

## TERRORISM IN MOZAMBIQUE: ANALYSIS OF THE FACTORS THAT CHALLENGED THE MOZAMBIKAN GOVERNMENT ON RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

### MOZAMBİK'TE TERÖRİZM: MOZAMBİK HÜKÜMETİNİ SORUNUN ÇÖZÜMÜ KONUSUNDA ZORLAYAN FAKTÖRLERİN ANALİZİ

Yıl 3, Sayı 2, ss.30-53.

Year 3, Issue 2, pp.30-53.

Makale Türü: Araştırma Makalesi

Article Type: Research Article

Geliş Tarihi: 20.06.2023

Submitted: 20.06.2023

Kabul Tarihi: 17.07.2023

Accepted: 17.07.2023

<https://doi.org/10.58851/africania.1317159>

#### Atf Bilgisi / Reference Information

Alfiado, E. R. (2023). Terrorism in Mozambique: Analysis of the Factors that Challenged the Mozambican Government on Resolution of the Problem, *Africania-İnönü Üniversitesi Uluslararası Afrika Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 3 (2) , 30-53.

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#### Abstract

The year of 2017 marks the beginning of a series of attacks which are considered to be terrorism in Mozambique. It started as a group of militants of unknown identity attacked 3 Mozambican police stations. The attacks carried out by this group resulted in the death of more than 4000 citizens as well as the displacement of more than half a million citizens. This research is important insofar as it seeks to determine the factors that prevented the Mozambican Government from efficiently resolving this problem that led to the suspension of gas exploration projects in the country, a fact that negatively affects its future. Lack of understanding of the problem, lack of experience and equipment to deal with the militants, as well as the focus on military operations, only prevented the Mozambican Government from finding an efficient solution to the situation in Cabo Delgado. In order to carry out the research, speech analysis, documentary and bibliographic techniques are used, since during the research, official documents were used in order to assist the investigation. Moreover, secondary sources, the analysis of works carried out by other researchers, allowed a better understanding of the problem and broadened the scope of the answer to the research problem.

**Keywords:** Terrorism, insurgency, Africa, Mozambique, natural gas.

#### Öz

2017 yılı, Mozambik'te terörizm olarak kabul edilen bir dizi saldırının başlangıcına işaret etmektedir. Kimliği bilinmeyen bir grup militanın 3 Mozambik polis karakoluna saldırmasıyla başlamıştır. Bu grubun gerçekleştirdiği saldırılar, 4000'den fazla vatandaşın ölümüne ve yarım milyondan fazla vatandaşın yerinden edilmesine neden olmuştur. Bu araştırma, Mozambik Hükümeti'nin ülkedeki gaz arama projelerinin askıya alınmasına neden olan ve geleceğini olumsuz etkileyen bu sorunu etkili bir şekilde çözmesini engelleyen faktörlerin belirlenmesi açısından önemlidir. Sorunun anlaşılmasını, militanlarla başa çıkmak için deneyim ve ekipman eksikliği ve askeri operasyonlara odaklanma Mozambik Hükümeti'nin Cabo Delgado'daki duruma etkili bir çözüm bulmasını engellemiştir. Araştırmayı yürütmek için söylem analizi, belgesel ve bibliyografik teknikler kullanılmıştır, çünkü araştırma sırasında soruşturmaya yardımcı olması için resmi belgeler kullanılmıştır. Ayrıca, ikincil kaynaklar, diğer araştırmacılar tarafından yürütülen çalışmaların analizi, sorunun daha iyi anlaşılmasını sağlamıştır ve araştırma probleminin cevabının kapsamını genişlemiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Terörizm, isyan, Afrika, Mozambik, doğalgaz.

## STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Terrorism is a problem that affects the security of many states today. On the African continent there are evidences of how terrorism becomes an impediment to the development of states as in the case of Somalia, we see the case of terrorism in Nigeria that has been affecting the security of this country since the past years. As far as the Southern African region is concerned, terrorism is a new problem, as there are no old pockets of terrorism in that region. In Mozambique, as in the southern African region as a whole, terrorism is a new problem. Insofar as there were no cases of terrorism in the country before, one of the pieces of evidence that this is a new challenge for the country is the fact that, until the date of the start of the first attacks, there was no law that provided for this and established beacon laws to deal with terrorism. The first law on terrorism in Mozambique was created in 2018, a year after the attacks began. The fact that there are different narratives on the part of the government to designate the attacks, for a time they were called malefactors, for another time insurgents and later the term terrorists came to be used to designate this group. This research sought to determine the factors that constituted an impediment to the quick resolution of the problem. In the search for the answer to the research question, it was necessary to proceed with the analysis of questions considered relevant to the theme under analysis, in this way, seeking to understand questions related to the emergence of the group, the causes that led to the outbreak of terrorism, the form of operation of this group, strategies and actions carried out by the government in the fight against terrorism. From the analysis of these aspects it was possible to arrive at the answer to the research question. With the discovery of gas in Mozambique, expectations were emerging and growing with regard to the future of the country. This discovery led to the emergence of large projects around gas exploration in the region on the one hand, but for the population of Cabo-Delgado, who had felt marginalized by the government for years, there was fear within them about this new reality, leading to the emergence of doubts about the changes that were expected, and this factor was exploited by the terrorist group that used it to recruit members.

It is important to note that in the beginning this group focused on attacking state entities, such as attacks on police stations and seeking to take control of them in an attempt to prove itself stronger in relation to government forces. Later on, this group became more violent, starting to carry out attacks not only on government entities but also on private entities such as banks, etc. At this time that the group manages to gain the attention of the international community, which led to a halt in the pursuit of international investments in progress in the region, such as the withdrawal of the company Total.

This group is different from other terrorist groups in that it differs in some ways of operating. While terrorist groups such as the Islamic State tend to claim responsibility for their attacks, they have come to the public to present their identity, objectives, the cause for which they fight, this group has not shown the same behavior in such a way that some authors argue about the fact that they do not know whether it is terrorism or another form of terrorism.

Thousands of people had to leave their homes because of the attacks, there were displacements inside and outside the country, there were deaths. Attacks on state entities as well as private entities were carried out. Difficulties in understanding and defining the problem, lack of preparation and equipment on the part of the Mozambican defense forces in the face of the militants led the country to resort to private military companies to act in Mozambique, but that also proved to be a failure. With support from Rwanda and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) forces there was a significant advance and a weakening of this group. Even with the weakening of the group, there is a need for the government to act in other sectors in order to mitigate the reasons that lead citizens to join this group. For example, the creation of more jobs can put an end to unemployment, which is one of the reasons for the group to be able to have new militants. Ending these reasons the government can put an end to terrorism and history dictates that only by military means it is impossible to end terrorism.

## Introduction

Africa is a continent rich in natural resources, however, instead of guaranteeing an improvement in the living conditions of the populations, leading to the growth and economic development of the African states, in some cases resources have contributed to the worsening of the living conditions of the African countries.

Mozambique is a country rich in natural resources. In the southern region of the country, more specifically in the province of Inhambane, the South African company Sasol has been exploring for years natural gas in the region, there is mineral coal in Moatize, province of Tete. Mozambique has several natural resources, gas, mineral coal, precious stones such as rubies, diamonds that have been attracting foreign investment to these sectors. It is believed that the emergence of terrorism in Mozambique dates back to 2010 with the discovery of gas in the Cabo Delgado region, which drew the attention of large investors and in turn started the creation of large projects for exploration (Estelle and Darden, 2017: 5-7). In 2015, the Ansar al-Sunna group was created by the union of street traders, a fact motivated by the combination of dissatisfaction with the prevailing economic situation at the time, together with a religious radicalism (Estelle and Darden, 2021: 8). In 2015 Ansar-al-Sunna created a religious organization that later evolved and started to join a military faction that started the terrorist attacks in October 2017 (Sitoe, 2019: 166-167). The discovery of gas and creation of gas exploration projects, the unfulfilled hope of improvement of the living conditions of the people of this region with the arrival of projects, unemployment and marginalization of young people in this region are considered some of the causes that led to terrorism.

