

Insurgency in Mozambique and its butterfly impacts for Zimbabwe and Southern Africa region

Waini Rangarirai¹, Christine Sri Marnani², and Ali Rahmat³

¹National Security Faculty, Republic of Indonesia Defense University

²National Security Faculty, Republic of Indonesia Defense University

¹Disaster Management Study Program, National Security Faculty, Republic of Indonesia Defense University

²Disaster Management Study Program, National Security Faculty, Republic of Indonesia Defense University

³Indonesian Institute of Sciences,

ABSTRACT. *The on-going violent extremism (man-made disaster) in Cabo Delgado region, Mozambique has not only led to butterfly impacts on Mozambique but to Zimbabwe and Southern Africa region as well. Innocent civilians have been abducted, kidnapped and or beheaded in broad daylight. Others witness their homes burnt to ashes and so far, more than 800,000 people have been displaced by this conflict. Jihadist Islamic militants are scaling up attacks on civilians, bombing police stations and army infrastructure, beheadings, kidnappings and other despicable acts of violence. The Mozambique government responded to the insurgency through a military war operation. However, the insurgency has tested the security and defence capability of Mozambique and the SADC region against intensified attacks and capacity by the militants. The purpose of this study was to analyse the impact of the Jihadist insurgency in Cabo Delgado to peace and security for Zimbabwe and the SADC region. Having started in the year 2017, the conflict is still on-going and being confronted by a SADC regional response standby force alongside Rwandan forces. The study employed the qualitative research approach and primary data was obtained through focus group discussions and observation. Secondary data was gathered through literature or document analysis, i.e. perusing, evaluating and reading summaries and conclusions from previous research work, books and journals. The study found that natural resources are one of the major drivers of conflicts. As shown in the study, the unfair distribution of resources fuels threats to peace and security. The discovery of huge gas reserves in Cabo Delgado, an under-developed region where the majority are poor fuelled the on-going conflict. Thus, government policies must address socio-economic inequalities (poverty and under-development) which are latent causes of conflicts, particularly in developing countries, including Mozambique. The conflict has real impacts on the socio-economic aspects of not only Mozambique but also on Zimbabwe and Southern Africa region. A threat of infiltration by Jihadists into Zimbabwe exists and remains high given the porous state of the borderline between the two countries. Therefore, Zimbabwe to increase border patrols and lobby for a regional coordinated response to thwart the insurgency before it spills over into neighbouring countries becomes an urgent priority.*

KEY WORDS: *Beheadings, Insurgency, Terrorism, Southern Africa, Zimbabwe.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Mozambique is currently facing growing insecurity after terrorist insurgency perpetrated by non-state armed groups under the banner of Islamic Jihadists in Cabo Delgado region. Fears are mounting that these attacks could turn into the next frontier for prolonged jihadist caliphates not only in Mozambique but in Southern Africa

as well. The attacks in Cabo Delgado are strongly connected to issues related to security, militancy, insurgency, and terrorism, all fuelled by high levels of poverty and mass suffering, ethnic issues, unequal relations in power and governance structures, growing levels of corruption, the exploration of natural resources for the benefit of the ruling elite at the expense of the poor, displacement and limited state presence, with butterfly impacts on regional peace and stability. The Muslim group allege that Mozambique no longer follows the teachings of Muhammad and it uses arms of war to instil fear upon the public, force and threaten others to follow their radical beliefs (Kajjo & Salem, 2019). Indeed, the rising Islamic insurgency has stretched beyond Cabo-Delgado, Mozambique posing serious security ramifications, both for Zimbabwe and the SADC region.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Concept of Terrorism

Terrorism is closely tied to insecurity. Terrorist groups deliberately threaten or use violence to further their own political or self-interest goals by intimidating citizens and attacking states and territories through bombings, hijackings, and suicide strikes, among other methods. It suggests that sub-national organizations or covert agents engaged in planned, politically motivated violence against non-combatants (Ogbonnaya and Ehigiamuose, 2013). There are two distinct forms of terrorism: domestic and international. Domestic terrorism refers to terrorist activities carried out within the borders of a host nation. These attacks, such as those carried out by Islamic jihadists in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, target fellow citizens, their possessions, and the institutions and policies of the host nation. Transnational terrorism, however, involves multiple actors or groups of networks, for example the Al Qaeda terrorist group originally based in Afghanistan and using its network to perpetrate the 9/11 US bombings.

Insecurity is a multifaceted, cross-cutting term that has generated discussion. According to UNDP (1994), persistent challenges to human security include hunger, disease, and oppression. Insecurity is defined as the condition of worry or anxiety brought on by a real or perceived lack of protection or insufficient freedom from danger (Achumba, Ighomeroho and Akpor-Robaro, 2013). According to a different perspective, insecurity is a state of being vulnerable to risk, exposed to danger, or anxious, (Achumba et al. 2013). When a person or item is not in danger or at risk of physical or moral assault, an accident, theft, or decay, it is said to be secure (Eme and Anyadike, 2013).

2.2 Relative Deprivation Theory

This theory subsists in the assumption that after states fail, individuals and human groups within the country sense aggrieved because of the deprivation that they may be subjected to because the state is not able to cater for their basic needs, insurrection or rebellion ensues (Gurr, 1970). These desires include the provision of health services, security, food, jobs, and infrastructural development among others. According to Maiangwa et al (2013), it is far this deprivation and its concomitant component of the poverty it breeds that gives birth to many youths falling prey to extremist ideologies of Islamic Jihadists. These youths emerge frustrated that they make every symbol of the country and its authority their target. In the desire to vent their anger, these youths behead and kidnap or abduct innocent civilians and carry out targeted attacks on security institutions such as police stations, army bases and destroy different assets. The important elements on account of terrorism in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique are deeply rooted to the concept of deprivation. The Jihadist terrorists in Cabo Delgado province has been strongly linked to a perceived failure by the government to allow for the equal benefit from vast mineral and off-shore gasoline revenues to the local populace.

2.3 Galtung's ABC conflict model

Proposed by Johan Galtung (1969), a conflict can be viewed as a triangle whose sides are represented by A (attitude), B (behaviours) and C (contradictions).

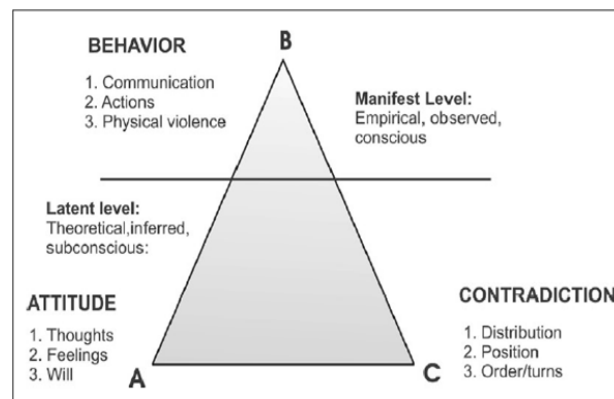


Figure 1: The Conflict Triangle by Galtung J., *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict Development and Civilisation*, Sage, London, (1997)

2.3.1 Contradictions (latent)

Refer to conflicting goals (needs, interests) between the parties to a conflict. The main conflict includes real or perceived "incompatibility of goals" between the conflicting parties. In symmetrical conflicts, the contradiction is defined by the parties, their interests and conflicts of interests. In asymmetric conflicts, the contradiction is defined by the parties, the relationship between them and the conflict within this relationship. A conflict in Galtung's view = attitude + behaviour + contradiction, where contradiction (C) is the root of the conflict, and attitude (A) and behaviour (B) are meta-conflicts after (C). CAB is a possible example of a conflict sequence starting objectively with an attitude of inner life that is expressed externally through violent or not verbal and / or physical behaviour. The contradiction in conflict may include inequality and dispute over political rights and resources, and unemployment.

2.3.2 Attitudes (latent)

Refer to the perceptions and psychological conditions experienced by the parties in a conflict situation. Attitudes include cognitive aspects such as perception, enemy construction, negative stereotypes, and feelings such as anger, hatred, suspicion, Includes the perception of the parties; It can be positive or negative, strongly negative especially in violent conflicts when the parties develop humiliating stereotypes about each other. Attitude consists of emotive and affective components (I like or I do not like X), cognitive components (favourable or unfavourable information about X) and cognitive/ behavioural components (desire, will).

2.3.3 Behaviour (manifest level)

Refers to polarizing - and sometimes damaging - the actual activities or behavior of the parties to a conflict. Involves cooperation or coercion / conciliation or hostility regarding the behaviour, in case of violent conflict we talk about threats, coercion or destructive attacks.

III. METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this research is qualitative. Qualitative research begins with assumptions and interpretive/theoretical frameworks that shape or influence the study of research problems related to the meaning influenced by individuals or groups in a problem. In this study, the design used was descriptive-analytical. Researchers emphasize notes with detailed, complete, and in-depth sentence descriptions that describe the current situation to support data presentation. Therefore, in general, qualitative research is often referred to as a descriptive qualitative approach. Researchers try to analyze the data in various shades according to the original form as when recorded or collected. This study describes the data submitted by the subject from the parties related to the research topic. In deciding the research subject, we used purposive sampling, meaning that the informant as an informant mastered the topic related to the research to be discussed.

Data collection was carried out in this study using Focus group Discussion (FGD) techniques, observation, and document review. The data in this study was sourced from primary data and secondary data. Primary data in this study were obtained through FGD using virtual zoom meetings and observation. The secondary data of this research was obtained through previous relevant literature studies, photos, documents, and data from the internet. This entails reading, examining and reviewing online literature (books, journals, thesis, and research articles) related to community preparedness towards flooding, disaster resilience, knowledge and vulnerability to disasters, and disaster risk mitigation among others. Analysis of published knowledge enable researcher to gain insights on how the Jihadist Islamic insurgents carry out various atrocities including beheadings, bombings, kidnapping, murder and rape among others, particularly in Cabo Delgado region in Mozambique. This research uses data analysis techniques with interactive models. This analysis technique is carried out continuously as long as the data collection in the field until the data obtained is saturated. The interactive model data analysis technique consists of data collection, condensation, presentation and conclusion.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Terrorists commonly adopt strategy whose main goal is to overthrow by forceful means or challenge existing government for control, and often take place in peace time rather than as part of conventional war. The on-going conflict in Cabo Delgado region, Mozambique, is mainly fought between Islamist militants attempting to establish a caliphate within the region, and Mozambican security forces. The Ansar al-Sunna jihadists are reported to possess capacity to bid for territory and sophisticated weapons for insurgency. This is exhibited by the wanton bombing of police stations and army infrastructure in the region. In March 2020, the militants dressed in face masks killed six defence and security personnel and seized a police command centre in Quissanga town and even raised their black flag. The militants also abduct and carry out beheading and other nefarious crimes upon victims, ostensibly with intent to ignite reaction or response from security forces whose constitutional mandate includes the protection of people from any forms of harm. Psychological traumas from fear of violence followed by confirmed attacks trigger panic and mass movements of people. In August 2020, the Islamist extremist movement took over the port town of Mocimboa da Praia in the north-eastern part of Mozambique and Quissanga town, approximately 180 km further south, then continued to carry out more attacks on several different areas around Cabo Delgado, particularly targeting military and police forces, while the population in Cabo Delgado continue to witness despicable acts of violence such as beheadings, rape, burning of homes and forced abductions. Children, boys and girls of young age are forced out of school, and experience these and other forms of brutality, leaving an indelible mark extending to post-violence traumatic disorders.

This conflict is very dynamic, playing out against contradictions emanating from the backdrop of a historically north-south divide in the country, which is rooted in the colonial history of Portuguese Mozambique. The south was ruled by successive large kingdoms, which based their economy on gold trade, while the north developed an economy largely based on cash-crop farming. Unlike the southern parts, the north-eastern parts and especially

the north-eastern coastal areas were strongly influenced by the Swahili culture of East Africa and also home to a sizable Muslim population linked to the historical Arab Muslim trade of several centuries between the Middle East and East African coastal communities, (Ndou, 2021).

Today, different historical trajectories of the north and the south are still prevalent in the country's geopolitical landscape. The capital city, Maputo, is located in the extreme south, while Pemba, the capital of conflict-ridden Cabo Delgado is located in the north-eastern parts and 1,666 km away from the capital city. The north-south divide was entrenched when the original colonial capital, Ilha de Moçambique in Nampula province, was relocated to now Maputo in 1889. Since independence in 1975, the country's top political leaders were mainly from the south, although the current president, Filipe Nyusi, is the first president with a northern background and originally from Cabo Delgado. The location of Maputo and the strong political focus on the south is, according to Vines, the single most important cause of the imbalances in the social and economic development of Mozambique.

The rise of terrorism in Mozambique is also inextricably linked to many citizens of Cabo Delgado who see the province's gas riches as theirs, which need to be defended against the dominating interest of 'southerners.' Currently, a French based oil and petroleum processing firm (Total) has established a plant in the gas rich region and exploration works had since started. This company has been targeted by terrorists and its infrastructure bombed while some employees killed or abducted. In Cabo Delgado, Jihadists managed to recruit locals into their network and have also further declared allegiance to ISIS and IS Central Africa Province. The matter becomes more complex due to a weak Mozambique security system which has generally failed to drive out the insurgents. The country also has many borders and the Indian Ocean presents several escape alternative routes and safe havens for the terrorists as they can drift back and launch attacks or plan operations from Tanzania.

Since 2017, Islamic Jihadist have been perpetrating atrocities (manifest behaviour) such as bombings, armed attacks and sporadic shooting of citizens, burning of police stations, churches, kidnapping of girls and women, and raping women and girls among others. In 2021 alone, increased violent attacks displaced more than 30,000 people. Cumulatively, since 2017, intensified Islamic violent activities have left thousands dead and more than 800,000 people displaced, thereby largely undermine human security. Displaced people often abandon their possessions and uproot their lives to new dynamic environments, often requiring humanitarian assistance particularly health care, food, water and sanitation, and child protection. Currently, an estimated 1.5 million people in three provinces need humanitarian assistance and protection, more importantly urgent food, shelter and health.

The scale of these Jihadist attacks has been mainly concentrated in Cabo Delgado province but also sent shock-waves to neighbouring towns where they are also continuing to establish new hubs for restocking and recruiting new fighters. They also loot villages for supplies and as such, many civilians in nearby towns are therefore fleeing for safety, with impacts likely to spread to neighbouring countries including Zimbabwe. In the past, Mozambican refugees have always sought cover in the eastern parts of Zimbabwe, adjacent to the two countries' borderline. Jihadists often use the Indian Ocean and Mozambique Channel routes to launch attacks in Mozambique and flee to Tanzania as shown on the map on the next page:



Figure 2: Map of Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique and neighbouring SADC countries, (Gathered by researcher from internet, 2022).

In an attempt to quell the insurgency, Mozambique sought special assistance from private foreign security contractors namely the South African-based Dyck Advisory Group and the Russian Wagner Group. These contractors were deployed together with the Mozambique Special Forces but failed to counter militant attacks. The attacks were intensifying with the Jihadists already proving forceful and having established a caliphate from which to launch attacks in Mocimbaio and Palma. Mozambique alone has been unable to eradicate the complex and violent extremists for the past 3 or 4 years.

Sometime later in 2020, following several summits on the Mozambique crisis, Southern African (SADC) region deployed a special mission to counter the terrorist movements in Cabo Delgado. A few SADC member states namely Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana recently deployed their security forces under the umbrella of a SADC Standby Peacekeeping Force, (Chikohomero, 2020). Although government forces assisted by Rwandan and SADC forces are reported to have killed at least 78 militants including two of the group's leaders, violent attacks are increasing with almost 20 attacks reported each month. However, lessons drawn from similar previous regional interventions specifically insurgency in West Africa, the Sahel, East and North Africa have to be borne in mind by SADC. For example, ECOWAS, a regional grouping in West Africa has been fighting Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria. Neighbouring countries such as Chad, Niger and Cameroon that supplied army units to repel terrorist activities in northern Nigeria have also been attacked by Boko Haram as reprisal for their joint response under the umbrella of ECOWAS. Moreover, Al-Shabab, a terror group that controls large swath of rural areas in Somalia and has been very strong and active, responsible for many terrorist attacks such as the 2013 Westgate shopping mall attack in Kenya, the October 2017 and December 2019 Mogadishu bombings. The nature of these attacks provides concrete evidence on how SADC should handle the Mozambique terrorist insurgency. It is indisputable that many African states bordering Mozambique have porous borders which are so easy to penetrate. This may make it easier for Jihadist terrorists to cross and launch attacks or expand their networks in any neighbouring country that join forces in retaliation for quelling its jihadist movements in Cabo Delgado.

In 2020, the Jihadist insurgents crossed from Mozambique and carried out raids in one village of Kitaya in Tanzania's Mtwara region. As a bilateral agreement, Tanzania and Mozambique later signed a Memorandum of Understanding to scale up security cooperation along their common borderline. This indeed shows the transnational nature of terrorism calling for greater cooperation among SADC member countries in fighting violent extremism in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique. Disunity and a weak response could resultantly consolidate an Islamic caliphate in SADC.

4.1 Impacts of the Islamic Insurgency on Zimbabwe and SADC

Zimbabwe borders Mozambique due north-east and the two great nations enjoy cordial bilateral relations dating back to the 1960-80s, tied to their independence. This friendship is reflected in the history of the two countries in which some Zimbabwean freedom fighters were trained in Chimoio, Mozambique and the Mozambican Frelimo party was influential in providing training, arms of war, moral support and welfare for Zimbabwean comrades during the armed guerrilla warfare. Resultantly, there exist excellent political and socio-economic ties between the two countries.

Paolo (2021;03) opines that neighbouring countries, including Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa risk being affected directly and indirectly by events unfolding in Northern Mozambique. The country's borders are porous coupled with a rather compromised intelligence system. The Zimbabwe National Army is well known for its experience in effective combat, having successfully thwarted rebels against President Laurent Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1999. Zimbabwean soldiers are highly trained to manoeuvre with ease both in rigid and mountainous terrains like in Cabo Delgado region. For these and other reasons, the Mozambique government requested for solitary assistance from the Zimbabwe National Army. The request was however not acceded to by the Zimbabwe government, preferring a multilateral African response within the ambit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), citing the Mutual Defence Pact that provides for military assistance among countries. Threats of retaliation by the Islamic Insurgents upon any other actors in the region intending to offer assistance in the fight against the insurgency have also been made, (Defence-web, 2020 and Hunter, 2020). The national security of other SADC member states therefore remains impacted, (Comins, 2020). Drug cartels may profit from the insecurity and instability in Mozambique.

The current conflict in Mozambique has implications for Zimbabwe's security, given close cooperation between the two countries. Zimbabwe relies on Mozambique for imported electrical power energy and food. In the energy sector, the Beira-Feruka pipeline supply crude oil worthy billions of dollars to Zimbabwe. Several investment products in the mining industry are conveyed to external markets through Beira Port. Mozambique has immense importance in maritime sphere too, mainly due to its location off the Mozambique Channel, a vital point in the Indian Ocean. It is of economic value due to huge import/export volumes of products from East-Asian markets dominated by China, Japan and other European markets.

