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## **Carlos Cardoso murder trial update**

**9th January 2003**

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### **Nyimpine Chissano's phone records**

Maputo, 9 Jan (AIM) - Maputo loan shark Momade Assife Abdul Satar ("Nini"), one of those charged with ordering the murder of Mozambique's top investigative journalist Carlos Cardoso, on Thursday called for the phone records of Nyimpine Chissano, the oldest son of President Joaquim Chissano, and of his business associate Apolinario Pateguana, to be admitted as evidence in the Carlos Cardoso murder trial.

When they testified to the Maputo City court in December, Chissano and Pateguana, who are co-owners of the travel agency and car hire firm, Expresso Tours, denied any business dealings with Satar. Chissano said he had only met Satar once in his life.

But on Thursday Satar said the phone records told a different story. He suggested that the court should subpoena the records from the mobile phone company M-Cel referring to the numbers registered in the names of Chissano and Pateguana, from the period from January 2000 to now.

He gave judge Augusto Paulino three of these numbers (301107, 307089 and 312351), but believed there were probably others.

He claimed that a mobile phone using number 312351, registered in the name of Pateguana, was sent into the top security prison by Nyimpine Chissano to allow Anibal dos Santos Junior ("Anibalzinho"), the man accused of organising the death squad that murdered Cardoso, to keep in contact with him. Satar said he persuaded Anibalzinho to let him use this phone, and so both he and Anibalzinho had been in phone contact with Chissano from the prison shortly after their arrest in early 2001. Satar is thus alleging that the president's son smuggled banned communications equipment into prisoners who, at the time, were supposed to be incommunicado.

Satar also gave Paulino copies of phone records that had been extracted from the case file on the attempted murder of lawyer Albano Silva in November 1999. He said that these mobile phone records were also relevant for the Carlos Cardoso case: they showed for instance that Anibalzinho rang a phone number registered in Pateguana's name five times in October 2000, the month before the murder.

Nini Satar also claimed the records showed that between April and July 2000 he rang one of Pateguana's numbers no less than 110 times. He implied that these were in reality phone calls made to Chissano since "some of Nyimpine's phones are registered in Pateguana's name".

"These people came to this court and said they didn't know me or Anibalzinho", said Satar. "These phone records prove that they're lying".

Satar elaborated on his earlier testimony that in the jail Anibalzinho assured him that they would soon be released, because the investigating magistrate would not send the case to trial.

"He said there was a guarantee that we would all be freed, because the person who ordered the crime would see to it", Satar told the court. "I thought he was telling the truth".

Right from the start of their imprisonment, both men had access to mobile phones: Satar said the first phone he had in the top security jail was sent to him by Anibalzinho. On that phone, Anibalzinho sent Satar a message warning "not to mention the payments I had made to him otherwise we would lose our protection". (According to Satar these payments to Anibalzinho, which amounted to the equivalent of 50,000 US dollars, were made at Nyimpine Chissano's request. He claimed that at the time he did not realise this was payment for a contract killing.) Anibalzinho instructed Satar not even to recognise him. This phone was taken from Anibalzinho to Satar by "a high ranking officer of the Presidential Guard", he said.

He recalled that once "Anibalzinho was in my cell and rang up Nyimpine, even before the judge's dispatch. So I believed him".

But the dispatch from Judge Paulino, in September 2001, was that there was sufficient evidence for a trial, and that meanwhile the suspects should remain in detention. Satar then asked Anibalzinho what had happened to his "guarantee", and "he said we would be freed by the Supreme Court".

But the Supreme Court confirmed the case would go to trial.

It was then that Anibalzinho threatened him, Satar claimed. "He showed me a knife. He said "stop writing, stop writing. We'll get out"" (Satar had been firing off letters to the Attorney- General, Supreme Court judges, President chissano's office, the Human Rights League and other bodies, claiming that he was the victim of a conspiracy, aimed at extorting a million dollars from him).

Satar denied claims by other witnesses that his relations with Anibalzinho had deteriorated so much, that at one point Anibalzinho punched him.

But mobile phone records also work against Satar's defence case. Satar has claimed that the only time he ventured into the Rovuma Hotel was to visit the shopping centre on the ground floor. However, witnesses have placed him in conspiratorial meetings in one of the hotel's rooms at which murder was planned.

The court has copies of Satar's own mobile phone records, and Paulino noted that they showed "a lot of phone calls to the Rovuma Hotel. Why ?" Satar claimed that all these contacts were innocent calls to the boutique in the Rovuma shopping centre.

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### **Why is Unicambios still open?**

Maputo, 9 Jan (AIM) - Judge Augusto Paulino, who is hearing the Carlos Cardoso murder case, on Thursday suggested that the Unicambios foreign exchange bureau, owned by Ayob Abdul Satar, one of those accused of ordering the murder, should have been closed down.

Ayob Satar, asked by the court to explain Unicambios finances, repeatedly boasted that his company was entirely legal, that it was recognised by the Finance Ministry, and that it had its books in order.

"This is a company that is properly organised", declared Satar. "And it's still open, even though its majority shareholder is in jail. I'm proud of this company".

"I don't know whether it should still be open", interrupted judge Paulino acidly.

Much of this second interrogation of Ayob hinged on whether his brother, the loan shark Momade Assife Abdul Satar ("Nini") could take large sums from Unicambios without Ayob's authorisation.

Ayob declared that this was absolutely impossible, since every item of expenditure in excess of five million meticaïs (about 200 US dollars) required his personal approval.

But he admitted that, although he owns 95 per cent of the company, it was his brother Nini who was responsible for the day- to-day management of Unicambios. Every afternoon it was Nini Satar who checked the takings of the three Unicambios branches.