Several researches such as the ones carried out by Estelle and Darden (2021), Sitoe (2019), Mirko Manzoni (2023) among others, show that there are differences between them in the delimitation of the problem insofar as some consider the attacks as terrorism and others as insurgency. History shows that there are difficulties, problems in reaching a consensus on the definition of terrorism and this fact negatively contributes to the search for a solution to it. As happened in some cases in the past, in Mozambique, there is an absence of consensus in the country on whether it is a question of insurgency or terrorism (Sitoe, 2019: 165).

Insurgency is defined as the organized use of subversion as well as violence aiming to seize, nullify, or challenge political control of a region, it is also viewed as a form of intrastate conflict. At the other side terrorism is broadly seen as a tool of irregular warfare. While insurgents rely on support of the populations, terrorists on its turn are individuals or isolated groups or cells without broad public support (Wijk, 2020: 110-113). The insurgent (freedom fighter) fights against a sovereign State in order to achieve political autonomy or change the current order, while the terrorist uses the civilian population as a target in order to coerce a State or even the entire international community. Terrorist organizations operate through decentralized cells and direct their actions predominantly at civilian targets. Insurgent and belligerent groups have a similar structure to the state armed forces, they use the system of hierarchy and their attacks are aimed at the state armed forces. Combating insurgents is accepted as being simpler and taking less time, however, the fight against terrorism is generally more complex, takes more time since the enemy is considered "unknown" (Nunes, 2017).

For the purposes of this research, this group is considered a terrorist group. As will be analyzed below, this group generally uses irregular means in its fight, the fight against this group still persists since 2017, since the beginning of the attacks there has been no record of population support turned to the group, and their actions, although at first they were aimed at the police, they developed and began to take civilians as their main target. The fight against terrorism is therefore a difficult and long process, and this is constituting a fundamental characteristic of the Mozambican problem since, as will be studied below, it was not possible to solve the problem quickly, in such a way that it prevailed over the years and there was

a need to receive external help in the fight against terrorism.

This group uses rudimentary methods in its attacks as it resorts mostly to the use of bladed weapons in carrying out its attacks, unlike other terrorist groups today that resort to the use of explosive devices such as bombs in carrying out their attacks. In 2017 Mozambique seemed to be closer to experiencing a new security problem: Terrorism. The problem started in Cabo Delgado Mocimboa da Praia region and expanded to more regions causing also more damage to the country, so this research aims to understand which aspects prevented the state from solving the problem.

This study aims to determine the factors that prevented the Mozambican government from effectively solving the problem of terrorism in the country. Many studies have been developed around the Mozambican problem. Most of these studies discuss the nature of the same problem in order to understand whether it is insurgency or terrorism. This work will serve as a bibliographical collection with regard to the emergence of this new international security problem in Mozambique, as well as allowing a greater perception of the factors that prevented the Mozambican government from solving the issue of terrorism quickly and effectively.

This research resorted to the use of documentary and bibliographical techniques for its materialization. The documentary technique that, through the use of primary sources, in other words data that have not yet been treated in a scientific way, greatly favored the development of research insofar as, resorting to the use of laws, international resolutions that ensured a better understanding of the problem in analysis. On the other hand, the bibliographic technique enriched the work because, through the use of research carried out by other researchers, it was possible to carry out a more comprehensive analysis and find the answer to the research problem.

The research argues that the difficulty of perceiving the problem, Mozambique's lack of experience with problems of this nature, the choice of internal resolution as the initial strategy to the resolution of the problem as well as the focus only on military combat, made it difficult to effectively solve the problem in question. To reach the answer to the research question, a study was carried out in order to understand the prevailing context in Mozambique at the time of the beginning of the attacks, the main dynamics, as well as getting to know the group behind the attacks. Understanding the perpetrator of terrorism attacks makes it easy to perceive what the reason for their fight is as well as what the objective that they are trying to pursue is. The research also made an approach of the main attacks carried out by the group and made an analysis around the strategies adopted by the Mozambican government on its counterterrorism measures in order to understand the aspects that hindered the solution of this security problem.

### **Definition of Terrorism**

Terrorism is widely accepted as a problem that affects the security of individuals, states and international organizations as a whole. Despite terrorism being widely accepted as a problem that directly affects actors in the international system, a consensus has yet to be reached regarding the definition of this same problem. Several international actors such as the United Nations are of the opinion that a definition widely accepted by actors in the international system is essential to ensure success in the fight against terrorism (European Parliament, 2015: 1).

Alex Schmidt, is of the opinion that the absence of a general definition of terrorism serves to encourage terrorism. The former Director of the Office for Combating Terrorism at the United States State Department Anthony Quainton, argues that the lack of a widely accepted definition for the term terrorism makes it difficult to create strategies and measures that guarantee success in the so-called fight against terrorism at the national and international level. It is believed that the definition of terrorism will serve as

a basis for the creation of an operational tool that allows the international community to expand its abilities to combat it, insofar as it will facilitate, for example, the creation of laws that establish legal parameters that allow punishing for example the perpetrators of terrorism, will prevent success in attempts by terrorist groups to reach or obtain legitimacy on the part of terrorist groups in seeking support from the population, will facilitate the creation of international agreements on terrorism that establish parameters of cooperation between states (Schmidt, 2004: 378).

Hoffman (1998) defines terrorism as the “deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change.” The author states that use of violence or threat to use violence is a basic element of terrorism. Psychological effect is seen as an instrument used by terrorists in order to expand the effects of their acts. The establishment of fear or intimidation within a large public allows terrorist groups to reach their target, be it the government, a political party as well as the public in general. Resorting to violence or threat of violence terrorists intend to win power or influence to generate changes in the political arena in a national or/and international level.

Wilkinson (2003) on its turn, states that terrorism is the systematic use of "coercive intimidation" used in an organized form, mostly to pursue political objectives. Terrorism is used to generate fear as well as take advantage of this environment among a huge target other than the direct victims of the act in order to make public the cause they are fighting for and at the other side to force a target in the concession of their goals. The author adds that terrorism can be a tool of powerless minorities, states, an instrument of domestic and foreign policy as well as it can be used by belligerents as a supportive weapon in all kinds and levels of warfare. Most of the times, innocent civilians have been victims of terrorist attacks, they are often killed or injured in those violent acts.

Jenkins (1974: 2), while addressing terrorism underlines the fact that there is no a broadly accepted definition of terrorism and this is a topic hard to define. The author considers that "violence towards political ends" is a good way of defining the concept. This definition helps to separate terrorism from all other sorts of violence. The fact that terrorism never or rarely separates "civilians" is also underlined by the author because for terrorists "one may be considered an enemy, and therefore a target, solely on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, or religion. Or one can become a target by mere happenstance -- by watching a movie in a theater when a bomb goes off".

