



2 May 2024

Cabo Ligado Update: 15-28 April 2024

[Cabo Ligado](#) — or 'connected cape' — is a Mozambique conflict observatory launched by ACLED, Zitamar News, and MediaFax.

BY THE NUMBERS

Cabo Delgado, October 2017-April 2024

- Total number of political violence events: 1,809
- Total number of reported fatalities from political violence: 5,670
- Total number of reported fatalities from political violence targeting civilians: 2,374

All ACLED data are available for download via the [data export tool](#) and [curated data files](#).

SITUATION SUMMARY

In the last fortnight, Islamic State Mozambique (ISM) launched its second offensive into the southern districts of Cabo Delgado province in 2024. This time, fighters went as far as crossing into Nampula province and launched the first attacks south of the Lúrio river since [October 2022](#).

After passing through Quissanga district, a contingent of insurgents ransacked Mopanha village in Ancuabe district on 17 April, looting food, goats, and other goods. They proceeded further south down the N380 highway and two days later clashed with the Local Force militia in Nanao in Ancuabe. There were no confirmed fatalities, but insurgents burned down a primary school before leaving the village. Islamic State (IS) claimed its fighters also burned a church.

By 22 April, insurgents had reached the village of Nantavo in Chiúre district, where they burned several buildings. ZumboFM [reported](#) that three people were killed. IS later published photos of the attack on social media but did not claim to have killed anyone. The next day, insurgents burned the villages of Micolene and Magaia, beheading one local man in the latter. The International Organization for Migration [reported](#) that 38,299 people were forced to flee their homes due to insurgent violence in Chiúre between 17 and 29 April.

Insurgents crossed the Lúrio river by boat into Nampula and attacked the villages of Nassua and Manica in Eráti district on 25 April. IS claimed to have burned homes, churches, and schools and to have killed one civilian in Nassua. The next day, insurgents clashed with security forces around the village of Mithoca, according to IS. Police in Nampula [confirmed](#) that insurgents had attacked Eráti district and that schools and homes had suffered extensive damage.

Meanwhile, security forces continue to battle insurgents in Macomia district of Cabo Delgado. On 15 April, in Napala, outside insurgent-occupied Mucojo, security forces killed three young people they believed to

be insurgents, which some locals disputed. The day after, insurgents attacked the garrison at Napala, killing at least three soldiers and forcing security forces to abandon the position. Insurgents and security forces clashed again in Nambini, near Mucojo, on 17 April, but there were no confirmed fatalities, [Lusa reported](#).

Trust between the security forces and the local population in Macomia remains low. In Macomia town, security forces arrested three people on 15 April, one of whom had just returned from Mucojo and was reportedly heard saying that life was better under the insurgents, a local source told Cabo Ligado. They have not been seen since. In the last two weeks, at least seven others have also been arrested on Quirimba island in Ibo district, with locals protesting their innocence.

In western Macomia, insurgents clashed with the Local Force around the village of Chai on 22 April. One source reported that the Local Force anticipated an insurgent attack and was well-positioned when it came. At least one insurgent was killed, and several Local Force members were wounded.

FOCUS: ISM PUSHES SOUTH

ISM's attacks last week in Nampula were the first in that province in just over 18 months. As before, they targeted rural communities in the north of the province. Their progress south through Cabo Delgado and into Nampula met little resistance from state forces, which allowed them to send clear political and sectarian signals to communities across northern Mozambique.

ISM started their move south towards the end of Ramadhan, joining Eid el-Fitr celebrations in Cagembe in Quissanga district. They then moved on to Tapara and Bilibiza before pushing south through Ancuabe and Chiúre districts and on to Nampula. Images from Cagembe and Tapara, released by IS on 29 April, show the group seemingly at ease, undertaking *dawah* with villagers. *Dawah*, or propagation of faith, has been a feature of IS communications for both Mozambique and [Mali](#) since January. Given IS's tight [control of communications](#) on behalf of its provinces, this is unlikely to be a coincidence.

IS issued four photo sets between 25 and 30 April to illustrate their campaign in Chiúre district and across the river in Nampula's Eráti district. These featured the burning of homes and a school and the destruction of a church. Images from Magaia featured the beheading of a villager, which follows the beheading of three other Magaia residents that were featured in February.

ISM's move south was, for the most part, unimpeded. The only resistance they met from state forces in Cabo Delgado was from a Local Force detachment in Nanao on 19 April, deployed from Mueda. An IS statement on 27 April acknowledged that the group encountered state forces at Mithoca in Nampula. The presence of security forces may have hindered their return. Nevertheless, their open movement through Cabo Delgado underlines the state's inability to provide security in those districts. The consequences of ISM's actions reinforce the state's failures, with [over 40,000 residents displaced](#) between 17 and 29 April in Ancuabe and Chiúre districts. The extent of their operations across the province will further stretch the security forces, civic administration, and communities in southern Cabo Delgado and northern Nampula provinces, particularly as the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) winds down.

ROUND UP

Voter registration levels reflect impact of the conflict

The Center for Public Integrity reports that [voter registration](#) in Cabo Delgado province is highest in the districts of Ibo, Pemba, Metuge, and Mueda, which host many displaced people who are likely using the registration process to replace lost identification documents. Registration is low in Palma and Mocímboa da Praia, suggesting many still have not yet returned, and it is even lower in Macomia, Muidumbe, and Quissanga districts, which have seen recent fighting.

