

## Conflict Weekly

### Monthly Review of Violence in Mozambique October 2020

Montepuez



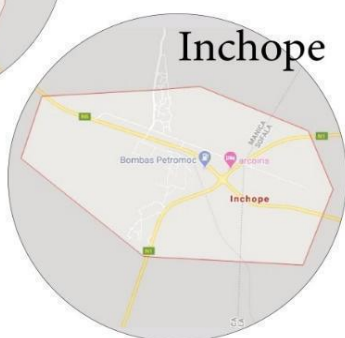
Mocimboa da praia



Gondola



Inchope



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In October, despite spiraling violence in Cabo Delgado, followed by a total disruption of civilian life and a humanitarian tragedy, the government has so far refused to call for international support. This refusal follows its latest praxis of informal mediations outside the scope of formal peace negotiations under the aegis of the United Nations. *By favoring ad-hoc political arrangements brought forward by loose mediations, the government has managed to end war **with** Renamo while maintaining the necessary domestic sovereignty to decide the format of the peace building process **without** Renamo.* The issue seems more to do with the survival of the undemocratic practices of the party than with the grievances behind groups such as the Renamo Military Junta or the insurgents.

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 - October

Despite spiraling violence in Cabo Delgado, followed by a total disruption of civilian life and a humanitarian tragedy, the government has so far refused to call for international support. This refusal follows its latest praxis of informal mediations outside the scope of formal peace negotiations under the aegis of the United Nations. *By favoring ad-hoc political arrangements brought forward by loose mediations, the government has managed to end war **with** Renamo while maintaining the necessary domestic sovereignty to decide the format of the peace building process **without** Renamo.* The same idea seems to be toyed around by Frelimo, with Veronica Macamo, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, stating that Mozambique was still not considering asking for UN military support because the natural conditions in Cabo Delgado, such as the dense vegetation, creates difficulties in combat. The issue seems more to do with the survival of the undemocratic practices of the party than with the grievances behind groups such as the Renamo Military Junta or the insurgents.

October was characterized by a series of events related to political violence. The ongoing violence in Cabo Delgado, and the ensuing humanitarian crisis, have been widely covered in the media, with an emphasis on the unspeakable barbarity and gross human rights abuses being perpetrated against civilians in the conflict since its onset in 2017. Despite fighting a lost war, the government has said no to any kind of military support that entails the deployment of forces within the framework of international law.

In the central region of Mozambique, the various attacks by the Renamo Military Junta has led to the disruption of normal life, with circulation along the vital N6 and N1 roads on that area being subject to military convoys, and the confrontations in the rural areas of Manica and Sofala provinces leading to citizens having to flee the fighting to seek refuge in district capitals.

The media also reported an inability by the government to provide support to the victims of the armed attacks. The majority of the victims of the terrorist attacks in Cabo Delgado do not have access to any kind of support (food, shelter or medicines), despite their constant appeals for

In overall, political violence had 128 citations in the written media, a testimony of the instability in the center and north of the country. However, despite the gravity of the terrorist attacks in Cabo Delgado in the beginning of October, Veronica Macamo, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, stated that Mozambique was still not considering asking for UN military support because the natural conditions in Cabo Dalgado, such as the dense vegetation, creates difficulties in combat.

Analysts, academics and religious leaders think it unconceivable that supposed “individuals without face” attack populations, destroy social infrastructures at a time when the consolidation of peace and development seem to be a general concern. Various voices have urged the government to end abuse and provide access to the victims. Amnesty International has demanded justice for the victims, while the Center for Public Integrity demands an investigation on supposed human rights violations perpetrated by the Defense and Security Forces. A Mozambican Red Cross cadre has said that the constant attacks by the insurgents in Cabo Delgado and the Renamo Military Junta in Sofala and Manica make it difficult to reach the areas where people seek refuge to provide support.

By the end of October, Mozambique had an estimated number of 435 thousand Internally Displaced People, the vast majority seeking refuge in Pemba leading thus to a huge pressure in the city that is at the moment devoid of resources to satisfy the various demands of the population in need. As a result of this, the country decided finally seek the support of the European Union in the fight against terrorism, a plea that was satisfied in the form of training and logistics support.

**Crime** was the second category in terms of numbers (45 news pieces), with the provinces of Maputo, Niassa, Nampula and Manica leading the count. Amongst the most reported types of

crime were burglary, deception, selling of false covid-19 tests, assaults and aggressions, and in the context of covid-19 restrictions, the selling and consumption of alcoholic beverages. Assaults and burglaries seem to change focus from area to area, but never ending in general. Residents in the vicinity of the Marrere General Hospital in Mapula have complained against, physical assaults, burglary, and physical assaults that they suffer during the nights. In Maputo, citizens complain of an increase in car thefts, while traders in the Mavalane neighborhood where in the international airport lays, mention that they have to close their shops early because of assaults. Kidnappings remain in the menu of criminal occurrences in Mozambique, with a gradual dissemination of the phenomena to the city of Beira.

