

Research Article

# Political Intolerance as a Risk Factor of War and Conflict in Mozambique

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## Abstract

Being political intolerance a risk factor of war and conflict in Mozambique, it can be perceived as a process of denial, discrimination or even lack of respect for the way other people think or express themselves. This phenomenon may result from the rejection of people with deferent political, sexual, religious and ethnic orientations. Political intolerance is a phenomenon characterized by the hatred of a political, religious nature of those who think differently on a given subject and that can lead us to a violent conflict characterized by physical aggression, destruction of property and even the murder of others. Therefore, it poses the risk of war and conflict in Mozambique to the extent that, the Frelimo party that is in power for 50 years did not recognize the will of the people who massively voted for the presidential candidate Venâncio Bila Mandane and the Podemos party in the elections of October 9, 2024, that, after the announcement of the fictitious results that placed the candidate of Frelimo Daniel Francisco Chapo in advantage, the population manifested itself demonstrating its indignation demanding that the competent bodies the National Council of Elections, as well as the Constitutional Council to restore the electoral truth for the sake of Mozambican democracy. It is in this context that the present article seeks to discuss the likely factors contributing to the risk of conflict and war in Mozambique resulting from political intolerance. Now, for the realization of this article we used the bibliographic consultation of several works that address on the theme under analysis.

## Keywords

Political Intolerance, Risk, Conflict and War, Mozambique

## 1. Introduction

Political intolerance is a risk factor of war and conflict in Mozambique and can be perceived as a process of denial, discrimination or even lack of respect for the way other people think or express themselves. This phenomenon may result from the rejection of people with political, sexual, religious and ethnic orientations different from ours. Therefore, political intolerance demands that the others, that is, the adversary, must be eliminated because it poses a risk a threat to the future and calls into question the realization and identity of the group

to which one belongs. This process occurs in duplicate, initially, the conception is forged that the identity itself is synonymous with the totality of being.

Now, later, the opponents of this identity are categorized as antagonists of the process. In this way, the antagonists themselves are inevitably transformed into opponents of the whole world. This mental pattern has been adopted by various agents of political intolerance in recent times. Thus, those who promote political intolerance claim to stop the truth and come

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those who have divergent thoughts or behaviors as mistaken, therefore deserving to be eradicated. They are considered enemies and traitors of the status quo and established order and public tranquillities.

The basis of political intolerance lies in the construction of the enemy or results from poor capacity for discernment, a process that also proves to be an extreme manifestation of fanaticism. Thus, political intolerance can flow into violent demonstrations that can destroy the social fabric of a nation. In Mozambique, after the announcement of the election results, there was a great wave of violence that resulted from the widespread discontent of the population specifically the young people who look to the government as salvation in all aspects, when it fails to solve the basic problems of young people can result in a great risk of war and conflict. Indeed, this article aims to comprehensively and deeply address political intolerance as the risk factor of war and conflict in Mozambique, analyzing the various factors that contribute to its occurrence.

## 2. Objectives

### *General:*

Analyzing Political Intolerance as a Risk Factor of War and Conflict in Mozambique.

### *Methodology*

For the realization of this scientific article, about Political Intolerance as a factor of Risk of War and Conflict in Mozambique, it was privileged the mixed methods: Quantitative, Qualitative and bibliographic consultation of works that address on the subject under study.

- 1) Quantitative Method - this method is characterized by the use of quantification, both in the modalities of information collection and in the treatment of these through statistical techniques, from the simplest to the most complex. As mentioned above, it has as a differential the intention of ensuring the accuracy of the work performed, leading to a result with few chances of distortions.
- 2) The same author states that qualitative research is one that works predominantly with qualitative data, that is, the information collected by the researcher is not expressed in numbers, or the numbers and conclusions based on them play a minor role in the analysis.

## 3. Theoretical Framework

Political intolerance comes from the beginning of humanity it had the first signs in ancient Greece specifically in Athena, according to Aristotle. It arose as a form of domination that unfolded during several centuries under a diversity of doctrines with principles of domination of a nation, which enhanced the domination of man by man. In the same context, the image of the total citizen emerges where politics controlled practically everything. Thus, the total citizen is practically artificial and happy living in the urban area where freedom is

conferred to the city and not to the citizens residing in it. Therefore, this understanding leads us to the maxim that politics is primarily a high exercise of power, which is imposed on companies putting them in a situation of vulnerability to the risk of political intolerance. [9].

