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President Nyusi chairs COP27 panel on damage and losses

President Filipe Nyusi on 8 November chaired the panel on damage and losses arising from climate change at the United Nations climate summit (COP27) at the Egyptian resort of Sharm el Sheikh. Mozambique organised this panel in its capacity as African Champion of Disaster Risk Reduction, a title which the African Union awarded to President Nyusi in February.

President Nyusi took the opportunity of the panel to present to the summit Rosita Mabuiango who was born in a tree during the enormous floods of 2000, which affected every river valley in southern Mozambique. President Nyusi said that Rosita was an example of resilience and of the capacity of women to adapt to adverse phenomena.

The President said that, although the world is generally prepared to provide post-disaster assistance, this is at the expense of actions of adaptation which could reduce, or avoid altogether, the losses and damage arising from disaster.

“Climate change does not respect borders, and no country can escape”, warned President Nyusi, “Supporting countries with few resources in the defence of humanity is to invest in the survival of each state”.

Poor countries are investing in adaptation and resilience, but their financial capacity is very limited, he added. “The African continent is doing a great deal to mitigate and reduce disaster risk”, said President Nyusi. “But the results of this work are being annulled by a range of factors such as the scarcity of financial resources, and institutional fragility”.

He warned that Africa is currently going through the worst drought of the past 40 years, affecting more than 50 million people. In addition, there have recently been major floods in countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, and South Sudan.

The question of compensation for “damage and losses” suffered by developing countries due to climate change has risen towards the top of the COP27 agenda. Indeed, disputes over the agenda lasted for 40 hours and delayed the start of the conference. The upshot of these debates was that developing countries succeeded in putting the issue of “loss and damage” onto the agenda.

This is the recognition that, historically, the developed world burnt fossil fuels in order to industrialise. The costs of that industrialisation were borne by the developing countries, and those who favour establishing a “loss and damage” fund argue that the rich world should pay for the devastation caused in the past. But persuading rich countries to pay for the losses caused to the poor countries is an enormous task. For example, Mozambique is still trying to raise two billion US dollars to repair the damage done by cyclones Idai and Kenneth in 2019, cyclones made worse by the climate crisis. Despite repeated promises made over the past three years, the money is still not available to rehouse all the cyclone victims and rebuild all the ruined infrastructures.

The situation is predicted to worsen. The cost to developing countries of loss and damage will be two trillion dollars per year by 2030 - one thousand times the damage done by cyclones Idai and Kenneth, according to a report issued on 8 November by the Independent High-Level Expert Group on Climate Finance.

This expert group is chaired by Nicholas Stern, who wrote the landmark 2006 review of the economics of climate change. The new report says at least one trillion dollars per year must come from rich countries and development banks and contrasts this need with “the failure to deliver the climate finance commitment of 100 billion dollars per year by 2020 made by developed countries at successive COPs”.

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

President Nyusi calls for fair energy transition

President Filipe Nyusi on 7 November called for a fair and gradual energy transition that will reduce the negative effects of the transition on economic development. The President was speaking at the plenary session on the first day of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt.

Recent statistics indicate that currently about 79 per cent of world energy production comes from fossil fuels and this is responsible for 87 per cent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions. Energy transition away from fossil fuels is thus fundamental to comply with the international targets to decarbonise the economy.

President Nyusi said the Mozambican government intends, over the medium term, to continue using resources such as natural gas, which are less polluting than other fossil fuels and which will generate revenue to implement actions of climate adaptation and resilience.

As for the carbon market, President Nyusi asked the providers of climate financing to make their disbursements in a balanced and satisfactory manner in order to implement more effective mitigation and adaptation initiatives.

President Nyusi told his audience that Mozambique is one of the countries most exposed to the threats posed by climate change, including tropical cyclones, floods and cyclical droughts, which demand more assertive measures of adaptation and resilience.

These include improved early warning systems, which would make communities less vulnerable to extreme climatic events. President Nyusi has launched a presidential initiative to set up a modern meteorological station in each of the country's districts.

