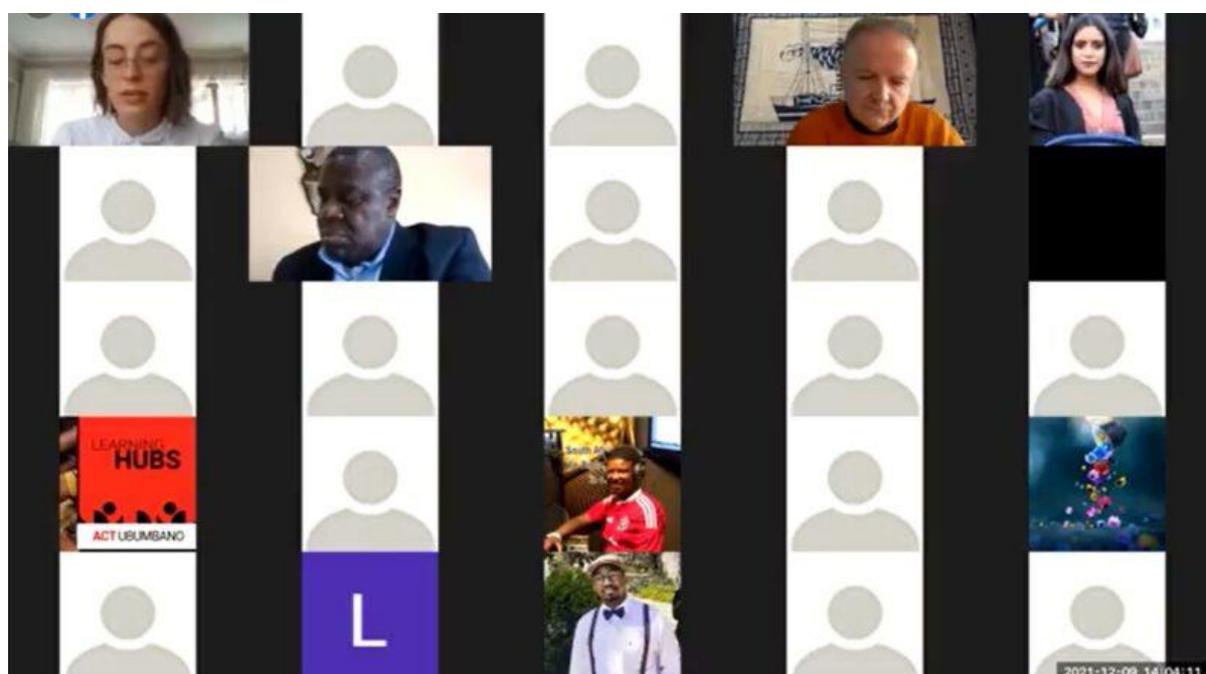


SALO Public Dialogue on the Crisis in Mozambique



Executive Summary

The Southern African Liaison Office (SALO), in partnership with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, hosted a public multi-stakeholder dialogue on the conflict in Northern Mozambique on the 9th of December 2021. The dialogue was held to discuss the current situation in Mozambique, including responses from the region, implications for the region, the economic impact of the conflict and potential ways forward. The dialogue was chaired by **Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo** and speakers included **Leila Constantino** (Centre for Public Integrity in Mozambique) and **Peter Boffin** (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project).

Summary of Presentations

Leila Constantino, Centre for Public Integrity in Mozambique

Leila Constantino provided updates and analysis of the situation in Cabo Delgado from the ground. She spoke about the humanitarian situation, the costs of the conflict, and some of the costs of the Reconstruction plan.

Humanitarian crisis

While the conflict has left no one untouched, certain groups are far more vulnerable than others, particularly groups that are unable to physically *“provide food or shelter for themselves or to do any economic activity due to their lack of strength.”* This includes pregnant women, unaccompanied children, the elderly and the physically disabled.

