



Executive Secretariat

"Empowering Voices, Protecting Rights"

Presentation by the Forum of the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism (FMMRPU) at the 52nd Pre-Session of the Fourth Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to the Republic of Mozambique

Geneva, 10 February 2026

1. Organization presentation

The Forum for Monitoring the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism (FMMRPU) is a national platform founded in 2020 that brings together 152 national and international civil society organizations dedicated to the promotion, monitoring and defense of human rights in Mozambique through UPR.

2. Methodology

The methodology adopted combines primary and secondary sources, broad and inclusive public consultation sessions involving a total of 135 civil society organizations from all over the country from June to September 2025, systematic desk analysis, and subsequent validation by stakeholders in a national seminar.

3. Statement plan

This statement comprises of four thematic issues, as se following:

- i. Electoral transparence
- ii. Post-electoral Violence
- iii. Violent extremism and humanitarian situation in Cabo-Delgado
- iv. National Inclusive Dialogue.

4. Issues

i. Electoral transparence

The problem of electoral transparence in Mozambique has been recommended since the first UPR in 2011 and reinforced in the third cycle in 2021. However, the recent electoral processes, including the 2023 local elections, have been marred by allegations of irregularities, such as match-fixing and obstruction of independent observers. Law No. 7/2018 on the Election of Local Government Bodies lacks robust oversight mechanisms by citizens. Trust in Mozambique's electoral institutions remains weakened due to persistent perceptions of political influence, recurrent irregularities, limited transparency, and weak accountability mechanisms. Civil-society participation is constrained by shrinking civic space, insufficient voter-education initiatives, unequal media access, and insecurity in conflict-affected regions. These structural challenges undermine public confidence and restrict citizens' ability to engage meaningfully and informatively in electoral processes.

Recommendations:

We recommend that Mozambique:

- strengthen the independence and transparency of electoral institutions;
- ensure impartial and timely resolution of electoral complaints;

- protect civic space and the work of civil-society organizations;
- expand inclusive voter-education programs;
- guarantee equal media access;
- adopt measures to ensure safe and meaningful participation of all citizens, including those in conflict-affected areas; and
- Institutionalize national electoral observation with the full participation of civil society.

ii. **Post-electoral Violence**

This topic was raised and recommended since the second cycle but no positive developments has been reported.

Post-election violence in Mozambique has manifested through political persecution, arbitrary detentions, repression of demonstrations, and intimidation of opponents. During the 2023 municipal elections, several cities recorded serious episodes of violence, including the killing of at least three people—among them a 10-year-old child—and the use of live ammunition, rubber bullets, and tear gas against protesters contesting the announced results. Thousands faced arbitrary arrests and ill-treatment, and more than 400 individuals fled to neighboring countries due to the violence. The 2024 presidential and general elections further deepened this pattern. National and international civil-society organizations documented serious irregularities throughout the electoral process, triggering widespread post-election violence across multiple provinces. Monitoring networks recorded *more than 400 incidents involving violence, injuries, or deaths*, including excessive use of force by security actors, politically motivated assaults, intimidation of opposition supporters, and the violent dispersal of peaceful demonstrations. Together, these events illustrate a persistent nationwide pattern of post-electoral instability and a continued erosion of public trust in electoral institutions.

This post-election crisis has exposed the profound fragility of Mozambique’s security and justice institutions. Multiple monitoring reports documented the disproportionate use of police force, including the deployment of lethal weapons against civilians, as well as acts of vandalism and destruction in several cities. These incidents highlight systemic weaknesses in command oversight, accountability mechanisms, and the protection of fundamental rights during periods of political tension.

Recommendation

We recommend that Mozambique:

1. Strengthen the Independence and Integrity of Electoral Institutions

- Ensure transparent, merit-based, and depoliticized appointment processes for members of the CNE and STAE.
- Guarantee institutional autonomy through legal reforms that prevent political interference in electoral administration.

2. Enhance Transparency and Accountability in Electoral Processes

- Publish voter-registration data, tabulation procedures, and results in accessible formats and within reasonable timeframes.
- Establish independent audit mechanisms to verify electoral processes and outcomes.

3. Ensure Effective Investigation and Resolution of Electoral-Related Violations

- Strengthen the independence and capacity of judicial and oversight bodies responsible for electoral dispute resolution.
- Guarantee timely, impartial, and transparent handling of complaints, with public reporting on outcomes.

4. Establish Prevention, Response, and Reparation Mechanisms for Electoral-Related Violence

- Create effective prevention, response, and reparation mechanisms, ensuring the meaningful involvement of independent oversight bodies, justice institutions, and civil-society organizations.
- Ensure access to remedies for victims of excessive use of force, arbitrary detention, and political persecution.

5. Protect Civic Space and the Work of Civil-Society Organizations

- Remove administrative and legal barriers that restrict the operation of civil-society organizations.
- Ensure that human-rights defenders, election observers, and journalists can operate freely and safely, without intimidation or reprisals.

6. Strengthen Voter Education and Public Participation

- Develop inclusive, nationwide voter-education **programs** tailored to rural communities, youth, women, and persons with disabilities.
- Promote partnerships with civil **society** to deliver non-partisan civic and voter education.