Mozambique also hosts the SADC (Southern African Development Community) Centre for Humanitarian and Emergency Operations. This was opened in the northern port city of Nacala in 2021, to coordinate the response to emergencies across the southern African region, with the main goals of preventing loss of life, and reducing the damage caused by disasters.

Other key actions included a regional conference in Maputo on the sustainable and integrated management of the Miombo forests, setting priorities for the next decade, and strengthening inclusive and transparent governance of natural resources. In Africa, the Miombo forests are the largest of the tropical forest ecosystems and are essential for carbon sequestration.

The President also stressed the importance of preserving Mozambique's mangrove forests. "Once again", he declared, "we are urging all our partners to mobilise financial and technical resources to restore and conserve the mangroves and the rich biodiversity of Mozambique".

COP27 is taking place between 6 November and 18 November. The draft agreement published on 17 November sets a goal "to accelerate measures towards the phase-down of unabated coal power and phase out and rationalise inefficient fossil fuel subsidies".

President Nyusi announces first export of LNG from Cabo Delgado

President Filipe Nyusi on 13 November announced the first export of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from the Rovuma Basin, off the coast of the northern province of Cabo Delgado.

The LNG was produced by the Coral Sul floating LNG platform, and left for the international market on board the cargo ship "British Sponsor".

The President noted that "this is the first shipment of LNG under the long-term purchase and sale agreement with British Petroleum (BP)". Under this agreement, all the LNG produced at the floating platform for the next 20 years has been sold in advance to BP.

President Nyusi recalled that in 2016 the government approved the development plan for the Coral South Floating LNG project, and in 2017 the Final Investment Decision on the project was taken. The government at the time was convinced that the first export from the floating platform would take place in 2022. "Everything has worked out", said President Nyusi. "Today, Mozambique has entered the annals of world history as one of the exporters of liquefied natural gas".

This first shipment, he added, was a sign of market recognition that Mozambique offers a stable, transparent and predictable environment for multi-billion dollar investments, in which the use of high technology stands out with the purpose of monetising resources in a phase of energy transition.

President Nyusi stressed the effect of LNG exports on the balance of trade, and the improvement of the public accounts through tax revenue and profit sharing, as well as the introduction of modern technology by Mozambicans trained during the various phases of construction of the floating platform.

"This project is the first in a more ambitious development plan", said the President. He encouraged the various companies involved in onshore LNG projects to follow the plans through to fruition, given the importance they could have for Mozambique.

President Nyusi urged Mozambicans not to imagine that gas is the sole or greatest solution for the country's development. Instead, they should intensively increase production and productivity "in our traditional activities such as agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and electricity generation, among others".

He congratulated the investors in Area Four of the Rovuma Basin, where the Coral Sul project is located, for their pioneer LNG operations. The operator of Area Four is the Italian energy company ENI, with a holding of 50 per cent. The China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) has a 20 per cent holding. Kogas of Korea, Galp of Portugal and Mozambique's own National Hydrocarbon Company (ENH) each have holdings of ten per cent.

The deal whereby the entire Coral Sul LNG production is sold to BP is valid for 20 years, with an option for a ten-year extension. The Coral Sul project is budgeted at 6.12 billion euros (US\$6.34 billion) and has a target to produce 3.4 million tonnes of LPG a year.

President launches agricultural campaign

President Filipe Nyusi on 14 November launched the 2022/2023 agricultural campaign in Pemba, the capital of the northern province of Cabo Delgado.

President Nyusi was optimistic about the campaign because of favourable climatic factors combined with a rise in the number of farmers and increased agricultural mechanisation.

The number of agricultural producers compared with the 2021/2022 campaign has risen by 2.1 per cent, said the President. As a result of the government's flagship agricultural development programme, Sustenta, the number of households with access to agricultural inputs has grown at a much faster rate – from 189,789 households in the previous campaign to 316,698 now.

President Nyusi forecast a rise in the area under cultivation from 5.85 million to 6.2 million hectares, with growth in most groups of crops. Hence, there should be a six per cent rise in the production of grain, 4.4 per cent in root crops, ten per cent in legumes, 12 per cent in oilseeds, and 20.4 per cent in vegetables. The country's livestock herd should grow by 6.5 per cent, including cattle, pigs, and small ruminants.

