



2009 Elections



Mozambique political process bulletin

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Still no candidates lists

With only two days to go before elections, there is still no publicly available list of candidates. Copies of the list have been made available, confidentially, to selected people, but have not been posted on the CNE website or published in *Boletim da República*.

Indeed, there is not even a publicly available list of which parties are standing in which districts for provincial assemblies. (The CNE published such a list for national parliament, but not for provincial assemblies.) This is particularly confusing because the lists posted outside the CNE and used for the table in *Bulletin 4* of 15 September showed that Frelimo was not standing in three districts. But Deliberação n.º 66/CNE/2009 of 5 September, which was posted on the CNE website on 17 September, says Frelimo is standing in all districts.

Corrections to the list of polling stations, with the 427 polling stations in seven districts missed out two weeks ago, were finally published in *Notícias* on Saturday. Several entire districts had been missed out, including Changara and Chifunde in Tete which will be special targets for observers this year because of high levels of fraud in 2004.

A nearly complete list of polling stations was posted on the CNE website on 14 October. The access from the home page via “locais da votação” does not give the full list (Maputo province is missing), but using the alternative address <http://www.stae.org.mz/media/documentos/staepagina/> gives access to all provincial lists.

Tear gas in Nacala Sunday morning

Police in Nacala fired tear gas at a group of Renamo demonstrators blocking roads on Sunday morning, 25 October. The incident began when a car with Frelimo posters knocked down a participant in a large Renamo parade (caravana). The Renamo supporters protested and blocked two roads, Fernão Veloso and the main road linking Nampula and Nacala Porto. Police arrived and fired tear gas to try to break up the roadblocks.

Mabalane traders beaten for backing Daviz

Two stallholders in the central market in Mabalane, Gaza, had pamphlets for Daviz Simango on their stalls as well as the bottles of oil, bags of sugar, and telephone cards. Our local journalist Armando Junior reports that he witnessed a Frelimo shock group headed by the district administrator Artur Macamo arrive at the market and take the two market traders,

Sousa Chaúque and João Manganhe, to the district administration, where they were beaten, in the presence of the local police.

Other incidents have also been reported in Mabalane. Frelimo supporters driving a black double-cabin Ford Ranger MMR 34-55 allegedly kidnapped the local Renamo delegate, Nelson Lino Chitsongo, and two Renamo organisers, Chadreque Rafael Chunguana and Conceição Faduco, and drove them 30 km from the town centre to Cerpa, where they were beaten and tortured. And on 22 October Renamo member Rodrigues Mechanhene was beaten, allegedly by Frelimo supporters.

Mabalane was a problem area in 2004, when Renamo party delegates were expelled from the area and there was serious ballot box stuffing.

Crackdown on polling station misconduct

Growing complaints about partiality and misconduct by a few polling station staff have been confronted head-on by STAE (Secretariado Técnico da Administração Eleitoral) in its training this year of polling station staff.

In 2004 and 2008 three issues were raised:

- A refusal of polling station staff to accept party complaints, which makes it impossible to raise issues at higher level.
- Ballot box stuffing.
- Improperly invalidating votes for Renamo

A code of conduct for polling station staff has been issued this year which stresses the need for impartiality, and explicitly states that individual polling station staff will be held criminally liable for a series of actions including:

- Refusing to receive party complaints. Training and the code stress that discussion and negotiation comes first, but if the problem cannot be resolved, staff must accept a written protest, even if they think it is wrong.
- Putting ballot papers in the ballot box before or after voting, and stating that an elector has voted when they have not. (Last year, the *Bulletin* saw a member of a polling station ticking names off the register, to allow ballot box stuffing.)
- Spoiling or altering ballot papers.

Furthermore, the manual goes on to list the penalties – up to six months in jail for refusing to receive party complaints, six months to one year in jail for ballot box stuffing, and six months to two years in jail for marking an elector as having voted when they have not.

Minor changes to manual and procedures

The manual for polling station staff (membros das mesas) has been rewritten and is generally clear and useful. There are three notable changes to the polling station procedures and to the manual itself.

Perhaps most important, the returning officer (polling station president) no longer tells each voter how to fill in the ballot paper. It is now assumed that after six elections, most people know how to vote, and this explanation was the main cause of delay in the queues. Only those voters who say they are unsure receive an explanation.

Surprisingly, there is no longer a formal check for indelible ink on the index finger, to confirm that the elector has not voted before.

And there is a worrying omission from the manual. One of the biggest problems during the count is for polling station staff to decide if votes with smeared fingerprints or big Xs are valid or invalid. Past manuals have given examples of valid and invalid votes as guidance, but this year's manual has no examples.

