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Policy Dialogue Report

04 August 2022

Zoom Online Platform

SALO Public Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Mozambique

SALO PUBLIC DIALOGUE: MOZAMBIQUE

THE SADC AND RWANDAN INTERVENTIONS: ONE YEAR ON & THE FORTHCOMING 42ND SADC SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

THURSDAY 04 AUGUST 11:00 - 13:00
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Executive Summary

In partnership with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation Initiative for Southern Africa, SALO hosted a public multi-stakeholder dialogue titled “*The SADC and Rwandan interventions: one year on & the forthcoming 42nd SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government*” on the 4th of August 2022. This dialogue aimed to build consensus on the approaches to the crisis, particularly against the backdrop of the upcoming 42nd SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government. There were addresses from Zenaída Machado, Human Rights Watch; Hermenegildo Mulhovo, Institute for Multiparty Democracy (Mozambique); and Jasmine Opperman, Security Analyst. The dialogue was chaired by SALO members Munjodzi Mutandiri, Milisa Mbete and Bishop Rubin Phillip.

Summary of Presentations

Jasmine Opperman, Security Analyst

In her opening remarks, Jasmine Opperman acknowledged that foreign intervention and the military forces' intervention in Rwanda had improved places such as MDP (Mocimboa de Praia). The Rwandan government is increasingly concentrating on the Afungi region during times of crisis in Macomia, and then simply stepping back and allowing the cells to resurface.

Overall Strategy

In her view, the overall plan is to deal with or halt the insurgency. A militarisation shadow is visible over Cabo Delgado in the normalisation narrative. The limitations and abilities of the SAMIM group are known. A more comprehensive strategy is needed, and one is missing, to enable SAMIM to play a more proactive role within a larger framework for containing the insurgency. Announcing a reconstruction programme appears to be a good idea.

Relying on Humanitarian Aid

She went on to speak about how communities relying on humanitarian aid during a humanitarian crisis is a clear indication that the military should not be providing this support. Instead, they should be integrated into it:

“It is sad to see how some communities have grown so dependent on aid that this dependence has made them vulnerable, and the rebels are genuinely seeking that”.

Issues affecting communities

The top-down approach is the second significant issue for SAMIM and Rwanda. The military has shown over the past year that their successes are still limited to a reactive response, a struggle to clear areas over time, and that they need to engage the communities and take a bottom-up approach. She posed a question: *“Where are the six Gazelles bought if SAMIM claims they lack air support? Where are the trained pilots now? I don't see any progress from the Mozambican government in gaining the Cabo Delgado residents' trust”*. The reports show that the nation is being exploited, people are being forced to pay, and these are issues that are present within the insurgency but rarely make news headlines. The Mozambican government and military do not appear to be making any progress in gaining the support of the Cabo Delgado population.

Cells are self-sufficient

She went on to speak about how today, the insurgents rely less on military bases; the cells are small and self-sufficient. The question of where their funding comes from and who is funding them has become an obsession, and these are independent cells. The

so-called massive amounts of money moving into Cabo Delgado are still not proven to be the source of funding for these cells.

Issue of trust and fear

Jasmine concluded that a better understanding of the environment in Cabo Delgado is needed by looking at the fact that so many communities are living in fear and there have been more than 900,000 IDPs since the insurgency began. The communities and reports are extremely critical of SAMIM, so there is a lack of trust. She highlighted:

“Will there be a willingness to spend so much time and effort in Cabo Delgado where the LNG sector is not directly affected? Directly. What we need to [remember is] without security in Cabo Delgado, supply streams can be a problem for these LNG companies irrespective of the innovations at this point in play. But is there a political [will] to deal with Cabo Delgado beyond Mocimboa da Praia and Palma in its totality? Is there patience?”

Zenaida Machado, Human Rights Watch in Mozambique

Zenaida Machado started her address by highlighting how many people are displaced in the communities looking for safety. It is critical to emphasise that this conflict continues to take unexpected turns and shifts and that people are being displaced twice or thrice. Only 10% of 700,000 IDPs were displaced between June and July.

“You have to respect these people who have had such traumatic experiences and disappointments with the way the authorities have treated them that they would rather travel south, than return to Pemba”, she said.

