

# 2013 Local Elections



## Mozambique political process bulletin

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## In Chimoio, police arrest MDM pulling down posters but not Frelimo using state cars

Nine MDM members in Chimoio have been arrested for obstructing Frelimo election caravans and destroying Frelimo election materials. Police spokesman Vasco Matusse said the MDM members were caught in the act of destroying Frelimo posters in several neighbourhoods.

Indeed, at the start of the campaign Chimoio was covered by posters, but it is notable how few MDM and Frelimo posters there are now.

Matusse went on to complain about Frelimo's increasing use of state cars, often with registration numbers covered by posters. But apparently there have been no arrests, even though use of state cars is a violation of electoral laws.

## Police in polling stations but presidents remain in charge

For the first time, there will be police in every polling station, but a new code of conduct makes clear the policeperson can only take action if requested by the polling station president (called returning officer, clerk, chair or other titles in English).

In a little noticed change to the electoral law, earlier procedure was totally reversed. Previously, all police had to stay at least 300 metres away from the polling station, which meant police normally did not enter the area of a school when voting was taking place. This year, there can be a police person inside each polling station.

But in another change, the National Elections Commission has issued codes of conduct for police, polling station staff, parties, and party delegates (Delegados de Candidatura) in polling stations. The CNE still does not have a functioning website, so these are posted on our websites: <http://www.cip.org.mz/election2013/> and <http://bit.ly/1j0bmdU>

The police code of conduct makes clear that the president of the polling station is in charge and that the police are expected to act only if requested or instructed to do so by the president. Police can remove people within 300 metres of the polling station who campaign, show party symbols, or disturb the voting process, as well as journalists who try to interview voters – but only when told to do so by the president of a polling station.

Party delegates are given a credential for a specific polling station, which must be within the municipality for which they are registered as voters. But it does not have to be the same polling station where they are registered, and they can vote where they are a delegate. The code sets out the normal tasks of a delegate, but then stresses they must "avoid interruptions of the voting which are unjustified or in bad faith." Delegates and sometimes known in English as scrutineers or poll-watchers.

The code of conduct for polling station members includes very strong requirements intended to avoid misconduct of the sort which happened in past elections. In particular, members are reminded that it is a criminal offense to:

- remove ballots,
- fraudulently introduce ballots,
- falsify the results in anyway,
- sign the register to say someone has voted when they have not,
- change or damage ballots, registers, minutes or any other material,
- block the work of party delegates, and
- refuse to accept a protest of complaint by any party delegate.

## Skirmishes continue in election campaigns

**Metangula** (Niassa): Frelimo began following MDM (Movimento Democrático de Moçambique) campaigners in bairro Micuio which led to a punch-up.

**Mueda** (Cabo-Delgado). An MDM member was attacked with a catana (machete) and a Frelimo member was attacked with an enxada (hoe) in bairro Ntandedi.

**Tete:** Frelimo provincial election spokesman Domingos Macajo accused MDM members of invading their office and breaking windows of the car of the candidate for mayor, Celestino Checanhandza.

## Elsewhere

**Catandica** (Manica): Frelimo candidate Tomé Maibeque accused MDM candidate Rangel Mairose of not living in Catandica, while the MDM candidate says he has lived there for five years. Both campaigned in church Sunday, Frelimo in the local catholic church and MDM in the Evangélica Assembleia de Deus. Both candidates are promising to improve water supply and roads.

**Sussendenga** (Manica): MDM mayoral candidate Albertino Zuai says he was demoted from being a teacher to just being a caretaker in the local primary school because he is an MDM candidate. He further claims that turnout is low at his rallies and marches because people are afraid to participate and are worried about reprisals.

**Quelimane** (Zambezia): Both parties started the second week of campaigning with fewer big displays and more door-to-door contact. MDM candidate for re-election Manuel de Araújo was in Chuabo Dembe where he promised to pave the main road to promote tourism. Abel Henrique of Frelimo was in bairro de Floresta, Frelimo showed its greater wealth with more cars and lorries carrying supporters, but with less ostentation than in previous campaigns. As in the previous election, MDM used bicycles and large parades of people on foot.

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