THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

WEBINAR

MOZAMBIQUE'S AL-SHABAB INSURGENCY, AND LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

Washington, D.C.

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

ANDERSON COURT REPORTING
1800 Diagonal Road, Suite 600
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone (703) 519-7180 Fax (703) 519-7190

PARTICIPANTS:

ZENAIDA MACHADO
Senior Researcher
Africa Division
Human Rights Watch

DINO MAHTANI
Deputy Director
Africa Program
International Crisis Group

ADRIANO NUVUNGA
Director
Centro para a Democracia e Desenvolvimento
Professor of Political Science and Governance
Universidade Eduardo Mondlane

VANDA FELBAB-BROWN, Moderator
Senior Fellow and Director
Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors
The Brookings Institution

* * * * *

P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Good morning to you in North America. And good evening to those of you who are joining from Africa and Europe. Welcome to today's event on the insurgency and international responses in Mozambique hosted by the Brookings Institution, Africa Security Initiative and the Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors.

I am Vanda Felbab-Brown, Senior Fellow at Brookings and the Director of the Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors, and codirector of Africa Security Initiative.

The Biden administration has repeatedly emphasized how the threat of terrorism has spread beyond Afghanistan in the Middle East. And indeed, Africa has been a key locale of militancy and terrorism activity as the Biden administration has repeatedly highlighted.

Indeed, the emergence of militancy and its complex interactions with domestic policies and international terrorism has been dramatically playing out in Mozambique for several years and acutely this year and over the past several months as the al-Shabab insurgency, a separate entity from al-Shabab in Somalia gathered steamed and took over communities and territories in the area of Cabo Delgado but also with connections beyond its place.

And indeed, in March al-Shabab in Mozambique was one of the groups that the Biden administration designated as a terrorist actor. The government of Mozambique has for several years and including this year struggled to respond effectively to the militancy and ultimately has had to rely on international counterinsurgency, counterterrorism backup and support from a variety of African and other international actors.

And in recent weeks, we have perhaps been seeing some improvements but we are certainly far from the resolution of the complex situation.

I am delighted today to be moderating a conversation with a terrific set of panelists to elucidate the dynamics going on in the country and to explore with us the policy responses underway and ways to improve them and strengthen them.

Professor Adriano Nuvunga, one of our panelists is the Director of the Centro para a

Democracia e Desenvolvimento, a democracy governance of human rights organization in Mozambique. Professor Nuvunga teaches political science and governance of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration in the Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique.

He is also a Senior Research Fellow at Good Governance Africa, an organization based in Johannesburg. In addition to that he chairs the Mozambique Network of Human Rights Defenders as well as serves as Deputy Chairman of Southern Africa Human Rights Defenders Network. And he is in the process of writing a book that explores the nexus of weak governance violent conflict and the resource in Mozambique that has been implicated in the challenges and insurgencies in the country.

I'm equally excited to be introducing Mr. Dino Mahtani who is the Deputy Director of the Africa Program and the International Crisis Group. Mr. Mahtani started his career as a journalist for Reuters covering the Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria. And later on as the best African correspondent for the Financial Times.

After his distinguished journalistic career, he was appointed to the U.N. Security Council sanctions monitoring panels on DRC and Somalia. And prior to joining the Crisis Group, he served as the senior political advisor in the U.N. peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

And finally, I am also enthusiastic that we are joined by Ms. Zenaida Machado who is a Senior Researcher in the Africa Division of Human Rights Watch where she covers Angola and Mozambique. She has conducted research and documented human rights of abuses in both countries covering a wide set of issues and a wide set of actors and violations related to terrorism as well as counterinsurgency operations, justice and civil and political rights.

Prior to joining Human Rights Watch in 2015, Ms. Machado worked as a journalist for BBC World Service where she could use the flex of radio and television programs focus on Africa and Network Africa. She has two decades of experience as a multimedia journalist, researcher, political analyst and she also sits on the Board of Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa.

Thank you all very much for very much for joining us today. Professor Nuvunga, let me start with you. I would like to ask you to give us a brief overview of how the conflict has come about and

where are we today particularly after the Rwanda intervention this summer?

MR. NUVUNGA: Thank you very much and good morning, good afternoon and good evening depending on where you are at the moment.

I think Cabo Delgado today is a militarily stabilized province. The violent extremism has been controlled. We cannot say it has been repealed. There is no evidence that it has been repealed, but it is militarily stable after the intervention of both the Rwanda defense force and SADC. We have seen vehement actions over violence by the violent extremist organization but one can completely say that the violent extremist organization is in the ran away. Not yet clear as to what is happening. Whether the members of the violent extremist organization, they are mingling with local communities or they are running away to other parts of Africa.

There have been, however, indications that the leadership of the violent extremist organizations, they have fled even before the Rwanda's defense force and SADC intervened in Northern Cabo Delgado. So if we compare to where we were before, one can clearly say that it is stable, militarily stable.

We see a more professional engagement by the Rwanda defense force and the subject in relation to communities, but the elective stability is based on the presence of the Rwanda defense force who have together with the Mozambique forces been able to give the necessary stability.

As to the Mozambique defense force, it is not yet clear whether -- if Rwanda defense force and the SADC were not there, they would be capable. The reality, it shows that capacity is not yet there. And it will take years to come until Mozambique can with its own forces provide that stability.

So in the more general picture what has emerged in Northern Cabo Delgado is that today it is more an issue of law and order and capacity. Not only of the army but also of the police to ensure law and order particularly in relation to the aspects of organized crime and criminality and looting which is taking place also perpetrated by some sectors of the Mozambique defense -- of the Muslim defense forces.

And while at the beginning Mozambique in terms of response, it has resorted to

mercenary groups starting from the Russian mercenaries and then to South African mercenaries and they have been not capable of controlling the situation. The intervention now, it seems to be effective but again while it is effective in terms of controlling -- keeping the violent extremists at bay, there is now is the extent which the key grievances that have led to where we are today, they are being addressed in two aspects here.

