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## THE ROLE OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) IN ENDING MILITARY HOSTILITIES IN CABO DELGADO PROVINCE

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**Abstract:** The study investigates the role of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in ending military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province. Its general objective is to analyze the role of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in ending military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province; it was subject to the following objectives: specific, Contextualize the Southern African Development Community (SADC); Describe the causes of military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province; Evaluate the strategies adopted by SADC to end military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province; the study found that hostilities in Cabo Delgado result from socio-economic marginalization, with local communities excluded from the benefits of development, especially the exploitation of natural resources. Poverty and lack of jobs fuel dissatisfaction, creating an environment ripe for insurgency, exacerbated by extremist groups. The effects include a serious humanitarian crisis, with more than 900,000 displaced people and limited access to essential services, as well as the destruction of infrastructure. SADC has implemented military interventions and dialogue initiatives, but faces challenges in addressing the root causes of the conflict. Its action is crucial to promoting peace and strengthening local governance.

**Keywords:** Hostilities, Cabo Delgado and SADC.

## INTRODUCTION

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been instrumental in finding solutions to the armed conflict in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, which has intensified since 2017, resulting in a serious humanitarian crisis. Made up of 16 states, SADC has recognized the need to intervene to restore security in the region, considering the implications of the conflict for regional stability. In 2021, it sent a rapid response force mission to support the

Armed Forces of Mozambique, strengthening its military capacity and promoting dialogue and reconciliation. In addition to military intervention, SADC has promoted socio-economic development initiatives and collaborated with international organizations to ensure a sustainable approach to peace, highlighting the importance of regional cooperation in resolving conflicts and promoting stability.

The study on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in the resolution of hostilities in Cabo Delgado is of great relevance in several dimensions. Politically, it offers insights into SADC's effectiveness in promoting peace and security, as well as illuminating its influence on governance in Mozambique. Socially, the analysis of SADC's interventions helps to assess its impact on local communities and the reconciliation initiatives that promote social cohesion. Economically, the study identifies how SADC initiatives address underlying issues of conflict, contributing to socio-economic development and attracting investment. Academically, it enriches the literature on regional organizations in conflict and serves as a case study for future analysis. Scientifically, it promotes a multidisciplinary approach, integrating different fields of study and resulting in innovations in security policies. Professionally, the knowledge gained can be useful to those in NGOs and government agencies, fostering collaborative networks. Personally, understanding the role of SADC can increase civic awareness and inspire deeper engagement in social causes, promoting solidarity-oriented development.

Military hostilities refer to aggressive actions or behavior between armed forces, which can include combat, attacks, confrontations and war operations. These hostilities can occur between states or armed groups and generally involve the use of military force to achieve political, territorial or ideological objectives.

Hostilities can vary in intensity, from sporadic clashes to open warfare, and often result in significant consequences, such as destruction of infrastructure, loss of life, displacement of populations and humanitarian crises. The term is widely used in the context of armed conflicts, insurgencies and civil wars.

## PROBLEMATIZATION

The reason for this study relates to the following scenario: Cabo Delgado province in Mozambique has faced an alarming increase in military hostilities since 2017, resulting in one of the most serious humanitarian crises in southern Africa. The conflict, caused by factors such as poverty, social marginalization and the exploitation of natural resources, has involved insurgent groups attacking both civilians and security forces, generating forced displacement and the destruction of communities.

In this complex scenario, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has emerged as an important regional actor with a responsibility to promote peace and security. However, the effectiveness of its interventions raises crucial questions. SADC implemented a military mission in Cabo Delgado in 2021, aimed at supporting the Mozambican Armed Forces in the fight against insurgency. However, SADC's actions need to be evaluated in terms of their actual impact on hostilities, the security of local communities and the promotion of dialogue and reconciliation.

In addition, the integration of sustainable development strategies is fundamental to addressing the root causes of the conflict, creating an environment conducive to peace. Therefore, the central question is: **What is the role of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in ending military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province?**

## GENERAL OBJECTIVE

- Analyze the role of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in ending military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province;

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Contextualize the Southern African Development Community (SADC);
- Describe the causes of military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province;
- Evaluate the strategies adopted by SADC to end military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province;

## REVIEW

### BACKGROUND TO THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC)

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has its roots in the Southern African Development Conference (SADCC), established in 1980. The context for the formation of SADCC was marked by the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and the need to promote economic cooperation between the countries of the region. According to the former president of Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda, "SADCC was created to reduce economic dependence on South Africa and promote sustainable development in the region" (Kaunda, 1980).