Lack of funding

A large part of the government's support comes from humanitarian agencies, and humanitarian groups have noted that their financial capacity is crucial in addressing the problems of displaced people and providing basic necessities. The lack of information about what is going on in Cabo Delgado and Mozambique's parallel crises is constraining fundraising. She supported the statement by saying:

“The international media cannot go to Cabo Delgado to do a free and fair coverage of what is going on on the ground. It also becomes difficult for the donors and the international community to understand the dimension of the problem”.

Humanitarians cannot access communities

In her view, currently, humanitarian groups cannot by themselves reach people in regions affected due to security reasons, and those groups that do reach people are protected by military forces. If these attacks continue when the operational humanitarians are present, this might make them withdraw, as they did in Mocimboa da Praia and Palma. Food security is a major issue that IDPs have to contend with. The numbers show that people are dependent on humanitarian aid. A sizable portion of Mozambicans rely on agriculture, they produce their own food. Some organisations

that deal exclusively with food security have issued a warning about the possibility that soon they will be addressing anger and frustration in some parts of Cabo Delgado.

Human rights issues

One of the most crucial human rights concerns related to children is education. Throughout the conflict, numerous schools were attacked and destroyed. Additionally, the traumatising of these children is evident. Children will therefore still face the challenge of returning to school even if they return to their original communities. Children who live in rural areas or in IDP camps face different difficulties. The language is one illustration. Zenaida highlighted that *“when they are integrated into the local schools, their parents have told us that they face a challenge in adapting to the new style of living, the new culture and the new language”*.

Women and Mental health

Women and children make up 70% of the 850,000 people affected by this conflict. One thing that women interviewed in this conflict seem to have in common is that they have received no or very little mental health assistance. Despite the fact that women make up the majority of survivors and victims, they are not represented in the dialogue. There is no effort made to comprehend their worries and what direction they anticipate Cabo Delgado will take next. The Mozambican government needs to develop a strategy for including women in the dialogue during and after the crisis. She recommended that SADC, for their next Heads of States meeting, should include women and that they should be listened to.

Justice and Accountability

Machado mentioned that justice is a human right regardless of who the detainee is. Although the conflict has been going on for nearly five years, there have been no discussions about justice or accountability. The human rights implications of practices taken against the actors in the conflict such as amnesty, killings, and arrests, are not considered. She raised the following concerns:

“I find it appalling that SADC has also entered into that narrative of the government of only announcing how many people were killed in the conflict. We don't hear how many people were arrested. What has happened to them? They were arrested on what charges? Where are they jailed? When are they going to appear in court?”

In the security field, accountability is always discussed. The Judiciary has not spoken up, as they are responsible for taking up those cases, following them appropriately according to international standards, and providing people with the necessary justice. She concluded her discussion by stating that the next SADC meeting should be used to put pressure on the Africa Peace Facilities Air Response Mechanism to take off. It has been far too long, with many decisions but little action on the ground. Civil societies should band together and push for this to happen, as well as ensure that this is the final meeting where they discuss the readiness, preparedness, and bureaucracy surrounding this mechanism.

Hermenegildo Mulhovo, Institute for Multiparty Democracy (Mozambique)

In his address, Hermenegildo highlighted the role that politics can play in addressing the issues and the role that political parties can play in resolving the Mozambican crisis. He noted that political parties play an important role in this context because they must deal with the fact that people have been recruited. Young people are the most easily persuaded and recruited by insurgents, especially if there is a financial incentive for them to be there. This is just the beginning of a process of the high ideologisation of these people.

Ideological battle

We have political parties that can play an important role in this type of ideological battle. In some ways, terrorists are bringing anti-democratic ideologies with them, ideologising young people in order to keep them there. On the other hand, there are political parties that play a role in promoting pro-democracy ideologies. This is what political parties in the area need to promote. He said:

“We have to make sure that it is clear to young people that there are democratic means and a kind of a rule of law, that in Mozambique there are the ways that we can use in order to address and channel our grievances. This is something that definitely needs a civic education from political parties for the citizens of this area because there [are] quite a lot of factors.”

Political parties must be programmatic and bring policies to the table. Exclusion has been discussed, which means that political parties can bring alternative policies that are more inclusive and address issues of people feeling excluded. Both the ruling party and the opposition party must do this.

The issue of representation

People in this district, particularly on the coast, do not feel represented in the democratic space, especially in this district. It is a crisis, even though political parties are supposed to serve this purpose. A democracy is based on political parties representing the grassroots will of its citizens. Political parties must fulfil this function and also serve as platforms for peace and reconciliation.

