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Joint submission

Franciscans International (FI)

(General Consultative Status with ECOSOC)

&

Caritas Nampula, CCFD-Terre Solidaire, *Comissão Episcopal para Migrantes, Refugiados e Deslocado*, Denis Hurley Peace Institute, *Justiça Ambiental* and World Council of Churches

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Presentation of the organizations

- 1. Franciscans International (FI)** is a non-governmental organization (NGO) with General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. FI was established in 1982 to bring the concerns of vulnerable people to the attention of the United Nations. FI's expertise is based on first-hand information obtained by Franciscans and other partners working at the local level around the world to advocate at the UN for structural changes addressing the root causes of inequality.
- 2. Caritas Diocesana de Nampula** is a charity non-profit organization of the catholic Church in Moçambique established in 2011. Caritas' mission is to serve the poor and vulnerable in the light of the Gospel and the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church, supporting them to create means and mechanisms for a dignified life. Caritas has been acting in providing relief for the internally displaced people of Cabo Delgado, reaching the Archdiocese of Nampula in Mozambique.
- 3. CCFD-Terre Solidaire** is France's first international solidarity and development NGO working for over 60 years alongside partners, focusing on all forms of injustice—first and foremost, the injustice of hunger. CCFD supports local partner organizations abroad to carry out their own development projects, and raises public awareness and engages policymakers and elected officials in France to resist the rollback of rights, and influence French and European foreign policy in line with the interests upheld by their partners. CCFD particularly focuses on fighting corporate impunity and ensuring that economic actors respect fundamental rights and the environment.
- 4. Comissão Episcopal para Migrantes, Refugiados e Deslocado (CEMIRDE)** is one of the organizations affiliated with the Social Department of the Episcopal Conference of Mozambique. It is a non-profit organization working for the benefit of people on the move and others in vulnerable situations, with a particular focus on trafficking in persons. Its mission is to ensure protection and promotion of the rights of migrants and refugees; raising awareness about trafficking in persons, assistance to victims; and assistance to Mozambican returnees from South Africa. These activities are carried out in all 13 dioceses of Mozambique.
- 5. The Denis Hurley Peace Institute (DHPI)** is an agency of the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference, with the mission of supporting the Church in other African countries with programs that promote peace, democracy and human rights.
- 6. Justiça Ambiental (JA)** is a Mozambican civil society organization defending the rights of communities and the environment against the impacts of globalization and uncontrolled, unsustainable development. JA provides legal support to communities affected by megaprojects and conducts advocacy actions to bring their voices to the media and government bodies.
- 7. World Council of Churches (WCC)** is a global fellowship of 356 churches from more than 120 countries, representing over 580 million Christians worldwide from Protestant, Orthodox, and other traditions. It was founded in 1948, and works to promote and protect human rights, peace and reconciliation, as well as Christian unity across denominations, Ecumenical dialogue and cooperation.

B. Methodology

8. This Universal Periodic Review (UPR) report is the result of a series of interviews conducted during a field mission to Maputo, Nampula, and Corane in July 2025, first-hand information collected by Franciscans, and thematic reports written by partners. Other corroborating reports and articles are also cited in this report.

PART 2: REPORT

A. Ratification of & accession to international instruments

1. In the 2021 UPR review, Mozambique received and accepted nine recommendations¹ encouraging the ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and its Optional Protocol. In December 2023, Mozambique further pledged the ratification of CESCR on the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights².
9. The ratification process has, however, not been undertaken to this date. The ratification of CESCR will open pathways for greater scrutiny on fundamental rights, particularly on access to food, water, and livelihoods for internally displaced persons in Cabo Delgado, and set benchmarks for better compliance by the government.

Recommendations to the Government of Mozambique:

1. We recommend that the Government of Mozambique take all necessary steps to ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and its Optional Protocol.

B. Internal displacement and humanitarian situation

a. 3rd UPR Cycle – 2021

10. In 2021, Mozambique received six recommendations³ on the humanitarian situation in Cabo Delgado, particularly calling for the provision of assistance to displaced persons, ensuring access to healthcare, food, housing, and education, especially for children, and facilitating humanitarian aid in the province.

b. Legal framework

11. Mozambique made significant progress by incorporating the UN Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced Persons in its national laws and amending existing national legal provisions to reflect the Kampala Convention on Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, ratified in 2017.

