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VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES
SECURITY
AND HUMAN RIGHTS

IN MOZAMBIQUE *BULLETIN*

PLATFORM FOR DIALOGUE ON BUSINESS, SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN CABO DELGADO

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STRENGTHENING HUMAN RIGHTS AND VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES:

Training for Local Government Representatives, Civil Society Organizations and Palma Working Group

- Between July 4 and 5, 2023, at Hotel Amarula in Vila de Palma, Cabo Delgado Province, the Center for Democracy and Human Rights (CDD), in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs, and technical support from the DCAF, conducted Training for local authorities and civil society organizations in Palma on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. The Voluntary Principles is an initiative that provides a framework for companies in the natural resource extraction sector to ensure that their security operations do not violate human rights or contribute to conflict. In a district like Palma, where there are important projects to extract natural resources, the Voluntary Principles can play a crucial role in guaranteeing the rights of local communities.





The Voluntary Principles is a set of good practices for a safe extractive industry that respects human rights and can serve to protect the rights of populations living in the vicinity of resource extraction megaprojects.



For this reason, the CDD, as the secretariat of the two Mozambican working groups on the Voluntary Principles, is organizing training in Cabo Delgado districts with the presence of multinational companies, to sensitize local authorities and civil society organizations to human rights, so that they can recognize when there are cases of human rights violations and report them to the Cabo Delgado regional working group, located in Pemba. Additionally, the Event also served to create the Palma Working Group on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.

The first day of the event began with Celso Bilihaire, representative of the Provincial Directorate of Justice and Labor of Cabo Delgado, who highlighted the importance of the participation of local authorities and civil society in this training. He also emphasized the Mozambican government's commitment to the Voluntary Principles and its commitment to promoting human rights. "The Mozambican Government remains committed to the Voluntary Principles and to the promotion of human rights in all sectors".



Celso Bilihaire, representative of the Provincial Directorate of Justice and Labor of Cabo Delgado

Laurinda de Fátima, Permanent Secretary of the District of Palma, expressed great satisfaction on behalf of the Government of Palma for having been invited to participate in this impor-

tant training. Fátima recognized the efforts of all those involved and thanked them for including the district of Palma in their plans and activities, considering the challenges faced by the district, especially after the March 2021 attacks. “It takes consolidation and dedicated participation in training to benefit affected communities”, and “Together we can build a better future, stronger in our commitment to human rights and the Voluntary Principles.”

The training sessions were divided into two themes, taught by specialists in the respective areas. Teoflio Shreiber, representative of the Institute of Sponsorship and Legal Assistance (IPAJ) in Cabo Delgado, started the program with a presentation on Human Rights in the Mozambican legal system. Shreiber covered several aspects, including an introduction to human rights, its place in the national legal framework, its relevance to the extractive industry, and the monitoring and reporting of human rights allegations and violations. “You must not limit yourself; you must address and share cases of human rights violations”.

Hélio Siteo from CDD led the second topic and gave a presentation on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. Siteo spoke about the essence of the Voluntary Principles and emphasized the importance of establishing working groups bringing together the private sector, government and civil society to identify security and human rights issues linked to extractive industry operations. Siteo also explained that the Voluntary Principles is a set of good practices for a safe extractive industry that respects human rights and can serve to protect the rights of populations living in the vicinity of resource extraction megaprojects. For example, in case of recurrence of human rights violations, such as the undue use of force by private security providers, civil society organizations (now empowered) can report cases to the provincial working group on the Voluntary Principles, which will address the matter to find a joint solution. “The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights serve as a powerful framework for ensuring the protection of human rights in the context of security operations”.





On the second day of the event, the focus shifted to listening to the current security and human rights situation in Palma. Participants had a platform to share their experiences, concerns and perceptions about the prevailing security and human rights landscape in the region. This interactive session provided a general understanding of the challenges facing the community.

Júlio Bichehe, Coordinator of the Civil Society Platform in Palma, addressed the context in which Palma finds itself. He expressed his hope that this event is not just another meeting or program that remains without a significant follow-up. Bichehe emphasized the importance of utilizing the shared knowledge and experiences from the training to create an actionable agenda aimed at addressing the most pressing human rights and security issues. He emphasized that this collaborative approach serves as a powerful tool for advocacy, empowering participants to actively engage in finding sustainable solutions to challenges facing the community. "It is from here that we can create a next agenda with the objectives of solving the most burning problems in relation to human rights and security".

The training program held in Palma was a sig-



Júlio Bichehe, Coordinator of the Civil Society Platform in Palma

nificant step forward in promoting human rights and strengthening security measures in the region. By bringing together local government representatives, civil society organizations and experts in the field, the event was able to socialize participants about human rights principles and

the Voluntary Principles. Furthermore, by creating a platform for dialogue and open exchange, the event fostered a sense of shared responsibility among participants, ensuring that the impact of the training extends beyond the event

itself. The event encouraged active engagement and emphasized the need for continued efforts to pursue a comprehensive agenda that addresses key human rights and security concerns in Palma.



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