

# Mozambique News Agency

## AIM Reports

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## Samora's legacy "inexhaustible source of inspiration"

President Filipe Nyusi declared on 19 October, the 29th anniversary of the death of the country's first President, Samora Machel, that Machel's legacy "is an inexhaustible source of inspiration and a resource for us to win a prosperous future". In a message to mark the anniversary, President Nyusi praised the "far-sighted leadership" of Machel, before and after independence.

"President Samora", he said, "was a fearless fighter, a military leader and statesman of extraordinary vision, a permanent source of unshakeable ideas, an icon of humanism and solidarity".

Machel, he added, "was entirely committed to building a state of social justice in Mozambique, without neglecting unconditional support for the liberation struggles of the peoples of the region and of the entire world".

Machel and 34 others died on the night of 19 October 1986, when the presidential aircraft, returning from a summit in Zambia, crashed into a hillside at Mbuzini, just inside South Africa.

Samora Machel's death was not an isolated incident. It took place in the context of an undeclared war waged by the South African regime, not merely against Mozambique, but against all the front line states, committed to ending apartheid. Samora fell at a point of high tension in the region, after open South African threats of direct military intervention in Mozambique, and following threats against his life by apartheid Defence Minister Magnus Malan.

It is widely believed that the crash took place because the South African military used a pirate navigational beacon, broadcasting on the same frequency as the Maputo airport beacon, to lure the plane away from its correct flight path.

Members of the Machel family, veterans of the liberation struggle, and other friends and comrades, laid wreaths at Maputo's Monument to the Mozambican Heroes where President Samora is buried, alongside the founder of Frelimo, Eduardo Mondlane, and others who gave their lives for the liberation of Mozambique.

Samora's son, Samora Junior (Samito), told reporters that the best way that Mozambicans could remember his father would be by studying his thoughts and putting them into practice.

"Samora Machel was a leader who participated in the life of the people", he said. "He was a leader who brought to Mozambicans a way of life – namely discipline, organization, work, social justice and the struggle for equality".

It was painful for the family, he added, that there was still no definitive result from the investigation into the Mbuzini crash. "The fact that we still don't know what happened to our father hurts", said Samito. "The government still has the inquiry under way. But recently we have had no report on how the investigation is going. We remain in the dark. As the family, we want this to end as quickly as possible".

## Poverty and malnutrition "unacceptably high"

The levels of poverty and malnutrition remain "unacceptably high", President Filipe Nyusi declared on 14 October.

Speaking at the opening of the second Mozambique-Nordic Conference on Inclusive Growth, President Nyusi pointed to the uncomfortable paradox of high economic growth rates co-existing with high poverty rates.

"According to the World Bank, the Mozambican economy grew at an average annual rate of 7.4 per cent over the last two decades", he said. "But despite robust economic growth, the levels of poverty (54.7 per cent) and of chronic malnutrition (43 per cent of children under the age of five) remain high, and our Human Development Index is also reason for concern".

One of the goals of the government's five year programme for the 2015-2019 period was to reverse this situation, President Nyusi added.

To ensure "inclusive growth", he said, there must be no discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, race, region or gender. In economic development, "discrimination constitutes a huge barrier", he said.

President Nyusi argued that participatory democracy and political stability are fundamental principles for forming a dynamic and prosperous society. "We want the strengthening of social and territorial cohesion, democracy and the defence of human rights", he said.

President Nyusi added that Mozambique should focus on strengthening its technological and industrial sectors, since these are crucial indicators of economic growth.

Strategies should also be adopted to generate more jobs in rural, peri-urban and urban areas. "What measures can be taken to empower the transformation of small scale farmers and agricultural producers?" he asked. "How can our mineral resources become a blessing rather than a curse?", he added.

Speaking for the five Nordic countries, Finnish ambassador Seija Toro said the conference is intended to produce ideas for the political dialogue under way in matters of inclusive growth, while sharing the Nordic development model, in order to inspire the design of Mozambican economic and social policies.

