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Wave of killings of police officers: Leonor Inguane is the sixth victim in four months

- Yesterday, Thursday 23 October, a member of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique (PRM) was shot dead in the Matola-Gare area, Municipality of Matola, Maputo Province — the sixth fatality among police officers recorded over the past four months. The victim has been identified as Leonor Inguane, District Commander of Marracuene.



According to verified reports, the commander was shot inside her vehicle — a red Mahindra — after unidentified individuals in a Toyota Hilux intercepted her convoy. She died at the scene. This is the second police officer to be murdered in October and, strikingly, both incidents

occurred in the Matola-Gare area. The first, an officer known only as Pacule and attached to the National Criminal Investigation Service (SERNIC) of Maputo’s 7th Precinct, was killed on 1 October 2025 when unknown assailants opened fire on a Toyota Mark II in which he was travelling.

Six victims in four months

The killing of Leonor Inguane brings to six the number of police officers assassinated in a four-month span. The chronology of recent incidents includes:

1 October:

The killing of Pacule (SERNIC, 7th Precinct, Maputo city);

9 September:

The fatal shooting of an officer from the PRM Special Operations Group (GOE), known as “Mosquito”;

2 July:

Two SERNIC officers shot dead in Matola;

11 June:

Carlitos Zandamela of the Rapid Intervention Unit (UIR) gunned down in the Nkobe neighbourhood, Matola municipality.

The attack on Leonor Inguane reinforces an alarming and escalating pattern of murders targeting police officers; in each case, the circumstances remain unexplained and investigations have yet to yield public results.

Two dominant explanatory narratives

Crimes of this nature are commonly interpreted through two, not mutually exclusive, narratives. One suggests inter-personal or organised criminal reprisals — “settling of scores” linked to alleged involvement of some officers in illicit activities or corrupt networks within the service. The other posits targeted “silencing” or “file-burning” operations intended to eliminate officers who possess sensitive information.

Conclusion

Whatever their immediate cause, this wave of assassinations signals a collapse in the security architecture and exposes the fragility of institutions charged with maintaining public order in Mozambique. If police officers — armed, trained and tasked with protecting the public — cannot be guaranteed safety, what protection remains for ordinary citizens?

This reality reflects and deepens a pervasive sense of fear and helplessness among the population, casting serious doubt on the state’s capacity to secure the lives and integrity of its own officers, let alone that of the public they are meant to protect.



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