To target civilians, to use violence, to have a political purpose, to carry out attacks in a continuous and planned manner are considered by Kaya and Kodaman (2021: 152-153) who define terrorism as a group of people that resorts to violence targeting civilians aiming to accomplish its political objectives and does this in a continuous and planned way. A terrorist organization tries to influence the decisions of the society and politicians by harming innocent civilians in the society it targets and by staging constant attacks. They think that this way allows them to achieve their goal. In the process in question, it sanctifies its purpose and struggle, and sees the suffering of people as legitimate.

Jenkins (1974: 2) argues that terrorists are as hard to define as terrorism. They can be understood as a band of factions who are seen as murderers, patriots or lunatics. An association of "rebels" can use terrorist strategies as well as an organization may resort to terrorism and refuse to be doing it. "Some terrorists are extremely well-organized, well-financed, well-trained, and well-equipped. They are almost an army". On the other hand, some terrorists are powerless and less organized, their activities are usually not planned as well as their main political goal is not clearly defined. The author describes that behind the "frontline terrorists" are always political leaders who cannot be considered as "insane in medical sense" because of their capacity to plan and manage the organizations activities.

Terrorism is used to express the use of organized, systematic and continuous terror. Terrorism is a

form of political violence. It seems that terrorist attacks can also turn into an insurrection form when they get enough social support that they can be used as a tool in uprising movements. Terrorism is a symbolic act designed to influence political behavior in abnormal ways that involve the use or threat of violence (Demir, 2016: 108; Demir, 2013: 30).

According to the Resolution 49/60 of the United Nations General Assembly, a terrorist act is stated as a criminal act planned to create a case of terror in the society, an association or individuals or in special individuals for political aspirations are in any case unjustifiable, whatsoever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other type that may be imposed to sustain them, United Nations General Assembly [UNGA] (1994: 4). The UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004: 2) describes terrorism as:

“Criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, (...)”.

In the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) definition of terrorism, a distinction is made between international and domestic terrorism, where international terrorism is considered to be violent criminal acts perpetrated by individuals or groups that have their inspiration in or are still associated with terrorist organizations, international organizations or states for state-sponsored groups. In turn, domestic terrorism is considered to be violent and criminal acts perpetrated by individuals or groups in pursuit of ideological objectives generated by political, religious, social, racial or environmental nature (FBI, n.d.).

Terrorism in Africa represents a serious security problem that has affected states like Somalia and Nigeria for years. The Organization of African Union (OAU) adopted by July 01, 1999 (1999: 3-4) a Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism according to which:

“Terrorist act means any act is a violation of the criminal laws of a State Party and which may endanger the life, physical integrity or freedom of, or cause serious injury or death to any person, any number or group of persons or causes or may cause damage to public or private property, natural resources, environmental or cultural heritage and its calculated or intended to: intimidate, put in fear, force (...) any government, institution, the general public (...) to do or abstain from doing any act (...)”.

In the OAU definition of terrorism, it is possible to note that not only acts against the government are considered terrorism as well as acts that intend to restrain or by the use of coercion force an institution, the general opinion from doing or to do something is considered an act of terrorism.

SADC has a Regional Counter-terrorism center (SADC RCTC). Created by 20 February 2022, the center is located in the capital Dar-Es-Salam. The center was created to facilitate coordination, solidify partnerships, and effectively respond to terrorism as well as violent extremism in the region, SADC (n.d.). SADC acknowledges the fact that terrorism represents a strong threat to the fulfillment of fundamental rights and freedoms of humankind as well as states that cooperation between the states is essential to the victory in the war against terrorism (Declaration on Terrorism, 2002: 2).

With regard to the definition of terrorism in accordance with Mozambican legislation, one year after the outbreak of terrorist attacks in Cabo Delgado, Lei 5/2018 de 2 de Agosto (Law 5/2018 of August 2) establishes the legal regime for preventing, repressing and combating terrorism, according to which terrorism is a crime committed with the aim of inciting insecurity within society, terror or panic among the population in general or of exerting pressure on the State or on an organization of an economic, social or political nature to carry out or refrain from carrying out a or more activities. A terrorist act is an act

committed with the intention of causing death or serious bodily injury, being perpetrated against civilians or any other person not taking a direct part in hostilities, with the intention of provoking a state of fear in the general public, as well as on a group of people or private individuals, intimidate the population or force a government or other public entity or even an international organization to act or refrain from performing a given act (Boletim da República, 2018: 1791).

In Mozambique, on July 8, 2022, Law number 13/2022 was approved, which establishes the legal Regime for the Prevention, Suppression and Combat of Terrorism and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and at the same time repeals Law number 5/2018 of August 2. This law defines terrorism as a crime committed with the aim of generating social insecurity, terror or panic among the population or of exerting pressure on the State, Government or any national or international organization of an economic, social or political nature to carry out or refrain from to carry out certain activities (Boletim da República, 2022: 1118).

In regarding the definitions above it is possible to conclude that in the various definitions of terrorism, there are some similar notes such as:

- One of the most important characteristics of terrorism is its planned and continuous nature of its attacks.
- Terrorism is a politically motivated criminal act committed with the aim of causing an entity to do or abstain from doing something;
- Governments of states, international organizations, individuals as well as groups of individuals are considered to be targets of acts of terrorism.
- Acts of terrorism are based on creating panic, terror among the population through the use or threat of the use of illegal violence.

The FBI's definition of terrorism presupposes that terrorism is an act committed by individuals or groups of individuals associated in a certain way with an association, but the other definitions analyzed here, such as that of the OAU or the Mozambican government itself, do not specify the actor of this act, if the actor is a group or an individual associated with a group. On the other hand, the FBI's definition of terrorism is broader in the sense that it makes a distinction between domestic and international terrorism.

These definitions also support the controversial fact that has been discussed for years: although terrorism is widely accepted by states, international organizations as a crime that must be committed and threatens the security of individuals in particular as well as states and international organizations in the world. Terrorism is a fact accepted by many as a threat to the security of states and international organizations, for example, but the fact that there is still no definition of terrorism generally accepted by these same states and international organizations that recognize it as a threat becomes controversial. It is controversial because terrorism has been debated for a long time, seeking to create a single definition, but the existence of different perceptions and definitions to explain this phenomenon has prevented a consensus on what terrorism is and therefore time makes it difficult to create mechanisms to fight, deal with or solve this problem. In general, there is no single definition, internationally accepted by states and international organizations. Each state, each organization (etc.) has its own definition of terrorism, which constitutes an obstacle to cooperation in favor of preventing and combating terrorism.

### **Context of the Emergence of Terrorism in Mozambique**

During the period in which terrorism in Mozambique began, that is, in the period that preceded the first terrorist attack in Mozambique, the country was immersed in a peace process after a long period in which political and military tension in Mozambique took place. It was a time when there were indirect

military clashes between the government and the opposition party Resistência Nacional de Moçambique better known as RENAMO. It should be remembered that it was with this same party RENAMO, which soon after Mozambique's independence, the civil war that lasted 16 years in Mozambican territory was unleashed. Shortly after the start of the attacks in Mozambique, before the government adopted the narrative that it was terrorism, the government called for negotiation and aimed to resolve it through dialogue, seeking to find the problem with the group and seek solutions. Mozambique since the times of the civil war, followed by the political-military tension and the times of the 2017 attacks, has always guided by the peaceful solution through dialogue, a fact that makes it considered a global example of the importance of dialogue for the peaceful resolution of military conflicts (Manzoni 2023; Club of Mozambique, 2022).

