



2009 Elections



Mozambique political process bulletin

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Editor: Joseph Hanlon (j.hanlon@open.ac.uk)

Deputy editor: Adriano Nuvunga Research assistant: Tânia Frechauth

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Even with helicopters, the schedule is very tight

Ballot papers and other electoral material will be given to provincial elections commissions on 18 October, which leaves just 9 days to distribute to polling stations before the vote.

Two Mozambican companies are involved – Sotux is supplying voting booths and lamps and Académica is supplying the clear plastic ballot boxes. The rest of the material is coming from South African companies, Lithotech and Uniprint.

Printing ballot papers is complex. The presidential ballot papers are the same for the entire country, but the national parliament ballot papers are different for each province and the provincial assembly ballots are different for each district, because different parties are standing in different constituencies.

Materials will be packed by province and sent by lorry to the provincial capitals. In the province, the materials are split up by district, and the electoral registers – provided provincially – are added. Districts are responsible for sending materials out to individual polling stations, in the form of “kits” which fit in a single metal trunk for each polling station.

At the same time, the electoral administration secretariat, STAE, will be doing the final training of polling station staff. This will finish on 24 October, four days before the election, leaving little time for bureaucratic procedures including signing contracts.

Each polling station has its own team of 7 people, headed by a president. In 1999 and 2004, after training, the polling station team were given their kit to check at district level, and then were transported by lorry with their kits to the polling station. This process means that distribution of teams and kits to 12,694 polling stations can only begin on 25 October.

This is very tight, and although this is technically before the rainy season, there are often already showers by late October, which makes roads muddy. “Even with a normal situation, there are places which are far away and with difficult access, such as the islands in Cabo Delgado and places in Niassa that can only be reached by canoe. So we have opened a tender to hire four helicopters which will be positioned in the north, but could also provide support in the centre,” STAE head Felisberto Naife said in an interview in *Domingo*.

The count

Early results from districts, but second national count

The outcome of the elections should be known on Sunday 1 November. But the National Elections Commission will do its own count, and will also reconsider the invalid votes (*nulos*), and must announce an official result by Friday 14 November.

The CNE approved its directive on the count on 27 September. It is not yet on the CNE website, but the key parts are now on ours: www.eleicoes2009.cip.org.mz.

Ballot papers are counted within the polling station immediately after the close of voting. A summary results sheet (*edital*) and a more detailed report (*acta*) are compiled by each polling station. A copy of the *edital* is posted on the door of the polling station, and given to parties and observers. Copies of the *edital* and *acta* and all electoral material are then taken immediately to the city or district election commission. (CEC, CDE).

There will be two different tabulations. A national count (*apuramento nacional*) done by the various election commissions, and a separate computerised “provisional count” (*contagem provisória*) done by the CNE in Maputo.

At all levels, much of the actual work is to be done by STAE, supervised by the election commission.

Apuramento nacional

At district level, STAE and the CEC/CDE simply add up the totals on the polling station *editais*, referring to the more detailed *actas* only as needed. Results must be announced within three days of the close of voting, that is, Saturday 31 October, and posted at the election commission. Thus results will be clear by Sunday 1 November.

All materials are then passed up to provincial level, where the district and city results are simply added up and published within five days of the end of voting. The provincial election commission also calculates the allocation of seats in the provincial and national assemblies. At district and provincial level, the election commissions cannot delay if material is missing; the results must be based on the *editais* that are available. But the provincial election commissions are allowed to take “necessary measures” to resolve problems. Where *editais* are missing, the law allows election commissions to use signed copies which have been given to parties and others, and this seems an opening to allow election commissions to replace missing *editais* with party copies.

Provincial *editais* and *actas* are then sent to Maputo (on CD rom) where the CNE adds them up. However, the CNE also must reconsider all invalid votes (*nulos*), and those which are accepted as valid are then added to the sum of the provincial results. That is the national result, which must be announced within 15 days of the close of voting – Friday 14 November.

Nulos

Many voters, particularly those who are illiterate, mark the ballot paper improperly, for example voting for more than one candidate. These invalid ballots, known as *nulos*, are then rejected at the polling station and not included in the count. The law says that if the intent of the voter is clear, then the vote should be counted, but polling station staff are often quite strict. In the past, all invalid ballot papers have been sent to the CNE in Maputo for reconsideration.

The table below is for the nulos in 2004. At polling stations nearly 4% of presidential ballots and nearly 5% of legislative ballots were ruled invalid. In 2004, the CNE looked at nearly 300,000 individual ballot paper – sacks and sacks of them – and concluded that for one third the intent of the voter was clear and that the vote should be counted.

The law this year seemed to suggest that nulos might be reconsidered at district level. But the directive of the CNE says that, as in the past, all invalid ballot papers (plus the very few which are challenged by party representatives in polling stations) are to be sent directly to Maputo. With three elections instead of two, and a higher turnout likely, it seems possible that the CNE will receive 500,000 ballot papers to check.

These numbers are so large that they could have an effect on the distribution of parliamentary seats between parties. In 2004, for example, in the legislative election Renamo received 21,510 requalified votes, compared to 16,123 for Frelimo.