This was not a case of Mozambique simply copying the Nordic model, she added, but of taking advantage of some aspects that might prove useful in the Mozambican social, economic and political context.

## Tanzania and Mozambique want second Rovuma bridge

The Mozambican and Tanzanian governments on 8 October reaffirmed their desire that a second bridge should be built over the Rovuma River, which marks the border between the two countries.

This was one of the matters discussed in official talks between Mozambican and Tanzanian delegations headed by the Presidents of the two countries, Filipe Nyusi and Jakaya Kikwete, on the first day of a state visit by Kikwete.

The first bridge over the Rovuma, known as the Unity Bridge, was inaugurated in May 2010. This bridge, at Negomano, is underused, partly because of the poor state of the access roads. Many travellers continue to use ferries or canoes to cross the river.

Briefing reporters on the talks, Mozambican Foreign Minister Oldemiro Baloi said a new bridge would help stimulate trade and regional integration. The official statistics indicate that trade between Mozambique and Tanzania is insignificant, despite the excellent political and diplomatic relations between the two countries.

However, the official statistics take no account of informal cross-border trade, and Baloi admitted that this could be very large. Even with a major trading partner such as South Africa, the true scale of trade is not known, and the same is the case with Tanzania.

“The two bridges over the Rovuma will empower connections in the region, and the countries north of Tanzania will also benefit from this second bridge”, he said, adding that the two countries are determined to raise the funds necessary to build it.

Baloi believed that the bridges over the Rovuma could also form part of a trans-African highway from Cape Town to Cairo.

The discussions also covered coastal and maritime security. The maritime border has already been demarcated, and so is not in dispute. But the hydrocarbon reserves in the offshore Rovuma basin do not respect man-made borders, Baloi said, hence the need for close cooperation between Tanzania and Mozambique at all levels, including the ministries of defence and of mineral resources.

The threat posed by poaching was also discussed. Baloi said the meeting stressed the need to step up protection for the Niassa Reserve in northern Mozambique and the Selous Reserve, which is the continuation of the same ecosystem in southern Tanzania. Poaching in the two reserves, especially of elephants, has already reached alarming proportions, Baloi pointed out.

Tanzania's concerns also include the high price of Mozambican entry visas, particularly for students. The Tanzanian side wanted to see visas scrapped altogether for Tanzanian students attending Mozambican institutions.

Baloi admitted that Mozambican visas cost more than Tanzanian ones and said this disparity should be eliminated. He was also in favour of scrapping visas for students, in order to relieve some of the financial pressure they and their parents face.

A visa waiver agreement was reached some years ago, allowing citizens of one of the countries to visit the other for up to 30 days without an entry visa. The visa-free period was extended to 90 days under an agreement reached when Nyusi visited Tanzania in May.

This visit is also a chance for the Mozambican authorities to bid farewell to Kikwete, who is reaching the end of his second term of office. Presidential elections will be held in Tanzania on 25 October.

## Race against time to save Kariba Dam

A catastrophic failure of the Kariba Dam on the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia would put three and a half million lives at risk and knock out forty per cent of southern Africa's hydroelectricity supply, according to a recent report.

The report by the Institute of Risk Management of South Africa warned that 181 billion cubic metres of water could be released if the dam wall failed. Eight hours later this would hit and destroy the Cahora Bassa dam in Mozambique.

The Kariba dam was commissioned in 1960 and is central to the power requirements of Zimbabwe and Zambia. However, the water gushing out of the Kariba Dam's sluices has been eroding the rock at the bottom of the dam. Originally the water was only ten metres deep at the foot of the dam, but erosion of this plunge pool has increased the depth to ninety metres and has been wearing away rock near the dam's foundations.

Plans have been drawn up to remedy this by increasing the size of the plunge pool, which will involve blasting up to 300,000 cubic metres of rock. In addition, work will be carried out on the dam's floodgates and the concrete will be inspected to analyse the extent of damage to the structure's concrete caused by chemical reactions.

