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President Nyusi invites Emirati businesses to invest in the Port of Nacala

President Filipe Nyusi has challenged DP World, one of the shareholders of the Port of Maputo, to expand its investments to the Port of Nacala, in the northern province of Nampula. President Nyusi pointed out that “Nacala is close to the world markets. It is a deep water port, especially now that the government has just completed its rehabilitation and modernisation”.

DP World of Dubai is part of the consortium Maputo Port Development Company (MPDC) that holds the lease on the Port of Maputo until 2033. It also includes Grindrod of South Africa, the Mozambican private company Mocambique Gestores, and the publicly-owned port and rail company, CFM.

The President made the challenge on 25 October during a visit to the Port of Dubai, on the third and last day of his official visit to the United Arab Emirates, following an invitation from his counterpart Sheik Muhammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

According to President Nyusi, DP World of Dubai is a vital partner for the Port of Maputo development, an infrastructure which over the last few years has become more competitive. “I would like to express our gratitude for the work you’ve done at the Port of Maputo, which is an exemplary job. You contributed to making the Port of Maputo more competitive at a time of great challenges”, the President said, encouraging the Dubai Port to pass on its experience and know-how to other Mozambican ports.

The technological development of DP World, according to President Nyusi, is crucial for Mozambique, as it has the potential to boost the economy and the country’s development. “You are our inspiration because, technologically, the Port of Dubai is very advanced, capable, and modern”, he added.

For their part, Emirati businessmen expressed their willingness to expand the cargo handling capacity at the Port of Maputo to increase cargo handling.

President Nyusi also met with a group of Mozambicans living in the United Arab Emirates. During the meeting, some businesspeople said that they want to see the boosting of bilateral cooperation in various areas of activity, especially business.

President Nyusi couldn’t hide his satisfaction because this was one of the few occasions when he didn’t only hear complaints, such as documentation or services rendered by consular services.

The visit was hailed as an opportunity to consolidate and deepen friendship and cooperation ties between Mozambique and the UAE, and also an opportunity for the two countries to define strategies for strengthening political, economic and business relations.

President Nyusi warns against exaggerated gas expectations

President Filipe Nyusi has warned against exaggerated expectations of the revenue that will be generated by liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the Rovuma Basin, off the coast of the northern province of Cabo Delgado.

At a meeting in the southern province of Inhambane, with newly elected members of the Central Committee of the ruling Frelimo Party, reported in the news service “Mediafax” on 24 October, President Nyusi warned that the revenue expected from LNG between now and 2024 will not even be enough for the full rehabilitation of the main north-south highway (EN1).

“This is a problem that must be understood, comrades”, said President Nyusi. “What we will receive, if we are lucky, is no more than US\$30 million this year”. Gas revenue in 2023 and 2024 will be higher, but President Nyusi put it at no more than US\$100 million a year. So, the President urged his listeners not to place all their hopes in LNG.

Nor was it true that the planned Sovereign Wealth Fund would miraculously produce a flood of money for the state budget. The only way forward, President Nyusi insisted, was to diversify the economy.

Revenue collection for 2023 is projected at 350 billion meticais (about US\$5.5 billion), but only 0.3 per cent of this will come from LNG.

President Nyusi warned that it will be another ten years before really large sums from LNG start flowing into the state’s coffers. The only Rovuma Basin LNG project now in production is the smallest one – the floating LNG platform built in a Korean shipyard and towed to the Mozambique Channel.

Much larger onshore LNG projects are planned for the Afungi peninsula in Palma district – but can only resume once the security situation in Cabo Delgado improves. The French company TotalEnergies has made it clear that LNG production in Afungi is dependent on security conditions.

The forecast is that the Coral South LNG floating platform will produce US\$19 billion in revenue over the next 25 years.

Mozambique navy participates in trilateral exercise with Tanzania and India

Mozambique's navy has taken part in the inaugural India-Mozambique-Tanzania Trilateral Exercise (IMT TRILAT), which was held between 27 and 29 October in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

According to a press release from the Indian Navy, the joint maritime exercises had "three broad objectives: capability development to address common threats through training and sharing of best practices, enhancing interoperability, and strengthening maritime cooperation".

The exercises had two main components – a harbour phase and a sea phase. In the harbour the participants focussed on capacity building activities including Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (where teams board vessels to search for illicit goods or weapons); small arms training; joint diving operations; and damage control and firefighting exercises.

The sea phase included Visit, Board, Search and Seizure operations, fleet manoeuvres, helicopter operations, small arms fire, and Exclusive Economic Zone patrols.

The press release notes that "these exercises reflect India's and the Indian Navy's commitment to enhancing maritime security and cooperation with maritime neighbours in the Indian Ocean Region and promoting Safety and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).