The founding countries, including Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, collaborated on infrastructure and agricultural development projects, looking for ways to overcome the limitations imposed by the political situation.

## **Vision**

SADC aspires to a peaceful, prosperous and integrated region where citizens enjoy a high and sustainable standard of living. The aim is to create a regional community that is competitive on the global market and that is an engine for economic and social development.

## **Mission**

SADC's mission is to promote regional cooperation and economic integration, with a focus on sustainable development. This includes promoting peace and security, strengthening regional institutions and promoting trade and investment in the region. SADC also seeks to promote good governance and respect for human rights.

## **Objectives**

**Promoting peace and security:** SADC seeks to create a peaceful and stable environment in the region, combating violence and conflict through conflict resolution mechanisms and promoting cooperation between member countries.

**Developing regional integration:** SADC aims to create an integrated economic zone by facilitating trade between member countries, creating a free trade area and reducing trade barriers. This will promote economic growth and development in the region.

**Promoting economic growth and development:** SADC seeks to boost sustainable economic development in the region by promoting industry, infrastructure, agriculture and tourism, creating job opportunities and reducing poverty.

**Strengthening institutions and governance:** SADC strives to strengthen democratic institutions and governance in the region by promoting human rights, good governance, the rule of law and citizen participation.

## **CAUSES MILITARY HOSTILITIES IN CABO DELGADO PROVINCE**

The military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique, are driven by a combination of complex factors that include social, economic issues. and political Below is an analysis of the main reasons for these hostilities, with up-to-date quotes to help put the situation into context.

### **Social factors and marginalization**

The marginalization of local communities is one of the main drivers of the conflict. The exploitation of natural resources, such as gas and minerals, often does not bring direct benefits to the affected populations. As the International Crisis Group report (2021) noted, “socio-economic exclusion and lack of opportunities create fertile ground for insurgent recruitment” (International Crisis Group, 2021).

### **Poverty and Unemployment**

Cabo Delgado is one of the poorest regions in Mozambique. The high unemployment rate and lack of access to basic services contribute to discontent. According to the UN, “precarious socio-economic conditions are factors that fuel insurgency” (UN Security Council, 2022).

### **External Influence and Insurgency Networks**

The presence of organized insurgent groups, which may have links to regional terrorist networks, exacerbates the situation. A study by the Brookings Institution (2022) points out that “the insurgency in Cabo Delgado is part of a broader pattern of violent extremism in southern Africa, with transnational influences” (Brookings Institution, 2022).

## Weak Governance and Corruption

The lack of effective governance and endemic corruption in Mozambican institutions are also factors that fuel hostilities. According to Human Rights Watch (2023), “the perception of impunity and corruption in government contributes to distrust among the population and support for insurgent movements” (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

## Military Repression and Response

The government’s military responses, which are often violent and disproportionate, have exacerbated the situation. Amnesty International (2022) pointed out that “military operations in Cabo Delgado often result in human rights violations, leading to a spiral of violence” (Amnesty International, 2022).

## EFFECTS OF MILITARY HOSTILITIES IN CABO DELGADO PROVINCE

The military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique, have generated a series of profound and multifaceted effects, impacting both the local population and regional stability. Below are some of the main effects:

### Humanitarian crisis

**Forced Displacement:** Thousands of people have been forced to leave their homes in search of safety. It is estimated that more than 900,000 people have been displaced since the conflict began in 2017.

**Limited Access to Basic Services:** Insecurity has hampered access to essential services such as health, education and food. Many communities face hunger and acute malnutrition.

## Socio-economic impact

**Destruction of Infrastructure:** The violence resulted in the destruction of infrastructure, including schools, hospitals and roads, hampering economic recovery.

**Loss of Livelihood:** Insecurity has affected agriculture and fishing, the main sources of livelihood for local communities, leading to increased poverty and unemployment.

## Violation of human rights

**Abuses and Violence:** Reports of abuses, such as extrajudicial killings, sexual violence and forced recruitment of young people by insurgent groups, have increased during the conflict.

**Criminalization of Resistance:** The government’s military operations have also been criticized for human rights violations, further alienating the local population.