The trafficking in heroine and narcotic drugs has been flourishing in Cabo Delgado since the end of the Mozambican Civil War in 1974. Other illicit activities such as smuggling of drugs, timber, ivory, rubies and other gemstones, and human trafficking, have also become commonplace particularly en-route to and from Madagascar and other Middle East countries (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime 2020). Haysom et al., (2018) avers that the Indian Ocean can be used as an international shipping route for heroin to East and Southern Africa, and illegally shipped into Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa. These illicit activities flourish very much in regions where widespread insecurity and violent extremism exist due to the absence of effective law enforcement and government control.

Moreover, weak security systems in Mozambique may enable jihadists to easily cross into Zimbabwe through the porous border and commit various atrocities among the defenceless communities during the insurgency. From a national security perspective, the insurgency in Cabo Delgado represents a real threat to peace and stability. It transcends to socio-economic and political insecurity, with serious ramifications on human security, often responded to through war military operations. The insurgency has also created a humanitarian crisis particularly hunger, health, shelter, and education which are the basic needs for human survival. The impact of forced displacements and the destruction of homesteads by the Islamic terrorists may be difficult to quantify. Increased Internally Displaced Persons will flood safe havens such as schools, few churches and other makeshift accommodation facilities where security may be provided by the state. However, evidence shows that most of these centres will be overcrowded and overwhelmed in terms of capacity for clean water and sanitation facilities, cooking and privacy (HMO, 2021).

Many people therefore, fear that this conflict might expand to nearby provinces in northern Mozambique and may even spill over to neighbouring countries like Malawi and Zimbabwe, (Paolo Israel 2021:03). This will lead to a humanitarian crisis because people will be scared to live normal lives out of their villages to plant or harvest their crops. They will also be restricted to carry out their normal day-to-day business activities like farming fields to produce and collect food. Hunger will be experienced and exacerbate poverty in an already ailing economy.

V. CONCLUSION

The insecurity in Cabo Delgado has exposed the weak security and defence strategy for the Mozambique government and the importance of increasing preparedness and capacity to confront emerging threats to peace and stability, not only in Mozambique but for Southern Africa as a region. The Cabo Delgado conflict has exposed socio-economic inequalities as some of the latent causes of conflicts that must be addressed before conflict escalation. Policies to prioritise local development, provision of fundamental or basic needs for survival and generating employment opportunities for the general populace, particularly the youth who may be tempted to join the on-going insurgency as jihadist fighters.

Mozambique desperately needs the support of Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries in fighting the growing insurgency before it spills over its borders and expand to become an international insurgency. Zimbabwe to also enhance intelligence-led security patrols along the Mozambique border in-order to monitor its territory and protect citizens from possible threats of insurgency. A coordinated regional response based on SADC guiding principles for unified response such as the SADC Treaty; SADC Protocol on Politics,

Defence and Security; SADC Common Agenda; and the SADC Mutual Defence Pact, among others. African Union frameworks aimed at fighting terrorism and insurgency must also be activated early in order to contain the growth of terrorism in Mozambique before it spills over to other regional countries, (Mukeredzi, 2020).

In-order to strengthen bilateral relations and mutual cooperation between the two countries, Zimbabwe to also consider designing training and information exchange programmes geared towards capacitating Mozambique armed forces in the area of defence and security. Furthermore, Zimbabwe to also revise its national terrorism strategy and ensure border security becomes a priority in line with (SADC, 2020). Over the years, the porous Zimbabwe border has been used by syndicates to easily carry out illicit trade, particularly between Mozambique, Zambia and South Africa, posing a serious threat in the form of cross-border crime. There is need for increased military operations other than war along the borderline with Mozambique to counter indirect threats of terrorism. This will enable the country to effectively address the fight against transnational terrorism and prevent spill-over effects of violent insurgents into Zimbabwean territory (Kajjo, 2020).

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