Ncondezi completes solar project feasibility study

The London-based company Ncondezi Energy announced on 31 October that the final draft of its feasibility study into its proposed integrated 300-megawatt solar power and battery storage project in the western Mozambican province of Tete confirms its technical and economic viability.

The feasibility study also finds that there is a phased expansion potential of between 30 and 300 megawatts, with a strong solar resource of 1,980kWh/m² and a high energy yield of over 2,000kWh/kWp.

In a statement, Ncondezi notes that the feasibility study indicates that the phased construction will enable to project to deliver its first power of up to 60 megawatts within 18 months of achieving Financial Close, with the full 300 megawatts deliverable over 28 months.

Ncondezi's Chief Executive Officer, Hanno Pengilly, welcomes the study's findings which have "confirmed a technically viable project with a number of advantages capable of driving a competitive power tariff whilst maintaining a robust investment return".

He adds that "the Solar Project is expected to benefit from favourable site conditions which will help lower costs and maximise energy yields. Transmission studies confirm multiple feasible connection solutions to strategically connect into the grid with potential to distribute through the Mozambican northern grid as well as the wider Southern African region".

Ncondezi plans to connect the project to Mozambique's grid with customers also coming from the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP). It stresses that it "is focused on providing reliable and affordable energy to Mozambique to meet growing energy demands". In particular, it highlights the fact that its project supports the Mozambican government's energy strategy of universal electricity access by 2030, adding that "our projects would provide reliable and available power helping to close the infrastructure gap of the region and serving as a catalyst for economic development".

The Solar Project will be located within the Ncondezi mining concession 5967C which covers over 25,000 hectares in the districts of Moatize and Chiuta in Tete Province.

Call for jobs to undermine terrorism

The Chair of the European Parliament delegation to the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific/European Union Joint Parliamentary Assembly (PCA-EU), Carlos Zorrinho, has called for the creation of more jobs for young people through the Cotonou Agreement as a means to combat the terrorism ravaging many parts of the world, including the northern Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado.

Zorrinho expressed his view in Maputo this 31 October on the sidelines of the official opening of the 42nd Session of the African, Caribbean and Pacific - European Union (ACP-EU) Joint Parliamentary Assembly, which was presided over by President Filipe Nyusi.

According to Zorrinho, "the Cotonou Agreement is a cooperation agreement to develop renewable energy, digitalisation, and promote job creation. Unemployment and economic difficulties create a fertile ground for the emergence of terrorism, so the agreement will indirectly help to resolve the conflict".

The Cotonou Agreement, according to Zorrinho, "is a development agreement for the creation of a working partnership. It can create jobs and promote development as a means of combating terrorism". However, he added that "I cannot say that there is a direct link between the Cotonou agreement and the resolution of the situation in Cabo Delgado".

Zorrinho announced that the EU's support to Mozambique is expected to increase and "it won't just be lethal support. There are many ways to support and deal with the conflict".

In its latest report on Mozambique, the UN Refugee Agency stated that close to a million people have fled their homes over the last five years in Cabo Delgado as a result of the violence.

Since July 2021 Mozambican Security and Defence Forces have been working with the support of a military contingent from Rwandan Defence Forces and the Southern African Development Community Military Mission (SAMIM) to fight terrorism in Cabo Delgado.

EU grants over €148 million to finance projects

The European Union (EU) on 31 October pledged to disburse €148.2 million for the implementation of projects in six sectors in Mozambique covering education, building resilience in the northern region of the country, water and sanitation, energy, culture and digitalisation.

The agreement was signed by Deputy Foreign Minister, Manuel Goncalves on behalf of the Mozambican government and vice president of the European Commission for Democracy and Demography, Dubravka Suica.

The projects are expected to create a transformational and tangible impact on Mozambicans, with €60 million earmarked to support basic education reform and 35 million for resilience and accelerating recovery in the northern provinces of the country, namely Nampula, Niassa, and Cabo Delgado.

Under the agreement, the EU will provide €20 million to improve access to water, sanitation, and hygiene in the northern region of Mozambique, benefitting 60,000 people. Another €18.2 million will help to improve the reliability and sustainability of the power supply in Mozambique and Southern Africa. In addition, €5 million will be spent on promoting youth employment and €10 million on bridging the digital divide by stimulating digital innovation among the youth.

The deputy minister said that the agreement reaffirms the political commitment of both the government of Mozambique and the EU to continue strengthening cooperation. “We would therefore like to express our gratitude noting that the European Union is today one of our largest bilateral cooperation partners, providing a valuable contribution to the efforts of Mozambicans to overcome the main challenges for our economic and social development”, he said.

According to Goncalves, the EU's assistance in implementing the government's 5-year plan is notable, specifically in infrastructure, energy, public finance, nutrition, education, environment and trade, which are crucial for poverty reduction.