12. As a result of the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Cabo Delgado, the Government of Mozambique approved Resolution No. 42/2021 which established the Policy and Strategy for Internal Displacement Management (PSiDM)⁴ to be in line with the Kampala Convention. The Policy, led by the National Institute for Disaster Risk Reduction, aims to reduce and resolve issues related to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees through prevention, assistance, and reintegration. The Policy outlines the measures required to mitigate the suffering of displaced persons by facilitating their integration into host communities or their return to their areas of origin once security conditions have been restored, with the goal of normalizing their lives in the short, medium, and long term.
13. This Policy applies to people or groups of people who have been forced to leave their places of usual residence to mitigate the adverse effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, human rights violations and natural or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed the borders of the Republic of Mozambique.
14. The Policy does not, however, address land ownership in the context of the prolonged absence of owners due to displacement. The Land Act No. 19/1997⁵ regulates land access in Mozambique and recognizes customary land rights for local communities who do not possess formal documentation and have been occupying the land for ten years. The law also provides for exploitation rights to non-Mozambicans through the attribution of DUAT (*Direito de Uso e Aproveitamento da Terra*), which formalizes customary land rights into tenure, after mandatory consultations with local communities.

c. The human rights situation in 2025

15. Despite these policy developments, the humanitarian situation in Cabo Delgado remains deeply concerning. Mozambique was listed as one of the most neglected humanitarian crises in the world in 2024, primarily due to a severe funding shortage. The decision by the United States of America to drastically cut international funding has significantly hampered the response capabilities of humanitarian actors in the country.
16. As of June 2025, the humanitarian plan established by humanitarian agencies⁶ had only received 19% of its projected funding, necessitating urgent action and multiple calls for funding. IDPs are currently facing a multidimensional crisis, including the impacts of political instability, activities of extractive industries, the resurgence of violent attacks by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) since 2024, and the impact of climate-related disasters.
17. At least 609,243 persons are internally displaced in Northern Mozambique as of April 2025⁷. Overall, 1,3 million persons – one third of the population of the Cabo Delgado Province – are in dire need of humanitarian assistance, including housing, food assistance⁸. In 2025 alone, three cyclones - Cyclones Chido (December 2024), Dikeledi (January 2025), and Jude (March 2025) – made landfall in Mozambique and compounded the humanitarian needs of displaced persons, particularly in Nampula.
18. ***Displacement patterns*** - The armed conflict is the primary driver of internal displacement in Cabo Delgado. Each attack of NSAGs against civilians and public or private infrastructures, systematically provokes widespread displacement mainly around Macomia, Mocimboa de

Praia, Pemba, and the neighboring province of Nampula.⁹ In July 2025, attacks of NSAGs in Chiúre Velho, Ocuá, and Mazeze against public infrastructures, businesses, and homes, which were unopposed by Mozambican and Rwandan forces, forced more than 50,000 persons, including a high number of unaccompanied children, to flee to Chiúre Sede.

19. The Corane IDP resettlement camp, located 80 km from Nampula city, used to welcome up to 7000 persons at the height of the conflict in 2018, and is now home to 4000 individuals from Cabo Delgado, with arrivals as recent as December 2024, as a result of a spike in insurgent attacks during the post-electoral protests at the end of 2024. Many have returned to their villages, opting to resume their lives at home, while a sense of resignation prevails among the displaced persons in the camp in the face of an escalating and prolonged conflict.
20. The case of the Corane camp exemplifies a shift in patterns of displacement. Some IDPs are choosing to return to insecure areas due to fear of attacks in displacement sites and lack of humanitarian support, while others remain in conflict zones, resigned to the risks. Reports of involuntary, government-led relocation and returns impede the right of IDPs to an effective, safe, and dignified return, as they remain vulnerable to attacks without guaranteed access to adequate infrastructure, basic services, and livelihood opportunities. Following the announcement by humanitarian actors of funding cuts that would limit humanitarian aid, IDPs in Corane perceived this trend as part of the government's attempt to force their return. This perception was reinforced by Total Energies, which had conditioned the resumption of the project on the return of IDPs and stabilization of the security situation. The government's intention to establish a sense of normalcy in the view of international actors, most of whom are private entities, appears to be driving the non-voluntary returns of displaced persons under questionable humanitarian conditions.
21. Another observed trend is the shortening of displacement movements and a growing sense of fatigue among affected populations, who have been impacted by the conflict since 2017. Many displaced persons have moved four to five times, as highlighted in the report of the Special Rapporteur on IDPs¹⁰, which mentions multiple displacements of individuals, particularly in areas like Montepuez. After experiencing attacks by NSAGs, the population increasingly chooses to hide in the bush for a few days before returning to their villages, rather than embarking on a dangerous, long, and tenuous journey to district capitals.
22. **Land tenure** - Displaced returnees faced cancellation of their DUATs in their place of origin due to prolonged absence and inability to provide land ownership documents, as customary law prevailed. Cabo Delgado's significant mineral and oil wealth has led to the allocation of resource-rich areas to multinational corporations by the government without prior consultation with displaced communities, who are driven off their lands by businesses or as a result of insurgent attacks. This resulted in illegal appropriation or exploitation, creating fertile ground for land-related conflicts. Individuals are unable to recover their land due to the lack of a regulatory framework addressing this situation or available legal remedies, as reported by the Special Rapporteur on IDPs.