"He checked how much had been bought and how much sold, and submitted it to me for approval", said Ayob.

"So Nini controlled himself", remarked Paulino.

Ayob claimed that he did not know the former financial director of the Polana Casino, Philip Nevitt, and that the Casino had never done business on any significant scale with Unicambios.

Yet on Monday Nevitt had testified under oath to huge loans from Unicambios to the Casino, arranged under a "verbal contract" between the then general manager of the casino, Gary Rouper, and Nini Satar. He recalled Nini once delivering a sackful of money to Rouper, containing "hundreds of millions of meticaïs". As far as Nevitt was concerned "Nini and Unicambios were one and the same thing".

But Ayob insisted that the money lent to the Casino came from his brother's own funds, and had nothing to do with Unicambios. Yet the postdated cheques from the Casino (totalling seven billion meticaïs), signed by Nevitt and Rouper, are made out, not to Nini, but to Ayob.

"It's not my money, it belongs to Nini", he insisted. "My name is there, but that wasn't my wish. Those cheques were never in my possession, they belonged to Nini".

Ayob argued that the cheques backed up the story spun by prosecution witness Osvaldo Muianga ("Dudu"), when he retracted his original statement of 2001, which claimed that the murder of Cardoso had been planned at meetings in the Rovuma Hotel attended by both Satar brothers.

Muianga's retraction alleged that he made up the Rovuma story at the instigation of Rouper, because of the Casino's debts to Nini Satar. Ayob submitted the Casino's cheques in evidence, arguing that they backed up Muianga's retraction.

However, there are other cheques (amounting to the equivalent of 70,000 dollars) paid by Satar's sister, Rachida, to Muianga's mother, Fatima Razak, which look like a bribe to persuade Muianga to change his statement.

Furthermore, Muianga retracted his retraction, which he now claims was made under pressure. On the witness stand, he insisted that conspiratorial meetings in the Rovuma did take place.

The simplest explanation for the fact that the Casino cheques are made out to Ayob, not Nini, is that in reality the money came from Unicambios.

Ayob tried to distance himself from many of the other people who have featured in this case. He said he had never met Nyimpine Chissano, the oldest son of President Joaquim Chissano, his brother N'naite, or his business partner, Apolinario Pateguana.

The three own the travel agency and car hire firm, Expresso Tours, and although there is strong evidence of repeated business dealings between Expresso Tours and Unicambios, Ayob said he had no knowledge of any ties between the two companies.

Businesswoman Candida Cossa is one of the links between Expresso Tours and Unicambios - but Ayob said she was just a casual acquaintance, who came to Unicambios to visit his brother.

But Cossa claimed that she had been threatened by both Satar brothers in order to change a statement she had made to the police concerning a cheque signed by Satar, for over 50,000 dollars that had bounced.

Ayob stuck to his original claim of December that this part of Candida Cossa's testimony was entirely false.

She had claimed that the Satars effectively kidnapped her, forced her to accompany them to a room in the Rovuma hotel, where Nini locked the door and told her one of her children would be abducted unless she withdrew her complaint about the bouncing cheque.

But, just like his brother, Ayob denied ever visiting any part of the Rovuma Hotel, apart from its ground floor shopping centre.

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### **Assassins add little new**

Maputo, 9 Jan (AIM) - Confessed assassins Carlitos Rashid and Manuel Fernandes brought little new to the Carlos Cardoso murder trial on Thursday, when they were questioned by the court for the second time.

Both thrust the blame for the crime on the third member of the death squad, Anibal dos Santos Junior ("Anibalzinho"), who was illicitly released from the Maputo top security prison on 1 September, and whose whereabouts are currently unknown.

The division of labour on the day of the murder, 22 November 2000, was that Anibalzinho drove the car, Rashid fired the fatal shots, and Fernandes kept a lookout for any police presence.

Rashid said that the initial plan had been to use two men with guns - himself and Miguel Chamusse, but at the last moment, Chamusse (who died last year in South Africa) was replaced by the unarmed Fernandes.

Rashid said that he, Anibalzinho and Chamusse had followed Cardoso from the office of his paper "Metical" to his home "four or five times".

Asked why they had not assassinated him on one of these earlier occasions, Rashid replied "Anibalzinho said "today won't do". He was always saying that".

Rashid changed his earlier evidence according to which he had never fired a gun in his life before the day of the murder.

That claim had been demolished by a South African ballistics expert, who told the court the assassination was carried out by someone experienced in handling firearms.

Now Rashid said it was only that particularly type of gun, the AK-47, that he had not fired before. He had experience with the G-3 rifle, and with his father's hunting gun, a Mauser.

But he continued to insist that he had never been a member either of the army or of the police. "In the first interrogation, I said I was a policeman, in order to avoid torture", he said, since he believed the police would not maltreat someone whom they believed had once been in their ranks.

He neglected to mention that, when questioned by "Metical" reporters immediately after his arrest in March 2001, he said he was a deserter from the armed forces.

Rashid continued to insist that the man standing behind Anibalzinho, and paying for the murder was Nyimpine Chissano, oldest son of President Joaquim Chissano. He recalled that in prison "Anibalzinho said that Nyimpine was working on our release".

He was angered that in court "my boss called me a wretch".

He was referring to the incident in December when Nyimpine Chissano, asked if he recognised Rashid, replied "I don't know this wretched individual".

Neither Rashid nor Fernandes showed anything approaching repentance. Indeed, the only thing they seemed sorry about was that they had not received the money Anibalzinho had promised.

Rashid's casual attitude towards the murder repelled the presiding judge, Augusto Paulino, who remarked "The defendant speaks in such an off-hand way, as if death were just a toy".

<http://www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news/newsletter/Cardoso21.html>