According to Siteo (2019:160), on October 5 and 6, 2017, attacks began in Mocimboa da Praia. The first attacks targeted three police stations in the Mocimboa da Praia region, located in the province of Cabo Delgado in northern Mozambique. In addition to police targets, these attacks also claimed civilian victims. Attacks were carried out by a group of armed men and resulted in the death of the National Director of Reconnaissance of the Rapid Intervention Unit (*Director Nacional de Reconhecimento da Unidade de Intervenção Rápida-UIR*), members of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique (*Polícia da República de Moçambique-PRM*) as well as civilians, destruction of residences of the population (there were about 50 families that were left without shelter), there was vandalism of churches and suspension of public order in the village of Mocimboa da Praia – deserted streets and interruption of traffic to and from Mocimboa da Praia.

Cabo Delgado is located in a region of strategic importance for the Mozambican economy because on May 15, 2012, the National Petroleum Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Petróleo-INP*) announced, in the country's capital Maputo, the discovery of large deposits of natural gas in the Rovuma sedimentary basin, off the coast of Cabo Delgado province, northern Mozambique. The discovery was made by Anadarko Petroleum Corporation, an American oil company based in Texas (INP, 2012: 1).

The Rovuma Basin is the sedimentary basin connected to the Rovuma River that lies on the border separating Mozambique from Tanzania, located on land and sea. The first oil survey and data acquisition in the Mozambican part of the basin started around the year 1980. During long years of intense research, in 2010 the first major discovery in this basin was announced, followed by other considerable discoveries of natural gas. With the discovery of gas in the Rovuma Basin, 3 mega projects were approved in this region, namely: the Golfinho/Atum Project, to be carried out by Total E&P Mozambique Area 1 Limited, the Coral Sul FLNG Project to be implemented by Eni and the Rovuma LNG Project, to be carried out by Mozambique Rovuma LNG (MRV) (INP, 2014).

After the discovery of large gas reserves along the Rovuma basin, Anadarko and Eni, companies that stand out in the volume of investment in Mozambique, announced in 2013 what would be the biggest investment destined for Mozambique: 50 billion dollars intended for the construction of up to ten liquefied natural gas plants, a megaproject only surpassed by a similar one in Qatar. The construction of factories for the production of liquefied natural gas was scheduled to begin in 2014 and production and exports were scheduled for 2018. An initial capacity of 20 million tons/year was foreseen, which would later be extended to 50 million tons/year, which will have the Asian market as their main destination. With these projects, Mozambique could occupy a prominent position at an international level as, within a few years, it could occupy the position of the third largest producer of natural gas in the world, behind Qatar and Australia (Sousa, 2013).

Gas exploration in the Cabo Delgado region created great expectations in terms of economic gains for the country, not only within the Mozambican population but also within the country's government. In

2015, the government and the company Anadarko signed a memorandum related to the resettlement of the population of palm trees in Cabo Delgado that resided in the areas where the construction of an industrial park for the processing of natural gas would be carried out. In addition to indemnities for the population, funding for the area of infrastructure for the population such as schools, hospitals, houses, among others, was foreseen (Portal do Governo Moçambicano, 2015). Mozambican Prime Minister Carlos Agostinho do Rosário, during his speech at the Assembly of the Republic in 2016, was confident in the recovery of the Mozambican economy in 2017 after a long period of economic crisis. The recovery of the economy would be largely influenced by the start of implementation of natural gas projects in the Rovuma Basin in Cabo Delgado (Portal do Governo Moçambicano, 2016).

In 2016, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was also optimistic about the growth of the Mozambican economy, having announced that it predicted an increase in the average annual economic growth rate in Mozambique that could reach the impressive figure of 24% during the first half of the next decade. The IMF's optimism was based on the start of gas production in the Rovuma Basin which was scheduled for 2021. In its report it was estimated that in the middle of the next decade about half of the country's production would result from the exploration of natural gas (Portal do Governo Moçambicano, 2016).

Until 2016, a year before the start of the attacks in Cabo Delgado, the future of Mozambique was considered bright, as the executive chairman of Exxon Mobil, Rex Tillerson, said in an audience with the President of the Republic of Mozambique Filipe Jacinto Nyusi in a meeting with the Business Council for International Understanding, in New York in 2016. At the same meeting, the Mozambican President assured investors that it was safe to invest in Mozambique as the country was stable and open to business, also calling on international investors to explore the opportunities that the country offers. Tillerson also said that Exxon Mobil was keenly interested in carrying out its operations in Mozambique after being granted licenses to explore for hydrocarbons in some blocks in the Rovuma basin, in Cabo Delgado (Portal do Governo Moçambicano, 2016).

From the paragraphs above, we can see that the hope for growth as well as economic development in Mozambique was largely based on gas exploration in the region of Bacia do Rovuma in Cabo Delgado. The discovery of gas reserves attracted the attention of international companies such as Anadarko, Exxon Mobil and others to the country. Before the start of the attacks in Cabo Delgado, a region where bets were being made for the country's development, the future of Mozambique was considered promising. However, this situation began to change after the start of the attacks in Cabo Delgado, as we will see later.

### **Outbreak of Terrorism 2017: Identity of the Group, Modus Operandi and Objectives**

Some authors consider the Mozambican case as an “terrorist insurgency” (Kunaka, n.d.: 9). On the other hand, authors such as Estelle and Darden (2021: 5) in regard to the case of Cabo Delgado, assume these attacks to be a case of insurgency. Within the Mozambican Government, the use of both narratives is also verified, as the later one will be addressed. With regard to the identity of the group that perpetuated the attacks in Cabo Delgado, the following names are presented by Estelle and Darden (2021: 5) as being used to refer to the group:

- Al Shabaab (“the Youth”): This group, at the local level is called al shabaab however, it is important to underline that it does not refer to the Somali terrorist group Al-Shabaab.
- Ahlu Sunna wa al Jama’a (“the People of the Sunnah and the Community”): The armed insurgency and a predecessor sect used this term, which can refer to Sunni Muslims broadly and is used by many other organizations, including a paramilitary group in Somalia.

- Islamic State Central Africa Province (ISCA or ISCAP). This is the Islamic State's official designation for its affiliates in Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Islamic State in Mozambique (IS-M) and ISCA's Mozambique branch are considered synonymous (...) but IS-M is used to avoid confusion with the ISCA's DRC branch.

According to Siteo (2019: 163) the name Al Shaabab is the most preferred with regard to the designation of this group, that may have been influenced by the fact that the Somali group of the same name is known as a religious terrorist group and the fact that the members of this group are of the same religion made this analogy and the group was considered as al shabaab.

The true identity of this group has yet to be made public. Due to the fact that the group itself has not yet declared a name that would represent the identity of the group, authors believe that it has not yet created or chosen an identity, so all possible identities used to designate this group are considered by analysts as a result of speculation made by both the population and the press, (Siteo 2019: 163; Estelle and Darden 2021: 5; Rawoot 2020).

Siteo (2019: 166), regarding the composition of the group, underlines the fact that it has not only national but also international militants: Mozambicans (314) from Nacala Porto, Mocimboa da Praia and Nangade, Tanzanians (52), a Somali and one Ugandan, about 370 of the identified members. With regard to the languages spoken by this group, the group speaks Swahili, Portuguese and Kimuani, which are languages spoken at the local level. This group also has its own clothing: they wear a white turban around their heads; shaved hair; big beard, white coat and short pants, just below the knee.

The religious faction of this group is believed to have connections with Tanzania as it was discovered that the first members of the group were followers of the radical Kenyan preacher, Aboud Rogo, who was shot dead in 2012, possibly by the Kenyan security services. After his death his followers moved and settled in Tanzania in an area close to the border with Mozambique, (The Standards 2019). The group appears to intent on attempting to impose Sharia across Mozambique. It opposes the government's secular education program and takes issue with co-ed education and has allegedly banned its members from seeking hospital treatment (Terrorism Monitor, 2018).

