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Frelimo wins general election

Mozambique's National Elections Commission (CNE) on 30 October announced that former defence minister Filipe Nyusi, the candidate of the ruling Frelimo Party, has won the presidential election held on 15 October with 57% of the vote.

In second position was Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama with 36.6%, while the third candidate Daviz Simango, the mayor of Beira and leader of Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM), took 6.4%.

In the parliamentary election, Frelimo won a comfortable majority and will hold 144 seats in the new parliament to 89 for Renamo and 17 for MDM. The results were as follows:

Presidential election

Number of registered voters	10,964,978	
Number who voted	5,333,665	
Turnout	48.64%	
Number of valid votes	4,871,804	(91.34%)
Blank ballots	290,186	(5.44%)
Invalid votes	171,675	(3.21%)

Candidates

Filipe Nyusi	2,778,497	(57.03%)
Afonso Dhlakama	1,783,382	(36.61%)
Daviz Simango	309,925	(6.36%)

Parliamentary election

Number who voted	5,316,936	
Turnout	48.49%	
Valid votes	4,508,142	(84.79%)
Blank ballots	458,919	(8.63%)
Invalid votes	252,535	(4.75%)

Parties

Frelimo	2,575,995	(55.97%)
Renamo	1,495,137	(32.49%)
MDM	384,538	(8.36%)

The remaining 3.18% of the parliamentary vote was scattered around no less than 26 minor parties, none of whom obtained even half a per cent.

The 250 parliamentary seats are allocated as follows:

Niassa

13 seats – Frelimo 7, Renamo 6, MDM 1

Cabo Delgado

22 seats – Frelimo 19, Renamo 3, MDM 0

Nampula

47 seats – Frelimo 22, Renamo 22, MDM 3

Zambezia

45 seats – Frelimo 18, Renamo 22, MDM 5

Tete

22 seats – Frelimo 11, Renamo 10, MDM 1

Manica

16 seats – Frelimo 8, Renamo 8, MDM 0

Sofala

22 seats – Frelimo 8, Renamo 10, MDM 3

Inhambane

14 seats – Frelimo 12, Renamo 2, MDM 0

Gaza

14 seats – Frelimo 14, Renamo 0, MDM 0

Maputo province

17 seats – Frelimo 12, Renamo 3, MDM 2

Maputo City

15 seats – Frelimo 11, Renamo 3, MDM 2

In addition, there are two seats for Mozambican communities abroad, one for Africa, and one for the rest of the world. Frelimo won both these seats.

While Frelimo has won a comfortable victory, it is far cry from the 75% of the vote it took in the previous elections in 2009. Frelimo has lost its two thirds majority in parliament, and so cannot pass amendments to the constitution on its own.

Questioned by reporters, the Frelimo national election agent, Veronica Macamo, made light of Frelimo's loss of 47 parliamentary seats. She said that, even when it had a two thirds majority, Frelimo always tried to work with the opposition benches and to pass legislation, whenever possible, by consensus.

Renamo ought to be pleased with the results. Dhlakama's share of the vote has more than doubled in comparison with the 2009 election, and Renamo's parliamentary representation is set to rise from 51 to 89. MDM's parliamentary group will double in size, from eight to 17.

Nonetheless, both opposition parties have rejected the results, and their election agents did not attend the announcement.

Renamo had submitted a formal appeal against the results earlier in the day

The CNE's results are broadly in line with the results announced by the 11 provincial elections commission. The main change is that the number of invalid votes has been greatly reduced. The CNE looked at every vote declared invalid at the polling stations. There were about three quarters of a million of these, and the CNE managed to rescue 174,614 of them (23%), which were then distributed among the parties for whom they were intended.

The changes, in comparison with the distribution of seats based on the provincial results prior to reclassification of the invalid votes, are that in Cabo Delgado Frelimo gains two seats, and MDM and Renamo each lose one, and in Nampula Renamo gains a seat at the expense of MDM.

CNE chairperson Abdul Carimo said that some members of the CNE had voted against the resolution containing the results – but he did not say how many. However, AIM learnt from another CNE member that seven out of the 17 CNE members voted against, mostly members appointed by Renamo and MDM. At the end, however, all members of the CNE signed the minutes of the meeting – though some of them, such as Renamo appointees Latino Ligonha and Fernando Mazanga, added riders describing the results as “fraudulent” or “not transparent”.

Carimo admitted that although the elections had, in general, been “orderly, calm and tranquil”, they had been marred by “administrative irregularities, electoral offences and common crimes”. The CNE knew about these because they had been denounced, not by the competing parties, but by election observers and the media.

Despite the later Renamo and MDM claims of generalised fraud, Carimo said the CNE had not received a single complaint from any political party

until the Renamo appeal. Nonetheless, the CNE had launched investigations into the cases reported in the press, and this investigation “is still under way, with the involvement of the relevant bodies of the administration of justice”.

