



18 July 2021

Cabo Ligado Monthly: June 2021

Cabo Ligado — or ‘connected cape’ — is a Mozambique conflict observatory launched by ACLED, Zitamar News, and Mediafax.

VITAL STATS

- ACLED recorded 22 organized political violence events in June, resulting in 206 reported fatalities
- Over three quarters of the reported fatalities came during fighting between government forces and insurgents around Palma town toward the end of the month; the government claimed to have killed 150 insurgents during the fighting
- Other events took place in Macomia, Muidumbe, Nangade, and Pemba districts

VITAL TRENDS

- The fight for control of the area around Palma town moved onto the Afungi peninsula, with clashes recorded in Quitunda, Monjane, and other areas where displaced people had settled
- The Southern African Development Community (SADC) took a formal decision to intervene militarily in the conflict, although the scope of that intervention remains to be seen
- The economic cost of the conflict continued to climb, as French energy major Total delayed payment on more local contracts; other businesses moved or shuttered in June

IN THIS REPORT

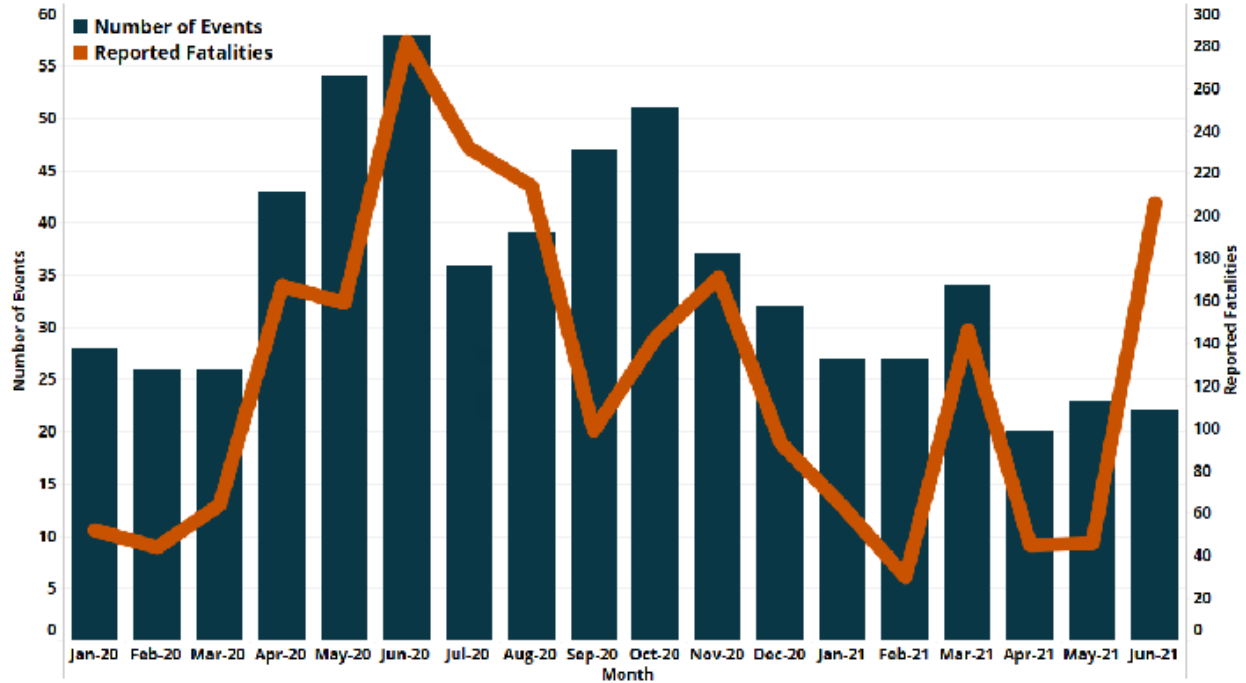
- Analysis of Tanzania’s recent decision to release the leaders of the Islamic organization Uamsho after years in detention
- Narrative of Mozambican refugees’ experience entering and being deported from Tanzania
- Update on international involvement in the Cabo Delgado conflict with a focus on the challenges faced by the newly authorized SADC Standby Force mission

JUNE SITUATION SUMMARY

Fighting around Palma town continued in June, with insurgents making a concerted effort to establish control both in the town itself and in the villages just to the south where many displaced civilians had taken up residence. Insurgents carried out attacks across Afungi while avoiding the natural gas project site there, causing panic among civilians who had sought shelter in the area. Insurgents also held propaganda meetings, at which they urged civilians to accept them as a more legitimate authority than the government.

