

Mozambique News Agency

AIM Reports

Report no.502, 10th March 2015



Prominent lawyer murdered in Maputo

One of Mozambique's most prominent constitutional lawyers, Gilles Cistac, was murdered in Maputo on 3 March. He was shot in Eduardo Mondlane Avenue and died later in Maputo Central Hospital.

Gilles Cistac was shot shortly after taking his habitual morning coffee at a snack bar. He had called for a taxi to take him to the Administrative Tribunal (the body responsible for checking the legality of state expenditure) where he planned to work. As he got into the taxi, another vehicle drew up with four men inside. Eye-witnesses described them as three black men and one white man. The latter opened fire on Cistac at point blank range.

When news of the attack against Cistac reached President Filipe Nyusi, he interrupted a meeting of the Council of Ministers (Cabinet) he was chairing, in order to discuss the shooting and the government's reaction.

Presidential spokesperson Antonio Gaspar told reporters that President Nyusi had given instructions to the Ministry of the Interior to hunt down and arrest the criminals. He described the shooting as "a macabre act, which the government condemns vehemently".

Shocked academics, lawyers, journalists and human rights activists gathered outside the hospital hoping to hear news that the doctors had succeeded and Cistac had survived. Some four hours later those hopes were dashed.

The motive for the assassination is not known, but it is generally being connected to the libellous and hate-filled campaign against Cistac waged in social media. Cistac came under fire because he argued that the Constitution would allow the creation of the "autonomous provinces" called for by opposition leader Afonso Dhlakama.

Dhlakama claims Renamo will rule Niassa

On 5 March Afonso Dhlakama, boasted that Renamo would take control of the northern province of Niassa – even though this is one of the provinces won by Frelimo in last year's general election.

Speaking in the district of Mecanhelas, on the final day of a tour of Niassa, Dhlakama promised he would include the province in his plan to set up "autonomous regions".

"Frelimo is not a party", he claimed. "It's a group of bandits, a group of assassins!" He said he was referring not only to the murder of constitutional lawyer Gilles Cistac, but "many others have been killed". He mentioned in particular the murder of economist Antonio Siba-Siba Macuacua in

2001 and of investigative journalist Carlos Cardoso in 2000.

"I am not intimidated", Dhlakama declared, promising to see through his plan for "autonomous regions".

A Renamo bill setting up "autonomous provinces" is due to be debated at the next sitting of the Mozambican parliament, the Assembly of the Republic. It has not yet been deposited with the Assembly, and so far nobody knows exactly what it contains.

Renamo boycotts peace fund

On 2 March Renamo boycotted the inauguration of the Peace and National Reconciliation Fund, set up as a result of the 5 September agreement on a cessation of military hostilities signed by the then President, Armando Guebuza, and Renamo leader, Afonso Dhlakama.

The Fund, starting with an allocation of US\$10 million a year, will provide loans for demobilised soldiers to help guarantee their reinsertion into society.

The fund will finance economic and social projects of veterans of the independence war and of demobilised soldiers both from the armed forces and Renamo. The widows of veterans and of demobilised soldiers can also access the fund.

The General Assembly of the Fund consists of seven members – four appointed by the government, two by Renamo and one by private business.

But according to a report in the daily newspaper "O Pais", Renamo thinks this composition is unbalanced and so it boycotted the ceremony.

That did not prevent the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Eusebio Lambo, from swearing the other five members into office. The four appointed by the government are Horacio Massangaie, Norberto Mapesuane, Francisco Pariela and Abilio Sigauque. The private sector representative is Rogerio Manuel, chairperson of the Confederation of Mozambican Business Associations (CTA).

Renamo spokesperson Antonio Muchanga said the two Renamo members of the Fund's General Assembly did not take office because Renamo did not see why the government should appoint four members and Renamo only two. Until Renamo is given more members, it will not take up its seats, he threatened.

MDM celebrates sixth birthday

“Violations of freedoms and of human rights should never go unpunished”, declared the mayor of Beira, Daviz Simango, leader of the opposition Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM), on 7 March.

Addressing a meeting in Beira marking the sixth anniversary of the foundation of the MDM, Simango added “in no way should the culture of impunity be encouraged. The MDM will fight to ensure that these situations do not occur in our country”.

“We have to continue to defend and fight for basic principles such as the promotion of freedom and individual rights, democracy and human rights, the rule of law, justice and equality, respect for strong and transparent national institutions, the promotion of free and fair elections, freedom of the press and impartiality in the media, as well the responsibility of the government towards its citizens”, he said.

