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SERNIC's Defensive Statement Raises More Questions Than Answers Amid Allegations of Human Rights Violations



The National Criminal Investigation Service (SERNIC) has issued a clarification note in response to allegations of serious human rights violations supposedly involving its members during the post-election protests that shook Maputo. The statement was released even before

the institution was formally notified by the Attorney General's Office (PGR), which had received the complaint filed by the Center for Democracy and Human Rights (CDH) on November 26.

At the center of the allegations is the death of 12 out of the 26 people recorded during the protests,

with claims that members of SERNIC were directly involved in these incidents. Despite not yet being officially summoned to respond to the accusations, SERNIC preemptively declared that “none of the cases and individuals referenced in the complaint are connected” to its agents, as per the conclusions of an internal consultation.

However, the defensive tone of the clarification note raises questions. While it reiterates strict adherence to the functions outlined in Law No. 2/2017, dated January 9, the institution exonerates its members from any wrongdoing without presenting external or independent investigations to substantiate its claims. This action appears to be an attempt to influence and shape public opinion before the facts are thoroughly analyzed by the PGR.

Furthermore, SERNIC has expressed its willingness to collaborate with CDH to clarify the accusations and has reiterated its openness to dialogue, mentioning that it is willing to engage in similar interactions as it has done with the Mozambican Bar Association. This stance suggests an appearance of cooperation but contrasts with the lack of de-

tail on measures taken to investigate the incidents independently and transparently.

SERNIC’s response also highlights an institutional contradiction. While professing total respect for the Constitution and prevailing laws, the institution fails to acknowledge the gravity of the situation and the need for more transparent accountability mechanisms. Relying solely on internal reviews is insufficient to address the concerns raised by CDH and civil society, particularly during a time of growing distrust over excessive use of force and the accountability of state agents in crisis situations.

Additionally, the facts brought forth in the complaint can typically be clarified through a thorough investigation that would, in due time, determine those responsible for the crimes. Nevertheless, SERNIC chose to “put the cart before the horse,” rushing to defend itself before being summoned by the PGR. This approach raises serious doubts about whether the grief imposed on Mozambican families by state weapons, tear gas, and vehicles will ever be fully clarified.






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EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Property: CDD – Centro para Democracia e Direitos Humanos
Director: Prof. Adriano Nuvunga
Editor: André Mulungo
Program Assistants: Artur Malate; Yara Carina Lamúgio; Stella Bié
Author: CDD
Layout: CDD

Address:
Rua de Dar-Es-Salaam Nº 279, Bairro da Sommerschild, Cidade de Maputo.
Telefone: +258 21 085 797

 CDD_moz
E-mail: info@cddmoz.org
Website: <http://www.cddmoz.org>

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