

APNIFFT Group in Mozambique with new leadership

- The National Working Group of the African Parliamentary Network on Illicit Financial Flows and Taxation (APNIFFT) in Mozambique has, since September 9, a new leadership. Member of Parliament Edson Judite Calisto Nhangumele has assumed the presidency, while José Manteigas Gabriel has taken up the position of vice-president. Officially launched in 2023, the APNIFFT National Group in Mozambique serves as the basic unit of parliamentary engagement aimed at promoting legislative reforms, strengthening debates on tax justice, and advancing the fight against illicit financial flows.



The election of the new leadership took place during the group's second national meeting in Maputo, a meeting marked by the parliamentarians' reaffirmation of their commitment to the agenda of combating illicit financial flows and promoting tax justice. In addition to choosing the new presidency, the meeting also served to revita-

lize the work initiated in 2023, update the Group's composition in line with the new legislature, and strengthen strategic alignment with the APNIFFT regional network, ensuring that Mozambique continues to have an active voice in regional and continental initiatives on tax governance and domestic resource mobilization.



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Delivering the event’s opening remarks, Her Excellency Cernilde Muchanga, Vice-President of the Planning and Budget Committee of the Assembly of the Republic, began by recalling that “Mozambique hosted a high-level workshop in 2023 to launch the network in Mozambique, a milestone that saw the active participation of members of the Planning and Budget Committee and the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Human Rights, and Legality.” She emphasized that the country’s participation in this continental movement, which already brings together more than 700 African parliamentarians committed to promoting tax justice, transparency, and accountability in the management of public resources, constitutes a clear sign of determination and commitment to strengthening good economic and financial governance.

“Illicit financial flows continue to deprive African states of resources essential for development, limiting investment in crucial sectors such as health, education, employment, and infrastructure,” he stated, emphasizing that the second meeting of the National Working Group in Mozambique aims to “revitalize its composition, clarify its objectives, and, most importantly, strengthen its parliamentary advocacy role against illicit financial flows and in favor of fairer tax systems.” He added that the Planning and Budget Committee, which chairs this group, assumes its responsibility “firmly, aware that only through a concerted effort between parliamentarians, civil society, and international partners will it be possible to address this phenomenon that undermines the progress of our economies.”

Concluding her speech, Cernilde Muchanga encouraged everyone to contribute with enthusiasm and a sense of purpose, emphasizing that the goal is for “this national group to become an active, dynamic, and effective instrument of parliamentary action.” On behalf of the Planning and Budget Committee, she also reaffirmed “the determination to consolidate Mozambique’s participation in APNIFFT as an integral part of the African agenda of structural transformation, domestic resource mobilization, and tax justice.”



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Reinforced commitment to equitable domestic resource mobilization

The meeting began with a briefing on Mozambique's involvement in APNIFFT. It was emphasized that this continental platform, which already brings together hundreds of African parliamentarians, constitutes a privileged space for exchanging experiences, strengthening capacities, and political consultation on tax justice and domestic resource mobilization. The meeting was led by Gabriel Manguele of the CDD, Francis Kairu of the TJNA, and James Chidakwa of APNIFFT.

The discussion then focused on the relevance of the debate on illicit financial flows and tax justice in the African and Mozambican contexts. It was emphasized that the flight and misuse of financial resources pose a serious threat to development, as they significantly reduce states' ability to invest in essential sectors such as health, education, employment, and infrastructure. It was also emphasized that tax justice is not merely a technical issue of revenue collection, but above all a political and ethical dimension that influences social trust, the legitimacy of institutions, and the state's ability to fulfill its role as a promoter of collective well-being.

The meeting also served to conduct a general analysis of the Mozambican situation. It was highlighted that weaknesses persist in economic governance and the management of public resources, which open the way for practices that undermine tax justice. Issues such as the difficulty of ensuring fair and equitable taxation, pressure from private interests, and the prevalence of corruption were widely discussed, factors that, taken together, weaken the state's ability to respond to the needs of the population and promote inclusive and sustainable development.

Finally, the session concluded by highlighting possible ways to strengthen parliamentary action and cooperation with other strategic actors, including civil society, development partners, and international networks. It was reiterated that addressing IFFs and promoting fairer tax systems require concerted and sustained efforts, based on transparency, accountability, and a long-term vision.

During the meeting, it became evident that Parliamentarians play a strategic role in the fight against IFFs and in promoting tax justice. This responsibility stems from their constitutional mandate to legislate, oversee the executive branch, and represent citizens. On a continent where it is estimated that Africa loses between \$50 and \$80 billion annually to IFFs, parliamentary intervention is crucial to reversing this scenario that deprives states of revenues vital to development.

