

Mozambique Political Process Bulletin

2004 Election specials by e-mail

Issue 15

Saturday 4 December 2004, 9 am

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Deputy editor: Adriano Nuvunga

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- + Frelimo ahead as Renamo vote collapses
- + Carter wins concessions, but not enough
- + Ballot box stuffing in Changara -- again

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RENAMO VOTE COLLAPSES AS FRELIMO GAINS EARLY LEAD ON 50% TURNOUT

Armando Guebuza is on course to gain a similar number of votes as President Joaquim Chissano won in 1999, but Afonso Dhlakama's vote has collapsed, according to early results. Turnout will be between 3.5 million and 4 million, roughly 50% of eligible voters. (Turnout should be calculated as a percentage of the 7.6 million real voters on the roll, not the 10.1 million names on the roll which includes twice everyone who has registered a second time and includes people who have died since they registered.)

The relatively low turnout, compared to 4.9 million in 1999, has been much discussed. But it looks increasingly like the lower turnout comes in large measure because many who opposed Frelimo and voted for Renamo in 1999 simply did not vote this year. Armando Guebuza spent the entire past year travelling the country and reorganising Frelimo party structures. Renamo's weak level of organisation was shown in local elections last year, when in many cities its supporters simply did not vote. The same seems to have happened this year -- Frelimo made sure that its supporters voted, but Renamo did not.

In Ilha de Moçambique, where Renamo won local elections last year, with all 39 mesas reported, Guebuza had 6037 votes compared to 5471 for Dhlakama. (In votes for mayor last year, the result was Renamo 4082, Frelimo 2543, independent 1054.) Noticias reports that in Angoche, which Renamo won last year, Guebuza is also ahead.

Radio Mozambique read out results continuously all day yesterday, as compiled by its own reporters reading the results sheets (editais) posted on the door of each polling station. Although these do not come from places which are hardest to reach, they do include many rural and Renamo-supporting areas. AIM has recorded 17% of

polling stations, with Guebuza gaining 462,829 votes and Dhlakama 176,484. Dhlakama is ahead in only one province, Sofala.

Because of the unexpectedly low vote for Raul Domingos and PDD, and the derisory vote for other candidates and parties, AIM has only recorded the two main parties and candidates. It's total by provinces are given below.

CARTER WINS CONCESSIONS FROM CNE ON PARTIAL RESULTS -- BUT SAYS MORE TRANSPARENCY NEEDED

Former US President Jimmy Carter met the president and members of the National Elections Commission Friday afternoon and gained a promise that observers could see the running totals (partial results) of editais which have been put into the data bases, at both national and provincial levels. As we noted last week after the presentation of the computer software, that report was available to the system managers but was not being made available to observers. In addition, president Arao Litsure promised that at both national and local level there would be daily announcements of the totals up to that time.

Carter was as forceful with Litsure as he had been at his press briefings yesterday, but he failed to win any concessions on his key demand -- to be able to have detailed information on all the corrections made by STAE and CNE at the end of the tabulation, and to be able to examine rejected editais. He reminded Litsure that editais containing 600,000 votes had been excluded in secret in 1999 and that was unacceptable. Rev Litsure only promised that the CNE would further discuss the matter.

In a statement issued after the meeting, the Carter Center said: "Final results, including any voting returns negated by CNE, need to be examined by observers to understand the reasons for CNE decisions. The Carter Center hopes this request will be granted."

The meeting between Carter and CNE member took place at the same time as a lunch at the British High Commissioner's house with international observer groups and several ambassadors, and Carter reported back to the lunch. Observers remain united in demanding more access, but there are divisions as to whether it is sufficient to have a complete record of all changes made to the results and the reasons, or if physical access to meetings and computer rooms is needed.

Physical access to computer rooms is not very useful, but there is a fear that CNE will promise complete details and never comply. For example, in 1999 CNE promised that results would eventually be published on a polling station by polling station basis, but in the end they were only published two years later on a polling centre by polling centre basis -- that is, all the polling stations in a school were added together. That suggests to many observers that there had been some manipulation of the data and the STAE had something to hide.

