

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

243 1 March 2014 Editor: Joseph Hanlon (j.hanlon@open.ac.uk)

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Also in this issue:

Election machine to be highly politicised

Filipe Nyussi to be Frelimo presidential candidate

Defence Minister Filipe Nyussi was selected tonight by the Frelimo Central Committee as its presidential candidate for the 15 October national election. After repeated criticism, Filipe Paunde resigned as party secretary-general.

Paunde and the party Political Commission tried to restrict the list of possible candidates to three allied to current President Armando Guebuza: Prime Minister Alberto Vaquina, Agriculture Minister Jose Pacheco and Nyussi. An old guard anti-Guebuza campaign led by Graça Machel and Joaquim Chissano, forced two former prime ministers onto the list, Luisa Diogo and Aires Ali. In an impassioned speech, Graça Machel also forced Guebuza to allow former members of the Political Commission who are no longer on the Central Committee, including former President Chissano, to attend and speak (but not vote). (Contrary to earlier reports, Eduardo Mulembwe did not stand.)

In the first round tonight, Nyussi gained 46% and Diogo 23%. In a second round between those two, Nyussi was selected, with 135 votes (68%) against 61 (31%) for Diogo.

Filipe Nyussi is Macondi and was born 9 February 1959, in Namaua, Mueda, Cabo Delgado. He was the only one of the candidates to have a liberation war link, having attended the Frelimo school in Tunduru, Tanzania before independence. He was a surprise appointment as Defence Minister in 2008. He completed his Mechanical Engineering degree at the Military Academy in Brno, Czechoslovakia, in 1990, just before the end of socialism. He joined the northern railways Caminhos de Ferro de Moçambique (CFM) in 1992 as assistant head of maintenance, moving up to be executive director 1995-2007.

President Armando Guebuza has always had business links in ports and transport, dating from his time as transport minister 1986-90, so it is likely that Guebuza came to know Nyussi in this way. Unlike Guebuza, Nyussi is not a businessman; his only recorded business interest dates back to his time in CFM when he became one of many owners of a stevedoring company, SOMOESTIVA - Sociedade Moçambicana de Estiva. Indeed, during his campaign for the position, in January in Inhambane, he was applauded for a call for redistribution of wealth through the tax system and for increasing productive investment (CanalMoz, 12 Jan 14).

Of the five possible candidates, Nyussi is the least known nationally and within the party. The spelling of the candidate's name is not consistent, sometimes Nyussi and sometimes Nyusi, even in official documents.

Election machine to be highly politicised

Frelimo caved in almost completely to opposition demands to put tens of thousands of political appointees into the electoral process.

Partly this was the result of recent government-Renamo negotiations, and are changes which could have been offered to Renamo many months ago, and which have now been pushed through parliament in haste. It appears that after MDM did well in local elections, both Frelimo and Renamo realised it was important that Renamo was back in the electoral process. So Frelimo offered more than it was willing to put on the table before, while Renamo accepted less than the veto power over the electoral process it had demanded.

As soon as we have final texts of the revised laws, we will published a *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin* with details of the changes. Information here is from AIM reports of parliament sessions during the week.

Polling station staff: For the first time in a Mozambican election, polling stations will now have party-nominated staff. Current and most previous laws say each polling station has five staff (chair, deputy chair, secretary and 2 scrutineers) recruited by STAE from public applications. Unexpectedly, MDM proposed four recruited staff and 3 party nominees, 1 Frelimo, 1 Renamo, 1 MDM. MDM expected this to go to a vote and be rejected, but Frelimo accepted and it did not go to a vote. There will be 13,000-14,000 polling stations, which means up to 42,000 political appointees. Parties have always had party delegates in polling stations, who observe and could file protests, but never nominated staff.

Election commissions: Renamo has boycotted the electoral process until now, and it did not take up its seats on elections commissions. The means the civil society members of the commissions were chosen by the Frelimo majority, and tend to be Frelimo-aligned, Renamo's main goal was to reverse that.

The current 13-member National Elections Commission has 5 Frelimo Party, 2 Renamo (still vacant), 1 MDM, 3 civil society, and 2 legal figures, a magistrate and a public prosecutor. The new CNE will have 17 members, 5 Frelimo and 1 MDM (unchanged), 4 Renamo (up from 2), and 7 civil society (up from 3). The two legal figures are dropped. Renamo assumes it was have the right to name two of the new civil society. There will also be two new deputy presidents, one Frelimo and one Renamo, but not MDM. As part of an informal deal, