



Statement for UPR pre-session of Mozambique

10 February 2026

Your Excellencies,

I speak on behalf of Franciscans International and a coalition of six civil society actors on the situation in Mozambique, particularly in the Northern province of Cabo Delgado.

1. Regarding the Humanitarian Situation in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique received six recommendations in the UPR of 2021.

In 2024, Mozambique was listed as one of the most neglected humanitarian crises in the world.

As of 2026, the ongoing armed conflict and attacks of non-state armed groups continue to drive internal displacement in Cabo Delgado. Over 1.3 million persons need humanitarian aid. IDPs continue to face numerous human rights violations, such as lack of access to adequate food, clean water, land, education, and livelihoods. They do not receive regular food distributions by humanitarian organizations, and remain highly vulnerable.

The Special Rapporteur on IDPs visited the province in 2023 and made recommendations on protection, safety and security of IDPs, which we wish to reiterate.

We note a new trend in displaced persons choosing to return to unsafe areas out of fear of attacks on displacement sites, and reports of involuntary relocations prompted by the government's goal to establish normalcy.

Women and children experience risks of gender-based violence and re-traumatization when returning to locations where harm occurred. They do not access adequate psychosocial support.

2. Regarding countering Violent Extremism, Mozambique received 12 recommendations in the UPR of 2021.

Counter-insurgency efforts led by the government resulted in grave human rights violations committed mainly by Mozambican forces. Civilians are left unprotected, and their trust in the Mozambican forces is weakening after reports of arbitrary arrests, torture, and civilian killings of falsely suspected insurgents. Impunity prevails as victims and witnesses rarely report these crimes fearing intimidation or retaliation by security forces and non-state armed groups. Children separated from their families are particularly vulnerable to recruitment by non-state armed groups.

We receive limited information on the situation in Cabo Delgado as civil society and media are restricted from independent monitoring and reporting.

3. Regarding Business and Human Rights, Mozambique received 4 recommendations in the UPR of 2021.

In Cabo Delgado, mining concessions increased by 68% over the last four years. The government prioritizes economic investments by foreign companies over community land rights.

The Mozambique LNG project in Cabo Delgado exemplifies how large-scale extractive investments can deepen inequalities, and undermine human rights. The project's human rights due diligence assessment failed to adequately assess impacts on local livelihoods, land, ecosystems, and conflict dynamics. Over 550 families were displaced without receiving land compensation or resettlement.

The project's heavy militarization prioritized asset protection over civilian safety as witnessed in the 2021 Palma attack that killed at least 1,200 civilians. Cases of torture, sexual violence and other abuses by security forces were documented near the project site. Affected communities remain without effective remedy which highlights the urgent need for accountability, and genuine protection of community rights.

Similarly, the Mphanda Nkuwa mega dam project in Tete Province was approved without prior consultation of affected communities. The project places at least 1,400 families at risk of forced displacement and threatens cultural and spiritual sites.

In light of these developments, we call on UN Member States to put forward in their own recommendations to Mozambique during the review in May 2026 the following points:

- Adopt a multisectoral approach prioritizing effective, safe, and dignified returns for internally displaced persons and provide mental health and psychosocial support, particularly for children and women.
- Ensure accountability for grave human rights violations committed by state and non-state actors, and strengthen the judiciary to address them.
- Allow unrestricted humanitarian access and aid for civilians and human rights documentation
- Ensure human rights are respected by any transnational corporations operating in the country and suspend all megaprojects that may contribute to an ongoing armed conflict situation.

Thank you for your attention.

Closing Message

Since 2017, Cabo Delgado has been experiencing an ongoing armed conflict by non-state armed groups. This conflict has resulted in widespread displacement and created a significant humanitarian crisis.

Challenges however, remain:

- Local communities remain vulnerable and face multidimensional challenges, including internal displacement, violent attacks and retraumatization;
- Increased uncertainty due to funding gaps affecting humanitarian aid;
- And transnational corporations do not properly evaluate impacts on local communities and on ongoing conflicts.

It is essential that your recommendations include suggestions for protecting the rights of internally displaced persons, particularly women and children. We also consider it urgent to ask Mozambique to enhance accountability for human rights violations in the conflict, and adopt a human rights-based approach to internal security, transnational corporations' activities, and displaced persons.