Eventually, government forces responded to these provocations, leading to heavy fighting in Palma toward the end of the month. By July, government troops appeared to once again be in control of much of the area

Organized Political Violence and Reported Fatalities in Cabo Delgado (Jan 2020 - Jun 2021)

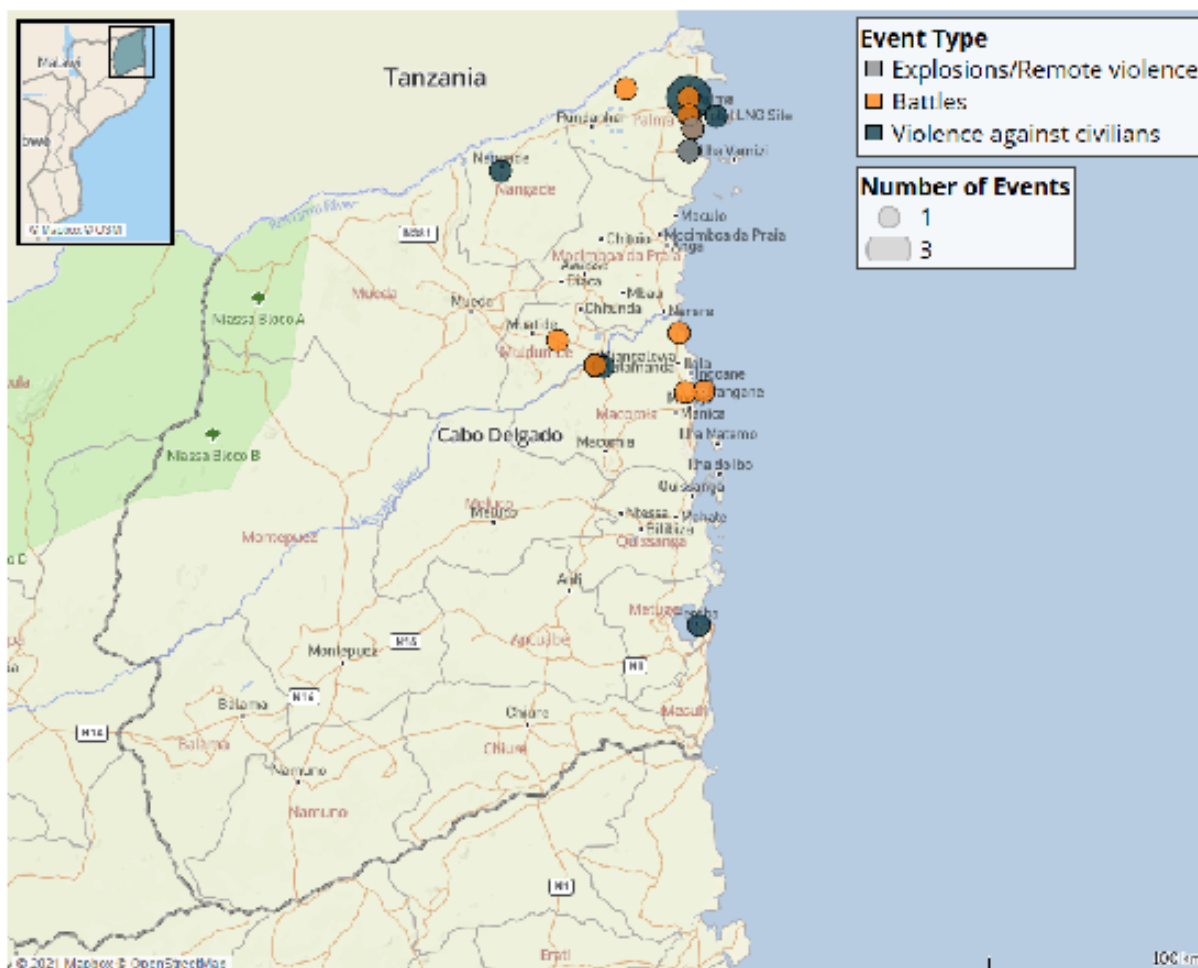


near the gas projects, although insurgents retained the capacity to threaten the whole of Palma district.

