

Promoting human rights in business environments and judicial sector action in northern Mozambique

- The Center for Democracy and Development (CDD), in partnership with the Legal and Judicial Training Center (CFJJ), and with the financial support of the Swiss Embassy in Mozambique, launched on Monday, 07 November, in Maputo City, the project "Promotion of Human Rights in a Business Environment and Judicial Sector Action in Northern Mozambique". The project focuses on the actions and mechanisms of intervention of the institutions responsible for the promotion, respect, protection and enforcement of human rights and the training of human rights defenders.



The project “Promotion of Human Rights in a Business Environment and Action by the Judicial Sector in Northern Mozambique” aims to contribute to the strengthening of the capacity of action of ombudsmen, human rights defenders, companies, and other actors in matters of human rights in the environment of Business. This is an initiative that arises in a context in which the violation of human rights in companies, mainly in land and natural resources investment projects, is a reality in Mozambique.



“Talking about human rights in a business environment and linking the issue to the performance of justice is complex”, Elisa Samuel Boerekamp, Director General of the CFJJ

The project “Promotion of Human Rights in a Business Environment and the Action of the Judicial Sector in Northern Mozambique” will be implemented through a partnership between the CDD and the CFJJ. At Monday’s ceremony, the Director-General of the CFJJ, Elisa Samuel Boerekamp, presented the general lines of the project, as well as the main actions and activities that will be carried out in northern Mozambique.

In her speech, Judge Elisa Samuel Boerekamp noted that talking about human rights in a business environment and linking this issue to the performance of the justice administration system is complex, as it involves three fundamental elements. These are the independence of the judicial system, its capacity and, above all, its financial autonomy.

“The United Nations Guiding Principles are not new. They reinforce Mozambique’s international commitment and responsibility to respect, guarantee and promote human rights, both through the State and through the private sector. It is in this perspective that the Guiding Principles are not law in themselves, but norms and values that must be considered by all. What’s more: Mozambique is part of several regional, African, and international conventions and protocols that promote and protect human rights”, said the Director General of the CFJJ, Elisa Samuel Boerekamp.



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“Promoting respect for human rights in a business environment is a constant concern of Switzerland”, Maurício Sulila, Swiss Embassy

Speaking on behalf of the Swiss Embassy in Mozambique, Maurício Sulila began by stating that the protection and respect for human rights in a business environment is a constant concern of the Swiss Confederation. Recently, the Swiss Government has developed human rights and business guidelines for Swiss Cooperation and its network of representations around the world. The logic of these human rights and business guidelines aligns with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Human Rights and Business.

It is within this context of promoting human rights and business that the Swiss Embassy decided to support the Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs, through the CFJJ, and together with the CDD, for the implementation of the project “Promotion of Human Rights in Business Environment and Judicial Sector Performance in Northern Mozambique”.

“The implementation of this project intends, on the one hand, to contribute to the awareness of government actors and the administration of justice about the need to be present and defend human rights in a business environment and, on the other hand, to engage companies that carry out commercial activities in the northern region of the country so that they respect recognized international standards in terms of human rights in business”, explained Maurício Sulila, representing the Swiss Embassy.



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“Project aims to defend human rights defenders to continue to protect the right to development of communities”, Prof Adriano Nuvunga

This project, which is developed jointly by the CFJJ, an entity of the Mozambican State, and the CDD, a civil society organization, shows our understanding that the most burning issues in Mozambique, which have to do with development, will not be resolved exclusively neither by the Government, nor by civil society, but in partnership, defended Prof. Adriano Nuvunga, Executive Director of CDD.

While recognizing the importance of business for the development of the country, Prof. Adriano Nuvunga expresses concern about the impoverishment of communities living in areas of exploitation of natural resources.



“The partners of the companies travel in jets to the areas of exploration of natural resources. But our communities that live there don’t even have water to drink. This is not just a development issue; it is above all a human rights issue. If we look at the UN Guiding Principles on Human Rights and Business, we will notice that, in addition to the issue of transparency and participation, the issue of corporate res-

ponsibility and the right to community development are important components.”

The project “Promotion of Human Rights in a Business Environment and Judicial Sector Action in Northern Mozambique” also focuses on human rights defenders. “Mozambique is on the list of African countries where human rights defenders are most threatened. Therefore, this project must defend human ri-

ghts defenders, to exist, to do their work and to continue where they are most needed to protect the right to development of communities”.

The event ended with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD) and the Legal and Judicial Training Center (CFJJ).



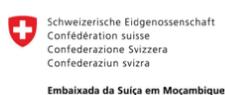
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