President Nyusi reminded his audience that Mozambique is no longer on the list of countries at high risk of famine. "In the area of food and nutritional security, 2022 will be marked by the fact that this year Mozambique did not record any pockets of hunger", he said. "The country was considered stable because we took about 2.6 million people out of food insecurity following the good harvest from the last agricultural campaign. The number of Mozambicans experiencing hunger fell from 9.8 to 7.2 million".

Despite these improvements, President Nyusi believed there is still a long march ahead in the fight against hunger. But he was confident of victory.

As for malnutrition, the President said that the latest statistics indicate a decline in the number of children under five years of age suffering from chronic malnutrition from 43 to 38 per cent. This, he declared, "consolidates our vision of implanting integrated rural development policies, of production and access to food, water and sanitation, and education".

President Nyusi said the 2021/2022 agricultural campaign had unfolded in an adverse context, marked by uncertainties in the trade policies of the major economies which affected the dynamics of production, international trade and global economic growth. This was largely the effect of the global Covid-19 pandemic.

The Russian conflict with Ukraine led to a breakdown in agricultural exports, "and it is continuing to affect negatively the global food, fertiliser and energy markets", said President Nyusi.

He added that the acts of terrorism in parts of Cabo Delgado province "tried, without success to totally paralyse our productive capacity".

Despite all adversities, Mozambican agriculture had performed robustly. In the previous campaign total production had been 18.3 million tonnes of crops, which was an increase of 8.3 per cent.

Progress in Cabo Delgado reconstruction

Prime Minister Adriano Maleiane on 10 November declared that the Cabo Delgado Reconstruction Plan (PRCD 2021-2024) is being implemented at a good pace in those districts of this northern province that have been affected by Islamist terrorism.

Maleiane expressed this optimism during an Extraordinary Session of the Coordination Forum for implementation of the plan, held in the provincial capital Pemba during a three-day working visit by the Prime Minister to the province. "From the report presented, we can at least be certain that the displaced people are returning", said Maleiane.

The coordination model adopted for the implementation of the reconstruction plan is working, he declared, and "the partners are seeking more funds to support us". But challenges remain in mobilising the resources to conclude Phases I and II of the Plan, which are the activities to be undertaken in the short and medium term. The short-term activities are budgeted at US\$190 million, and the medium-term activities at about US\$109 million.

The Prime Minister added that the government is also mobilising resources "so that economic agents, small and medium enterprises, can be on the ground. For economic activity must resume, and it can also encourage those who are not yet certain whether it is worth returning to their home districts".

Cabo Delgado provincial governor Valige Tauabo told the meeting that, due to security improvements, more than 50,000 households who had fled from the terrorist raids have now returned to their zones of origin.

The report presented to the meeting detailed the rehabilitation of schools, health units, and other public buildings, as well as access roads, electricity and communications networks, and the financial system. All this was necessary to encourage the return of displaced people and the resumption of public services.

For his part, the chairperson of the Agency for the Integrated Development of the North (ADIN), Armindo Ngunga, explained that many of the rehabilitation activities are undertaken by partners, without the direct involvement of the government, including the hiring of contractors, and the subsequent implementation and financing. He admitted that this makes it difficult to know exactly how much money is being spent. For example, a partner who wants to provide boreholes for drinking water hires the contractors, the work is done and, in the end, the boreholes are presented. "We are happy with the work done", said Ngunga, "but we don't always know how much it cost. We are satisfied, in that a problem has been solved. But in terms of the accounts, it's difficult. We never had access to this money".

The provincial director of economic activities, Daniel Agostinho, said that Cabo Delgado is standing up, and "activities are underway at a good pace". Despite the terrorism, "we had good production in the agricultural campaign that has just ended. The displaced people themselves managed to open their fields. We can't always be dependent on outside support".

US\$2 billion still needed for post-cyclone reconstruction

The Mozambican government is still running a deficit of about two billion US dollars to fund the post-cyclone reconstruction programme in the wake of cyclones Idai and Kenneth that hit central and northern Mozambique three years ago.