For her part, Suica said the EU may adopt two additional projects on nutrition and resilience to climate change over the year, budgeted at €45 million. According to the European Commissioner, it is crucial to stay united and provide assistance to those affected by insecurity. She stressed that the package includes a set of measures specifically dedicated to the north of Mozambique which complement the EU's actions on peace and security building in the country.

“We are living in an era of intense global but also local challenges,” Suica said, pointing to wars, pandemics, climate change impacts, famine, inequalities, and inaccessibility to technical and health infrastructure. “But every challenge is also our opportunity to act,” she added.

Suica was in Mozambique to attend the 42nd Joint Assembly of the African, Caribbean and Pacific and European Union (ACP-EU) countries event in Maputo.

Health Minister calls on doctors to reconsider strike

Health Minister Armindo Tiago on 29 October requested that the Mozambican Medical Association (AMM) reconsider its call for a nationwide strike, due to start on 7 November.

The call comes in response to the AMM announcement on 28 October threatening to go on a national strike if the government fails to correct inconsistencies in the Single Wage Table (TSU).

The TSU, which is still being introduced by the government, cuts the number of wage levels in the public administration to just 21. It sets wages according to three parameters, namely the length of service, length of career, and educational level.

However, the doctors claim that they have been betrayed by the government which has failed to accommodate their demands in the TSU.

In response to the threats, the Minister argued that the well-being of citizens should rise above any complaints arising from the TSU implementation. He stressed that the TSU was designed in good faith and any concerns of the medical profession should be addressed under the terms of the law.

There had been optimism that the TSU would greatly improve wages in public administration, but the government has stated that will be no general wage increase for state employees. Instead, the TSU will lead to the elimination of the wage imbalances that currently exist in public administration.

The government also promised that the TSU will not lower anybody's wages. If the new wage scale did lead to any individual being paid less than previously, he or she will receive a “wage adjustment allowance”.

Tete poacher arrested with 94kg of elephant tusks

The National Criminal Investigation Service (SERNIC) on 21 October arrested a poacher in possession of 94 kilogrammes. The suspected poacher, named as Batuelo Campaundi Tsongola, was caught in the town of Tete while trying to sell the elephant tusks.

According to MozBio, an environmental and conservation organisation, the accused confessed to the crime, saying that three elephants were killed in the Magoé National Park and one in neighbouring Zimbabwe in the Muzarabana Chidodo Reserve.

In recent years Mozambique has made considerable progress against poaching, but there are still pockets of criminal activity. A few weeks ago, rangers from Maputo National Park refused to be bribed by 100 thousand meticaís (US\$1,565) offered by a resident in Matutuine district, who has close contact with a poachers' networks. The man deals with trophies of endangered animals slaughtered in the Maputo National Park (PNM), and he was arrested by park rangers during a raid in the conservation area. Park authorities also seized a vehicle and a firearm used for poaching.

Mozambique and Rwanda reaffirm commitment to fighting terrorism

Mozambique and Rwanda on 28 October reaffirmed their commitment to fighting terrorism which, since October 2017, has caused over 3,000 deaths and displaced nearly one million people in the northern province of Cabo Delgado.

This commitment was expressed during a one-day visit of Rwandan President Paul Kagame to Mozambique. During the visit, President Filipe Nyusi took the opportunity to express his gratitude for the continued support and solidarity of the Rwandan people.

According to Foreign Affairs Minister Veronica Macamo, “both leaders saluted the brave and heroic young Mozambicans and Rwandans who, with the support of SAMIM (SADC military mission to Mozambique) forces and other partners, are sparing no effort to stop terrorist attacks in our country”.

As for President Kagame’s visit to Mozambique, Macamo explained that it is part of an initiative aimed at strengthening and consolidating the ties between both countries. He added that during the talks, President Nyusi and his counterpart reviewed the stage of cooperation between the two countries.

According to the Foreign Minister, President Nyusi and President Kagame focused particularly on the feasibility of using Rwandan airlines to expedite Mozambique's connection with other countries.

The Mozambican government also expressed its gratitude for Rwanda’s support for Mozambique’s campaign to become a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. Rwanda’s support was not confined to the vote itself “but also the electoral process, because Rwanda did more than vote, it mobilised other countries to vote for Mozambique”.

Trade between the two countries was also addressed by both leaders, with Mozambique expressing its interest in continuing to export products to the Rwandan market, particularly maize, sugar, soya and rice to boost economic cooperation.

Gemrock calls for government support

Gemrock, which holds a concession for ruby mining in the district of Montepuez in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, has confirmed that a terrorist attack took place on the morning of 20 October, and called for government support to resume its operations.

Gemrock explained in a press release that its operations were attacked by a group of heavily armed insurgents, who “in about 30 minutes, torched the heavy machinery equipment, vehicles, living accommodations and other key infrastructure at the Gemrock operations”.

