

# Mozambique News Agency

## AIM Reports

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## Wage reform will not solve cost of living problems

President Filipe Nyusi has recognised that the Single Wage Table (TSU), introduced this month in public administration, does not constitute a solution to the rising cost of living.

The president was speaking in Maputo, on 20 July, to members and supporters of the ruling Frelimo Party, at a ceremony held to celebrate Mozambique's election as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

The government has decided to postpone until August the payment of most of the new wages in accordance with the Single Wage Table due to some discrepancies in the calculations made for allocation of the new wages.

On 19 July, the Minister of Economy and Finance, Max Tonela, explained that about 21,000 State employees will receive the minimum monthly wage, of 8,756 meticaís (US\$137, at the current exchange rate) in July. This is a rise of over 87 per cent compared with the previous minimum. However, everyone paid above the minimum wage will have to wait until August to receive their new salaries.

President Nyusi confirmed that serious inconsistencies discovered in the TSU have forced the government to suspend paying most of the new wages. But the President thought that such difficulties are normal in a complex process. He noted that the TSU could not be regarded as a finished product and inevitably more corrections and adjustments would have to be made. The important point, he stressed, was that the government had decided to reduce imbalances and improve wage conditions in the public administration. "Don't panic because things are being corrected", he urged. "It's like someone carving a sculpture – he improves it whenever he notices some defect".

President Nyusi assured state employees that they will all be paid. Those who, for whatever reason, have not yet been included in the TSU, will receive their old wages, and increases under the TSU will be backdated.

President Nyusi blamed part of the current inflation on the Russian conflict with Ukraine, which had triggered increases in fuel and grain prices. The conflict "has enormous influence on the country's economy, but Mozambicans should not lose focus. It is urgent to accelerate domestic production as a way to reduce dependence on foreign donations", the President urged.

"I would like us to work harder so that we can reduce imports. By reducing imports, we will have a greater capacity to solve our problems", he added.

### Half a million HIV-positive people abandon anti-retroviral treatment

About 500,000 people living with HIV in Mozambique have abandoned anti-retroviral treatment in the last two years, which is an estimated 25 per cent of all HIV-positive people in the country.

The data was made available at an event in Maputo on 19 and comes from a survey conducted by the National AIDS Council (CNCS) and its partners, entitled "Why did you stop?" This research covered 39 districts in Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Sofala, Inhambane, and Maputo provinces.

The document notes external factors that contribute to treatment being abandoned, such as work, side effects of the anti-retroviral drugs, and disapproval by partners. Other factors include socio-economic issues, discrimination, and stigma.

The CNCS Planning Unit Coordinator, Ema Chuva, explained that there is work being done in the communities with partners in order to rescue people who had given up on treatment and bring them back to the health units. "It is being successful. But clearly, we realise that it is not enough just to do the work, we need to be able to solve the reasons that made them stop", she added.

For her part, the researcher and head of the study, Marion dos Santos, highlighted recommendations from the research. "We had as recommendations to broadly discuss the concept of masculinity, and to improve the socio-economic situation of women so that they don't become more dependent on their husbands", she said. Another recommendation is to look at people's mental and emotional health because it is one of the factors that contribute to low self-esteem and depression in infected people.

Marion dos Santos also pointed out the continuous work within the communities to increase knowledge through the dissemination of clear information about the importance of treatment for HIV-positive people.

Mozambique currently has an estimated 2.1 million people living with HIV, a majority of them women, including about 130,000 children under the age of 15.

## Terrorists killed and captured in Nagade

Islamist terrorists on 26 July suffered a heavy defeat during a failed attack on the town of Nangade in the northern province of Cabo Delgado. According to reports in the news sheet “Mediafax”, all of the attackers were killed or captured by the Mozambican defence forces and their allies from SAMIM (SADC Mission in Mozambique).

