

Number 226-228 – 23 March 2024

Published by Centro de Integridade Pública, Maputo, Mozambique

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Almost a million voters registered in the first week

In the first week 943,731 voters were registered, STAE spokesperson Lucas José said at a press conference Friday (22 March). This is 13% of the number of voters expected to register by the close of registration on 28 April. In the registration for municipal elections last year, 8.7 million people registered. The first week of registration brings the total to 9.6 million. This is 60% of the projected 16.2 million voters.

STAE confirmed reports by the *CIP Eleições* bulletin's 400 correspondents that registration was initially characterized by slowness in taking the voters' data. But STAE made no reference to the machine malfunctions that have occurred at many registration posts.

STAE confirmed a financial crisis at the same press conference. A lack of funds affected the purchase of fuel and is reflected in delays in paying for expenses made during the 2023 elections, in all provinces. STAE also confirmed delays in paying allowances to election agents at all levels. This had been raised by Renamo in a press conference two days earlier. The STAE press statement (Portuguese only) is on <https://bit.ly/Moz-EI-228-STAE>

Renamo says CNE repeating same mistakes, like 'taking a shower then wearing the same dirty clothes again'

"We plunged into voter registration on 15 March this year, without having been able to reflect on and evaluate the past process. We are once again plunged into the same ignominy, full of uncertainties about the fairness of the registration for the 2024 local elections," said CNE Renamo Vice-President Fernando Mazanga at a press conference

Wednesday (20 March). "This is the equivalent of taking a shower and wearing the same dirty clothes again."

Partly it is lack of money, partly lack of preparation, partly disinterest, he said.

"The registration for the 2023 municipal elections was awful, which is why we voted against it, because it didn't reflect the level of a process that guarantees free, fair and transparent elections. That's what we saw in the vote on 10 October 2023. A bad census is reflected in bad results. It was a national disgrace that we don't want to see happen again. What hurts most is that we criticise and vote against. We witnessed that the results of the local elections were neither fair nor transparent. We shouted, we protested," but to no avail.

Mazanga also criticised the way in which the Constitutional Council acts in secret. Mazanga noted that the CC called new elections in some places and not in others, without any explanation. He also noted how the STAE could simply ignore the CNE's orders, for example, to suspend corrupt STAE directors.

He also complained about the lack of transparency in the use of CNE and STAE funds. "Some invoices from the last election have still not been paid. STAE has debts with suppliers, with members of the CDEs, some since November and others since January." This was confirmed at the STAE press conference two days later. Mazanga's statement (in English and Portuguese) is on <https://bit.ly/Moz-El-228-Ren>

Three election workers brutally killed by local militia

STAE officially confirmed the murder of three civic education agents by a paramilitary local force known as Naparamas on 8 March in the Katapua administrative post, Chiúre district, Cabo Delgado province. Their bodies were stripped naked and mutilated.

Naparamas are untrained local militias which have been encouraged by the military to help fight insurgents, and seven Naparamas were killed in a fight with insurgents in Ancuabe on 2 March.

The Naparamas are poorly educated and share with the local population and the insurgents a distrust of local officials. In mid-January Naparamas led violence against health workers and administrators in Hukula, Nampuno district, and Mecorora, Ancuabe district, destroying a cholera treatment centre and burning houses of officials.

In Cabo Delgado distrust of officials is so great that many people believe local officials and health workers are putting cholera in the water to kill them. It is unclear if Naparamas erroneously saw the civic education workers promoting registration as insurgents, or if they were simply seen as government officials from outside who were not to be trusted.

Still no registration in Quissanga and Ibo

Insurgency and rain are having a negative impact on voter registration in Cabo Delgado. STAE confirmed what our Bulletin had already reported, namely that the registration has not yet started in some districts in Cabo Delgado. According to Lucas José, STAE has not yet managed to place the brigades and their equipment in Quissanga and Ibo districts. Use of air and sea transport is under consideration. Quissanga was occupied by insurgents until a week ago, and Ibo island remains largely inaccessible.

Storm Filipo affected registration in south

Tropical Storm Filipo which struck coastal zones in the south and centre of the country, created problems for the voter registration. In Inhambane, Gaza and Maputo provinces there was significant destruction of infrastructures, such as the electricity grid, schools and roads. The voter registration posts, which mostly operate in schools were also affected, which forced changes in the initial plans for requirements of verandas and alternative means of transport.

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