

# MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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## Frelimo and Renamo remain intransigent

Neither Frelimo nor Renamo have moved from their rigid positions in negotiations which have now gone through 12 rounds. Renamo insists on "parity" in the electoral process, which Frelimo rejects, and there seems no discussion of a possible compromise.

Frelimo continues to insist that Renamo disarm its presidential guard and remaining guerrillas, which Renamo rejects. Government now has a heavy military presence about 20 km from Renamo president Afonso Dhlakama's headquarters at Satunjira, Gorongosa; Renamo insists they be pulled back and government refuses.

There is clearly space for negotiated settlements. For example, in a long interview with *Canal de Moçambique* (31 July), MDM leader Daviz Simango points out that the Renamo presidential guard could easily be converted into a Renamo-owned private security company which would have the right to be armed. And an easy concession to Renamo would be to give this company contracts to guard some state facilities.

Renamo had a meeting 29-31 July with 300 party militants in Satunjira. *O Pais* (1 August) reported that the delegates took a hard line and demanded that if government made no concessions, then Renamo should not permit elections to take place this year and next. Both *O Pais* and *Savana* (2 August) were impressed by the quality of the organisation of the conference.

On the first day, Monday, Dhlakama made a very strong statement threatening to divide the country in half during the next week. But after being contacted by US and EU ambassadors, on Wednesday he backed down on his threat. Renamo briefed the press that the ambassadors had promised Frelimo would make concessions, but other sources rejected this, and no concessions were offered at the next round of talks.

Indeed, Guebuza stressed the continued hard line in speeches in Zambézia last week in which he insisted that no political agreement with Renamo could violate the constitution. (*Domingo*, 11 August) In the negotiations Renamo has wanted government and Renamo to submit a joint proposal to parliament for changes to elections laws and perhaps other laws. Frelimo rejects this on the grounds that separation of powers in the constitution does not allow such a joint proposal, and that Renamo must submit its own proposal to parliament - where it would be rejected by the Frelimo majority.

Renamo continues to boycott the electoral process. It has not taken up its seats on electoral commissions and did not register to stand in local elections by the deadline last week. Rumours in Maputo suggest the 20 November local elections might be postponed, but Frelimo leaders including Macuácuá, say publicly and privately that the elections will go ahead as scheduled.

## Editor sacked and critics criticised

Rogério Siteo, the respected editor of the state-owned daily *Notícias*, was dismissed last week. His replacement was an explicitly political appointment, Jaime Langa, who has no journalistic experience but was a Frelimo vereador (local minister) in Matola.

*Notícias* and the Sunday newspaper *Domingo* are both owned indirectly by the government. *Domingo* has always promoted a very strict Frelimo line, but in his decade as editor, Siteo carefully opened space for criticism and debate, especially toward the end of long articles. This has always rankled in some sectors of Frelimo, and he may have gone too far when he personally attended a press conference by Dhlakama and wrote a very thoughtful article in *Notícias* (15 July). *Notícias* has also reported some in Frelimo calling for Guebuza to be more flexible in negotiations with Renamo.

Siteo's dismissal follows the return to influence of Edson Macuácuá. In September last year he was removed from the Frelimo Central Committee post of Mobilisation and Propaganda Secretary (effectively press spokesman) to the lower profile post of Secretary for Cadre Training, following heavy criticism of his handling of the media at the Frelimo 10th Congress. At the Congress he ordered copies of *O País* and *Savana* to be confiscated, and stopped live TV coverage of the Congress during the speech of Jorge Rebelo when he was arguing that there was a lack of open debate in Frelimo. But in a surprise announcement on 13 June, President Armando Guebuza named Macuácuá as presidential press spokesman and advisor – a powerful post.

Since then, the media has run long interviews with Macuácuá, praising Guebuza. In an interview in *Domingo* yesterday (11 August), Macuácuá said constructive criticism was acceptable, but he dismissed much criticism of Guebuza as being "destructive" and in "bad faith". He said such critics are trying to discourage Mozambicans from overcoming poverty, are trying to weaken Frelimo and say the Congress was not a success, are in the pay of foreign agencies to denigrate the state and president and spread false rumours, simply don't know Mozambique, or are using the time of the elections to undermine the state. He concluded that the truth is that the Mozambican people are proud of President Guebuza and his successes.

## Crime causes panic & fear in Matola

Residents of the suburbs of Matola and Maputo "are living in terror and panic" because of a crime wave involving large groups of 15 to 20 men breaking into homes at night to steal goods, rape women, and beat or shoot anyone who resists. (*Domingo* 11 August) The suburbs are being hit by "a wave of criminality which is taking on alarming proportions. Every day there are reports of murders, many of women who are first raped", reported *Notícias* (9 August).

Many people are afraid to sleep in their houses at night and night time community patrols and vigilante groups have been set up in many neighbourhoods; they have caught some thieves. The suburbs are vulnerable because there have few lights and no police, and houses can be easily broken in to.

The police have come in for heavy criticism and the government is criticised even by *Domingo* and

*Notícias* for not giving adequate resources to the police.

The crime wave only adds to the feeling of insecurity of people living in the suburbs in often marginal circumstances. This in turn has generated rumours which feed the panic.

It is said that the crimes are being committed by an organised group called G-20, group of 20, which attacks with gratuitous violence, including using a hot clothes iron to actually iron people's arms and burn them. Allegedly G-20 is circulating leaflets, and a photo of a woman burned by an iron has been circulating on mobile phones.