Three counts for this election

A STAE press conference Thursday clarified some details of the three counts which take place for this election.

First, in order to provide rapid results, STAE does a “provisional count”. District STAE directors will text (SMS) or telephone individual polling station results to provincial headquarters as soon as they are received. These are consolidated and released at the press centre in Maputo. These results are less accurate and unofficial, but are intended to give an early indication of results and compete with parallel counts being done by the media. This was done for the first time last year; it was very useful and worked relatively well.

The “secondary count” is a computerised count done at provincial level. A copy of every polling station edital is sent to the provincial election commission. There are separate computer systems in each of the 11 provinces (and in Maputo for the two constituencies abroad). Each system produces a cd-rom which is sent to Maputo. In the press conference, Mario Ernesto, STAE head of operations, stressed that this secondary, computerised system is only to be used for verification, checks, and especially to fill gaps.

Finally, there is the official national count. The district simply adds up all the polling station results sheets (editais), using nothing more than a calculator, and produces its own results sheet (edital). It sends this on to the province and posts a copy in the district. This must be done by Saturday 31 October. The province then simply adds up the district totals. But it also compares the results to the computerised secondary count and can, in secret, make corrections. This must be done by Monday 2 November. This edital is sent to Maputo and posted at the provincial election commission.

At national level, the CNE must reconsider all 500,000 invalid ballot papers (nulos). It normally accepts about one-third, and these are added in. The process of requalification is open to press and observers.

The CNE and STAE then, in closed session, make further corrections to the results. Only the CNE can exclude polling stations where there has been obvious ballot box stuffing or other manipulation. In the past there have been problems with lost or damaged polling station editais, and this can sometimes be corrected using the data from the secondary count computer system. When all the changes and corrections have been made, the CNE publishes its national results sheet.

In the past the CNE has never published a list of changes and corrections made or provided any explanations. There is no list of excluded polling stations or reasons, and no explanation of changes to provincial editais. The ability of the CNE to change results in secret without explanation is permitted by Mozambican law, but has been repeatedly criticised as unique and unacceptable by international observers (for example after the 2004 election, see the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin* 29 December 2004.)

Meanwhile, the CNE directive on the counting and tabulation procedures, which is essential to parties, press and observers monitoring the process, has still not been published. It was approved on 27 September and posted on our website two weeks ago. (www.eleicoes2009.cip.org.mz) Details are given in Bulletin 15.

Wicked wind and missing files

Rumours continue to swirl about the alleged missing MDM files. The MDM (Movimento Democrático de Moçambique) has already filed a formal complaint with the Attorney General's Office (Procuradoria Geral da República, PGR) that files of candidates were lost or stolen inside the National Elections Commission (CNE), in order to prevent the MDM from standing in some provinces.

In an article in the fax daily *Canalmoz* Friday, director Fernando Veloso writes that the PRG is taking the accusation seriously, and that the Renamo nominated member of the CNE, Ezequiel Molde Gusse, might be accused.

Perhaps in response to this, António Salomão Chipanga, a CNE member and coordinator of the CNE legal commission, made a very odd comment when he was briefing observers from the diplomatic community in Maputo on Friday. He admitted that the CNE was unprepared for the thousands of files which were submitted on the last day, 29 July, and that boxes of files were left scattered around the CNE. Then, he said, there was a “wicked wind” (“vento maligno”) which apparently spread around some papers.

In an subsequent interview with the *Bulletin*, Chipanga said that papers from the parties did fly around, as people saw on television – but he said he gave this as an example of the disorganisation of the parties in submitting their documents, and has nothing to do with allegations of missing MDM files. The CNE maintains that the missing files were never submitted.

However, an eminent figure from a former election commission has been telling associates that he knows that two CNE members did, indeed, shred MDM files.

With CNE keeping secret all of its records on submission of candidates’ documents, these stories are impossible to check. And in this atmosphere of secrecy, rumours swell.

LabSoft exists

The front page article in the independent weekly *Savana* Friday said that the software company the won the contract for computer tabulation systems, LabSoft, did not officially exist and thus the contract was illegal.

However STAE provided details of the company, and much of the rest of the press reported that it is a legally registered company, with its statutes published in *Boletim da Republica* on 24 June 2008. It is owned by two Mozambicans, Penicela Pedro Vasco and Mauro Rodrigues Conceicao da Costa, and based in Matola.