Simango said that the MDM has as its vision “the construction of a welcoming and safe Mozambique, based on the ideas and aspirations of millions of Mozambique, where equality, freedom and legality, peace and national unity, human rights and our cultural heritage are taken into consideration”.

He said his party’s task in the short and medium term “is to lay the basis for an alternative project of governance, where the eradication of hunger, malnutrition, poverty, illiteracy, endemic diseases, lack of housing and unemployment, and the fight against generalized corruption are priorities”.

Simango wanted the MDM to step up preparation for its own Second Congress, as well as for the 2018 municipal elections and the 2019 presidential and parliamentary elections.

He pointed out that the MDM is the only opposition force which is actually running parts of the country. The MDM controls the municipal councils in the major cities of Beira, Quelimane and Nampula and in the town of Gurue.

Storms hit Nampula

Torrential rains in the northern province of Nampula have swept away houses, swamped crops, and cut road and rail communications in much of the province.

The railway from the port of Nacala to Malawi is cut in eight separate places between Nacala and the town of Monapo.

The destruction of roads and bridges has cut off eight districts (Mossuril, Larde, Moma, Liupo, Mogincual, Mozambique Island, Angoche and Mogovolas) from the rest of the province.

Mossuril is one of the worst affected areas: about 500 houses have been destroyed in Mossuril and 2,500 families in the district are in need of food aid. The power supply to Mossuril town was knocked out four days ago, and the district has also run out of fuel for motor vehicles.

In Nacala port, Mayor Rui Chong Saw said it had rained persistently for three days. This has worsened Nacala’s already chronic erosion problems, and has made many roads in the city virtually impassable.

The provincial capital, Nampula city, has been under heavy rains for a week. The city’s infrastructure has suffered severe damage – water mains have ruptured, and motorists are now negotiating potholes that have turned into small lakes.

The adjacent province of Cabo Delgado is suffering similar problems. Seven districts in the north of the province (Meluco, Macomia, Muidumbe, Nangade, Mueda, Mocimboa da Praia and Palma) have been cut off from the south, because of damage to a bridge which carries the main road over the Muaguide River in Ancuabe district.

Over six thousand plots for flood victims

The Mozambican authorities have so far demarcated 6,651 plots of land on which to resettle people driven from their homes by the torrential rains and flooding that hit parts of the central and northern provinces earlier this year.

So far, 5,873 of these plots have been distributed to families. The vast majority of these plots – 5,668 – are in the central province of Zambezia, while the remaining 205 are in Niassa, in the north.

Speaking to reporters on 24 February, after a meeting of the Council of Ministers (Cabinet), the spokesperson for the meeting, Deputy Culture Minister Ana Comoane, said that 130,000 victims of the floods still need food aid. 127,700 of these are in Zambezia, while the remaining 2,300 are in Niassa.

Four accommodation centres for flood victims are still in operation, all of them in Zambezia. Two of these are in the basin of the Licungo River (one in Mocuba district, and one in Maganja da Costa), while the other two are in Chinde, near the mouth of the Zambezi.

Comoane said that the storms have affected artisanal fishermen in Zambezia and the neighbouring province of Nampula. In Zambezia, boats belonging to 104 fishermen were destroyed, and the losses are estimated at three million meticaís (about US\$92,600). In Nampula, 14 boats were destroyed and the losses there were put at 954,000 meticaís.

Comoane also reported that, despite the floods, the distribution of free text books to the country’s schools is within the government’s expectations, and so far 90 per cent of the books have been distributed.

So far this year 7,030,084 pupils have enrolled in schools at all level – which compares with 6,794,294 in 2014, an increase of about four per cent.

Under normal circumstances, enrolment would have finished by now but because of the disruption caused by the floods, the government has decided to prolong it to the end of the month.

New teachers are still being hired. The target is to recruit 8,390 new teachers this year, compared with the 7,566 recruited in 2014.

This is a condensed version of the AIM daily news service – for details contact pfauvet@live.com

World Bank pledges to continue support

The executive director of the World Bank Group responsible for Mozambique and 21 other African countries, Louis Larose, guaranteed in Maputo on 5 March that the Bank will continue direct support for the Mozambican state budget.

The World Bank is one of the main contributors to the budget. It is one of the group of donors and funding agencies known as PAPs – Programme Aid Partners – who provide some of their aid to Mozambique in the form of budget support.

