

2014 National Elections



Mozambique political process bulletin



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Editor: Joseph Hanlon (j.hanlon@open.ac.uk)
Deputy editor: Adriano Nuvunga News editor: Teles Ribeiro Reporter: Idalêncio Sitoê

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COLLECTIVE ACTION: This newsletter is based on reports from 150 journalists in nearly every district, working together to give the most up to date coverage of the election. We are also working with the Community Radios Forum (FORCOM) and the Human Rights League.

Observers & journalists barred from district count

Observers and journalists will not be able to watch the count at district level, STAE director-General Felisberto Naife told a press conference this morning. They will only be able to attend the formal announcement of the district results. The actual count is only open to the official party representatives (mandatários) in the district.

A journalist at the press conference pointed out that the Constitutional Council had found that the Gurué district election commission had acted improperly and illegally last year in local elections, and thus there was no reason to trust them to do the count in secret. The response was that the change in law this year means that STAE now has MDM and Renamo representatives who will be present.

Meanwhile, it is pointed out that the electoral law gives observers the right to "free circulation in all locations in which electoral activity takes place and at any time" ("livre circulação em todos os locais onde decorrem actividades eleitorais que compreendem os diferentes momentos do processo eleitoral," lei no 8, art 263) It is expected that international observers at district level will argue that they cannot be kept out of the district count.

COMMENT: This means the district count is now a real weak point in the counting process and a possible source of fraud, as happened in the past. The law change this year means that a district STAE has eight senior party nominees, 4 Frelimo, 3 Renamo, and only 1 MDM. This creates real potential for confusion. So many party people in the room creates a disturbance which actually makes it easier for unnoticed changes to be made in the tabulation.

In more remote areas where there have been problems in the past, MDM and Renamo mandatários and STAE representatives will not always be present, while Frelimo people surely will be, which increases the potential space to make improper changes. MDM fears local deals between Frelimo and Renamo to improperly transfer votes from MDM to Renamo, and this will be very hard to control. *jh*

Where will Dhlakama vote?

It is still unclear where Renamo presidential candidate Afonso Dhlakama will vote. Antonio Muchanga, spokesman for Dhlakama, said this morning at a press conference that Dhlakama will vote at Polana secondary school in Maputo.

But the regulations on who is allowed to vote at a polling station at which they are not registered were underlined and not changed in a ruling by the National Elections Commission Monday, which was announced today. This means no exception has been made for Renamo presidential candidate Afonso Dhlakama and he must return to vote Wednesday in Gorongosa where he registered.

CNE Deliberation 78 says that only polling station staff (MMVs, membros da mesa de voto), party delegates in the polling stations, police, journalists, national observers, and members of STAE and CNE can vote in a place where they are not registered.

No mobile phones, briefcases for MMVs

Polling station staff (MMVs) cannot have mobile telephones during the voting and the count, according to CNE Deliberation 78, approved Monday. The president of the polling station can have a mobile phone, but can only use it to communicate with the district STAE.

In addition, MMVs will be barred from having any "bags, backpacks, briefcases, wallets or any other means to carry or store material that may be suspected or contribute to distrust within the polling station."

Electors must leave after voting

The CNE deliberation also stresses that once a person has voted, the polling station staff returns their voting card to them, and they must leave the area. This underlines both the law and regulations that were issued in August they people cannot hang around the polling station after they have voted.

This is clearly intended to stop MDM youth who remained in some places after voting, and Frelimo party people who did not have observer or delegate credentials but who remained around polling stations, sometimes claiming to be party delegate coordinators.

A detailed report on the 2009 elections is available, in two parts, on

<http://bit.ly/MozElec2009-1a> and <http://bit.ly/MozElec2009-2>

The Portuguese edition of the Bulletin is more detailed, and can be read on

<http://www.cip.org.mz/election2013/>

Portuguese Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CIP.Eleicoes>

Some English bulletins cover two Portuguese bulletins and have a double number.

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CIP, Centro de Integridade Pública, Rua Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (ex-Pereira do Lago), 354, r/c (CP 3266) Maputo www.cip.org.mz cip@cip.org.mz Tel: +258 21 492 335, 823 016 391, 843 890 584

AWEPA, the European Parliamentarians with Africa, Rua Licenciado Coutinho 77 (CP 2648) Maputo awepa@awepa.org.mz Tel: +258 21 418 603, 21 418 608, 21 418 626

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