



UIR commander, Alfredo Macuacua (right), is handcuffed with GOE patrolman, Euclídio Mapulasse and at the back is the duet of Edson Silica (right), GOE patrolman and platoon driver, with Tudelo Guirugo, GOE commander.

### DAY 3 OF "MATAVELE CASE" TRIAL

## Statements by the UIR Commander shake the narrative of GOE officers

When it was 12:45 pm, on Thursday, Judge Ana Laquidão announced a short recess, a kind of transition between the last hearing of the four detained defendants and the first of the three who respond in freedom.

In the morning, the court questioned Alfredo Macuácuá, 46 years of age, Commander

of the sub-unit of Gaza Rapid Intervention Unit (UIR) who was suspended a day after the murder of Anastácio Matavele and later imprisoned. He was the Head of UIR Barracks, the place where both the weapons and the men who shot the social activist, in the middle of the election period, came from.

In the afternoon, the first defendant, who





responds in freedom, was heard: Deputy Superintendent Januário Rungo, 51 years of age, UIR Army Chief of Staff in Gaza province. He is the second in command for this sub-unit of the special police forces.

At the hearing of the detained defendants, Judge Ana Laquidão defined a hierarchical criterion and started from the bottom up: she heard, first, GOE patrolman, Euclídio Mapulasse, the 1st Corporal in the police ranks; then she inquired Deputy Inspector Edson Silica, also GOE patrolman; then it was the turn of the Chief Inspector, Tudelo Guirugo, GOE Commander; and finally, the Superintendent Alfredo Macuácuá, the UIR Commander.

A police officer for 28 years, Alfredo Macuácuá made a statement that goes against the narrative of GOE officers. Mapulasse, Silica, and Tudelo threw responsibility to Agapito Matavele, a fugitive, and his colleagues Williamo Martins and Nóbrega Chaúque who died in the accident that made impossible creating an alibi for the murder of Anastácio Matavele.

The UIR Commander told the court that a Platoon Commander has no autonomy to define a mission and that missions are never

confidentially communicated to officers, even in emergencies. “The UIR sub-unit Commander receives missions from PRM Provincial Commander, who passes the order to his Deputy, the UIR Army Chief of Staff. The latter, in turn, coordinates the mission with the operational technical team made up of the operations division, two Company Commanders (from UIR and GOE), and the Chief of Reconnaissance. The Army Chief of Staff coordinates with the Company Commander about the selection of officers who will integrate the mission. And they are informed at the police parade”.

With these words, Alfredo Macuácuá deconstructed the version of GOE officers, in which Agapito, a fugitive, as a Commander of GOE Platoon, was the one who defined the mission to murder the social activist and made the screening of the officers that integrated the squad.

Still yesterday morning, the UIR Commander countered the version according to which GOE officers are allowed to leave their weapons in Barracks, even when they are outside (the Barracks). Commander Macuácuá was adamant: “Agents are not allowed to leave

their weapons in Barracks and go outside. When agents enter the Barracks, they collect the weapons in the arms depot and sign the register where the number of the weapon and the quantity of ammunition are recorded. When the work schedule or mission ends, they return their weapons to the arms depot”.

Remember that Euclídio Mapulasse told the court that he collected his Norinco handgun on September 29 and Edson Silica on September 24, and both left their weapons in the Barracks. Only on October 6, that is, on the eve of Matavele’s murder, that they took the handguns. Apart from the security officer and the arms depot, arms control is carried out by the Chief of ordnance, Chief of Internal Information and Army Chief of Staff, and all report to the UIR Commander. However, Alfredo Macuácuá said that from 19 September to 6 October, last year, he was not informed of any problems in the arms depot and he admits that there were failures in weapons

control.

When asked about the circumstances in which a Commander can return a weapon collected by his subordinate to the arms depot, the UIR Commander pointed out two examples: when an officer dies on a mission or is seriously injured. But even in these circumstances, “the Commander should verify if the weapon has been used and check the quantity of bullets with that recorded quantity when the weapon was checked out”.

However, on October 7, Tudelo Guirugo, GOE Commander, returned an AK 47 from his subordinate (Agapito) to UIR arms depot without examining whether it had been used and without comparing the amount of bullets in the weapon with the amount recorded when the weapon was checked out. It is the weapon used in the murder of Matavele and which was later hidden in a cemetery by Agapito, in Xai-Xai, when he was on the run after surviving the accident that followed the crime.

## **“I don’t know why Tudelo did this to me”, says Alfredo Macuácuá**

On the fateful of October 7, the UIR Commander said that he was in the office when he received a call from the PRM Provincial Commander informing him of an accident involving armed men. Alfredo Macuácuá instructed the UIR Army Chief of Staff, Januário Rungo, to send a group of officers to the accident site. Minutes later, he was informed that those involved in the accident were colleagues from GOE.

