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2023 municipal elections:

STAE and CNE still have no money

STAE and the CNE do not have the money for the voter registration, which begins in 40 days, because the government gave them a dud cheque, without the money to cover it in the bank. The government informed the CNE in late January that MT6bn (\$94mn) are available for the elections. But the amount is only in the system virtually (as an accounting sum) but in real terms (sum available) it still does not exist in a form that can be used. The electoral bodies are now facing difficulty in operating the election machinery. And the supplier of equipment has not yet been paid for the materials that have arrived in Maputo.

In February, the government informed the National Elections Commission (CNE) that the overall amount for the elections was available in the system. The CNE then redistributed the amount to the Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat (STAE), immediately providing the sum of MT6bn, of which MT4bn is to pay for election equipment from the Lexton/Artes Gráficas consortium. The consortium has imported the equipment for the municipal and general elections of 2023 and 2024 respectively.

But this amount is just in the system and is not available in reality. STAE only found that the money did not really exist when its financial area wanted to use it, because it received a communication from the National Treasury Directorate that the money is only available virtually, and not in real terms – that is, there is no liquidity. Hence, not even the consortium has been paid for the purchase of material. Nor has there been any payment for other expenses inherent to the elections, some of which have already been made.

Right now, STAE does not have the resources to operate its electoral machinery. It has no information as to when the money will be made available for election operations. 40 days from now, the voter registration will begin. This means that by then all the electoral material should be in the districts where there are municipalities, and the brigade members who will carry out the registration should be hired. The money only exists in the system, but not in reality.

The consortium is using its own money for all the operations.

It should be recalled that the electoral bodies, CNE/STAE, at the end of last year submitted a budget proposal for MT14bn (\$220mn) for the 2023 municipal elections. The government approved the proposals.

CNE and STAE have not yet been told the boundaries of the new municipalities

A few days from the start of voter registration, the Government has not yet sent to the electoral administration and management bodies the territorial demarcations of the 12 new municipalities since these have not yet been approved by the Council of Ministers. This is preventing the electoral bodies and the political parties from better planning their operations.

The territorial demarcations allow the electoral bodies to know the area of the new municipality and to define the number of registration brigades and their members, the number of polling stations and the respective polling station staff necessary for the municipal elections in these new municipalities. Without territorial demarcation, it is not possible to calculate how many people are needed.

Likewise, the political parties cannot know how many polling station monitors they will need nor where to place them to inspect the voter registration due to begin on 20 April, or the voting itself in October.

Is Ossufo Momade resigned to no district elections?

Renamo seems to have accepted the decision of Frelimo to cancel the holding of district elections in 2024. According to Ossufo Momade, Renamo “has no answer to give”, but it was his desire that the elections be held next year.

Ossufo Momade says that Renamo regrets that the postponement of the district elections had been presented “very late”. Momade recalled that the elections are the result of agreements in 2019 between Renamo and the Government.

Ossufo Momade reacted to the cancelling of the elections after the meeting he held with the President of the Republic, Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, in the context of the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) of former Renamo guerrillas.

As for the next step to be taken, the leader of the largest opposition party said “Right now, we have no answer to give with regard to the district elections.”

Although apparently in acceptance, Momade guaranteed “We shall discuss so as to find a solution, because we would like the district elections to be held in 2024”.

For his part, the President of the Republic, Filipe Nyusi, confirmed there had been an “exchange of impressions” about the district elections. Both men analysed technical aspects concerned with the consolidation of decentralisation, and also with the financial viability of the district elections.

By way of a warning, Filipe Nyusi presented a further reason for his hesitation in pushing ahead with district elections. “If we are embarking on the DDR, in which we are thinking about paying pensions, that means involving (financial) resources.” And he concluded “The Mozambicans will find a solution”.

1/5th of equipment for voter registration is now in Maputo

The first one-fifth of material will be used for the voter registration that begins on 20 April was unloaded in Maputo on Monday (6 March). The 108 tonnes were flown from Hong Kong.

The registration system is based around a portable computer, known as a Mobile ID. The equipment delivered Monday included:


+ Batteries,

+ Power banks and chargers to increase their autonomy, which will reduce the need to take them to charging points with access to electricity, thus avoiding interruptions in the registration of voters, and

+ PVC cards, being used for the first time this year for voters cards instead of paper sealed in plastic, and which like credit cards have greater durability and security, and could in future be used for a permanent registration system.

In all, 200 tonnes of equipment from Hong Kong and France are being flown to Maputo for the voter registration, [at a cost of \\$7mn.](#)

According to a source in the National Elections Commission, the last aircraft carrying the Mobile IDs will soon land in Maputo from France.

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