UNOG Bi-weekly press briefing: Mozambique Alert WFP
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Shotlist

1. Exterior wide shot, Palais des Nations flag alley, nations’ flags flying, a beautiful day.
3. SOUNDBYTE (English) — Tomson Phiri, spokesperson, WFP (World Food Programme): “The number of displaced people has tripled over the last few months amid growing insecurity. Also, many of those that we have been assisting, either in Cabo Delgado, in Nampula, in Niassa, they have nothing but WFP food assistance.”
5. SOUNDBYTE (English) — Tomson Phiri, spokesperson, WFP (World Food Programme): “There is fighting and these armed groups are linked definitely to some terrorists organizations, I’m not too sure which ones exactly, but what I can tell you right now is that it is indeed an insurgency in northern Cabo Delgado.”
6. Medium shot, journalist sitting in front of laptop, touching her face mask, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
7. SOUNDBYTE (English) — Tomson Phiri, spokesperson, WFP (World Food Programme): “Thousands of Mozambicans have also fled as refugees into neighbouring Tabora district and others, and this is deepening concerns among the international community about the regionalisation of this conflict”.

9. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Tomson Phiri, spokesperson, WFP (World Food Programme):** “Cabo Delgado, as some of you may know, currently is recording the second highest number of COVID cases in Mozambique. And population displacements have the potential to accelerate the spread of the virus.”

10. Medium shot, journalist listening, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.

11. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Tomson Phiri, spokesperson, WFP (World Food Programme):** “If the situation does not improve beyond December, WFP will be forced to even suspend assistance and that is a situation we do not want to go.”

12. Medium shot, journalist listening while touching his face mask, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.

13. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Tomson Phiri, spokesperson, WFP (World Food Programme):** “It costs us $4.7 million a month, we need $142 million between now and February, those are our needs.”

14. Wide shot, showing an almost empty room, with some journalists and UN staff members in the audience, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.

15. Medium-wide shot, showing podium with WFP speaker, with UN logo behind, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.

Mozambique insurgency fuels fears of humanitarian crisis and regional insecurity

Escalating conflict linked to an insurgency in northern Mozambique’s Cabo Delgado province has forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee and will likely prolong crisis levels of food insecurity there, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) said on Tuesday.

More than 310,000 people have sought shelter in southern and western districts of the gas-rich province, while many thousands have fled into the neighbouring provinces of Nampula and Niassa, WFP spokesperson Tomson Phiri told journalists in Geneva.

“The number of displaced people has tripled over the last few months amid growing insecurity,” he said. “Also, many of those that we have been assisting, either in Cabo Delgado, in Nampula, in Niassa, they have nothing but WFP food assistance.”

The situation is linked to an armed insurgency that began in 2017, WFP said, amid reports that Islamic extremists continue to hold key areas in the gas-rich northern region, after attacking a number of towns in recent months.

These have caused loss of life and severely damaged infrastructure that was already severely affected by cyclone Kenneth in 2019, the UN agency noted.

Highlighting concerns that regional security risks being compromised by the insurgency, Mr. Phiri added that there were ongoing clashes and that “these armed groups are linked definitely to some terrorist organizations”.

Thousands more Mozambicans “have also fled as refugees into (Tanzania’s) neighbouring Tabora district and others…deepening concerns among the international community about the regionalisation of this conflict”, he continued.

Apart from alarming levels of food insecurity in Cabo Delgado – where more than one in two children under five is chronically malnourished, above the 43 per cent national average – there are additional concerns about coronavirus transmission.

“Cabo Delgado….currently is recording the second highest number of COVID cases in Mozambique. And population displacements have the potential to accelerate the spread of the virus,” said Mr. Phiri.

Despite “major operational challenges”, WFP is working to reach displaced people in Cabo Delgado, Nampula and Niassa, including those “stranded” in highly insecure areas facing “crisis” levels of food insecurity.

Today, WFP provides food assistance to nearly 200,000 people in the province.

The UN agency is stepping up aid to reach more than 300,000 people, but it has warned that without continued funding, assistance may have to be cut.

“If the situation does not improve beyond December, WFP will be forced to even suspend assistance and that is a situation we do not want to go,” Mr. Phiri said. “It costs us $4.7 million a month, we need $142 million between now and February, those are our needs.”