“I sent for the GOE Commander (Tudelo) to find out if he was aware of a mission by armed men from his company. He said he didn’t know any men were out on a mission”, Macuácuá said, recalling that the number of GOE officers is controlled by the respective Commander. “Then, I instructed back the Army Chief of Staff to go to the arms depot and see if colleagues from GOE would have collected weapons. He found that some weapons had been checked out and I remember mentioning that, at least, one Ak 47 was missing”.

With this information, the number one UIR member picked up his cellphone and called to update the PRM Provincial Commander about what happened. “I also informed the Provincial Commander that I still did not have a clear explanation of what happened, since the colleagues sent to the crime scenes were still on the ground.”

He said he did not know who was part of the team assigned to the accident site and did not mention the name of Tudelo, who on Wednesday claimed to have been one of the officers involved. However, yesterday, Alfredo Macuácuá said that he spoke to the GOE Commander at the UIR Headquarters, moments after being informed that those involved in the road accident were officers from Tudelo’s company.

I learned about Matavele’s murder hours later, but before that, I had received calls from people who said that “your men had an accident because they were fleeing after shooting on someone and took his money”.

When he was heard in October, the GOE Commander said he was the one who selected the five special officers who made up the killing squad led by Agapito Matavele. Tudelo said that he did this work at the behest of Alfredo Macuácuá, the UIR Commander.

On another occasion, he made a different statement, saying that, after receiving the order from his superior, he assigned Agapito Ma-

tavele to form the squad to execute a mission.

But, on Wednesday, he justified that he involved the name of Alfredo Macuácuá because he was desperate with the suspension and thought that, by doing so, he could escape.

When confronted by the court with these statements from his subordinate, the UIR Commander was brief in his reaction: "I don't know why Tudelo did this to me".

## **“GOE is not accountable to the UIR Army Chief of Staff”, says Januário Rungo**

A police officer for 32 years, Januário Rungo did not bring “great news”, despite being one of the chiefs responsible for weapons control. When the first weapons used in the crime were collected on September 19, he had been on a mission in Niassa, since July 19. He returned to Xai-Xai on September 10 but had to interrupt his 15-days rest and returned to work on the 18th. Due to the number of “typical activities during the electoral period”, the UIR Army Chief of Staff said that, since his return, until October 7, he did not carry out any supervision of the weapons.

He cannot say why and under what circumstances the GOE officers involved in the murder of Matavele remained with their weapons for many long. “GOE is not accountable to the Army Chief of Staff. GOE Commander reports directly to the UIR Commander. With the Army Chief of Staff, there is only work coordination. But we have no intervention in GOE missions”.

Because GOE is one of the companies that

compose the sub-unit of UIR Province, its Commander is, in terms of hierarchy, inferior to the Army Chief of Staff, who is a kind of Assistant Commander of the UIR. But Januário Rungo insisted that the best he could do is to cooperate with GOE.

Perhaps that's why he learned that it was the GOE Commander who returned the AK 47 used in the murder to the arms depot. After Alfredo Macuácuá's suspension from the duties of UIR Commander, Januário became responsible for the Barracks. And it was under his watch that two handguns, which had been used in the crime and were lost, were recovered. He says he informed the PRM Provincial Commander about the recovery of the weapons and instructed Justino Muchanga to sign their return in the control register.

He confirmed that he was the one who sent a group of officers to the accident site and instructed them to detain Euclídio Mapulasse, who was hiding in his sister's house, after abandoning the car involved in the crime.

## **Judge loses patience and shouts: “Doctor Elísio, control your tongue!”**

Yesterday was a quiet day in the courtroom of Gaza Province Judicial Court. The hearing of the two defendants took place without those unnecessary inquiries that occurred on Wednesday. The reason for the quietness was Elísio de Sousa's silence. He did not take the “previous questions” to the room and, during the hearings, avoided at most evaluating and cor-

recting the questions of the other procedural subjects.

But when he was given the floor, the man spoke up and justified the reason for the atypical silence: “Today I avoided asking my colleagues to avoid being seen as a judicial troublemaker. However, I feel that my colleagues are always asking questions to feed newspaper

headlines". The judge did not like it and said: "Doctor Elísio, control your tongue! Nobody is here to be in the press, we are doing our job and we are not concerned with the things that appear in the newspapers".

After the Brooklyn (New York) mission, the showy lawyer is now in Xai-Xai defending the officers involved in the murder of Anastácio Matavele. As he revealed on his Facebook account, Elísio de Sousa has been the Lawyer of PRM General Command for two years and is in this capacity that he is defending the suspects in preventive detention.

It is by law that a member of PRM is entitled to legal assistance and sponsorship in all criminal proceedings in which he is accused or offended in his honor and dignity, due to facts related to the work. Thus, after dispatching his lawyer to Xai-Xai, to defend the accused officers in "Matavele Case", the PRM General Command is explicitly assuming that the accident platoon commanded by Agapito, a fugitive, was on a work mission the day that they



shot the social activist at point-blank.

This gives merit to the lawyers of the Matavele family who defend that the State should be held accountable for the damages caused by its officers by paying a solitary compensation to the victim's heirs.

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