In a press conference Friday, interior minister Alberto Mondlane said that G-20 did not exist, and that no one has ever complained to the police about being attacked with a hot iron. The photo being circulated is actually a Brazilian woman attacked by her ex-husband, and he gave the web reference for it.

But the crime wave, unusual violence, and resulting panic are all too real.

## **Divisions emerging over ProSavana and very large farms**

Major divisions over the giant ProSavana programme became apparent at a meeting Thursday 8 August in Maputo.

ProSavana is a joint Japanese-Brazilian programme in Nampula province, upper Zambézia, and western Niassa, initially based on a Japanese-funded programme in the Brazilian cerrado (savanna) in the 1970s that opened the area for very large corporate soya farms. ProSavana was very donor-driven and was specifically aimed at encouraging Brazilian companies to open giant farms in this area; there is a special ProSavana office in Nampula, and consultants connected to the Brazilian agri-business linked Fundação Getúlio Vargas are drawing up the master plan (*plano director*). (Many reports on ProSavana are on [tinyurl.com/mozamb](http://tinyurl.com/mozamb))

However, there have been substantial modifications. To encourage big investors, the programme was extended from the Nacala corridor to Niassa because of lack of large amounts of available land in Nampula. But objections from both local communities and the Mozambican Ministry of Agriculture led to major changes, including paying more attention to support of local farmers.

The 8 August meeting was a joint meeting between civil society of Japan, Brazil and Mozambique, organised through the two Mozambican peasant organisations, ORAM and UNAC, attended by 150 people. The Ministry of Agriculture took it seriously; minister José Pacheco spoke and three national directors attended.

But the divisions are clear. The draft master plan commissioned by the ProSavana office has not yet been shown to the Ministry of Agriculture or to local communities, but has been leaked and posted on the web. (<http://farmlandgrab.org/post/view/21996>) One of the highest priorities is to "promote large scale investment in each province" and the plan accepts that there will be some involuntary resettlement of peasant farmers.

But Raimundo Matule, National Director of Economy in the Ministry of Agriculture, made a detailed presentation, in which he stressed that while the target of the Brazilian cerrado programme was to promote big industrial agriculture ("latifúndios"), the target in Mozambique was to support tiny, small, and medium farms. And in a clear criticism of the ProSavana office, he agreed with community groups that "there is a clear lack of information on ProSavana and everyone is starting to speculate."

Peasants attacked Matule and accused him of lying, pointing to the draft master plan. But it became clear that Matule has not been given a copy of the plan, and probably only read the leaked

copy on the web.

Matule stressed that his presentation "is government policy on ProSavana". But is it? In a recent interview, a senior Ministry of Agriculture figure told us "ProSavana is big scale, and that is essential. We must have large scale monoculture production. We must consolidate land into large blocks."

And Minister Pacheco in his talk said "ProSavana is a government priority and we are betting everything on the success of this project." But he said nothing about the dispute between large and small.

The master plan is supposed to be presented formally in October. And it is clear that a four-way battle is shaping up between the ProSavana office, two parts of the Ministry of Agriculture, and local peasant groups over whether the priority is huge industrial foreign-owned farms, or smaller Mozambican farms.

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### **The new book**

## **Zimbabwe takes back its land**

by Joseph Hanlon, Jeanette Manjengwa & Teresa Smart is now available from the publishers

[https://www.rienner.com/title/Zimbabwe\\_Takes\\_Back\\_Its\\_Land](https://www.rienner.com/title/Zimbabwe_Takes_Back_Its_Land)

<http://www.jacana.co.za/book-categories/current-affairs-a-history/zimbabwe-takes-back-its-land-detail>

### **Now in paper at a reasonable price**

## **Do bicycles equal development in Mozambique?**

by Joseph Hanlon & Teresa Smart

is now available in **paperback**, for £17.99 (+ p&p)

from the publisher <http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/store/viewItem.asp?idProduct=13503>

and on Amazon.co.uk for £17.09

## **Just Give Money to the Poor:**

## **The Development Revolution from the Global South**

by Joseph Hanlon, Armando Barrientos, and David Hulme

Most of this book can now be **read on the web**

[tinyurl.com/justgivemoney](http://tinyurl.com/justgivemoney)

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### NOTE OF EXPLANATION:

This mailing list is used to distribute two publications, both edited by Joseph Hanlon. This is my own sporadic "News reports & clippings", which is entirely my own responsibility. This list is also used to distribute the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, published by CIP and AWEPA, but those organisations are not linked to "News reports & clippings"

Joseph Hanlon

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### **Mozambique media websites:**

Noticias: [www.jornalnoticias.co.mz](http://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz)

O Pais: [www.opais.co.mz](http://www.opais.co.mz)

Macauhub English: [www.macauhub.com.mo/en/](http://www.macauhub.com.mo/en/)

Savana: [www.savana.co.mz](http://www.savana.co.mz)

Canal de Moçambique: [www.canalmoz.co.mz](http://www.canalmoz.co.mz)

AIM Reports: [www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news](http://www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news)

Carlos Serra Diario de um sociologo: <http://oficinadesociologia.blogspot.com>

Good daily newsletters:

English: Mozambique Investor. Send e-mail to [joaquim.fale@clubofmozambique.com](mailto:joaquim.fale@clubofmozambique.com)

Portuguese: Mozambique Hoje. Send e-mail to [moçambiquehoje@clubofmozambique.com](mailto:moçambiquehoje@clubofmozambique.com)

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