## Regional destabilization

**Risk of Conflict Spillover:** Instability in Cabo Delgado could affect security in neighboring countries, such as Tanzania and Malawi, due to geographical proximity and the possibility of insurgent groups spreading.

**Challenges for SADC:** The conflict represents a test for the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which seeks to promote peace and security in the region.

## Changes in Social Dynamics

**Community Fragmentation:** The conflict has generated divisions within communities, with mistrust between different social and ethnic groups, which can hinder reconciliation efforts.

**Radicalization:** Marginalization and lack of opportunities can contribute to the radicalization of young people, making them more susceptible to recruitment by insurgent groups.

## STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY SADC TO END MILITARY HOSTILITIES IN CABO DELGADO PROVINCE

The Southern African Development Community's (SADC) intervention in Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique, reflects an attempt to address a complex conflict that began in 2017. SADC has adopted several strategies, which can be assessed from different perspectives

### Direct military intervention

In 2021, SADC sent a rapid response force to support the Mozambican Armed Forces in the fight against insurgency.

**Assessment:** The initial operation was able to regain control of some areas, temporarily reducing the violence. According to the SADC report, "SADC forces played a key role in the immediate stabilization of the region" (SADC, 2021). However, the insurgency has not been eradicated. As pointed out by the International Crisis Group (2022), "the military approach alone is not enough to resolve the root causes of the conflict" (International Crisis Group, 2022).

### Promoting Dialogue and Reconciliation

SADC has sought to facilitate dialogue between the Mozambican government and local communities, as well as promoting reconciliation initiatives.

**Assessment:** Dialogue is essential to address issues of trust. SADC has stated that "a focus on dialog initiatives can help restore confidence in institutions" (SADC, 2021). The limited inclusion of local community representatives has been a recurring criticism. Human Rights Watch (2023) noted that "without the voice of affected communities, reconciliation efforts can appear impostor-like" (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

## Socio-economic development

SADC has promoted development initiatives to deal with the socio-economic causes of the conflict.

**Assessment:** Promoting development is fundamental. The UN stresses that "addressing socio-economic issues is essential for sustainable peace" (UN Security Council, 2022). However, the implementation of projects faces delays and a lack of funding. The Brookings Institution (2022) points out that "the investments needed for economic development are not keeping pace with the urgency of the crisis" (Brookings Institution, 2022).

### Regional and international collaboration

SADC has collaborated with the African Union and other international organizations for a more coordinated approach.

**Assessment:** This collaboration can bring resources and expertise. The African Union emphasizes that "a coordinated response is essential to address the transnational challenges of insurgency" (AU, 2022). However, the different agendas of member countries can complicate implementation. SADC faces "difficulties in aligning varied interests among member states" (AU, 2022).

### Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

Implement monitoring mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies.

**Evaluation:** Monitoring is vital for adjusting strategies. SADC must "establish clear indicators to measure the progress and effectiveness of interventions" (SADC, 2021). The lack of reliable data and access to conflict areas limits this evaluation. As Amnesty International (2022) noted, "without clear data, it is difficult to assess the impact of actions" (Amnesty International, 2022).



## **ROLE OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) IN ENDING MILITARY HOSTILITIES IN CABO DELGADO PROVINCE**

SADCs role 'in ending military hostilities in Province Cabo Delgado is multifaceted and involves various approaches and interventions. Here are the main aspects of this role:

### **Military intervention**

SADC sent a rapid response force mission in 2021 to support the Mozambican Armed Forces in the fight against insurgency. This intervention aimed to regain control of strategic areas and reduce immediate violence. SADC highlighted that "the mission was crucial in stabilizing the situation in several localities" (SADC, 2021).

### **Promoting Dialogue and Reconciliation**

SADC has promoted dialog initiatives between the Mozambican government and the affected communities. This approach seeks to restore confidence in institutions and facilitate reconciliation. As mentioned by SADC, "the inclusion of all stakeholders is essential for lasting peace" (SADC, 2021).

### **Socio-economic development**

Recognizing that the causes of the conflict are deep-rooted, SADC promotes development projects aimed at improving the living conditions of local communities and reducing poverty. The UN emphasizes that "socio-economic development is fundamental to ensuring long-term stability" (UN Security Council, 2022).