The report stated that the terrorists attacked Chitunda, an outlying neighbourhood of Nangade town at nine in the morning. This was the first time Nangade had come under attack, and the first time any district capital had been attacked since troops from SAMIM and Rwanda entered the conflict.

The jihadists entered Chitunda and murdered three people while many others fled into the bush. They went on to burn down about 20 houses and loot property.

According to the “Mediafax” sources, there were seven people in the terrorist group, only three of whom were armed. The unit of the Mozambican defence and security forces stationed in the town, supported by SAMIM troops from Lesotho, reacted quickly, killing two of the raiders and capturing the other five.

Earlier in the day, the group had been spotted in fields in the area of Nakaindili, about three kilometres from the town. Here one of the terrorists was captured and told the authorities that the other seven were on their way to the town.

“Mediafax” also reported that the Tanzanian contingent of SAMIM has, in recent days, captured 95 youths on their way to terrorist bases. Most of them were captured, not inside Mozambique, but in Mahea village in the southern Tanzanian province of Mtwara.

Some of the youths had taken refuge in the Mahea mosque. Three children who had been out catching birds spotted the movements of the would-be terrorist recruits near the border and tipped off the authorities.

## Dozens of terrorists killed at Catupa base

The commander of the Northern Operational Theatre of the Mozambican Armed Forces (FADM), Omar Saranga, has told reporters that dozens of Islamist terrorists were killed in the operation that led to the seizure of the major jihadist base of Catupa, in Macomia district, in the northern province of Cabo Delgado.

Catupa was captured in mid-July and was regarded as the most important strategic stronghold of the terrorists, following the fall of their Siri 1 and Siri 2 bases last year. It was located in dense bush and accommodated rebels fleeing from the offensive in which the FADM and its Rwandan allies drove the jihadists out of the town of Mocimboa da Praia in August 2021.

“Our forces killed dozens of terrorists and seized military and computer material”, said Saranga. He presented a Mozambican who had been a bodyguard for one of the terrorist leaders, but who had surrendered.

The capture of the Catupa base was initially announced by President Filipe Nyusi on 14 July, who

revealed that during the operation one of the jihadist leaders was killed.

## President Nyusi invites Italy to invest in northern Mozambique

President Filipe Nyusi has expressed interest in seeing Italy support the Programme for Resilience and Integrated Development of the Northern Region (PREDIN) which aims to promote the recovery of basic conditions for sustainable economic and social development of northern Mozambique, following the Islamist terrorism that has been plaguing parts of Cabo Delgado province.

President Nyusi was speaking on 5 July in Maputo, during the state banquet offered in honour of his Italian counterpart, Sergio Mattarella, who was on a state visit to Mozambique. The President explained that, through the programme, the government intends to accelerate the inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development of the northern region of the country, reduce poverty and vulnerability, and discourage young people from being lured into terrorist groups.

“The implementation of PREDIN requires financial resources and we are sure that Italy, always a friend of Mozambique, will play a crucial role”, the President said. Experience, said President Nyusi, shows that terrorism cannot be fought only with military operations. Therefore, the government approved PREDIN.

The combined efforts of the Mozambique Defence and Security Forces and their Rwandan counterparts, as well as the Southern African Development Community Military Mission (SAMIM) and the military training actions coordinated by the European Union, have dictated the recovery of some areas and the destruction of bases previously occupied by terrorists.

PREDIN includes actions aimed at increasing the military capacity of the defence forces, support to countries that commit their forces on the ground, as well as providing humanitarian assistance to more than 850 thousand internally displaced people, and the rehabilitation of infrastructure.

“We would like to express our deep appreciation to Italy, which has joined the European Union military training mission, placing itself once again at the side of Mozambique to combat a complex and transnational phenomenon: terrorism and violent extremism”, said President Nyusi.

For his part, President Mattarella stressed that there is no indifference when the dignity of people is violated, adding that “Mozambique has always had an intelligent and active partnership on all issues in bilateral relations with Italy, including the fight against poverty and climate change.”

