

Police remain undemocratic: Head of Operations fires to stop peaceful Renamo march in Mecubúri, Nampula

- As part of the Renamo Women's Detachment Day (June 5), members and supporters of the party took to the streets to celebrate the day in the town of Mecubúri district, Nampula province. However, the Police of the Republic of Mozambique (PRM) mobilized an armed contingent to prevent a peaceful march.



According to the newspaper IKWELI, in its edition of this Thursday (July 7, 2022), the Head of Operations of the PRM District Command of Mecubúri even fired in the air as a way to intimidate the members and sympathizers of the largest opposition party in Mozambique.

The PRM district commander in Mecuburi confirmed to IKWELI the occurrence of the incident and explained that the two shots were fired to contain the animosity of the members and supporters of Renamo who protested against the actions of police officers at the site of the march.

Now, shooting to supposedly contain the animosity of people who were marching peacefully is a disproportionate and irresponsible measure, since it represents a danger to public safety. In fact, there are recurrent cases in Mozambique of civilians dying after being hit by bullets fired by the police¹.

This is not the first time that PRM uses weapons to prevent normal activities of opposition political parties, a practice contrary to the principles and values that guide the democratic rule of law. In the Republic of Mozambique, the PRM has no mandate to prevent peaceful marches by political parties.

The most serious thing is that incidents of prevention of political activities by PRM only happen when they are opposition parties, especially Renamo and MDM. That is, there is no record of a single demonstration or other political activity of Frelimo, the ruling party, which has been prevented by PRM. This clearly shows that PRM is Frelimo's main ally in the struggle to destroy the political opposition in Mozambique.

The importance of political parties in the construction of the democratic rule of law has constitutional support, namely in the terms of paragraph 1 of article 74: "Parties express political pluralism, they contribute to the construction and manifestation of the popular will and are a fundamental tool for the democratic participation of citizens in the country's governance.

Therefore, the actions of PRM in Mecuburi are reprehensible at all levels, because they do not contribute to national reconciliation and cohesion of Mozambicans. There is no justification that 30 years after the establishment of the Democratic Rule of Law in Mozambique, the PRM continues to disrespect and violate the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens.

There is no justification that, instead of guaranteeing security for people and property, the Police continue to be a factor in political-party tensions and conflict in Mozam-



bique, undermining all efforts at pacification, reconciliation and cohesion of Mozambicans. The Police must serve the State and the citizens, not the interests of the party in power.

Moreover, under paragraph 1 of Article 253 of the Constitution of the Republic, the PRM has the role of ensuring law and order, safeguarding the safety of people and property, public tranquility, respect for the democratic rule of law and strict observance of the fun-

damental rights and freedoms of citizens.

In numbers 2 and 3 of the same article, the Constitution clearly states that the Police are non-partisan and, in the exercise of their functions, they obey the law and serve citizens and public and private institutions with unbiased and impartiality. In other words, the Police cannot treat citizens according to their party affiliation, as was shown in the Mecuburi incident.

¹ <https://www.opais.co.mz/crianca-morre-apos-ter-sido-atingida-por-suposta-bala-perdida-numa-escolinha/>



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