The fighting around Palma prompted another round of displacement from the district, with people fleeing west to Nangade and south to Pemba. Upon arrival in a place of relative safety, however, displaced civilians must immediately begin to consider the crucial questions of whether, when, and how they will return to their homes once the fighting ends. According to a parliamentary commission, those questions — and the government’s lack of attention to finding the answers — is leading to land competition between displaced people and host communities. With no indication of how long displaced people will stay in their towns and villages, host communities are growing concerned that they may be forced to give up their land to newcomers on a permanent basis. Displaced people, meanwhile, are split about whether they wish to return, according to [surveys](#) run by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Many see the conflict itself as a way to remove them from their land, and despair of ever being able to return. The government, for its part, is doing little to dissuade them from that conclusion. Despite requests to do so, the government has failed to offer any documentation of land claims people have in their home villages.

On the international front, SADC finally overcame Mozambican objections to authorize a Standby Force Mission in Cabo Delgado. Details about the authorization are below in the international section of this report. If the authorized deployment actually takes place, it will be a boon to government forces in the sense that it will provide extra capabilities. On the other hand, it will also pose a major coordination challenge for Mozambican security forces that often struggle to conduct joint operations with their compatriots, much less with foreign forces.

Organized Political Violence in Cabo Delgado (June 2021)



POLITICS OF ISLAM AND COUNTERTERRORISM IN TANZANIA

The [release](#) last month of 34 leaders of Zanzibar’s *Jumuiya ya Uamsho na Mihadhara ya Kiislam* (universally known as Uamsho, meaning ‘awakening’) highlights the Tanzanian state’s consistent approach of ultimately bringing dissenters into the fold, and shrinking the space in which political violence against the state can be considered.

The leaders had been held since 2014 on a variety of charges under the Prevention of Terrorism Act of 2002, including conspiracy to commit terrorist acts and recruitment. Their release on 15 June followed [talks](#) three days beforehand with recently appointed Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Sylvester Mwakitalu.

Uamsho is a Muslim faith-based organisation founded in 1995 that started campaigning strongly for Zanzibari autonomy in 2012, and was associated by the state with certain acts of political violence in Zanzibar and beyond. Indeed, a [leaked document](#) from 2014 by the Director of Public Prosecutions linked Uamsho with the upsurge in terrorism across Tanzania in 2013 and 2014. The Uamsho leaders’ detention — and the detention of hundreds of other Muslims across the country on terrorism charges — is a central issue for elements of the Muslim community in Tanzania.

No evidence has ever come to light to associate Uamsho and its leaders with terror networks in the region. Nevertheless, their release may signal a change in approach by this administration to addressing political issues facing Muslim communities. Key among those issues are ongoing widespread detentions in current security operations against terrorist networks, including those linked to the insurgency in Cabo Delgado.

According to Uamsho's Sheikh Msellem Ali Msellem, government representatives claiming to speak on behalf of President Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania and President Hussein Mwinyi of Zanzibar said the state would drop all charges if Uamsho's leadership [promised](#) to refrain from violence. Msellem was clear that they would. Another released leader, Sheikh Farid Hadi Ahmed, went further, praising President Samia as the "[mother of all Tanzanians, and indeed all Africans](#)." Ahmed also called for the release of the remaining 186 prisoners held with them in Ukon-ga Prison, and the hundreds of others held in prisons across the country on terrorism charges.

Over the past eight years, operations against terrorist networks have targeted individuals active in Muslim institutions, with significant numbers detained. Sheikh Farid estimates 560 people have been detained in total. A position paper for last year's general election produced by the *Shairi ya Maimamu*, the Advisory Council of Imams, listed 148 names and case numbers of people detained for six years and over, and whose cases are yet to come to trial.