In Cabo Delgado, the Italian energy company, Eni, is heading the consortium that owns the Coral Sul floating platform in the Rovuma Basin Area 4 deep-water block, where huge deposits of natural gas have been discovered.

## EU approves €89 million for fight against terrorism

The European Union (EU) has approved an €89 million (US\$89.4 million) package for the fight against terrorism that has been plaguing parts of Cabo Delgado, since October 2017. This sum will be invested in the training of the Defence and Security Forces, to make them more operational and self-sufficient, as well as in the purchase of non-lethal protective equipment.

The aid was announced on 13 July by the outgoing Ambassador of the European Union, Antonio Sanchez-Benedito Gaspar, following an audience granted to him by President Filipe Nyusi.

The ambassador, who is closing his four-year term of office in Mozambique, said that “with regard to equipment, the European Union has already approved a package of €89 million for training and purchase of non-lethal equipment for 11 Marine command units that are being trained, including uniforms, vests, helmets, communication systems, drones, vehicles, a field hospital, and other individual protection materials”.

According to the diplomat, great advances have already been made in the fight against terrorism and the Mozambican government, with the support of allied countries, has managed to control the situation in general terms, “but the attacks continue and even in some places that had not previously been affected”. “Hence, we have to continue to be present”, said the Ambassador. “Our objective is to help control and manage the situation”.

Regarding the meeting with President Nyusi, Gaspar said that it was an opportunity to review the past few years that were very intense and at the same time to strengthen and deepen the partnership between the European Union and Mozambique.

He revealed that the EU will start a new cycle of cooperation aligned with the priorities of Mozambique, but with a focus on youth. “We will put a lot of focus on youth in this new era and we will also pay more attention to Mozambique's green and digital transition and peace and security issues”, he said, whilst congratulating the country on the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) of the former guerrillas of Renamo, the main opposition party.

## Central Bank keeps interest rates unchanged

The Bank of Mozambique on 21 July decided to keep its benchmark interest rate unchanged. A statement from the Central Bank's Monetary Policy Committee (CPMO) stated that the Monetary Policy Rate (MIMO), used by the bank for its interventions on the interbank money market to regulate liquidity, remains at 15.25 per cent. This rate had risen by 200 base points, from 13.25 to 15.25 per cent, in late March.

The decision not to alter interest rates, the CPMO said, “is sustained by the prospect that inflation will slow down to one digit in the medium term”.

The annual inflation rate in June reached 10.81 per

cent, according to the figures issued by the National Statistics Institute (INE). Nonetheless, the CPMO was optimistic that this rate would prove only temporary, because of “the slowdown in external demand, and the consequent slowdown in international commodity prices, in a context of maintaining exchange rate stability”.

However, the CPMO admitted that in the short term prices will continue to rise as the high international costs of fuel and grain are passed on to Mozambican consumers. But the CPMO expected prices to decline over the longer term, a trend favoured by the stability of the Mozambican currency, the metical.

Nonetheless, “risks and uncertainties linked to projections of inflation remain high”, it warned. Among those uncertainties were fuel prices, and the impact of the Russian conflict with Ukraine.

The CPMO forecasts economic recovery for Mozambique over the next two years, supported mainly by the natural gas projects in the Rovuma basin off the coast of the northern province of Cabo Delgado, and in the southern province of Inhambane, “in the context of the resumption of the programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and foreign aid from other cooperation partners”.

The CPMO concluded that “recent macro-economic prospects are in line with keeping the MIMO rate at its current level”. But should the risks and uncertainties worsen, the CPMO “will have no hesitation in increasing the MIMO rate”.

## Pravida III to benefit 3.9 million people

Minister of Public Works Carlos Mesquita announced on 20 July that the third phase of the “Water for Life” (Pravida) programme should benefit 3.9 million people by 2024. Other targets for this period include the storage of 9.2 million cubic metres of water, the irrigation of 311 hectares of land, and the provision of drinking water for more than 14,000 head of cattle.

