

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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Mozambique Summary 20 May 2026

President Daniel Chapo (2015-present) conducts a state visit to China, the highlight of which is his meeting with China's President Xi Jinping (2013-present). Venancio Mondlane, the former 2024 presidential candidate and opposition Anamola political party's leader, accuses security forces of killing opposition supporters and politicians. Autoridade Reguladora de Energia (ARENE) (energy regulatory authority) sharply increases the price of fuel, hiking diesel up by 45% and petrol by 12.1%. Lynch mobs kill at least 60 people across multiple provinces after rumours circulate accusing people of witchcraft.

President conducts state visit to China

President **Daniel Chapo (2015-present)** [conducted](#) a state visit to **China** from 16 to 22 April, leading a high-level delegation that included first lady **Gueta Chapo**, justice, constitutional and religious affairs minister, **Mateus Saize**, finance minister **Carla Fernandes Loveira**, and foreign minister, **Maria Lucas**. Chapo's itinerary [included](#) visits to agricultural and technology hubs in China's **Hunan** and **Qinghai** provinces. Chapo also met with numerous Chinese provincial and national government officials, including **Zhao Leji**, the chairman of the **Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China** (the national legislature), the third-highest-ranking member of the **Politburo Standing Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)**. However, the highlight of the trip was Chapo's meeting with China's President **Xi Jinping** (2013-present).

Xi [hosted](#) Chapo at the **Great Hall of the People** in **Beijing**, during which Chapo was accorded state honours and reviewed the guard of honour with Xi and their respective spouses before attending a state banquet. The two presidents used their meeting to affirm their shared commitment to strengthening Sino-Mozambican bilateral relations. This commitment was underscored by their witnessing the signing of 23 agreements and diplomatic instruments between their delegations. Among the most noteworthy of these agreements was the [new Convention on the Establishment of the International Organisation for Mediation](#); this is a proposed China-backed intergovernmental organisation dedicated to resolving interstate and multinational disputes through mediated dialogue.

China used Chapo's visit to [confirm](#) to Chapo's delegation that it had dramatically expanded tariff exemptions on Mozambican exports. The full list of tariff-exempt products has not been published, but it does cover agricultural products, minerals, and semi-processed resources. These tariff exemptions came into effect on 1 May and will make Mozambique's products more competitive in the Chinese market and should boost exports to China.

Chapo's visit was successful as it achieved its core goal of improving Sino-Mozambique relations and building interpersonal relationships between senior figures with Chapo's administration and the Chinese government. This was necessary given that Chapo is pushing through a generational change in both the government and the ruling party, **Frelimo**. Chapo needed to ensure that he had a good working relationship with Xi and that the Chinese president knew that Chapo prioritised Mozambique's relationship with China. In a symbolic gesture of this, Chapo [publicly affirmed](#) Mozambique's support for the 'One-China' policy and China's claim of sovereignty over **Taiwan**. China is Mozambique's second-largest trade partner, after **South Africa**, and is one of Mozambique's largest [creditors](#) and is estimated to hold around \$1.35 billion worth of Mozambican debt, making debt repayments to China a major annual budget item for the state.

Opposition leader accuses security forces of murdering supporters

Venancio Mondlane, the former 2024 presidential candidate and opposition **Anamola** political party's leader, [accused](#) Mozambique's security forces of killing opposition supporters and politicians on 13 May. Mondlane made this accusation in a speech responding to the murder of Anamola's **Manica Provine** coordinator, **Anselmo Abilio Vicente**, who was killed by unidentified gunmen on 9 May, while travelling on the EN6 highway in Manica.

Mondlane claimed that Mozambique's security forces were targeting Anamola supporters and leaders on behalf of the Frelimo-led government in an effort to weaken the opposition party. The Anamola leader contends that the party's growing popularity is being perceived as an existential threat to Frelimo.

According to Mondlane, state security forces have killed at least 56 Anamola members, and the party has recorded 346 cases of violence targeted against its members, including assaults, detentions, and arson attacks. These figures have not been verified, but it should be noted that since the 2024 election, there have been numerous reports of opposition supporters and party members being killed or attacked in suspected politically motivated incidents. Arguably, the most high-profile of these was the assassination of Mondlane's lawyer and close personal ally, **Elvino Dias**, who was assassinated along with another opposition figure, **Paulo Guambe**, in **Maputo** in October 2024, shortly after the disputed presidential election (*see ARC Briefing Mozambique Oct 2024*). Dias was among those leading Mondlane's legal challenge against the election results at the time.