The ever-growing number of displaced people face hunger, a lack of shelter, and a lack of education and healthcare. Presenting data from August 2021, she explained that *“the conflict caused [the] displacement of around 165 741 families. These are equivalent to 786 520 people.”*

The financial crisis has worsened the humanitarian crisis. Most displaced people are relying on humanitarian aid agencies for food, particularly the World Food Programme, and increasingly there is a lack of funds for the aid agencies to provide food. There are at least 348 primary schools that have been destroyed, along with several secondary schools and two technical institutes. *“We have 96,274 students from the different teaching subsystems that are out of school.”*

Finally, the destruction of health infrastructure has greatly exacerbated the humanitarian crisis. Drawing on government data, she explained,

“...we have the total destruction of 10 health units, 29 partially destroyed and 39 vandalised out of 131 health units in Cabo Delgado - so it's a big number of health units that need urgent intervention as health is a basic need.”

The costs of the conflict

Leila Constantino presented research done by the Centre for Public Integrity in Mozambique, estimating the economic costs of the conflict. The main state spending has been largely within the security and public order sector and the defence sector.

“The annual growth average of the defence sector was 40,1% between 2012 and 2016 and the [growth of the] security and public order was 60,8%.”

Within defence, a significant amount of spending - almost 10 billion meticals- has also gone towards contracting private military companies.

In summary, *“the total amount estimated by CIP of the cost of Cabo Delgado was 64.17 billion meticals - this is approximately \$1.1 Billion United State dollars.”*

The Reconstruction Plan of Cabo Delgado

Recently the state presented a budget and a comprehensive plan to rebuild the areas affected by the conflict. According to Leila,

“this plan aims to guarantee the humanitarian, social and economic conditions to ensure that the population returns to their areas of origin and to normalise their lives in the original areas. This multisectoral plan needs the intervention of the departments of health, water and sanitation, energy and public infrastructure sectors. All sectors must intervene to make this plan effective.”

In addition, another key institution in the rebuilding of Cabo Delgado is the Northern Integrated Development Agency, known as ADIN, as well as the humanitarian response organisation - Disaster Risk Management and Reduction Institute known as the INGD.

The budget needed to implement this recovery plan is estimated at around \$190.2 million. Yet this amount is likely to change, and many costs are not yet reflected in the budget such as water, sanitation, and social security.

Peter Boffin, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project.

Peter Boffin from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project looked at the region more broadly and strongly emphasised the important role played by regional networks stretching out into the countries north of Mozambique, in particular, Rwanda and Tanzania but also included Kenya, Uganda and the DRC. Similarly – he discussed how the insurgency operates through networks of recruitment.

“...the centre of gravity of the networks that support the insurgency in Cabo Delgado ... is to the north, not so much to the south - and any solution to the conflict of Cabo Delgado needs to take account of addressing how these networks operate across the region.”

He discussed the significant military interventions that Rwanda and Tanzania contributed. The Rwandan military intervention has been the greatest in terms of personnel and it has arguably been the most effective intervention in the short term, he posited. Tanzania is the most significant contributor to SAMIM - a third of the deployed personnel at the launch of the mission were Tanzanian. Tanzania also has a prominent role in the mission coordination mechanism with the greatest number of representatives in that body after Mozambique, which Boffin notes as quite surprising. However, he points out that the security threats to Tanzania are significant.

“[Tanzania’s] borders provide...supportive networks [for] the insurgency in Cabo Delgado itself, and now in Niassa, and they often act as a conduit connecting the [centre] in northern Mozambique to groups and supportive networks across East Africa, the Great Lakes and beyond”.

This is where Rwanda and Tanzania have a shared interest as they both face a significant threat from militant networks in the region. This is likely why both have made such significant military contributions. Indeed, he stresses, no country in the region can risk northern Mozambique becoming another incubator for armed groups or a finance hub of expertise and recruitment - that is a threat to all countries in the region. However, Boffin stressed the importance of being cognizant of the fact that “...state

interests are not always aligned. And that makes coming to joint solutions and improving collaboration between states on security issues, and also on developmental issues [very difficult].”

He points to the various tensions between the different nations yet emphasises the importance of collaboration. Tanzania in particular could play an important bridging role as a member of both SADC and the East African Community. A proposed SADC Counterterrorism Centre could potentially solidify this role for Tanzania.

“But for that to be effective, I think there probably needs to be recognition that the centre of gravity of the problem is towards East Africa and the Great Lakes, and diplomatic and civil society engagement needs to reflect that and needs to focus on the necessity of better interstate relations on professional security issues in terms of addressing it.”

