

# Mozambique Political Process Bulletin

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## Voting opens in Nacala

High turnouts in suburban neighbourhoods and lower turnouts in the centre of the city marked the opening of voting in Nacala today, Wednesday 11 February. Voters are having to queue in the rain, and heavy rain over the past few days has caused some problems with access to polling stations on the edge of the city.

This is the second round contest for mayor after no candidate gained more than half the vote in the 19 November election. Frelimo candidate Chalé Ossufo received 49.8% against 47.8% for the present mayor and Renamo candidate Manuel dos Santos.

An incident in the strongly Renamo Murrupulane neighbourhood delayed opening there. Renamo party representatives in polling stations in the local school insisted that the cardboard cabins where voters mark their ballot papers face in such a way that polling station staff and observers can see people while the vote. This is as shown in the manual for polling station staff, but many polling station presidents and observers feel this compromises the secrecy of the vote, and turn the cabin around the other way, with the opening facing a wall. Eventually one Renamo party delegate was expelled by the police, which caused protests by the 600 people waiting to vote. Other Renamo delegates calmed the crowd, the police withdrew, and voting began.

Our correspondent also noted a Frelimo flag flying, illegally, at the school.

## Government threatens to cut investment if Frelimo candidate loses

“If Ossufo Chale does not win, these investments be taken away, so your children will remain unemployed,” warned Aiuba Cuerreneia, Minister of Planning and Development, during the launch of two central government investment projects in Nacala, an Accelerated Economic Development Zone and a Special Economic Zone. The zones were launched two days before the start of the campaign at a three-hour meeting with community leaders including Bishop Dom Germano Crachane. Cuerreneia and others stressed the necessity to mobilise people to vote for Chale.

Similarly, the Frelimo candidate is claiming the \$47 million for Nacala from the United States Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) as support for Frelimo. The money includes \$18 million for improved water supply, \$12 million for a new dam, and \$17

million for improved drainage, and is being given because of actions taken by Frelimo, Ossufo Chale said.

Chale also promised to give money to fishing people and market traders to help them expand their businesses.

## OCINA backs Frelimo

The citizens list OCINA, which had won seat in the previous municipal assembly but failed to win a seat this time, and gained only 1% of the vote for mayoral candidate, Cesar Gabriel (enough to force the second round), has thrown its support behind Frelimo. Gabriel told the *Bulletin* his supporters had joined the Frelimo campaign brigades.

## Municipal strike creates problems for dos Santos

Renamo candidate and present mayor Manuel dos Santos had to stop campaigning on Friday 6 February to deal with a strike by 200 municipal workers, who claimed that they had not been paid for January. They also demanded the traditional "13<sup>th</sup> month" bonus (an extra month's salary often paid at Christmas) and a number of benefits allegedly paid in the past but cancelled during the five years of the dos Santos administration. Dos Santos claimed the strike had been organised for political reasons, to blacken his image as mayor, but it was settled Friday afternoon when he agreed to make all the payments demanded.

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