7. Guarantee Equal Access to Media and Freedom of Expression

- Ensure balanced and equitable media coverage for all political actors during electoral periods.
- Protect independent media from political pressure and ensure journalists' safety.

8. Address Insecurity in Conflict-Affected Regions

- Adopt measures to ensure safe voter registration, campaigning, and voting in Cabo Delgado and other affected areas.
- Ensure the inclusion of displaced populations in electoral processes.

9. Strengthen Oversight and Accountability of Security Forces

- Ensure strict compliance with international standards on the use of force during demonstrations and electoral periods.
- Investigate and sanction cases of excessive or lethal force, arbitrary detentions, and intimidation of political actors.

iii. **Violent extremism and humanitarian situation in Cabo-Delgado**

Violent extremism in Cabo Delgado which started in 2017 has already caused more than 1 million Internally Displaced People, according to the National Institute for Risk and Disaster Management (INGD, 2025) and 6,017 total fatalities **since** 1 October 2017 that include Civilians, State security forces, Non-state armed groups (including IS-Mozambique) and Other actors involved in the conflict according ACLED.

Many recommendations were made to Mozambique regarding this topic. However, the state response has been predominantly military, resulting in serious negative impacts on civilians and displaced communities, including civilian casualties, destruction of homes and livelihoods, forced displacement, restricted humanitarian access, and reports of arbitrary arrests and ill-treatment during security operations. The absence of a national radicalization prevention policy violates the commitments made by Mozambique under the SADC Regional Strategy for the Prevention of Violent Extremism.

Recommendations

We recommend that Mozambique:

- Adopt a multidimensional approach, combining security, development, community dialogue and prevention of radicalization.
- Implement civic education, interfaith dialogue and youth inclusion programs in at-risk areas, with a focus on preventing radicalization.
- Strengthen local mechanisms for conflict resolution and community mediation, with technical and institutional support.
- Integrate religious, traditional and youth leaders into peacebuilding and violence prevention processes.
- Ensure safe and continuous humanitarian access to displaced and affected populations, with respect for the principles of neutrality and impartiality.
- Investigate and punish abuses by security forces, including arbitrary detentions, torture, and extrajudicial killings.
- Integrate Cabo Delgado into UN thematic reports on forced displacement, human security, and the protection of civilians.

iv. **National Inclusive Dialogue**

The National Inclusive Dialogue (NID) process, which began in 2024 and intensified in 2025, has a result of the political unrest in line with electoral transparency and Post-Electoral Violence in 2024 and 2025, represents a strategic initiative of multisector articulation, promoted by the

government, with the objective of strengthening social cohesion, citizen participation, and the construction of consensus around the structural reforms of the State.

The NID is aligned with articles 43, 48 and 271 of the Constitution, which enshrine the right to political participation, information and decentralization. It is also in line with the commitments made by Mozambique under the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, and with the SDGs.

Recommendations

We recommend that Mozambique:

- Strengthening electoral transparency and institutional integrity.
- Protection of human rights defenders and vulnerable populations.
- Territorialization of public policies and monitoring mechanisms.
- Reform of the justice system and fight against institutional violence.
- Legal recognition and protection of marginalized communities.
- Integration of international recommendations into national and local levels.

5. General Recommendations to the Mozambican State

Mozambique faces structural challenges in consolidating human rights promotion and protection, aggravated by territorial inequalities, institutional weaknesses, climate crises, and insecurity. The ongoing decentralization, as provided for in Law No. 15/2018 on the Organization and Functioning of Local Authorities, offers opportunities for the territorialization of public policies, but requires greater integration between international mechanisms and national and local plans. Civil society plays a crucial role in monitoring, advocacy and evidence production, and this report is an expression of that commitment. This diagnosis is directly aligned with several SDGs and highlights the interdependencies between human rights and sustainable development.

In the field of civil and political rights, restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly and association persist, especially in conflict zones. Cases of arbitrary detentions, excessive use of force by state agents, and the criminalization of activists have been frequently reported, contrary to articles 52 and 54 of the CRM. National monitoring platforms documented *hundreds of arbitrary arrests* during post-electoral demonstrations in 2023 and 2024, including the detention of *dozens of activists and election observers*. Human-rights organizations also recorded *multiple incidents involving the use of live ammunition, rubber bullets, and tear gas* against peaceful protesters, resulting in *several deaths and dozens of injuries* across major cities. The legal and physical protection of human rights defenders remains limited, requiring legislative reforms and rapid response mechanisms.

With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, inequalities persist in access to health, education, food and social protection. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed weaknesses in public systems and accentuated the exclusion of vulnerable groups. The decentralization of social development plans, as provided for in the Government's Five-Year Plans, is essential to ensure equity and social justice.

In context, we recommend:

- Integrate UPR recommendations into national, provincial and district plans, with measurable indicators and a dedicated budget.
- Strengthen the protection of human rights defenders, with specific legislation and rapid response mechanisms.
- Promote the decentralization of public policies, with a focus on vulnerable groups and risk zones.
- Strengthen international cooperation and dialogue with UN mechanisms, ensuring transparency and political commitment.
- Promote an environment conducive to the flourishing of society and opening the civic space for the promotion of active citizenship.