

## Conflict Weekly

### Monthly Review of Violence in Mozambique November 2020

Montepuez



Mocimboa da praia



Gondola



Inchope



Assembleia da República



Presidência da República



This November edition of our conflict bulletin has the President's efforts at a unilateral ceasefire being dismissed by the *Renamo Military Junta*, who continued with its attacks in Sofala and Manica. In the Northern province of Cabo Delgado, things went from bad to worse bordering the chaotic, with the successful military attacks and human rights abuses brutality by the insurgents rendering great parts of Cabo Delgado off-limits for civilian rule and organized social life. The ensuing refugee crisis affecting basically all provinces of Mozambique minus the southern ones (Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane), has made the costs of war a daily reality with impacts far greater than the ideas of localized armed conflicts tend to convey.

This analysis is organized in different categories and shows how violence unfolds in Mozambique. Violence seems to be more than a ritual practice among political actors fighting for power, being increasingly used as an instrument for production and reproduction of social, and economic relations (and even for survival). It is CEPCB's perception that this constancy of violence might be blocking the possibility of creating discursive spaces and practical measures to promote peace in the country.

The full document with all the news clips can be accessed at: <https://cepcb.org.mz/category/conflict-weekly/>

### Context

In this analysis, the news pieces are separated into different categories of violence: political, social, police brutality, gender and crime. We have also inserted news on structural aspects of violence in categories such as discrimination, marginalization, peace, dialogue and reconciliation. At a later stage, ritual crimes were also inserted in a separate category. This collection allows a more robust analysis of the violence in Mozambique, and helps to identify trends in how violence is perceived in order to boost the efforts to mitigate, and eventually, end violence. Even if the different kinds of violence seem different in their manifestations, as a human act they are, in our view, all related to the way individuals and human groups value life - the violation of political and individual rights are a common denominator in all kinds of violence.

### Monthly Highlights - November

In November, political violence has dominated the news charts due to the intensification of the armed attacks by the insurgents in Cabo Delgado, in the districts of Muidumbe, Palma, and Nangade. Those attacks have resulted in the loss of human life and property, and have intensified the migratory push already in motion towards safer areas. The Paquitequete beach in Pemba, the capital city of Cabo Delgado, became the most mediatic migratory destination. The month was also marked by the week of unilateral military truce decreed by the President of the Republic, Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, meant to stop the military pursuits of the Renamo Military Junta soldiers and of its leader. The unilateral truce was ignored by the Military Junta who carried out several attacks in Sofala province, leading to a new wave of internally displaced persons.

In November, we were able to identify 256 news pieces related to our various categories of violence. Amongst those, 98 deal with *political violence*, 59 are connected to *crime*, 33 are related to *social violence*, 24 were the result of *traffic accidents*, 13 have to do with efforts at *dialogue*, 14 deal with *gender-based violence*, and 11 fall under *reconciliation*. The categories of *ritual crimes* and of *marginalization* have scored two pieces each.

The 98 news pieces connected to **political violence**, dealing with the violent attacks perpetrated by armed groups in the central and northern regions of the country, in the final days of October and beginning of November, have contributed to put political violence at the apex of news on violence. In the central region of Mozambique, the violence attributed to the Junta Militar da Renamo has as its principal focus the districts of Nhamatanda and Gorongosa in Sofala province, and the district of Sussundenga, in Manica province.

During November, violent conflicts erupted in Cabo Delgado in the districts of Palma, Nangade, and Muidumbe. In Muidumbe, the news reported the decapitation of 15 children that were captured while taking part in an initiation ritual ceremony, and there were reports regarding the assassination of 50 people in the local football field of Muatide. Besides the violent attacks, the

drama lived by the refugees in the center and north of the country is also a matter of concern judging by its coverage in the news.

The intensification of attacks in Muidumbe had as a consequence the massive dislocation of people in search for more secure areas. In this context, more than 95 thousand individuals have escalated the City of Pemba to seek refuge or in transit for other safe areas in the province or elsewhere. The month was also marked by the death of 50 refugees that were fleeing attacks in central and northern regions of Cabo Delgado. According to the government, the armed conflict in Cabo Delgado had at the time led to an estimated 95 thousand people becoming refugees.

**Social violence** had a score of 33 news pieces during November, and the highlight goes to murders, assaults, lynching, and poisoning. These numbers show that politics or bad governance are not the sole sources of violence in Mozambique, with social values and material well-being laying behind a sizable number of the violence.

13 news were fielded in the category of **dialogue**. In an effort to control the armed violence in the centre of Mozambique, more concretely in the provinces of Manica and Sofala, the Head of the State, Filipe Nyusi, declared a unilateral truce, to persuade the leader of the Renamo Military Junta, Mariano Nhongo, to seat at the negotiation table. The unilateral truce decision by the Head of the State was not accepted, and the primary parts continuing to throw at each accusations of unwillingness to negotiate.