BALLOT BOX STUFFING IN CHANGARA

As in 1999, there has been ballot box stuffing in Changara district in Tete. Renamo representatives were expelled from the district and there were no Renamo delegates in the polling stations, as also happened in 1999. Preliminary results from 95 polling stations show an incredible turnout of nearly 70% of all the names on the register.

Because the rolls contain many people who have moved, registered a second time, or died, this would mean that nearly every living voter in Changara went to the polls. Armando Guebuza gained 58,242 of 59,701 "valid" votes.

FRELIMO WINS EUROPE

Frelimo has won the single seat for Mozambicans in Europe. There were polling stations in Portugal and Germany. Portugal gave 445 votes to Frelimo and 141 to Renamo, and there are not enough votes in Germany to shift that, which means Frelimo has won the seat. Turnout in Portugal was 71% of voters who registered this year.

RESULTS BY PROVINCE

The results as of 19.30 on Friday from Radio Mozambique and gathered by AIM from its own correspondents, are:

(To make the tables easier to read, use an equal space font such as courier)

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

TOTAL (2,153 polling stations, 16.9%)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	462,829
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	176,484

Maputo city (123 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	38,268
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	5,342

Maputo province (180 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	42,755
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	3,922

Zambezia (249 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	27,793
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	22,873

Nampula (115 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	17,396
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	14,802

Sofala (228 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	26,083
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	42,896

Gaza (273 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	97,090
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	1,615

Inhambane (229 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo) 47,533
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo) 7,853

Cabo Delgado (227 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo) 64,567
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo) 17,906

Niassa (183 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo) 31,911
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo) 13,050

Manica (232 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo) 43,272
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo) 31,467

Tete (114 polling stations)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo) 26,161
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo) 14,758

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PARLIAMENTARY
ELECTIONS

TOTAL (2,009 polling stations)

Frelimo 395,706
Renamo 147,633

Maputo City (102 polling stations)

Frelimo 28,115
Renamo 4,264

Maputo Province (155 polling stations)

Frelimo 33,879
Renamo 3,057

Zambezia (240 polling stations)

Frelimo 23,731
Renamo 19,779

Nampula (106 polling stations)

Frelimo 14,086
Renamo 12,252

Sofala (215 polling stations)

Frelimo 21,973
Renamo 37,026

Gaza (273 polling stations)

Frelimo 93,348
Renamo 1,872

Inhambane (229 polling stations)

Frelimo 42,121
Renamo 6,852

Cabo Delgado (227 polling stations)

Frelimo 51,795
Renamo 14,232

Niassa (181 polling stations)

Frelimo 28,706
Renamo 11,458

Manica (199 polling stations)

Frelimo 39,415
Renamo 29,690

Tete (82 polling stations)

Frelimo 18,536
Renamo 6.251

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- + Frelimo lead grows
- + Observers praise voting
- + Carter criticises police
- + More on Changara
- + How many potential voters -- more discussion
- + Radio Mozambique partial results

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GUEBUZA LEAD GROWS AS RENAMO COLLAPSES

Frelimo's parallel count, which in the past has been quite accurate, shows Armando Guebuza with 57% of the vote and Afonso Dhlakama with 35%. Radio Mozambique's ongoing count at 1400 on Saturday with results from across the country gave Guebuza 620,891 and Dhlakama 264,520. These are given in more detail below.

Indications on turnout suggest it was highest in Maputo city, at over half, and lowest in Zambezia province, at less than a third. This seems to suggest that much of the abstention has been of Renamo voters, and that Frelimo's vote is holding up.

OBSERVERS PRAISE VOTING AND POLLING STATION STAFF

In press conferences on Saturday, the European Union, the Carter Center, and the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa were all effusive in their praise for the voting days and the count within the polling stations. They cited the enthusiasm of the young staff and the careful way they carried out their jobs. Former US President Jimmy Carter called the polling station staff "very very good".

All three said their observers were well received, except in one case. David Pottie of the Carter Center said their three teams in Tete province received a chilly reception, as also occurred in 2003 local elections, and "their presence was questioned in contravention to CNE's own regulations." Although there was an official ban on observers speaking to polling station staff, this was not enforced on the ground, and for the most part observers were warmly received at polling stations.