Gemrock’s security team and Gardaworld managed to evacuate all their personnel from its site unharmed. The company praised the swift response of the Mozambican army who averted what could have been a much bigger loss to both life and assets, although no insurgents were apprehended.

The company stated that it “was forced to suspend its operations after this ghastly attack since most of the heavy mining equipment required to run its operations has been charred by the insurgents”.

This attack not only affected Gemrock but also the neighbouring mining companies Gemfields and Fura.

Gemrock added that the situation has been further exacerbated by the fact that nearby villages which were a growing community and had one or more family member employed with Gemrock have fled their villages and are trying to resettle in safer areas and may never return to their homes. This will not only impact Gemrock but would deprive these people of their steady income and make them go back to living a life which is neither in their interest nor in the interest of the overall society at large.

While Gemrock is doing its best to work closely to find the best way to resume its operations, it argues that without critical Government support the entire Mozambique ruby industry remains at risk. Gemrock has invested over 2 billion meticaes (US\$31 million) in its Mozambique operations and was on the cusp of expanding its operations. However, these plans have now been on the back burner.

Fake iPhone factory dismantled in Maputo

A multi-sectoral team on 28 October dismantled a fake iPhone factory in the Mozambican capital Maputo city, where they seized 1,165 counterfeit handsets.

The factory was able to perform complex technical procedures, such as assembly and assignment of IMEI numbers. At the site, the authorities also seized various materials used by the suspects to carry out their activities.

Cited in the daily newspaper “O Pais”, the director of customs operations, Gino Jone, said the operation to dismantle was the result of a tip-off. “We received a complaint that raised our suspicions, so we activated our operational lines to find out the truth and after three weeks of investigation we discovered this factory, where we seized 1,165 boxes of iPhone mobile phones”, explained Jone. He added that there are also suspicions that some mobile phones may have been stolen.

“These mobile phones were imported without a license from the National Institute of Communications or customs declarations. Therefore, we are also dealing with smuggling, because no document justifies the importation and sale of these mobile phones on the market,” explained Jone.

The owners of the illegal factory, two Chinese nationals, denied all the accusations of any illegal activity. They claim to be running a legal operation. “We have everything, and we have proved it. So, what they are doing is not normal”, said one of the owners.

The multisectoral team that dismantled the factory included members of the Police, the National Criminal Investigation Service, the National Institute of Communications of Mozambique, and the National Inspection of Economic Activities and Customs.

Limpopo National Park seeks €10 million to resettle 800 families

The Limpopo National Park (LNP) is seeking to mobilise €10 million to resettle 800 families living inside the perimeter of this transfrontier conservation area, located in the southern province of Gaza.

To this effect, LNP together with the Massingir district government and partners are in an advanced stage of negotiations with the German Development Bank (KfW) to fund this operation.

The community of Mavoze settled inside the park perimeter several years ago with subsistence farming and livestock rearing as its main source of income. However, settlements inside the park clash with government management plans for fauna and flora in the area. The resettlement process, which began in 2012, has already managed to move four communities out of the park.

The removal of this community from the conservation area is crucial for ecotourism, seen as the main source of income, not only for conservation activities but also for the subsistence of the communities through the transfer of part of the income resulting from tourism.

During an interview with AIM, district administrator Esmeralda Muthemba pointed out that “right now we need €10 million to remove the entire community of Mavoze, which is made up of 800 families. The resettlement process is taking too long and one of the consequences is that the population has been growing over time and so has the budget required for resettlement”.

The funds will be invested in compensation for the families, resettlement to new areas, housing, preparation of agricultural fields, and the construction of social infrastructure.

According to Muthemba, in addition, the funds will “cover the expenses of building secondary infrastructures, such as barns, animal pens, the transportation of livestock and other belongings”.

Once the resettlement of the Mavoze community is completed, the next step will be the removal from the park of the communities of Machamba with 135 families and Chinang with 145 families.

The park covers four districts of the northern part of Gaza province, namely Massingir, Mabalane, Mapai, and Chicualacuala.

Mozambique still facing US\$2 billion shortfall for post-cyclone reconstruction

The Mozambican government is working to make up for the shortfall of US\$2 billion required to rebuild infrastructure destroyed by cyclones Idai and Kenneth that hit the central and northern regions of Mozambique in the first half of 2019.

The sum is part of a total of US\$3.2 billion needed for post-cyclone reconstruction, of which US\$1.2 billion has already been disbursed by cooperation partners.

These figures were released by the Minister of Public Works, Housing and Water Resources Carlos Mesquita,

on 27 October while speaking at the High-Level Meeting on Post Cyclone Reconstruction Programme Idai and Kenneth, implemented by the Post Cyclone Reconstruction Office (GREPOC).

