

“ADDRESS TO THE NATION BY HIS EXCELLENCE FILIPE JACINTO NYUSI, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE, ON THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE PROVINCE OF CABO DELGADO”

Unofficial translation

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Fellow Mozambicans:

In recent years, the life of Mozambicans has been a permanent struggle against challenges. In addition to the known constraints of poverty and disease, climate change continued, more intensely, to cause droughts, floods and cyclones, which caused damages in excess of USD 3 billion.

Criminals from the Renamo Military Junta in the center of the country, the health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and terrorism in Cabo Delgado province have exacerbated the negative impact on our economy.

Fellow Mozambicans!

We consider it opportune to share with the Mozambican people useful information on the security situation in Cabo Delgado Province and the response we have been giving, with a view to stopping the suffering of Mozambicans and restoring peace and tranquility to the affected areas. It is about TERRORISM that we intend to address in some detail today.

We are at a crucial moment in the struggle of the Mozambican people against the aggression brought on by terrorist groups, for which, within the framework of regional and international solidarity, we are receiving support from some foreign partners.

Background on Terrorist Attacks in Cabo Delgado

For a better understanding of the phenomenon of terrorism in the province of Cabo Delgado, it is important to remember that, from the end of 2011 and beginning of 2012, people in the districts of Chiúre, Balama, Macomia, Mocímboa da Praia and Palma started to notice the first signs of radicalization, promoted by some foreign and national individuals who falsely called themselves the true Muslims.

As a result of these movements, Islamic sects began to emerge that spread radical messages and, at the same time, signs of infiltration by terrorist groups operating in other countries began to appear.

These individuals, using various tricks, urged adolescents and young people, already radicalized, to disobey national authorities and not respect the laws and the Constitution of the Republic. They prohibited children from attending formal schools, directing them to attend only the so-called madrassas.

At that time, they incited violence against members of the Islamic community and other good people who promoted values of peace. These practices clearly revealed that these agitators were in conflict, not only with the laws of our country, but also with the teachings of the Qur'an.

In their incursions, the terrorists kidnap children, teenagers, young people and women, in addition to investing in the recruitment of young people, through false promises for further radicalization, with a greater focus on the Provinces of Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Zambézia and Niassa.

After these first signs, the terrorist group carried out its first armed attack on October 5, 2017, in the district of Mocímboa da Praia.

After that first armed attack on Mocímboa da Praia, the terrorists extended their violent action to other districts of Cabo Delgado such as Macomia, Muidumbe, Nangade, Quissanga and Palma. In all these places they left a trail of pain and blood and with practices of the most exquisite barbarity.

As this is a phenomenon little known in Mozambique, the Mozambican Nation initially interpreted the attacks as simple criminal actions. That's why the population gave various names to the group, from insurgents, criminals, al-shabab. Later, from a better knowledge of its modus operandi, it became evident that it was a terrorist group, with international connections.

Initially, this group used knives and other cutting instruments, as a way to disguise their military power and their real intentions. A posteriori, it started to use firearms mixed with knives, to assassinate, decapitate and dismember innocent populations, burn villages and destroy socio-economic, public and private infrastructure.

At the same time, they plunder people's assets for supplies. In all their activity, terrorists demonstrate a gross lack of respect for human life. This is how they use

innocent populations (especially children and women) as human shields to hinder the actions of persecution by the Defense and Security Forces.

In Cabo Delgado, terrorist incursions resulted in more than 2,000 deaths of our fellow citizens. Among the barbarities, acts of authentic genocide stand out, such as what happened in April 2020, when terrorists murdered 52 young people in the village of Xitaxi, in the district of Muidumbe. The only crime these young people committed was that they refused to join their ranks. They paid with their lives for their decision not to accept joining the forces that spread death.

Fellow Mozambicans!

Because of terrorism there are more than 817,000 displaced people within Cabo Delgado province itself as well as in the surrounding provinces of Nampula, Niassa and Zambézia.

