

Number 204 – 21 December 2023

Published by Centro de Integridade Pública, Maputo, Mozambique

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Registration will be moved to after the rains, requiring special parliament session

A registration in the rain was only approved by the council of ministers because the badly written and much changed electoral law forces it. Everything indicates that the National Elections Commission (CNE) will, in January, propose to the Council of Ministers that the voter registration start 15 March, toward the end of the rainy season. This will require an extraordinary sitting of parliament to change the law to allow the new date.

This fiasco is caused by frequent and incoherent changes to some parts of the electoral laws and not others. The registration law was passed in 2014 and remains unchanged. It requires registration within the six months after the presidential election date is announced. The national elections law from 2013 was changed in 2014, 2018, 2019, and last year. One change was that the presidential election date should be in the first half of October and be announced 18 months in advance, which would have forced national registration to be last year.

Then last April as part of the decision not to have district elections, this was again changed to 14 months in advance, and the 9 October 2024 date was announced in August 2023. But there was no change to the registration law. The CNE was too busy with municipal elections, and only belatedly noticed that holding registration on the latest possible date was during the rainy season. And the very late decision on registration means it is impossible to produce the registration material and place it in all the provinces in less than 40 days. And the government still owes the normal consortium money for this year's voter registration, ahead of the municipal elections.

Many countries have a single electoral code, but Mozambique has a collection of at least eight laws, one dating back to 1991, including different laws for national and municipal elections. The Constitutional Council and others called for a unified electoral code, and after the 2009 elections, government, parties, and civil society informally agree to move to a single electoral code. At which point donors called a strike in early 2010 demanding that the old system of multiple electoral laws be kept. In 2010 donors were still powerful, and government caved in. The current mess of contradictory laws is the result.

[This time Bishop Carlos Matsinhe did not abstain:](#)

Frelimo on CNE approves results from 4 municipalities

The CNE approved, early this morning (Thursday 21 December) the results in the four municipalities where the elections were repeated - Marromeu, Milange, Guruè and Nacala Porto - but gave no details of what was being approved. Renamo again voted against, arguing that the elections were marred by even more irregularities.

This time, all the Frelimo representatives present at the meeting voted in favour. This included CNE head Bishop Carlos Matsinhe and Salomão Moyana, who had chosen to abstain in the vote held in the early morning of 26 October, on the results of the 65 municipalities.

Repeat elections worse than 11 October, says Renamo

In their declaration justifying their dissenting votes, the Renamo representatives on the CNE said they voted against approving the results because they did not agree “with the procedures in the entire voting process and all phases of the count”, particularly in the municipalities of Marromeu and Guruè.

In the repeat elections in Marromeu and Guruè there were “various irregularities and crimes which greatly exceeded those that marked the elections of 11 October” they said. Renamo continues that the district and provincial electoral bodies drew up a strategy that resulted in altering the results on the original *editais* (results sheets), “producing other, fake *editais* with numbers erased”.

In Gurue

- + "All the voter rolls used at the polling stations were totally different from the replica rolls made available to the polling station monitors and distributed by the CNE to the political parties.
- + Rolls 06 and 07 from the Moneneia EPC polling centre were not at the polling stations.
- + Members of the CDE and the chair of the CPE banned supervision of the partial count.
- + In all the polling stations there was a contingent of armed police from all branches of the police.
- + Shots were fired, a citizen was shot, and another was beaten."
- + "The chairs of the polling stations abandoned the count of the votes, and only came back the following day with *editais* and polling station minutes already filled out with fraudulent results.
- + The chairs refused to accept the protests from the political party monitors.
- + 147 ballot papers were stolen from polling station no. 3 at the Julius Nyerere EPC."

Other irregularities denounced by the opposition concern the police ban on CNE members supervising the elections.

In Marromeu Renamo CNE members says:

- + "CNE members were banned from undertaking supervision by the district police commander, Sr Isidro. He went so far as to say that, if they attempted to supervise, they would suffer the consequences and he would not be held responsible.
- + Voters appeared with ballot papers marked in advance in favour of the Frelimo Party.
- + The chair of polling station no. 5 at 25 June EPC gave 8 pre-marked ballot papers to the First Scrutineer. This was followed by physical attacks by the police against a Renamo monitor."

Opposition says “CNE’s inertia reduced the transparency of the elections”

In the same dissenting opinion, the opposition representatives on the CNE accused that body of being mainly responsible for the irregularities and crimes that occurred during the repeat elections.


They said members of the electoral bodies at central level who were supervising the elections in those municipalities should have intervened promptly to correct the problems and calm public opinion. But the inertia and apathy which characterize the CNE “greatly reduced the trust, transparency and justice” of an electoral process that was “well organized up to the voting”, but was altered “in the period of the partial count”.

Renamo's dissenting opinion continues:

+ "The results that the CNE obtained and announced were prepared by STAE, and this body once again strategically and in defiance of transparency, impartiality and justice, presented data that were completely adulterated.

+ This behaviour was guaranteed by the members of the CNE who voted in favour (shirking their responsibility) and launched a cloak of suspicion and distrust, which called into question all the investment made, aimed at free, fair and transparent elections. Specifically the banning of supervision by the CNE trickled down as far as the CDEs.

+ Public opinion is that the CNE and STAE are clearly in favour of one of the competing parties, at the expense of the others. If this was not a deliberate attitude, then we have failed, once again, in our mission to instruct STAE to be guided by impartiality and to conform with the law."

	FICHA TÉCNICA:	ENDEREÇOS:
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