Mesquita announced that “of the confirmed resources, just over US\$500 million was used by the end of the first half of 2022 for urgent repair works on economic and social infrastructures in provinces that sustained severe damages”. He noted that this disbursement marked the first phase of the Post Cyclone Recovery and Reconstruction Programme (PREPOC).

According to the Minister, the largest recovery investments took place in 2019, with US\$229 million used to restore essential services. The Minister lamented that the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 had a major impact on financing post-cyclone reconstruction.

The two cyclones left over 700 people killed and displaced 420,000 others. They also destroyed public and private property. The UN World Meteorological Organisation called them possibly the worst weather-related disaster to hit the southern hemisphere.

Over a hundred officers expelled from the police

The Mozambican police force (PRM) has expelled at least 104 officers since January as part of a purging of its ranks. This was disclosed on 26 October by the General Commander of the PRM) Bernardino Rafael at the closing ceremony of the PRM Council, held in Palma in the northern province of Cabo Delgado.

Rafael called for “a tightening of the siege on those infiltrators in our midst. We have expelled 104 officers who deviated from their duties and we will continue to purify the ranks because it is our desire to see a clean PRM”.

He also lamented the existence of a significant number of sick police officers. “Adding up the number of colleagues who are unable to give their contribution in the operational work and those who have lost their lives, we end up having problems of overstretching in the force, which negatively affects our mission. We recommend that the PRM health sector identify potential colleagues with health problems, to provide better medical follow-up and planning, to ensure our mission to guarantee public order and security”, he said.

Rafael also advised other police institutions to raise the levels of training of recruits, to improve police operations. “The schools of Matalana, ESAPOL, and Macandzene are on a good path. Hence, we urge them to continue with the high level of training of our officers to better and faithfully serve the country. Even with difficulties, the schools are committed to providing quality training and placing the best police officers to defend the citizens,” he said.

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

Mozambique designing strategies for green industrialisation

The Minister of Industry and Trade, Silvino Moreno, has revealed that Mozambique meets all requirements to adopt a green industrialisation strategy due to its huge power generation potential, adequate infrastructure, and favourable geographical location.

The Minister voiced his conviction on 26 October in Maputo at the Conference of Senior Officials of the United Nations Council for Southern Africa (UNECA), which runs in parallel with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OEACP) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific - European Union (ACP-EU) Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

“We have all the conditions to implement green industrialisation, which we have already started with, for example, the construction of the Mphanda Nkuwa hydroelectric dam and solar power projects all over the country. These are good indicators of Mozambique’s preparedness for green industrialisation”, Moreno said.

The Minister noted as a major development challenge digital technologies, as these require huge investments. “Digitalisation is a challenge for Mozambique, and we want to adopt green industrialisation policies. We want to develop green industrialisation because it presents itself as an environmentally friendly platform by the adoption of low-polluting technologies”, the Minister said.

During the meeting, participants also discussed Mozambique’s preparedness to join the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The country signed the agreement but, according to Mozambique’s Constitution, it must be ratified by the Assembly of the Republic. “We are taking the necessary steps to domesticate the legislation, while also looking at the customs legislation”, Moreno said, adding that this is a good opportunity for the country, looking at the huge number of consumers, which is estimated at 1.3 billion.

“We have an extensive coastline and we have infrastructure that can boost African trade”, he said, adding that the meeting, which ended on 27 October, would produce some important decisions and recommendations from the point of view of actions for the country to easily integrate the African Free Market.

At the meeting, UNECA regional director, Eunice Kamwemdo, stressed the need to boost green industrialisation in Mozambique as a means to protect the environment and arrest climate change. “Mozambique is a country struggling with climate change. The implementation of green industrialisation has the potential to generate environmental gains”, Kamwemdo said, stressing that natural disasters affect the entire southern African region, hence the need for the adoption of strategies for environmental protection.

“We must industrialise and diversify our economies by creating sustainable jobs. There is a need to invest deeply in green industrialisation. This can be done without using the same path as the developed countries.

We have to invest in other economies, such as tourism, for example”, she said.

In attendance were representatives of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), experts from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), government officials and other guests.

Parliament ratifies Charter for African Cultural Renaissance

Mozambique’s parliament, the Assembly of the Republic, on 26 October unanimously passed the second reading of the draft resolution ratifying the African Cultural Renaissance Charter.

The main focus areas of the Charter include the promotion of African identity, shared values, the spirit of Pan-Africanism, and African Renaissance. It also covers the development of the creative economy of the continent, the protection and conservation of African World Heritage Sites and increasing the number of African sites on the World Heritage List, the development and continued dissemination of regional and continental programs for the promotion of African identity, shared values, cultural and creative industries, and heritage.

