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Provincial results give Filipe Nyusi 57 per cent

With the official results of last week's general election now in from all 11 of Mozambique's provincial constituencies, it is clear that Filipe Nyusi, the candidate of the ruling Frelimo Party, has won with around 57% of the vote – considerably less than the over 60% predicted at the start of the vote tabulation.

Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama won over 36% of the vote. This is more than double the 16% he won in the last presidential election in 2009. The third candidate, Daviz Simango, leader of the Mozambique Democratic Movement, trailed on 6.5%, down from the nine per cent he won in 2009.

The sum of the 11 provincial results is as follows:

Filipe Nyusi	2,744,066	57.14%
Afonso Dhlakama	1,747,093	36.38%
Daviz Simango	311,358	6.48%

As for the parliamentary election, Frelimo too scored about 57%, a sharp decline from its 75% of 2009. Renamo took over a third of the vote, and the MDM slightly more than nine per cent. For the sake of convenience, the 27 minor parties who stood in the election have been omitted – none of them came anywhere near winning a parliamentary seat.

The sum of the 11 parliamentary results from the provinces is as follows (percentages refer to the sum of the vote of the three main parties):

Frelimo	2,473,938	57.06%
Renamo	1,467,289	33.84%
MDM	394,458	9.1%

Absent from these results are the two constituencies for Mozambican communities living abroad. However, only 88,820 voters were registered abroad, and it is already known that both these seats went to Frelimo.

Hence, from calculations based on these figures, the composition of the new parliament is likely to be 142 seats for Frelimo, 89 for Renamo and 19 for the MDM. The composition of the current parliament is 191 seats for Frelimo, 51 for Renamo and eight for the MDM.

Thus Frelimo is set to lose 49 seats, while Renamo gains 38 and the MDM gains 11.

In late 2013, Frelimo claimed more than four million members: but on 15 October less than 2.5 million people voted for the party, and 2.75 million voted for its presidential candidate. So either the Frelimo membership figures are exaggerated or around one and a half million Frelimo members failed to vote for their party.

The provincial results are not yet definitive, since they have not been confirmed by the National Elections Commission (CNE). Currently the CNE is undertaking the painfully slow task of re-classifying all the votes that were considered invalid at the polling stations.

On past experience, between 10 and 20% of these votes will be rescued, with the CNE determining that the polling station staff were too strict, and that the voters concerned did indeed express a preference. This will alter the total votes for the three candidates and the three main parties, but not by very much.

Far more significant is the CNE's decision to investigate all allegations of irregularities and fraud. Should the CNE decide to annul openly fraudulent results sheets which claim impossible turnouts of 90, 95 or even 100%, this could make a material difference to the final result.

The results by province were:

Niassa

Presidential election

Filipe Nyusi	120,818	48.39%
Afonso Dhlakama	111,114	44.5%
Daviz Simango	17,776	7.12%

Parliamentary election

Frelimo	113,496	50.51%
Renamo	91,743	40.81%
MDM	18,105	8.06%

Cabo Delgado*Presidential election*

Filipe Nyusi	324,857	78.06%
Afonso Dhlakama	75,568	18.16%
Daviz Simango	15,729	3.78%

Parliamentary election

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

Nampula*Presidential election*

Afonso Dhlakama	375,592	49.46%
Filipe Nyusi	339,143	44.66%
Daviz Simango	44,587	5.87%

Parliamentary election

Frelimo	306,676	45%
Renamo	299,311	43.73%
MDM	57,416	8.39%

Tete*Presidential election*

Afonso Dhlakama	231,972	49.22%
Filipe Nyusi	218,850	46.43%
Daviz Simango	20,493	4.35%

Parliamentary election

Frelimo	208,933	48.23%
Renamo	197,922	45.69%
MDM	26,343	6.08%

Zambezia*Presidential election*

Afonso Dhlakama	327,300	50.11%
Filipe Nyusi	268,856	41.16%
Daviz Simango	56,983	8.72%

Parliamentary election

Frelimo	243,036	41.12%
Renamo	283,036	47.88%
MDM	65,033	11.00%

Sofala*Presidential election*

Afonso Dhlakama	229,341	55.72%
Filipe Nyusi	146,043	35.48%
Daviz Simango	36,189	8.79%

