

2013 Local Elections



Mozambique political process bulletin

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Sheik Abdul Carimo named CNE president

Sheik Abdul Carimo Nordine Sau was elected yesterday as president of the National Elections Commission (Comissão Nacional de Eleições, CNE) for a five year term, replacing the outgoing João Leopoldo da Costa. He will be formally installed today by President Armando Guebuza.

The President is elected by the members of the CNE from among the three civil society nominated members. Rabia Valgy did not stand. Sheik Abdul Carimo received 9 votes against 2 for Paulo Cuinica.

Abdul Carimo is secretary general of the Islamic Council of Mozambique and has been Executive Director of the Electoral Observatory, the most active civil society grouping monitoring elections. He was nominated for the CNE by the Democracy Studies Centre (Centro de Estudos de Democracia e Desenvolvimento) headed by a former CNE president, Brazao Mazula.

Without Renamo: **CNE takes office and starts work**

The new CNE has started work, despite a boycott by Renamo. .

A CNE has 13 membros: 3 civil society, 8 from parties (5 Frelimo, 2 Renamo, 1 MDM) and two nominated by legal bodies which only just made their nominations: Judge Joao Beirao named by the Magistrates Council (Conselho Superior da Magistratura Judicial) and public prosecutor Albino Vasco Macamo, named by the Prosecutors Council (Conselho Superior da Magistratura do Ministério Público). Renamo has refused to name its members to any of the election commissions, arguing that the material and legal conditions do not exist for elections.

One of the first tasks for the CNE is to propose a date for 2004 general elections to President Armando Guebuza. The election law says that the election must be in the first

two weeks of October, but that the President must name the date 18 months before – which has already passed. Parliament yesterday amended the election law to reduce the time to 12 months.

Registration begins Saturday

Voter registration begins Saturday in 43 municipalities. There will be 5,024 registration brigade members and 1,708 registration posts. STAE (Electoral Administration Secretariat, Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral) has done training of the teams this week.

This is an entirely new registration; all voters must register again. It is the second which will be done by a computerised system. But it will be a different system than was used in 2007-9.

The previous system had many problems, both with equipment and training. STAE promises this year will be better. "Taking into account past experience, we want to make the process better this year. To do this, we want to ensure better preparation for the brigade members to make the voter registration easier," explained Lucas José, STAE press officer.

In buying new equipment this year, STAE first analysed the tasks that needed to be carried and past problems. "For this electoral census, we bought new equipment that is more robust and should work smoothly. This new equipment has a different configuration than the previous system, and we are confident of success," he said.

Registration continues until 23 July.

10 new municipalities will have elections

Ten new municipalities were approved yesterday in a bill rushed through parliament by the government. Registration and elections will take place this year in the new municipalities, bringing the total to 53.

The new municipalities are: Boane (Maputo province), Praia do Bilene (Gaza), Quissico (Inhambane), Nhamatanda (Sofala), Sussundenga (Manica), Nhamayábué (Tete), Maganja da Costa (Zambézia), Malema (Nampula), Chiure (Cabo Delgado) e Mandimba (Niassa).

Few mobile brigades

The new electoral law makes much stricter the requirement that polling stations be in the same place as registration posts. That means there will be fewer mobile brigades than in the past. Mobile brigades went to small villages to register voters, but there were complaints that voters then had to go long distances to find their polling station.

The new law allows mobile brigades, but only with a radius of 5 km from a polling station, making it possible to still walk to vote. STAE reports that there will be some mobile brigades.

Cost of elections

Registration and elections are budgeted at \$28 million (847 mn meticaís) according to STAE. This is \$11 mn more than the last local elections, partly due to the cost of the new registration. STAE director general Felisberto Naife says the money has been budgeted and is being made available normally. STAE is attempting to expand to the 10 new municipalities, which are relatively small, but were not included in the initial plan and budget.

Slow start for civic education

The civic education campaign, which encourages and explains registration and voting, began on 10 May and will continue for 60 days.

But the start has been slow, and a week after the start of the campaign, some cities such as Múeda still had not received materials such as pamphlets, megaphones, shirts and hats.

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