1. Questions and Contributions from Participants

- **Lwazi Somya (SALO):** *“Has there been a cost added to the post-conflict peacebuilding initiatives that will have to be undergone and who's willing to foot the bill - not only [within] the regional actors - but also international organizations such as the AU and possibly the UN and other international financial institutions that are willing to allocate resources towards the post-conflict peacebuilding process?”*
- **Question from the chat function:** *“Are the terrorist groups [that are] moving between the Great Lakes, East Africa and southern Africa utilizing similar routes of organized transitional criminal networks? Or are these newly established routes?”*
- **Robin Hunter (Journalist with Zitama)** *“Are the [speakers] able to share any updates re plans for SADC's new counterterrorism centre in Tanzania?”*
- **Lwazi Somya (SALO):** *“Is there a current DDR (Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration) strategy towards demobilization in Tanzania and then more northern countries, concerning the impact of some of the insurgents that are entering the Cabo Delgado region? Is there some form of external intervention strategy that will stop the facilitation of extremists moving into the area?”*
- **Fowzia Davids (SALO):** *“I think it is Professor Thandika Mkandawire who coined the term of the “clear and hold” concept. I think if the military force manages to push the insurgency back from one area, and they manage to hold that area for a while, then the insurgency just moves on to the next area. I think this is the cat and mouse dynamic in the fight against Al Shabaab by AMISOM in Somalia. How have Rwanda and SAMIM been tackling the insurgent groups in the north? Are they moving from one place to the next? Are they managing to break down structures within the different cells and in the insurgency?”*
- **Question from the chat:** *“Has the idea of a joint development plan for Mtwara, Cabo Delgado ever been suggested? One politician in Tanzania has suggested a Ruvuma Development Authority”.*
- **Piers Pigou (International Crisis Group):** *“What commitments are made in the plan to rebuild the social fabric, establish a dispute resolution capacity, and [foster] community dialogue, given that the leadership in so many communities*

have been ripped asunder in these areas? What emphasis is there on helping to rebuild some of those, with the caveat about concerns around some of the governance issues, which we know contributed to drivers of conflict? Is there any thinking around how those issues might be addressed in the Mozambican reconstruction plan?"

"Could you say something about the culture of secrecy in the Tanzanian security forces and body politic around addressing these issues? Do we have a kind of combined secrecy of the Tanzanians and the Mozambicans who repeatedly promised to strengthen security and intelligence cooperation?"

"I am curious about your thinking about what is going on in the mining and the land arena concerning some of these issues and how the plan may be addressing those head-on or sidestepping them?"

- **Betty Makubu:** *"Is there a plan specific for women and the girlchild, especially on a development basis?"*
- **Martino Chachiwa:** *"Can any of the panel update us on how serious the expansion of the attacks into Niassa province is?"*
- **Patrick Bond (UKZN):** *"Many respected Mozambican and regional civil society groups have called for an end to the 'blood methane war', but their voices are usually not heard. How do we get that perspective better represented here?"*
"Cyclone Kenneth's 225 kph devastation of Cabo Delgado in April 2019, and the global North (including South Africa's) failure to pay climate reparations to affected residents, plus corruption in the inadequate emergency relief operations are reasons the situation is so dire there. Fraught regional state development and repression will not work [as a developmental strategy] and a very different strategy is required. Not so?"

Responses from the Panel

Peter Boffin:

Regarding the question of whether the networks use similar routes to organised crime networks, Boffin spoke to research done by the Global Initiative on Transnational Organised Crime (GITOC) – which provided evidence that the insurgency has disrupted at least the drugs trade that used to run through Cabo Delgado – and therefore it has not been captured by the insurgents as a funding mechanism. Such evidence suggests that those kinds of larger, organized criminal networks are not underpinning the insurgency. However, in his own experience in Mtwara when working with people from the University of Dar es Salam, the networks that support border crossing by fighters and recruits from across the region are very intimate, consisting of small numbers of people travelling in twos or threes, staying in safe houses, and being ferried down to the river and guided across by local guides and local motorcycle taxi drivers. *"The type of guys that might well be involved... in these smaller criminal activities [would likely also be involved] ... in supporting the movement of people and no doubt [a] small amount of arms across the border."*

In terms of security actions taken to prevent people from crossing, certain borders between Tanga, Mtwara, Cabo Delgado, Kigoma and Burundi are heavily patrolled by the Tanzanian People's Defence Force, particularly since 2018, and they have had limited success in stopping the flow of people. They are, however, not getting much

cooperation at the community level, and it is becoming increasingly evident that this is needed, but is significantly lacking.

