



REDE MOÇAMBICANA DOS  
DEFENSORES DE DIREITOS HUMANOS

**RMDDH**



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## Mozambique takes historic step with the establishment of a human rights defenders desk within the national human rights commission

- On July 11, 2025, Mozambique marked a historic milestone for the protection of human rights with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) and the Mozambican Human Rights Defenders Network (RMDDH). This agreement formally establishes the country's first-ever Human Rights Defenders Desk within the CNDH, launching a new chapter in institutional commitment to the protection of those who defend human dignity.



This achievement stems from a process initiated with support from the European Union under the BRIC project – Building Resilience, Inclusiveness and Capacity of Human Rights Defenders in Mozambique. In April 2024, a strategic training session brought

together defenders, magistrates, and civil society actors to discuss the role of national institutions in protecting HRDs. The workshop resulted in a clear and urgent recommendation: to establish a permanent institutional mechanism — a dedicated “Desk” to protect defenders.

## Human Rights Defenders Desk: A new institutional pillar of protection

the creation of this dedicated space within the CNDH is more than a technical response — it is a political decision with the following strategic goals:

- **Targeted and effective protection**, tailored to the specific risks faced by defenders across the country;
- **Strengthened national and international advocacy**, to bring visibility to violations and promote a coordinated response;
- **Efficient allocation of technical and financial resources**, ensuring legal, psychological, and emergency support for defenders under threat;
- **Continuous specialized training**, in digital security, risk mitigation and collective protection strategies;
- **Multisectoral coordination**, fostering synergies between CNDH, civil society organizations, development partners and international protection networks.

## Aligned with regional and global commitments

The establishment of this Desk is a concrete step towards fulfilling the commitments made in the historic Accra Declaration, adopted on 9 December 2022. That declaration followed the first-ever meeting between African human rights defenders and national human rights institutions, hosted by AfricanDefenders. In 2023, in Bishoftu (Ethi-

opia), these commitments were reinforced with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between NANHRI and AfricanDefenders — embodying the spirit of the Marrakesh Declaration. By establishing its own HRD Desk, Mozambique becomes a pioneer in operationalizing this African protection architecture.

## A Renewed Commitment to Life and Freedom

This initiative is part of the PRÓ-CÍVICO AND HUMAN RIGHTS project, implemented by a consortium composed of IMD, CESC, MASC, and CDD, and funded by the Embassy of Finland in Mozambique. It offers a practical and institutional response to growing pressure on defenders amid global democratic backsliding and shrinking civic space.

Through this effort, the CNDH and RMDDH re-

affirm their commitment to protecting the lives, physical integrity, and freedoms of human rights defenders — which are essential pillars for a participatory, pluralistic and just democracy.

With this step, Mozambique strengthens its national protection system, anchored in international norms, sustained by meaningful alliances, and propelled by the courage of those who defend the rights of all.









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# RMDDH

*Almejamos um país livre e seguro para os Defensores dos Direitos Humanos, um ambiente favorável ao desenvolvimento das comunidades e ao envolvimento da juventude como potenciais Defensores dos Direitos Humanos.*

*We aspire to a nation where Human Rights defenders can operate freely and securely, fostering community development and empowering youth to become effective advocates for Human Rights.*

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