Carter Center observers visited 991 polling stations and found significant problems in only two. A polling station in Quelimane closed mysteriously for part of one day. A polling station in Mossuril district, Nampula province opened but no one but polling station staff could vote because it did not have a registration book; repeated contact with STAE were to no avail, so no ordinary voters voted. This confirms reports that in addition to the 37 polling stations which CNE announced on Friday had not opened, mainly due to rain, there are others which opened but were no one voted because of the lack of a register or the wrong register.

Other points in the reports

- + Commenting on the campaign, the EU said that coverage by the public media "has been reasonably balanced" and it noted that "the campaign was characterized by a political discourse which did not include unacceptable personal attacks."
- + Both EISA and the EU questioned the party-based structure of the CNE.
- + Both EISA and the Carter Center said polling station staff were considering nulo (invalid) too many ballot papers where the intention of the voter was clear, and should receive better training on this particular issue. Other aspects of training were considered good.
- + The EU reported the use of state vehicles by Frelimo in Nampula and Manica.
- + The EU reported that voters who had a card but could not be found on the register were correctly allowed to vote.
- + The Carter Center was concerned that despite the introduction of many new polling stations, some people had to walk up to 20 km in order to vote.

CARTER CRITICISES POLICE

"The police are highly oriented to favouring Frelimo", Jimmy Carter said, and this has caused problems. In several places police did not allow party delegates to spend the night with the ballot boxes as allowed by the election law. In Angoche the police arrested 14 Renamo agents. Carter said this suggested intimidation. David Pottie said the police were clearly partisan.

The EU also noted that "law enforcement was at times selective", with the police only defending Frelimo.

TRANSPARENCY IMPASSE CONTINUES

The European Union met with the CNE president and members on Saturday morning, but gained no further access. The final correction process in Maputo remains closed to observers. Two kinds of corrections are done in secret -- the provisional count in Maputo is used to make corrections to the provincial counts, and any edital which has been excluded is reconsidered in Maputo and accepted or rejected. In 1999 roughly 7% of editais were excluded. This year again these corrections and exclusions will be done in secret, with no clear promise of a detailed report.

National and international observers are taking a united stand on this. The EU chief observer Javier Pomes told a press conference that they wanted access to all rejected editais and the reasons for the rejections. He said the law did not prohibit giving such information to observers. "We must have access for transparency. We cannot give credibility to a process we cannot see."

In his press conference Jimmy Carter said the the CNE had not given an "adeuqate response" to their insistence on seeing the rejected editais and the reasons for rejection.

In 1999 rejected editais meant that 600,000 votes were not counted. This year the edital has been simplified and clarified. It no longer requires calculations, a cause of problems in 1999, and all numbers must be written in both figures and words, which provides a further check. There are, however, some problems with the carbon copy system giving unclear copies, so some problem editais are expected.

MORE CONFIRMATION OF CHANGARA BALLOT BOX STUFFING

Following reports in yesterday's Bulletin about ballot box stuffing in Changara, we have been given information on polling station 04E738/99 in Nhacawanda, Luenha, Changara. This is a 1999 register book with 1000 voters. All of those, plus the polling station staff, are said to have voted, with 986 voters for Armando Guebuza, none for other candidates, and 20 invalid votes (nulos). In the parliamentary race, there were 986 votes for Frelimo and 20 nulos. In Changara sede in polling station 04E733/99, also a 1999 register with 1000 voters, there were 985 votes for Guebuza, 4 nulos and 7 for other candidates, 983 for Frelimo, 4 nulos and 10 for other candidates. It is highly implausible that everyone in a 1999 register book is still alive and actually voted, so this looks like ballot box stuffing.

HOW MANY VOTERS --
A FURTHER DISCUSSION
AND WHY WE TAKE 7.7 TO 8 MILLION

It really is impossible to know how many genuine live registered voters there are. The following choices are available: 11, 10.1, 9.1, 8, 7.7, 7.6 and 7.5 million.

Why is it impossible to answer such a simple question? To start at the beginning, there are current 10.1 million names on the electoral register, reduced from 10.6 million after a 10 week cleaning process which finished recently. In 2003 and 2004 there were 1.3 million people who said they were registering for a second time, because they had moved or lost their card. Because it was virtually impossible to clean these people out of the register, they all appear twice. STAE estimates that 9.1 million people said they registered for the first time in 1999, 2003 and 2004. (No, the sums don't add up, but we must ignore that, too.)

