

**SYMPOSIUM DES CONFÉRENCES
ÉPISCOPALES D'AFRIQUE ET
MADAGASCAR**



**SIMPÓSIO DAS CONFERÊNCIAS
EPISCOPAIS DE ÁFRICA
E MADAGÁSCAR**

SYMPOSIUM OF EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES OF AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR

STATEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF AFRICA ON THE TRAGIC KILLING OF MOST REV. OSÓRIO CITORA AFONSO, BISHOP OF QUELIMANE AND APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BEIRA

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (Mt 5:6).

The Catholic Bishops of Africa have received with profound shock, sorrow, and indignation the news of the violent killing of Bishop Osório Afonso in his episcopal residence in Quelimane, Mozambique.

This heinous act, perpetrated against a shepherd of God’s people, constitutes not only an attack on the life and dignity of a devoted servant of the Gospel but also an assault on the values of peace, justice, human dignity, and religious freedom that are essential for the flourishing of every society.

We strongly and unequivocally condemn this barbaric crime. No religious leader, regardless of faith or denomination, should ever become the target of violence. Those who dedicate their lives to serving God and promoting reconciliation, solidarity, education, charity, and the common good deserve protection and respect, not persecution and death.

On behalf of the Symposium of the Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), I call upon the Government of the Republic of Mozambique and all competent authorities to undertake an immediate, thorough, transparent, and independent investigation into this crime. We urge that all those responsible, whether direct perpetrators, accomplices, or masterminds, be identified, prosecuted, and brought to justice without delay. The people of Mozambique, the Catholic Church, and the international community deserve the truth.



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We further call upon the Mozambican authorities to strengthen measures guaranteeing the protection and security of religious leaders, places of worship, and all persons engaged in pastoral and humanitarian service. Religious freedom is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of every democratic and peaceful society. The State bears a solemn responsibility to ensure that all citizens can practice their faith freely and safely, without fear of intimidation, violence, or persecution.

At this painful moment, we express our deepest condolences and spiritual closeness to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Mozambique, the clergy, religious, and lay faithful of the Diocese of Quelimane and Archdiocese of Beira the members of Bishop Osório Afonso's religious congregation, his biological family, relatives, and loved ones and to all those whose lives were touched by his pastoral ministry and witness.

We join them in mourning the loss of a faithful pastor whose life was dedicated to the service of Christ and His Church. We pray that the Lord of Life may grant him eternal rest, reward his faithful ministry, and comfort all who grieve his passing.

May this tragic event become a renewed call for justice, peace, respect for human life, and the protection of religious freedom throughout Mozambique and across our continent.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace!

Accra, Ghana, 6 June 2026


† **Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo**
Archbishop of Kinshasa
President of SECAM