As a result of terrorism in Cabo Delgado and the instability caused by the Renamo Military Junta in the Centro Zone, we now have more than 826,000 displaced people in Mozambique. There are more than 177 families and nearly 400,000 children who have been forced to flee their homes.

In Cabo Delgado, from October 2017 to July 2021, terrorism interrupted or disrupted the schooling of more than 123,000 students. Terrorists destroyed 46 schools, 104 classrooms, 30 administrative blocks and 5 District Services for Education, Youth and Technology. More than 42,000 children were forced to continue their studies in other districts, far from where they used to live.

Also, in the Education Sector, 219 schools stopped working and the schools that had been opened in Palma, at the moment are paralyzed due to the attack on the 24th of March of this year. A total of 1,736 teachers are displaced in Ancuabe, Balama, Chiúre, Mecúfi, Metuge, Montepuez, Mueda, Namuno, Nangade, Meluco and Pemba.

The news that 8 teachers were savagely murdered in the districts of Muidumbe, Macomia, Nangade and Palma is particularly sad.

Damage to social infrastructure extends to the health sector. Thirty-nine health units, i.e 30%, in the province are currently closed. Eleven health centers were totally

destroyed, 13 were partially destroyed and 15 closed due to insecurity. Right now, the districts of Mocímboa da Praia, Quissanga, Macomia, Muidumbe and Palma do not have any health services.

We also want to inform Mozambicans and the world that 886 health sector workers from the worst affected districts were forced to provide services in other districts.

Also, in the health sector, terrorists destroyed and vandalized 48 staff residences, 7 vehicles, including 5 ambulances and various medical and pharmaceutical materials.

All of this is happening in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. As can be seen, the target of terrorists is the lives of innocent people, it is the well-being and development of communities. It is not acceptable to find social or ideological reasons for this barbarity. It is not reasonable to find reasons to justify the actions of these criminals. One cannot be tolerant of this inhuman intolerance.

Fellow Mozambicans!

The situation I just described has caused enormous costs to our economy and society. In recent years, our economy has been declining due to the interaction of this aggression with natural disasters.

Violence destabilizes institutions and economic and social activity and reduces investor confidence because of the perception of associated risks.

Following the terrorist attacks in Palma, Total suspended all implementation activities of the Golfinho-Tuna Project in Afungi, including contracts with builders, suppliers of goods and services and labour. This will result in a delay in the start of production of Liquefied Natural Gas.

Twenty-eight companies were affected, 17 of which suffered serious material damages. The suspension of activity had a direct impact of approximately USD 116 million in turnover. 3,250 workers, including direct TOTAL workers, were left with suspended employment contracts.

Likewise, the disbursement of the first financing estimated at around USD 1,165 million was suspended, of which approximately USD 894 million were to cover the financial costs.

Fellow Mozambicans!

In Cabo Delgado, in areas located in the northern districts of the province, terrorism has brought about a total stoppage of mining activity, destruction and delay in the electrification of administrative posts, destruction and vandalization of gas stations and commercial banks.

Terrorism has made agricultural activity vulnerable with difficulties in accessing farms and marketing products. In addition to these activities, there are considerable losses recorded in the banking and hotel industry, resulting from the vandalization of property.

The country cannot think slow or small in order to deal with this situation. We need to have the courage to turn the situation around.

Who are the Assassins? Provenance and Modus Operandi

The leaders never show their faces, but from several terrorists out of combat, it was possible to identify Mozambican and foreign citizens, including Tanzanians, Kenyans, Somalis, Congolese, Burundians and some from Arab countries.

Terrorist groups have never publicly presented the reasons why they attack the Mozambican people, although some "scholars" of terrorism evoke reasons, not always clearly substantiated, such as poverty, exclusion, regionalism, religion, the establishment of a Caliphate and claims on gains from Natural Gas projects. For these experts, these are possible motives for the attacks.

For us, the real motivations for terrorism in Mozambique are still unclear. The inescapable truth is that by murdering innocent people and destroying social and economic infrastructure, looting people's assets and making development projects unfeasible, they are creating terror.