Aquino [1] et al. Reinforces the idea that, since the emergence of humanity and its evolution over time, risks have always been present. Thus, political intolerance as a risk factor of war and conflict can be understood as the probability or possibility of occurrence of a harmful invention characterized by lack of patience, discrimination, denial or even lack of respect for someone else's way of thinking or expressing, resulting from poor intellectual capacity to interpret a given subject. This phenomenon can lead us to conflicts of various orders. In the same context, Elie Wiesel, defines political intolerance as a source of hatred between individuals, but for Bronislaw Geremek, and other authors consider political intolerance as a trivialization of the totalitarian system resulting from technological that it has always existed, although the latest scientific advances make it more dangerous that can trigger conflict.

Thus, conflict can be perceived as a fundamental disagreement between individuals or groups that arises from the opposition of interests, values or expectations, and may manifest itself as a struggle, dispute or clash of ideas. It can occur in the personal (intrapersonal), between people (interpersonal), within a society (intrasocial) or between nations (inter-social).

Therefore, Giddens [17] et al, understands conflict as a process of social struggle between groups resulting from discord and clashes of common interests. In turn, Posner [18], understands the conflict as a competition between social classes to achieve power that can be intensify by language, work, and the differences of political and religious beliefs that can flow into a war.

Matozo [10] et al, states that, War is an armed conflict between states, governments, societies or paramilitary groups such as mercenaries, insurgents and militias. It is usually characterized by extreme violence, aggression, destruction and mortality, using regular or irregular military forces.

Tosi [11] et al, considers that war can occur between countries or between smaller groups such as tribes or political factions within the same country (internal confrontation). In both cases, one can have the opposition of rival groups alone or together. In the latter case, there is the formation of alliances.

### *Characteristics of Political Intolerance*

According to Barbosa [12] et al, Political intolerance is characterized by several phenomena that can trigger conflicts or wars, this phenomenon results from the widespread discontent of the population caused by the bad governance of governments, has as fundamental characteristics the hate speech, extreme polarization, spread of false information and censorship.

### *Hate speech*

Cisneros, [8] understands, hate speech involves the expression of ideas that promote discrimination based on racial, social or religious characteristics, usually directed at specific

groups, often minorities. The term is derived from "hate speech". Expressing these ideas implies making them public, because when they remain as thoughts or internal emotions, they do not constitute a hate speech. It is universally recognized that legal interference in thoughts is unacceptable, since everyone has the right to freedom of thought. Hate speech is distinguished by attacking human dignity and violating fundamental rights. The difficulty in defining hate speech lies in its detection, since it can be manifested in an explicit or veiled way. Incitement to hatred may be present in an evident or subtle way in the words uttered. The feeling of hatred is a concrete reality, and its ability to generate significant changes in society is directly linked to the way it is disseminated. Hate speech represents a distinct form of spreading negativity, and the media play a crucial role in this current scenario, especially in the political sphere.

#### *Extreme polarization*

Contemporary politics is marked by intense polarization and a growing lack of communication, especially evident on social media platforms. These platforms often become fertile ground for the spread of hatred and intolerance towards perspectives that do not align with individual beliefs and preconceptions. Usually, those who send messages cannot recognize their interlocutors as legitimate partners in a dialogue. Instead, they tend to project on them the image of adversaries, positioning them as antagonists of their own ethical beliefs. In this way, they use the interlocutor as a counterpoint intended to confront and contrast with the world view that they seek to promote. The audience that shares your polarization is the main audience of your speech. This lack of communication between divergent political positions, although it is a common and widely documented dynamic throughout the twentieth century, takes on new dimensions in social networks. This is intrinsically linked to the phenomenon of "post-fact", the spread of "fake news" and the growing loss of confidence in journalistic institutions. These factors seem to amplify the intensity of the antagonism between the two sides, making them less sensitive even to the most extreme moments of human experience, such as death. [13].