One, is whether the government will move towards (inaudible). As the way to engage not only elements of the violent extremist organization but an inclusive dialogue which would bring all key stakeholders from different spheres. The (inaudible) Mozambican based leads, and the locally leads, et cetera, into a framework where grievances they can be addressed.

I'm not saying that has started the situation where we are today but it has created an enabling environment for the violent extremist organization to start its activities and to try to do the point of beating them for almost four and a half years without being addressed.

And also, the issue of how the IDPs and how the development is going to take place. How inclusive is that going to be as a way of bringing everyone to participate, but also and importantly to address those key grievances that have contributed significantly as I've indicated to where we are today.

Everyone is expecting for the private sector to resume activities. We have seen it in the past in the beginning of the year, in March when the international oil company, Sasol rush to the -- to resume the activities and then we had the attack at Palma and all went back to where it was.

So looking at -- zooming in to what is happening today, it would be perhaps an opportunity to use the stability. Not to rush. To resume activities, but to address some of the fundamental root causes that have brought us to where we are today. But as I've started by saying, Cabo Delgado is stable comparing to where we were in the past four years. We have to say that the international deployment has contributed significantly into bring Cabo Delgado into a situation of military stability.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you very much. This is a great overview of where we are today. And you started talking about the root causes which is of great transition to the questions that I

would like to pose to Mr. Mahtani.

To give us more of a background of how we got in Mozambique to the state that we are today? And more importantly, perhaps where we were in the Spring and Summer when the situation seemed quite dire and we were spinning out of control very rapidly. Dino, what are the details of the root causes in the country? And also, what are the international dimensions of the conflict?

MR. MAHTANI: Thanks. Yeah, so I will take the audience through three sort of contributing factors to the evolution of this conflict.

One, I suppose is the evolution itself of grievances that came out of the post-liberation era in Northern Mozambique in Cabo Delgado. Secondly, the recent resource boom and the feelings of grievances that have already been whipped up by that stage then feeding into -- or being fed by the boom in natural resources particularly gas and mining.

And thirdly, as you say, there's an international dimension to this in two senses. One, the return from the '90s and the growing sort of escalation of salafist ideologies that were brought back into Mozambique as was sent out to -- across the Arab world to be schooled in Islam. Returned back to Mozambique in the '90s and then fed the environment with forms of Salafism that were then picked up and then misused frustrated bands of youth.

The second dimensions of that international dimension is the overall dynamic that we see in the Swahili coast, which is sort of from the '90s and stemming from the networks that were embolden at the time and connected to Al-Qaeda East Africa and radical clerics such Aboud Rogo, the Kenyan cleric who was killed in 2012.

There was a spreading throughout the region enmeshing itself also in al-Shabab Somalia, which is an Al-Qaeda franchise and not to be confused with what is known in Mozambique also locally as al-Shabab.

But those networks over the last 20 years have spawned also a regional network of young men who have been involved in various terrorist attacks in Kenya, in Uganda, in East Africa generally, in Somalia, of course. And a big proportion or a significant proportion of the Mozambique

insurgency turns out to be Tanzanians and even a smaller number of Kenyans who became the sort of foreign components of that.

So just to go through all of these sorts of one by one. I mean Cabo Delgado itself was the, you know, birthplace to Mozambique in its liberation. And so, after the liberation war, this province which also then, you know, happened to be 2,000 kilometers away from the capital, became the preserve of various elites who monopolized and captured both the political and business spaces in Cabo Delgado in this far away distant province.

And in the post-liberation environment, you know, we saw the development of a political economy in Cabo Delgado that was something of a wild West that became also the repository for, you know, massive amounts of heroin trafficking, coming through and controlled by powerful elites in that region. And it became an economy that was exploited by those who were privileged enough to have the power to do so. Who were also corrupted and permitted to exploit that economy?

And over time, that has also sort of fed into some of the social economic and asymmetries that have developed in Cabo Delgado. A lot of people point to poverty, but of course the human development and indicators are sometimes even worse than the neighboring province is then Cabo Delgado itself.

So poverty on its own is a simplistic explanatory factor to this. But rather it's a sort of inequity of the political economy and the political system that drove, you know, drove many youth particularly from the coastal in one community and also the ethnic Makua from the interior of Mozambique against those, predominantly Muslim against those who they associated with the power in Maputo.

And of course, by that I mean the Makonde tribe of President Nyusi which is a major ethnic community in Cabo Delgado itself. That's not to paint this as an ethnic conflict. And we should not do that. It's definitely not a factor in driving people to conflict. But it is definitely an explainer of -- or you can see the trends of the recruitment from the (inaudible) particular into this insurgency.

So you have this sort of asymmetry that was characterized the political economy of Cabo Delgado. And to some extent, you know, it is also worth noting that a large proportion of the (inaudible)

also were (inaudible) supporters. So there is that sort of queries that political dimension to this.

Then you have the resource boom and the development of -- or the finding of massive gas reserves that have, of course, very well known about and that have attracted billions of dollars of investment. And also, the development of ruby mines which attracted also a number of artisanal miners and foreigners who after 2017 were expelled from those mines in the west of the province from Montepuez district. Which actually is not one of the districts that is associated with this particular conflict.

But out of those mines poured, expelled miners. Some of whom during the course of our research and which made it into a report in June, published by Crisis Group on the insurrection. A number of the boys who were expelled from those mines ended up in the insurrection itself. These were young men who were selling perhaps some of their rubies into the trading networks mostly to (inaudible) avoid the prior town, which is one of the key constituencies of the Kimwani community.

And then the third dimension which is this Swahili coast dimension. Around the time of the start of this insurrection in 2017. In parallel to what we associate as the time where the first shots were fired in Cabo Delgado, you also had the escalation of crackdowns, particularly security crackdowns which particularly in Tanzania culminating also in that year where the security forces went off the various jihad networks in Tanzania.

You had long associations with the Al-Qaeda, East African networks and those connected also to al-Shabab Somalia. And at that time, we understand that many of those who fled those crackdowns also then fled into Mozambique. But also, as it happens, an escalating number of them that also moved into the Democratic Republic of Congo where they also found new possibilities to join new conflicts in North Kevin province where the ally democratic forces which happens to also be an on group (inaudible) Islamic state right now.

