

## 4 Mayoral candidates disqualified; Renamo loses good chance

Just a day before the start of formal campaigning for the 19 November local elections, the National Elections Commission (CNE) on 3 November disqualified four candidates for mayor. Three are Renamo candidates who did not satisfy the requirement of living in the municipality in which they were standing for at least six months. All 3 are in the Beira corridor where Renamo has substantial support.

Cristovao Soares, Renamo candidate in Gorongosa in Sofala had the best chance for Renamo of winning one of the 10 new municipalities, but the documents he submitted said he had only lived there for four months.

Manuel Bissopo, Renamo candidate for mayor of Dondo, lives not in Dondo but 30 kilometres away in Beira. He was a vereador, a member of Beira City Council, until he was sacked in September by the mayor of Beira, Daviz Simango, who is standing for mayor there as an independent. The Renamo candidate for mayor of Manica town, Benjamim Massangaice, was found to be living not in Manica, but in the provincial capital, Chimoio.

The fourth disqualified candidate is Joao Alfazema, candidate for mayor of Milange from the Party for Peace, Democracy and Development (PDD), He failed to supply the CNE with his photograph, which is a basic requirement for mayoral candidates because the photo appears on the ballot paper. PDD was set up by the former number two in Renamo, Raul Domingos, after he was expelled from Renamo in 2000.

The disqualifications mean that the Frelimo candidate in Manica town will be elected unopposed. In Dondo and Gorongosa the contest will now be between Frelimo and the PDD. In Milange, there are still three candidates in the race, from Frelimo, Renamo and the Mozambique National Union (UNAMO)

The CNE says it notified all candidates of any irregularities in their nomination papers, and the deadlines for correcting those irregularities expired some time ago. It appears the CNE delayed its decision as long as possible to give Renamo maximum time to respond.