Interviewed in the Maputo daily newspaper “Noticias”, the Minister of Public Works, Carlos Mesquita, said that, despite the deficit, the work to repair the cyclone damage is clearly visible. “The roads and bridges affected by the two cyclones have been rehabilitated, allowing the restoration of 4,154 kilometres of road, 23 concrete bridges, 18 culverts, 33 drifts, and 211 aqueducts”, he said.

So far, according to the minister, 2,835 metres of metal bridges have been purchased, of which 84 metres have been assembled over the Muendazi River and 36 metres over the Nacala River, in Nampula province.

The post-Idai and Kenneth recovery and reconstruction programme is budgeted at about US\$3.2 billion. Of this sum, US\$1.2 billion should be provided by the cooperation partners.

In the first semester of this year, more than US\$500 million were applied to the various rehabilitation projects for interventions in economic and social infrastructure in the severely affected provinces. So far, 2,644 houses have been built or rebuilt and delivered to the beneficiaries in Sofala province; 615 in Manica; 784 in Nampula; and 213 in Cabo Delgado. Overall, the rehabilitation and reconstruction of 17,703 houses are underway, of which 17,203 are in Sofala, 295 in Manica, 180 in Nampula, and 25 in Cabo Delgado.

INGD requires 12.5 billion meticaís for contingency plan

Mozambique’s Disaster Risk Management Institute (INGD) needs 12.5 billion meticaís (US\$195 million) to finance its Contingency Plan for the 2022/2023 rainy season. The INGD publishes a contingency plan, with various scenarios at the start of each rainy season. So far this year, the INGD only has about 5.1 billion meticaís available, leaving a deficit of 7.4 billion. The current forecast is that about 2.2 million people throughout the country will be adversely affected by the rainy season.

Speaking on 14 November at a meeting of the Disaster Management Coordinating Council, chaired by Prime Minister Adriano Maleiane, INGD chairperson Luisa Meque said the Contingency Plan studied three possible scenarios.

The least damaging involved drought in parts of the country, high winds and some flooding. The second scenario added worse floods and cyclones, while the third scenario also envisaged possible earthquakes.

Analysis involving teams from the INGD, the National Meteorology Institute (INAM), and the Public Works Ministry, Meque said, concluded that the second scenario was the most likely.

Funds were needed immediately for actions such as removing people living at risk in flood-prone areas, particularly in the central provinces. Meque said discussions are now underway between the government and its cooperation partners on this aspect of the plan.

“In the central region, we are still feeling the effects of the last rainy season, which means that some of the river basins are still saturated”, said Meque. “This draws our attention to take greater care to prevent many people living near the riverbanks from being affected by flooding”.

She noted that in the 2021/2022 rainy season, flooding on the Licungo River, in the central province of Zambezia, caused enormous damage. This obliged the authorities to redouble their vigilance to ensure that there would be no repetition this year.

Governor calls for reopening of Mocimboa da Praia port

The governor of the northern province of Cabo Delgado, Valige Tauabo, has called for the urgent reopening of the port of Mocimboa da Praia to facilitate the supply of various products to the population.

The port was destroyed during terrorist attacks against the town between 2020 and 2022, which also forced most of the inhabitants to abandon the town.

According to the governor, cited in the Maputo daily newspaper “Notícias” on 11 November, the reopening of the port, besides facilitating life in the district of Mocimboa da Praia, will also benefit food supplies for the neighbouring districts of Palma, Nangade, Mueda and Muidumbe.

“Recently, there have been clear signs of improved security, especially in the districts of the northern region of Cabo Delgado, due to the actions of the Defence and Security Forces”, Tauabo said, calling on the Ports and Railway Company (CFM) to speed up the rehabilitation of the port.

The governor added that the restoration of security in the province should be an opportunity to revive the economy, deeply affected by the action of terrorists. “We call on the local business community and others to be bolder in their investments to put Cabo Delgado back on the road to development”, Tauabo said, adding that besides the port, the town of Mocimboa da Praia also has an airport with the capacity to receive national and international flights, but it too was severely damaged during the terrorist attacks.