Now, in rural and suburban areas, some register books are being used at more than one polling station, because a registration brigade used the same book in two or three places. This occurs in at least 10 per cent of polling stations. These polling stations all have copies of the entire register, even though only some people come from their polling station. So the sum of the number of names in all polling station registers is thus about 11 million, even though the duplication is removed when data is put into the computer. Now, when observers report a turnout of 30%, it is 30% of this number, or 3.3 million voters.

Of the 9.1 million people who registered for the first time in 1999, 2003, and 2004, National Statistics Institute figures suggest 1.1 million have died. This gives a figure of 8 million living voters.

But there is a widespread feeling that because of confusion in the registers in 2003 local elections in which many people could not vote, many of those who said they were registering for the first time this year were actually registering a second time. Estimates of this number are around 300,000. This brings the number of living voters down to 7.7 million.

Paul Fauvet of AIM takes a different approach, saying that 85% of adults were registered in 1999, and if we assume the same percentage of the present adult population of 9.1 million, that also gives 7.7 million.

Finally, three other figures have been given by prominent people. So here is the possible list:

- + 11 million -- number of names on polling station tables (because of duplicated books)
- + 10.1 million -- number of names in the register
- + 9.1 million -- official first time registration in 1999, 2003, 2004
- + 8 million -- 9.1 million less deaths
- + 8 million -- number given by CNE chair Arao Litsure in an interview with the magazine Tempo.
- + 7.7 million -- 8 million live voters less people who did not admit they registered a second time.
- + 7.7 million -- 85% of voting age adults.
- + 7.6 million -- figure cited by STAE head Antonio Carrasco.
- + 7.5 million -- figure cited by Jimmy Carter

In further reports in this Bulletin, we will use the range 7.7 to 8 million as the number of living registered voters.

We accept that this can only be a guess. But it is important because it means the turnout is higher than it seemed to press and observers. If the turnout is 3.5 million,

as we predict, that is only 32% of the 11 million names on the tables, but it is 44% or 45% of the potential voters, which is a much more reasonable turnout.

RADIO MOZAMBIQUE PARTIAL RESULTS

The following are the results compiled by Radio Mozambique as of 14.00 on Saturday. They were gathered by literally hundreds of Radio Mozambique journalists from the results sheets fixed on the walls of polling stations. The main gaps in the results are rural Sofala (dominated by Renamo), much of Cabo Delgado (dominated by Frelimo), and much of Nampula (in the past equally divided between the two). This suggests the results provide a reasonably good estimate of the final outcome.

PRESIDENTIAL

Niassa

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	20,244
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	5,613

Cabo Delgado

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	22,271
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	8,237

Nampula

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	26,025
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	22,842

Zambezia

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	102,359
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	95,065

Tete

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	180,736
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	52,868

Sofala

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	22,556
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	38,711

Manica

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	30,684
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	20,456

Inhambane

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	51,886
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	8,893

Gaza

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo) 78,989
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo) 1,338

Maputo province

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo) 35,187
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo) 3,768

Maputo city

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo) 45,714
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo) 6,427

Mozambicans abroad

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo) 4,257
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo) 302

TOTAL

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo) 620,891
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo) 264,520

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PARLIAMENT

Niassa

Frelimo 14,513
Renamo 5,837

Cabo Delgado

Frelimo 28,826
Renamo 10,671

Nampula

Frelimo 22,352
Renamo 16,836

Zambezia

Frelimo 90,044
Renamo 82,842

Tete

Frelimo 84,669
Renamo 18,643

Sofala

Frelimo 21,536
Renamo 29,326

Manica

Frelimo 22,068
Renamo 15,536

Inhambane

Frelimo 65,389
Renamo 7,099

Gaza

Frelimo 48,077
Renamo 1,099

Maputo province

Frelimo 52,086
Renamo 2,940

Maputo City

Frelimo 38,809
Renamo 6,658

Mozambicans abroad

Frelimo 4,191
Renamo 513

TOTAL

Frelimo 492,560
Renamo 198,000

These results exclude minor parties and the three minor presidential candidates.

