

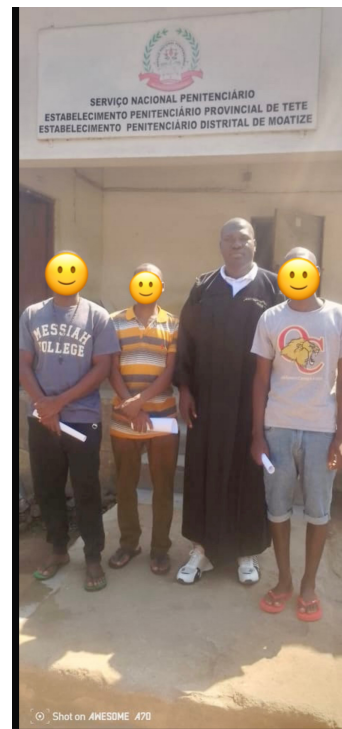


DECIDE BRIEFING

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Moatize: compatriots detained for allegedly kidnapping FRELIMO members during demonstrations have been released

On 30 March 2025, three citizens were arrested in Moatize, Tete province, on charges of alleged kidnapping and torture of FRELIMO members and supporters. Although they were brought before the court after the legal deadline of 48 hours, the judge validated their preventive detention. The Public Prosecutor's Office charged them with kidnapping and simple bodily harm (physical assault). The trial took place on 14 August 2025. The defendants were acquitted of the crime of kidnapping due to lack of legal requirements, but convicted of simple physical assault. As they had already served their full sentence, they were released. The defence was conducted by the Mozambican Bar Association (OAM) in a case that highlights serious challenges in terms of compliance with legal deadlines and guarantees of fundamental rights in Mozambique.



Maputo: defendants accused of conspiracy released due to lack of evidence

Similarly, around 12 citizens detained in Maputo on charges of conspiracy against state security and other crimes were released after nine months in preventive detention. The defence, also led by the OAM through lawyers Carlos Xerinda, Nelson Cossa and Ferosa Chauque, obtained the complete annulment of the charges. The preliminary hearing ruling pointed to a lack of evidence and the irremediable nullity of the elements presented by the Public Prosecutor's Office.



These two recent episodes in Moatize and Maputo reveal serious weaknesses in the Mozambican justice system, namely:

- Arbitrary detentions and late presentation.
- Charges without sufficient evidence.
- Dependence on the action of the Bar Association, AMAC, IPAJ and other similar institutions to guarantee basic rights.

Of the approximately 7,200 people detained in connection with the demonstrations, around 2,848 are still imprisoned in Mozambique and the police are still accused of continuing to carry out night-time arrests to this day, which is illegal, of people who participated in peaceful demonstrations, as in the case of the grandson of the Head of Block 3 in the Siduava neighbourhood, which led the population to protest by blocking the railway line last week.

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