These aggressors want to keep Mozambicans in poverty, they want to steal our resources and they want to delay the progress and well-being of the Mozambican people.

Commitment and Level of Readiness of the Defense and Security Forces

Fellow Mozambicans!

We are proud to share our satisfaction with the commitment and level of readiness of our Defense and Security Forces. This pride is not based on knowledge at a distance, but on the contact we regularly maintain with the reality on the ground and the results achieved.

From an early stage, we have followed the response actions of our forces. From the last visit we made to units and sub-units, training centres and forces' positions, including those on the frontline combating terrorism in Cabo Delgado, we found a high combative morale within our forces. This moral is founded on the heavy blows that have been dealt against the enemy.

Since the first shot of the terrorists was heard on the 5th of October 2017, at a time when practically no one had a real idea of what was happening in Cabo Delgado, our Defense and Security Forces were on the frontline to bravely defend the homeland and protect the populations from terrorist actions.

Facing material adversities and in difficult conditions, our Defense and Security Forces maintained their readiness, loyalty and oath to defend, to the last consequences, their land and its population. It is in combat territory that we find the great and anonymous heroes of today.

When the enemy intensified their actions, we created the Northern Operational Theater (TON), a strategic and operative decision that allowed our forces to face the enemy in a more structured, integrated way and from the ground up.

With the evolution of the situation on the ground and given the socio-economic specificities of the Afungi Peninsula, we had to create the Afungi Special Operational Theater, whose specific mission is to defend and protect natural gas prospecting and exploration projects, one of the strategic interventions to lift Mozambique and Mozambicans out of poverty.

The Afungi Special Operational Theater aims, above all, to defend and protect the resident population and contribute to total security and return to normality throughout the province of Cabo Delgado.

Despite material, logistical or military constraints, a matter of common knowledge, the brave Defense and Security Forces have always faced the enemy fearlessly. It is because of this combative posture of the Defense and Security Forces that Mozambique and the Province of Cabo Delgado, in particular, have not become, to this day, a sanctuary for terrorists.

Fellow Mozambicans!

Current Situation as a Result of the Commitment of the Defense and Security Forces

As a result of the commitment and bravery of the Defense and Security Forces, we can categorically state that Mozambique continues to be a stable country, with State, private sector and civil society institutions functioning normally. With the exception of the places already mentioned, in the generality of the country, the population continues to live its normal life.

Cabo Delgado Province is under the direction of the Mozambican authorities. It is true that, in some specific areas of the districts of Mocímboa da Praia, Macomia, Muidumbe and Palma, there are still outbreaks of terrorist attacks.

On March 24, 2021, the terrorists carried out an attack on the town of Palma that had a great media impact as it took place near the largest Liquefied Natural Gas project on the continent, which houses many national and foreign citizens. With this attack, it became clearer that the objective of the terrorists was to rob and permanently occupy the town, in order to derail the liquefied natural gas projects in the Rovuma Basin.

The prompt response of the Defense and Security Forces not only prevented the enemy from achieving its objective, but also marked a turning point in the approach to terrorists on the ground, inflicting blows on them and limiting them to sporadic attacks far from town.

Despite this balance of forces in our favour, we are still concerned that the deaths of defenseless and innocent people continue to occur. However, it is a fact that, on balance, the current situation has improved substantially compared to the scenario of a few months ago, as our forces, with some increased capacity, continue to gain ground every day.

To maintain the pressure and momentum in the fight against terrorists, we have been making enormous efforts to restructure, readjust, train, re-equip and moralise our forces to make them more efficient in facing present and future challenges. Our mission is to make Mozambique a safe, peaceful and free from terrorism country.

This is what our people expect from their government. And that is what we will do with commitment and determination.

Patrol and clarification operations continue in the Quionga and Pundanhar radius, after the successful operation in Palma, where the Defense and Security Forces repelled the enemy when they intended to occupy the town.

From that moment onwards, population composed mainly of women and children, who were in captivity to the villages of Nangade, Mueda and a significant part to Kitunda began to abandon the terrorist bases. We call for greater vigilance, as always the enemy will want to infiltrate in our midst through this massive return of populations.