Amnesty International (2021) registered various attacks carried out by the group intentionally killed civilians, burned villages as well as towns, and also performed abominable acts of violence using machetes, including numerous beheadings and desecration of corpses. By March 2020, there was an attack that took place in the town of Quissanga. 16 former residents testified summary killings, beatings, abductions, burning, as well as looting in the course of the next weeks. A lot of teenagers were kidnapped. One man told Amnesty International: "They take both boys and girls. Some, they take them to behead. Some, they make the girls become 'wives' and do work in the base. The boys become soldiers." Women shared that they were running to other cities because of the fear of being abducted. During a bus attack on 23 July 2020, the terrorists ordered that every single person in the bus must be executed, a pregnant woman was shot and left to bleed to death but survived and lost her husband in the attack.

### **Causes of Terrorism Attacks**

For the most part, analysts argue that the problem of Cabo Delgado was mostly due to economic reasons. The population of Cabo Delgado considers itself or feels "forgotten" by the Mozambican Government for some time now, since the rates of economic problems such as poverty and unemployment have been increasing in this region over the years. It is considered that these economic problems are the main cause that led to the beginning of the attacks in Cabo Delgado (Makonye, 2020:63).

With the preparations for the start of gas exploration in Cabo Delgado, more than 550 families had to be resettled and more than 900 families would lose access to their lands where they practiced agriculture for their own subsistence, as well as more than 3 thousand would lose access to their fishing areas that were also their source of income in order to make way for the construction of the necessary infrastructures for the production of gas. There was a financial aid plan for the resettled populations, however, this population that already felt "forgotten" by the government carried numerous concerns related to its future after resettlement. Some of those who had been resettled until 2016 complained that the compensation was inadequate, the farmland was located in areas cultivated by other families which generated conflict over land on the one hand and on the other hand the new spaces made available for cultivation were located in areas far from their homes. Families who lived from fishing were resettled to areas more than 10 km from their fishing areas and considered that the gas projects affected the reduction of the fish stock, the promised jobs in the extractive industry were not materialized, which increased the pressure on the families with regard to their concern about sources of livelihood in the future (Rawoot, 2020).

Emily Estelle and Jessica Trisko Darden (2021: 7) argue that Cabo Delgado has been marginalized by the Mozambican Government. Due to the fact that access to electricity is limited to 12.5% of families in the region, access to internet and media is reduced, access to education for women is limited to 17.5% against 85% of women residents of the nation's capital. Estelle and Darden (2021: 7) present the following relationship between the causes and catalysts of the problem:

- Problems related to weak governance such as political marginalization, vulnerability of the security sector that led to what the authors call "Armed crackdown on religious splinter group; Mishandling of initial insurgency";
- Problems linked to economic marginalization resulting from problems such as corruption, lack of employment and failure to carry out the necessary investment in the provision of services that led to the simultaneous collapse of many local industries due to natural disasters as well as industrial consolidation and high expectations regarding the benefits to be gained and development levels to be generated by gas exploration;
- Existing tensions between ethnic groups, classes and religious groups as a division of the Muslim population at the level of generations, influence of Wahhabi education with foreign origin, connection with northern Islamic groups or networks as well as fragmentation of Makonde, Makuhwa and Mwani representatives that led to the reception of influences from the Tanzanian Salafi-jihadi network.

Feelings of dissatisfaction with the Government among the local population facilitated the recruitment of the local population by the extremist group considered Jihadists by Rentergem (2022: 2). It is easier for the group to recruit from within the *Mwani* ethnic group, as this group has been marginalized by the Government since the country's independence. This community is known as the protector of Islamic traditions in the region and has been greatly affected by relocations related to gas exploration as well as internal migration and the political influence of the *Makonde* ethnic group, which in turn has also negatively influenced the marginalization of the *Mwani*, Estelle and Darden, (2021: 7). Individuals in this group make an effort to gain sympathies in the region through promises to guarantee the entry of members to paradise and earn money, a practice that facilitates the recruitment of members for the organization as well as allows them to get financial support and also sympathizers for the group (Sitoe, 2019: 167).

The group that operates in Cabo Delgado was created in 2015 as a religious sect and later expanded into a military branch. It is believed that the group resorts to illegal trafficking in precious stones such as the ruby in order to obtain funding for its activities. The trafficking of precious stones can generate up to 3 million dollars in just one week. Among the allies in the trafficking are Tanzanians, Vietnamese and

Chinese who operate in the region. On the other hand, both national and international sympathizers also make their donations to the group, constituting another source of funding for it (Clube de Moçambique, 2018).

In a video published by the group in February 2018, the group showed its jihadist inclinations of the imposition of Sharia in Mozambican territory. The group showed that it opposes the secularism adopted by the government and aims to make Mozambique a state governed by Islamic law, Felix Makonye, 2020:65). In the same video the group leader declares its objective as expressed in the following statement "... our fight is to replace the Frelimo flag with this flag and (...) rule by the Law of Allah" (Nhamirre, 2021: 3).

"Insurgents have attacked both security forces and civilians, burning villages and committing atrocities", (European Parliament Research Service, 2022:2). With regard to the modus operandi of this group, the group generally resorts to the use of machetes (blank weapons) as well as firearms, also organizing ambushes of police stations and police convoys. On the other hand, the group also attacks churches, destroys citizens' homes, and invades government and private buildings using machetes, axes, arrows, firearms (AK-47), among others (Sitole, 2022: 170).

### **Main Attacks Carried out by the Group**

The most notable attack at the beginning of the series of attacks in Cabo Delgado was perpetrated by 30 armed men, who attacked 3 posts of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique (PRM) in the district of Mocimboa da Praia in October 2017. The armed men gained control of the city and stole ammunition from the stations until the government forces managed to remove them from the area. During the clash, 2 policemen were killed and 10 militants lost their lives (Makonye, 2020: 66).

In March 2018, insurgents attacked a service station in Sofala province, making their first attack outside of Cabo Delgado. In May of the same year, insurgents attacked 10 unarmed citizens, therefore marking a change in their target. During February 2019, the attackers carried out an offensive against vehicles of the Anadarko Petroleum company, in May of the same year, the militants carried out an attack on a truck that was transporting passengers and goods using homemade explosives. In June 2019, an attack was carried out near the Mozambican border with Tanzania, causing 11 mortal victims (8 Tanzanians and 3 Mozambicans) for the first time (Devermont and Columbo, 2019: 3)

During 2018 there was a change in the mode of operation of militants in Cabo Delgado. The targets were no longer just State institutions, but also included citizens, both men and women, some women were taken to serve as wives of the militants. On the other hand, the attacks extended to another 6 districts of Cabo Delgado, which shows that the group's terrorist cells have increased. As a result, more people had to be relocated both to other provinces in the country and to the refugee camp in Tanzania (Estelle and Darden, 2021:10).

In 2019, for the first time, concrete signs emerged of the existence of some connection between this group and the Islamic State. The Islamic State media shared some videos in which it claimed responsibility for some attacks on Mozambique, however, the connection between these two groups has not been clear or easy to prove insofar as it is believed that if in fact these two were connected, the attacks in Mozambique would have taken on a completely different dimension. For example, they would have received training related to explosives and this group still has not had training with explosives as well as the legitimacy of the group is still unclear. As evidence of the previous aspect, it is given the following example: When Boko Haram started its relations with the Al-Qaeda group in the Islamic Maghreb, it received training that led to the sophistication of its attacks, starting to use booby-trapped explosive devices as well as booby-trapped

cars, for example, its attacks also became better coordinated, a fact that is not yet evident in the case of the militants in Mozambique (Estelle and Darden 2021:10; Sitole 2022: 170).