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 - + Delays
 - + Radio Mozambique partial results
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GUEBUZA RETAINS WIDE LEAD

With more than half of polling stations now covered, Radio Mozambique's parallel count gives Armando Guebuza and Frelimo a commanding lead. Guebuza has 1,170,096 voters compared to 627,242 for Dhlakama. Although the gap between the two is closing slightly as more remote polling stations are reported, the difference is now too large to bridge. Not included in the count so far are more remote rural areas in several provinces, including Tete, which may favour Renamo, but also many polling stations in the Frelimo strongholds of Maputo city and province.

Dhlakama is ahead in two provinces, Sofala and Zambezia, while two are very close, Nampula and Manica.

These results were gathered by over 200 Radio Mozambique journalists from the polling station results sheets fixed on the walls of the stations. They exclude the three minor presidential candidates, and the more than a dozen minor parties. None of the minor parties have come anywhere near the five per cent of the total vote required to obtain representation in parliament. (Full results are given below.)

CHANGARA – GOOD HEALTH OR BALLOT BOX STUFFING

Radio Mozambique's latest results from Changara district in Tete cover 94 out of 95 polling stations. Of 68,000 people on the electoral roll, 64,562 voted for Guebuza and 919 for Dhlakama. This is an exceptionally high turnout, since the voters roll normally includes many people who have died or moved away. It is possible that Changara is unusually healthy and stable, with few people dying or moving. But it is more likely that the ballot boxes have been stuffed or the results sheets faked, as also happened in 1999. Both in that election and this one, Frelimo drove all Renamo activists out of Changara district and there were no Renamo party delegates in the polling stations.

RAIN AND TRANSPORT CAUSE DELAYS

By law all results sheets should have been delivered to provincial election commissions by Sunday night, but this has not happened. Rain and swollen rivers continue to hamper access and problems are compounded by transport shortages. In Nampula the helicopter used up all the available fuel before it could collect from Erati district. In Zambezia and Sofala some polling stations have still not been reached to collect materials.

SADC SAYS VOTE IN DRY SEASON

The SADC Parliamentary Forum in its report issued on Sunday made the sensible recommendation of "scheduling elections during the dry season in order to avert the inevitable problems associated with the rainy season".

Why did no one think of that before?

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Radio Mozambique's parallel count as summarised by AIM at 20.30 on Sunday:

PRESIDENTIAL

Total

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	1,170,096
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	627,242

Niassa

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	74,384
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	20,700

Cabo Delgado

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	54,759
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	21,509

Nampula

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	153,033
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	140,619

Zambezia

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	150,807
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	209,519

Tete

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	126,328
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	31,614

Sofala

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	45,602
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	98,680

Manica

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	84,531
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	73,690

Inhambane

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	144,419
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	15,237

Gaza

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	250,225
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	4,614

Maputo province

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	35,187
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	3,768

Maputo city

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	45,714
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	6,427

Mozambicans abroad (in Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Portugal and Germany)

Armando Guebuza (Frelimo)	5,107
Afonso Dhlakama (Renamo)	865

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PARLIAMENT

Total

Frelimo	1,104,920
Renamo	552,210

Niassa

Frelimo	68,076
Renamo	20,832

Cabo Delgado

Frelimo	48,152
Renamo	18,287

Nampula

Frelimo	137,868
Renamo	125,081

Zambezia

Frelimo	140,970
Renamo	175,297

Tete

Frelimo	124,152
Renamo	29,551

Sofala

Frelimo	42,164
Renamo	88,877

Manica

Frelimo	78,041
Renamo	66,194

Inhambane

Frelimo	120,523
Renamo	13,124

Gaza

Frelimo	248,949
Renamo	4,454

Maputo province

Frelimo	52,086
Renamo	2,940

Maputo city

Frelimo	38,809
Renamo	6,658

Mozambicans abroad (in Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Portugal and Germany)

Frelimo	5,130
Renamo	915

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IN THIS ISSUE

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 - delays likely
- + Turnout near 3 million
- + Requalification of nulos starts
- + 43 polling stations failed to open
- + More fraud

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COUNTING STARTS IN ONLY 3 PROVINCES

Although data entry for the provincial vote counts should have started on Friday, the tabulation software was still being corrected in Maputo at the weekend. In only three provinces has the software been installed and counting started on Monday -- Nampula, Zambezia, and Sofala. At a press conference on Monday afternoon, Filipe Mandlate, the press spokesman of the National Election Commission (CNE), said the data input and counting should begin Tuesday in Gaza, Inhambane, Maputo city and province, and at a national level.