Sheikh Farid has pointed out that it is not only Uamsho leaders and members who have been detained. A number of Muslim institutions and networks are actively campaigning for the release of prisoners. The most consistent of these has been Hizb Ut Tahrir, which for twelve months has focused on the detention of three members in Lilungu Prison in Mtwara. In Tanga, a campaign for the release of Hamadi Ayubu Kidege, a religious teacher held in Maweni Prison, Tanga since December 2019 has been growing, with an open letter from his wife to President Samia quoting Anne Frank – "whoever is happy will make others happy too." In 2015, Kidege stood as a parliamentary candidate for ACT Wazalendo, and his case is occasionally raised by party activists on social media.

The Uamsho releases do not mark the first time that Muslim leaders accused of terrorism have been slowly brought in from the political wilderness. In 2012, Sheikh Salim Barahiyani of Tanga was accused by the United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea of raising funds and recruiting for Al Shabaab. Five years later, in July 2017, at the height of a ruthless security force operation against violent extremists in Kibiti District, he spoke against Salafi-Jihadists, saying that "the country has lost its peace because of this group, fighting with the administration illegitimately." Tanga, for most of those five years, was the location of intense security operations, which would have threatened Sheikh Barahiyani's Ansaar Muslim Youth Centre's considerable social service provision, as well as religious proselytization.

For terrorist networks, bringing such political actors in from the cold makes the spaces in which they operate more unpredictable. For those working to prevent violent extremism, it will make the work more challenging. As opportunities to radicalise and recruit in madrasas and mosques are restricted, attention will need to move to the less accessible approaches within family groups and on the edges of communities. This will require a focus on the liminal spaces between authority and youth that are least accessible. It will also require greater sensitivity to the longer term political objectives of sovereign governments, and understanding of the variety of ways they look to influence communities susceptible to involvement in violent extremism.

THE PATH THROUGH NEGOMANO

The humanitarian drama experienced by Mozambican citizens trying to flee violence in northern Cabo Delgado continues. In June alone, around 1,270 Mozambicans were forcibly deported from Tanzania, bringing the number of refugees deported from that country since the start of 2021 to 9,753 individuals, [according](#) to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Mozambican refugees are sent back home across the border at Negomano, Mueda district, where they are distributed in several IDP centers. UNHCR [claims](#) that Tanzania has refused asylum requests to Mozambican nationals and that those stranded at the Tanzanian border do not receive medical assistance, food, or shelter. The situation is made worse by high inflation in Mozambique that impacts the cost of living along the Mozambique-Tanzania border.

According to Mozambican authorities, the [repatriation](#) of nationals fleeing Palma is part of an agreement between Mozambique and Tanzania in which Tanzania conducts the repatriations due to security concerns. Despite Mozambique's complacency in the compulsory repatriation of Mozambicans to Tanzania, the UNHCR has

criticized Tanzania's attitude. The UN body has called on Tanzania to allow the free movement of people fleeing conflict in search of international protection, security, and assistance, and urged the Tanzanian government not to violate the principle of non-refoulement codified in the 1951 Geneva Convention protecting refugees. UNHCR's reports about deportations and ill-treatment of refugees are corroborated by several testimonies Cabo Ligado gathered from Mozambicans who sought asylum in Tanzania and who were later returned to Mozambique. After the attack on the village of Palma on 24 March, several survivors chose to walk to the Tanzanian border in search of safety, rather than taking the road west to Pundandar. The westward route was not viable because it was frequented by insurgents. For those sheltering in the resettlement village of Quitunda, the southern route by boat to Pemba was nearly impossible, as there were few ships and the use of the coastal route was banned by the Mozambican Maritime Police. Those who managed to travel by boat were at serious risk of being ambushed or captured by insurgents on the high seas. The displaced people walking towards the Tanzanian border were mostly women, children, and the elderly, sometimes carrying huge luggage. Few had documentation for their entry into Tanzania. The trip was made by the road that connects the main village of Palma and Quionga to the border with Tanzania.

Many of the displaced people who fled Palma stopped temporarily in Quirindi, a village east of Quionga, and when they could afford it, they made their way to the Namoto border post, which separates Mozambique and Tanzania. One source, who was in Quirindi shortly after having escaped the Palma attack, reports that moto-taxi drivers charged \$23.64 (1500 meticaís) per household from Quionga to the Namoto border, at a time when a liter of gasoline cost \$9.46 (600 meticaís). Those who could not afford the costs of moto-taxi were forced to walk by foot to the border post. Later on, displaced people from Palma were faced with other challenges.