To illustrate some of the advances against the terrorists, we attacked and reoccupied the enemy position of Ausse, having taken those of Diaca, Rome and Nanili and captured innumerable military equipment.

During their flight, the enemy vandalized some villages namely Matope, Namande and Nampanha in Muidumbe district.

Even today, the enemy continues to try to counterattack with a view to retaking Ausse, so we are, at this moment, in combat and the enemy is having the deserved response with his men out of combat and so many others are on the run.

It's not about singing victories, because the fight against terrorism cannot be forecast.

Foreign Forces

We are aware that terrorism is a global phenomenon, with national, regional and international consequences. A United Nations report estimates that, in Africa, around 33,300 deaths were caused by violent extremism from 2011 to 2016. Twenty African countries are victims of this phenomenon.

From an early stage, we realised that its fight should rely on the joint efforts and synergies of bilateral and multilateral partners, with experience in dealing with the phenomenon.

In fact, this position is in line with the appeal of Mozambican society, political parties, the international community that expected from the Government a cautious assessment that combined consideration and urgency.

That is how, within the scope of our diplomacy, we started contacts and shared information with various international partners about the situation in our country, in particular the situation of terrorism in Cabo Delgado.

In Southern Africa, we interacted with the leaders of the countries in the region, mainly with South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, requesting their support. We have established the same type of contacts with Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda, among other African countries, with experience in the fight against terrorism and characteristics not very different from ours.

We always kept our partners informed during our participation in regional and international events.

Several countries have expressed their willingness to support our country. Partners such as Portugal, United States of America, United Kingdom, France, Russia, Algeria, European Union, just to name a few, offered to provide support in training, advising and in the development of a strategy to fight terrorism and promotion of integrated development.

In approaching the various partners, we indicated that our greatest interest was to obtain not only specialized training for combating terrorism, but also individual and collective equipment and logistical means, to facilitate land and air mobility for health assistance . We also need support in gathering operational intelligence, exchanging information on terrorism and related crimes.

Mozambique is a full member of several regional, continental and international organisations. Among the various support options we had on the table, we decided that the best approach would be to first rely on our regional organisation, SADC.

From there, several contacts were initiated, several Summits of the Organ Troika, in Harare, Zimbabwe, in May 2020, in Gaborone, in November 2020, High Level Consultation Meeting, in Maputo, in December 2020, including at the level of the Double Troika, in Maputo, on April 8, 2021, where it was decided that the region should support Mozambique in tackling the scourge of terrorism.

The SADC Extraordinary Summit was held on June 23, 2021, in Maputo, which decided that SADC would deploy, by July 15, 2021, a contingent of the SADC Standby Force, with military land, naval and air components - as well as the police and intelligence component.

According to the decision of the SADC Summit of 23 June 2021, the SADC Forces would start arriving in our country from 15 July. SADC countries are already mobilizing in this direction, so much so that the commander of these Forces is already on the ground.

At the same SADC Extraordinary Summit, it was decided that, in addition to regional support, Mozambique had the prerogative of requesting support from any bilateral partner, outside the region, with priority for African countries, without ever neglecting the contribution of other countries that currently provide us with support, which we value and are grateful for. We shared this position with the leadership of the African Union.

This is how, in the framework of the exercise of our sovereignty, we requested support from Rwanda for its experience and immediate availability in a situation where, with

each passing day, more innocent Mozambicans die and many families live with pain in Cabo Delgado and in Mozambique in general.

A Rwandan Contingent, comprising a military and police component, has been in our country since 9 July 2021, a matter on which we have already formally notified the President of the SADC Organ, in compliance with the Summit decision, in addition to the consultations we held in Lusaka, on the sidelines of the wake of the Former President of Zambia, Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda, with members of the Double Troika.

On the other hand, under the Cooperation Agreement that has existed with Rwanda, since the 1990s, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the Republic of Rwanda on Cooperation in the Defense and Security sector and the Statute of Forces Agreement in the Fight against Terrorism in Mozambique. Therefore, the forces of Rwanda are in our country under the bilateral Agreement between our two countries in the field of security.