Mandlate said that the data base for Tete, which forms an integral part of the software, was still being corrected on Monday afternoon in Maputo. In other words, four days after voting finished, there is still no accurate list of polling stations in Tete province.

Thus it seems likely that Tete and some other provinces will not begin counting until Wednesday. By law, all provincial counts must be completed and results announced by Thursday, but this seems highly unlikely.

Daily reports of partial totals are promised at both national and provincial levels, and these will be reported in the Bulletin.

Mandlate also reported that in four provinces -- Niassa, Cabo Delgado, Tete and Manica -- not all editais have yet been collected at provincial level because continuing heavy rain is making it difficult to reach polling stations.

TURNOUT NEAR 3 MILLION

Current projections indicate that the turnout will be less than 3.5 million and could be as low as 3 million. Since there are between 7.7. and 8 million possible voters, this gives a likely turnout of between 38% and 45%. Turnout has been lowest in Inhambane, Nampula and Zambezia at around 33%, and highest in Maputo City and Gaza at just over 50%.

Projections continue to suggest Armando Guebuza will win with 60% of the vote, compared to 35% for Dhlakama. Official results will start to be available today.

REQUALIFICATION OF NULOS BEGINS

All invalid votes (nulos) must be reconsidered at national level and it is likely that 350,000 ballot papers will be sent to Maputo. Reconsideration began Monday afternoon with five teams, two pairs (Frelimo and Renamo) from the National Election Commission and three pairs from Maputo city election commissions. They will work two shifts a day. Reconsideration started with nulos from Inhambane.

In general, polling station staff are too strict in rejecting votes as invalid, and the CNE reconsiders based on the single question: Is the intent of the voter clear? Thus a ballot paper with a big fingerprint for one candidate and an ink drip near another may be rejected at polling station level but accepted by CNE. Similarly, where a voter draws a line in the box but does not do an X or +, polling stations sometimes reject, but these were being accepted at national level.

In the past, one quarter to one third of nulos have been accepted at national level. These are then added to district and provincial totals.

43 POLLING STATIONS FAILED TO OPEN

In all 43 polling stations with 24,943 people on the electoral roll could not open because bad weather prevented the delivery of the polling station kits. Renamo wanted these people to vote at a later date, but the Frelimo majority on the National Election Commission (CNE) voted to not hold elections in these places, since this is such a tiny proportion of the 11.1 million names on the electoral roll.

There were 33 polling stations in Milange, Zambezia, with 21,172 voters which did not open. In Cabo Delgado there were 10 polling stations spread around Chiure, Mueda, Montepuez and Muidumbe districts.

Polling stations previously identified in Gaza and Niassa as not opening apparently were able to open by the end of the second day.

However the CNE could give no information on polling stations which opened but did not have a register book or had the wrong one. Many of these problems were resolved by provincial STAEs during the two days, but it is clear that no one was able to vote at some polling stations because of the lack of the correct register book. It remains unclear how serious this problem was, but it seems to involve at least some dozens of polling stations and is possibly more serious than the polling stations which did not open.

INK BLOT FRAUD BY POLLING STATION STAFF

Evidence is emerging of at least a few polling station presidents using ink on their finger to spoil ballot papers. In two cases in a strongly Renamo area, the presidents were seen to put an ink mark on the ballot paper during the explanation of how to vote. In another, an ink mark was put on votes from Renamo during the count. In these and some other polling stations there were also a unusually high percentage of invalid ballots (nulos). In one polling station in a Renamo area, half the votes were invalid. There was also the unusual appearance of ballot papers with a cross written by pen for one candidate and a finger print for another. The bulletin has seen cases where a voter has used both a cross and a finger print for the same candidate, where a semi-literate voter wants to make absolutely sure, but never a cross for one and a finger print for another.