Mesquita was speaking on the opening day of a meeting of his Ministry's Coordinating Council, held at Matibane, in the northern province of Nampula.

“Motivated by the results of implementing Pravida I and II, under which more than 1.7 million people benefitted from clean drinking water, for the 2022-2024 period we have decided to implement Pravida III which will cover the construction of 356 water sources and 70 water supply systems”, said Mesquita. The package also includes the construction of 32 small dams and nine reservoirs.

Mesquita stressed the urgent need for a strategy to deal with water losses. “We are concerned at the level of losses in the urban systems which are running, on average, at about 46 per cent”, said the Minister. “This requires urgent actions to control and reduce these losses which affect the sustainability of the water supply systems. We estimate that, in an initial phase, US\$120 million will be needed to reduce the losses to a level of between 30 and 34 per cent”.

## President Nyusi inaugurates electrification of Macuse

President Filipe Nyusi on 27 July inaugurated the connection to the national electricity grid of the Macuse administrative post in Namacurra district, in the central province of Zambezia.

The electrification of Macuse cost the Mozambican state 124 million meticaís (about US\$1.9 million, at the current exchange rate). The main work was the construction of a medium voltage transmission line between Namacurra town and Macuse over a distance of 50 kilometres.

The project envisages 2,000 connections to the grid of Macuse homes, companies, and other social and economic undertakings. So far 800 connections have been made.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, President Nyusi stressed that electrification is one of his government's top priorities and reiterated the government's commitment to ensure "electricity for all" by 2030.

"Our operational slogan is electricity for all", he declared, recalling that in his first term of office (2015-2019) the government completed the electrification of all district capitals. Now it was electrifying the administrative posts "as part of our agenda for the economic transformation of the country in this cycle of governance".

Electrification, he said, is a requirement imposed by industrialisation, population growth, and urbanisation. This year, President Nyusi added, electricity coverage should reach 52 per cent of the population, compared with 44 per cent in 2021.

Macuse is regarded as a strategic area for economic development, and there are ambitious plans for a deep water port and a new railway linking the port to the Moatize coal basin in Tete province. The project was supposed to be launched in 2021, but nothing has happened so far, supposedly because of the need for "restructuring". Macuse port was initially designed to transport coal, in the days when it was imagined that Mozambique would export 100 million tonnes or more of coal a year, a forecast that now seems unrealistic.

President Nyusi said that, with electricity now available, other investments can be promoted in Macuse, in agriculture, tourism, fisheries and agro-processing, which would bring "positive changes to the life of the population". He called for diversification of production, which would help meet the rising cost of living.

Later in the day, President Nyusi inaugurated the electrification of the Namanjavira administrative post, in Mocuba district, and a complex of silos and warehouses to store agricultural produce in Milange, on the border with Malawi.

## Peak power consumption exceeds 1,000 MW

Mozambique's publicly-owned electricity company, EDM, recorded a peak hour power consumption of 1,035 megawatts in the 2020-2021 period as a result of demand growth and the increase of new connections to the grid.

In the last five years, there has been an increase in peak consumption of 19.9 per cent, from 863 MW in 2015 to 1035 MW in 2021. A significant part of this growth is driven by the southern part of the country, where the load is higher due to the concentration of services, industry, and population density.

According to Munguambe, in response to the growing demand, the government launched the energy auctions programme to optimise the electrification projects in the country. It is under this initiative that power generation projects are underway in the districts of Dondo in Sofala province, Lichinga (Niassa), Manje (Tete) and Jangamo (Inhambane), taking advantage of a wide diversity of renewable energy sources, namely wind, hydroelectric, biomass, geothermal, wave and solar.

Parallel to EDM's projects, there are also private initiatives, for example in Cuamba district, in Niassa, to ensure energy supply in quantity and quality.

"What EDM is doing is balancing the sub-programmes within the government programme, but without neglecting the private initiatives. These are necessary investments, but within the regulatory framework", he said.