Rwanda's participation is part of the principle of solidarity for a noble and common cause, and for that reason it is priceless, as it is about saving human lives, avoiding the decapitation of people and the destruction of public and private goods and infrastructure, not just with intentions or studies.

The SADC contingent, which is preparing to support Mozambique with acts, has a legal framework in the SADC Treaty, the SADC Mutual Defense Pact and in the Cooperation Protocol in the Areas of Politics, Defense and Security, all ratified by our country and also in the Basic Operational Agreement - Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) for the SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM).

The mandate of the foreign forces is to help the Defense and Security Forces on the ground to restore security, tranquility and allow the resumption of normality, to consolidate definitive peace. The action of the forces on the ground will comply with precepts recommended in their own instruments and within the scope of a previously approved command structure.

The aforementioned command structure ensures that there is no confrontation, friction or disarticulation between our forces and foreign forces. It also safeguards that there is no friction between the various international forces that may be involved in our country.

It is absolutely clear that it is Mozambicans who will be at the forefront and strategic direction of the operations as they are better acquainted with the terrain, context and are the most interested in restoring stability in Mozambique and, by extension, in the region and continent.

Therefore, there is no reason to fear the presence and intervention, neither of the SADC Forces nor of the Rwandan contingent. No one asked Mozambique for a reward for supporting the saving of lives of Mozambicans. On the contrary, we must salute those who join us to eradicate terrorism. Together and in a coordinated way, all these forces will help restore tranquility in Cabo Delgado.

In fact, we Mozambicans have already had our contingent on a Peace mission in Burundi. We have already been engaged in bilateral support missions to Zimbabwe, in the Republic of Tanzania with continuity to Uganda against Idi Amin Dada; we trained the embryo of the Uganda Armed Forces in Montepuez, the East Timor Forces and, openly, with consequences for Mozambique, we supported our brothers in the struggle against the Apartheid regime in South Africa.

We have been involved in many other peace missions as observers and we do not charge these sister countries anything either.

In addition to SADC and the Rwandan contingent, our country, within the framework of bilateral military technical cooperation agreements, hosted an instruction team from the Portuguese Armed Forces committed to training Marines and Commandos of the Armed Forces of Defense of Mozambique.

We are receiving support in training from the US military and police. Likewise, with the United Kingdom, following contacts with the authorities of that country, since 2018, we have carried out some specific training activities and advice to face the scourge of terrorism.

Neighbouring countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe have trained bilaterally and are willing to continue in the specialised training of Defense and Security Forces personnel. Other countries such as Botswana are supporting the training of our Air Force and considering other bilateral ways to increase this support.

Our brothers and sisters in Kenya have been participating in the process of training and exchanging information relevant to combating terrorism. In terms of information, the Republic of Uganda has been playing an important role.

The European Union has shown itself available to support us, with the preparation of a specialized training contingent being finalized, as well as logistical support and non-lethal equipment to strengthen our forces.

As you can see, the solidarity movement of bilateral and multilateral partners willing to support Mozambique in the fight against terrorism and to face the humanitarian drama resulting from more than 800,000 displaced people and the destruction of essential infrastructure is huge. All this movement shows that the country is not alone in this struggle.

We must not fear this support. We must not fear the presence of troops from other countries. We should be afraid of being alone facing the terrorists. No country in the world is capable of being self-sufficient in the fight against terrorism.

All the support we have received has been aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Defense and Security Forces to fight terrorism and violent extremism, as we said earlier, Mozambique has taken its own steps in defending its own sovereignty.

Likewise, Mozambique took steps with its own legs in building the solidarity that we witness today. We were and will be owners of this path that we travel together with countries that face the same enemy.

Preservation of Sovereignty and Mozambicans at the Vanguard

To defend our sovereignty, we never jeopardize our future sovereignty. At no time did we fail to comply with legal precepts and international norms of cooperation. We have

applied, in a thoughtful way, all the mechanisms of international collaboration in the fight against terrorism.