Not long after Mondlane made these allegations, [another Anamola figure was killed](#). Unknown assailants killed **Pedro Chauke**, who was a party member in the **Mucambene** region of **Gaza Province's Massagena** district, at his home on 18 May.

Mozambican police have claimed that they are investigating these murders and attacks on Anamola member but, as yet, no meaningful arrests have been made. None are expected given that Mozambican police have a poor track record of investigating politically-motivated attacks on opposition supporters. This track record long predates Mondlane and Anamola's arrival on the political scene.

The Dias investigation is the most evident example of this; no arrests have been made in the 18 months since the assassination. Authorities are currently suggesting that the killing was not politically connected despite the nature of the victim and the timing of the killing. Attorney general **Americo Letela** [claimed](#) on 23 April that investigators believe that the late **Momade Assife Abdul Satar** (known as **Nini Satar**), who was a known criminal and hitman, was involved in Dias's assassination. Letela further suggested that Dias and Guambe's murders were unrelated to the election and were potentially either connected to Mondlane and Dias's defection from the Renamo opposition party or even related to Dias's past as a defence lawyer.

These varied suggestions are unlikely to face any real scrutiny, but do indicate that the Attorney-General has steered the investigation away from state security agencies and anyone connected with the ruling party.

Mondlane's allegations may well be true, as the killings of prominent opposition figures since the 2024 election have been [raised](#) as a concern by international human rights groups. Regardless, Mondlane is an opportunistic politician and will continue to accuse the state of killing opposition figures to rally opposition supporters to Anamola and affirm his position as the dominant and most outspoken opposition leader in the country. Anamola is currently on a recruitment campaign to build its strength ahead of the 2028 local government elections.

Fuel prices hiked amid global supply crunch

The **Autoridade Reguladora de Energia (ARENE)** (energy regulatory authority) sharply [increased](#) the price of fuel on 7 May in response to the impact of the ongoing conflict in the **Persian Gulf**. Diesel

was increased by 45.5% from MZN 79.88 (\$1.25) to MZN 116.25 (\$1.82), while the price of petrol was hiked by 12.1% to MZN 93.69 (\$1.47) from MZN 83.57 (\$1.31).

Authorities had sought to avoid implementing fuel price increases for as long as possible due to concerns around the inflationary impact such measures would have. However, the protracted negative impact that the war has had on global fuel supply chains meant that efforts to avoid implementing the price hike became unaffordable. In particular, the cost of importing petroleum products was placing an unsustainable strain on Mozambique's foreign exchange reserves and threatening the country's ability to finance all imports.

The government also needed to implement increases to place some downward pressure on demand for fuel in the country. Fuel supply disruptions combined with panic buying had led to [shortages](#) across the country. These shortages effected major urban areas such as Maputo the worst. Officials will hope that the higher retail prices will compel consumers to seek alternatives and discourage panic buying.

However, the sharp increase in fuel prices will cause an economic shock. Mozambique's economy is heavily dependent on petrol and diesel as the majority of passenger and freight transport in the country is conducted by road. Furthermore, the country's major industries, including agriculture, mining, and fisheries, are all dependent on diesel. Consequently, the cost of producing, transporting, and importing products into the country will increase, and these costs will be passed on to consumers, leading to an increase in the cost of goods. Transport costs will increase first, and public transport operators are expected to increase their prices in the immediate future.

Mozambique is particularly sensitive to inflationary shocks, and the country is still recovering from the protests over the cost of living that occurred in early 2025. These protests were an extension of the anti-government unrest and occurred in the wake of the October 2024 general election. Any fresh increase in the cost of living risks reigniting these demonstrations.

Rumours of witchcraft lead to lynchings in several provinces

Lynch mobs, driven by fears of witchcraft, [killed](#) at least 60 people across multiple provinces between 18 April and 13 May. The killings began in **Cabo Delgado Province** on 18 April after rumours circulated that individuals were using witchcraft on people's limbs. Lynchings related to these fears have subsequently been confirmed in **Niassa, Nampula, Zambezia** and **Sofala** provinces.

The rumours and related mob attacks spread rapidly despite the fantastical and easily disproven claims. However, these events highlight the real security concerns related to superstitious beliefs in rural Mozambique. Witchcraft-related killings occur frequently in the country, especially in the northern provinces. Most of these tend to involve the illegal trade in human body parts. The majority of victims tend to be children or individuals with albinism whose organs and other body parts are traded for use in so-called 'black magic'.

