

2014 National Elections



Mozambique political process bulletin



Number NE-54 10 October 2014

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Published by CIP, Centro de Integridade Pública e AWEPA, European Parliamentarians for Africa

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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.

CNE rules: district count open to observers & journalists

"Journalists and observers cannot be excluded from any part of the district count", National Elections Commission (CNE) press spokesman Paulo Cuinica told a press conference this afternoon. This decision was made at an extra-ordinary meeting last night. Conditions must be created so journalists and observers can watch the process - but not interfere with it - explained Cuinica.

The election law is unclear on this issue, and in the past journalists and observers have often - but not always - been excluded from the process at district level, where the results sheets (editais) from polling stations are added up. This has been an area of fraud in the past, with numbers and even editais being changed. Therefore media and international observers this year pressed for the district count to be open. Yesterday STAE director-General Felisberto Naife told a press conference that the count would be closed, causing an outcry by observers and media. Last night CNE responded by making the process open.

The electoral system had been inconsistent with some actions being open and some closed. Thus observers, journalists and party agents are present during the count in the polling station, and sit directly behind polling station staff who are doing the count. And when the CNE rechecks all invalid votes (nullos), observers and journalists stand directly behind the CNE members and watch them make individual decisions as to whether a ballot paper is valid or not. Neither of these has caused problems. But until now, similar processes at district and provincial level were not open. This has now changed.

Dhlakama can vote in Maputo

Arrangements will be made to allow the Renamo head and presidential candidate Afonso Dhlakama to vote in Maputo, admitted CNE press spokesman Paulo Cuinica this afternoon. Dhlakama is registered in Gorongosa, Sofala, and the law says he should vote there. But he wants to vote at Polana Secondary School Maputo. Cuinica said that no formal requests has yet been made, but if the CNE is asked, it will find a way.

Three locks on the warehouse

The warehouse used to store election materials will have three locks and each of the three deputy directors of local STAE nominated by the three main parties, Frelimo, Renamo and MDM, will have one of the keys and must be present to open the door, the CNE decided last night. This is to give extra confidence to the parties that materials are not tampered with.

This was also done in the 2004 elections, but created problems in some places when the Renamo deputy director did not turn up or refused to open his lock. This was raised at the press conference this afternoon, and Cuinica said that arrangements had been made that if one person was missing, the warehouse could still be opened. But he refused to give details.

Too much burned

Cuinica also confirmed media reports that by mistake, the Zambézia provincial election commission incinerated too many ballot papers. After the theft of some ballot papers for the provincial assembly elections in Pebane, the CNE decided to burn all the ballot papers for provincial assembly in Pebane and print new ones. One book of ballot papers for provincial assembly in Namacurra district was also stolen but it was decided to only replace that book, and not all of Namacurra ballot papers. In fact, too many ballot papers were incinerated yesterday, so more must be printed to replace those incorrectly destroyed.

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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Academic citations: Cite as "2014 National Elections, Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, Maputo"