MORE BALLOT BOX STUFFING

Ballot box stuffing or falsification of the results sheets seems more common this year than in 1999. As well as Changara in Tete, the same problem is occurring in Tsangano, where Renamo party delegates had serious trouble obtaining credentials. In one polling centre in a school with two polling stations, one had a Renamo delegate and one did not. In the one with the Renamo delegate, there were 858 voters registered and 388 voted, in line with the rest of the country. There were 194 votes for Dhlakama, 176 for Guebuza, and 11 invalid (nulo). In the adjoining classroom which had no Renamo delegate and where the register book only arrived on the morning of the second day, of 1000 voters registered 750 are said to have voted, with 565 for Guebuza and only 4 for Dhlakama, and 177 invalid votes. Other polling stations in the district also showed anomalously high turnouts. In Biri-Biri where the local police said turnout was low, the posted edital at one polling station showed that 947 of 1000 registered had voted, with 820 for Guebuza, 25 for Dhlakama, and 99 invalid.

A similar phenomenon occurred in Chiconono, Niassa, where 996 of 1000 registered are said to have voted, 928 for Guebuza, 23 for Dhlakama, 8 for others, and 37 nulos.

The problem for Renamo is that although the fraud is obvious, it will be very difficult to prove that Changara and Chiconono are not full of unusually healthy, non-mobile Frelimo supporters. And CNE will not reject these results without some proof.

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Mozambique

Political Process Bulletin

2004 Election specials by e-mail

Issue 19

Wednesday 8 December 2004

Editor: Joseph Hanlon (j.hanlon@open.ac.uk)

Deputy editor: Adriano Nuvunga

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SOME COUNTS HAVE STARTED

Provincial counts began Monday in Niassa and Zambezia and on Tuesday in Sofala, Nampula and Cabo Delgado according to our correspondents. Counting will begin Wednesday in Manica and at national level in Maputo. By law, provincial counts must be finished and the results announced tomorrow, Thursday, in all provinces, but this seems highly unlikely.

So far only Zambezia is holding the daily press conferences to announce partial results; these were promised for all provinces and at national level. Results announced Tuesday afternoon for Zambezia were, for parliament with 7.94% of editais processed:

Renamo 42.92%

Frelimo 47.95%

Presidential with 8.76% of editais processed:

Guebuza 48,9%

Dlhakama 46,27%

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CNE SAYS PROVINCIAL COUNT
HAS FINALLY STARTED

Tabulation of votes has finally begun in all 11 provinces and at national level in Maputo, Filipe Mandlate, spokesman for the National Elections Commission (CNE) said Wednesday afternoon. Most provinces started inputting results sheets (editais) in to the computers five days late and there is no chance that they will complete their work by the end of today, as required by law.

Processing in two provinces, Gaza and Cabo Delgado, was held up by Renamo objections, but Mandlate said these had been resolved. In Gaza, Renamo demanded that press, observers and party delegates be invited to the start of data input and that all be given the list of polling stations and their registers numbers (which has never been made available).

The worry in Gaza is that the original register was substantially inflated, apparently by including many register books more than once. The register was cleaned in the weeks before the election and many duplications removed. But revisions were rushed and were only finished two days before the election and observers wanted to be sure that registers were no longer included twice; without a list there was no way to check this. If a register was in the data base twice, it is possible that editais could be entered twice, which in Frelimo-voting Gaza could potentially increase the vote for Armando Guebuza.

Contrary to the report in yesterday's Bulletin, processing was delayed in Niassa because of problems finding a suitable location for the computer, and data input only began late Wednesday afternoon.

STRANDED POLLING STATION

Staff at the polling station in Mucangadazi, Zumbo, Tete and their editais and other materials have still not been collected, STAE director Antonio Carrasco said yesterday. Continued heavy rain has made it impossible for a helicopter to land to pick them up, and STAE is now trying to send a boat. This is apparently the only polling station in the country from which electoral material has not been collected.

RENAMO CONFUSION ON COUNT

The Renamo deputy president of the CNE, Raimundo Samunje, said yesterday that data input should stop in all provinces until the changes recommended by the software audit have been implemented, AIM reports. The tabulation software for the 12 computers had been written by STAE and at the last minute CNE commissioned an audit by Solucoes Ltda, which recommended significant changes in the security to block access to the data base by senior STAE officials. Computer staff within STAE were unable to make the changes quickly enough so they were done by Solucoes itself. The company was also working through last weekend to correct a number of other problems in the STAE-written software. Samunje seemed unaware that his demand had already been met – by the audit company itself.

