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2018 LOCAL ELECTIONS

MOZAMBIQUE POLITICAL PROCESS BULLETIN

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CNE admits chaos in Nampula caused by sloppiness of STAE

Sloppiness by the staff of the technical secretariat STAE (Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral) in Nampula caused the confusion over register books and polling stations, the National Elections Commission (Comissão Nacional de Eleições - CNE) admitted at a press conference Friday.

Renamo and MDM had both protested. A team of CNE chair Sheik Abdul Carimo Sau, Renamo nominated CNE vice-president Meque Brás, spokesperson Paulo Cuinica, and STAE director Felisberto Naife had to fly to Nampula to sort out the mess. All because STAE staff did not properly copy files onto flash drives and then did not check.

For the 24 January by-election, flash drives were given to the parties which were supposed to contain the complete voters roll for Nampula. Voting is based on the 2014 registration, so this was supposed to be a copy of the 2014 register, simply with the headings changed to 2018.

In fact, the copies on the flash were disorganised and incomplete. Folders did not open, or if they opened they were partial or corrupted; some folders were duplicated, admitted CNE spokesperson Paulo Cuinica.

And the copies given to different parties were different. Thus for Nampala primary school, where here should be 24 register books, Renamo was given a flash with only 8 books and MDM was given a flash with 12.

New and correct flash drives have been issued and distributed, said Cuinica, who stressed that the voters rolls and polling stations were exactly the same as in 2014.

Comment:

Not just Nampula - and repeating 2014, 2009, and 2004

The sloppiness is not just in Nampula, but in Maputo as well. Four years after local elections and three years after national elections, detailed results (down to polling station level) have still not been published. And CNE/STAE still do not have a working website - it is impossible to download the electoral laws or 2014 summary results sheets. Just as with the flash drives given to the parties in Nampula, no one seems to have checked that the posted pdf files can be downloaded and opened.

And this continues past performance. After the 2014 election, we published a comment headlined: "Déjà vu again".

The 2014 article reminded readers:

"After the 2009 election we had an article headlined 'Déjà vu - An unnecessarily tainted election'."

And in 2009 we said:

"Long term readers of this Bulletin will recognise that little has changed in response to harsh criticism of 1999 and 2004 elections; like a film being seen again, the same problems recur."

And they recurred again in 2014. and we asked: "Is misconduct and sloppiness a permanent part of the Mozambican electoral process? Will our headline in 2019 be 'Déjà vu again once more'?"

2004, 2009, 2014 and now the same story of sloppiness in 2018. It does not look hopeful. But, yet again, we are watching.

Assassination: political or politicized?

An MDM member was killed on 10 January, the second day of the campaign. But was it political?

Buana Agostinho was killed in Campo dos Macondes, Namutequeliua, Nampula just after he had been putting up MDM posters near where the Frelimo candidate Amisse Cololo had launched his campaign. And Buana's mother, Tina Mário, is head of the MDM Women's League in Namutequeliua.

MDM is treating it as a political assassination - not surprisingly, as the by-election was caused by the still unexplained murder of MDM mayor Mahamudo Amurane.

Buana drove a motorcycle taxi, and his mother said he was fatally beaten after have been called out for a taxi trip.

CNE spokesperson Cuinica said Friday that the campaign had been peaceful and without incidents, and later said he had not heard about the killing.

Voters rolls displayed

The correct voters register was put on display at the location of each polling station (mostly schools) on 11 January and can be consulted until the last day of the campaign, 21 January. With the confusion over the registers, this will allow people to check that they are actually able to vote.

2018 Local Elections is part of the
Votar Moçambique programme



CNE spokesperson Cuinica stressed that people who have lost their 2014 voters card can still vote if they can present a photo ID card, such as a driver's license or official identity card. He suggested that they check for their name on the roll now, so that they know which polling station to go to.

Archbishop objects & Frelimo apologizes

As noted in the previous issue of this newsletter, Frelimo posters were plastered on the wall of the house of the Catholic archbishop of Nampula - in violation of the electoral law which prohibits political posters in public and religious buildings.

The archbishop was not pleased and sent an angry letter to the first secretary of Frelimo. A contrite Frelimo promised to not only remove the posters but also to repaint the wall.