He hoped that a detailed report could be obtained on each of the cases so that the CNE could provide an explanation to the public about such matters as the late opening of polling stations, allegations of ballot box stuffing and the deliberate invalidation of votes by members of polling station staff.

The results announced by the CNE are not final. They still have to be validated and proclaimed by the Constitutional Council, the country's highest body in matters of constitutional and electoral law. The Council will also have to rule on any Renamo and MDM appeals.

Over 50,000 opposition monitors observed polling stations

Over 50,000 monitors from opposition parties observed the voting and count at the 17,010 polling stations in Mozambique's general elections held on 15 October.

Frelimo had the largest number of monitors, 37,032, followed by Renamo with 26,761, and MDM with 24,892. The other monitors were appointed by minor parties.

Each competing party had the right to appoint one full and supplementary monitor for each polling station. The province with most monitors was the hotly contested northern constituency of Nampula, where Frelimo, Renamo and MDM all appointed the maximum number of monitors, 6,142.

In the second largest constituency, Zambezia, Frelimo had 5,839 monitors, Renamo 4,646, and MDM 4,402. In the opposition stronghold of Sofala, the three parties had much the same number of monitors – Frelimo 2,534, Renamo 2,354, and MDM 2,414.

Between them, Renamo and MDM had 51,653 polling station monitors, concentrated in those northern and central provinces where they claim that massive fraud took place.

However, the opposition monitors did not denounce any cases of fraud. The kits for each and every polling station contain printed sheets where monitors are entitled to write down any complaints or protests. These went unused. Not a single monitor filed a protest at any of the polling stations. Or possibly any complaint was resolved at the polling station itself – for according to CNE spokesperson Paulo Cuinica, not a single written protest reached the CNE.

A few complaints against irregularities or fraud were made to the district courts. According to Supreme Court spokesperson Pedro Nhatitima, there were just 24 such cases in the entire country. One was submitted by Frelimo, successfully demanding the annulment of the elections in those parts of Tsangano district, in the western province of Tete, where crowds of Renamo supporters destroyed polling stations.

The courts threw out the cases submitted by Renamo and MDM, said Nhatitima, because they had not provided any evidence, or because they submitted their complaints later than the deadline of 48 hours after the close of polls.

In other words the Renamo and MDM monitors did not protest at fraud or irregularities at the time, and did not use the mechanisms made available to them. The two parties denounced the alleged generalized fraud not during the election, but only afterwards.

CNE will not order new elections in Tsangano

The National Elections Commission has no intention of re-running the election in parts of the western district of Tsangano affected by serious rioting on polling day.

According to the Tete Provincial Elections Commission, supporters of Renamo destroyed 10 polling stations in Tsangano and 12 in the neighbouring district of Macanga. They set election materials ablaze, and the frightened election staff fled from the polling stations.

Frelimo appealed to the Tsangano district court for an annulment of the elections in the affected polling stations. On the grounds that transparent elections were impossible under those circumstances, and that all Tsangano registered voters deserved the chance to vote, the court accepted the Frelimo request.

Revealing this to reporters on 30 October, Supreme Court judge Pedro Nhatitima said the next step was now up to the CNE. It was up to the CNE to decide whether to hold fresh elections in those areas of Tsangano affected by violence.

But CNE spokesperson Paulo Cuinica told AIM it was not at all the CNE's task, and the question of Tsangano did not enter into the CNE's resolution on the election results read out by its chairperson, Abdul Carimo.

Cuinica said that any decision on the matter would have to be taken, not by the CNE, but by the Constitutional Council, the country's highest body in matters of constitutional and electoral law.

Furthermore, he added, holding new elections was only an option if it might have a material impact on the election results.

Even if the ones in Macanga are added, the polling stations destroyed do not cover enough registered voters to change the overall results in the presidential election. However, it is just conceivable that these voters could alter the distribution of parliamentary seats in Tete province, and in the Tete provincial assembly.

Cuinica insisted that these matters would have to be considered by the Constitutional Council when deciding whether it was worth holding fresh elections in Tsangano.

300 places for Renamo in army and police

The Mozambican government on 27 October declared that it is prepared to incorporate into the armed forces and police 300 men from Renamo's militia.

Speaking at the end of the 82nd session in the dialogue between the government and Renamo, under way since April 2013, the head of the government delegation, Agriculture Minister Jose Pacheco, said that 200 of the Renamo men would go into the police and 100 into the armed forces (FADM).

However, Renamo has so far not presented a list of the men comprising what are delicately referred to as its "residual forces".

Pacheco made clear that the figure of 300 did not come out of thin air, but resulted from past contacts with Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama. From these contacts it was clear that the Renamo residual forces consisted of one or two hundred men.

International military observers are due to deploy to Sofala, Tete, Inhambane and Nampula provinces to monitor the agreement on cessation of hostilities between the government and Renamo. That agreement was reached in August and formally signed by President Armando Guebuza and Afonso Dhlakama on 5 September.

Largest known graphite vanadium deposit

The Australian company Triton Minerals announced on 21 October that drilling and testing at its Balama North graphite project in the northern Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado has defined the world's largest known deposit of graphite and vanadium.