Mozambique’s Culture and Tourism Minister, Eldevina Materula, explained that the Charter also seeks to “combat and eliminate all forms of alienation, exclusion, and cultural pressure in all parts of Africa and to encourage cultural cooperation between member states to strengthen the unity of African nations, through the use of African languages, as well as encouraging dialogue between cultures”.

According to the Minister, the ratification of the Charter complies with the provisions of Mozambique’s Constitution and other legal instruments that determine the protection of tangible and intangible assets of the Mozambican cultural heritage.

Materula stressed that Mozambique’s accession to the African mechanism for cultural promotion meets the aspirations of the government and of Mozambique, especially “at a time when the cultural sector is internationally recognised as a driver of inclusive and sustainable economic development, contributing to the reduction of social inequalities in Africa”.

“The Charter will provide Mozambique with opportunities to develop practices and strategies that respond to the current challenges that the government faces in arts and culture, and also to agree and consolidate positions with other states”, she said.

Underlying the concept of African cultural renaissance is the recognition of culture as one of the main driving forces for achieving the vision of the African Union (AU) for the consolidation of peace, integration, democracy, and sustainable development.

The Charter was first adopted in 1976 in Mauritius by the Heads of State and Government of the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and amended through a Protocol in 2006 in Sudan. To date, 17 of the AU’s 55 member states have ratified the document.

WFP cuts food aid in Mozambique

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has announced that it was forced to halve the food aid to families in northern Mozambique to less than 40 per cent of the minimum daily caloric needs between April to October 2022 due to a funding shortage and continue reaching an increasing number of people.

In its Country Brief, published on 24 October, the UN organisation noted that it reached over one million people in northern Mozambique during the August-September distribution cycle. However, it warns that its humanitarian assistance is at risk of ending in January – the peak of the ‘lean’ season – if new funds are not received. According to WFP, it needs US\$59.1 million to “continue delivering life-saving food and nutrition to one million people from January to March 2023 in the north”.

Islamist terrorism has forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee their homes and livelihoods in parts of the northern province of Cabo Delgado. Although the Mozambican defence and security forces, supported by the Rwandan army and soldiers from SAMIM (SADC Military Mission in Mozambique), have dislodged the terrorists from most areas, many people are still waiting for more stability before returning home.

As a result, WFP has had to increase its humanitarian assistance while “supporting the transition to resilience building to address root causes of food insecurity, helping 40,000 people to rebuild their livelihoods in the north”. As a result, WFP plans to reach 160,000 people between now and April 2023.

WFP has been present in Mozambique since 1977, working with the government to provide food, nutrition, and livelihood assistance to the most vulnerable communities.

SERNIC parades suspected kidnapers in Nampula

Mozambique’s Criminal Investigation Service (SERNIC) on 20 October paraded six people suspected of involvement in a failed attempted kidnapping of a businessman in the northern town of Nampula.

According to the head of the investigation and instruction department of SERNIC in Nampula, Manuel Arnaca, all the suspects are Mozambican nationals. Arnaca added that “the gang includes the owner of the car used in the attempted kidnapping, a mechanic, and four other individuals who own houses that would serve as captivity for their victims”.

One of the gang members, according to Arnaca, comes from Maputo and arrived in Nampula in August to join the group and prepare the ground for the kidnapping to take place on 13 October.

Arnaca also announced that SERNIC is yet to recover the weapon used in the attempted kidnapping, but “steps are underway to locate and identify other members of the gang.” The attempted kidnapping was the first case reported this year in Nampula.

Tete inaugurates public health laboratory to deal with endemic and epidemic diseases

Health authorities from the western province of Tete are now able to deal with endemic, epidemic, infectious, and emerging diseases following the inauguration of a Public Health Laboratory in the capital with the capacity to process 400 samples a day.

Equipped with real-time PCR technology, the new laboratory was funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

“The infrastructure will allow the introduction in Tete province of the specialised diagnosis of relevant diseases in the local and national epidemiological context, with an emphasis on infectious, endemic, epidemiological, and emerging diseases,” explained Health Minister Armindo Tiago during the inauguration.

Tiago added that the laboratory was complemented by investment in human capital in the fields of molecular biology, biosafety, and bio-protection. As a result, Tete province has qualified human resources to carry out diagnostic tasks in public health and research.

The Minister added that the new laboratory is an important milestone in the strategy to expand the diagnosis of diseases that threaten public health across the country. He stressed that “the timely identification of and rapid response to outbreaks, pandemics, and epidemics depends on a network of laboratories with adequate infrastructure and with modern technology and qualified staff”.

Tiago cited as an example the Covid-19 pandemic which showed that public health laboratories are fundamental in the readiness to face different types of health emergencies.

The Minister said that Tete now has one of the best public health laboratories in the country. He pointed out that “the features of this laboratory are different from those of Tete Provincial Hospital because this was designed to deal with health emergencies, such as outbreaks of diseases, epidemics and pandemics”.