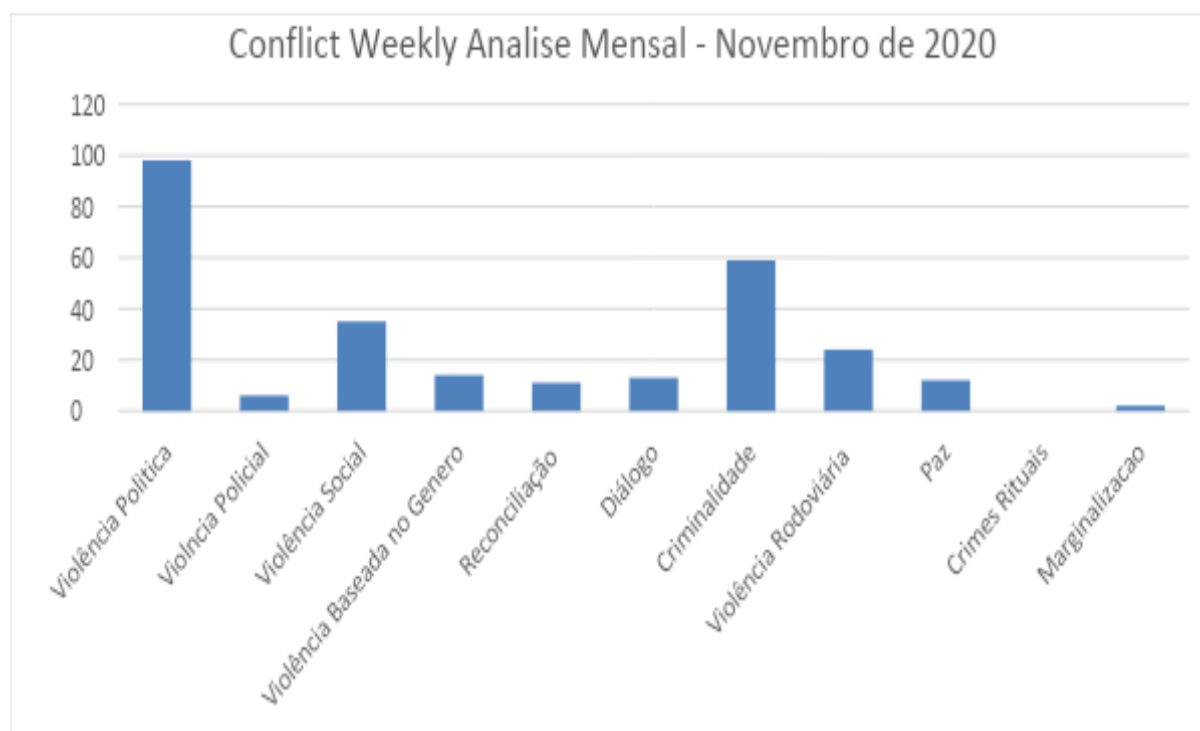
Episodes of **gender-based violence** were reported 14 times. This monthly gathering of gender-based violence was topped by the particularly grim data on sexual violence released by the Mozambican police. According to the police, 1430 children were sexually abused from January to September 2020, and 99% of such cases of sexual aggression were directed to girls.

Appeals to **peace** have increased in number and tone and in November we recorded 12 news pieces on this category. The President of Renamo, Ossufo Momade considers that Mozambique is living under an unreal peace, if judged by the political persecution, exclusion and irregularities in electoral processes. It is important to note here the appeals for peace by residents of Muxúnguè, a locality heavily affected by the war in the central region. In the same period, the Institute for Multiparty Democracy has organized a series of televised debates with leaders of political parties and social figures on virtue of the commemoration of the 30 years of the first multiparty constitution in the country.

The national roads continue to compete, if not surpass, political violence and crime in terms of number of fatalities. **Traffic accidents** featured in 24 news pieces, with one accident in Xai-Xai being responsible for 4 deaths and the serious maiming of other six, Gaza province. In Massinga, Inhambane province, another accident killed 4 and injured other 27. In Chimoio, Manica province, there was a hit and run, leading to the death of a 10 years old girl. The accidents are blamed on high speed and bad to pedestrians' irregular crossings of roads.

General **crimes** were mentioned 59 times, and the bulk of the criminal activity was related to extorsions, theft, assaults, and kidnappings.

The category that fetched more news pieces after political violence was **crime**, were we recorded 59 news pieces dealing mostly with burglary, assaults, and kidnappings.



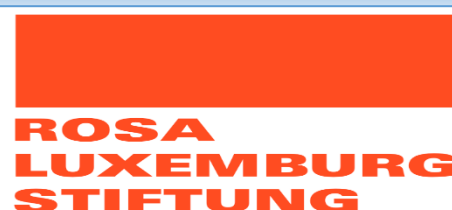
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**Parceiro:**



The CEPCB brings weekly to citizens, politicians, and other decision-makers in the civil, community, and state fields, an analysis of violence in the country. This analysis shows how violence unfolds, and is organised into specific analytical categories. Violence in Mozambique *appears not only to be a common practice among political actors in the struggle for power, but also an instrument of production and reproduction of social, economic, and even individual survival relationships.* It is CEPCB's perception that the constancy of "violence" may be blocking the capacity to build a society of peace and prosperity. The different manifestations of violence seem to be intersecting and creating a rationality that builds the **citizen as a political subject product of violence** in Mozambique, and also builds **violence as an act of citizenship.**