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.

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

WFP warns lack of funds endangers food provision

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) on 11 November warned that it will be forced to suspend its life-saving assistance to one million people in Mozambique unless it receives additional funding.

At a press briefing in Geneva, Switzerland, the WFP Country Director in Mozambique, Antonella D'Aprile, pointed out that almost 1.15 million people in the northern province of Cabo Delgado are suffering "crisis" or "emergency" hunger with the latest data indicating that the situation may deteriorate even further.

The crisis is caused by Islamist terrorism that has forced hundreds of thousands of people in parts of Cabo Delgado to leave their homes and livelihoods. The Mozambican defence and security forces, supported by the Rwandan military contingent and soldiers from SAMIM (SADC Military Mission in Mozambique), have had notable success in scattering the terrorists although the threat remains in some locations.

D'Aprile stated that WFP has been providing emergency assistance to a million displaced people but has had to cut rations in recent months. In October, WFP announced that it had been 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 and October 2022.

She added that, while striving to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, WFP is also working to scale up resilience-building activities among vulnerable communities and supporting 44,000 people in recovering land and production in Cabo Delgado.

WFP is also running the UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) for aid workers needing to access remote areas in northern Mozambique. The air service has since transported over 10,000 humanitarian personnel and 70,000 kilogrammes of humanitarian cargo, and carried out over 330 security relocations.

However, according to D'Aprile, "WFP's funding situation has been worrisome for some time, and we are now running out of options and all these activities are at risk". She pointed out that WFP needs US\$51 million "to continue delivering life-saving assistance to one million people and provide much-needed services".

Frelimo secretariats urged to prepare for election victories

The General Secretary of Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party, Roque Silva, on 13 November challenged the newly elected members of the Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee and the provincial secretariats to work speedily to prepare a Frelimo victory in the 2023 municipal and 2024 general elections. The first step, he said, must be to set up election preparation offices in all the provinces.

Speaking at the end of an induction seminar for secretariat members, held at the Party School in the southern city of Matola, he said there is no serious

political alternative to Frelimo with a project for a society committed to a future of wellbeing for all Mozambicans.

"The political cycle, which is beginning now, poses great challenges for our Party, and the centre of gravity of these challenges lies in preparing our victory in the municipal and general elections".

Silva pointed out that the government has approved the creation of 12 new municipalities and it was now urgent that Frelimo ensure that its party structures are operational in all these new units.

"We must strengthen the performance of our party in the interest of consolidating victory in the municipalities already managed by Frelimo and, even more important, to recover those municipalities which, for the time being, are in the hands of the opposition", declared Silva.

The Secretariats, he said, have the task of guaranteeing the day-to-day management of the Party machinery. To ensure their effectiveness, Silva added, they must make decisions that implement the directives and guidelines of higher party bodies, while monitoring and supporting the actions of the lower bodies.

He stressed that the Secretariats must respect the principle that decision-making is preceded by free discussion, characterised by openness and tolerance towards divergent viewpoints and opinions expressed by the members. But once a Secretariat has taken a decision, it is binding on all members of that Secretariat. "Members of a Frelimo Secretariat are individually and collectively bound by decisions taken by the body they belong to", Silva said. "Hence they should implement the decisions jointly".

Observance of this principle, he insisted, is the cornerstone for cohesion and the defence of discipline within Party bodies.

A second principle concerned planning and budgeting: Silva said the activities of the Secretariats must rest on realistic plans with clear objectives and measurable targets.

Silva noted that, in today's world, rapid and profound changes are underway with an impact on all spheres of humanity. These changes are exacerbated by the facilities provided by the new information technologies which make it possible for anyone to instantaneously spread information of public utility with a simple click on a computer mouse. But the same technology also allows the spread of distortions, gossip and slanders, readily consumed without any verification or checking of sources.

Mozambican opposition parties were among those who abused social media in this way, claimed Silva. "Lacking any constructive arguments, without any ideas for the reconstruction of the country which some of them spent years destroying, we have, unfortunately, witnessed some of our fellow citizens discharge their energies into virulent attacks on social media against Frelimo and its leaders".