Frelimo donates two million meticaïs to the Local Force

The Secretary General of Mozambique's ruling party Frelimo, Roque Silva, presented the Local Force in Cabo Delgado with a [two million metical cheque](#) donated by the Frelimo Central Committee. The cheque was given to Local Force commander John Issa along with more than 50 tonnes of supplies, including corn flour, beans, sugar, cooking oil, salt, and soap. The Local Force is made up largely of veterans of the Mozambican War of Independence and their families.

Amnesty International criticizes human rights failings in Mozambique in new report

Amnesty International's State of the World's Human Rights report [published](#) this month highlights war crimes committed in Cabo Delgado by the insurgency, Mozambican security forces, and SAMIM. It specifically mentions insurgent attacks against civilians, the rape of a 17-year-old girl by a Mozambican security forces member, and the shooting of a man in Mucojo by a SAMIM officer. The report also points to cases of arbitrary detention, the failure to protect Asian businesspeople from kidnappings, and the suppression of freedom of expression and assembly by Mozambican police with respect to strikes and anti-government protests, such as a [march](#) for the late rapper and social activist Azagaia.

Extension of South African deployment in Cabo Delgado causes confusion

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa [has authorized](#) the extension of the South African National Defence Force's deployment to Cabo Delgado until December 2024, just days after South African troops held their farewell parade, marking their departure from Mozambique, causing significant confusion. A South African spokesperson later clarified that the extension is a formality to ensure that if any South African troops happen to remain after the end of SAMIM on 15 July, they will still be legally covered by the Status of Forces agreement.

Cabo Ligado Update #168

13 - 26 April 2024

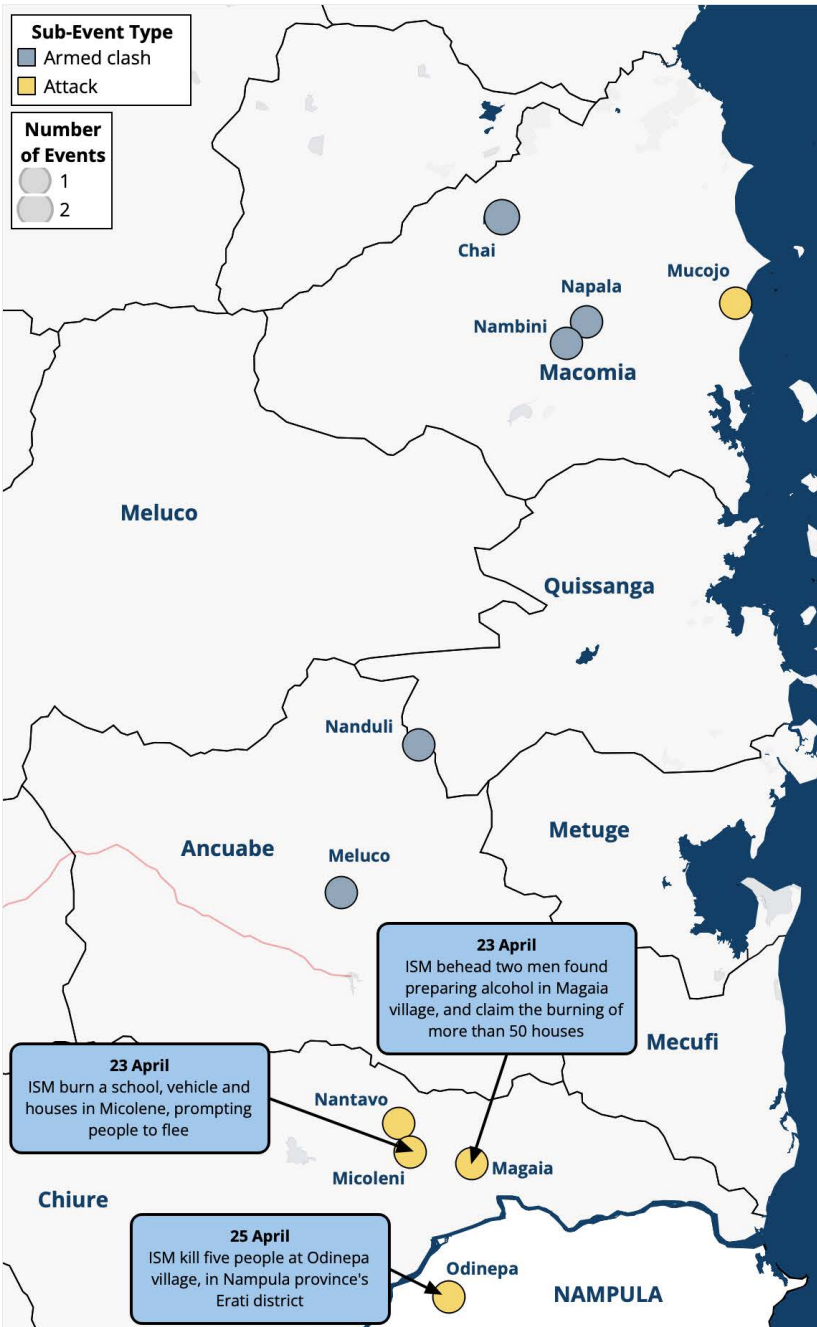
Key Data Points

Events in Cabo Delgado province from 1 October 2017 to 26 April 2024

 At least **1,809** political violence events

 At least **5,670** reported fatalities from political violence

 At least **2,374** reported fatalities from political violence targeting civilians



NOTE: This map displays political violence events that have taken place in Cabo Delgado province from 13 - 26 April 2024. Some events from this coverage period may be included in the next infographic due to reporting delays. ACLED is a living dataset and figures are subject to change as new information becomes available.