The report references an article in the South African paper “Business Day” which stated that “the consensus of engineers from around the world is that Kariba has a life span of three years if extensive repairs are not undertaken immediately”.

In an interview with AIM, the report's author, Kay Darbourn, warned that the likelihood of dam failure increases the longer it takes to get started on the repairs. She pointed out that if the current drought continues there is less of a danger, but questioned whether the dam will be able to cope with a drastic increase in water during the rainy season.

Some of Darbourn's suggestions would be easy to implement and could save many hundreds of thousands of lives. Thus SMS text messages and social media such as Twitter and Facebook could be used to give advanced warning of any threatened or occurring danger. There are already international SMS services that warn people of the danger of Tsunami's in the Pacific Ocean.

The technical director of Hidroelectrica de Cahora Bassa (HCB), the company that operates the Cahora Bassa dam, Moises Machaba, told AIM that HCB has been aware of the risk to Kariba for some time.

According to Machaba, the latest information is that the risk exists, but is not imminent. “It won't happen tomorrow, or next year”, he said. “But if nothing is done, then it will happen but not for another couple of years at least”.

The Zimbabwean and Zambian governments signed agreements on 18 September with the European Union, World Bank, African Development Bank and the Swedish government to finance the repairs costing US\$294 million.

The repairs could take up to a decade. Charity Mwansa, chairperson of the Zimbabwe River Authority (ZRA), which operates the dam, said the “reshaping of the plunge pool will take three years, while the rehabilitation of the spillway gates will take six years”.

The drought affecting the upper Zambezi means that the structural condition of the dam is not getting much worse at the moment. The condition of the plunge pool worsens when the floodgates are open, and currently none of the Kariba floodgates are open.

Machaba said the Kariba reservoir is currently 20 per cent lower than normal. ZRA had told HCB that it is keeping the floodgates closed, and does not intend opening them, even if it begins to rain.

## Heavy sentences for Education Ministry theft

The Maputo City Court on 8 October sentenced eight people to prison terms of between one and 20 years for their part in a fraud which had diverted 33 million meticais (\$825,000 at current exchange rates) from the coffers of the Ministry of Education between 2008 and 2011.

Much of the money was stolen by duplicating the Ministry's wages sheets, taking advantage of the transition from manual to electronic payment of wages. According to the prosecution, the corrupt officials put the names of staff who were already receiving their wages electronically onto the list of those whose wages were still processed manually.

These extra wages, prosecuting attorney Tacia Martins told the court, were then drained into nineteen bank accounts which had nothing to do with the Ministry.

The fraudulent scheme also involved the names of 43 Cuban teachers hired by the Ministry. The prosecution argued that the wages for these teachers continued to be processed, even after they had returned to Cuba.

The longest sentence, 20 years, was imposed on Abilio Mathe, former head of the Administration and Finance Department of the Education Ministry. His accomplice, Suado Mahande, who worked in the wages division, was sentenced to 14 years.

The court found that Carlos Acacio and Alfine Ibrahimio had allowed their bank accounts, and those of their relatives, to be used for criminal and fraudulent purposes. Some of the stolen money was deposited in their accounts, and they did not raise the alarm. They were therefore guilty of covering up the crimes committed by Mathe and Mahande, and were each sentenced to four years.

Four other accused, Maria Acacio, Iva Pedro, Tuta Pedro and Rachid Aly were sentenced to between one and two years imprisonment, converted into fines.

One key figure in the fraudulent scheme, according to the prosecution, was Jose Sende, the man in charge of processing the Ministry's wages. He was not in the dock because he has disappeared and his current whereabouts are unknown.

## Minister vows crackdown on academic fraud

The Minister of Education, Jorge Ferrao, on 14 October declared "zero tolerance" of academic fraud.

He was reacting to the latest cheating scandal, concerning the 12th grade extraordinary examinations held in August. An investigation into 43 of the country's 200 public secondary schools confirmed that cheating had taken place in nine schools, involving 407 pupils.