In terms of energy generation and transmission, EDM has concluded the feasibility study on the Tsate Hydroelectric Plant in Manica, projected to produce about 30 MW. The feasibility study is also underway for the Mavuzi 2 plant in the same province, with a capacity to produce the same amount.

"EDM is currently meeting the challenge of bringing energy to everyone by 2030", said Munguaba. "What EDM is doing is ensure that there is energy generation and that there is transmission from the production centres to the consumption areas".

## Man arrested in possession of drugs

A 37-year-old man travelling from Mozambique along the N12 highway in the South African province of Gauteng was arrested on 6 July in possession of drugs worth US\$715,000. This happened a week after the Mozambican National Criminal Investigation Service (Sernic) dismantled a methamphetamine laboratory in the Katembe municipal district of Maputo.

According to the South African media, the man was arrested by the Trilateral Planning Cell (TPC) – an organisation constituted of agents from Mozambique, Tanzania, and South Africa. He had crossed the border from Mozambique in a white Ford Ranger carrying heroin and methamphetamine.

The drugs - which were sealed in plastic and hidden in a compartment of the vehicle - were found by the k9 narcotics dogs after a thorough search.

## **INP to maximise use of Mozambican labour**

The National Petroleum Institute (INP) intends to maximise the use of Mozambican labour in gas extraction projects, generating up to 14,000 jobs in the four major projects currently underway.

Speaking on the sidelines of the education fair in Maputo on 23 July, the Director of Local Content at the INP, Natalia Camba, said these projects are: Mozambique LNG and Rovuma LNG, which are both onshore gas liquefaction projects in the northern province of Cabo Delgado; the Coral Sul floating LNG platform, anchored some 40 kilometres off the Cabo Delgado coast; and the Inhassoro-Temane project in the southern province of Inhambane.

The Mozambique LNG project will operate gas liquefaction plants on the Afungi Peninsula, in Palma district. However, this is currently being delayed with no firm date for the resumption of activities due to the attacks by Islamist terrorists.

Once security issues have been solved, the project should create 5,000 jobs for Mozambicans in the construction phase and 1,200 in the operational phase, with a plan to train 2,500 technicians.

In the projects already underway, namely Coral Sul FLNG and Inhassoro-Temane, 3,820 jobs have been created in the construction phase, with a forecast of around 486 fixed jobs in the production phase, including foreign labour that will be reduced in the subsequent phases.

“These projects also have a great capacity to create indirect jobs, with foreign labour decreasing throughout the project and Mozambican labour increasing. Most of these jobs are expected to be provided by contractors and subcontractors”, Camba said. She expected that 88 per cent of those recruited would work in construction.

According to Camba, INP intends to develop skilled human resources to meet the demands of the market as well as to combat the discrepancy between the investments made in the industry and its capacity to generate employment. Under the framework of Local Content, INP will cooperate with the companies operating the gas projects to provide assistance with the qualification, training, and certification of about 200 Small and Medium Enterprises so that they can operate to internationally required standards.

## **Piped domestic gas expansion to cost US\$470,000**

The Mozambican government intends to invest 30 million meticais (around US\$470,000) to pipe cooking gas in several neighbourhoods of Maputo City including Coop, Munhuana, and the 25<sup>th</sup> June neighbourhoods. Currently, work is underway so that by the end of the year at least 200 families will have the gas piped into their homes.

The project began in 2018 in the districts of Vilankulo and Inhassoro, in the southern province of Inhambane, covering over 3,000 families. In the same year, another

100 families, living in Aeroporto neighbourhood in Maputo, were also connected to the gas network.

This government initiative is a partnership with the National Hydrocarbon Company (ENH) and Kogas of South Korea and takes natural gas from the pipeline that runs from the Pande and Temane gas fields in Inhambane to Secunda in South Africa.