23. IDPs in Cabo Delgado and Nampula continue to face serious and widespread human rights violations, including a lack of access to adequate food, clean water, land, education, and livelihoods. Access to food and economic opportunities is further compromised due to irregular food distributions by humanitarian organizations and the limited availability of land for subsistence agriculture. In the Corane IDP resettlement camp, local faith-based actors, such as Caritas, provide regular food rations and support the economic self-reliance and resilience of displaced people by promoting subsistence farming practices. However, the uncertain funding context does not guarantee the sustainability of their support, which also includes promoting self-reliance through vocational training and improving financial literacy.
24. **Impact on women and children** - Women face heightened protection risks when returning to areas where they previously suffered attacks, placing them at risk of gender-based violence and re-traumatization. There has been a rise in survival sex and unwanted pregnancies, underscoring the urgent need for reproductive health services and protection interventions. Children who experience or witness violence face high levels of trauma and psychological issues. The lack of state-funded psychosocial support and empowerment opportunities for children, particularly girls, perpetuates cycles of vulnerability in a context of an underfunded education system subjected to widespread infrastructure damage in conflict-affected areas.
25. The Policy fails to adequately address land tenure and the heightened vulnerability of displaced persons, particularly women and children, in a context of depleting funding available to respond to the multifaceted humanitarian crisis in Cabo Delgado.
26. It is important to reiterate the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on IDPs particularly on ensuring protection, safety and security and human rights monitoring of IDPs with a particular focus on vulnerable groups, adopting a comprehensive legal framework to address the situation of survivors of conflict related-sexual violence, adopting preventive measures protecting children from abduction and recruitment in armed groups, adopting measures to protect housing, land and property rights of IDPs and conduct human rights assessment in extractive projects. We further urge the government of Mozambique to address the Special Rapporteur's questions in MOZ 1/2021 regarding DUAT cancellations and the clarity of returns¹¹.

Recommendations to the Government of Mozambique:

1. Adopt a coordinated and multisectoral approach prioritizing protection, mental health and psychosocial support, legal aid, and education to enhance the resilience of IDPs, particularly children and women.
2. Ensure that all conditions for safe, effective and dignified returns are met for internally displaced persons, including by ensuring that individual and community rights to land and livelihoods are upheld.
3. Regulate business enterprises to ensure that they respect human rights, including the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and provide access to justice for victims that are impacted by business activities and operations.

B. Violent extremism in Cabo Delgado

a. 3rd UPR Cycle – 2021

27. Mozambique received two recommendations to adopt a comprehensive strategy against violent extremism and pursue efforts to counter extremist activities in the country.¹² It further accepted six recommendations on ensuring accountability and investigations into alleged human rights violations and abuses by all parties¹³, three recommendations on humanitarian access in Cabo Delgado¹⁴, and one on allowing human rights monitoring¹⁵. It further received two recommendations on ensuring the protection of civilians according to international law¹⁶ with one focused particularly on the protection of children from killings, recruitment, and sexual violence.¹⁷

b. Legal framework

28. The counter-terrorism legislation comprises two laws, the Terrorism Law (2022)¹⁸, which defines the domestic anti-terrorism framework for individuals found guilty of terrorism, and the Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT)¹⁹, which deals with financial support for terrorism. The Terrorism Law contains hefty prison sentences for acts of terrorism and imposes trials for civilians in a military court instead of the civil court system. The use of the military court system raises concerns about fair trials, as it provides fewer due process guarantees for civilians. Another controversial provision on the presumption of innocence allows for arrest on mere suspicion of belonging to a terrorist entity, which could lead to arbitrary arrests.
29. The AML/CFT Law imposes regulations on financial bodies²⁰ to perform due diligence on their activities and funding, and expand the scope to non-financial bodies, including NGOs. This law is feared to have a chilling effect on civil society, as the government can invoke this law to silence dissenting NGOs.

c. The human rights situation since 2021

30. Mozambique's efforts to counter terrorism and extreme violence in Cabo Delgado resulted in **grave human rights violations committed mainly by Mozambican forces**, stationed in the province with Rwandan forces that are funded by the European Union until 2026. After the withdrawal of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) forces in June 2024, NSAGs who pledge allegiance to the Islamist State (ISIS) move freely in the province without opposition, and carry out rapid, targeted attacks on public and private infrastructure in villages, killing and looting. Each attack is systematically followed by large-scale displacement of people fleeing their homes temporarily or permanently, as seen following the attack in Chiure²¹. Attacks spiked in Mocimboa da Praia, where Médecins sans Frontières can no longer operate²².
31. **Counter-insurgency efforts appear to serve the narrative of normalization in Cabo Delgado, and to enable major extractive projects to operate safely while neglecting civilian protection.** The flagship Mozambique LNG project was halted after the 2021 Palma attack, soon after which TotalEnergies declared "force majeure" and paused the project until security

conditions are deemed stable enough to resume the project. Mozambican forces only protect major cities, such as Pemba, or sites of economic importance, leaving major routes without military protection and complicating rapid deployment on attack sites, which in turn allows for the free movement of NSAGs and fuels a situation of insecurity throughout the province. The Mozambican army does not directly engage against insurgents due to a lack of training in counter-guerrilla warfare. NSAGs' presence has increased in other provinces, as witnessed in Niassa, where two rangers working in a conservation outpost were killed²³, showing the expansion and adaptability of NSAGs to the local environment.