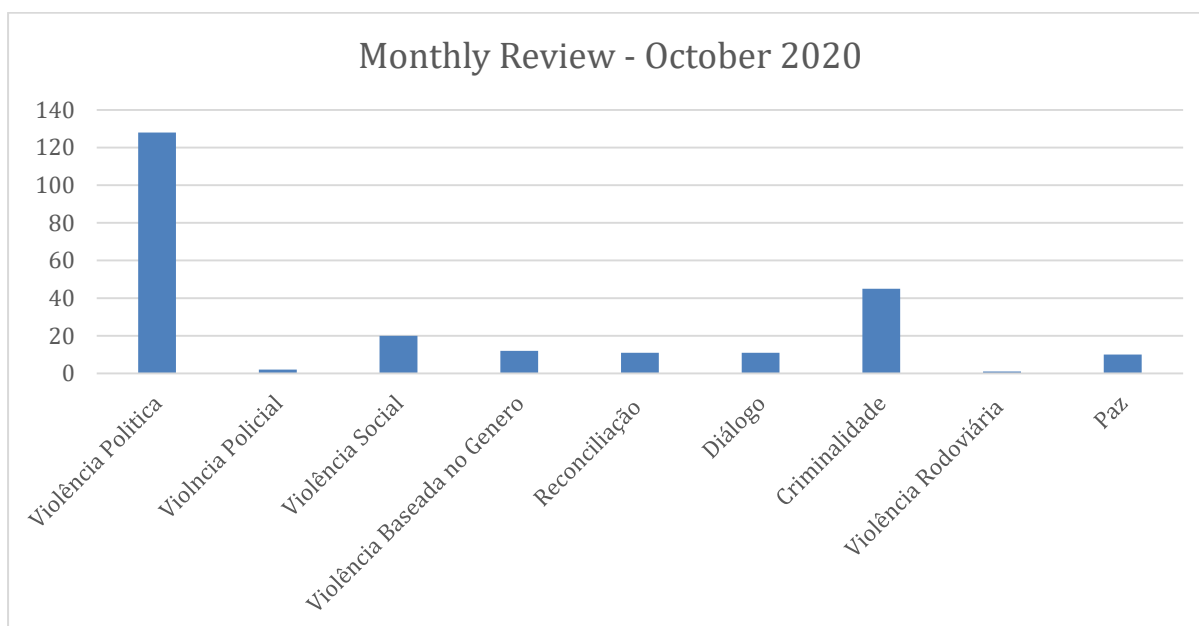
A substantial part of the social interaction in Mozambique still fall within the confines of **social violence**, and 20 news pieces were reported in this category during October. In Inhambane province, 12 citizens were killed because of old age, accused of witchcraft, through acts of family or community justice. Two individuals escaped from being lynched by mob in the Conhane neighborhood in Gaza, accused of stealing cattle. They claim to know the real thieves as the thieves used to drink in their shebeen, and to have communicated the fact to local authorities and to the police, but to no avail.

**Gender-based violence** and sexual crimes continue rampant and unabated, with 12 news of the utmost gravity. For example, father was detained in Polana Caniço neighborhood in Maputo on of rape of his 15 years old daughter. The mand confessed and claims that the act was consensual. In the town of Chibuto, Gaza province, a man has raped his wife and inserted solid objects in her genitalia to avenge from her alleged cheating. A 63 years old community leader was detained in Homoine district accused of sexually abusing a e years old child in 2017.

In the category of **Dialogue**, Joaquim Chissano, former president of Mozambique, has been quoted saying that there is a need to look for the deep causes of the conflict in Cabo Delgado in order to secure lasting peace in the country. Regarding the armed attacks in central Mozambique, he claims that dialogue is the best way to solve the problem. In its turn, the President of the Republic, Filipe Nyusi, has manifest his availability for dialogue with the Renamo splinter group, while announcing a 7 days truce to allow for meeting with the representatives of the Junta Militar da Renamo.

Within the framework of the DDR, news reports indicate that more than 1000 former Renamo soldiers have been demobilized and socially reintegrated, in what can be considered a positive step towards **reconciliation**. It is expected that 326 more former Renamo guerrillas will surrender their weapons until November in the context of the DDR.

Different pronunciations for **peace** have been made this month. Leaders of different religious denomination have met at the Catholic Cathedral in Maputo in the context of the celebration of the 28 years of the General Peace Agreement. Participants indicated that dialogue and tolerance are the pathways for an effective peace. Teodato Hungwana a senior Frelimo Cadre, argues that the signing of various peace agreements signals that the country is still at war, and that this war unravels through other means. Ossufo Momade, Renamo President, defends that national reconciliation is a tool for an effective peace, but that peace does not only mean the silencing of guns but also the well-being of all.



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Parceiro:



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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**.