Combating terrorism and maintaining peace is a sacred and non-delegable duty of all Mozambicans and a prerequisite for the sustainable economic and social development that we all aspire to as a nation.

International legal instruments on combating terrorism, including the SADC Declaration on Combating Terrorism; the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and the UN General Assembly Resolutions 55/158, 1269 (1999) and 1373 (2001) of the UN Security Council, qualify terrorist acts as a threat to peace and to international security.

Additionally, our Defense and Security Policy, approved by Law No. 12/2019, of 23 September, has as one of its principles the creation of a climate of peace and security in the region, the continent and internationally.

On the other hand, the national legal framework that establishes the legal regime for the prevention, repression and combat of terrorism and its various forms, including related actions, is enshrined in Law no. 05/2018, of 2 August.

It is in this legal context that, as a sovereign country and a full member of SADC, the entity that we currently preside, we carry out all the consultations mentioned above, in order to face the phenomenon of terrorism.

Similar assumptions were taken into account so that, bilaterally, after the favorable pronouncement of several SADC leaders, we would contact a sister African country with which we could work and deal with this issue of terrorism in Mozambique.

It is important to remember that our country also has bilateral and multilateral memorandums of understanding and cooperation agreements in the areas of defense and security with other countries such as the European Union, the United States of America, China, Russia, Portugal, Tanzania, just to name a few.

Even so, all this support will be implemented at the request, command and direction of Mozambicans, who are in charge of the country's destinies, as no one knows our home better than we do.

The Government will continue to do its part, developing actions in the short, medium and long term to keep our State's sovereignty intact. To that end, we will intensify the training, re-equipment and modernization of the Defense and Security Forces, in all specialties. We intend to provide them with the capacity to face, with greater efficiency, the scourge of terrorism and other threats that may arise in the present and in the future, after international support at each stage.

We are aware that the fight against terrorism is not limited to security aspects and the mission to stabilize or restore an environment of peace and normality. Therefore, we adopted a multifaceted response strategy that includes interventions in the economy, in the medium and long term, support for the reconstruction of damaged infrastructure, as well as social assistance to affected families, to stimulate aggregate demand and boost the economy as a whole.

On the other hand, in relation to the displaced people, we are intervening in their multiform support, accompanying them at all stages of the process, namely, prevention, protection and humanitarian assistance, reintegration and development, in the long term, and finding viable solutions for sustainable assistance.

Our action, in the strategy to prevent and control violent extremism, consists in promoting intensive programs to promote development, training and creation of employment opportunities in the provinces of Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula.

It is within this framework that we created the Northern Integrated Development Agency (ADIN), which, already active in the field, implements a program of prevention and resilience against conflicts worth over USD 100 million.

We started all these interventions aware that the lack of employment opportunities is not only a motivating factor, but also a consequence of violent extremism and terrorism, hence the profile of awareness-raising measures against radicalization in our strategy.

National Unit

Fellow Mozambicans!

National Unity was and continues to be the driving force to achieve all our victories and overcome the numerous challenges we face, whether security, such as terrorism and organized crime, ecological and climate change, sanitary such as Covid-19, among many others.

National Unity is fundamental for achieving peace and national reconciliation, based on respect for ideological and party diversity, on dialogue, tolerance, equality and equal opportunities for all, on the appreciation of ethnolinguistic, religious, intellectual and racial diversity, and in the continuous cultivation of Mozambicanity.

Therefore, as Head of State and Government, and Commander-in-Chief of the Defense and Security Forces, we urge our entire society, from community leaders, religious denominations and political parties; sportspeople, academics, professional organisations, civil society organisations, artists, researchers, economic agents, students, teachers, nurses, workers, peasants, civil servants, private sector workers, friends in the media, all citizens of our country, to do everything together with the Defense and Security Forces, to preserve and consolidate National Unity in defense of the nation, of our One and Indivisible Mozambique.

As Head of State I will not hesitate to make decisions that save the life of every Mozambican.

Thank you!