Parliamentary election

Frelimo	138,493	37.07%
Renamo	182,049	48.73%
MDM	53,040	14.20%

Manica*Presidential election*

Afonso Dhlakama	169,359	48.45%
Filipe Nyusi	167,018	47.77%
Daviz Simango	13,182	3.77%

Parliamentary election

Frelimo	156,835	49.02%
Renamo	147,087	45.93%
MDM	16,276	5.05%

Inhambane*Presidential election*

Filipe Nyusi	228,819	75.7%
Afonso Dhlakama	57,523	19.03%
Daviz Simango	15,920	5.27%

Parliamentary election

Frelimo	207,642	72.05%
Renamo	44,055	15.29%
MDM	15,941	5.18%

Gaza*Presidential election*

Filipe Nyusi	342,470	93.79%
Afonso Dhlakama	11,591	3.17%
Daviz Simango	11,098	3.04%

Parliamentary election

Frelimo	269,914	93.84%
Renamo	7,249	2.52%
MDM	10,454	3.63%

Maputo

Presidential election

Filipe Nyusi	298,624	73.63%
Afonso Dhlakama	71,407	17.61%
Daviz Simango	35,543	8.76%

Parliamentary election

Frelimo	265,508	68.27%
Renamo	66,684	17.15%
MDM	47,998	12.34%

Maputo city

Presidential election

Filipe Nyusi	287,674	68.84%
Afonso Dhlakama	86,326	20.66%
Daviz Simango	43,868	10.50%

Parliamentary election

Frelimo	257,829	62.69%
Renamo	82,447	20.05%
MDM	64,490	15.68%

These figures do not add up to 100%, because the many minor parties on the ballot paper, who took a handful of votes between them, have been disregarded.

CNE begins requalifying invalid votes

The National Elections Commission (CNE) on 23 October began “requalifying” all the votes regarded as invalid at the polling stations.

Since there were 17,010 polling stations, dealing with three elections (presidential, parliamentary and for the ten provincial assemblies) sorting the invalid votes is a gigantic task. One CNE member told AIM that the CNE must look at about 700,000 ballots and see if it agrees with decisions taken at polling stations.

In general, polling station staff tend to be strict in their interpretation of the rules, throwing out ballots where the voters have made slight mistakes in placing their “x” or, in the case of illiterate voters, their fingerprint. Under CNE supervision, staff from the Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat (STAE) are looking at each and every one of these votes to see whether the voters did indeed express a preference.

The procedure is transparent, with political party monitors, national and foreign observers, and journalists all able to watch as the STAE/CNE teams sort their way through mountains of votes.

When AIM watched the teams at work, most of the votes really were invalid – voters had put crosses beside two or more candidates, or their inky finger had smudged the ballot paper so it was impossible to tell which candidate, if any, they had preferred.

In cases where part of the cross or fingerprint was in one candidate’s box, and part was in another, the teams had a difficult decision to make. They tended to conclude that, if most of the cross or print was in one box, then that was the candidate the voter had chosen. But if the cross or print straddled the boxes more or less equally, that vote was invalid.

A sizeable number of voters had made the mistake of signing their ballot papers. Since any word written on a ballot paper renders the vote invalid, these ballots were all tossed out. But what is a word – is a squiggle drawn on the ballot paper a word? In such cases, the teams tend to give the voter the benefit of the doubt, and requalify the ballot as a valid vote.

Some ballots appeared to bear no mark at all (and should thus have been classified as blank ballots and not invalid votes) – but close inspection showed that the voters had placed small marks on a candidate’s photo or emblem. This was then counted as a valid vote.

Small marks could easily go unnoticed by tired staff in poorly lit polling stations, but show up under the bright lights of the CNE/STAE offices.

This raises a question about the vast number of votes classified as blank ballots (over 11 per cent of the parliamentary vote in Zambezia province, for example). Did some of these votes carry small marks made by voters, which the polling station staff did not notice?

The blank ballots are discarded, and are not checked by the CNE. Perhaps in future elections they should be.

AIM was watching the “requalification” of invalid votes from Inhambane province, and during the time the AIM journalist spent in the room there was no sign of any deliberate invalidation of votes – though from the suspiciously large number of invalid votes in some districts in other provinces, it is clear that such fraud did happen in some polling stations.