Using the Australian code for reporting mineral resources, JORC, Triton stated that Nacanda Hill (just one area in Balama North) holds 155.9 million tonnes of graphite and 3.93 million tonnes of vanadium oxide.

Triton's managing director Brad Boyle stated, "this impressive result has confirmed the true world class potential of the Balama North project. Triton is now one step closer to becoming a market leading low cost graphite and potential vanadium producer".

The Triton licence area is very near another world class graphite and vanadium deposits discovered by a second Australian company, Syrah Resources. In July it was rumoured that commodity trader Glencore was considering making a US\$1.9 billion takeover bid for Syrah Resources. Although the takeover did not happen, it is a sign of the tremendous value of the mineral resources in Cabo Delgado.

Graphite is a form of carbon which is highly priced due to its properties as a conductor of electricity. It is used in batteries and fuel cells, and is the basis for the "miracle material" graphene, which is the strongest material ever measured, with vast potential for use in the electronics industries.

Vanadium is mainly used as an additive to strengthen steel. However, it is now being used in a new generation of rechargeable batteries.

Agreement on fight against wildlife crime

The Mozambican government on 29 October in Maputo signed an agreement with the Joaquim Chissano Foundation and the Peace Parks Foundation to fight wildlife crime.

The partnership will support the development of anti-poaching operations in and around the Limpopo National Park (PNL) in the southern province of Gaza.

The agreement follows on from a Memorandum of Understanding signed in April by the Mozambican and South African governments promoting joint action on the management and conservation of biodiversity, and aimed at stopping poaching, particularly of rhinos.

Under the new agreement, the Peace Parks Foundation will spend thirty million rand (about US\$2.8 million) and offer material support and assistance to anti-poaching activities.

These funds come from a €15.4 million donation from the Dutch and Swedish lotteries to the Peace Parks Foundation.

According to the Peace Parks Foundation, wildlife crime is the fourth largest illegal activity in the world after drug trafficking, counterfeiting and human trafficking, with an annual turnover of at least US\$19 billion.

The Foundation laments that poaching “is decimating Africa’s iconic species of elephant, rhino, lion and leopard and threatening the very existence of Africa’s protected areas where tourism is a major GDP contributor”.

Chief Executive, Werner Myburgh, explained that “many of the actions will be taken jointly by Mozambique and South Africa. Wildlife crime is often transnational by nature and transfrontier conservation areas and agreements, such as these signed today, offer an important platform to counter the decimation of our protected species”.

The project includes the updating of the communications technology used by rangers as well as shared communication across the border with South Africa. Rangers will also receive training, new equipment and improved working conditions.

An essential component is support to the judicial system in Mozambique so it can implement the stiff penalties provided for in the Conservation Areas Act.

In April the Mozambican parliament passed a bill dramatically increasing penalties for poaching. The law proposes prison sentences of between eight and 12 years for people who kill, without a licence, any protected species, or who use banned fishing gear, such as explosives or toxic substances. The same penalty

will apply to people who set forests or woodlands on fire (poachers use fire to drive animals into the open).

Anybody using illegal firearms or snares, even if they do not catch protected species, can be sentenced to two years imprisonment.

In addition, those found guilty of the illegal exploitation, storage, transport or sale of protected species will be fined between 50 and 1,000 times the minimum monthly national wage in force in the public administration (at current exchange rates, that would be a fine of between US\$4,425 and US\$88,500).

Central to the project is the Joaquim Chissano Foundation’s Wildlife Preservation Initiative. This is developing research on policy formation in Mozambique as well as promoting the use of sniffer dogs along known trafficking routes.

The PNL covers over 1.1 million hectares, and forms part of the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park, along with the Kruger National Park in South Africa, and the Gonarezhou Park in Zimbabwe. The three parks cover a total area of 5.5 million hectares.

The Peace Parks Foundation was established in 1997 by the then South African President Nelson Mandela, Anton Rupert, chair of the South African Branch of WWF (Worldwide Fund for Nature) and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands. It aims to promote Southern African Peace Parks (also known as transfrontier conservation areas) including the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park.

Air France negotiating direct flights to Maputo

The Air France / KLM group has begun talks with the government of Mozambique on the resumption of direct flights between Paris and Maputo.

Air France’s Managing Director for Africa, Franck Legre, told reporters on 26 October that he hoped the service will begin within the next two years. He commented, “the economy of Mozambique is growing fast and the discovery of natural gas deposits makes this country attractive”.

Legre was speaking in the Ivory Coast during a ceremony to launch a new Air France service between Abidjan and Paris using the Airbus A380 aircraft.

There have been no direct flights between Maputo and Paris for around two decades. Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s Mozambique Airlines (LAM) operated a weekly flight, using a DC-10 aircraft, from Maputo to Paris, Copenhagen and Berlin.

Currently the only direct flights from Mozambique to Europe are between Maputo and Lisbon, operated by the Portuguese airline, TAP.

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