

MOZAMBIQUE 159

News reports & clippings

18 March 2010

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NOTE OF EXPLANATION:

This mailing list is used to distribute two publications, both edited by Joseph Hanlon. This is my own sporadic "News reports & clippings", which is entirely my own responsibility. This list is also used to distribute the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, published by CIP and AWEPA, but those organisations are not linked to "News reports & clippings"

Joseph Hanlon

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Donor strike ends

Budget support donors have ended their strike. Members of the G19 budget support group have instructed their capitals to release funds, blocked since mid-December. Money should start flowing next month.

Planning and Development Minister Aiuba Cuereneia, the government's chief negotiator with the G19, confirmed this morning (Thursday 18 March) that agreement had been reached. He said a document on the consensus reached at recent negotiations would be signed next week.

The two top issues were the "blurred distinction between party and state" and electoral reform. On the first, government appears to have successfully refused to meet donor demands for a ban on Frelimo party cells in state institutions. On the second, government has probably agreed to donor demands for a rushed, government-led revision of electoral laws, bypassing and ignoring at least two civil society initiatives to draft a new electoral code from scratch.

Donors have demanded that parliament's rules be revised to allow the MDM (Mozambique Democratic Movement) to have a formal party bench (bancada) in parliament (AR). Present rules require 11 deputies (MPs) to form a bench, and MDM has only 8. When this was not done in the first parliament sessions, it was pushed higher up the list of demands – as a "confidence building measure". Frelimo has a large majority in parliament, and MDM will surely be given its bancada.

Corruption and conflict of interest are the other key areas for the donors. Here donors seem prepared to accept government moving faster, and with more noise, on commitments already made. In his letter of 5 February, Cuereneia stressed that the government already planned a number of law revisions.

The G19 are the 19 budget support donors. Some of Frelimo's oldest friends took the hardest line in pushing for the strike in December. But five members of the group have not supported it. Two large donors, the World Bank and European Union, released large

amounts of money in December just before the start of the strike. And three of the smallest donors – Portugal, Italy and Spain – publicly committed themselves to continuing budget support.

The strike only withheld budget support – money going directly to the state budget. All other aid, to projects and ministries, continued normally.

Three articles on the end of strike are attached.

More details of the donor demands and government response are posted on my website.

<http://www.tinyurl.com/mozamb>

Flood waters falling

This year's floods have not proved very serious, and water is now falling, although there are warnings that water levels could rise again on the Zambeze River. Reports given to the Council of Ministers Tuesday are posted on my website: <http://www.tinyurl.com/mozamb>

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Do bicycles equal development in Mozambique?

by Joseph Hanlon & Teresa Smart

is only available direct from the publisher.

www.jamescurrey.co.uk

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Also on the web: Previous newsletters and other Mozambique material are posted on
<http://www.tinyurl.com/mozamb>

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Mozambique media websites:

Noticias: www.jornalnoticias.co.mz

O Pais: www.opais.co.mz

Savana: www.savana.co.mz

Canal de Moçambique: www.canalmoz.com

AIM Reports: www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news

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