32. The lack of training of the Mozambican forces led to grave human rights violations such as arbitrary arrests, torture, and killings of civilians suspected of supporting or being insurgents, and prompted erosion of trust among communities who witness widespread impunity for these crimes despite some cases being brought against the military. **The absence of a functioning judiciary and court system in the province compounds the lack of accountability for violations.** Understaffing, combined with inadequate training for justice operators to handle grave human rights violations, stalls investigations, and complaints rarely progress beyond the filing stage. Witness protection and victim support structures are essentially non-existent, leaving survivors and witnesses of atrocities—such as mass killings, child soldier recruitment, or sexual slavery—vulnerable to intimidation, harassment, and retaliation by security forces and armed groups, which deters them from reporting these crimes.
33. In this context, the insurgents continue to be fueled, among other factors, by the granting of concessions to extract resources, including gems, whose benefits do not translate into employment opportunities for the youth or financial returns. Local artisan miners, mostly Mozambicans and Tanzanians, are expelled by companies, which has further disrupted local economic dynamics and aggravated the insurgency's grip in the province. The NSAGs are gradually presenting themselves as a substitute for the government, which is perceived to favor international companies over protecting civilians and the interests of local communities.
34. As the conflict in Cabo Delgado is becoming a low-intensity, protracted conflict with a growing insurgency and fatigue among local communities, women and children continue to be victims of grave human rights violations.
35. **NSAGs allegedly recruit children** who are separated from their families during displacement, and children under the age of 18. In 2025, the Report of the Secretary General on children in armed conflict noted an increase in 525% of violations against children including killings, sexual violence, and abductions by armed groups and government forces²⁴. Some who were released by NSAGs or escaped face stigma and difficulty in reintegrating.
36. **Gender-based violence** in the context of the conflict is on the rise in Cabo Delgado, with reports of early pregnancies, teenage pregnancies, abductions, and sexual exploitation. Forced or early marriage is increasing, both through coercion by NSAGs and as an economic choice by families.

37. Although the government of Mozambique accepted the UPR recommendations on allowing humanitarian assistance and media access in Cabo Delgado, **civil society organizations report restrictions on independent monitoring and reporting**, media outlets are barred from accessing the province and there is an increase in reprisals targeting human rights defenders and journalists. Partners highlighted the arrests of several journalists whose whereabouts remain unknown. Recently, a Catholic radio in Cabo Delgado that used to relay information from the province²⁵ was closed. The recent arrest and disappearance of Pemba-based journalist Arlindo Chissale was raised in a UN communication²⁶. Curtailing independent reporting does not allow for a proper understanding of the dynamics on the ground, including NSAGs' movements, and contributes to the normalization discourse put forward by the government in an effort to attract economic investment into the resource-rich province with gas and minerals. The evaluation of humanitarian aid cannot be entirely assessed due to the lack of safety for humanitarian personnel stationed in the province, which further complicates the process.

Recommendations to the Government of Mozambique

1. Adopt all necessary measures to address the root causes of the conflict, including socio-economic and political measures addressing structural inequalities in the Northern provinces.
2. Ensure accountability to address grave human rights violations committed by state and non-state actors in the context of the conflict in Cabo Delgado.
3. Strengthen the judicial system in Cabo Delgado to reestablish trust among communities, through adequate funding, staffing, and awareness raising on existing legal provisions, and ensure the effective handling of independent and transparent investigations and trials.
4. Allow unimpeded humanitarian access and human rights documentation in Cabo Delgado to establish adequate measures in combating the NSAGs while providing sufficient humanitarian support for the civilians in the province.

C. Business and human rights

a. 3rd UPR Cycle – 2021

38. In its third cycle review, Mozambique received three recommendations on business and human rights, prompting the government to adopt a National Action Plan drawing from the UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs) on Business and Human Rights²⁷. Mozambique accepted a recommendation on strengthening measures regarding the extraction of natural resources in accordance with the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights²⁸.

b. Legal framework

39. The Mozambican Government joined the Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI) on May 18, 2024, and developed a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, in conformity with the

UNGPs, following the adoption of the Guiding Principles in June 2011²⁹. The Action Plan is yet to be adopted by Parliament.

40. While these policy developments are a positive step towards enshrining human rights standards in business conduct in the country, human rights due diligence assessments covering all human rights impacts in operations and supply chains are not explicitly mandatory in Mozambique. There exists a broader context of impunity regarding human rights violations perpetrated by transnational corporations. While companies are legally bound by existing national frameworks—such as the Land Act No. 19/1997³⁰, which governs access to land and the allocation of mining rights—implementation remains partial, and awareness of these legal provisions among local communities is limited.
41. The State owns the land in Mozambique and grants rights to use it through DUAT (*Direito de Use e Proveitamento da Terra*) for local communities and foreigners, while also recognizing customary land tenure for local communities occupying the land for more than 10 years.³¹ Exclusive rights over land still require licenses for new economic activities to be issued by sectoral bodies, such as mining or forestry, and those licenses, on their own, do not confer a land-use right. The law further imposes a requirement on investors to conduct a mandatory prior consultation with communities that legally hold the right to use and benefit from the land, during which the community may agree or refuse to cede the requested land to the investor. The rationale behind consultations with communities is that they are best positioned to determine whether land is occupied or not. Applications for rights of land use and benefit will not be processed unless local community consultation, mandatory under the Land Law, has taken place according to Article 13(3).³²