He urged Frelimo members to become more fully involved on social media, deconstructing narratives which seek to deceive the less well-informed.

Prime Minister defends unified wage table

Prime Minister Adriano Maleiane on 9 November defended the public sector Unified Wage Table (TSU) recently introduced by the government, against a barrage of attacks from assorted professional groups including doctors and judges who say the new table damages their interests.

Speaking at the country's parliament, the Assembly of the Republic, Maleiane said the TSU was a dramatic simplification of the wage system in the public administration, reducing the number of wage levels from 89 to 21, and the number of salary supplements from 35 to 18. The TSU, he stated, eliminates wage disparities, brings greater wage balance and justice among the staff affected in the various sectors of the administration, and guarantees the sustainability of the public sector wage bill.

The Prime Minister told the Assembly that the TSU ensures the stability and professionalisation of human resources in public administration and allows the mobility of those resources. He insisted that nobody is losing money because of the TSU. No public servant is receiving a lower wage under the TSU than before its implementation, and none of the special statutes for professional groups have been revoked. The various supplements continue to exist but have different names.

He added that under the TSU the basic criteria for employment and promotion in the public service are position in the career structure and length of time spent working for the state. He added that the first phase of implementation of the TSU has already covered 354,360 public servants, which is 99.8 per cent of the total.

The government, Maleiane added, had set up multi-sector commissions, locally and centrally, to guarantee the uniform implementation of the TSU, receive complaints, and propose solutions. "We urge all public servants to prioritise the use of the legally established channels and mechanisms to attend to concerns arising from implementation of the law on the TSU", he said.

Maleiane reiterated the government's willingness to maintain a dialogue with public servants and the socio-professional organisations involved, to ensure improved regulation and implementation of the TSU.

The Minister of Economy and Finance, Max Tonela, told the Assembly that some of the concerns presented by professional groups "are legitimate".

Some of these, he said, arose from procedural failings that could easily be corrected, and some resulted from interpretations that require "further explanations or improvement of this new model". Still others "result from managing the expectations generated around the TSU since its conception".

Tonela reminded the deputies that the whole point of the wage reform was to value and retain the best cadres in the state apparatus, to correct wage imbalances among staff with similar functional requirements and to eliminate the proliferation of special statutes that had been approved in a discriminatory fashion. He insisted that no worker in the public administration will suffer a wage cut because of the TSU.

The conciliatory speeches from Maleiane and Tonela may have come too late. Various groups feel that they were not properly consulted about the new wage scales and that their interests are being damaged. Foremost among these are the country's doctors, who are threatening to go on strike as of 5 December, if negotiations with the government do not satisfy their demands. Even worse, on 4 November, the Mozambican Association of Judges (AMJ) issued a statement describing the TSU as "unconstitutional and illegal". The AMJ claims that the TSU "lowers the professional status of judges", and violates the Mozambican constitution and various international agreements Mozambique has signed. Such claims may seem extreme, but if they are accepted by the Constitutional Council, the country's highest body in matters of constitutional law, the whole public sector wage reform could be sent back to square one.

The existing wage structure has evolved over decades and is generally agreed to be inefficient and unwieldy.

MRG Metals secures option to acquire Jangamo project

The Australian-based mining company MRG Metals on 9 November announced that it has signed an agreement with the British company Savannah Resources under which it can acquire the Jangamo heavy mineral sands project in the southern province of Inhambane.

Under the option, MRG has 45 days to undertake due diligence on the project. If MRG decides to go ahead with the transaction it will then have a 16-month option period during which it would fund the development of the project, at a cost of up to half a million US dollars. The purpose of this work programme is to get the project to a stage where it can satisfy the requirements of Mozambique's National Mining Institute (INAMI).

During this period, MRG Metals would have the option to buy the mining licence for US\$800,000, in cash or shares. Subsequently, MRG would pay Savannah Resources a one per cent royalty on revenue generated once the project becomes profitable.

According to the company's chairperson, Andrew Van Der Zwan, the mining licence is well-progressed and operations could begin as early as next year.