Contagem provisória

At district and city level, as soon as information is received from polling stations, copies of the data from the edital are then sent to the provincial election commission and then on to the CNE. The regulations are designed to encourage electronic transmission of the data (although a copy of each edital must eventually be sent to national level). CNE will then input the results from individual polling stations into a central computer system. There will be public computer terminals in the press centre where observers, party delegates and journalists can actually look up the data which has been input, and, for example, compare the input data to that from the independent parallel count.

The contagem provisória is intended to give the CNE an independent check on the process, but the agreed directive says that “in general” the apuramento nacional, based on district and provincial counts plus requalified nulos, takes precedence.

Invalid votes in 2004

	Nulos at polling stations		Accepted by CNE as valid		Total votes in ballot boxes
	Number	% total votes	Number	% of nulos	
Presidential	130,997	3.9%	42,682	33%	3,329,167
Legislative	158,875	4.8%	48,813	31%	3,322,051
TOTAL	289,872	4.4%	91,495	32%	6,651,218

Observer regulations

An English translation of the observer regulation (Deliberation n.º 108/CNE/2008 of 8 October) was posted on the CNE website on 17 September. It is on <http://www.stae.org.mz/media/deliberacoes/Regul.Obs.rtf>

Renamo official jailed in Ilha de Moçambique

José Carmona, Renamo party agent in Ilha de Moçambique, was jailed for six months by the district court on 8 October. He was convicted of four charges: vandalism, by invading the house of a Frelimo member; physical aggression against a man wearing a Frelimo shirt and a woman wearing a Frelimo capulana; and making death threats against Caetano Mutita Júnior, a former president of the municipal assembly who left Renamo and joined Frelimo.

Market traders block Dhlakama

Traders in Lichinga central market prevented Renamo head Afonso Dhlakama from campaigning in the market on 8 October. Passing through markets shaking hands with stallholders and buyers has become a conventional part of Mozambican campaigns. But when the small Dhlakama parade – one car with sound system plus cyclists and people on foot – arrived at the market square on 8 October, the traders left their stalls to meet the procession, yelling “keep moving, Renamo”.

Anyone who wanted to hear what Renamo had to say were threatened. “Anyone who goes to the Renamo meeting will never sell in this market again. This market was built by Frelimo, not Renamo,” the stall holders said.

23 state cars for candidate Guebuza

23 state cars used during the campaign visit of President Armando Guebuza on 10 October to Chibuto, Gaza. In Bairro Cimundo, 9 vehicles of the provincial government, 7 of the district government, and 7 of the municipal government were seen in use, with their registration numbers covered by red Frelimo banners.

Electoral violence

Maua, Niassa. Frelimo sympathisers disrupted the MDM campaign; one MDM injury and campaign material destroyed.

Cahora Bassa, Tete: 3 Renamo members, including the local delegate, Chico Sebastião, were injured by a Frelimo shock group (*grupo de choque*) in Bairro de Unidade 8 October, allegedly for destroying Frelimo campaign material.

Maxixe, Inhambane: 6 October, Frelimo shock group (*grupo de choque*) erected barricades to prevent an MDM group led by its president Daviz Simango from campaigning in the market.

Massinga, Inhambane. Frelimo members disrupted the MDM campaign led by Daviz Simango on 6 October. Skirmishes led to the injury of one Frelimo woman.

Balama, Cabo Delgado: 7 October, Frelimo supporters hit by Renamo members who claimed they were trying to infiltrate a Renamo parade.

Namuno, Cabo Delgado: 3 October, Frelimo supporters hit by Renamo members when they tried to put up posters near where Renamo was to have a rally.

Ilha de Moçambique, Nampula: 7 October, ex-mayor Gulamo Mamudo injured in a scuffle when Renamo and Frelimo parades met.

Meconta, Nampula: Homes of Renamo members Cantilo Ali and Inácio Parede burned on 4 October. Renamo party agent in Namialo, Bernardo Muti, accuses “Frelimo brigade number 4” headed by Mualinho Lichinga. Muti claims that on 3 October the Frelimo brigade said that if residents did not come out of their houses to a Frelimo rally, there would be consequences. Lichinga denies the charge.

Dondo, Sofala: 5 October, MDM member José Manuel Fernando arrested when he was caught climbing a post, allegedly to pull down a Frelimo poster.

Mabalane, Gaza: 6 October, young men wearing Frelimo shirts in Combumune neighbourhood allegedly attacked José dos Santos for having posters for an opposition candidate in his window.

Namarroi, Zambézia: Renamo supporters invaded the Frelimo office in Lipal, tearing up posters and pamphlets.

Frelimo use of state cars

Chibabava, Soafala: in a campaign parade, district health service motorcycles MMC 87-57, MMC 82-4, MMC 81-81 and a department of agriculture car MMC 97-51.

Milange, Zambézia: 8 October, Toyota Hilux, white double cabin, of the district government, with registration plates covered with Frelimo pamphlets.

Quelimane, Zambézia: Seen at the airport: double cabin vehicle of TDM (state telecommunication company) full of young people in Frelimo shirt singing Frelimo songs.

Matutuine, Maputo província: white Nissan, MMJ 77-23, belonging to the Educaiton, Youth and Technology svce, and a white Toyota Hilux belonging ot the district govenrment.

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