c. The human rights situation since 2021

42. Mozambique is one of the richest countries in non-renewable natural resources, with a significant portion of these resources located in Cabo Delgado. The Government of Mozambique has multiplied the granting of licenses to private entities for prospecting, researching, and extracting mineral resources, as observed on the Mining Cadastre Map³³. We note the concentration of many concessions in Cabo Delgado and Nampula, mostly Prospecting and Research Licenses, as well as Mining Concessions. There are 113 mining concessions in Cabo Delgado, held by 83 companies. There has been a sharp increase in the number of licenses granted for mining projects in Cabo Delgado over the last four years. Between 2003 and 2017, 67 licenses were granted - an average of five per year. From 2017 to February 2021, during the armed conflict, 46 mining projects were licensed – more than double the average number of concessions in the peaceful years. Compared to the previous 14 years, the number of concessions increased by 68% in the four years of attacks³⁴. Civil society organizations highlighted the absence of consultation with local communities and environmental impact assessments in the cases of titanium extraction in Moma, sand mining for raw earth minerals and gas extraction in Angoche (Nampula Province), extraction of graphite in Balama and Ancuabe, and rubies in Montepuez (Cabo Delgado Province).
43. The existing legal framework does not impose sufficient and adequate human rights safeguards for local communities. The government prioritizes economic development and

investments from foreign companies over upholding community land rights, as prescribed by the Land Law governing land acquisitions. Communities report that consultations are carried out as a tick-box exercise by the government and companies, rather than being an informed discussion between communities and investors. The local administrator is responsible for facilitating discussions between communities and companies. Still, the content of these exchanges is not divulged publicly. It can be falsified to the company's advantage, leading to the administrator hastily approving projects and disregarding concerns raised by local communities.

44. Civil society emphasized weak political will to implement existing laws, a lack of oversight, and training of local, district, and provincial land administration bodies. Communities further lack awareness of their rights, including access to justice to enforce land rights, which is tied to the lack of judicial bodies in Mozambique. Only a small proportion of the 127 districts in Mozambique have resident judges and public prosecutors³⁵.
45. In Tete Province, the Mphanda Nkuwa mega dam project involves the construction of a run-of-river hydroelectric dam on the Zambezi River³⁶. In December 2023, the Mozambican government and state-owned companies Electricidade de Moçambique (EDM) and Hidroeléctrica de Cahora Bassa (HCB) signed a partnership agreement with a private consortium—Electricité de France (EDF) (40%), in which France is the main shareholder³⁷, TotalEnergies (30%) and Sumitomo Corporation (30%)—without prior consultation with affected communities, who remain the legal landowners³⁸. 14,00 families who mainly rely on fishing, farming, and livestock for their livelihood are at risk of forced displacement and the submersion of cultural and spiritual sites. Communities downstream also face the loss of lands dedicated to floodplain agriculture, essential to food security, due to changes in the river's natural cycle. Until now, communities have not been adequately consulted, and it remains unclear where the government plans to resettle them. Communities further highlighted the lack of transparency surrounding the project, including the withholding of essential information, and a climate of fear and threats when opposing the project.
46. In Cabo Delgado, historical socio-economic disparities and political marginalization³⁹ is compounded by foreign business investments favoring international investors and companies over local business development.
47. Among the liquefied gas projects being developed in the Rovuma Basin⁴⁰, the Mozambique LNG Project owned by TotalEnergies is planning to extract gas offshore to be processed in an onshore gas plant in Afungi peninsula. The project's human rights due diligence assessment (HRDDA) failed to properly evaluate its impact on local communities' livelihoods and lands, on the environment, and on the active armed conflict involving non-state armed groups affiliated to ISIS.
48. Consultations with communities for the HRDDA were constrained due to COVID-19 travel restrictions and the ongoing conflict in Cabo Delgado. When consulted, members of the communities were afraid to speak out freely against the project due to the presence of police forces and the fear of being arrested if they expressed their opposition to the project⁴¹.