A source who was part of a group that traveled to the border between Mozambique and Tanzania said he was surprised by the reports that the authorities had suspended the reception of Mozambicans in Tanzania, and anyone found transporting Mozambicans would be severely penalized. This forced Mozambicans seeking asylum to be detained on the Mozambican side for several days, without protection and medical assistance. Mozambicans who were part of the group reported that the cost of living at that point was unbearable. Individuals already known by the Tanzanian authorities made the crossing in search of food to be sold on the Mozambican side. However, the cost of basic necessities was quite high. A kilogram of rice or corn cost \$3.15 (200 meticaís). The situation was exacerbated by the fact that displaced people were forced to remain stationed at the border for more than twenty days, which meant that most of them ran out of savings in the campsites on the Mozambican side.

Lack of money prevented many from choosing to travel clandestinely to Tanzania. Clandestine boat crossings cost \$7.88 (500 meticaís) and were usually made at night. In addition to financial difficulties, many were unable to get a place on the boats because the boat trips were infrequent and demand was high. Arriving in Tanzania, the Mozambicans made their way to Kilambo in Mtwara where they were subjected to searches and interrogation by the Tanzanian police authorities. Days later, the Mozambicans were transported in military vehicles from Kilambo to the border post at Negomano, on a journey that took up to seven hours without food assistance. Once they arrived at the border with Mozambique, the refugees were handed over to the Mozambican authorities and these authorities, in turn, assigned the displaced to various IDP camps in Negomano.

Some displaced people who passed through Negomano said they felt relieved when they arrived there, as they were reunited with their fellow countrymen and received support from humanitarian agencies, something that did not happen on the other side of the border. However, a significant number of repatriated Mozambicans found themselves separated from their families, both during the flight from Palma and on arrival in Tanzania. They thus found themselves in Negomano without family support, relying exclusively on humanitarian aid. Those in IDP centers in Negomano have different perspectives on their future. Some of those who fled Palma refuse to leave Negomano for southern Cabo Delgado or other provinces because they believe that they will have an unbearable life due to the lack of financial capacity to start a new life elsewhere. For now, they content themselves with the support provided by human-

itarian agencies and by the government of Mozambique, the latter which has been allocating land for cultivation and construction of housing to displaced people living in the Negomano area. Others simply choose to head towards Montepuez or Pemba in search of safer places, given the trauma of violence.

INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

After months of delay and prevarication, the Extraordinary Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government that convened in Maputo on 23 June [agreed](#) to “endorse the recommendations of the Report of the Chairperson of the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation and approved the Mandate for the SADC Standby Force Mission to the Republic of Mozambique to be deployed under the SADC Standby Force in support of Mozambique to combat of terrorism and acts of violent extremism in Cabo Delgado.”

Since the March attack on Palma, SADC has been pushing Maputo to accept some measure of military intervention from the region, on the basis that there is a collective security challenge in play and that Mozambique is evidently not able to solve the crisis. In terms of the latter, Mozambique has little option but to acknowledge this reality, but with respect to the former, it has maintained a prickly reluctance to enable a collective regional security response and has been visibly dragging its heels as it seeks an alternative path predicated on bilateral security agreements and posturing around sovereignty.

On face value, the Summit declaration appears to have finally broken through this hesitation. But what has actually been agreed? The Communique refers to a deployment based on “the Report of the Chairperson of the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation.” The content of the report and its specific mandate is not public and it is unclear whether, or perhaps more accurately to what extent, SADC’s April Technical Assessment Mission (TAM) Report drawn up in April provides the basis for any subsequent deployment. The TAM report details leaked to the public provided only a crude framework of suggested ground, sea, and air assets that should be deployed. Much more work has been done since then to refine what that would look like and who would contribute what assets and play what role, as well as agreement on command and control factors. None of this is in the public domain. There are also a range of issues relating to the civilian and policing components of an envisaged Standby Force that must be factored into the overall task force.