He added, “if there is a cholera outbreak this laboratory should be the first to know and in real time make a rapid diagnosis and notify the relevant parties”.

Currently, public health laboratories are operating in the provinces of Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Sofala, and Inhambane.

The Minister announced that next year public health laboratories will start operating in Niassa, Zambezia, Manica, and Gaza provinces, thus covering the whole country.

Secretary of State Elisa Zacarias expressed her gratitude in the name of Tete residents saying that the construction of the laboratory is a major achievement for the province. “We would like to reaffirm our commitment to ensure the full operation of the laboratory which will impart a new dynamic, aiming to meet the demand, as well as making it the best platform for the development of new research by offering quality services, with an emphasis on Covid-19, among other emerging diseases”, she stressed.

Work accidents kill 22 people in 2021

Work accidents killed at least 22 people last year in Mozambique while another 471 sustained both serious and light injuries.

The Mozambican authorities also reported a total of 602 work accidents in 2021, of which 266 were in the mining, construction, and manufacturing sectors.

These figures were released in Maputo on 24 October by the General Inspector of Labour Domingos Sambo at the launch of the 2nd edition of the Good Practices in Occupational Safety and Health Competition.

“The mining, construction, and manufacturing sectors continue to be the sectors with the highest number of work accidents”, said Sambo, explaining that “these three sectors alone account for 44.2 per cent of the total cases”. Without providing further details, Sambo said that these data show a slight decrease compared to the same period in 2020. According to Sambo, this fact denotes that special attention should be given to those sectors, prioritising a pedagogical approach to stimulate the voluntary spirit of promoting good practices on safety and health at work.

He stressed that “in no way should good practices be viewed as mere bureaucratic or legal impositions by government authorities, but rather a crucial and indispensable issue which should be placed at the top of priorities and central concerns of companies”.

Therefore, Mozambican authorities urge businesses to promote, with determination, good practices on safety and health at work, since productivity, success, and institutional performance are, in part, dependent on the health, safety and welfare of human resources.

Regarding the competition, Sambo explained that it shows the country's commitment, as a State that fights for the respect of the highest values of human dignity as postulated in the International Labour Law, Mozambique's Constitution, as well as in other elements of the country's legislation.

He also expressed the government's expectations that this competition will allow sharing of experiences among different sectors.

The competition ends on 16 December, with the winners awarded during the ceremony.

Attempted suicides worry healthy authorities

Maputo Central Hospital (HCM), the largest health unit in Mozambique, has expressed concern with the increasing number of suicides and attempted suicides across the country, particularly among children and adolescents.

This concern was expressed in Maputo on 24 October by the Emergency and Paediatrics Service Director, Otilia Goncalves, at a press conference.

In Mozambique, the annual number of attempted suicide recorded by health authorities jumped from 263 cases in 2014 to reach 6,500 in 2020. Of the 11 provinces, the Mozambican capital Maputo recorded the largest increase, from 1126 cases in 2019 to 1,937 cases

in 2020, a 72 per cent increase.

According to Goncalves, the number of attempted suicides is worrisome taking into account that only a fraction is recorded by the national health system. “In the last month alone, we reported three cases of attempted suicides of both children and adolescents, all of them from the age group 12 and 16 years”, she revealed.

Goncalves believes that nothing justifies people taking their own lives, therefore she advocates greater dialogue within the family and social circles.

In 2015, the government approved the National Suicide Prevention Plan to promote awareness about the importance of mental health in the country. Unfortunately, it is still incipient and a considerable number of people, especially in rural areas, only seek medical help in extreme cases.

The latest World Health Organisation (WHO) report, dated 2016, suggests that Mozambique has a rate of 4.9 suicides per 100,000 inhabitants.

Stockpile of weapons found in Cabo Delgado

The combined troops of the Rwandan Security Forces and Mozambique Defence Forces (FDS), which are fighting terrorist groups in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, have found another stockpile of weapons hidden in the forest of Limala. This follows another stockpile of weapons and ammunition found hidden in the forest of Mocimboa da Praia district in the previous week.

“Rwanda Security Forces discovered another pile of hidden weapons in abandoned terrorist bases in Miloli in the general area of Limala forest, southeast of Mocimboa da Praia District”, reads a statement posted by the Ruanda Defence Ministry on its website.

“According to some sources, the Ansar Al Sunnah Wa Jammah (IS Mozambique terrorist group) have attempted several times to return to recover the weapons to no avail”, it adds.

The areas where these weapons were discovered used to be terrorist strongholds before they were dislodged by the Mozambican and Rwandan joint forces in August 2021.

Asked by AIM comment on the operation, a source from Mozambique's Defence Ministry declined, saying “we cannot give you any details now.”