And perhaps we can come back to this in the question and answers or in the next phase of the discussion. But that also will, you know, will now play an important role in explaining the threat level, the emerging threat level, the rising threat level that is now being delivered by the transnational network which is waiting to see how these military operations unfold.

So in a nutshell, those are to answer have been the key driving forces. I'll leave it there and hand back the floor.

MR. WILLIAMS: Terrific. Thank you so much. We will definitely come back to the transnational networks fled landscapes particularly as the United States is finding its way on how to reposition its counterterrorism responses abroad and certainly in Africa during the Biden administration.

Zenaida, you spoke about the international dimensions, the repercussions of crackdowns. Adriano spoke as well as (inaudible) about the socioeconomic inequities. Let me ask you about the human rights dimensions of the conflict on both sides. And please, give us a flavor really of what life has been like for communities as the violence had been escalating for several years and particularly this year.

MS. MACHADO: Thank you so much, Vanda, for this opportunity. Thank you for Dino and Adriano for these wonderful presentations prior to mine.

What I can say is that the human rights situation in Mozambique and in Cabo Delgado in particular has deteriorated even further this year. And this is despite the military gains that Adriano talked about which have the result of the intervention international forces improving those from Rwanda and from the Southern Africa development community, (inaudible).

As of September this year, the Mozambique (inaudible) in the United Nations (inaudible) were estimating that over 800,000 people were displaced. Of those 84 percent lived in temporary accommodations provided by those communities across the country. Only nine percent of them were in government camps. Across Cabo Delgado, Cotogna, (inaudible) and Nampula Provinces.

In July the U.N. worked with problem. One that not in Mozambique could face in the coming years amongst an under crisis because most of the fundings that have been displaced have not had access to the accounts to cultivate for the next (inaudible) culture season. And because of those that own the area continue to (inaudible) of the violence and some are still fleeing.

As in the last year, this year again humanitarian groups have been unable to reach for

those in need especially in areas that is related in Palma, (inaudible). It was only in September this year that the WSD and some other few groups managed to resume the supply of food to Palma. This is after six months.

Displaced people continue to (inaudible) to lack of conditions in the camps that were set up by the government, including lack of privacy, food, medical care and trauma care, especially for women who have witnessed a range of abuses including beheadings of their relatives, kidnapping of their children, sexual abuse. There are also allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse of women in exchange of human aide.

Mozambiquan security forces have been implicated in allegations of human race violations during the (inaudible) including intimidation, ill treatment of displaced people, use of excessive force against civilians and extortion. We have documented cases where displaced people accuse government forces deployed to Palma in March or forcing distressed residents to pay bribes in exchange for a seat on the planes.

As of now, the government of Mozambique is not taking any publicly known step to investigate these abuses or punish those implicated. It is also concerning to us that despite the intervention of the military forces from SADC and Rwanda which are widely considered more disciplined and prepared for this type of counterterrorism operations. The narrative continues to be about how many insurgents have been killed rather than how many have been captured, arrested, formally charged and waiting for a trial.

We as human rights have also documented serious abuses by the (inaudible) group known as (inaudible) or locally called (inaudible) al-Shabab including war crimes. Among those killings of civilians in many cases beheadings, kidnapping of women and children, destruction of property including schools and (inaudible).

We also found evidence that the al-Shabab fighters are using hundreds of kidnapped women and girls in forced marriage and sex slavery. Some of the women were also released after their family paid a huge sum of money in ransom. The group was also implicated and we have published on

that in kidnapping of boys and subsequently using them to fight the government which is a violation of the international provision of use of child soldiers.

I know that at the beginning there have been various military gains and again I'll also mention them made the government forces with the international partners. We continue to advocate that both United States and European trainings nations that the U.S. one is already in Mozambique, the European one is arriving now in December. Should include the component of human rights, justice and accountability.

Hopefully by doing so in the near future, we will have the Mozambiquan force better prepared to assist, protect civilians while respecting the rights of detainees and suspected militants during the counterterrorism operations. It is disappointing, however, to see that humanitarian and social part of this conflict has not progressed at the same level of the military one. Until last week, for example, discussions about the oppression of the disaster with partners and response mechanism were still ongoing.

This center was launched in July at the same time that the military site was launched. But it will only be fully established only after two terms of the state (inaudible dog barking) have endorsed and signed the MOU. And that's problematic because as we approach the rain season, the risk we have against displaced people, civilians become even bigger. We know that the rain might considerably limit the army soldiers' movements on the ground and (inaudible) especially on (inaudible) and Palma. Depending on the intensity of the rain as we have seen in the past, we could see destruction of road access to areas of conflict or areas where lots of people, displaced people run to which could make it harder for humanitarian aid to reach people in need.

And last but not least, rain season in Mozambique and particularly often comes with its own disaster management challenges. And now our fear is that this could still (inaudible) and the fuel resources that have been allocated to the current humanitarian crisis that has been caused by this four yearlong conflict. So I will stop now, Vanda, and maybe engage later.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Well thank you very much, Ms. Machado for bringing those

dimensions. I want to highlight just one data point that you mentioned. 800,000 displaced, 84 percent without being in government camps. 800,000 displaced in a country like Mozambique is a serious challenge. And the international community is preoccupied with humanitarian crises elsewhere in Africa in places like Ethiopia, obviously in the (inaudible) region, elsewhere in the world like Afghanistan. But the suffering and the challenges in Mozambique just in terms of the humanitarian dimension remain very significant.

Professor Nuvunga, let me return to you and then also Mr. Mahtani and Ms. Machado and explore with you more the policy responses. Let me start with you by asking about managing the resources in the way that they'll allow for greater equity. What is a popular (inaudible) called addressing the root causes. You started exploring that Mr. Mahtani spoke in great detail about the exploitation frenzy in Cabo, it's inequality that capture by elite.

What can and should be done now to start addressing those issues and is there in fact any recognition on the part of the government of Mozambique and the elite in Mozambique as well as the multinational companies that operate there. That resolving the underlying socioeconomic inequity, the inability to participate in the richest resources have brought there have contributed to the militancy.