49. Civil society organizations further noted a lack of transparency regarding the methodology of engagement with affected stakeholders in 2020, with an absence of consultations with particular groups (women, peasants, or different professions), the absence of consultations with rights-holders affected by the conflict, and the absence of information on the location of the meetings or language inclusivity.
50. The construction of the onshore LNG terminal required 6.625 hectares of land and the transformation of 3.612 hectares of agricultural land where two villages of farmer communities are located. Over 550 families⁴² were displaced to the newly built village of Quitunda. However, the HRDDA did not analyse the impact of the project on communities' ecosystems and livelihoods, nor potential delays in allocation of replacement lands due to the security context in Cabo Delgado. The assessment did not consider marginalized groups (women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities) in the relocation⁴³ and compensation schemes.
51. The HRDDA did not adopt a conflict-sensitive approach to include risks posed by the conflict in Cabo Delgado while establishing resettlement plans. It did not consider whether the project's presence and its operations could aggravate the conflict, or whether the presence of a high number of security forces could influence the conflict dynamics⁴⁴.
52. Mozambican forces, supported by EU-funded Rwandan forces and SADC forces, as well as private military⁴⁵ contracted by the Government, were instead deployed to secure the project site and assets, inciting violence by NSAGs, and aggravating economic grievances in the province. Employees are hired outside of Cabo Delgado due to the lack of qualified personnel, and the economic benefits do not trickle down to the communities as the project's financial structure was built to favor investors. Benefits will not be attained by Mozambique until 2040, and strong investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) clauses protect financial interests and impede legislative changes including strong human rights safeguards for communities.
53. NSAGs attacked the town of Palma in Northern Mozambique at the end of March and early 2021. The attacks took place in the areas close to the project sites of TotalEnergies, killing at least 1200 civilians, and leading thousands to flee the region. In the absence of centralized coordination and an evacuation plan in case of attacks, only 2000 were evacuated from Palma, exposing TotalEnergies' negligence. The military was concentrated around the gas project sites and could not be rapidly deployed in Palma, additionally refusing to provide refuge for civilians who were attacked and displaced⁴⁶. This attack prompted a criminal complaint against TotalEnergies for involuntary manslaughter and failure to assist a person in danger in 2023⁴⁷. After the attack, the Mozambican army arrested and tortured men suspected of being Islamist insurgents, after separating them from women and children, and confined them in steel shipping containers near the plant's entrance. Only 26 persons out of 250 men survived, and women who sought protection were subjected to sexual violence from soldiers⁴⁸.
54. The 2021 Palma attack and reports of detention and torture of 250 men near the TotalEnergies plant revealed not only the heavy militarization around the project at the expense of local communities, but also the widespread misconduct of Mozambican soldiers. Mozambique fast-

tracked recruitment for security around major projects, due to a lack of a well-staffed and functional military, and operated without adequate training or oversight, leading to incidents of theft, sexual violence at checkpoints, extortion of local communities, and even kidnapping for ransom.

55. Some families are still awaiting lands despite being subsistent farmers, and fisher communities, often labeled as terrorists, were pushed inland without substantial income or livelihood opportunities. To this date, 1300 resettlement complaints were registered. The project also poses risks to the marine fauna and flora of the Mozambican canal⁴⁹.
56. Communities do not have recourse via the State to report on a human rights issue related to TotalEnergies, which also did not establish an appropriate grievance mechanism. Any complaint against the company is communicated to TotalEnergies, which has information on victims and could engage in retaliatory actions against them. ⁵⁰Police summoned 10 community members after they spoke out about the threats to their livelihoods⁵¹. The communities are therefore cautious in their exchanges with investigators due to the security presence around them and a fear of retaliation.

Recommendations to the Government of Mozambique

1. Ensure human rights are respected by any transnational corporations operating in the country and ensure legal consequences for non-compliance (criminal, civil and administrative), including by respecting the right to free, prior and informed consent of local communities, establish appropriate, independent and safe grievance mechanisms (that do not serve to replace judicial avenues), and ensure the right to oppose (the right to say No) any project that may have harmful impacts on the communities, environment or aggravate a conflict situation.
2. Take concrete steps to reestablish trust among communities through independent and transparent investigation processes into all human rights violations committed in Cabo Delgado by Mozambican armed forces and ensure that private security companies or those tied to companies are held accountable.
3. Establish clear thresholds for ongoing and proposed future projects by transnational corporations to ensure the prevention of grave human rights violations, including those related to the context of an armed conflict.
4. Halt all megaprojects being developed by transnational corporations that are or might be actively contributing to an ongoing armed conflict situation such as Cabo Delgado.
5. Actively participate in the ongoing negotiations for a legally binding instrument on transnational corporations⁵².

¹ Recommendations 149.4 to 149.13, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Mozambique, 2021, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/48/6>

² OHCHR, Pledge submitted by Mozambique to the Human Rights 75 Secretariat, December 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/udhr/publishingimages/75udhr/Mozambique_EN.pdf

³ Recommendations 149.66 (Lebanon), 149.67 (Portugal), 149.265 (Mexico), 149.79 (Japan), 149.263 (Syrian Arab Republic) and 149.264 (Austria) from Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Mozambique, 2021, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/48/6>

⁴ Mozambique: Policy/Strategy on the Management of Internally Displaced People (Resolution 41/2021), <https://www.refworld.org/policy/strategy/natlegbod/2021/en/147633>

⁵ Land Act No. 19/1997, <https://faolex.fao.org/dos/pdf/moz15369e.pdf>

⁶ ReliefWeb, *Mozambique: the cost of inaction*, July 2025, <https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/mozambique-cost-inaction-july-2025>

⁷ IOM, Mozambique — Mobility Tracking Assessment (Districts Profiles) Round 22 (April 2025).

