



PEACEMAKING ADVISORY GROUP (PAG) – CABO DELGADO
MULTISTAKEHODLER CONSULTATIONS REPORT VII
19 June – 26 June 2024

ENQUIRIES

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Military interventions in Cabo Delgado should be complemented by a political strategy addressing the root causes of fragility and recruitment. This strategy should create a dialogue platform for all stakeholders to build trust, identify shared interests, and solve problems collaboratively. The platform must be sustainable, scalable from district to provincial levels, based on evidence-based research, and supported by the national government. The PAG is committed to helping establish this platform.
- The PAG recommends that NGOs and research institutions collaborate to create and promote a dialogue platform, which in turn will continue the work SAMIM's civilian component initiated as part of the efforts to resolve the conflict in Cabo Delgado. Consultations revealed widespread recognition of the need to prioritize non-military efforts in addressing the situation.
- The government and international partners should strengthen legal frameworks on child soldiers, improve monitoring and data collection, and enhance community awareness and education programmes on child recruitment.
- The government of Mozambique should prioritize and expedite the development of an amnesty law to facilitate the rapid implementation of reintegration and rehabilitation programmes. Specific legal protections and consideration for the needs of child-soldiers should be incorporated into reintegration and rehabilitation programming.
- Additional training for prison staff is required to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to safely manage violent extremists, including de-escalation techniques and counter-radicalization strategies. Where prison staff are concerned about potential risks to their family, additional protection and resource must be made available to ensure their safety and well-being.
- The international development community should urgently increase humanitarian funding for Cabo Delgado to address critical needs, including food security, shelter, healthcare, and education for displaced and affected populations. Enhanced financial support will enable humanitarian organizations to deliver timely and effective aid, mitigating the crisis's impact and fostering stability in the region.
- Based on the MoU between SADC and the PAG, the PAG should be considered as an independent contributor to SADC's after-mission review.
- SADC should consider the deployment of a special envoy to Cabo Delgado, agreeable to the Mozambican government, to maintain a situational awareness of security developments in Cabo Delgado and continue to support the security of local communities in light of SAMIM's drawdown.

1. INTRODUCTION

Between 19 and 26 June 2023, representatives of the Peacemaking Advisory Group (PAG) travelled to the Republic of Mozambique and the Republic of South Africa as part of the PAG's ongoing efforts to advance peace, security, and development in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique.

The objective of the visit was to continue with the PAG's implementation strategy and implementation of activities for the next twelve-month period. In addition to reengaging trusted local partners to determine the best pathway forward, the PAG held expansive consultations with civil society, government, and private sector actors at the local, national, and regional level.

2. SCOPE

This report will provide an overview of insights garnered from consultations on the current political, security, and humanitarian environment in Cabo Delgado and the wider region, as well as indicate the PAG's strategic focus going forward.

3. SECURITY

- 3.1** Following the major assault on Macomia district headquarters on 10 May, there has been a slight reduction in Islamic State Mozambique (ISM) activity. That attack saw ISM successfully capture several vehicles from humanitarian aid organizations and kidnap at least two aid workers. The Mozambican military (FADM) with support from the Rwandan Defense Force (RDF) and Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) were able to regain control of the city after the withdrawal of ISM on 12 May. The attack demonstrated a high level of planning and saw the successful use of Improved Explosive Devices (IEDs) against SAMIM vehicles. It also was notable for the extensive use of child soldiers. Given the sophistication of the attack on Macomia, there is increased concern that ISM could in the future target the towns of Meluco, Ancuabe and Metuge. They could also raid prisons in or around the provincial capital Pemba to free detained comrades.
- 3.2** On 29 May, an ISM assault on Mbau in Mocímboa da Praia was thwarted by the Rwanda Security Forces (RSF), resulting in significant insurgent casualties. Estimates of insurgent casualties vary, with the RSF claiming up to 70 killed, local sources confirming at least 50, and IS newspaper al-Naba admitting to 10 deaths while calling higher figures exaggerated.
- 3.3** On 8 June, a small ISM force attempted another attack on Mbau, managing only to burn several houses before retreating. On 19 June, insurgents launched a third attack on Mbau, killing at least three civilians. Besides Mbau clashes, ISM claimed an IED

attack on 8 June that allegedly killed or injured five Rwandan soldiers, though uncorroborated. On 11 June, a child died from an IED in Mbau. Meanwhile, ISM regrouped around Mucojo and Catupa forest, with a small raiding party heading south, looting and burning buildings in several villages between 10 – 18 June, causing residents to flee.

