

# Conflict, insurgency and unrest



Mozambique  
South Africa  
eSwatini

# Background



- There have been more than 570 violent incidents from January 2017 to December 2020 in the Cabo-Delgado province according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (Acled), which monitors political violence globally.
- Human rights groups have reported the extensive destruction throughout northern Mozambique by the militants.
- The conflict that has spiralled has left about 3000 people killed and over 900 000 internally displaced.





- The real agenda seems to be to drive people off their land so that it can be given to prospectors and investors.
- The suspicion is not without justification. Land belongs to the state and those occupying land are given “Permission to occupy”, known by a Portuguese acronym “DUAT”. A “DUAT” can be withdrawn at will, given to another entity without reasons and without compensation.

## The implications:

- Entire population of Cabo-Delgado and most of rural population of Nampula province will eventually be moved to make way for prospectors and mining.
- Reports of displaced persons from the north of Cabo Delgado who have their DUAT's when they arrive in Pemba, they are told that they came from Pemba, not from Palma or Mocimboa da Praia. Meaning that they will never be able to return to their places of origin, even if the fighting stops.
- Landlessness, poverty, unemployment, corruption, etc exacerbate levels of suffering
- Suffering of the masses can create conditions where the rich benefit from the suffering of the poor.
- The availability of humanitarian aid can also attract the temptation of diversion, especially in a country with endemic levels of corruption.
- Disregard of human rights by foreign troops could lead to the aggravation of violence. Therefore foreign military intervention should not result in the perpetuation of violence and abuse of the population.





- MCSA Interventions:

- A Connexional Consultation on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2021, and put out a statement highlighting the plight of the people of Cabo-Delgado.
- A MCSA Crisis Management Team is established to guide the MCSA response to the situation, the following areas of intervention are being worked on:
  - Humanitarian Aid:
  - Peace Building and Resilence to Radicalization
  - Promotion of Peace Initiatives
  - Advocacy for Peace against Terrorism
  - Mobilizing Regional and International Support
  - Partnerships
  - Engagement with SADC
  - Training in Conflict Resolution and mediation
  - Agricultural Development for sustainable livelihoods and food security
  - Possibility of a MCSA Pastoral and Solidarity Visit



## South Africa



- Recently rocked by the worst violence since democracy was achieved in 1994.
- Unrest began on July 8 and saw protesters set up roadblocks on major highways and burned about 20 trucks in KwaZulu-Natal.
- The attacks on retail spread inland, affecting mainly Johannesburg and Pretoria.
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- It is estimated that 215 people subsequently died and more than 2,500 were arrested on charges including theft and vandalism.
- SA Police Service are investigating 163 cases of murder, with 87 inquest dockets being opened. “The majority who died during the unrest had gunshot wounds and stab wounds, while others were badly assaulted.
- It is not known how many deaths were caused by police shooting at rioters. Human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, are investigating the deaths.



## What this highlighted:

- Exposed the extent of country's underlying economic problems, which include high rates of inequality, unemployment and poverty.
- Currently unemployment is more than 32%, and it is above 64% for those under the age of 35, more than half of the country's 60 million people live in poverty, and more than 20% are food insecure, according to South African government statistics.
- According to the World Bank the country is one of the most unequal in the world, and that inequality has increased since apartheid ended in 1994.
- From the reports the Mission Unit has received, five Synods were affected by the unrest namely, Central, Highveld and Eswatini, Natal Coastal, Natal West and Limpopo Synods.
- The restoration processes have begun and compassion witnessed through the generous giving of others, but the effects and impact on the livelihoods of those affected is likely to last for a very long time. Mainly to be worst affected are the poor.



