

Tragedy in Nacala-Porto: four young people die, victim of bullets fired by the Police

- Once again, the action of the Police in situations of popular revolt caused fatalities. This time the tragedy took place in the city of Nacala-Porto, where four young people were fatally hit by bullets fired by agents of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique (PRM) who were trying to contain the fury of residents of the Quissimajulo neighborhood.



According to the newspaper Notícias, edition of Monday, May 15, the popular belief that diseases such as cholera and diarrhea are spread by local authorities, including those responsible for the neighborhood, was at the origin of the riots. It all started when three children from the same family died of diarrhea and vomiting, a situation that led parents and neighbors to conclude that those responsible for the neighborhood, namely the secretary and community leaders, had spread the disease to kill people.

The belief triggered tombstones and, according to the head of block 15, Gustavo Pilale, at least 20 houses belonging to community leaders were destroyed by people. The Police were called to intervene to contain the feelings of the people who were vandalizing the local health center, the police station and the homes of those responsible for the neighborhood, including community leaders.

And the Police, once again, used weapons of war to contain the popular revolt and four people were hit. The head of block 15 of the Quissimajulo neighborhood explained that it was not possible to help the young people shot to the hospital since the demonstrators opened deep holes in the road to prevent the entry and exit of vehicles by the authorities in the neighborhood. Thus, the four ended up losing their lives in the place where they were hit by bullets fired by the Police.

Due to the insecure situation in Quissimajulo, health professionals left the local health center and some members of the PRM fled. Voter registration was interrupted, pending the restoration of public

order and tranquility.

Riots motivated by popular beliefs related to the outbreak and spread of cholera are recurrent in central and northern Mozambique, especially in the provinces of Nampula and Zambézia. This reflects, in part, people's low awareness of epidemic disease outbreaks at certain times of the year. As long as health authorities do not reinforce civic education and people's awareness, the belief that diseases such as cholera are spread by local authorities will remain in the social imagination, reinforcing the lack of trust in State institutions.

But even more serious is the way in which the Police act to contain the feelings of the population. As a general rule, agents use weapons of war to disperse people, which always ends in murder. And the State never assumes civil responsibility for the acts carried out by its agents, compensating the relatives of the mortal victims. The recurrent argument that people were hit by stray bullets is unfounded, as agents are trained to contain mass revolts and to use means and force proportionate to the situation at the time.

In the district of Vilankulo, in Inhambane, hitherto unknown people murdered, last week, an elderly man described as being very influential in the village of Choloane. According to Radio Mozambique (RM)¹, the broadcaster, the criminals tied the lower and upper limbs of the victim and, using blunt objects, physically tortured him. Immediately afterward, they tied the victim to a car and dragged it until it lost its life, while filming the scenario, which they later circulated on social networks.


¹ <https://www.rm.co.mz/inhambane-idoso-torturado-ate-a-morte-no-povoado-de-choloane-em-vilankulo/>



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