According to the Maputo daily newspaper "Noticias", quoting the National Director of Hydrocarbons and Fuels in the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Energy, Moises Paulino, a shortage of money has been one of the major challenges facing the government in the mass distribution of gas. He also said that, despite the constraints, the government intends to have half of the neighbourhoods of the country's capital using piped gas by 2030.

For his part, the director of ENH, Mussa Tembe, pointed out that since the implementation of the project in the Aeroporto "A" neighbourhood of Maputo, there have not been any problems with the gas supply.

## **Electronic money gains ground with interconnection of systems**

The Bank of Mozambique has announced the interconnection of the operations of SIMOrede, M-Pesa, mKesh and e-Mola.

SIMOrede is the system used by the ATMs of the commercial banks while M-Pesa, mKesh and e-Mola are the electronic money services of the three mobile phone providers, respectively Vodacom, TMcel and Movitel.

A statement from the central bank explained this means that clients of these institutions can transfer and receive money between them conveniently and securely pointing out that “users of mobile phone services now have their lives made easier”.

Previously, payments through electronic channels were constrained by the lack of interconnection between the systems. “In practice, this meant that clients of one of these institutions could neither send money to numbers of other operators nor receive, which reduced the use of electronic means of payments and greatly affected access to financial services and their use by the majority of the Mozambican population”, the central bank statement said.

As a result of the expansion of the mobile phone network, the opportunity has been created for the widening access and use of financial services provided by electronic money institutions in Mozambique. The central bank explains that this is an important step, as the interconnection of the operations of M-Pesa, mKesh and e-Mola, marks a milestone that will drive the expansion of financial services.

“With this achievement, we have reached one of the main goals of the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion for the period 2016-2022, which will certainly make an undeniable contribution to the expansion of electronic payments in the country”, the document concluded.

## UN envoy: appointment of Raul Domingos strengthens reconciliation

Mirko Manzoni, the personal envoy to Mozambique of United Nations General Secretary Antonio Guterres, believes that President Filipe Nyusi's appointment on 18 July of Raul Domingos as Ambassador to the Vatican is a measure that will strengthen reconciliation.

Raul Domingos was chief of staff of the then rebel movement Renamo in the 1980s, and he was then the chief negotiator of the General Peace Agreement, signed in Rome in 1992 between the government and Renamo.

According to Manzoni, this appointment constitutes further evidence of the advances that have been made by the government in building a more inclusive country with an ongoing commitment to peace and national reconciliation.

"President Nyusi's gesture represents a historic moment for the country, as it marks the first time that a member of the opposition party has been appointed an ambassador, a scenario unimaginable just a few years ago", said Manzoni's statement.

Raul Domingos is no longer a member of Renamo following his expulsion from the party in 2000. He went on to set up his own party, the PDD (Party for Peace, Democracy and Development), although it is currently silent.

The only political activity of Raul Domingos nowadays takes the form of occasional radio or television interviews.

## More Renamo officers join the police

A further 36 officers, demobilised from the militia of the main opposition party, Renamo, have been recruited into the police force, under the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) programme agreed upon between the government and Renamo.

The Renamo General Secretary, Andre Majibire, presented the 36 officers publicly at a ceremony in Maputo on 22 July. He said they would all be stationed in the police Unit for the Protection of Senior Figures. They join 10 Renamo officers who were integrated into the police last year.

Magibire said this recruitment is a basis for the consolidation of peace and national reconciliation in the framework of the implementation of the DDR. "We also expect that our police will now know a new era of being a truly republican and non-party force", he added. "We are convinced that these agents are at the service of the Mozambican state". He also praised the collaboration of the government, in the person of President Filipe Nyusi, and of the international community in the pacification of the country, and said that he was, in general, pleased with the progress of the peace agreement signed between President Nyusi and Renamo leader Ossufo Momade in 2019.

