

# Mozambique can sue Privinvest in London 'tuna bond' case, UK court rules

By [Sam Tobin](#)

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Mozambique can sue shipbuilder Privinvest in Britain over the \$2 billion "tuna bond" scandal, the United Kingdom's Supreme Court ruled on Wednesday, just weeks before a blockbuster trial begins in London.



File photo: Mozambique President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi addresses the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York City, US, 19 September 2023. Reuters/Eduardo Munoz/File Photo

The republic is suing Privinvest, its owner Iskandar Safa, Credit Suisse and others at London's High Court over government-guaranteed loans raised in 2013 and 2014, hundreds of millions of dollars of which went missing.

Prinvest had argued that, under its contracts with Mozambique, any dispute between the parties must be addressed by arbitration. In 2021, the Court of Appeal ruled in the company's favour, in a blow to Mozambique's efforts to recoup the money it says it lost.

But the Supreme Court unanimously allowed Mozambique's appeal against that ruling on Wednesday, meaning the republic's claims against Privinvest will be heard in a months-long trial due to start on 3 October.

The tuna bond or "hidden debt" case has triggered criminal investigations from Maputo to New York, plus a series of linked lawsuits.

The case dates back to three deals between state-owned Mozambican companies and Privinvest - funded in part by loans and bonds from Credit Suisse and backed by undisclosed Mozambican government guarantees - ostensibly to develop the fishing industry and for maritime security.

Mozambique, one of the world's poorest countries, wants to revoke a sovereign guarantee on a loan it alleges was corruptly procured and secure compensation for other alleged wrongdoing.

But the cases in London have been mired in difficulties as Mozambique's repeated failure to disclose key documents has threatened to derail the litigation.

Prinvest and Safa have also unsuccessfully tried to draw Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi into the case, with the High Court ruling this month that he has state immunity.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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