



REDE MOCAMBICANA DOS  
DEFENSORES DE DIREITOS HUMANOS

**RMDDH**

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

# Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Mozambique; Most Honorable Attorney-general of the Republic of Mozambique

Maputo, February 24, 2021

**Subject:** Threats, character assassination and hate and intolerance campaigns against human rights defenders, social activists, academics, civil society organizations and independent media

## Mr. President

The situation of human rights and the democratic rule of law is increasingly threatened by the recurrent speeches of character assassination and incitement to hatred and intolerance against those who, in the use of the freedoms of expression and press enshrined in the Constitution, critically question the signs of bad governance, abuse of power and/or authority, and denounce the violation of human rights and acts of corruption.

The hate speeches are disseminated through social networks and consists mainly of explicit threats, insults, defamation and harass-

ment of academics, human rights defenders, social activists, journalists, independent media and civil society organizations.

The recurrent incitement to hatred and intolerance is led by well-identified people, some of whom are close to you, Mr. President. Examples include Egídio Vaz, Elísio de Sousa, and others with relevant positions in the Public Administration, such as the President of the Board of Directors of the National Company of Science and Technology Parks, Julião Cumbane, and the President of the Central Public Ethics Commission, Gustavo Mavie.

Strangely, the authors of these speeches are never the target of criminal proceedings by the Public Prosecutor, much less of public con-

demnation by the President, as the highest magistrate of the Nation and guarantor of the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique.

## Mr. President

Your silence and the inaction of the judiciary in the face of serious violations of fundamental rights and freedoms contribute to the institutionalization of impunity and the climate of fear in the public sphere.

It is worth remembering, Mr. President, that in the recent past, speeches inciting hatred and violence culminated in the murder and assault of academics and social activists, including arbitrary arrests, which were never fully clarified by the judiciary. The barbaric and cowardly murder of the Constitutionalist and Professor

Gilles Cistac in March 2015, the kidnapping and torture of Professor Jaime Macuane (in May 2016) and the journalist Ericino de Salema (March 2018) are unequivocal examples of the victims of hatred and intolerance.

Moreover, the actions of the so-called "Death Squads" - personnel of the Defense and Security Forces deployed to silence voices critical of the governance of the country, represent the culmination of the campaign of incitement to hatred and violence initiated in social networks by well-identified people.

## Mr. President

At this moment, Professor Hélder Martins, a physician and former Minister of Health who resigned from the Technical and Scientific Commission to Prevent and Fight the Pandemic of COVID-19, is the victim of a campaign of character assassination, incitement to hatred and intolerance, led by people close to you, Mr. President, and others with relevant positions in our Public Administration.

"Once upon a time, there was an old white man, lapsed and complexed, who wanted to outshine the blacks in his own homeland. (I mentioned no one's name)." This publication made on Facebook by Julião Cumbane is just one example of many others that are part of the campaign against Professor Hé-

lder Martins, simply because he expressed his opinion in the exercise of his constitutional rights and freedoms.

It is important to remember that human rights defenders and social activists such as the then Bishop of the Diocese of Pemba, Dom Luiz Fernando Lisboa, the journalist and researcher Fátima Mimbire, the journalist Fernando Lima, just to name a few examples, were also targets of the hate campaign and explicit threats. The arson attack on the premises of Canal de Moçambique and the repeated attacks on civil society organizations (Centro de Integridade Pública) and independent media are also on the long list of targets.

## Mr. President

This incitement to hatred, violence and intolerance against human rights defenders, social activists, academics, civil society organizations and independent media who critically question the signs of bad governance in

the country, should not prevail in a democratic rule of law and social justice, as is the case in Mozambique.

Due to the seriousness of the situation, the Mozambican Human Rights Defenders

Network (RMDDH) calls for the urgent intervention of both the President and the Attorney General's Office to restore legality and to hold accountable those involved in these campaigns.

Furthermore, the RMDDH requests a meeting with the President and the Attorney General to address these issues for the sake of the democratic rule of law, justice, security, and public ethics.

## **The Representative of RMDDH**

Dr. Adriano Nuvunga



Rua Dar-Es-Salaam N° 279, Bairro da Sommerschild, Maputo - Moçambique



+258 21 418 336



[www.cddmoz.org](http://www.cddmoz.org)



[info@cddmoz.org](mailto:info@cddmoz.org)



[@CDD\\_Moz](https://twitter.com/CDD_Moz)



[@cddmoz](https://www.facebook.com/cddmoz) | [@cddyouthonlineTV](https://www.facebook.com/cddyouthonlineTV)