#### *Dissemination of fake news*

According to FREITAS [14] et al, fictitious and deliberately manipulated information created for the purpose of spreading on the internet, attracting public attention under the guise of legitimate news, and generating profit through clicks and visits to web pages. Spreading rumours and falsehoods and sharing inaccurate information are not unique to the Internet age. However, the ability to propagate ideas to a large audience in an easy way, coupled with quick profits from online ads, has resulted in an increase in the production and dissemination of fake news. This pattern has become notorious, gaining prominence especially after the 2016 US presidential race, then being labeled as fake news. There is an obvious connection between the importance of fake news and the concept of post-truth, which was chosen as the word of the year by the Oxford dictionary in 2016. This implies that people's personal beliefs

often outweigh the importance of real facts. Consequently, when confronted with news that aligns with their personal convictions, people tend to share them without making a prior check of their authenticity.

#### *Censure*

In a concise manner, censorship involves the action of vetting and limiting information or expressions (whether artistic or informative), leading, in many cases, to their exclusion from the public domain. Often, this practice is associated with dictatorial governments such as the military governments in Brazil after 1964. In such cases, the state is responsible for monitoring artistic and symbolic production in various media, such as newspapers, radio, stages, screens and books. [16].

## 4. Factors Influencing Political Intolerance

There are several factors that influence political intolerance from the low level of education, age, religious diversity, psychological insecurity, economic financial crisis and the deficit of human rights.

Now, Sniderman [4], points to self-esteem and social learning as important predictors of more tolerant postures. Although, Sullivan [6] et al, in turn, highlight the perception of threat, low adherence to democratic values and psychological insecurity as factors strongly associated with political intolerance.

Therefore, the pioneering study of Stouffer [5], has already confirmed with some demonstration the level of individual intolerance that is directly related to the feeling (real or imaginary) of threat offered by popular groups to important values or to the constitutional order as a whole.

Psychological insecurity associated with certain social conditions (such as social status and age), has characteristics of individual personality, especially dogmatism and low self-esteem, stimulate political intolerance. [6].

In addition to the behaviors of political intolerance pointed out by several authors, Stouffer [5], points to age, schooling and religious growth as favorite factors of political intolerance that has influenced much in political behavior and attitudes.

#### *Political Intolerance in Mozambique*

The rise of intolerance has increasingly manifested itself in its various forms, such as social exclusion, political exclusion and religious intolerance. In the Mozambican context, this increase has been evidenced in recent events, notably in the political and ideological polarization that occurred in the country before and after the 2024 presidential elections.

Despite the Constitution of the Republic, conferring on the country the guarantee of freedom of expression as a fundamental pillar, this does not authorize the practice or defense of criminal activities. What often happens is that in many circumstances, the expression of opinions conflicts with other principles and values protected by the Constitution of the Republic. Among the various scenarios where these conflicts

emerge, there are manifestations laden with hatred, violence and political intolerance. Mozambique has shown signs of a society marked by political intolerance and violence.

Despite attempts to romanticize the country as a haven of peace, without conflict, prejudice or hostilities, this idealization does not find support in the reality presented by Mozambican history and the contemporary context of the country.

Therefore, after the legislative and presidential elections held on October 9, 2024, it became clear that political intolerance is a reality in our country, the ruling party Frelimo that governs the destinies of Mozambique for 50 years, did not recognize the will of the people who voted massively in the presidential candidate Venâncio Mondlane and the Podemos Party, preferred to manipulate the election results through the CNE and the Constitutional Council according to the judgment of 6 November, that puts the Frelimo in advantages and its candidate Daniel Francisco Chapo, this phenomenon increased the fury and the intentions of the population that triggered demonstrations and violent clashes.

In the same sequence, the announcement of the fictitious results validated by the Constitutional Council, which gave wide advantages to the party fiftieth Frelimo, began a wave of manifestations of repudiation of the results, called by the presidential candidate Venâncio Bila Mondlane, where several extracts of society joined and asked that the electoral truth be restored for the sake of democracy in the country.

Thus, there were demonstrations of various orders where the population blocked roads vandalized public and private establishments, looting stores and warehouses of food products and, in response the party in power put the Defence and Security Forces to face the great where of violet demonstrations that every day took alarming proportions and clashes between the police and the population of sonantes neighborhoods such as Chamanculo, Mavalane, Polana Caniço, Alto mae, Patrice Lumumba between other neighborhoods of the city of Maputo and Maputo Province.