O País reported Friday that it was by far the low bidder for the contract, at 3.4 million meticaís (\$120,000 – although other reports give the contract as \$200,000), compared to 54 million meticaís (\$1.9 million) by EBS E-business systems, and 113 million meticaís (by Promsoft (\$4 mn), which do not look like serious bids.

Wrapping up in the heartlands

The three presidential candidates are all ending their campaigns in the areas of core support. President Armando Guebuza has passed through Gaza and ended his campaign in Maputo. The presidents of Renamo and its two breakaways all planned to end in Beira. They are Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo), Daviz Simango (Movimento Democrático de Moçambique, MDM), and Raul Domingos (Partido para Paz, Democracia e Desenvolvimento, PDD, which is standing only in parliamentary elections.

Burned voters cards in Pemba

More than 200 voters cards, partly burned and mostly without photos, were shown to the press by Renamo in Pemba last Tuesday. Arlindo Zacarias, Renamo party agent, was unable to say where they had been found. But he accused Frelimo of destroying voters cards of Renamo members – a charge that Frelimo denies.

MDM accuses TVM and STV of favouring Frelimo

The Mozambique Democratic Movement (Movimento Democrático de Moçambique, MDM) Wednesday in Beira accused the state-owned Televisão de Moçambique (TVM) and the privately-owned STV of favouring Frelimo.

The accusation was made by the MDM Sofala campaign director, Lucas Zabica, at a press conference Wednesday attended by *Diário de Moçambique* and Rádio Pax, but TVM and STV were absent.

Zabica argues that in their news reports, the two TV channels give more time to Frelimo than to MDM and other opposition parties.

Just in Gaza: 70 cars and 6 boats

Provincial STAE in Gaza has 10 road vehicles of its own but will use another 60 to get voting materials to all parts of the province, according to STAE director Maria Hombe. She said that six boats are also available for those areas on rivers and lakes that cannot be reached in any other way, especially if there is rain. Distribution of material has already started and will be in all districts by Tuesday.

Musician attacks announcer

Pemba musician Imamu Agy physically attacked Rádio Moçambique announcer Thomás Moises Anatamba while he was on the air on 19 October. Imamu Agy alleged that the announcer played a piece of his music immediately after a Renamo party political broadcast, without a break, making it sound like his music was backing Renamo, when in fact he is a Frelimo member who would not allow his music to be used by Renamo. MISA Mozambique has protested against the attack and RM has reported it to the police.

Campaign incidents

Sunday was the last day of campaigning, and in the run-up to the end of the campaign there was an increase in incidents of violence and in the use of state cars by Frelimo. Our 100 journalists throughout the country report:

Violence

Machanga, Sofala: Renamo party agent Isaias José Mainde and mobilisation head Titose Mateus Maime have been held in police cells in Matonga locality since 22 October, accused of destroying Frelimo election posters and other material.

Nhamatanda, Sofala: Frelimo supporters unsuccessfully tried to break up an MDM rally in Metuchira on 24 October, but were attacked and beaten by MDM supporters.

Nhangau, Sofala: Renamo supporters in Manga Loforte on 23 October invaded the house of an MDM supporter and beat two young men staying there and destroyed MDM campaign material.

Sanga, Niassa: Frelimo supporters broke up a Renamo rally on 21 October in Nassenheng village.

Funhalouro, Inhambane: Frelimo supporters attacked Renamo member Flor Sabão and destroyed campaign material, 23 October.

Chiuta, Tete: Renamo member Ganizani Sainete campaigning in Kazula on 14 October attacked by Frelimo supporters.

Chiuta, Tete: Frelimo sympathisers broke up a Renamo rally on 13 October in Kazula and stoned a Renamo car: MTA 25-94 Toyota Land Cruiser

Frelimo use of state cars

Chibuto, Gaza: 22 October, 6 state cars – 3 municipal council, 1 education, 1 agriculture, 1 district administration (MMR 29-57).

Mabalane, Gaza: 23 October, MMS 94-87 white Ford Ranger, Ministry of Science and Technology.

Chicualacuala, Gaza: Since the beginning of the campaign, district administration red Ford Ranger and grey Toyota, with registration numbers covered by Frelimo posters.

Buzi, Sofala: For the visit of presidential candidate Armando Guebuza 23 October, 20 state cars were used, from education and culture, health, and the rural hospital.

Machanga, Sofala: 23 October Toyota MLV 06-44 of the district administration, driven by permanent secretary Taibo Mguare.

Namarroi, Zambézia: 22 October, motorcycles of civil registry and district directorate of agriculture.

Meconta, Nampula: For the last days of the campaign, MLV 94-55, white Toyota hilux of the Instituto de Investigação Agrária.

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