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Mozambique

# TotalEnergies must face up to its responsibilities in Mozambique

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**A complaint against TotalEnergies for complicity in war crimes in Mozambique has just been lodged with the National Anti-Terrorism Prosecutor's Office (PNAT), following the 'container massacre'.**

In the early 2010s, a huge gas field was discovered off the coast of the Cabo Delgado region in northern Mozambique. Several multinationals, including TotalEnergies, were awarded concessions to exploit the various blocks. The operations took place in three phases: the gas was extracted offshore and transported by pipeline to the mainland, liquefied in the French multinational's industrial complex and then transported by ship to customer countries.

## Violence against local communities

The liquefaction terminal covers an area twice the size of the city of Paris. Its construction led to the eviction of more than 500 families. Thousands of people have been left without homes or means of subsistence, and have received derisory compensation.

These evictions are taking place against an already tense backdrop. The region is largely populated by the Mwani and Makua communities, who have been marginalised by central government since independence. For them, the gas project represents a plundering of their resources, with no positive spin-offs.

In this climate of frustration and exclusion, a Salafist insurgency emerged in 2017, marked by the first attacks. These fighters, affiliated to the Islamic State, briefly seized the port city of Mocímboa da Praia.

## Complicity in war crimes

The French multinational is known for its ability to conclude agreements with the most authoritarian regimes in order to exploit the mineral resources of developing countries with complete peace of mind. In 2020, TotalEnergies signed a partnership agreement with the Mozambican army. The company undertook to finance the Joint Task Force (JTF). A bonus was to be awarded to soldiers who respected human rights.

A few months later, complaints from the local population began to mount against the JTF, which was accused of mistreatment. Internal documents show that TotalEnergies was aware of the situation, but took no significant action, apart from occasionally cancelling bonuses for certain soldiers.

In 2021, during a jihadist attack on the town of Palma, located near the gas complex, the inhabitants fled into the bush. On their return, dozens of men were arrested by the JTF, accused of being terrorists. Locked up for several days in containers set up at the entrance to the TotalEnergies site, some were tortured, others executed.

NGOs have filed a complaint against the French company for complicity in war crimes, torture and enforced disappearances, because of its material support for the JTF.

## TotalEnergies must face up to its responsibilities in Mozambique

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This complaint illustrates once again how the quest for profit can trample human rights and environmental protection in one fell swoop.

4 December 2025

Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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