

URGENT ACTION

ACCUSED OF BEING OPPOSITION MEMBER, SHOT AT
Benedito Sabão was arbitrarily arrested, detained and shot by suspected secret service police, allegedly for supporting RENAMO, the main opposition party in Mozambique. While he survived the attempt and is now receiving medical care in a private clinic in Maputo, the capital, he is still subject to threats.

On 10 May, **Benedito Sabão**, a peasant farmer from the town of Catandica, in Manica Province, was selling maize at a local shop to buy milk for his recently born twins, when three men in plain clothes arrived to the shop, detained him without any explanation and took him to the local police station (Comando Distrital de Catandica). Once there, the men, who are believed to be secret service members (Serviço de Inteligência e Segurança do Estado, SINSE), asked him to reveal the whereabouts of members of the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), the main opposition party. Benedito Sabão denied knowing any RENAMO members. He was then handcuffed and thrown into a cell by himself. The police station commander and the director of the local Police for Criminal Investigation arrived and started hitting him with a gun handle to make him confess he was a member of RENAMO.

In the middle of the night of 11-12 May, the same three men who detained Benedito Sabão on 10 May drove him to a remote forest outside Catandica. They told him that he would be killed "just as other RENAMO members had been" and that he would "join them in a graveyard". Benedito Sabão managed to escape into the forest and the men started shooting at him. He was hit by three bullets on the foot and arm, and grazed by another one. He hid for a while and then started walking to reach a place where there was people.

On the morning of 12 May he managed to arrange a flight to Maputo, the capital. Benedito Sabão underwent surgery in the Maputo Central Hospital on 13 May, where he remained receiving medical care. At around 10pm on 16 May, a group of men arrived at the hospital ward and accused Benedito Sabão of being a RENAMO member. Some of the men were wearing police uniforms and some plain clothes, allegedly members of the secret service. On 19 May, unknown men with guns tried to break into the ward through a window. In the afternoon of 20 May, Benedito Sabão was transferred to a private clinic escorted by two patrol cars provided by the General Public Prosecutor. The local NGO Human Rights League, journalists and an Amnesty International representative accompanied the transfer.

Benedito Sabão wants to leave Mozambique with his family as he does not feel safe in the country.

Please write immediately in Portuguese or your own language:

- Urging authorities to stop state actors from attacking and harassing Benedito Sabão, including while he is receiving medical care, and provide him protection from any attacks for his alleged political views;
- Calling on them to conduct an independent, impartial and effective investigation into the detention, reported ill-treatment and shooting of Benedito Sabão, and to bring those responsible to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 6 JULY 2016 TO:

Minister of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs
 Isaque Chande
 Av. Julius Nyerere, 33
 Maputo, Mozambique
 Fax: +25821494264
 Email: isaquechande@gmail.com
Salutation: Your Excellency

General Public Prosecutor
 Beatriz Buchili
 Av. Vladimir Lenine, 121
 Maputo, Mozambique
 Fax: +25821304299
Salutation: Dear General Public Prosecutor

And copies to:
President of the National Human Rights Commission
 Custódio Duma
 Av. Fernão de Magalhães, 63, 1st floor
 Maputo, Mozambique
 Email: comissao.direitos@gmail.com

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Filipe Nyussi of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), the ruling party, was sworn in as President on 15 January 2015, after winning 57% of the votes cast in October 2014.

Afonso Dhlakama, leader of the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), the main opposition party, rejected the election outcome and boycotted the opening of Parliament in January. Throughout 2015, RENAMO campaigned for provincial autonomy in the central and northern regions, where the party claimed it had taken the majority of votes. In April 2015, Parliament rejected a bill put forward by RENAMO that aimed to formalize regional autonomy.

In September 2015, clashes between national armed forces and RENAMO's armed elements resumed following several months of post-electoral tension. On 13 September, Afonso Dhlakama's convoy was hit by gunfire while he was campaigning in Manica province. The result of an investigation into the incident is still pending.

Tensions and clashes between government forces and armed elements of RENAMO have been causing an increasingly number of refugees fleeing to Malawi. An unknown number of people were reportedly killed by both sides. On 18 February 2016, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that over 6,000 asylum seekers, mostly women and children, had been registered in Malawi since December 2015. The Director of the National Institute in support of Refugees, a government body, has denied these people are refugees, but rather citizens exercising their "right to freedom of movement".

Name: Benedito Sabão

Gender m/f: male

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