But Magibire did express concern at the fixing of military pensions for former Renamo fighters. "We are

working hard with the Government on this", he said, "and we believe that the problem will soon be solved. Negotiations are still underway to establish legal norms that include these fighters in the new pensions system".

## US\$300 million grant from World Bank

The Board of Directors of the World Bank on 13 July approved a grant of US\$300 million to Mozambique to support Mozambican institutions and the "Economic Transformation Development Policy Financing (DPF) operation".

According to a World Bank release, "This is the first in a series of three programmatic operations and supports a robust set of reforms aimed at strengthening institutions and laying the foundations for a sustained growth and economic transformation".

The World Bank country director, Idah Pswarhi-Riddihough, explained that "this operation supports the country's recovery from COVID-19 and structural reforms to foster sustained growth while providing much-needed financing to alleviate recent fiscal constraints".

She added, "this operation couldn't come at a better moment as Mozambique's economy is still reeling from the compounded effects of COVID-19, the protracted slowdown triggered by the hidden debt crisis, and the devastation caused by the tropical cyclones of 2019".

The DPF financing, the Bank release says, covers "structural reforms to strengthen budgetary institutions and transparency", including "enhancing the regulatory and institutional framework for sound and transparent resource revenue management; and improving public procurement governance and transparency ... together, these measures will address critical transparency and institutional weaknesses that undermine the governance and management of limited public resources".

A further goal is to address "business environment and financial access constraints to support private sector development". This will cover "simplification of the legal and regulatory requirements to open and operate businesses, improving the investment climate and incentivising firm development and job creation; and lifting of legal and regulatory restrictions to promote financial access".

This pillar of the DPR "includes a review of the 1993 Investment Law and the 2005 Commercial Code, which could result in further simplification and digitalisation of procedures, expected to accelerate approval processes". The reforms, it adds, "are expected to expand access to financial services, particularly for low-risk micro, small and medium enterprises, and for women, while maintaining a clear and sound framework to guard against illicit activity".

The DPF will also "builds on Mozambique's climate change commitments to support a more resilient and greener growth path, addressing utility sector constraints that limit Mozambique's productive potential".

**United States pledges US\$116 million for food and nutrition assistance**

The United States will disburse US\$116 million for food and nutritional assistance to over 800,000 people displaced due to the terrorist attacks in the northern province of Cabo Delgado. This sum is intended to meet needs in health, water, and agriculture, among other sectors. With this amount, the total humanitarian assistance provided by the US to Mozambique this year amounts to more than US\$167 million.

The grant was announced on 20 July in Maputo by the Under Secretary of State for Civil Security, Democracy, and Human Rights at the US State Department, Urza Zeya, at the end of an audience granted by President Filipe Nyusi. “With this support, the United States is helping 800,000 internally displaced people and working with local partners to address terrorism and cultivate community cohesion”, she said.

Zeya guaranteed that the US is committed to supporting Mozambicans to build a healthier, safer, more democratic, and more prosperous country for all. “We remain committed to increasing cooperation against violent extremism, strengthening the response against pandemics, ensuring economic prosperity, and supporting strong democratic institutions” she stated.

Zeya pointed out that the US continues to be the largest bilateral donor to Mozambique and last year it provided more than US\$536 million in assistance, particularly in the area of health. She declared that the US will remain committed to working with the Mozambican government, civil society, and the private sector to strengthen the resilience capabilities of communities affected by terrorism and natural disasters.

The partnerships between the government and civil society, she said, improve health and education outcomes, prevent child marriages, empower vulnerable youth to resist violent extremism, and increase trust and positive interactions between communities and the government.

Zeya added that there are external destabilising factors, such as the Russian conflict with Ukraine, which has caused widespread disruption and significantly increased the price of food and fuel in the world. More than 40 million people around the world are believed to be at risk of food insecurity due to the conflict. That is why, according to Zeya, the United States intends to provide more than five billion dollars in additional aid this year, including more than US\$760 million specifically for global food security. Most of the new funding will go to African nations, including Mozambique.

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