MR. NUVUNGA: Thank you very much. Indeed, that is the biggest issue at the moment in Cabo Delgado. In the sense that if we look at today root causes of these conflicts, it speaks to an elite eccentric extractivism of natural resources. Elite eccentric extractivism. Which is not developmental and it has denied development to local communities and it does disenfranchise the young people. And that is overall a violation of human rights because development it's a right on its own.

So if you are asking what can be done, think a lot of actors here have a lot to do including the international private sector. From the government side, there is a need to change policy from an elite eccentric extractivism to a more developmental oriented extractivism. And by extractivism, I'm not only talking about oil and gas, I'm talking about minerals, (inaudible) minerals. Ruby and other minerals. Cabo Delgado is one of the rich provinces of this country but is one of the most neglected marginalized and unequal. And that state of affairs, it does allow elites to distribute among themselves the wealth of

that province.

What is next to us that we can realistically do as part of addressing the conflict in the next months. And that's where perhaps you have more the possibility of a public and private sector dialogue is around local content, local content. If you asked total today, how much money have they spent in local content, they would say they have spent around a billion dollars in local content.

Then you ask them, where is that money? They will say that money it was captured by the Maputo eccentric elites. Now look Maputo is 2010 minutes flight from Palma, almost from Amsterdam to (inaudible). And the local elites, they haven't felt that they have benefitted of local content policy which is not in fact in place.

So we need international private sector to understand that the world has changed in that it's no longer extracting and gold. It is about using resources, contributed for local development in a robust engagement with local stakeholders, local communities and benefit from it. And that has not yet been the case. Even the local content that has benefitted some of the Cabo Delgado eccentric, it hasn't been local local. We need a local local content policy that will enable Cabo Delgado centric elites to participate meaningfully in what is happening in the province because we forget something important.

Gas is different from oil. When you discover oil, you just pipe and send to market. Gas it's a million-dollar term and a billion-dollar investment. So people see and hear everyday billions of dollars were invested from TV et cetera but on their plate, there is nothing to eat. So we need a shift at the policy level from Maputo leadership to understand that when we announce billions, those have to reflect in the livelihoods of the people, all the young people and allow local stakeholders to an inclusive and transparently participate in those processes.

And I think that here is where the Brookings can make an important contribution in bringing international private sector to also shift from extracting end goal but also engage leadership in Mozambique in order to move. What is said though is that I haven't seen much of that learning governors. No, no, no.

If you look at what's happening, four and a half years after the start of the violent extremists, you

don't see, I haven't seen up until now a policy change resulting of observing the lessons from what happened and the root causes and addressing them at the policy level. That we haven't seen and that needs to be changed, needs to be addressed if we are to start a new path of an inclusive local development addressing human rights and allowing business to prosper an international and domestic private sector to make what they know best which is business.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you very much. Very important urging and something that we all need to be paying attention to. Something that has also been frequently a challenge in conflict. Where even when the militancy is suppressed, getting to more equitable distribution of resources. Getting to development in communities that have been marginalized even as they sit on top of significant resources has been a major challenge in many conflicts around the world. In Africa but also in places like Colombia and Myanmar and hence conflict festers and morphs in different ways.

Dino, you know, at the beginning, Adriano told us that the intervention of SADC and Rwandan defense forces, have produced a stabilization of the militancy. The militancy is now controlled. That is certainly important. I wonder and would like to reflect with you how that -- how lasting and how much one can build on this improvement. You work in Nigeria, I worked in Nigeria. You covered other regions of Africa for the International Crisis Group.

And we have seen in many conflicts, in Somalia, in Nigeria that the external intervenors scores important successes, it drives the government, mobilizes, and scores important successes. There seem to be progress in the so-called clearing phase of militancy. The holding becomes a real struggle, and the building part never materializes, and conflicts becomes intrenched, wars escalate like has been happening in Somalia, like has been happening in Nigeria.

Please tell us, you know, what do you think needs to happen now with the military intervention. Where we are and are we really in a situation when the external intervener, Rwanda, will end up being stuck in Mozambique as well for a long time to come.

MR. MAHTANI: Thank you. Yeah, I mean in a nutshell, there is a risk that this turns into, you know, another intractable forever type of war. And I mean let me just start by saying and also

echoing what Dr. Nuvunga was saying. There's no question, absolutely no question that the military intervention has succeeded in disrupting the militant group taking back important territories, stabilizing parts, important parts of the province including the Palma to Mozambique's prior access. And giving the chance of tens of thousands of people to return to their homes.

But it's almost like this is the easy part that's been done. Now what happens next is going to be absolutely critical. There's still hundreds of thousands of people displaced. Look very carefully also at the public announcements of the authorities involved in this military campaign. There was an announcement the other day on another webinar by Rwandan officials that they've killed up to about 100 terrorists. That's a small dent in an armed group that at its height was possibly estimated somewhere along the lines of 4000 people if included all of the porterage and other ancillary units that were perhaps not direct fighting units. But still, a small amount that's really being claimed as being neutralized at this point.

I'm actually going to give the military intervention more credit because actually according to some of the defector accounts that we've heard there has been probably a loss of about a thousand, possibly more elements from the insurgency itself. So it's diminished in capacity but a lot of that has to do with the fact that militants are simply scattered, they've melted back into the communities or they've, you know, put their weapons on the ground and drifted also into IDP camps into displacement camps. And then they're sitting and waiting now to see what will happen.

And while the population is also not fully moving back to liberated or so-called liberated areas, conversations are going on in these camps in these locations between young men who, you know, by night were militant by day or another comparison who were once militant. But who are now sitting in IDP camps which themselves can if things go wrong become recruitment pools for the next phase of the insurgency?

And so what the expectation is of the people but also of the civilians but also young men who might otherwise be persuaded to hold onto their guns, everybody is waiting for the response now. What is going to be besides the military response, what is going to be the response of the government.

