

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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The fact that this monograph has been written is testimony to the political will for reform existing among the ranks of the security forces in Mozambique. Officers interviewed have to deal on a daily basis with the frustrations of problems they feel impotent to solve. They are ready to cooperate and to implement reforms; they are only waiting for a sign from the higher levels of political command.

Mozambique's development, in the post-independence period has been constrained by human insecurity – first with the civil war and then with the proliferation of small arms after the peace agreement. The recent natural catastrophes, such as the floods in 2000 and 2001, exposed the dependence on regional resources and showed the vulnerability and lack of resources of the security sector to cope with them. But it did have an advantage – it showed Mozambicans what a positive role a professional, accountable, and independent security sector can play. It established a basis upon which to build a positive image for the security sector. The perception Mozambicans have of their security forces is rather poor, as replies to the survey (Chapter 4) seem to suggest. And yet, Mozambicans are willing to support improvements in the security sector and show appreciation for the measures undertaken so far in this regard.

### ***Post-independence challenges***

The hardest challenges for Frelimo after independence were to build a nation out of patched chieftancies with dubious historical relations, to create a national identity among peoples with different languages and few cultural traits in common and to assert national sovereignty in a hostile regional environment. These issues were inextricable from the dynamics of the civil war and would later frame the strategies of Frelimo during the peace process. Frelimo was the ruling party in Mozambique at the time of the General Peace Agreement, coming from a background of single party rule. This created an environment where party interests and state interests were not discernable.

Frelimo sponsored the shift to a multiparty system but it seems to have been unable to internalize that shift. This is a situation that both the Frelimo party and the government of Mozambique may wish to address and correct. During the ONUMOZ period, party politics and strategies seem to have taken priority over national interests and this has been a relatively constant pattern. Frelimo's policy regarding national identity has always been one of inclusion/exclusion, but within the framework of the party – the interest of the party was also the interest of the nation. Mozambique suffered the consequences when hostile regimes tapped on the discontent and disenfranchisement created by such an attitude.

In a multi-party setting, such an attitude runs the risk of alienating segments of the population. Furthermore, this attitude can ultimately cause problems at national level, which may be difficult for any government to correct. This seems to be what happened in the security sector during the ONUMOZ mission.

### ***Unequal donor support***

Perceived as a less political body than the armed forces, the police were able to get support from a number of donors, ranging from technical assistance, to provision of equipment, to capacity building. The benefits from this support are evident and much has been accomplished. Most Mozambicans acknowledge a noticeable shift in police attitudes towards the population. However, both the government of Mozambique and donors should reflect on the validity of such support when it is not integrated into a broader reform strategy that includes all the security sector agencies in the country.

If it was acceptable in 1994 to postpone any reform of the security sector, today, ten years into the peace process, this is no longer the case. Traditionally, the security sector is not recognized as a partner in the struggle against poverty. However, given the impact that a poorly functioning security sector can have on sustainable development and poverty alleviation, more agencies and development workers are shifting their attention to security issues. Lack of public security means lack of investment and loss of property; it means diverting scarce resources from other sectors to allocate them in alleviating an impossible situation; it means unequal development. There is no point in supporting the destruction of SALW in Mozambique if the government is unable to stop their supply.

Mozambique has two ongoing disarmament initiatives – Operation Rachel and the Tools for Arms project, which have been very successful and deserve continuing support from the international community. However, efforts to address regional security cannot be reduced to these two programmes and a few ad hoc initiatives involving the police or the army. Mozambique deserves a modern and professional security sector, able to guarantee the security of the national territory and the security of Mozambican citizens. It is in the hands of the GoM to show political will to do so and it is in the capacity of the international community to support that political will.

The government faces a difficult challenge – the perceived corruption within government structures, including the security sector. Corruption was a theme that emerged over and over again during interviews, group discussions and workshops. Mozambicans feel, rightly so, that they have been too much in the limelight regarding corruption. As one of the interviewees told the team: “It seems there are no other corrupt countries in the world. It seems we are the only ones suffering with corruption” and it is true that a couple of high-profile court cases, closely monitored by the local and international media, have brought Mozambique and the problem of corruption to the forefront.

This perception that institutions are vulnerable to corruption will most certainly impact on how the international community perceives the commitment of the government in implementing effective reform within the security sector. To dispel such perception the government may need to be willing to make compromises. Participants at the workshop (Chapter 3) suggested that the government present donors with requests for assistance, showing a greater willingness to discuss difficult issues, such as corruption. They also suggested that governmental institutions should be more accurate and less ambitious with the proposals they make to donors.

Regarding small arms, the government of Mozambique seems to be in a particular advantage – people seem not only supportive of any measure to control the presence of firearms, but also willing to contribute to such efforts. Plus, it seems that there is not yet a widespread culture of weapons in Mozambique.

The present situation seems ideal to raise public awareness in Mozambique regarding the threat of small arms and light weapons. People seem to be supportive of any such initiative and many of the respondents in the survey referred to the need for more awareness campaigns. It would also send a signal to the communities of the commitment of the government to control the availability of small arms, which communities perceive as a threat to their security.

Operations to reduce illegal firearms have been ongoing in Mozambique and the Ministry of Interior may wish to intensify such operations, given the apparent support of the population. Notwithstanding, the Ministry of Interior should also address the existing stockpiles, as they seem to be having an impact on public security.

Further research on small arms and light weapons in Mozambique is clearly required to assist in policy formulation. COPRECAL, as a co-ordinating body, should identify research areas and research partners. Such research is possible and data gathered can be used to monitor the success of the different interventions; to correct policies or interventions; to allocate funds; to pinpoint particular problem areas. Field research has the added bonus that communities feel they are being heard.

Internationally, Mozambique is recognized as one of the leading African states in controlling and preventing the availability of small arms and light weapons. Internally the government seems to enjoy the support of the population. Mozambique has now assumed the Presidency of the African Union; local elections in 2003 will be followed by general elections in 2004. Both the Mozambican population and the international community appear supportive of efforts to prevent and control illegal firearms. Mozambique's contribution to these efforts are well documented and both SALW collection programmes currently ongoing in Mozambique have been consistently praised as highly successful programmes.

Donor support for initiatives to control and prevent the availability of small arms and light weapons seems to be growing internationally and Mozambique is very well placed to benefit from this support.