This crisis pushed the country into an unprecedented situation of total insecurity, where the government could not control the popular fury, several young people lost their lives in this process with more sonante examples Paulo Guambe, and the young protester who was run over mortally in broad daylight with the BTR of the Armed Forces of Defense of Mozambique, on Avenida Eduardo Mondlane, indeed, the phenomenon of running over, the youth became more furious and intensified their actions, looting shops and destroying some public and private establishments. Hellern, [7], et al.

Thus, several establishments were totally destroyed, the employees of the destroyed sites were without employment, increasing the number of unemployed young people due to the bankruptcy of the vandalized and looted establishments, the national and foreign owners and entrepreneurs who operated in various branches of activity went bankrupt some returned to their home countries with accumulated debts with domestic as well as foreign banks. [3].

After the demonstrations resulting from political intolerance,

with a view to economic recovery and reconstruction of the various business activities paralyzed, the President of the Republic, announced that its government and partners would survey the damage caused and allocate a fund for the recovery of affected sectors, so companies from various branches are waiting for government funding for their recovery which seems to be stalled until today, in this context, there was a risk of widespread discontent again for non-compliance with the promise announced by the government. [15].

## 5. Measures to Mitigate Risks Associated with Political Intolerance in Mozambique

Measures to mitigate the risks associated with political intolerance in Mozambique include the integration of all political parties in decision-making on the destinies of the country, the ongoing public consultation with a view to an inclusive national dialogue is one of the ways of guaranteeing or restoring the trust of the state, thus reducing mistrust on the part of the population, the partisanship of the National Electoral Council and the Constitutional Council, may allow transparency in the process of counting votes and publication of election results.

Thus, decentralization and the reduction of the powers of the president of the republic may also in some way reduce the risks associated with political intolerance, to the extent that some state institutions such as The Defence and Security Forces will work independently, that is, these sectors will respond to the desires and wishes of the people who are not the ruling party or the President of the Republic.

Therefore, the measures to mitigate the risks associated with political intolerance also extend to the election of members of the government, governors, administrators as well as deputies of the Assembly of the Republic this to allow representation of the population in the grand house. Governors as well as administrators should be elected and not appointed as is the case to be able to work for local communities not for central government, that their non-nomination election is important to galvanize the development of local communities and ensure trust and transparency in the use of public resources as well as equitable distribution of employment opportunities, training among others for the young layer and in the management of various community processes.

## 6. Conclusions

With the present work it can be concluded that political intolerance appears the risk factor of war and conflict in Mozambique, insofar as the ruling party Frelimo, which governs the destinies of the country for 50 years, did not recognize the will of the people, that is, in the elections of October 9, 2024, verified a phenomenon already more seen, where the

majority of the population voted in the presidential candidate Venâncio Bila Mondlane, and the party We can as a way to repudiate the continued governance of Frelimo, which has used the CNE and the Constitutional Council to manipulate the election results.

According to the assessment by the CC, even so recognizing large discrepancies, once presented by the CNE, what was expected of the body that scrutinizes the electoral process, with the determination of the final results, giving victory to the party FRELIMO and its presidential candidate, Daniel Francisco Chapo, this body, for the contestation of the opposition parties, as well as for the popular demonstration not to recognize the results presented by it, the process was transferred to the highest and collegial body, in accordance with Mozambican legislation.

Therefore, with the announcement of the final results by the CC, according to the judgment [2], of 6 November 2024, a wave of widespread demonstrations convened by presidential candidate Venâncio Mondlane, requesting the restoration of electoral truth, at that moment, triggered the first phase of peaceful demonstrations with the main objective of coercing the rulers to recognize the defeat and hand over the government to the legitimate president elected by the people.

In the same sequence, to face the demonstrations that took alarming contours, the fiftieth party put the FDS in the streets to scare and shoot the demonstrators as a way of threatening them, not only, used the death squads to eliminate young people who opposed the principles of Frelimo, such as lawyer Elvino Dias and Paulo Guembe. Thus, the country lived a period of total disorder, characterized by acute political intolerance, where several establishments were vandalized and destroyed culminating in total closure.

## Abbreviations

CNE	National Commission of Elections
CC	Constitutional Council
FDS	Defence and Security Force
BTR	Armoured Personnel Carrier
US	United States

## Author Contributions

**Oswaldo Francisco Zandamela:** Conceptualization

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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