The attacks in Cabo Delgado forced the displacement of more than half a million people who left the region and moved to safer areas, ONU News (2020). The local population believes that the discovery of gas influenced the outbreak of the conflict. More than 4000 people were killed, more than 800.000 people were forced to relocate due to the problem in Cabo Delgado (Institute for Security Studies, 2022).

These attacks significantly disaffected the progress of gas exploration projects in Mozambique to the extent that, in April 2021, the company Total declared the withdrawal of all its personnel working on the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project in the Afungi region of Cabo Delgado for reasons of *force majeure*<sup>1</sup>. The gas exploration project by Total whose investment of a total of 20 billion dollars in 2019 was affected by the Cabo Delgado problem, Total Energies Mozambique (n.d). At a press conference the company said "Considering the evolution of the security situation in the north of the Cabo Delgado province in Mozambique, Total confirms the withdrawal of all Mozambique LNG project personnel from the Afungi site." (Total Energies Mozambique, 2021).

### **Internal Resolution and its Challenges as a Strategy to fight terrorism in Mozambique**

At first, the Government of Mozambique, in order to avoid attracting international attention and creating governance problems, initially rejected any proposal for international aid and instead opted for a more local approach to problem solving. In order to decrease foreign attention, the militants were called neither insurgents nor terrorists but local bandits by the government. The Government, through security forces, prevented access by journalists in order to limit the sharing of information related to the problem, however, this strategy did not bring many positive results since the lack of free access to information led to the dissatisfaction of the local population and the same population developed a hostile feeling towards the Government due to the fact that they considered that their concerns regarding their security were incorrectly and ineffectively managed by the Government (Rentergem, 2022: 3).

In the excerpts below, some words uttered by the Mozambican President were extracted, from which one can perceive the inconsistency in the use of terms to classify the problem of Cabo Delgado, insofar as one notes the presence of neutrality due to the absence of the use of the word terrorists to address the group, it is also noted, on the other hand, the use of the term insurgents and later terrorists to designate the Mozambican problem:

- Evidence of the neutrality of the use of the terms insurgency or terrorist by the Mozambican Government can be found in the following words provided by Mozambican President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi in a message dedicated to the Mozambican people when transitioning from the year 2019 to 2020 on his official Facebook page where he wrote: "(...) we make this transition in a context of great pain resulting from unjustified violence, perpetrated by individuals contrary to our progress, in the North zone - in Cabo Delgado and in the Center zone.", Presidente Filipe Nyusi (2019). On August 14, 2020, the President of Mozambique said the following when referring to the situation in Cabo Delgado "(...) war started by people who want to divide us because of our wealth.". In this paragraph, different speeches made by the President of the Republic of Mozambique were used in order to demonstrate his neutrality over a long period of time with regard to the use of the term's terrorism or insurgency.

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<sup>1</sup> Force majeure is defined as a "superior or irresistible force: an event or effect that cannot be reasonably anticipated or controlled", (Merriam Webster, n.d.).

- " (...) In Cabo Delgado, we continue to work to normalize the situation given the presence of insurgents who continue to kill innocent people in some districts of this part of the country.", statement made by the Mozambican President in which he uses the term insurgents to address the Cabo Delgado case on December 18, 2019 (Presidente Filipe Nyusi, 2019);
- In other selected statements made to the Mozambican people, President Nyusi preferred the use of the term "terrorists" to refer to the problem of Cabo Delgado, as can be seen below: On June 3, 2020 the President said: "(... in particular the terrorist attacks in the province of Cabo Delgado." "(...) Mozambique in the fight against terrorism in Cabo Delgado (...) shared on June 11, 2020. "(...) we face terrorists in Cabo Delgado (...), extracted from a discourse done by the president by 12 December (Presidente Filipe Nyusi, 2020).
- "(...) the great security challenge we face, resulting from terrorist attacks, in the province of Cabo Delgado (...)" said the President by 28 of December (Presidente Filipe Nyusi, 2020).

From the above excerpts, it can be seen that in a first phase the government adopted a position of neutrality. When analyzing the Mozambican President's speeches, it is noted that at first this case was not accepted or considered as a case of terrorism, only later did the government accept that it was terrorism. Authors consider this to be a government approach to reduce the attention of the international community to the Mozambican problem. "Part of the Mozambican government's strategy was to label al-shabab as local bandits, not insurgents or terrorists, considering that the latter would attract massive international attention that could shed light on problematic governance issue" (Rentergem, 2022: 3).

Soon after the first attacks, there was a need for continued interventions by the police forces in Mocimboa da Praia. The operation that stands out most, took place in March 2018 and resulted in the seizure of seven firearms, 554 pistol ammunition, AK-47 and vehicles that were used in terrorist raids (Siteo, 2019: 165).

Until the start of the attacks in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique did not have legislation on terrorism, thus the first law on terrorism was approved in 2018, law 5/2018, the Legal Regime for Reprimanding and Combating Terrorism, and the subsequent one in 2022 with the revocation of law 5/2028 by law 13/2022 Regime for the Prevention, Suppression and Combat of Terrorism and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The absence of legislation on terrorism is considered by researchers to have contributed negatively to the efficiency in problem solving insofar as the terrorism is a criminal act for which legal instruments are needed to define how the criminal act will be punished. In the Mozambican case, until the emergence of terrorism, there was no legal instrument that could be used to punish this criminal act (Kunaka, n.d.: 13).

At the beginning it was hard for the government force to distinct civilians from the terrorists. Government forces realized diverse attacks against civilians that were believed to be in collaboration with or supporting the terrorists. The military and police have been accused of committing unlawful extrajudicial executions and acts of torture, and have mutilated bodies. Three days after the beginning of the Quissanga attacks, government security forces arrested civilians believed to be helping the group. They blindfolded and shot a lot of men, before dumping their bodies in a mass grave. The government fails to protect its citizens from attacks and subsequent violations suffered by citizens at the hands of this terrorist group (Amnesty International, 2021).

Mozambique announced that it had shot down 59 terrorists in an operation carried out in Cabo Delgado in August 2020. In this operation, 6 fields were neutralized and destroyed, as well as instruments used by the militants. The government continually asked in public for the support of the population, mainly through denunciations of members of the terrorist group. To date, around 280 members of the terrorist

group have been neutralized by the defense forces, Plataforma (2020). In December 2020, the Commander of the Defense Forces of Mozambique, announced in a press release the neutralization of more than 37 terrorists after an operation carried out by the military forces in Macomia (RFI, 2020).

The Mozambican army was not successful in its response to the attacks in Cabo Delgado. The factors that led to the failure in the response by the Armed Forces of Mozambique (FDM) are the shortage of soldiers, limitations in its operational capacity derived in part from the use of old equipment (European Parliament Research Service, 2022:2).

Comparing this group with other terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, it was noted that differently from other terrorist groups that always claim the authorship of its attacks, share in public their identity, objectives, this group did not prefer this approach since rarely it came out to claim the attacks that they have carried out. The author considers this as a terrorism without a face, without a cause, or with a pale cause. This group's mode of operation hampered the effectiveness and efficiency of counter-terrorism operations on the part of the Mozambican government, which, upon seeing that it alone could not contain the group, changed its strategy, and hired international private companies to help in the fight against terrorism (Siteo, 2019: 168).