The widespread belief in magic fuels very real fear in many rural communities in Mozambique, and rumours of witchcraft can drive incidents of mob violence and murder. The deeply held nature of these beliefs has made it difficult for authorities to combat. This was underscored by the recent spate of killings, the majority of which occurred after authorities from the interior ministry attempted to intervene and counter the disinformation. Interior minister, **Paulo Chachine**, confirmed authorities have arrested at least 132 people on charges related to the lynchings, and security has been heightened in the affected areas.

Planner

31 Aug 2026 – 6 Sep 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique). Feira Internacional de Maputo (FACIM 2026)** (Maputo international fair);

Chronology

13 May 2026 **London (United Kingdom)** *Integrity Magazine*. A London appeals court dismisses the appeal by the **Beirut**-headquartered **Prinvest Group** against the 2024 ruling by the **London Commercial Court** ordering it to pay Mozambique \$1.9 billion for its role in Mozambique's secret debt scandal;

12 May 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Noticias*. President **Daniel Chapo** attends the inauguration of Ugandan President **Yoweri Museveni** and affirms Mozambique and Uganda's cooperation in combatting terrorism;

12 May 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *360 Mozambique*. The **Centro de Integridade Pública (CIP)** (centre of public integrity) warns that revenues from new gas exploration will take several years to produce a significant impact on public finances;

11 May 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *360 Mozambique*. The office of the director-general for the **European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)** estimates that militant attacks displaced over 11,000 people in late April and early May;

11 May 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *Club of Mozambique*. Foreign minister **Maria Manuela dos Santos Lucas** meets with **European Union Military Assistance Mission in Mozambique (EUMAM MOZ)** Mission Force Commander, Commodore **César Pires Correia** and EU ambassador to Mozambique, **Antonino Maggiore**;

11 May 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *Zitamar*. Islamist insurgents ambush a military convoy in the **Macomia** district;

11 May 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Club of Mozambique*. President **Daniel Chapo** attends the **Africa Forward Summit**, co-hosted by **France**, in Nairobi;

8 May 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *Zitamar*. Insurgents kill five people in two attacks in the **Ancuabe** and **Macomia** districts (**Cabo Delgado Province**), respectively;

7 May 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *Club of Mozambique*. Authorities seize 40,000 litres of fuel that had been diverted from official retailers to informal traders in **Niassa Province**;

29 Apr 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *AIM*. The governments of Mozambique and the **United States (US)** sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) under the **Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)** worth \$537.5m;

27 Apr 2026 **Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)** *Club of Mozambique*. President **Daniel Chapo** conducts a two-day visit to Ethiopia during which he meets with Ethiopia's prime minister, **Abiy Ahmed**;

23 Apr 2026 **London (United Kingdom)** *Fitch Ratings*. **United States (US)**-headquartered credit ratings agency, **Fitch Ratings**, downgrades Mozambique's Long-Term Foreign-Currency (LTFC) Issuer Default Rating (IDR) to 'CC' from 'CCC';

23 Apr 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *Zitamar*. Insurgents kill six soldiers after attacking their position in the **Mitope** village in the **Macimboa da Praia** district (**Cabo Delgado Province**);

23 Apr 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *Carta Mozambique*. Insurgents attack a passenger vehicle in the village of **Roma**, in the **Mueda** district (**Cabo Delgado Province**);

20 Apr 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *AIM*. The **Anamola** opposition party swears its provincial coordinators into office in an important stage in building the party's structure and national support base;

17 Apr 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *Club of Mozambique*. **Empresa Nacional de Hidrocarbonetos (ENH)** (national hydrocarbons company), the electricity company, **Electricidade de Moçambique (EDM)**, the port and rail company, **Caminhos De Ferros de Moçambique (CFM)**, and **Hidroelectrica de Cahora Bassa (HCB)**, which manages the

Cahora Bassa hydroelectric power plant, sign an agreement to create a new company called **Serviços Integrados de Logística de Gás Natural de Moçambique (SLIGM)** to manage gas storage and logistics in the country;

14 Apr 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *AIM*. The government spokesperson, **Salim Vala**, indicates that the **Council of Ministers** is confident that Mozambique is on track to secure a new funding agreement with the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**;

14 Apr 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *Carta Mozambique*. Security forces arrest ten **Tanzanian** nationals in **Nangade** district (**Cabo Delgado Province**), suspected of being new insurgent recruits;

14 Apr 2026 **Maputo (Mozambique)** *Club of Mozambique*. Officials confirm that the government is seeking a new funding arrangement with the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**.

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