- 3.4 Following announcements in April, Rwanda deployed an additional 2000 troops to Cabo Delgado, which when complete, would raise the number of Rwandan soldiers and police personnel in Mozambique to 4,500. Brig. Gen. Patrick Karuretha, who leads the RDF's international military cooperation, has publicly stated that these forces will be tasked with providing training for Mozambican forces and take over security responsibilities in areas previously tasked to SAMIM. However, there is increasing public concern in Mozambique with regards to Rwanda's growing deployment. A parliamentary inquiry and disclosure of the terms and details of the bilateral agreement between Mozambique and Rwanda may help to address these concerns and improve transparency.
- 3.5 SAMIM forces have withdrawn from all three of their forward operating bases in Cabo Delgado and will completely depart Mozambique by 16 July 2024. Some SAMIM personnel may stay in Pemba in the short term to facilitate the extraction of SAMIM vehicles and equipment.
- 3.6 The withdrawal of SAMIM may embolden ISM, particularly if handover to Mozambican and Rwandan forces is not handled effectively. ISM has already framed the withdrawal of SAMIM as their victory against 'crusader forces' in multiple editions of the group's weekly *Al-Naba* publication. This could help to strengthen the group's recruitment efforts. Local sources have reported ongoing recruitment activities in Nampula province. The continued recruitment in Nampula suggests that despite setbacks in combat, ISM is determined to maintain their operational capacity and extend their influence in the region. The appointment of a SADC Special Envoy to Cabo Delgado may help to ensure SADC maintains a strong situational awareness of security developments in northern Mozambique.
- 3.7 There is growing concern about radicalization within prisons in Cabo Delgado as overcrowded, under-resourced facilities without effective counter-radicalization strategies, could become breeding grounds for ISM ideology. PAG sources reported that local prisons officers often feared inmates affiliated with ISM, reducing their ability to effectively carry out their duties.
- 3.8 While President Nyusi has publicly declared that combatants who lay down their arms will be granted amnesty, and that 'transition centres' will be established to help reintegrate former combatants, no formal amnesty or reintegration structure have thus far been established. The Mozambican government established the Interministerial Commission on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law

through a presidential decree on 28 April 2022 – part of whose mandate was to consider the development of an amnesty law.

4. HUMANITARIAN

4.1 Between mid-April and mid-May, escalating violence displaced nearly 59,000 people and damaged critical infrastructure across six districts: Chiúre, Ibo, Macomia, Mecufi, Mocímboa da Praia, and Muidumbe. In Macomia alone, ISM attacks and related security concerns forced at least 4,500 people, including over 2,600 children, to flee their homes between 10 – 21 May. Displaced individuals sought refuge in IDP sites and host communities within the affected districts. Notably, children make up more than half of the displaced population in Macomia and face a heightened risk of protection violations and recruitment into violent extremism. The persistent attacks in Cabo Delgado continue to restrict humanitarian access and elevate security risks for aid workers in ISM-affected areas, hindering the delivery of essential aid to vulnerable populations.

4.2 The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has recently appealed to donors for an additional \$413 million in emergency aid to support approximately 2.3 million people in Cabo Delgado and neighboring Nampula province. As of March 2024, the UNHCR's \$49 million funding requirement was only 17 percent met, and the broader Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan was just 14 percent funded. Without immediate measures to ensure the safety and security of IDPs and an increase in humanitarian funding, the population in northern Mozambique, particularly the IDPs, could face an escalating humanitarian and security crisis. In recent months, El Nino-induced drought and flooding in central and southern Mozambique has put further strain on humanitarian agencies operating in the country.

4.3 Increase in ISM activity since January has resulted in school closures in several Cabo Delgado districts, leaving over 22,700 children out of the classroom this year. This disruption has exacerbated the incidence of early and forced marriages, with girls being abducted and coerced into marriage by armed groups or families seeking dowries. Young girls who marry are significantly less likely to continue their education and face a heightened risk of physical and sexual violence. Additionally, they are more susceptible to severe complications during pregnancy and childbirth.

5. POLITICAL

5.1 On 5 May, the ruling Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) selected Daniel Chapo as its presidential candidate for the 9 October elections. Considering FRELIMO's historical electoral performance, Chapo will likely assume the presidency in October. Although Chapo's approach to the conflict in Cabo Delgado is likely to maintain a high degree of continuity, new leadership presents an

opportunity for a more balanced strategy that integrates security measures with social and economic reforms, in other words an approach in which the military and civilian components reinforce each other in resolving the conflict.