<https://dtm.iom.int/reports/mozambique-mobility-tracking-assessment-districts-profiles-round-22-april-2025?close=true>

⁸ UNHCR, *UNHCR: New displacement and funding squeeze intensify Mozambique crisis*, 23 May 2025

<https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing-notes/unhcr-new-displacement-and-funding-squeeze-intensify-mozambique-crisis#:~:text=Previously%2C%20civil%20unrest%20in%20late%202024%20led,need%20of%20humanitarian%20assistance%20in%20the%20country.>

⁹ OCHA, *Mozambique – New displacements due to NSAG attacks, Situation Report #1 – Chiúre, Ancuabe and Muidumbe districts, Cabo Delgado*, 1st August 2025, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/mozambique/mozambique-new-displacements-due-nsag-attacks-situation-report-1-chiure-ancuabe-and-muidumbe-districts-cabo-delgado-1-august-2025>

¹⁰ OHCHR, *Visit to Mozambique - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons*, 3 July 2024, A/HRC/56/47/Add.1, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/56/47/Add.1>

¹¹ OHCHR, *Communication MOZ 1/2021*,

<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gld=26051>

Questions 3 and 7:

" 3. Please provide information on the measures taken or envisaged to ensure that relocations of internally displaced persons are carried out in line with international human rights standards and with the objective of supporting durable solutions for displaced persons, including by ensuring their right to adequate housing and taking into account their specific needs, for example concerning women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities. [...]

7. Please provide information on the alleged practice of cancelling the duat of persons who fled violence in Cabo Delgado and how it meets the requirements of the human rights to life with dignity and adequate housing"

¹² Recommendations 149.72 (Spain), 149.74 (Australia) from Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Mozambique, 2021, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/48/6>

¹³ Recommendations 149.97 (Ireland), 149.101 (Republic of Korea), 149.76 (Sweden), 149.77 (Canada), 149.80 (Portugal), 149.83 (Norway) from Ibid.

¹⁴ Recommendations 149.78 (Finland), 149.80 (Portugal) and 149.83 (Norway) from Ibid.

¹⁵ Recommendation 149.78 (Finland) from Ibid.

¹⁶ Recommendations 149.83 (Norway) and 149.80 (Portugal) from Ibid.

¹⁷ Recommendation 149.85 (Slovenia) from Ibid.

¹⁸ Mozambique 2022 Law on Terrorism,

https://counterterrorlaw.info/assets/downloads/Mozambique_2022_Law_on_Terrorism_%28original_text%29.pdf

¹⁹ Law No. 14/2023

²⁰ This includes banks, credit institutions, and other entities that operate under the supervision of the Bank of Mozambique

²¹ UN News, *Violence in northern Mozambique forces thousands to flee, straining aid efforts*, 11 August 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165560>

²² Medecins Sans Frontières, *MSF suspends activities in Mocimboa da Praia as violence surges*, 26 September 2025, <https://www.msf.org/mozambique-msf-suspends-activities-mocimboa-da-praia-violence-surges>

²³ Mongabay, *After terror attacks, Mozambique nature reserve faces 'new reality'*, 2 June 2025

<https://news.mongabay.com/2025/06/after-terror-attacks-mozambique-nature-reserve-faces-new-reality/>

²⁴ UNSC, *Children and armed conflict: Report of the Secretary-General*, 2025.

<https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Secretary-General-Annual-Report-on-Children-and-Armed-Conflict-Covering-2024.pdf>

²⁵ Club of Mozambique, *Mozambique: INCM shuts down Rádio Encontro*, 12 February 2025

<https://clubofmozambique.com/news/mozambique-incm-shuts-down-radio-encontro-276024/>

²⁶ OHCHR, *Communication on Mozambique*, MOZ 2/2025

<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gld=29719>

²⁷ Recommendations 149.58 (Thailand), 149.59 (Ukraine), 149.60 (Fiji) from Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Mozambique, 2021, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/48/6>

²⁸ Recommendation 149.61 (Switzerland), Ibid.

²⁹ Centro para Democracia e Direitos Humanos, *Contextualizing Mozambique's Commitment to Business and Human Rights*, 24 March 2025 <https://cddmoz.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Contextualizing-Mozambiques-Commitment-to-Business-and-Human-Rights-1.pdf>