SADC has not clarified the various steps and modalities that would now follow; analysts have pointed out that Mozambique must still explicitly sign onto a status of forces agreement, which would denote Mozambique official authorisation. Although the deployment process is [reportedly](#) due to start on 15 July, it is still unclear at time of publication whether the agreement has actually been signed. Mozambique’s Defense Minister, Jaime Neto [claims](#) everything is in place to receive the SADC forces. The security situation in South Africa and the 14 July decision to deploy 25,000 troops to stabilize the [situation](#) there is likely to divert resources and further complicate the Standby Force deployment timetable.

According to Mozambican sources, President Nyusi can secure internal authorisation from the Defence and Security Council and does not need the agreement of parliament to enable external military assistance. The ball therefore remains firmly in Nyusi’s court to expedite matters.

The Summit’s decision is nevertheless a move forward. Nyusi [indicated](#) after the Summit that member states would announce their own levels of participation after an internal ratification process. No details about which countries would contribute have been disclosed, or what those “ratification processes” would necessitate. Speculation suggests that countries stepping up to the plate would include South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and possibly Namibia. Angola has also [indicated](#) that it will play its part. The Mozambican government has supposedly excluded the participation of the Malawian Defence Force. Several sources have been adamant that Tanzania is not in favour of direct involvement in a multilateral deployment, although its proximity to the field of operations and its related border security role underscores the importance of coordination and collaboration with their security forces.

Funding is a major determinant of the shape of an eventual mission. On 23 June, an initial budget of \$12 million drawn from SADC member state contributions in the existing reserve fund was [announced](#). This

is of course only a tiny fraction of what will be required, and funding constraints are likely to limit options for rolling out deployment plans within the initial three month period and beyond. Analysts do not expect any major developments within the next few months, even with Maputo's green light to proceed.

Then, there are other aspects of SADC support that are expected. Border security, intelligence sharing, and humanitarian support have all been mentioned as possibilities, but again without any detail or official pronouncement. It is not unusual that specifics on modalities would not be in the public domain, but effective radio silence from Maputo and SADC and the accompanying confusion does not instill confidence.

The Standby Force is expected to deploy on the basis of 'Scenario 6' in the African Union/ Regional Economic Communities framework of military intervention scenarios, which refers to a rapid deployment within 14 days in serious situation such as genocide. This is a peace enforcement role, but the situation on the ground goes beyond anything SADC has had to face before in terms of a collective security initiative. Its closest mandate is the offensive role played by SADC member states in Monusco's Force Intervention Brigade in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo which enables deployed forces from Malawi, South Africa, and Tanzania to actively pursue and engage rebel forces in that theatre of operation. A combat role in Cabo Delgado will require developing and refining counterinsurgency capacities, which are in short supply in the region despite the fact that many standing militaries come from a background of guerrilla warfare in their respective fights for independence. This remains uncharted territory and SADC forces will have to work within the confines of a challenging operational environment, with the need to build and maintain its own logistics and supply competencies, while coordinating actions with Mozambique's own security forces that remain compromised and challenged on multiple fronts. The road ahead will be fraught and presents SADC with its biggest security task to date.

DAG Report

Cabo Ligado has secured a copy of the Dyck Advisory Group's internal investigation into allegations that it committed human rights abuses while employed by the Mozambican police in Cabo Delgado.

Compiled by Adv G W Woodland SC, the report, completed on 25 June, presents the findings of his investigation into the accusations contained in the Amnesty International (AI) [report](#), "What I saw is Death: War Crimes in Mozambique's Forgotten Cape," released on 2 March 2021. This report, which details violations from insurgents, government forces, and private military contractors, relies on the testimonies of 53 witnesses, who [told](#) AI that between October and December 2020, "DAG operatives fired machine guns from helicopters and dropped hand grenades indiscriminately into crowds of people, as well as repeatedly fired at civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and homes." AI accused the contractor of committing war crimes and violating international humanitarian law.

Woodland's mandate was to investigate whether DAG had been compliant with its standard operating procedures, including its codes of conduct on human rights and security operations, and DAG's related adherence to the [United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#) and the [Montreux Document on Private Military and Security Companies \(2008\)](#), which provides a framework for guiding legal obligations for private contractors operating in armed conflict arenas.