Ferrao also announced that the Ministry expects to enrol about 1.32 million pupils in the first grade of primary education in 2016.

At first sight, this figure seems surprisingly high. The age at which children should enter primary school is six, and projections from the 2007 population census suggest that there are no more than 780,000 six year olds in the country.

But, according to education officials contacted by AIM, many parents do not enrol their children in school at the right age. This means that many of the children who will step inside a school for the first time in 2016 are older than six.

Ferrao gave the figure for first grade enrolment at a ceremony where a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Portuguese embassy for support in the training of education staff.

He said that the Ministry has been hiring around 8,500 new teachers every year, to ensure good quality education.

But the country remains short of teachers with adequate educational training. The Ministry, Ferrao said, had therefore begun to cooperate with Brazil to train the instructors who will work at Mozambique's 24 teacher training institutes.

He hoped that, under the new memorandum of understanding "we will have more teachers trained in Portugal".

## New railway carriages inaugurated

Mozambique's publicly owned port and rail company, CFM, on 12 October inaugurated 29 new passenger carriages in ceremonies in Maputo and Beira.

They are some of the 70 carriages and goods vans ordered from China to boost passenger transport capacity in the southern and central rail systems. Half of them will go the Beira Corridor, to be used on the lines to Machipanda, on the border with Zimbabwe, and on the Sena line to the Moatize coal basin in Tete province, with spurs to the sugar town of Marromeu, and to Malawi.

The rest of the consignment is for the southern lines from Maputo to South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, including the heavily used commuter trains between Maputo and Matola. All the newly arrived carriages and vans will begin operating immediately. The investment cost a total of \$4.9 million.

At the Maputo ceremony, the chairperson of the CFM Board, Victor Gomes, said there are now 63 passenger carriages to serve the southern routes. The new Chinese carriages, he added, contain better safety systems, and can undergo maintenance within CFM.

## Italy finances community initiatives

The Italian government is providing €500,000 (\$566,000) to support 14 community initiatives in education and health.

To this end, Italian Cooperation and the Mozambican Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare launched in Marracuene district a project to provide the resources necessary for the initiatives, including the construction and rehabilitation of classrooms and acquisition of school furniture, and the installation of electricity.

In the health area, the project will build and rehabilitate health posts, acquire material for health centres, provide tanks and other water supply equipment for health posts, and build sanitation installations at the health posts.

## Renamo wants police training

Mozambique's largest opposition party Renamo on 12 October demanded that members of its armed militia should be integrated into a new police unit trained to protect high ranking figures.

Speaking at a Maputo press conference, Renamo spokesperson Antonio Muchanga said that the eight bodyguards of Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama, disarmed by the police in Beira on 9 October, should form part of this new unit. After police training they would return to Renamo, and would continue training.

Muchanga said Renamo was raising this demand because it no longer trusted the normal police force. He claimed that the police had tried to assassinate Dhlakama during two attacks on his motorcade in the central province of Manica, on 12 and 25 September.

Muchanga said that the creation of the new police unit, including the Renamo militiamen, was "extremely urgent".

## More Renamo members join armed forces

A further five members of the Renamo militia have joined the Mozambican armed forces (FADM).

They are Augusto Razao, a lieutenant at the Renamo base of Monje, in the western province of Tete; Rafael Nguirize, a sergeant, also from Tete; Manuel Jimo, a sergeant in the Renamo forces in the central province of Sofala; and Antonio Masifombe and Julio dos Santos, described as “information captains”. Although the latter two had been stationed in Tete, they turned themselves over to the FADM in Maputo on 19 October.

Earlier in the month three officers abandoned the militia and requested to join the defence and security forces.

## Number of malaria cases falls

The number of cases of malaria diagnosed in Mozambique in the first eight months of this year fell when compared with the same period in 2014 – but rose in the two most populous provinces of Nampula and Zambezia.