Mulhovo explained that platforms must be clearly defined so that people can feel organised and focused on long-term goals. In this regard, the ruling elite and opposition parties are making little progress. Moreover, there is a significant segment of the community that feels unrepresented in terms of their needs, and political parties have abandoned them because of their suffering, which SAMIM can address.

Questions and Contributions from Participants

Dr Clever Chikwanda spoke as a respondent to the addresses given by the panellists. A tactical retreat, also known as negative peace, occurs each time the insurgents appear absent and defeated. Although it is quiet, there are strong undercurrents present. He concurs that killings committed by the army are not a good indicator of its

effectiveness. He continued to address the issue of SADC's militarisation. Africa as a whole has seen an increase in coups and violent extremism, which they call terrorism, but SADC continues to emphasise the militarised approach, having recommended the region's militarisation be intensified. The consequences are only hardening the violent extremists.

“The first question I have to this approach is, who is carrying out these activities? The last time I checked, it was a delegation of experts that were sent from member states. But I have got a problem with that. The problem is, do they have the capacity? Do they have the expertise? Is there enough funding and resources for such activities to take place in Mozambique? To what extent is this owned by the Mozambicans themselves? They are a shared framework for these activities? In terms of the roadmap, in terms of the milestones, which are actually measurable? I think all of you here present will remember the Silencing of the Guns by 2020, are they silenced by now? Is there a political will, in this initiative? Is the approach mutually understood within the region?”

Piers Pigou: *“Where is the detail on the SADC proposal? We know that something was referenced but there is not much more about form rather than substance ... Have [there] been efforts by the civil society to engage with communities?”*

Professor: *“How do you find a voice for the powerless?”*

Patrick Bond: *“If we do want to see alliances with strong activists in the region, why are we not adding climate?”*

Question from the chat: *“What I saw was this threat of insurgents moving south, is it real?”*

Responses from the Panel

Dr Clever Chikwanda answered a question about where the insurgents are.

“There is no trust between the communities and the government of Mozambique, which creates a conducive environment for insurgents to thrive. Yes, the insurgents are within the communities because the communities are also disgruntled”.

He also answered the question on the way forward.

“Civil society should fight for its space. This is an opportunity because SADC said it wants to engage civic leaders in Mozambique. So, this is an opportunity for CSOs in terms of the entry points. I know this has been contentious, but it should be multipronged. South Africa should play a part, and the technical units within SADC and Botswana should be utilised. The people summits or parallel summits around the upcoming SADC Summit should also be utilised. Then research and op-eds can also be written in prominent publications. I think also within these governments within SADC, there are progressive individuals and entities that can also play a part”.

Jasmine Opperman answered the question of whether the insurgents are moving

“There have been new tactics at play with the pushing down south. What we have seen is a tactic that has been present since about 2018/2019, where insurgents are spreading the operational field to make it more difficult for the counterforces. I doubt that there is a definite expansion at play. It is a power projection by the insurgents. But more than that, the insurgents also stretch them way out of their areas of convenience, with the ability to ensure that they can stay in communication. They also found themselves in a place completely unfamiliar to them. They simply did not have the level of cooperation that they had got familiar with in Cabo Delgado. The pushdown south was clearly intended to spread the counterforce field to split the limited forces at play. With that, we have seen the resurgence now in Macomia, we have seen the attacks in Nangade, and we have seen a resurfacing of what have been dormant cells, for some time”.

She continued to answer the question about how to find a voice for the powerless.

“These people have no societal security, yet we are talking about the community voice. Maybe it is time for think tanks and analysts to rethink their own positions in terms of how to provide a voice and collaborate with each other, instead of gunning one another on Twitter, as is so frequently the case. Then, find a level of cooperation”.

She answered the question about the detail of the SADC proposal.

“There is an urgent need for people to focus on Cabo Delgado and include academics and bring that back to a sort of a round table where there can be discussions. We will have to find ways for SADC and the AU to listen to us. Africa cannot be represented only by political leaders, for they are the ones that are collaborating”.

Jasmine also answered the question about climate change

“I would argue that we are going up against the most influential voices in Mozambique at this point in time, and that is the oil and gas companies, they are influential. You talk about the oil curse, we can go back prior to 2017, that is where the oil curse started. That is where people were forced off their land in the name of development that has not benefited the people”.