In a separate statement, the chief executive of Savannah Resources explained that "the proposed transaction would complete Savannah's planned withdrawal from Mozambique and enable us to focus 100 per cent on the ongoing licensing and development of the Barroso Lithium Project".

The Jangamo license covers 11,948 hectares of land and is valid until April 2044, with the possibility of a 25-year extension. According to test drilling, the area contains ilmenite, rutile, and zircon. Ilmenite and rutile are used to make white pigments for paints, paper, and plastic. Titanium can be extracted from these ores and used to manufacture metallic parts where lightweight and high strength are needed. Zircon is used for abrasive and insulating purposes and monazite contains rare earth elements.

Attorney-General calls for new criminal investigation approach

Attorney-General Beatriz Buchili on 9 November said that the rise in violent crime, notably kidnappings, demands that her office (PGR) and the National Criminal Investigation Service (Sernic) take a new position towards investigation and prevention methodologies.

The Mozambican authorities, Buchili stressed, had to adapt to face the new and increasingly sophisticated methods used by criminals. “Hence, we should strengthen our capacity for intervention namely in operational work, in the collection of evidence, in international legal and judicial cooperation, and in the coordination between the various stakeholders involved in preventing and fighting crime”, she said.

Buchili was speaking in the western city of Tete, at the opening of a three-day meeting between the PGR and Sernic.

The evolution of crime and the methods used by criminals, she said, “demands a highly intelligent response. So, we must continually strengthen our human and research resources, by training and upgrading our staff, and by acquiring modern equipment in line with the development of criminal behaviour”.

Buchili said the Tete meeting is an opportune moment to advance with contributions to enrich Sernic’s draft Strategic Plan, to ensure that it is in line with the PGR’s Strategic Plan, “so that we are walking at the same pace in pursuing the goals of our state, and in ensuring an environment of justice and peace”.

Buchili stressed that Sernic must not allow the organised and transnational crime that Mozambique currently faces to call into question the sovereignty of the State and the security of its citizens. “We have a duty to prevent and fight against this evil”, she declared.

Buchili called for rigorous selection criteria, in admitting new staff to Sernic, preventing “individuals of dubious conduct” from entering Sernic’s ranks.

“We must also continue to hold responsible for their acts those of our colleagues involved in illicit conduct, which endangers our institutions”, she added. “Only in this way will we be able to rescue the trust of citizens and guarantee that they collaborate with us”.

Corruption, said Buchili, remains one of the main obstacles in the fight against organised crime since it is

one of the key mechanisms used by criminals to ensure their success. Researchers and magistrates in the anti-corruption offices must find better strategies to root out corruption from within their institutions.

“We cannot tolerate that, as bodies with the duty to prevent and fight against corruption, we have amongst us colleagues who are involved in corrupt practices”, she warned.

Drive to issue displaced with identity documents

The Ministries of Justice and the Interior, with the support of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), are planning to issue 90,000 birth certificates and identity cards to people in the northern provinces displaced from their homes by cyclones and by military conflict.

According to an IOM press release on 8 November, the IOM will issue the documents to 90,000 internally displaced people in Cabo Delgado, Niassa, and Nampula provinces by September 2023 in coordination with the provincial representations of the two ministries.

“Providing access to documents that are vital to pursue or restart the life of the victims of conflicts and natural disasters is a fundamental human right”, said the release. “The IOM has been supporting the displaced people so that they can resume their lives with dignity and normality”.

The head of the IOM Mission in Mozambique, Laura Tomm-Bonde, said that, in addition to already living in a vulnerable situation, the lack of any documentation could expose displaced people to restrictions on their freedom of movement, harassment, family separation, discrimination, gender-based violence, and the risk of other human rights violations.

It may also limit the capacity of the displaced to access education and other basic services. The lack of documentation also raises concerns about land, housing, property, and child protection. The displaced may also be at risk of being trafficked or regarded as supporters of the jihadist groups fighting against the government in Cabo Delgado.

Tomm-Bonde added that people without any form of identity document are at risk of losing the right to vote in next year’s municipal elections and the general elections scheduled for 2024.
