



## Cabo Delgado: Violence linked to rumours raises serious human rights concerns

- The number of fatalities has risen to 11 across several districts in Cabo Delgado Province, following a wave of violence triggered by rumours linking alleged cases of “shrinking” male genital organs to witchcraft practices. These incidents, marked by collective panic and the spread of misinformation, have resulted in lynchings and other forms of serious violence.



The incidents have been reported in the districts of Ancuabe, Mecúfi, Metuge, and Montepuez, as well as in earlier occurrences in Mocímboa da Praia and the city of Pemba. In all cases, victims were accused by members of local communities without any evidence to substantiate such

allegations.

The district of Ancuabe accounts for the highest number of deaths, with four victims recorded in the localities of Nanjua, Ntele, Ngeue, and Metoro. In Mecúfi, one fatality was reported in the village of Muinde. In Metuge, three deaths occurred under si-

milar circumstances, while in Montepuez three victims were recorded, including cases in Mapupulo and surrounding areas of the district headquarters.

Among the victims is also a member of the Mozambique Police (PRM), Simões Mário, a sub-inspector and head of the Community Policing Section at the 3rd Police Station in the city of Pemba. According to available information, the officer was accused by local residents of involvement in the alleged phenomenon while in a rural area following a mechanical breakdown of his motorbike. He was surrounded and assaulted by a group of citizens and later attacked again after seeking refuge at a roadside checkpoint. Although he was transported alive to Pemba Provincial Hospital, he later succumbed to his injuries.

Local reports indicate that these incidents typically begin with informal accusations, often linked to alleged physical contact between individuals. Such information spreads rapidly within communities and through social media, creating an environment of fear and mistrust that triggers violent reactions. In several cases, no clinical evidence has been

identified to support the allegations made against the victims.

Institutions in the health sector and traditional medicine have rejected the existence of any phenomenon corresponding to the claims being circulated. The Mozambican Association of Traditional Healers (AMETRAMO) has stated that it does not recognise any practices capable of producing such effects, while reference hospitals report no clinical cases supporting these claims.

These developments raise serious human rights concerns, particularly regarding the protection of the right to life, physical integrity, and due process. Acts of lynching and mob justice constitute grave violations of the fundamental principles of the rule of law.

The persistence of these incidents highlights significant challenges in terms of public security, information management, and institutional response in contexts of social panic. Without a coordinated and effective intervention, there is a real risk of further escalation of violence and additional violations of fundamental rights in Cabo Delgado Province.





## MISSION:

*Inspiring and driving actions to protect human rights, strengthen democracy, and promote justice.*

### EDITORIAL INFORMATION

**Property:** CDD – Centro para Democracia e Direitos Humanos  
**Director:** Prof. Adriano Nuvunga  
**Editor:** André Mulungo  
**Program Assistants:** Artur Malate; Sheila Wilson; Marcia Massosste  
**Author:** CDD  
**Layout:** CDD

**Address:**  
Rua de Dar-Es-Salaam Nº 279, Bairro da Sommerschild, Cidade de Maputo.  
Telephone: +258 21 085 797

 CDD\_moz  
**E-mail:** info@cddmoz.org  
**Website:** <http://www.cddmoz.org>

### FINANCING PARTNERS