While we cannot yet gauge the extent of the effectiveness of SAMIM, the recruiting networks are still alive. Recently, two armed men were arrested near the border on their way to join the insurgency. It seems the insurgents are showing resilience and can move and regroup and have expanded into Niassa.

We also need to consider the interests around the LNG investments, as there seems to be exceptionalism around securing Palma as the main objective of the Rwandan intervention.

The SADC Counterterrorism Centre for Tanzania will probably move slowly. Tanzania has its own National Counterterrorism Centre, but it is ad hoc, it is not established in the law.

There is limited information sharing within and from Tanzania as things are done “*very very carefully*”, particularly in relation to Western interests. Security initiatives are often centrally driven and often disconnected from local police. While this all may lead to secrecy and a disjointed security effort on the one hand, on the other hand, Boffin explains, “*the positive outcome of this is that you do not have the whole counterterrorism industrial complex in Tanzania as in places like Kenya. But it does mean you do have to engage a little bit differently*”.

Leila Constantino:

The government estimated a cost of \$190 million to rebuild Cabo Delgado. The Mozambican Reconstruction Plan is short- to medium-term so for this purpose, it seems adequate. However, the plan does not cover all the issues - it focuses on social and economic issues without addressing governance and economic issues. In Mozambique, the government is an expert in making plans, however, if it is not well implemented it will not achieve its goals and objectives for the population to safely return to their areas of origin. This should be monitored going forward.

After the cyclones in Mozambique, the government had a plan to respond to this, but the population indicated that these plans did not benefit them. Several people did not receive the subsidy and the money and shelter that the plan promised. Cyclone Idai and Kenneth are currently not being talked about in Mozambique – they have been forgotten. Corruption and the management of public funds need to be urgently addressed for any plans to be effective.

The post-conflict reconstruction that is taking place on the ground currently is a short-term plan and tries to reconnect networks of communication, open routes to re-establish water and sanitation networks and re-establish electricity.

The question of the Ruvuma Development Authority is a significant political issue, yet it is not being widely discussed in Mozambique. It is likely to be difficult to implement in Mozambique because there has been no exploration of gas in Cabo Delgado since it became “*a battlefield*”. It can take more time to start talking about that and to see if it can be implemented in Mozambique. The emphasis now is to guarantee security and to re-establish some sense of normality in the affected districts.

Regarding the question of the national plans for women and girls in Cabo Delgado, no plan exists, at least none that has been publicly shared. However, NPOs are advocating for women's rights and gender issues.

The Niassa attacks are worrying. Seven days ago, there was another attack in one of the districts that was also attacked in 2020. There is hope that the government will address or respond to these attacks so that it does not spread.

Social inclusion is needed in Cabo Delgado and the northern, central, and southern provinces. What has been heard from some people in Cabo Delgado, Nampula, and Niassa is that people feel neglected. Cabo Delgado has massive economic potential, but people are unable to participate in exploration projects and companies.

Conclusion

This dialogue took place while the SADC mission in Mozambique, known as SAMIM, continued after an extension in October 2021. While there have been some military successes, the humanitarian situation continues to worsen. The dialogue aimed to create a space in which stakeholders could become better informed, could share perspectives, and could contribute to building synergies and consensus for strategies relating to the conflict in Mozambique. While the dialogue looked at the region more broadly, particularly focusing on nations to the north of Mozambique, South Africa is a key strategic actor in engaging the Mozambique government and the dialogue provided an important opportunity for South African actors to engage. The security situation was discussed in terms of how the local populations, as well as the region at large, were affected, and different suggestions were shared.

The analysis and recommendations included in this Policy Report do not necessarily reflect the view of SALO or any of the donors or conference participants, but rather draw upon the major strands of discussion put forward at the event. Participants neither reviewed nor approved this document. The contents of the report are the sole responsibility of SALO, and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the donors who provided financial assistance for this policy dialogue session.

About the Southern African Liaison Office:



The Southern African Liaison Office (SALO) is a South African-based not-for-profit civil society organisation which, through advocacy, dialogue, policy consensus and in-depth research and analysis, influences the current thinking and debates on foreign policy especially regarding African crises and conflicts.

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