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CNE proposes repeat elections on 10 December

The Council of Ministers is expected to announce, by tomorrow, the date for the repeat of the local elections in Marromeu and parts of Guruè, Milange and Nacala-Porto. The National Electoral Commission (CNE) proposal is for the rerun to take place on Sunday 10 December.

The proposal apparently violates Law 7/2018 of 3 August, which states that elections declared null and void must be repeated by the second Sunday after the Constitutional Council's decision. The decision was Friday 24 November so the second Sunday would be 3 December.

The much amended electoral laws were often changed in haste without considering practicalities. The CNE sometimes acts in secret because the law is wrong, for example the rule for allocating parliamentary seats to provinces is mathematically incorrect, so every five years the CNE ignores the law. Earlier versions of the electoral law allowed 30 days for a rerun, and eight days is clearly not enough time for the logistical issues involved in organising an electoral process.

The CNE says that it will be necessary to contract the company Académica, which supplied voting kits which include ballot papers, to get the material in place in good time. The short time means the order will be made without tender.

There will be 73 polling stations (*mesas*) with 511 polling stations staff (*MMVs*) for 51,770 registered voters

Município	Mesas	Eleitores	MMVs
Nacala-Porto	16	11,293	112
Milange	3	2,397	21
Gurue	13	8,647	91
Marromeu	41	29,433	287
Total	73	51,770	511

Maputo, 26 de Novembro de 2023

Rerun to cost \$336,000.

Will the same fraudsters run the new election?

The electoral fraud carried out by the managers of the electoral administration in the four municipalities is having a heavy cost for the state budget. *CIP Eleições* had access to the budget and reveals that the state will have to spend 21.5 million meticals (\$336,000).

None of the polling station staff, STAE directors or district election commission chairmen involved and responsible for the fraud have been dismissed and there is no evidence that any proceedings have been initiated against any of them. This means that it will be the same managers who will head the process of repeating the elections on 10 December.

**Resumo das Necessidades por CED para Repetição da Eleição
STAE e Órgãos de Apoio a CNE**

CED	Designação de Necessidades	2023 - REPETIÇÃO
111000	Despesas com pessoal	
111102	Vencto Base Pessoal fora Quadro	2.876.900,00
	Sub-Total	2.876.900,00
112000	Demais Despesas com Pessoal	
112001	Ajudas de Custo dentro do Pais	7.500.000,00
	Sub-Total	7.500.000,00
	Bens e Serviços	
121000	Bens	600.000,00
121001	Combustiveis	4.400.000,00
122000	Serviços	6.141.220,00
122001	Comunicações	39.600,00
122000	Material de Formação e Votação	0,00
	Sub-Total	11.180.820,00
		21.557.720,00

Marromeu has been a battle ground and site of fraud in all 5 municipal elections

Marromeu in Sofala is the only municipality with a complete new vote, after a massive fraud. This was a municipality which the Mais Integridade civil society observation made a double parallel count. Of 28 polling stations that were observed, 11 were clearly inflated, with 2944 ghost voters. In the most extreme case, at a polling station in 25 June school, the *edital* showed a 98% turnout with 758 votes for Frelimo. But observers recorded that during the count when votes are tallied on the classroom blackboard, Frelimo had only 316 in that polling station.

Marromeu has a long and fraught history in all 5 multiparty municipal elections. Five years ago in the 10 October **2018** election STAE and the police took some ballot boxes and the count was done in secret by Frelimo. A new election was called for 22 November in 8 polling stations. There were observers in all 8, who gave Renamo a victory by 3656 votes, while the district election commission gave Frelimo the victory by 772. Two polling stations at EPC Samora Machel were clearly fake, with no one voting during the day, but the district election commission said there was a 94% turnout.

The town has also been the site of repeated invalidating of opposition votes. This is done during the counting process when a second ink mark is surreptitiously put on an opposition ballot paper to make it invalid (*nulo*). A normal rate of *nulos* is 3.5% or less. Ten years ago in the **2013** municipal election, there were an incredible 13% invalid votes, which were clearly MDM votes made invalid. There were 1119 invalid votes (*nulos*) and the Frelimo candidate for mayor won by just 283 votes.

In **2008**, the *nulo* rate was 7% and Renamo protested, but Frelimo was declared victor.

The **2003** election in Marromeu was unique. The district election commission gave the Frelimo candidate for mayor a victory by 2 votes and for the assembly by 17 votes. A parallel count confirmed the Frelimo victory for assembly but said Renamo won for mayor by 1 vote. Renamo objected,

pointing to the 378 *nulos* (9%). The battle went to the CNE where a political deal was made. Representatives of both parties consulted party leaders and at 2 am the CNE voted to accept the parallel count. The Renamo mayor won by a single vote while Frelimo controlled the assemblies of the country's 12 new municipalities. The closing date for the tender is next Monday (23 January).

'Substantial' chance of change in 3 other municipalities

The CC says it only nullifies a mesa or municipality if the new vote can have a "substantial influence on the result." There must at least be a chance of changing the number of assembly seats. Three municipalities are having reruns in only some polling stations, and we also do not know what other changes the CC has already made in these three municipalities.

In Gurué in the results announced by the CNE, Frelimo has an advantage of 4625 votes and 6 seats over Nova Democracia. But the revote is being held in 13 mesas with 8647 registered voters. Also, two other opposition parties have seats: Frelimo 22, ND 16, Renamo 2, and MDM 1. So if ND gained three seats there would be an opposition majority. This is clearly possible.

In Nacala Porto 18 polling stations with 12,893 voters are to vote again. The CNE gave Frelimo a margin of 11,915 over Renamo, so on their own these 18 polling stations could not change to result. But if the CC has already given Renamo some additional votes, Renamo could win in Nacala Porto.


In Milange the CNE has given Frelimo a 3881 difference over Renamo, and 5 seats. Only 3 mesas with 2397 voters are voting again.

Observers castigate CC

The Mais Integridade civil society observer consortium is highly critical of the CC in a report today titled "[CC ruling leaves doubts about electoral truth](#)". These are a few quotes (translated from Portuguese):

- "One of the most critical aspects of this year's decision is that the CC changed election results without explaining how it arrived at the changes, particularly whether or not they were the result of its own research."
- "In addition to the data from the electoral bodies, the opposition parties submitted *editais* to the CC, but it is unclear whether the body used these copies, which leads one to question the practical usefulness of the copies of *editais* that the parties receive at the end of the day."
- "Even with the power to change data in order to enforce justice, if there is sufficient evidence, namely *editais* at various levels, that there have been counting errors, the CC must give reasons for its decisions."
- "From the document presented last Friday, it can be seen that the CC has refrained from taking bold decisions, even if they could hurt certain party interests, particularly in the main cities such as Maputo and Matola, thus refraining from fulfilling its role as the last pillar safeguarding our democratic rule of law."
- "Administratively, in some municipalities, the Constitutional Council decided that Renamo candidates had won, removing a significant number of votes from Frelimo, without explaining the reasons behind the changes, including whether or not they were the result of its own investigation. But in the most important municipalities, such as Maputo and Matola, the CC kept Frelimo as the winner, even with evidence of serious irregularities that may have substantially influenced the results, to the detriment of Renamo."

- "It is also unclear why the CC ordered a repeat vote in the municipality of Marromeu and not in the city of Maputo, for example, where serious irregularities were reported on polling day."
- "The CC missed an opportunity to send a clear message that it does not condone or tolerate serious irregularities and electoral offences."

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