### **Regional and international collaboration**

SADC collaborates with the African Union and other international organizations to address insurgency in a coordinated manner. This collaboration is vital to integrate efforts and resources. The AU emphasizes that "a unified response is essential to address the transnational challenges of extremism" (AU, 2022).

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Implementing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is crucial in order to adjust strategies as necessary. SADC should establish "clear indicators to measure the progress and effectiveness of interventions" (SADC, 2021). However, collecting data in areas affected by insurgency can be challenging.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In terms of methodology, this research is based on the interpretive paradigm, with a qualitative approach. Qualitative research seeks to understand how people interpret their experiences and the world around them. This involves the use of interviews, focus groups and participant observation. Rather than seeking statistical generalizations, the qualitative approach emphasizes the complexity and context of phenomena, recognizing that social situations are multifaceted. Qualitative methods are often adaptable, allowing researchers to adjust their strategies as new data or insights emerge during the research process. Qualitative researchers recognize that interpretation is subjective and therefore seek to reflect on their own influences and assumptions when analyzing data. Where techniques and resources were used. Content Analysis: Examines documents, texts and other materials to identify patterns, themes and meanings. Semi-structured interviews: Allow specific topics to be explored, but also provide space for participants to share their perspectives freely.

## **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

Analyzing the role of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in ending military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province involves an integrated understanding of causes, effects and regional responses. In the following, we discuss these topics in an interconnected way.

### **CAUSES OF MILITARY HOSTILITIES IN CABO DELGADO PROVINCE**

The hostilities in Cabo Delgado are the result of a combination of factors. Socio-economic marginalization is one of the main drivers, as many local communities feel excluded from the benefits of economic development, particularly with the exploitation of natural resources such as natural gas. The lack of job opportunities and endemic poverty fuel social dissatisfaction, creating fertile ground for insurgency. In addition, the influence of extremist groups who take advantage of local vulnerabilities contributes to the radicalization of young people, exacerbating the conflict.

### **EFFECTS OF MILITARY HOSTILITIES IN CABO DELGADO PROVINCE**

The effects of the hostilities are profound and cover the humanitarian, social and economic spheres. The humanitarian crisis generated by the forced displacement of more than 900,000 people is alarming, leading to limited access to basic services and increased hunger. The destruction of infrastructure and the loss of livelihoods result in a perpetual cycle of poverty and despair. In addition, human rights violations and social fragmentation create an environment of mistrust and insecurity, further complicating the situation.

## **STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY SADC TO END MILITARY HOSTILITIES**

SADC has implemented various strategies in an attempt to resolve the conflict. The military intervention in 2021, while providing immediate relief in some areas, has shown limitations in dealing with the root causes of the conflict. Dialogue and reconciliation initiatives seek to promote trust within local communities and between the government and citizens. However, the implementation of socio-economic development projects has faced challenges, such as a lack of resources and the need for effective coordination with local authorities.

### **SADC'S ROLE IN ENDING MILITARY HOSTILITIES**

SADC's role is crucial, not only as a military actor, but also as a facilitator of a comprehensive peace process. Collaboration with international organizations and the promotion of an integrated approach are essential to ensure the effectiveness of the strategies. SADC must ensure that its actions are sustainable and adapted to the needs of the affected communities. Strengthening local capacities and promoting inclusive governance are key to ensuring lasting peace.

## **CONCLUSION**

In summary, military hostilities in Cabo Delgado Province are deeply rooted in socio-economic factors, such as the marginalization of the local population and the unequal exploitation of natural resources, especially natural gas. These elements create an environment conducive to insurgency, exacerbated by poverty and a lack of job opportunities.

The effects of these hostilities are devastating, resulting in a serious humanitarian crisis, with more than 900,000 people displaced and restricted access to basic services. The destruction of infrastructure and the violation of human rights contribute to a continuous cycle of poverty and social distrust.



In response, SADC has adopted various strategies, including military interventions and dialogue initiatives. While these actions have provided some relief, they still face limitations in addressing the root causes of the conflict. SADC plays a crucial role, not only as a military actor, but also as a facilitator of a comprehensive peace process, promoting collaboration with international organizations and strengthening local capacities.

To achieve lasting peace, it is essential that SADC adapts its strategies to the needs of the affected communities, ensuring that actions are sustainable and integrated, aiming for inclusive governance and effective socio-economic development in the region.

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