# MCSA Interventions



## Synod Task

- Mental Health Intervention
- Provide spaces for healing and transformation
- Capacitate congregations to respond to crises situations
- Provide intervention skills and resources
- Theological reflection (See, Judge At) as a tool for empowering local congregations
- Conduct comprehensive analysis of the respective circuits and their needs
- Respond to contextual needs
- Address mistrust between racial groups
- Encourage working in community e.g. working with faith-based and community organisations,
- Encourage the outreach of the Mission Groups in response to the situation
- Address issues of food insecurity,
- Provide opportunities for mediation, peace-building, conflict resolution, engagement,
- Visits to the affected families and communities,
- Provide counselling services,
- Where possible provide food relief,
- Begin engagements with children on the impact of the unrest on their development and wellbeing.
- Through Provincial Councils of Churches advocate for the implementation of the Basic Income Grant

## Connexional Task

- Promote and advocate for policies that address screen abuse,
- Need to develop programmes that address diversity, anti-bias, racism, etc,
- Capacitate clergy and laity with mediation, conflict resolution and intervention, peace-building, community and nation building skills,
- Advocate for the implementation of the Basic Income Grant at a National level,
- Assist with capacitating and addressing the impact of mental health,
- With related FBOs and NGOs address issues of moral decay and moral regeneration,
- Create spaces to empower clergy and laity to advocate and address the underlying issues such as inequality, discrimination, corruption, unemployment, poverty, etc.
- Provide orientation of Justice and Service Desk Coordinators,
- Provide spaces for addressing healing and transformation,
- Address the under handed approach of the SAPS in dealing with the elite and their colleagues involved in the looting,
- The church must find a way of helping people to deal with the race issue
- Provide opportunities for engagement with the Basic income grant



# Eswatini

- Protests against the king of Eswatini, Africa's last absolute monarch, turned violent during the first week of July 2021.
- Some buildings connected to King Mswati III were torched by protesters, and police reportedly assaulted and arrested political opponents.
- Reports indicate that 70 people have been killed, more than 200 severely injured and hundreds detained.
- The government shut down the internet —making it difficult to access reliable news from the country.
- In recent incidents reported women have been randomly raped by security forces. The injured have been denied access to reliable health care.
- Education has been seriously hampered and the situation remains tense as government refuses to meet the demands of the people.



## Causes of the unrest



- The protest manifested after three pro-democracy MPs advocated in parliament that this country should be ruled under a democratic government.
- The MPs asked the government that they at least elect their own prime minister as the the prime minister is currently appointed by the king.
- They were suggesting a constitutional democracy, in which the king would be outside politics.
- After those submissions in parliament, citizens in other constituencies started delivering petitions around the country, urging other MPs to discuss these issues. After seeing that the momentum was growing, parliament banned the delivery of petitions.
- So, somehow, they were banning freedom of expression, and then that manifested into chaos.
- Calls of the Swati population is for dialogue and democractic of the country.
- This has been met with hush resistance from the King and his administration



## Responses to the situation:

- A delegation from SADC was sent to assess the situation. They met with government, met people suggested by government, the Council of Churches and civil society. However, they never met with political organisations.
- Nothing was said at the recent SADC meeting held in Malawi.
- A statement condemning the violence and abuse of the the Swazi People was issued by the United Nations, African Union and the European Union. There has been no formal engagement.
- The USA and the AU Ambassdors met with the people on the ground and pledged their commitment to address the situation.
- An engagement was hosted by FOCISSA and the SACC to deliberate on the situation. However, there has been silence since then.
- The situation remains unstable and volatile. Homes and property of senior police officials continue to be bombed.
- Individuals are targeted who oppose the current administration



## Response of the MCSA

- Two Statements condemning the violence, and end to violent attacks and supporting the call for dialogue was issued.
- Circuits within the Synod are donating towards providing humanitarian assistance to those affected.
- Securing wheel chairs and crutches for thos who sustained injuries and are unable to walk.
- A Pastoral and Solidarity has been proposed made up of both the Synod and the Connexion has been proposed.
- There's a need for the MCSA to meet the Eswatini Christian Council to offer support and strengthen their initiatives.
- Engagement with other faith-based and humanitarian organisations such as Amnesty, International, Doctors without Borders, Lawyers for Human Rights, United Nations Commission on Human Rights, SADC, European Union Committee on Foreign Affairs for intervention and seek solidarity.
- Compile a detailed report with supporting evidence to be used for advocacy and mobilizing of external support of other organisations, Churches and human rights organisations beyond the Connexion.
- A statement condemning the rape of women needs to be issued provided that it is substantiated by documented evidence.