alternatives, notably 1990 proposals for a "common European home" which would have included Russia and was discussed at the time of German unification. The idea was rejected by the US, which wanted to keep Russia on the outside.

Chomsky also notes that the direction of travel on the war is to keep Vladimir Putin fighting and not negotiating - demands for war crimes tribunals and permanent sanctions give him no reason to settle. And as in Mozambique four decades ago, it is local people who die.

It is the conundrum of ending all wars - how many extra deaths are a fair price for being able to punish the aggressor? Very few wars end with trials. Mozambique's 1992 peace accord meant there was no truth commission, no judgements, no punishments. People who should have been judged war criminals instead became respected members of parliament. But thousands of Mozambican lives were saved because the war stopped. And it was a deal agreed not between the US and Russia, but by Mozambicans.

Chomsky says the US wants to keep fighting Russia to the last Ukrainian.

If serious peace talks become possible, it must be Ukrainians - not the US and its allies - who choose between punishment for Putin or the alternative of fewer dead Ukrainians and an end to the war. A terrible and unfair choice - but one Mozambicans made 30 years ago. *jh*

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\$2bn secret debt trial: Daily press clippings in English on <https://bit.ly/Moz-Debt-Map-Trial> .

Important external links

Exchange rates 2006-21 & minimum wages 1996-2021 <https://bit.ly/Moz-Exch-wage-2021>

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 - <https://bit.ly/Moz-Flood-2022>

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: <https://bit.ly/MozNews2022> and <http://bit.ly/MozNews2021>

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-CDq>

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

\$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>

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>

Ten 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)
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)
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).
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