SOFTWARE, TABULATION & TRANSPARENCY PROBLEMS CONTINUE

STAE left the writing of the software to the last minute and the patching done by Solucoes was very rushed, so it seems likely that problems remain with the tabulation software. Each of the 11 provincial computers contains a data base with a list of all polling stations and their respective register books. This is the famous list which remains a "state secret" and has never been released by STAE or CNE. One

reason is that the list was still being compiled for some provinces, including Tete, after the election was already over. The lists for Tete, Gaza and Maputo province, at least, contained many errors, and it seems likely that not all have been corrected.

Radio Mozambique reports that on Wednesday afternoon Manica technicians of STAE (Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat) found they had too many polling station results sheets (editais). There were 732 polling stations in Manica, so there should be 1,464 editais (each polling station produces two of them, one for the presidential and one of the parliamentary election), but in fact there were more. This is exactly the confusion that worried people when no list of polling stations was ever produced. It probably reflects an error in the data base, but it could just as easily be a fraudulent attempt to introduce editais from false polling stations.

The effect of these problems is that the CNE and STAE in Maputo will have to make a number of legitimate changes to the final results, simply to correct errors. As ex-President Jimmy Carter noted, no other country where the Carter Center monitors elections feels the need for such a correction procedure. The problem for domestic and foreign observers is that these and other corrections and changes are made completely in secret. In past elections, no list of the corrections and changes was ever published, leading to a certain amount of distrust.

Domestic and foreign observers have been pressing for more transparency of the final correction process and well as of provincial tabulation, but so far this has been denied. The Commonwealth said yesterday that without this, the entire process will lack credibility.

Dr Vaughan Lewis, chair of the Commonwealth Observer Group, issued a pointed statement on this yesterday on his departure. He said: "We hope that the transparency and credibility that characterised the preparation, campaigning, voting and counting phases of the elections process that we observed will also characterise the rest of the process still taking place as we leave Mozambique. This is a pre-requisite for the credibility of the entire exercise." Lewis noted that although the observer team left yesterday, it has been replaced by a Commonwealth Expert Team to observe the concluding phases of the collation and tabulation of votes at the provincial and national levels. The European Union and Carter Center still have observers here. So the struggle between the CNE and observers for more transparency continues, with the continued threat that international observers will not give the election their full approval.

PROVINCIAL RESULTS AT 20.00 WEDNESDAY

Radio Mozambique on Wednesday night gave detailed results from the vote tabulation in three provinces. Only Manica has counted more than half of its polling stations. With results from 482 polling stations (58%) the race is very close:

Manica Presidential election

Armando Guebuza 62,603 (48%)

Afonso Dhlakama 61,287 (47%)

Manica Parliamentary election

Frelimo 57,658 (47%)

Renamo 55,755 (45%)

In Zambezia less than a quarter of the votes have been counted. With 524 presidential editais (21%) the partial result is

Armando Guebuza 48,360 (42%)

Afonso Dhlakama 60,647 (53%)

In the parliamentary elections, with 438 editias (18%) processed, the results were:

Frelimo 35,208 (42%)

Renamo 43,941 (48%)

According to AIM, the radio's account of Nampula, only gave percentages. With 414 presidential editais (16%) the partial result was

Armando Guebuza 47%

Afonso Dhlakama 48%

With 380 parliamentary editais (15%) processed, the partial result is a tie:

Frelimo 45.2%

Renamo 44.9%

In the parliamentary race in Nampula, 6% of ballots have been blank and 7% have been invalid (nulos). The invalid votes are sent to Maputo for reconsideration.

If after two days of tabulation Nampula and Zambezia have processed less than one-quarter of the votes, it seems likely that it will take until the weekend to get full provincial results.

Requalification of invalid votes continues in Maputo. So far nulos from Maputo city and province and Inhambane have been reclassified and work has started on Gaza.

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MOZAMBIQUE POLITICAL PROCESS BULLETIN

Editor: Joseph Hanlon (j.hanlon@open.ac.uk)

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with reports from 50 correspondents

Material may be freely reprinted and circulated.

Please cite the Bulletin.

Published by AWEPA, the
European Parliamentarians for Africa

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