Woodland, assisted by two former members of the British Metropolitan Police's anti-terrorist branch, now based in Pemba, interviewed DAG personnel and "independent witnesses" and was given access to an array of documents, including operational and situational reports.

The report sets out DAG's contractual obligations, confirming the company was contracted to the Mozambican Ministry of Interior in a period from 2020 to April 2021 and makes clear it has had no further involvement since the end of its contract, a [claim](#) that has been disputed by the private analysis group, Africa Intelligence.

The report provides a technical overview of DAG's operations including training, reconnaissance and logistical support, and claims its personnel were not involved in ground operations. The AI allegations, however, relate to aerial operations, and the report confirms that all of these operations were authorised by a commander in the PRM and that DAG teams were accompanied by senior PRM officers in all of these maneuvers.

Woodland's inquiry sets out DAG's standard operating procedures and internal policies dealing with contraventions and concludes that these were strictly enforced. The report focuses in on specific allegations relating to incidents in Quissanga (25 March & 8 April 2020), Chai Sede, Litamanda, and Macomia (28 May 2020), and Mocimboa da Praia (27 June 2020), including the death of Sheikh Sulemaini Mbone. The inquiry was also extended to investigate AI's subsequent [allegations](#) of racial discrimination in the rescue operations in Palma in late March 2021.

The report also questions the methodology AI employed in constructing its allegations, and disputes the validity of some of the witness testimony. It is not clear, however, what efforts, if any, were made to directly engage AI on this or if any attempt was made to access the full testimonies or engage with AI's witnesses.

Conversely, Woodland points to the first-hand accounts of DAG operators who were involved in the incidents the AI report refers to, as well as contemporaneous situation reports. The version of events relating to the 27 June 2020 clashes in Mocimboa da Praia, for example, "paint a very different narrative," and Woodland reiterates that mission objectives were set by the overall command of the PRM officer who was present during the operation. Details of this operation from these accounts claim DAG provided cover for civilians fleeing from the town and that an attack on a hospital building followed the majority of insurgents taking cover there; the hospital, the report claims, had been abandoned and was therefore not functioning as a hospital for "some six months."

Indeed, DAG claims that it only attacked "legitimate military targets" and that permission from the PRM was necessary before an attack was possible. DAG stated "the final authorisation to engage insurgent targets had to be given by the PRM liaison officer, a ranking Mozambican police general." With respect to discriminating between civilians and military targets, "if a target was identified and any civilians were seen in the target area, the engagement was called off." The only time "independent fire" was authorised was in instances of self-defence. DAG insists these rules of engagement were strictly adhered to.

DAG denies it threw handgrenades from its choppers, in fact claiming that it returned Chinese grenades supplied by the PRM as they were dangerously unreliable. The report does, however confirm, that "a limited number of canister devices were improvised and utilised" and that these were reserved for very specific targets, that delivery was very accurate and in no ways indiscriminate.

Nevertheless, whilst the report denies allegations of indiscriminate attacks, it acknowledges the possibility of civilian collateral damage, especially in instances of self-defence where insurgents may have used civilian cover to attack. The report highlights the challenging conditions of combat and questions how realistic AI's assertions are, especially those of wilful indiscriminate, in these circumstances.

The report also rejects allegations of racial discrimination made by AI regarding the evacuation of the Amarula Hotel in Palma in late March 2021 based on witness testimony of those involved in the rescue operation and some of those who were rescued.

Interestingly, the report states that the DAG team that operated in Cabo Delgado was in fact an "off-shore security group," challenging the oft repeated claim that the company is in fact a South African private security entity, and by extension was violating the [country's legal prohibition on mercenary activity](#). This may help explain why the South African authorities have not responded publicly to claims of illegality, and in fact may well have facilitated DAG activities during the course of the contracted period.

It will not escape observers and critics that the report was commissioned by DAG and its legal representatives, leaving it open to criticism regarding its independence, the selective nature of the inquiry and the limitations of verification. As such, an element of 'he said, she said' comes into play. Its content, however, provides some basis for a constructive interaction between those making the allegations through AI and DAG if both parties were interested in doing so. The report also exposes the PRM's command responsibility, but it is unlikely the PRM will even acknowledge let alone respond to the report. How AI and others will now respond to the content and findings remains to be seen.