It is notable that there is a military response but that doesn't seem to be a demobilization, you know, classic DDR response. Government has paid lip service to it. There isn't such a thing as a defector program. There needs to be conversations as to what degree amnesty can be used as a tool and where do you set the threshold of that. Because certainly, those who are involved in the worst egregious crimes need to be brought to justice as well.

But without those kinds of conversation, you don't have the exit corridor that could certainly play a role in draining the swamp if you'd like to use that terminology around the militants. So, you know, military operations are unlikely, and I've heard this from the Mozambiquan authorities themselves going to be able to eradicate this problem. Which is essentially a problem of the grass roots of grass roots societal issues that have blown up in this perfect storm.

And you just can't sort of shoot your way out of that problem. You have to fix the problem from whence it came. And yeah, so military operations but no demobilization or defector strategy that is emerged.

Then you also have development in the mobilization of hundreds of millions of dollars possibly more by the World Bank and its partners. As the gearing up to support the government to now intervene by various programs and strategies that are being developed by the government to start inserting into liberated areas, projects, money that can be used to deliver services to also resettle families.

But there is also a question there about whether that development initiative is really rooted in a political strategy. There is sort of discussion at the moment of some sort of government backed reconciliation unit that I've started hearing about which in theory could play a role in brokering the kinds of conversations. As we mentioned in our report in the policy section of our June report.

To broker the kinds of conversations that would need to happen on the ground between the state and the communities. Who are essentially the pools of society from which militants have also been recruited from? To find, you know, an accommodation between, you know, as regards to how this money is spent so that it doesn't -- so that the development doesn't, and this is the mistake that's also

being made in the Sahel.

Where you also have Islamic state franchises, you know, continuing to expand and inflict terrible abuses on the population. You put in development but without a conversation about how that money is spent, you inflame the perception that this money is now being channeled through patronage networks and into projects that don't necessarily directly benefit the people. Let's hope it doesn't get to that stage. I mean there's still a lot of good work that's being done. I don't want to sound as if I'm saying that these development efforts aren't worthy. They very much are, and they're needed but they need to be channeled in a way that are embedded within a political social dialogue that needs to take place at the same time.

If this does not happen, there are great consequences. Because we're not just talking about a non-group that is operating in a vacuum in Mozambique. It's part of a regional conflict system which I'm going to describe now in a few minutes. And what seems to be happening is the risk that is emerging is that if the root causes are not treated, if there is an honorable way out for fighters that gives them a chance to reintegrate back into society. And that process is not underwritten with development and social dialogue such as I've described. And if they continue to feel as if their backs are pushed up against a wall, they will turn towards the extremists.

And we know from the research that we've done, there was a significant component in the, you know, the height of the insurgency 2020 to 2021. That came from abroad. The Tanzanian's especially but a smaller number of Kenyan's. We also heard about Somali's and other nationalities from the Great Lakes. And I'm actually presently in the Great Lakes at the moment looking at the very connections between Mozambique and conflicts on this side of the continent.

And there are connections. There have been Mozambiquans who have traveled to Eastern Congo to get training. You would have read about a Jordanian suspect who was arrested in Congo traveling through Tanzania. On his way through Tanzania, he may have met some Mozambiquans and given them some instructions.

So there's a lot of cross over taking place. You know, the bomb plots that are being

uncovered in Uganda and Rwanda that have connections both to Eastern Congo and possibly to Mozambique. The Kenyan authorities are also raising the terrorist alert right now. I've been based in Kenya for a long time, and I've never seen so many security alerts popping up of this nature, including of, you know, threats of improvised explosive devices that can be detonated here and there.

And this knowledge, what we're starting to see is the development of a financial recruitment and IED proliferation network in East Africa connected to these two theaters of conflict, Mozambique, and Eastern Congo. That involve Kenyans and Tanzanians and other Swahili coast nationalities. Who are spreading the knowledge about how to, you know, set off bombs in public places?

And if the solutions are not found in Mozambique, they will bide their time, they will wait for the military operations, the military response to go static as it's starting to do. Because you have the kinetic phase where the insurgents have been pushed aside and some of them killed. Now they're going to regroup and come back using asymmetric tactics and this is a play book that we've seen time and time again in other theaters of conflict.

And so, to circle back to, you know, I don't want to exaggerate also the globalist terrorist network. I think that's also a very unhealthy tendency to portray this all as Islamic state. It's not. We made it very clear that you have Mozambiquan boys who tend to be fighters of the al-Shabab who are willing to put down their guns or walk away from conflict if they don't get paid.

Whereas you do also have the harden jihadists particularly from abroad who are also trying to exploit this conflict and there needs to be solutions for both these problems. I think the Mozambiquan, the best solution for Mozambique right now is to address those grievances. Defector program and dialogue accompanying development, otherwise you risk getting embedded in a forever war where, you know, the military partners of the Mozambiquan state will be facing what AMISOM has been facing in Somalia for the last 10 years.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you, Dino. Again, excellent transition to Ms. Machado. I am glad you raised the issue of the defector's programs. Something that I in partnership with the United Nations University have studied in great detail in Somalia, in Nigeria, in Iraq and various parts of the

world. And something that is important but often very challenged and a lot of lessons to be learned in what works, what doesn't, what are the limitations.

But the overarching point that you are raising, Mr. Mahtani, about not overestimating the capacity of military responses to decimate an insurgency and accompanying it with a variety of other policies like defector's program is really a fundamental one. And Ms. Machado, I would like to go here with you.

In what we have seen in many conflicts, counterterrorism responses around the world over the past 20 years including in African context is precisely very significant over militarization of the conflict even as often the military struggle in fact is inadequate and problematic. But also very harsh legal responses and sort of very harsh attitude of no mercy, no reconciliation with the alleged terrorists and the support networks.

This has been dramatically playing out in context like Nigeria in response to Boko Haram, an Islamic state in West Africa. What are your thoughts about transitional justice issues, defectors programs, some sort of legal leniency, perhaps amnesty that Dino spoke about. Are there ways to both address human rights violations by oversight but also provide some incentives to disengage from the battlefield. And any other elements of the policy response that you see as lacking.