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- ³⁰ FAO, *Current land policy issues in Mozambique*, 2022. <https://www.fao.org/4/y5026e/y5026eoc.htm>
- ³¹ 'Authorization of an application submitted by an individual or corporate person in the manner established' by the land law under Article 12(c).
- ³² FAO, Mozambique's Land Law, <https://www.fao.org/4/i1945e/i1945e02.pdf>
- ³³ Mapa Portal do Cadastro Mineiro de Moçambique, <https://portals.landfolio.com/mozambique/pt/>
- ³⁴ CIDSE, Policy Brief Northern Mozambique, 24 February 2023, https://www.cidse.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/20102023_Mozambique-Report.pdf
- ³⁵ Land-related "grievances are first aired with local administrators and the cadastral service, but these agencies are often ...unable or unwilling to intervene objectively on the side of injured local parties. Cases then pass up public administrative steps to the provincial governor....[as] the courts and public prosecution services are spread thin and are often a great distance away from the community itself. See FAO paper on Statutory recognition of customary land rights in Africa.
- ³⁶ Justiça Ambiental, CCFD-Terre Solidaire and The European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, *"Without our land, we will starve": Uncovering Green Colonialism in EDF, Sumitomo and TotalEnergies Hydroelectric dam Project in Mozambique*, 2025
- ³⁷ EDF and TotalEnergies, as French companies, are legally bound by France's Duty of Vigilance Law to identify, prevent, and remedy human rights and environmental abuses—whether directly or through subsidiaries and partners. As sole shareholder of EDF, the French State bears direct responsibility for ensuring compliance with these obligations.
- ³⁸ The dam is estimated with a projected installed capacity of 1,500 megawatts (MW). Of this, 60% is intended for export, while 40% will supply Mozambique's domestic energy needs. Located 60 km downstream from the Cahora Bassa Dam and 70 km upstream from the city of Tete, the dam's reservoir would flood approximately 100 km² of land, affecting the Chiúta, Cahora Bassa and Marara districts. The project is scheduled to be commissioned in 2030 and would become the third-largest dam on the main stem of the Zambezi River.
- ³⁹ Franciscans International, Human Rights Situation in Cabo Delgado, 2024 <https://franciscansinternational.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Web-Advocacy-Paper-Mozambique-2023.pdf>
- ⁴⁰ International energy companies developed four gas extraction projects in the Rovuma Basin after the discovery of 180 billion cubic feet of gas off the coast of Mozambique in 2010.
- ⁴¹ Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, *Mozambique: Consultations for Total's project in the Afungi peninsula were marked by intimidation and limitation of freedom of expression of community members; says activist*, 14 May 2021. <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/mozambique-consultations-of-totals-project-in-the-afungi-peninsula-were-marked-by-intimidation-and-limitation-of-freedom-of-expression-of-community-members-says-activist/>
- ⁴² IISD, *Navigating Decisions: The risks to Mozambique from liquified natural gas export projects*, December 2023, <https://www.iisd.org/system/files/2023-12/navigating-decisions-lng-exports-risks-mozambique.pdf>
- ⁴³ The 2012 Resolution for Resettlement in Economic Activities provides compensation for forced resettlement and land expropriation, which complements provisions under the Policy and Strategy for IDPs.
- ⁴⁴ According to the UpRights report, TotalEnergies and the government of Mozambique signed a Memorandum of Understanding setting up a Joint Task Force (JTF) composed of the Mozambican military and police force to provide security around the project site. This agreement includes material and financial support to the armed forces. Had the HRRD process involved enhanced human rights due diligence, TotalEnergies might have recognized that the Project's relationship with the Mozambican armed forces could be interpreted as providing assistance or support to a party to the armed conflict. <https://friendsoftheearth.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Report-Uprights-on-Total-and-LNG-Mozambique.pdf>
- ⁴⁵ Publicly available information show that the Government of Mozambique contracted the Dyck Advisory Group (DAG), Maverick and Janus Global Operation to provide security and support counter-insurgency efforts with the Mozambican Armed Forces.
- ⁴⁶ Justiça Ambiental, *Anything but natural: LNG infrastructure expansion threatens to coastal and marine ecosystems*, June 2024, <https://earth-insight.org/report/anything-but-natural-lng/>
- ⁴⁷ Le Monde, French prosecutors launch manslaughter probe against TotalEnergies over Mozambique attack, 15 March 2025 https://www.lemonde.fr/en/le-monde-africa/article/2025/03/15/french-prosecutors-launch-manslaughter-probe-against-totalenergies-over-mozambique-attack_6739177_124.html
- ⁴⁸ Politico, *Revelations of atrocities at French energy giant's African stronghold*, September 2024 <https://www.politico.eu/article/totalenergies-mozambique-patrick-pouyanne-atrocities-afungi-palma-cabo-delgado-al-shabab-isis/>
- ⁴⁹ The LNG terminals are located in or near the Mozambique Coastal Breeding Grounds Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA) and threaten the marine protected area which holds many habitats including shallow lagoons, fringing reefs, deep oceanic waters, submarine canyons and seamounts.
- ⁵⁰ Moz24h, *Mozambique LNG: Financial institutions so far refrain from taking a stance on allegations of severe human rights violations associated with the project*, 22 January 2025. <https://moz24h.co.mz/cross-border-jobs-at-the-heart-of-sadcs-next-mega-water-project/>
- ⁵¹ Moz24, *Mozambique LNG: Financial institutions so far refrain from taking a stance on allegations of severe human rights violations associated with the project*, 25 January 2025 <https://moz24h.co.mz/mozambique-lng-financial-institutions-so-far-refrain-from-taking-a-stance-on-allegations-of-severe-human-rights-violations-associated-with-the-project/>
- ⁵² The United Nations intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/wg-trans-corp/igwg-on-tnc>