Munjodzi Mutandiri answered the question about climate change.

“The issues of climate change have to be placed in the context of the conflict because climate change for most of us in this region, especially in recent years, is not just this abstract theory we read about in books. People are living on a day-to-day basis with the devastation of climate change. Mozambicans particularly would associate and identify with the effects of climate change”.

Zenaida answered the question about the extent to which these initiatives are owned by Mozambicans.

“They should be free of intimidation and harassment from authorities, security forces, and non-state players and it has been said very well that most women are under pressure either to avoid saying things that might damage the reputation of the government or avoid saying things that might place some of their own relatives into

trouble because that is one of the things that we often do not discuss. Many of the men involved in this conflict and fighting against governments or attacking villages are part of their families, their cousins, their husbands, and their sons”.

She answered the question of whether there have been efforts by civil society to engage with communities.

“Yes, there are groups that are doing very beautiful work. There is one called PROMURA in Cabo Delgado, which is a women's rights group. PROMURA has turned itself into an office for the provision of mental health care. The director of PROMURA once told me that she did not know that she could listen to problems and be able to provide any type of therapy to anyone, that she is learning to do it on the job. Yet she does not have any preparation whatsoever to do that. So, if the international community's big partners want to assist groups or partner with groups like that – provide them with the skills that they need. They know where to go, they know where these women are, and they talk to those women every day, they just lack the basic skills to do the job”.

She answered the question about political will.

“There are also some initiatives that are at a large scale, but I often advise my colleagues to take this conversation to Cabo Delgado rather than staying with it in Maputo. Let us go to Cabo Delgado, let us hear them. Let us allow them to tell the rest of the world what it is they have faced. How do they want this problem to be solved? What do they expect from the government and the international community and the rest of the community internally in Mozambique for the years to come?”

Hermenegildo Mulhovo answered the question of whether there is enough funding and resources for activities to take place in Mozambique.

“The financial incentive that we are referring to is the financial incentives that normally go to informal networking. Most of the people who go there are being recruited, the promises are under this kind of smuggling business and also on the artisanal mining. These are the people who just look at the opportunities for getting direct money. The other financial incentive is the fact that there were kind of small loans, easy loans that they did not even talk about what exactly some people needed to do in order to pay back the money. It was like they were offering money. These kinds of small entrepreneurs started small businesses, which then became references in the area. So, these are the things that I think incentivise young people to look at this as a kind of way because they do not have other alternatives, for example, from formal banks it was non-existent”.

He further answered the question about capacity.

“Capacity-building can benefit communities and civil society, and I wanted to use this platform to advocate for it. Therefore, I am not certain why civil society organisations require capacity-building. However, SADC needs to provide additional support to Mozambican civil society organisations. The support needed is not so much in the form of money but in the form of networking with other civil society groups in the region.

This is so that they may build a front against terrorism within civil society organisations so that they can be strong enough to build resilient communities”.

Conclusion

This dialogue highlighted the obstacles that are currently preventing the state from resolving the conflict in Cabo Delgado. The common theme stressed by all the speakers focussed on humanitarian concerns, particularly the impact and the trauma experienced by women and the need to include them in discussions about Cabo Delgado and Mozambique’s future. The crucial role of political parties, and the need to drive alternative, complementary interventions is a point that was also reiterated, as people feel abandoned by political parties. The government needs transparency and accountability regarding the seriousness of the situation, the cost of the conflict, and a process inclusive of citizens and marginalised groups through which to develop a strategy to end the conflict, as well as advance development in the region and country that benefits all of its residents. The first of many crucial steps that are required to develop consensus and solidarity among stakeholders and ultimately bring forth a just society is the amplification of marginalised voices in the presence of national, regional, and international civil society.

The analysis and recommendations included in this report do not necessarily reflect the view of SALO or any of the donors or conference participants, but rather draw upon the major strands of discussion put forward at the event. Participants neither reviewed nor approved this document. The contents of the report are the sole responsibility of SALO and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the donors who provided financial assistance for this policy dialogue session.

About the Southern African Liaison Office:

The Southern African Liaison Office (SALO) is a South African-based not-for-profit civil society organisation which, through advocacy, dialogue, policy consensus and in-depth research and analysis, influences the current thinking and debates on foreign policy especially regarding African crises and conflicts.

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