5.2 Daniel Chapo made a visit to Kigali with President Nyusi on 15 June. Although the Mozambican government has not publicly acknowledged the trip, it likely included a meeting with Rwandan President Paul Kagame. Before traveling to Rwanda, Chapo visited Tanzania and met with President Samia Suluhu Hassan, a meeting that Tanzanian security leaders had been advocating for since Chapo's nomination in early May. Following his visit to Tanzania, Chapo also met with President Emmerson Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe in Harare. President Mnangagwa is the current incoming chairperson of SADC, while President Hassan is incoming chair of the SADC Organ.

5.3 In June, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC) visited Mozambique ahead of the October general elections. It is important that efforts are made to avoid the post-election violence which followed the 2023 October local elections after allegations of vote rigging in multiple municipalities emerged.

6. REGIONAL

6.1 Reports in May indicate that the United States export credit agency Exim Bank will not decide on releasing financial support for TotalEnergies' Mozambique LNG project before the US election in November. Exim Bank's hesitation stems from concerns over the worsening security situation in Cabo Delgado and an ostensible reluctance to approve long-term projects amid domestic political uncertainty. This places further doubt about the LNG's project prospects.

6.2 In August, President Samia Hassan will take over chairpersonship of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Affairs from President Hakainde Hichilema. Tanzania and Mozambique have seen a strengthening of relations under President Hassan, which has included the signing of two new bilateral security agreements. Tanzanian troops will remain engaged in Mozambique following the withdrawal of SAMIM forces. It remains to be seen whether, as chairperson of the Organ, President Hassan pushes to have the conflict in Cabo Delgado back on the regional agenda.

6.3 The European Union is evaluating a new request for financial support for Rwandan forces combating the insurgency in Cabo Delgado, according to European Commissioner for International Relations, Jutta Urpilainen, during her visit to Maputo. This potential funding would add to the previously approved 20 million euros in 2023. Approval of the new funding requires a consensus among EU member

states. There is concern, however, that this funding could be used by Rwanda to free up additional capacity for supporting the M23 rebel group, whom SADC troops are currently seeking to neutralize.

6.4 As previously argued by the PAG, SADC should be the primary body tasked with the provision of security assistance to Mozambique. The PAG considers SADC's decision to withdraw SAMIM as a serious setback for regional security cooperation efforts and indeed for the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) as a whole.

7. Gender Issues

The PAG held extensive discussions with gender experts in Cabo Delgado regarding the impact of the conflict and resulting humanitarian crises on women and girls. This included a discussion of some of the work SAMIM's civilian component with women groups in the region. The importance of continuing this work was noted, given the highly deleterious effects that the conflict has had on women and girls.

8. LIST OF ENGAGEMENTS

- SAMIM
- United Nations
- Diplomatic Missions
- Government
- Religious Leaders
- Civil Society Leaders

ABOUT THE PEACEMAKING ADVISORY GROUP

Objective - The purpose of the Peacemaking Advisory Group (PAG) is to create a platform for engagement to ensure all communities are heard, based on mutual respect and *ubuntu*, to de-escalate intercommunal tensions and unlock development potential.

Membership - The PAG is a regional civil society-led initiative that is politically neutral and harnesses the experience and expertise of its constituent members to support peace and development in Southern Africa through listening and dialogue.

The PAG is chaired by Bishop Trevor Mwamba, Bishop of the Anglican Church, and President of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), and comprises the following members:

- Ms. Alice Mogwe, Executive Director of Ditshwanelo (Botswana Human Rights Centre), and President of the International Federation of Human Rights.
- Sheikh Aminuddin Muhammad Ibrahim, President of the Islamic Council of Mozambique, State Council member of the Current President, President of the Council of Religions of Mozambique, and Founder of the Hamza Institute.
- Bishop Dinis Matsolo, President of the Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation Commission of Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM) and Executive Director of PIRCOM, Republic of Mozambique.
- Ms. Fatma Karume, leading Human Rights Lawyer, United Republic of Tanzania.
- Dr Craig Moffat, Security and Policy Analyst.
- Ambassador Roeland van de Geer, former Ambassador of the Netherlands to Mozambique.

The PAG has the support of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG), comprised of distinguished leaders from the region, as well as an advisory council comprising a broad range of experienced peacebuilding and development specialist.