MS. MACHADO: Thank you so much, Vanda. I think when we talk about Mozambique, we shouldn't forget that it's a country with many challenges. It's by far the first the first challenge the country is facing and by far the first conflict. This is a country that (inaudible) amnesty deals following conflict. Most three of them were consolation conflict.

Next year there will be elections. The year after there will be elections and we don't know what will happen after those elections. And will probably count for five and then six amnesty deals and then if we count (inaudible) as well the way we are suggesting amnesty, that would be 7 and then 8 and then 10. And then we are slowly building a state of (inaudible) which has been our concern for some years now. The lack of justice and accountability for crimes and abuses that are committed.

When we talk about a legal process in Mozambique, we have to start from where did we

ever hear the government making a public pledge to investigate the crimes and abuses. And them hold community meetings to consult the communities about what they want on their future. To hear from the civil society, what are the best options for the country.

Quite often, what we have seen following the conflicts is there are two parts sitting down privately and deciding on their fate and the fate of the entire Mozambiquan community. And most times, that fate or that agreement that we reached only benefits the two of them.

We can go back in history to the most recent conflict before Cabo Delgado which was the one in (inaudible) between the government and the position party that at the time still had a military wing that is now in the process of disarming. People had their houses destroyed. Many people were killed and a known number of people were killed. And a non-number of people were forceable disappeared.

I personally spoke to women who have not seen their husbands for years and they don't know what to do with the husband's clothes in the house because they have not informed what the state of the husband. Have they died, have they been arrested, have they run away?

And when we look at the solution, the government and the opposition party have come up for specifically (inaudible) was a peace deal. A disarmament process and an integration of the (inaudible). We haven't heard about justice and accountability for the times implemented, instead what we heard was that they are going to be given a blank amnesty.

We also haven't heard about conversation to those people that were affected by the conflict. And my fear with Cabe Delgado is that when we start talking about amnesty is we seem to forget that this conflict is more than just about the government and the militants. It's also about the people that were affected. And lots of people that have been displaced, 800,000 people displaced. They had their own land.

I don't think I need to explain a lot about what it means to having your own 100-meter land and within 24 hours being forced to abandon all of that and to go live in a place in a tent of just 1 meter, 2 meters by 2 meters. Where you can barely go to the toilet without being seen by the next neighbor who is also staying in a tent. And most of them or at least many of them might not be able to recover or they

don’t what is their situation at the moment.

So before we talk about amnesty for the members of the group or for the soldiers or police officers that might have been involved in crime and abuses, we also need to talk about how to reconcile with the communities. How to make sure that these type of groups like the al-Shabab don’t continue to grow and be able to recruit in the communities because the communities don't trust the state. They are angry at the way they have been treated and they are hopeless and therefore not able to even collaborate.

So people need to be compensated. First, before even conversations they need to feel that they are safe. They need to be given the basic resources to recover. I mentioned medical care. I think it's unacceptable that over 80 percent of the displaced people are not even receiving direct help from the government because they are staying with host communities or they're staying with friends.

I have spoken to people in Palma that are accommodating in their house over 50 people that they don’t know and never heard of them before. They accommodated one (inaudible) brought 10 people along. So they need to be given the conditions, basic conditions, food, water, medical care, their children need to go back to school. They need to be provided with education, they need to be given land or provided with an opportunity to go back to where they are coming from to their land.

And on top of that, they need to be compensated for their loss. They need to see justice and accountability for the atrocities that they have witnessed. It's an unaccepted that a country that respects or claims to respect the rule of law has had so many conflicts over its history but very little accountability and justice for the crimes committed.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you very much, Zenaida. Those are very important words, and I am reminded of the two extremes that the transitional, so-called transitional justice mechanisms sometimes swing between just blanket amnesty we spoke about. Often perpetuating many forms of accountability and problems. The so-called high value deflector program in Somalia immediately comes to mind. Or alternatively just blanket rejections of any kind of leniency sending every alleged member even if membership meant simply paying (inaudible) to an execution squad. Equally and

honestly problematic and at various times already today still playing out again in places like Somalia and Nigeria.

And I'm also really would like to reemphasize your very important point about the need for dialogue with communities about what kind of defectors programs, what kind of leniency, what kind of alternative, imaginative accountability mechanisms can be built into so that brutalized communities have the sense of justice in the absence of simply death penalty or very lengthy imprisonment that creates for alleged members that creates its own problems. And the need for community voices, community level work as opposed to trying to impose such programs from afar.

I am going to start taking questions from the audience. I have been already folding them into my conversations with our extraordinary panelists today. Please continue to submit questions. Let me, we'll start with you, Professor Nuvunga. Several of the questions that have come in, quite a few actually, raise the question that we started exploring in different ways are asking about really what next.

And asking about the chances that the insurgents and the militancy in Caba Delgado will become decentralized. One of our audience members has written, the rebellion in Cabo Delgado is almost entirely vanquished at this point, something that we have been exploring. Is that, in fact, the case or not? Yet both in Mozambique's War of Independence and Civil War a vanquished regional rebellion morphed in a decentralized all out multi-regional insurgency.

This was the case with FRELIMO again, in the war against the Portuguese. This was later the case with RENAMO against the central government. What do we do to avoid that? We have spoken about some dimensions but would you like to elaborate on that issue? Quite a few questions are asking about that next space, how to avoid an entrenchment fragmentation. And I would add to that, what are the chances that militancy fragmented morph perhaps would spread to other parts of Mozambique such as southern communities in Mozambique?

MR. NUVUNGA: Indeed. There are so many questions but I think it's important to acknowledge that after four and a half years, Cabo Delgado is militarily stable. It has been difficult to be there and the government response it has on the one hand fueled the violent extremists. And the growth

in terms of confidence and capacity of the violent extremist's organization I would like to mention here.

The use of the groups like the violent groups like the South African mesna (phonetic) that has been a disastrous response. But now seems to be I wouldn't say okay because we have RDF on the one hand and we have SADC. From a civil society perspective, we would have wanted to have RDF coming under the vein of SADC not having this parallel. Because it might have led into stability now but it is going to be problematic to handle this the way it is now.

