

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NOON BRIEFING BY STEPHANE DUJARRIC,
SPOKESPERSON FOR SECRETARY-GENERAL ANTÓNIO GUTERRES
WEDNESDAY, 31 MARCH 2021**

MOZAMBIQUE

In Mozambique, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) today said that the escalation of violence in Cabo Delgado Province continues to drive massive displacement, following the recent attacks by non-state armed groups and ongoing clashes reported in Palma since 24 March. The security situation remains volatile and concerning.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has already registered about 8,000 people at arrival points in Nangade, Mueda, Montepuez and Pemba. Thousands more have arrived today in Pemba and other areas of Cabo Delgado.

We have information that hundreds of people are still trying to leave Palma right now and thousands are making their way by foot, boat and road. Some are being rescued by the UN Humanitarian Air Services and other civil society groups.

For its part, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) is pre-positioning birthing kits and essential drugs to support displaced pregnant women and mothers.

The World Food Programme (WFP) said that it has ramped up assistance and aims to reach up to 50,000 people affected by the attacks. The UN Humanitarian Air Service, which is managed by the WFP, is providing an air bridge to transport critical medical staff and humanitarian workers as close as possible to the operational sites, as well as provide medical evacuation of people in need.

Also today, in a joint statement, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Virginia Gamba; along with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten; and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, Najat Maalla M'jid, strongly condemned the brutal and horrific acts of violence reported in the province of Cabo Delgado. They stressed that the protection and humanitarian needs of the civilian population, especially women and children, must be urgently addressed.