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AIM Reports

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Frelimo wins in Cabo Delgado

The ruling Frelimo Party and its presidential candidate, Filipe Nyusi, have won last week's Mozambican general elections in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, according to the results declared by the Provincial Elections Commission.

The results are not unexpected, in that Cabo Delgado has always been a Frelimo stronghold. It was in this province that Frelimo's war for independence from Portuguese colonial rule began in September 1964. Cabo Delgado is also Nyusi's home province.

Nyusi took 78% of the presidential vote – slightly less than the 80% that the current president, Armando Guebuza, won in the province in the 2009 election. The vote for Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama rose from 14% in 2009 to 18% now, while the third candidate, Daviz Simango of the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM), saw his vote slip from 5.6 to 3.8%.

In the parliamentary election, the Frelimo vote fell from 81% to 77.5%. The Renamo vote rose from 15 to 17%. The MDM, which was unable to stand in Cabo Delgado in 2009, took five%.

One extraordinary feature of the Cabo Delgado results is the large number of blank ballots – over nine% of the votes cast in the presidential election, and over 11% in the parliamentary election bore no marks at all. The results available from Cabo Delgado districts show that this phenomenon extends across the entire province.

It means that one in ten of all voters went into the voting booth, made no mark at all on their ballot paper, neatly folded it, and dropped it in the ballot box.

This happens either when citizens do not understand the voting process – more likely in Cabo Delgado than in many other parts of the country because of the province's high illiteracy rate – or possibly as a protest vote.

The number of invalid votes (where voters have tried to vote for more than one candidate, have written a message, or have otherwise spoiled their ballot papers) was around 3.5%, a normal figure in Mozambican elections.

The full results from the province were as follows:

Presidential election

Registered voters	964,071	
Number who voted	477,463	
Turnout	49.53%	
Valid votes	416,154	(87.16%)
Blank ballots	44,211	(9.26%)
Invalid votes	17,098	(3.58%)

Candidates (percentages of valid votes)

Filipe Nyusi <i>Frelimo</i>	324,857	(78.06%)
Afonso Dhlakama <i>Renamo</i>	75,568	(18.16%)
Daviz Simango <i>MDM</i>	15,729	(3.78%)

Parliamentary election

Number who voted	473,567	
Turnout	49.12%	
Valid votes	400,580	(84.59%)
Blank ballots	55,117	(11.64%)
Invalid votes	17,870	(3.77%)

Parties (percentage of valid votes)

Frelimo	310,608	(77.54%)
Renamo	69,167	(17.27%)
MDM	19,175	(5%)

On AIM's calculations, this parliamentary vote means that 17 of Cabo Delgado's 22 seats will go to Frelimo, four to Renamo and one to the MDM. In 2009, the seats divided 18 for Frelimo and four for Renamo.