But back to your question as to what is next. What is next would be to set things right. Set things right means utilizing the existing governance architectures. Government has put in place ADIN. They integrated urgence of development. Governments should use that. At the beginning we're critical about it because we thought it was corrupt but there have been changes and we commended those changes.

So we think most of the response it should go fire ADIN as a way of allowing institutionalized channel of assistance to IDPs past and then move into issues of inclusive development and overall a policy of an inclusive development sort of framework which is not yet there. And we don't see it happening.

What we see is that the IDPs are not properly being handled. We don't see proper channels when people who have opportunity to come out and say I was a victim of this and I want to come out, I want to participate. So allowing humanitarian spaces for victims to come out. But we more and more hear is the killing of violent extremists, military killing is the issue of dismantling of bases et cetera.

This is good but from the humanitarian, international humanitarian law perspective, it will be important to see that happening. We don't see and this it can in the short medium become a problem and importantly to allow like ICFC to follow this. We don't see this happening the way that we would like to see it.

But overall as I've indicated, seeing things right it means putting in place a comprehensive dialogue mechanism. A comprehensive dialogue mechanism. At the moment, we are

doing a number of initiatives including the voluntary principle on security and human rights on one hand. On the other hand, we are putting in place a platform for dialogue for conflict resolution. But that is civically driven and government is participating and it has to be commended for that.

But this, from a civil society perspective, it's creating enabling environment to start comprehensive dialogue. But then it would need to be picked by those who have the powers and to convene important conversations including those who in a political economy perspective, who are the losers, who are the winners from local and national stakeholders. And who has the potential kind of (inaudible) et cetera. And all these it can be identified if government decided to move things right.

As I conclude, I would like to say that we have the feeling that with the consolidation of the military stability, government tends to move away from the initial openings of engagement and dialogue. More and more we see a kind of a policy in nature of the state emerging which it will (inaudible dropped audio) causes that brought us where we are today. And again, the international private sector has an important role to play.

I would like to tell some of our participants here that in the very same way that we have the FCPA which has been preventing corruptions overseas. We can also find ways of embracing in the international private sector those mechanisms that would allow them to engage local governments across Africa, Mozambique in particular, to understand the need of local development in an inclusive and participatory and transparent way. And this has systematically been failing in Mozambique in Cabo Delgado.

MR. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you.

MR. NUVUNGA: One last point. There is of course of these expanding across the country. Mozambique has a high level of fragility, has a high level of vulnerability. But in the form of violent extremism, we think that this is local to the northern Cabo Delgado region due to the elements that we have alluded to at the beginning, including mineral activity et cetera.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you very much. I am mindful of the time. We have 15 minutes left and so I am going to ask a question from the audience to each Dino and Zenaida and ask

you please to limit your responses to five minutes as we are coming close to the hour. But just would like to highlight one thing that Adriano had said on risks.

Namely, that as the military situation has stabilized, the willingness of governments to not focus on the issues of socioeconomic inequity, not focus on accountability, greater inclusion often disappears or at least wanes and become inadequate. And that's a major pitfall that needs to be avoided and the dialogue that Adriano spoke about, other mechanisms are very important in making sure this doesn't happen in Mozambique.

Dino, there are several questions about the funding of the insurgency. Questions specifically to elaborate on the heroin trade in the Cabo Delgado region. And also reflect on the nexus of illegal economies like wildlife trafficking and the insurgency. And for that matter, I would say nexus of illegals economies and government elites. So drugs, poaching, funding, over to you in five minutes, please.

MR. MAHTANI: Okay. It's yeah, it's not a straightforward picture by any means. In terms of the funding, of course, well very difficult to get an understanding of how an om groups gets its funding unless you're in that om group itself. But what we understand from some defectors, other investigators looking at financial flows and things like that there are a number of sources.

On the ground, we hear that from territory that was under their control there was a bit of timber smuggling going on connected to the insurgency at the time. But now it's difficult to say what the status of that is when they're on the run. Heroin smuggling was a completely different ballgame and, you know, is not directly, you know, connected to the insurgency. It was really a trade that was more dominated by local elites, business elites, protected elites.

There was some well, in a sense, the trade sort of was looked upon by some of the insurgents as evidence of the hypocrisy of the elites and things like this. And, you know, played its role in aggravating tensions. You know, why do some of these guys get to be well paid criminals and we have to hand over half our money from our daily catch of fish to the local, you know, check point. You know, sort of it played a role in the aggravation of the insurgency in a way.

There was some suspicion at the time when the insurgents took over parts of the coastline that they were trying to get their teeth into that trade. But it, you know, if there was any type of connection there it looks to have been short lived. I haven't looked into this to the extent that I can be 100 percent sure about that.

It is worth noting though that in the past, the UN and other bodies have done investigations 10 years ago where Tanzanian and other Swahili coast drugs networks and the fisherman that plied the waters between Tanzania and Mozambique were involved also. You know, on the one hand involved in being the vessel, the skiffs and speedboats that offloaded the heroin cargos from wooden dowls coming from as far away as Iran and Pakistan.

But offloading that cargo, you know, those fisherman smugglers who were involved in that were also involved in the smuggling of human fighters, of fighters rather from Tanzania to Somalia. And there are very detailed previous investigations on that. And some of those networks sort of connected to Mozambique at that time in 2012.

You know, it's a very mixed-up sort of criminal scene on the ground there and I guess, you know, links back to my very early point that I made in terms of the nature of Cabo Delgado's political economy is one that is sort of wild, wild west monopoly capture. You know, business barrens who control, you know, in very rough terms the mineral base of the political economy and then, you know, criminalize space where, you know, elites are also a big part of managing. And then what's left behind are pieces of the, you know, crumbs that aren't sufficient and that have led to feelings of again, of modernization. Thank you.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Great, fantastic, thank you. Zenaida, one question to you and then I will ask the same questions to all three of you as the last concluding question and ask you just to respond please in one minute. But first, Zenaida a question solely to you.

One of our audience members is asking about the role of the private sector in supporting the IVPs. In terms of corporate social responsibility, has there been any accommodation, any efforts to ease the condition of the IVPs and also about international donor agency? What is the support? You

spoke about the vastly inadequate support from the Mozambiquan government. Is there anyone else, private sector, international actors stepping up to that issue?