But posters remain on public buildings. At Mutauanha primary school, there are posters for Frelimo, Renamo and MDM.

Impossible promises

Normal municipal elections are due on 10 October to elect a mayor for a 5-year term, so the winning candidate on 24 January will be in post for less than year. But that is not stopping extravagant promises.

Frelimo candidate Amisse Cololo António is promising to combat chronic malnutrition. Renamo candidate Paulo Vahanle is promising to build markets with better conditions and better hygiene, as well as to improve mini-bus transport. The AMUSI citizens list candidate Mário Albino is promising to reduce the prices charged to market stall holders, although the price is set by the municipal assembly, where MDM is the biggest party and Frelimo second. MDM candidate Carlos Saíde only promises to continue "the brilliant project" of the late mayor Mahamudo Amurane.

Detailed coverage of 2018 municipal and 2019 national elections is again being provided by the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, which has covered all of Mozambique's multi-party elections. We will have a large team of local journalists throughout the country, ensuring that our reports are accurate and verified. Publication will become more frequent in the run-up to the Nampula by-election; we will publish daily in election periods. Elections newsletters are distributed on the "Mozambique News Reports and Clippings" mailing list. **If you do not want to receive the elections newsletter, simply send a note to j.hanlon@open.ac.uk with the subject line "no election".** The elections newsletter is also in Portuguese; para subscreever <http://eepurl.com/cYjhdb> Previous issues are available on <http://cipmoz.org:9000/elections2018/>

Academic articles

Three academic articles published last year looked at Mozambique elections.

"Mozambique's 2014 elections: A Repeat of Misconduct, Political Tension and Frelimo Dominance"

by Adriano Nuvunga, 2017, Journal of African Elections, 16(2), <http://www.eisa.org.za/pdf/JAE16.2Nuvunga.pdf>

A good summary of the 2014 elections and especially the context. On the election, Adriano Nuvunga argues "the three major problems which underpinned Mozambique's 2014 election are characteristic of Mozambique since the founding democratic election in 1994. First, fraud and misconduct at the polling stations which is seen as perpetrated by and benefiting Frelimo.

"Second, there was an imbalance of power with Frelimo enjoying better organisation and patronage networks, and control of the police and media. Being the party of government allows Frelimo to abuse state resources for its electoral machinery.

"Third, secrecy in the CNE, including altering results, is shaped by factors related to the opposition, namely a view that the electoral system should be party-based rather than neutral and impartial. Opposition thinking is that this would enable their own people on the inside to check procedures. However, this had only marginal success because of an inability or unwillingness to train scrutineers and party delegates to use their positions, and of opposition officials in STAE to allow misconduct to go unchallenged."

"Does Electoral Observation Influence Electoral Results? Experimental Evidence for Domestic and International Observers in Mozambique"

By Stefamis Leeffers & Pedro Vicente, 2017, Novafrica Working Paper 1704, Nova School of

Business and Economics, Lisbon. <http://novafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/1704.pdf>

"We find significant effects of domestic observers, suggestive of a reduction in ballot fraud. In particular, ballot box stuffing and the validation of blank votes seem to be deterred. We do not find evidence that the presence of international observers deters ballot fraud," report the authors.

"How Local Elections Can Transform National Politics: Evidence from Mozambique"

by Charles R. Hankla and Carrie Manning, 2017, Publius: The Journal of Federalism, 47(1) pp 49–76, <https://doi.org/10.1093/publius/pjw023>

The creation of the municipalities in turn created a new political space. This facilitated the emergence of a new party, the MDM. The authors also argue that this has led to some decentralization within Frelimo and Renamo, with local issues and people being given a larger role within the parties. However, they argue that both parties want to maintain central control. Frelimo in government named state representatives to all municipalities, to control not just opposition mayors but its own as well. And both parties have removed popular mayors who did not follow the party line, a high risk and high cost strategy. Renamo did not allow Daviz Simango to stand again as mayor of Beira in 2008, but he won as an independent. Frelimo did not allow Eneas Comiche to stand again in Maputo in 2003, and Frelimo's replacement candidate did win, but when Frelimo's Pia Matos was forced to resign in Quelimane, MDM's Manuel Araujo won the 2011 by-election.