



REDE MOÇAMBICANA DOS  
DEFENSORES DE DIREITOS HUMANOS

**RMDDH**



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# Defending Rights, Fighting Corruption: A Call for Justice and Solidarity in Africa

- Speech for International Human Rights Defenders Day and International Anti-Corruption Day





**Corruption is not just an ethical lapse; it is a destructive force that weakens the foundations of any nation. It erodes citizens' trust in institutions, undermines the rule of law, and perpetuates inequality.**



## **Distinguished guests, human rights defenders, leaders, and allies,**

Today, we commemorate two profoundly significant occasions: the International Human Rights Defenders Day and the International Anti-Corruption Day. These dates symbolize two fundamental pillars of any just society: the fight for human dignity and the integrity of public institutions. They call us to reflect on the kind of world we are building and challenge us to act boldly to address the evils that persist.

## **The Inextricable Link Between Corruption and Human Rights Violations**

Corruption and human rights violations are deeply interconnected. Where corruption thrives, the rights of the most vulnerable are often trampled. Corrupt governments divert essential resources meant for health, education, and security, leaving millions without access to basic services. At the same time, these governments often resort to brutal repression against those who dare to expose such practices.

Corruption is not just an ethical lapse; it is a destructive force that weakens the foundations of any nation. It erodes citizens' trust in institutions, undermines the rule of law, and perpetuates inequality. When a nation chooses to tolerate corruption and attack those who fight for human rights, it embarks on a dangerous path that can lead to social and political collapse.

## **Mozambique: An Urgent Warning**

Mozambique, once considered a promising nation and a beacon of post-war recovery, is now a glaring example of how corruption and human rights repression can erode a society. In the years following the General Peace Agreement, Mozambique symbolized hope, with democratic reforms and significant economic growth.

Today, however, it faces a severe crisis. Peaceful protests are being crushed with violence. Human rights defenders, who should be protected, are often persecuted. Public resources that could transform millions of lives are being misappropriated, while inequality grows exponentially. A nation that once inspired the African continent is now perilously close to becoming a state of calamity, drawing comparisons to tragedies like Haiti.



## A Call for Accountability

To governments, I send this clear message: respecting human rights and combating corruption are not luxuries or choices; they are fundamental obligations. Ignoring these principles paves the way for conflict, poverty, and social collapse. Good governance is not only the foundation of a functioning democracy; it is the guarantee of stability and progress.

To the human rights defenders present here and around the world: you represent the best of us. With courage, you face threats and persecution to protect those whose voices have been silenced. You are the conscience of our societies, the frontline in the fight for dignity, freedom, and justice.

## Solidarity: The Foundation of Resistance

No human rights defender should fight alone. Solidarity is our most powerful currency. Together, we can amplify silenced voices, demand real change, and ensure that perpetrators of abuses are held accountable. Solidarity transcends borders and unites our forces to face the toughest challenges.

## A Renewed Commitment

Today, we must renew our commitment to human rights and the fight against corruption. The task is not easy, but it is necessary. As leaders, defenders, and citizens, it is up to us to build a future where human dignity is respected, corruption becomes a relic of the past, and justice is accessible to all.

Mozambique serves as a powerful reminder: of what can be lost when human rights are neglected and what can be achieved when they are defended with courage and determination. Let this celebration not just be a moment of reflection but a starting point for concrete action.

The fight for human dignity, integrity, and justice is a fight for all of us. Let us stand firm and united, for together, we are stronger.

**Thank you**



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*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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