



# BOLETIM SOBRE DIREITOS HUMANOS



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Friday, May 22, 2026 | Year VI, NO. 551 | Director: Prof. Adriano Nuvunga | English

## Mozambique: wave of lynchings linked to disinformation and superstitious beliefs exposes state fragility in guaranteeing Law and order

- At least 60 people have been killed and 111 injured in acts of violence recorded in recent weeks in Mozambique, linked to the spread of rumours about the alleged disappearance or shrinking of male genital organs through acts of witchcraft, according to figures released by the Mozambican police.



The incidents were initially reported in Cabo Delgado province before spreading to Nampula, Zambezia and Manica. In several locations, individuals accused of practicing “genital magic” were subjected to mob attacks, beatings and lynchings by members of the public.

Regardless of cultural or religious beliefs existing within communities, such acts constitute serious human rights violations, including:

- the right to life;
- the right to physical integrity and security;
- the right to human dignity;
- and the right to due process of law.

The spread of disinformation and superstition-based rumours has contributed to an environment of fear, public panic and mob justice. In many cases, victims were attacked without evidence, investigation or effective preventive intervention by the authorities.

The scale and spread of these violent acts also reveal serious weaknesses in the State’s ability to guarantee law and order, particularly regarding the prevention of collective violence, the protection of communities and rapid response to situations of social panic.

The situation highlights broader challenges related to:

- institutional fragility in maintaining public security;
- insufficient access to reliable information;

- weak State presence in some communities;
- limited public trust in formal justice and protection mechanisms;
- and the growing resort to vigilante justice in contexts of fear and disinformation.

In a democratic State governed by the rule of law, no individual should be attacked, condemned or killed on the basis of rumours, suspicion or popular beliefs.

Mozambican authorities have the responsibility to:

- investigate the acts of violence;
- hold perpetrators of lynchings criminally accountable;
- strengthen the protection of affected communities;
- restore State authority in maintaining public order;
- and promote public awareness campaigns against disinformation, hate speech and collective violence.

It is equally important to involve community leaders, religious leaders, civil society organisations and the media in preventing violence and promoting a culture of human rights, tolerance and respect for human dignity.

The protection of life, security and fundamental rights must remain at the centre of the national response to this crisis.



## MISSION:

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

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