Typically this occurs when a corrupt member of the polling station staff surreptitiously adds an extra ink mark to a ballot to make it look as if the voter has tried to vote for two candidates. This has been easily detected in the past, when a string of votes shows up, all marked with a cross for an opposition candidate, but with a fingerprint added. Such fraud was denounced by the CNE after the 2009 election, but nobody was arrested.

ENI signs natural gas deal with Kogas

The Italian energy company ENI has announced that it has signed a cooperation agreement with the Korean company Kogas to facilitate the development of Area Four of the Rovuma Basin, off the coast of the northern Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado.

ENI estimates that Area Four holds 85 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and the company is working on plans to develop the resource.

ADB promises budget support

The African Development Bank (ADB) has pledged support for the Mozambican state budget of US\$60.1 million over the next two years.

An agreement on the first tranche, \$29.5 million to support the 2015 budget, was signed in Maputo on 23 October by the Minister of Planning and Development, Aiuba Cuereneia, and by the ADB resident representative, Joseph Ribeiro.

Cuereneia said that the pledging of resources to cover more than one year allows budgetary planning over the medium term, which was important for the predictability of government interventions.

He added that the government's "Programme of Economic Governance and Inclusive Growth" results from a long term partnership between Mozambique and the ADB. Cuereneia described the ADB as "a fundamental partner for achieving many projects and programmes in the country".

"It is expected that this programme will help strengthen the institutional capacity of the government, including supporting the policy reforms under way in public financial management, and in regulating the management of natural resources, as well as policies for the development of the private and financial sectors", he said.

Cuereneia added that this programme could improve effectiveness and transparency in natural resource management, including the expansion for setting up businesses and creating jobs.

For his part, Ribeiro said the ADB group intends to continue assisting the government's efforts to mobilise more domestic resources, and to maximize the country's potential, particularly with regard to its natural resources.

Budget support, Ribeiro said, "seeks to help the government create a more favourable environment for the fight against poverty".

Government launches hydrocarbon licencing

The Mozambican government, through its National Petroleum Institute (INP), on 23 October launched the fifth licencing round for exploration and production of hydrocarbons in fifteen blocks.

The fifteen blocks on offer cover an area of 76,800 square kilometres. They are located off the northern coast including the Rovuma Basin, the Zambezi Delta and the area near Angoche, in Nampula province, and onshore around Pande/Temane and Palmeira, in the southern provinces of Inhambane and Maputo

Launch ceremonies took place both in Maputo and in London. At the Hilton Hotel in London, over three hundred delegates were present, representing almost two hundred companies.

The key speaker, Minister of Mineral Resources Esperanca Bias, explained that just five years of exploration in the Rovuma Basin has increased the country's known natural gas reserves from five trillion cubic feet to over 200 trillion cubic feet.

She stressed that the bids for the acreage should include plans for upstream activities, institutional support, training and local content.

The Chair of the INP Board, Arsenio Mabote, pointed out that bidding companies will also be judged on their ability to optimise resource recovery and deliver an excellent technical programme. He added that the successful companies will also be required to demonstrate a regional overview.

The successful bidders must also show their timetables, with exploration programmes completed within eight years. It was also revealed that no signature bonus will be required. However, companies must commit themselves to making a quarter of hydrocarbon resources available for use inside Mozambique.

Mabote's colleague, Carlos Zacarias, told the audience that preliminary data suggests that oil and gas could be found in the areas up for auction.

He explained that the state hydrocarbon company, ENH, will be awarded at least a ten per cent stake in each area. In addition, there is a minimum requirement of one operator and at least one non-operator (in addition to ENH) for each block. Zacarias added that, if necessary, INP will create "forced marriages" to ensure partnerships.

Speaking to AIM after the event, Esperanca Bias explained that no single company has the full set of skills required to cover the entire value chain, and this is why the government requires partnerships to be formed.

On the issue of setting up a Sovereign Fund to invest future oil wealth, Bias said that this was just one of the options being considered by her government to make sure that the country's wealth can be best used for the benefit of current and future generations.

The Chairman of ENH, Nelson Ocuane, told AIM that it is increasing its participation in the exploration process with the goal that perhaps in five to ten years it can become an operator.

The bidding will be closed on 20 January and INP will analyse the offers after a period of clarification.

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