### **Change in the Mozambican Government's Strategy in the Fight Against Terrorism: International Assistance**

The Mozambican Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Verónica Macamo, spoke to UN about the strategies adopted by the government in the fight against terrorism, where she shared that, "Mozambique is committed to combining armed intervention, reconstruction and development momentum to combat terrorism in the Cabo Delgado region, in the north of the country". This left the fact that the government has the aspect of military combat against terrorism as well as mitigation actions. On the military side, the government chooses to conduct armed operations against terrorists and, at the same time, as a mitigation measure, there is the implementation of the reconstruction plan for Cabo Delgado in order to guarantee that there are necessary conditions for the returning citizens to live in a safe and comfortable way (ONU News, 2023).

Regarding the inability of the Mozambican military to deal with the problem, Mozambique resorted to the help of private military companies (PMC), namely: The Russian company Wagner and the South African DAG, (Rentergem 2022:3). Russia and Mozambique have a history of relationship since the times of the liberation struggle in Mozambique, Russia was one of the country's allies during the struggle for independence. Faced with the inability to succeed in the fight against terrorism, Mozambican President Nyusi, made a trip to Russia, in order to hold a meeting with President Vladimir Putin. The trip took place in August 2019 and the following month saw the mobilization of the Russian Wagner Group to the country. The details of this agreement have not been made public. Two months after the arrival of the Russians in Mozambique, the Wagner Group withdrew from Cabo Delgado, a fact that is believed to have originated from the existence of disagreements with the Mozambican troops. Apparently, the soldiers of the Wagner Group intended to bomb the places identified as bases of the insurgents, while their Mozambican counterparts rejected this plan. On the other hand, it is believed that when going to Russia, the Mozambican government expected Russian military personnel to be deployed as opposed to a private military contractor (Nhamirre, 2021: 165-166).

The government contracted the South African private military company Dyck Advisory Group (DAG), to combat on their side using armed helicopters. Witnesses who spoke to Amnesty International, stated that DAG operatives have fired machine guns from their helicopters and released hand grenades randomly into mass of people, and also continuously fired at public infrastructure, including hospitals,

schools, and homes. By June 2020, an attack was carried out on Mocimboa da Praia. On this attack DAG helicopters ruined a hospital while looking for the members of the terrorist group. They were shooting and dropping bombs without making any distinction between civilians and terrorists (Amnesty International, 2021).

Amnesty International (2021) accused all parties involved in the conflict of committing war crimes. In other words, both insurgents and government forces as well as private military companies were accused by Amnesty International of committing war crimes by killing hundreds of Mozambican civilians during their operations. Government forces are also accused of illegally executing insurgents and private military companies are accused of carrying out indiscriminate attacks.

None of the organizations were also able to put an end to the insurgency problem due to the lack of knowledge of the territory. This put them at a disadvantage against the insurgents who know the region well (Rentergem 2022:3).

Wagner Group was immobilized in September 2019, and its mission was to fight insurgents in Cabo Delgado and ensure combat techniques for special operations. Consisting of about 200 soldiers, including elite troops, their instruments consisted of 3 attack helicopters, drones, weapons. Unsuccessfully, they left the country in November 2019. Dyck Advisory Group, mobilized in April 2020, composed of about 40 soldiers, its mission was to provide air support, logistics, military advice. As equipment, it had 6 light military reconnaissance and combat helicopters, they unsuccessfully withdrew from the country in April 2021. On the other hand, we have the Consortium Paramount and Burnham Global group, from South Africa and Dubai. Mobilized in February 2021, its mission was to train and provide military equipment and advice. Its equipment consisted of 4 Gazelle helicopters, 2 Mi-24 helicopters, 1 reconnaissance aircraft, 12 Marauder armored vehicles. Its forces left the country in November 2021 (Nhamirre, 2021: 166-167).

In 2021, Mozambique and Rwanda signed a bilateral agreement which culminated in the deployment of over 2000 Rwandan troops to give support on counterterrorism operations in Cabo Delgado, the first troops arrived in Mozambique on 9 July 2021. The Rwandan help, played a huge role in the brief stemming off the terrorism, control was recovered in Mocimboa da Praia in 2021. It's important to say that, the Rwandans forces were working together with the Mozambican armed forces. Their military played a huge role in the decrease of terrorist attacks (Rentergem, 2022: 4).

Mozambique is a member state of SADC. Initially created as Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference in 1980 in Lusaka, Zambia the organization aimed to “advance the cause of national political liberation in Southern Africa and to reduce dependence particularly on the then Apartheid era South Africa. Later on, by 1992 the heads of the countries decided to change the former Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) to the new SADC who now was more focused on the integration of economic development in the region. The organization has 16 member states in which Mozambique is one of them (Southern African Development Community, n.d.).

The SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) was installed by 15 July 2021, following the consent of the Extraordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government that took place in the Mozambican Capital Maputo on 23 June 2021. The directive of SAMIM incorporates giving support to the Mozambican Government on its fight against terrorism and acts of violent extremism in Cabo Delgado (SADC, 2021).

SAMIM mission intends to provide support to Mozambique over different ways: by neutralizing the militants, reassuring law and order, and providing humanitarian relief to the population (Rentergem, 2022: 4). The SADC military forces were composed by military from 8 different countries: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia

respectively. They were working in collaboration with the Mozambican military forces. SAMIM has recorded significant advances in the war on terrorism such as: regaining villages, removing terrorists from their bases and capturing weapons and warfare material. This has helped a lot in the creation of a safer environment. On the other side, community members feel confident toward SAMIM forces, they feel more secure and this has permitted internally displaced persons to return to their normal lives (SADC, 2021).

The SADC mission announced the killing of 31 terrorists during two major operations with Mozambican forces between October 2021 and January 2022 in the province of Cabo Delgado. These operations culminated in the capture and destruction of several terrorist bases east of Chai administrative post and the Messalo river, Macomia district. 31 terrorists were killed and 16 women, eight children and two elderly men, believed to have been kidnapped by the terrorists, were rescued. SAMIM also confiscated five RPG 7 type grenade launchers, five PKM machine guns, 48 AK47 machine guns and grenades. Other seized equipment includes vehicles, motorcycles and cell phones. During the so-called Operation Buffalo, the SAMIM Forces encountered strong resistance from the terrorists, but were able to inflict fatal casualties and disable activities (AIM Organization, 2022).

During the operations mentioned above in Mozambique, SADC forces suffered some casualties, on November 30th it was shared that during operations carried out in the Nkonga neighborhood, Nangade district (Cabo Delgado), SAMIM forces lost two soldiers and one contracted minor injury. The sergeants who lost their lives were from Tanzania and Botswana respectively. The lightly injured soldier is a member of the Tanzanian Armed Forces and was taken to a SAMIM hospital in Pemba (capital city of Cabo Delgado province) for treatment (SAMIM, 2022).

According to United States Institute of Peace (2022) the reason that led SADC to support Mozambique by sending military support to the country was because the insurgency in Mozambique raised the distress that this insurgency is a treat not only to Mozambique but to all the states within the region as well as threatens the regional integration and the economic development. Moreover, Mozambique received logistical support in addition to troop training from the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), European Union (EU), United States of America (USA), United Kingdom (UK) and Portugal in efforts to combat terrorism (Ouassif and Kitenge 2021: 11; Kunaka 13; Rentergem 2022:3).