According to the Deputy National Director of Public Health, Benigna Matsinhe, there were 4,272,715 known cases of malaria between January and August. For the same period last year the figure was 4,354,308 – the number of cases diagnosed has thus declined by 1.8 per cent.

But in Zambezia there was a 13 per cent increase in malaria cases, while in Nampula the number of cases diagnosed rose by 18 per cent.

The main activities to prevent the spread of malaria, Matsinhe said, are the spraying of homes with insecticide, and the distribution of insecticide treated mosquito nets.

A spraying campaign was launched in September intended to reach over 3.1 million people, mostly in Maputo and Gaza provinces, but including Nampula city and the capital of Manica province, Chimoió. For Zambezia, the spraying campaign began on 19 October, covering the two main urban areas, Quelimane and Mocuba, and the districts of Morrumbala, Dere, Milange and Mulombo.

At the same time mosquito nets are being distributed. The Health Ministry advocates replacing the nets every three years. “This is a continual process”, said Matsinhe, stressing that the health authorities are stepping up their efforts as the 2015-16 rainy season approaches.

As for diarrhoeal diseases, Matsinhe said there has been an increase in the number of cases diagnosed. There were 529,949 cases between January and September 2014, but in the same period this year the number has risen to 568,464.

However, the number of deaths from diarrhoea over the two periods has declined from 388 to 295.

The best way of combating diarrhoeal diseases is to obey the rules for individual and collective hygiene, said Matsinhe – including washing hands before preparing or eating food, storing cooked food properly, and banning the practice of defecation in the open.

A campaign of health education is under way, she said, intended to help communities improve their sanitation and hygiene in order to reduce the number of cases of diarrhoea.

## 100 million meticaís to repair sub-station

Full repairs to the electricity sub-station at Matola, which is critical to the normal supply of power to Maputo and Matola cities, will cost 100 million meticaís (\$2.5 million), according to the publicly-owned electricity company, EDM.

There are two transformers in the sub-station. One of them broke down in March, and the second suffered a major breakdown on 30 September, when the sub-station was hit by lightning.

“It’s calculated that it will cost 50 million meticaís to repair each transformer”, said EDM spokesperson Luis Amado. The new coils are already in the country, he added, as are Portuguese technicians from the company that made the transformers. Work has begun to replace the old coils with new ones, but Amado believed it would take 45 days to finish the job.

With the Matola sub-station knocked out, EDM has had to re-route power for Maputo city and province through the nearby Infulene sub-station, and is also using alternative sources, such as the gas-fired power stations in Beluluane, in Boane district, and in Ressano Garcia, on the South African border.

Despite EDM’s efforts, power cuts are continuing, particularly in parts of central Maputo. Shops that can afford to are obtaining electricity from their own generators. Any restaurant or similar business without a generator risks serious losses as produce rots in Maputo’s sweltering temperatures.

## Food security affecting over a million people

Food insecurity is now affecting over a million people in Mozambique (about four per cent of the total population), the government spokesperson, Deputy Health Minister Mouzinho Saide, told reporters on 6 October.

Speaking at the end of the weekly meeting of the Council of Ministers (Cabinet), Saide pointed in particular to the southern provinces of Gaza and Inhambane, where drought has put 137,000 people at risk.

The lack of rainfall has led to a severe shortage of water for people and livestock alike. To minimize the situation, he said, water is being distributed to the worst hit areas in tanker trucks, while additional boreholes are being drilled and small dams built.

Agricultural and livestock fairs have been organized, he added, and medical care is being stepped up to minimize the impact of food shortage on health.

Saide said the situation is also affecting education, with children dropping out of schools particularly in the Gaza districts of Guija and Chigubo. In these two districts alone, 4,799 pupils have stopped attending school.

Saide said that measures are being taken to reverse this situation and persuade children to return to classes.

“Pupils have been staying away from school”, he said. “So programmes have been undertaken to supply water directly to schools, and also to strengthen the distribution of snacks at school to make the situation less critical”.

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