

Video: Mozambique to Finally Get Rid of Terrorists

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Global Research, August 11, 2021

[South Front](#) 10 August 2021

Region: [sub-Saharan Africa](#)

Theme: [Terrorism](#)

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After years of outrage generated by ISIS-linked extremists in Mozambique, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has finally launched a military mission in the country, SAMIM.

It was officially inaugurated by the Mozambican president and his counterpart in Botswana on August 9, the day after the jihadist stronghold of Mocimboa da Praia was taken.

SAMIM will number up to 3,000 troops and is aimed to secure the situation in northern Mozambique to allow the resumption of the gas megaproject of the French group Total which is crucial for the country’s development.

https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/10.08.2021_IMR_Mozambique.mp4

De facto, the military operation against the ISIS-linked Al-Shabab started weeks earlier.

The key role in its implementation was played by the military contingent from Rwanda, which is not a member of the SADC. It deployed 1,000 soldiers in Mozambique on July 9.

Following Rwanda, Botswana and Angola also sent military assistance to Mozambique. Zimbabwe has also deployed thousands of military instructors.

South Africa helped with more than 1500 troops, including Special Forces. On July 31, units of the 43rd Brigade of the South African Armed Forces were deployed in Pemba. The missile boat “Makanda” of the South African Navy was also used to patrol the Cabo Delgado coast to prevent terrorists from using water transport. A Cessna 208 Caravan light aircraft was used for aerial reconnaissance of both the coastline of Mozambique and land areas in the province of Cabo Delgado.

The European Union also did not stay apart. On 12 July, it set up a military mission to train Mozambican forces to help them fight al-Shabab. Portugal is already participating in the training and its military instructors should make up half of the European mission’s contingent. Initially, it should last for two years.

After military preparations and regular clashes, the first important victory was reported on

August 7th. The Rwandans with support from local forces managed to take control over the Afunji peninsula.

The next day, on August 8, they achieved a larger success and repelled the terrorists from the strategically important port city of Mocimboa da Praia, which was under al-Shabab's control for a year. The military drove the Islamists out of the port, airport and suburbs of the town.

The number of casualties was not reported.

The terrorist activity in the province of Cabo Delgado increased four years ago. Since 2017, 2,500 people were killed and about 600 thousand fled the region, according to the UN.

Large deposits of natural gas have been discovered on its costal shelf. Near the city of Palma, the French energy group Total is building a natural gas complex worth \$23 billion. It should be operational in 2024, but the work has already been suspended twice due to the terrorist threat. The last time this happened was on March 27, and the work on the project has not yet been resumed.

The possibility of foreign troops being deployed in the region was first discussed back in August 2020.

However in Maputo, they dragged out the international process and refused direct military support from neighboring states, preferring technical support from the European Union and bilateral aid from Rwanda.

The result was disastrous. Within 10 months, the Mozambican authorities lost control over more districts in Cabo Delgado and faced a severe humanitarian crisis. The Total project was put at risk.

The deployment of troops of African states in Mozambique led to a turning point in the course of the battle against the Islamists.

They have lost a significant part of their territories and, most likely, will be forced to return to the tactics of guerrilla warfare.

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