MS. MACHADO: Once again, thank you so much, Vanda. Let me first address just one point that Adriano raised. The issue we need to finalize efforts and support to ADIN, ADIN which is the Agency for Development of Northern Mozambique, a newly created organization.

I just wanted to make sure that we don't turn ADIN into some sort of super government of Mozambique. ADIN was created to address the economic and social groups of the conflict. So it was created to develop (inaudible). Not to sort out the problems that have been created by the conflict. And I think one of the ways to move forward is to somehow the Mozambiquan government together with international partners and (inaudible dropped audio) the government and ADIN is to maybe reorganize the terms of references of ADIN and ensure that it is very clear what is the role of ADIN and what is the role of the local government in Cabo Delgado.

Because what we are seeing is that ADIN is diverting funds, human resources to rebuild what was destroyed over the 40 years. And then it will take another maybe 5, 10 years to then address the root cause that actually might have led to this conflict. So what it means then it is we will be delaying on the task of addressing the reasons why countries like continue to emerge in Mozambique and parts of the continent.

I think my answer addressed the point on what donors can do to help. What private sector can do to help? I do appreciate the fact that the Mozambiquan crisis is competing to many other crises across the globe in Ethiopia, in Syria, in Iraq and many other cases across the globe that are facing similar humanitarian crises. But I think the opportunity private sector has in Mozambique is that this one is starting.

So there is still time to stop or at least to prepare the local communities to address it, to have less of a negative impact on their lives. And they can do that, for example, in the areas like Palma (inaudible) big investment is first it's a repetition of what has been said before. But it's never too much to repeat it again here to ensure that the dividend, the gains of that investment indeed go to the local communities to

make sure there is development in the areas.

Some of those places that we are talking about the names we have mentioned were at a place where there is very little infrastructure for the local communities. I think that's something the private sector can look at, reorganize their own terms of references and their social responsibility. And look at Mozambique not just as a normal destination for investment but a country that has got serios deep rooted problems that need to be addressed.

Because if they are not addressed and on those serious deep-rooted issues, we should include political exclusion, poverty, high levels of poverty. If those things are not addressed when those multi-nationals arrive in those communities then the chances are that they will keep fighting against the community itself and that's not good for them. It could end up ending in the crisis that we have seen happening across the northern side of (inaudible).

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you. Very important urging again that we are hearing repeatedly and that I hope is registering with everyone joining this conversation. I have one last question, the same question for all of you and I apologize that I can only give you one minute of response on an issue that's complex.

What is Rwanda's interest? Is Rwanda participating in this military intervention out of altruism and what are its key motivations? And what are the risks or not that the Rwandan forces might end up being both stuck in and addicted to being in the conflict like they were in the DRC. Maybe let me start with Dino, go to Adriano, and then end with Zenaida. And again, please one minute.

MR. MAHTANI: Well it's very difficult to say with any certainty. But, of course, Rwanda has its experience elsewhere on the continent as a sort of policeman in the Central African Republic, for example. And so it's protecting its international or its military credentials across the continent.

Of course, a lot of questions have been asked about how Rwanda will sustain financially this intervention if it's not receiving support from elsewhere. And, of course, the authorities in Kigali have been very clear that they are the ones who are picking up the tab for this. So there must be some sort of future gain down the road.

And, of course, it would be in any states interest that is intervening in a place like Cabo Delgado which is one of the most resource rich parts of the continent to perhaps have some sort of commercial agenda down the road. But I think that that is -- I mean we've -- I mean that is something that is well to put it mildly, common in the way that military interventions all over the world have worked in the past.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Excellent. Adriano, one minute, please. Your take. Adriano, is your mic muted? Well perhaps I can go to you, Zenaida, for one minute of your take on Rwanda, Rwanda's interest and then come back to Adriano.

MS. MACHADO: I think that the question from my side is I don't know what the Rwandan interest is. I know they're already in Mozambique and as such I can tell you what I would like them to do while they are here. Number one is to make sure that their operations are transparent, that they allow immediately independently go to Cabo Delgado and independently monitor their activities.

The second one is to respect human rights and (inaudible). And the third one and last for me would be to make sure that they too do not become a source of inactions of impunity and abuses against the civilians which are part of the rest of the Mozambiquan population.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Excellent. Adriano, is your mic working now? Your last one minute on Rwanda.

MR. NUVUNGA: Yes, Rwanda. They -- as I've indicated, unlike SADC which came here with a clear mandate emulating from the SADC assembly. In the case of Rwanda, it resulted over bilateral agreement with President Nyusi. That is a fragile agreement and we have seen it in other parts of Africa leading into problems.

So if President Kagame is to stick by the international humanitarian law, we want to know the terms of reference of their deployment as to what is the exit strategy. How much will the mission cost and when they will be back and go back home. Because these are a part of issues that have in other parts of Africa creating problems.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Excellent, indeed. The exit strategy has been an enormous challenge for many international intervenors sometimes at extraordinarily tragic outcomes as we have

been seeing this summer in Afghanistan and not good prospects in a place like Somalia. I very much hope that this will be avoided in Mozambique and the conversation today with our extraordinary speakers provided many important lessons, suggestions, recommendations for how to make sure Mozambique does not become (inaudible). That more equity inclusion accountability does come to the country and that in fact the exit out of the conflict and to more peace does take place.

I would like to thank very much Professor Nuvunga, Mr. Mahtani and Ms. Machado for joining us today sharing their extraordinary insights. I would like to thank all of our audience for the questions and participation. Our webinar will be posted on YouTube in a few hours and it will continue to be accessible.

And I hope you will all join us on November 22nd when the Brookings Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors and the Africa Security Initiative. We'll be exploring the issue of wildlife conservation biodiversity conservation in Africa after COVID and the nexus with organized crime and conflict. Thank you all very much.

* * * * *

CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

Carleton J. Anderson, III

(Signature and Seal on File)

Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia

Commission No. 351998

Expires: November 30, 2024