Rwandan Ambassador to Maputo Claude Nikobisanzwe, announced in November 2021 the death of 100 terrorists and the release of 350 people, but the Government of Maputo neither confirmed nor denied. "Terrorism in northern Mozambique could spread to the entire southern region if it is not contained and resolved", warned the spokesman for SAMIM, Mpho Molomo, recalling that "wars of this type take a long time and reconstruction is not something achievable in a short time". Molomo added that this regional military intervention made it possible to pacify the region, mentioning the advances in operations in the region, but he stressed the need for work to ensure that the gains are effective, through the use of other approaches such as the reconstruction of Cabo Delgado. Nikobizanzwe considered that the terrorist group is in a "situation of enormous fragility", but guaranteed that it will be eradicated even without specifying the date (Voa Português, 2021)

Foreign military forces are considered to have some success in resolving the problem in Cabo Delgado. Influenced by having more experience and better equipment that gave superiority compared to the insurgents. In just 2 months after their deployment, the Rwandan forces, for example, gained the control of district of Palma and also allowed the recovery of Mocimboa da Praia which had been occupied by the insurgents for a year. The Mozambican military knew the bases of the insurgents, but given their inexperience with terrorism and a deficit of men and equipment, they were unable to defeat the insurgents or terrorists. On the other hand, SADC troops (SAMIM), having been placed in more regions than Rwanda, achieved more gains, just a few months after the beginning of their operations the troops shared evidence

of destruction of insurgent bases, seized equipment and rescued kidnapped civilians. Sometime later, populations began to return to some recovered areas that were considered safe for their return (Nhamirre 2021: 8).

The forces of Rwanda and SADC allowed significant advances in the recovery of areas that were under the control of the terrorists as well as in the weakening of the terrorists in Mozambique. It is believed that such success is due to their advanced equipment, their experience and better preparation to deal with terrorism, which gave them superiority over terrorists (Rentergem, 2022: 4; Nhamirre 2021: 8).

Despite the success of foreign military forces, this approach was not enough to put an end to the problem in Cabo Delgado. In spite of the decrease of attacks and insurgents, attacks have been continuing even if on a small scale. Journalist and political analyst Alexandre Chiure agrees that the insurgents are weakened and that life in Cabo Delgado is returning to normal, but he is of the opinion that the Government is focusing more on military solutions, that is according to him a failure. This situation indicates the fact that a multidisciplinary approach is necessary, resorting to policies of deradicalization in the region, creating and implementing economic programs. He continues stating that working together with society may lead to the dismantling of Islamic radicalization in the region, and is necessary to prevent the insurgents from moving to other parts of the country (Ramos, 2022).

Borges Nhamirre, in an interview with DW, left his opinion that in addition to military troops, dialogue with the insurgents is necessary to solve the problem. The analyst underlined that no military conflict of this nature is resolved solely by military means, giving the example of the 16-year war experienced in Mozambique, in which more than just military means, the approach to dialogue between the Government and RENAMO was quite decisive for problem resolution (Mansani 2022).

## Conclusion

This group was initially created with religious motivations. It was noted that, there is no consensus regarding its identity, which is evidenced by the existence of different names used to designate the same group as seen earlier. For some authors the group is called al-shabaab, by others Ahlu Sunna wa al Jama'a as well as Islamic State Central Africa Province (ISCA or ISCAP) evolved and developed at the military level as well. This group finds its main source of funding in the trafficking of precious stones such as the ruby, as well as donations from national and international sympathizers. The group takes advantage of the marginalization of this region due to the fact that the population of this region feels forgotten by the government, to recruit and obtain sympathy from this population. Initially, attacks on government institutions using firearms and machetes were the main methods of operation of this group that started its attacks in October 2017, however, as the group improved, the group evolved its techniques in attacks on unarmed civilians, resorting to the use of bladed weapons as well as setting fire to residences, state institutions together with private ones. Poverty, lack of employment, both political and economic marginalization of the Cabo Delgado region and tensions between religious, ethnic and class groups are considered to be the main causes of the outbreak of terrorism in Cabo Delgado.

In October 2017, the group began its attacks with the attack on three stations of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique where, in addition to controlling the station, it managed to gain access to government ammunition. Clashes between the Defense Forces and the militants resulted in the deaths of individuals on both sides. The group began its attacks in Mocimboa da Praia and expanded to other parts of Cabo Delgado province as well as Sofala province and the border crossing with Tanzania, claiming victims both Mozambican and Tanzanian. The attack that received the most international attention to the situation in Mozambique was the attack carried out on the palm that targeted international citizens, which led to the consequent internationalization of the conflict. As a result of this problem, more than 4000

citizens lost their lives and more than 800.000 citizens had to flee into other areas of the country and also some fled to Tanzania.

Total Energies announced the withdrawal of its personnel in 2021 from the region of Afungi where construction of the gas processing center was under way, showing that the situation in Cabo Delgado affected what was considered the bright future of Mozambique.

Regarding the challenges that prevented the efficient resolution of the problem, there are several factors as well. First there have been problems in understanding and representing the problem as there are divisions of narratives. In which one considers these attacks as a part of insurgency whereas to some others, these attacks constitute acts of terrorism. Initially, in an attempt to avoid raising the attention of the international community, the Mozambican government refrained from using both the terms of “insurgents” and “terrorists”. Instead, it preferred to use the terms malefactors or criminals to refer to this group. The government carried out operations in the Cabo Delgado region in an attempt to resolve the problem internally, however, due to lack of experience with the type of problem, abnormal behavior of the group when compared to other terrorist groups, lack of men or military power and adequate equipment it was unable to successfully resolve it.

On the other hand, the government prevented social media from obtaining information about the situation in the region, which in turn generated dissatisfaction among the population about the way the government was dealing with this situation related to their security. After the failure of the National Defense Forces, the Mozambican Government resorted to military companies such as, the Russian company Wagner to solve the problem, however, due to lack of knowledge of the region, they were at a disadvantage in relation to the insurgents, a fact that led to their failure. After these two failures, the government decided to change its strategy and showed itself to be open to receiving international help to solve the problem, resorting to the help of Rwanda, which sent military troops to Mozambique, as well as SADC military forces, and received logistics support including troop training coming from the UN, AU, EU, USA, UK and Portugal.

The actions of the Rwandan forces allowed for some success as control of the Palma region returned to the Government, as well as control of Mocimboa da Praia, which had been lost by the Government a year ago, was retaken. The action of the SADC forces was even more successful insofar as this, being more comprehensive, allowed the weakening of the insurgents on a large scale, kidnapped citizens were freed, etc. The better preparation and experience of these forces, as well as improved equipment, are some of the aspects that made their operations successful.

Although the operations carried out by foreign forces ensured the weakening of the group, it was not enough to put a definitive end to the problem. Terrorism or other military conflicts require more than military operations for victory in their combat. Side by side with military operations, it is necessary to operate in multiple dimensions, it is necessary to create strategies with society that prevent groups from recruiting new members, that prevent the group from moving to new places, that allow the deradicalization of the population. Dialogue is also an aspect that in the history of Mozambique has helped to put a definitive end to conflicts and allowed the achievement of peace.

History shows that it is necessary to combine forces in the fight against terrorism, not depending only on the use of military force since, unlike wars in antiquity, where by military means the enemy was annihilated and defeated, terrorism appears in a different way. Terrorism takes advantage of existing problems in society to “be born, feed itself, grow and expand”. For this it is necessary to use democracy to fight against this evil, seeking to understand within the affected society who were the facilitators of this evil and together with society through public policies to fight each one of them independently. Through this it is possible to win the war on terrorism.

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