



**Statement by H.E. Ambass. Amadeu da Conceição, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Mozambique to the United Nations Office in Geneva and other International Organizations at the Third Symposium of WTO on Natural Disaster Risk and Trade**

**10<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

Your Excellency Bradly Felix, Minister of Commerce, Industry, Enterprise Development and Consumer Affairs of Saint Lucia,

Mr. Yonov Frederick Agah – Deputy Director General of WTO,

Your Excellency Frances Lisson, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia,

Ms. Kirsi Madi, Director of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

Dear Moderator,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We wish to start by thanking the WTO for organizing and inviting us to partake in this Third Symposium on *Natural Disasters and Trade*.

Indeed, we commend the WTO for linking up natural disasters and trade and we would urge other related organizations to mainstream natural disasters in their activities, for experts on the matter have indicated that such disasters will be increasing in magnitude and frequency, over time.

Mr. moderator,

The symposium could not have been timely. It takes place just a few days before the holding of the Second Global Forum on Disaster Risk Reduction, here in Geneva, when States, relevant UN agencies, partners and others will reflect of the progresses

made, but also on challenges and constraints encountered in the implementation of Sendai Framework on DRR, as Ms. Madi, has just made reference.

The event also takes place almost 7 weeks after the Central part of Mozambique was affected by the worst extreme event in the Southern Hemisphere, the so called *Idai* Cyclone, with a heavy toll of over 600 lives. In total, the Cyclone has impacted 1.514.662 persons, equivalent to 306.221 households. 715.378 hectares, of crops, were lost to the Cyclone.

*Idai* Cyclone has also severely devastated strategic social and economic infra – structures, which is to say, the investments and progresses then made for years in trade facilities were drastically reversed.

On the other side, it means agricultural and cattle farms, subsistence activities and livelihoods have been destroyed, threatening food security of thousands, if not millions of households.

Mozambique witnessed a second extreme event, two weeks ago. Striking the northern part of the country, *Kenneth* Cyclone destroyed the entire district of Mocimboa da Praia; Macomia, Mueda, Muidumbe, Chiure, Ibo and Quissanga districts were severely devastated, all in Cabo Delgado province. In total, the Cyclone has affected 213,462 people, corresponding to 45,833 households. 43 people lost their lives. Furthermore, this Cyclone destroyed 31.431 hectares of crops and affected substantially the Pemba harbour and its access infrastructures.

The Government, under the leadership of H.E. President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, with the support of International Community, especially UN relevant humanitarian agencies, national and international NGOs, made their utmost to assist the affected populations, through massive search and rescue operations; provision of food, medicines, vaccines and emergency shelter.

We believe Mozambique's staunch engagement with the UN DRR frameworks, helped to mitigate human losses in both extreme events.

In fact, even before the occurrence of previous natural disasters, that affected the country, Mozambique had already adopted legislation on DRR, including, but not limited to the Law on Natural Disasters. Strategies at national, provincial and district

levels, as per Sendai Framework on DRR target e, were also adopted and are under implementation.

Mr. moderator,

Despite the referred dramatic impact of these events, from human and infra-structures standpoints, Mozambique, a pilot – country of different UN DRR frameworks, is resolved to re –emerge from *ashes* and get back on its feet, as it strives to realize its development plans, in the context of African Union 2063 Agenda, UN 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Agreement on Climate Change and Addis Ababa Agenda for Development Financing.

As for specifically addressing the untold infra- structures damages in the affected areas, the Government has put in place a *Post-Disaster Reconstruction Office* with the mandate of surveying and designing a reconstruction plan, following an integrated approach.

Apart from that, the Government has decided by a decree to exempt businesses of these areas, of duties and other financial obligations, up to 31 December 2019, as to assist them to recover, rehabilitate and re-build, given the magnitude of destruction.

In this process, the *Build Back Better*, as provided for by priority iv of the Sendai Framework will come into play, for the sake of disasters' resilient infra-structures.

The customs and tax exemption provided are to benefit economic operators in the provinces and affected areas by an authorization for advanced exit from imports of construction materials and food products, including the provision of technical assistance in the recovery phase.

One of the affected strategic infra - structure, is the *Beira Corridor*, which consists of a highway, railway and a pipeline. The corridor, in general, services the *hinterland* neighbouring countries of Malawi and Zimbabwe and, to some extent, other countries.

As we have indicated, the *Post-Disaster Reconstruction Office* is still surveying the damages, and we hope that, by the time of the next *Aid for Trade Review*, the Government will be in a position of

presenting the full account on the impact of these extreme events on trade and seek proper assistance not limited to the WTO, but also to all those who may be willing to assist.

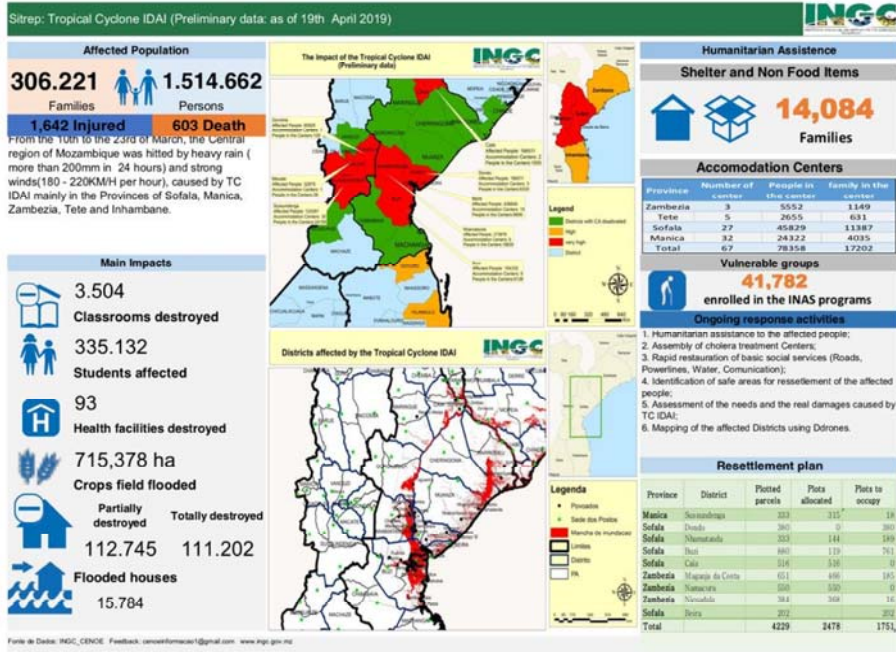
Mr. President,

Allow us to thank the International Community for standing by our side, at these trying times. The African Development Bank, the European Union, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and some other partners agencies have announced their pledges. Several countries have done likewise. We hope the WTO as well as Members, will follow suit.

We could not conclude without availing ourselves of this opportunity to also thank wholeheartedly the international *humanitarian family*, as a whole, private and public international institutions and individuals of good will who helped and continue helping our country to recover from these natural disasters.

There are no words that can translate our deep gratitude.

We thank you for your kind attention.



# Map of Mozambique