World Bank support for the 2015 Mozambican budget will be around US\$200 million, and the Bank has pledged a further \$300 million in project aid (in areas such as agriculture, health, education, transport and water supply).

Speaking to reporters at the end of a four day visit to Mozambique, Larose said the budget support will be disbursed in a lump sum during the second half of 2015. The timing is the same as in previous years.

The project aid will be made available to the Mozambican authorities as the projects are implemented in various parts of the country.

Larose said that, under its cooperation with Mozambique, the World Bank has a portfolio of projects worth US\$1.6 billion, of which about \$800 million have yet to be disbursed.

He added that the purpose of his visit was to explore areas that can benefit from World Bank funding under a five year programme to be negotiated between the Mozambican government and the Bank within the next nine months.

Larose downplayed the current fall in world market prices for commodities which could be key Mozambican exports, such as coal and natural gas. "History tells us that no crisis lasts for ever", said Larose.

During his stay, Larose visited the Special Economic Zone in the northern port of Nacala, looking at investment opportunities there. He found that the constraints on the development of all of Nampula province concerned infrastructures, particularly roads.

"I realized that all the investment projects need more investment from the World Bank", he said.

Funds from EU to repair highway

The National Roads Administration (ANE) has stated that the damage done to the country's main north-south highway (EN1) during the storms and floods that hit the central province of Zambezia in January will be repaired with funds made available by the European Union.

The worst cut to the road was in the town of Mocuba, where EN1 crosses the Licungo River. This bridge, built in 1944, is two kilometres from the confluence of the Licungo and Lugela rivers. The massive flood on the Licungo on 12 January destroyed embankments at both ends of the bridge. The damage to the Licungo bridge made overland transport from the northern provinces of Nampula, Niassa and Cabo Delgado to the rest of the country impossible for about five weeks.

Contractors hired by ANE filled in the craters and built ramps on both river banks, re-establishing traffic fully on 18 February. These repairs are only provisional and ANE

has warned motorists to take care when using the bridge.

EN1 was also affected at three points north of Mocuba. At the Nivo River, the road was affected by erosion, but it was not cut, and traffic continued to flow. But the bridge over the Namilate River collapsed, and has not yet been replaced. Instead, ANR opened a temporary diversion, fording the river.

At the Mutuasse River, a metallic bridge has been installed and currently ensures that the road is passable.

The ANE delegate in Zambezia, Daniel dos Santos, told reporters that definitive repairs will be undertaken at all these points to ensure that EN1 will continue to play its key socio-economic role in the country.

Work on the repairs will begin as soon as possible said dos Santos – but he did not announce any dates, nor did he estimate the costs of the repairs.

Agreement reached on Kenmare redundancies

Negotiations over the mass redundancies announced last month by the Irish company Kenmare Resources, which exploits the heavy mineral sands at Topuito, on the coast of the northern Mozambican province of Nampula, have saved the jobs of 214 workers.

In mid-February Kenmare had announced that it was making cuts in the size of its workforce to reduce costs. The company said the cost-cutting programme was necessary because of the decline in world market prices for the minerals it mines (ilmenite, rutile and zircon).

It originally planned to make 375 redundancies (about 20 per cent of the work force). When this became public knowledge, the trade union committee at the mine protested vigorously, and contacted the Nampula Provincial Labour Directorate.

Labour Minister Vitoria Diogo then met with Kenmare's representative in Mozambique, Gareth Clifton, and persuaded the company to halt the compulsory redundancies. The distribution of letters giving workers 30 days' notice of their dismissal was suspended.

Dialogue between the company, the union committee and the Nampula provincial branch of the National Union of Building, Timber and Mining Workers (SINTICIM) then followed, mediated by the General Inspectorate of Labour (IGT) and the Centre for Labour Mediation and Arbitration (CEMAL).

According to the Labour Ministry, this resulted in an agreement under which the number of compulsory redundancies falls from 375 to 161. Thus 214 of the Kenmare jobs have been saved.

The release adds that the other 161 workers will lose their jobs, but must receive the redundancy pay envisaged under Mozambican labour legislation.

Sweden disburses budget support

On 26 February Sweden disbursed 1.3 billion meticais (about US\$40 million) to the Mozambican government, in the form of general budget support

The budget support was disbursed following the visit to Mozambique of the Swedish Foreign Minister, Margot Wallstrom, who attended the investiture of President Filipe Nyusi. In 2014 Sweden was Mozambique's second largest bilateral partner in official development aid.