First, parliamentarians are legislators and, as such, have the power to pass laws that strengthen tax transparency, combat abusive tax planning practices, and close loopholes that allow tax evasion and abuse. Measures such as the passage of access to information laws, the regulation of beneficial ownership, and the review of double taxation agreements are examples of legislative initiatives that can reduce opportunities for illicit flows.

Second, parliament is responsible for exercising oversight functions. This involves scrutinizing contracts and treaties involving natural resources and tax regimes, questioning tax exemptions and benefits granted without transparency, and ensuring that the executive branch does not forego legitimate government revenues in exchange for unclear incentives. Its oversight function is even more relevant in the African context, where dependence on extractive industries and institutional weaknesses make states highly vulnerable to transfer pricing manipulation, export underinvoicing, and harmful tax incentives.

Third, parliamentarians play a representative role. By bringing citizens' concerns, especially those of the most vulnerable populations, to the national debate, they can denounce the regressive nature of tax systems that burden the poor with indirect taxes, while large multinationals and economic elites benefit from legal loopholes to evade their tax responsibilities. Thus, parliamentary action in favor of tax justice is not merely a technical matter, but an imperative for equity and social cohesion.

“Participation must translate into concrete action”, Edson Nhangumele, President of the Group

Reacting to his election and the expectations surrounding his role as the Group’s new president, Deputy Edson Nhangumele began by considering Mozambique’s entry into the African parliamentary platform dedicated to combating illicit financial flows a privilege. He emphasized that this platform will allow members of parliament, regardless of their technical expertise, to learn how to track and verify illicit flows, thus strengthening the parliament’s oversight role. He emphasized that the main expectation is that, through this participation, the country will be better equipped to develop legislative initiatives aimed at reducing tax evasion, combating tax avoidance (especially by multinationals and their subsidiaries), and reviewing the current legal framework to strengthen national revenue collection.

The representative stated that the group, made up of the three parliamentary groups, already represents a clear demonstration of political will. For Nhangumele, this pluralism offers fertile ground for developing joint efforts and consolidating an inclusive process of oversight and lawmaking. He emphasized that this joint effort reflects a commitment to placing the national interest above partisan differences, creating a more conducive environment for addressing the fiscal and financial challenges Mozambique faces.

Continuing his speech, he emphasized the importance of this platform taking root in the country, allowing for greater engagement among parliamentarians and greater acceptance within the benches. He emphasized the need to broaden the process and ensure that the platform becomes a national reference for monitoring and debating illicit financial flows and tax justice.

In conclusion, Representative Nhangumele reiterated that participation in this network should not be limited to the representative level, but rather translate into concrete action. “We hope to influence our benches so that there is full acceptance and so that Parliament itself takes the initiative to review and propose laws, especially in the tax area, to address the challenges that compromise revenue collection in Mozambique,” he stated.



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For his part, Deputy José Manteigas Gabriel, Vice-President of the Group, began by expressing his satisfaction with being elected to represent Mozambique in this group, emphasizing that the priority must be to “look at Mozambique” and ensure that the country is increasingly visible for the best reasons. He acknowledged that, unfortunately, Mozambique has been in the news for the worst reasons and emphasized that, as parliamentarians, based on the powers and responsibilities enshrined in the Constitution, our goal must be to change this paradigm.

In this context, he stated that the mission of the deputies is to bring to parliament tax policy proposals that improve the lives of Mozambicans. He recalled the skepticism surrounding the benefits of megaprojects and the need to review contracts, emphasizing that “one of the things I’ve always said and reiterated today is the non-secrecy of contracts.” For Manteigas, the government enters into contracts on behalf of Mozambicans, and elected representatives have the right and duty to understand the terms and benefits of these investments.

The representative warned that we cannot stand idly by while investments that, in practice, only result in the withdrawal of national resources. He emphasized that the priority is to ensure that the wealth benefits, first and foremost, the Mozambican people, without excluding the legitimate right of investors to receive dividends. He thus reinforced the vision of an active and vigilant parliament in defending national interests.

Concluding his speech, José Manteigas highlighted the importance of inclusive work within the group, noting that, despite the opposition being a minority, there was room for cooperation and a spirit of Mozambican identity. For the representative, this approach represents a major step forward and must be preserved: “If we continue with this vision, with this way of being, we will obviously achieve the results we seek.”



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