Since July 2021, the Rwandan Defence Forces and the Southern African Development Community Military Mission (SAMIM) have been working with Mozambican Defence and Security Forces in the fight against terrorism.

The province of Cabo Delgado is rich in natural gas but has been plagued by terrorist attacks since 2017 perpetrated by armed groups causing the death of over 3,000 people, most of whom civilians.

In its last report on Mozambique, the United Nations Refugee Agency says that nearly one million people have fled their homes over the last five years in Cabo Delgado as a result of violence.

Mozambique reaffirms commitment to combating money laundering

The Mozambican government through a statement by the Finance Ministry on 21 October, has reaffirmed its commitment to preventing and combating money laundering, financing of terrorism, and financing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,

In the statement, the government notes that Mozambique has been placed on the list of enhanced surveillance jurisdictions, also referred “grey list” despite ongoing efforts to strengthen its infrastructure to combat money laundering and terrorist financing crimes, close cooperation with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), and its multilateral partners.

It acknowledges that placement in the list is intended to ensure the expeditious elimination of strategic deficiencies identified in its system to prevent and combat money laundering and terrorist financing in the 2019 Mutual Evaluation of the country, whose Report was published in June 2021 by the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG).

However, the statement stresses that “the Government and all relevant bodies to this process are fully committed to efforts to strengthen the integrity of both domestic and international financial systems and will continue to work hard, in collaboration with FATF, to implement the measures recommended by FATF in the identified areas for improvement”.

In this context, it has taken a series of measures namely approval by the Council of Ministers of the strategy against money laundering and financing of terrorism, the approval of the Revision of the Money Laundering Law by the Parliament, the Law on the Prevention, Repression and Combating of Terrorism and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

“The State is fully committed to these efforts and remains highly focused on implementing the recommended additional measures required to further improve transparency and strengthen the stability of the country's financial system”, says the government

For its part, FATF and ESAAMLG to strengthen the effectiveness of its Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) acknowledge that Mozambique has made a high-level political commitment to work with the relevant bodies

Since the adoption of its Mutual Evaluation Report in April 2021, Mozambique has made progress on some recommended actions to improve its system including finalising its National Risk Assessment (NRA) and strengthening its asset confiscation efforts.

Mozambique will work to implement its FATF action plan by ensuring cooperation and coordination amongst relevant authorities to implement risk-based AML/CFT strategies and policies; conduct training for all LEAs on mutual legal assistance to enhance the gathering of evidence or seizure/confiscation of proceeds of crime; providing adequate financial and human resources to supervisors, developing and implementing a risk-based supervision plan among others.

Maputo province exports 220,000 tonnes of bananas

Exports of bananas from the southern province of Maputo reached 223,603 tonnes in 2021, which amounts to 80 per cent of the total 279,504 tonnes produced. According to the head of the Maputo provincial Directorate of Agriculture and Fisheries, Mariamo Jose, “due to its geographical location, this part of the country enjoys favourable conditions for fruit production, especially bananas, mangoes, citrus, papaya, and litchi”.

Jose said that since the beginning of 2000 the province has benefitted from large investments in fruit production, which now account for a significant portion of the country's exports. “In Maputo province, there are 22 private companies investing in banana production with the main producers in the districts of Namaacha, Moamba, Boane, Manhica, and Marracuene”, she explained.

“The most important export markets are South Africa, Botswana, and Eswatini which generate large foreign exchange earnings for the economy. Those bananas are exported to South Africa and then shipped to Asian and European markets. The remaining 20 per cent are sold in the domestic market”, she added.

Bananas, according to Mariamo, account for 3.9 per cent of the total agricultural production in Maputo province, generating an average of 1.3 jobs per hectare, totalling 6,100 direct jobs and 11,000 indirect jobs.

President Nyusi pardons 24 terrorists

President Filipe Nyusi on 19 October pardoned 24 terrorists in the district of Memba in the northern province of Nampula, who voluntarily surrendered to authorities.

These are 23 men and one woman, mostly young people, from the districts of Memba, Nacala-Porto and Mogovolas who had joined the terrorists who have been sowing terror in the province of Cabo Delgado since October 2017, reports the daily newspaper “Noticias”.

The only woman among the terrorists was in charge of logistics, including catering food and other goods.

Recently, President Nyusi pledged to pardon all terrorists who voluntarily surrendered provided they show repentance. He told the Memba population that the government is aware that some did not join the terrorists of their own free will hence the government and the people should welcome them with open arms and with the spirit of forgiveness.

He urged the population to remain vigilant and keep an eye on the social reintegration of the former terrorists, and accept the return of others who are still in the forests of Cabo Delgado.

A month ago, a terrorist group attacked the administrative post of Chipene in Memba, where they killed three people, one of whom was a missionary nun, and destroyed infrastructure. According to President Nyusi, the terrorists who attacked Memba district were seeking to recruit more young people.