Anadarko increases estimated reserves

Anadarko Petroleum Corporation has increased estimated recoverable resources in Mozambique's Offshore Area 1 to more than 75 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Previously, the company had estimated that Area 1 held between 50 and 70 trillion cubic feet.

Anadarko is the operator in Area 1, located in the Rovuma Basin in the northern province of Cabo Delgado. Its first discovery was in 2010 and it is now working to develop one of the world's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects. This would enable the gas to be shipped to markets, particularly in the Middle and Far East.

The company is working with its partners to develop the marketing wing of the project, named Mozambique LNG. So far, the project has entered into long-term, non-binding Heads of Agreements covering eight million tonnes of LNG per annum. This covers eighty per cent of the initial supply as Mozambique LNG will begin by building two LNG trains, producing ten million tonnes of LNG per annum (a LNG train is the plant for the liquefaction and purification of the gas, greatly reducing the volume for shipping).

It has been estimated that the first train could be operational by 2019. However, other analysts such as the London-based analysts Business Monitor International (BMI) do not expect the onshore LNG plant at Afungi, near the town of Palma, to begin operations before 2021.

According to Anadarko's director of external communications, John Christiansen, Anadarko is working with the Mozambican government to achieve the final investment decision as quickly as possible.

Christiansen told AIM that "we have made extraordinarily good progress on marketing, construction, field delineation, and project financing to move the project forward".

In December, the government adopted regulations by decree that set out the legal and financial framework for the development of the Rovuma LNG projects. This guarantees lengthy periods in which tax rates will not be raised nor the basic legal framework changed.

Commenting on this development, Christiansen stated, "we were pleased to see a Decree Law at the end of 2014; this new legislation marks a critical step toward establishing a project-wide legal and contractual framework that delivers a level of fiscal stability that enables continued investment".

Anadarko holds a 26.5 per cent stake in Area 1. The other members of the consortium are Mitsui of Japan (20 per cent), ONGC Videsh (16 per cent), Oil India (four per cent), BPRL Ventures (ten per cent) and PTT of Thailand (8.5 per cent). In addition, Mozambique's National Hydrocarbon Company, ENH, holds a 15 per cent stake.

President Nyusi urges judiciary to purify its ranks

President Filipe Nyusi on 2 March urged the country's judiciary to "purify your ranks, because in your midst there are people who are staining your seriousness and dignity".

Speaking at the ceremony marking the start of the 2015 judicial year, President Nyusi said "it takes courage to make changes. I want to challenge the judiciary to make the necessary changes. On this depends the good name, honour and dignity of the judiciary".

"We want the judges, the lawyers, the police and all those who work in the administration of justice to enjoy the respect of our people", he added. "This necessarily involves consolidating principles and values such as integrity, professionalism and respect for the people whom you swore to serve".

"We cannot remain calm when we hear the people crying out for quicker, fairer and more honest justice", said President Nyusi. He challenged the judiciary to win the trust and support of the people by making the necessary changes.

Corruption, the President warned, "is an evil that corrodes our social fabric with serious consequences in all areas of our state".

Society demanded from the administration of justice an implacable attitude in the fight against corruption. "The magistrate, as a guardian of legality, must be intolerant towards acts of corruption", Nyusi demanded. "Otherwise your image, built with much work and sacrifice, will be damaged".

The President of the Supreme Court, Adelino Muchanga, said that Mozambique has just 311 judges. Of these, 288 are working in the courts, while the others are in full time study, or seconded to other work.

This means that there are 1.1 judges for every 100,000 inhabitants of the country. But that figure is an average. The situation is much worse in the two most populous provinces. There is one judge for every 150,000 people in Nampula, and one for every 200,000 in Zambezia, said Muchanga.

The courts are working with a heavy backlog of cases. Muchanga said that, at the start of 2014, there were 150,079 cases pending. During the year, a further 108,487 cases entered the courts. But only 97,196 cases were concluded over the year, and so the backlog increased, with 161,370 cases passing into 2015.

Mozambique News Agency, c/o 26 Withdean Crescent, Brighton BN1 6WH, UK. Tel: +44 (0) 7941890630 - mozambique-news@geo2.poptel.org.uk

Subscription Rates (20 issues)	Individuals	Institutions
UK	£15.00	£25.00
Europe	£25.00	£40.00
Rest of the World	£30.00	£50.00

Overseas subscribers are requested to pay in sterling. If payment is made in another currency, add the equivalent of £6.00 to cover bank charges.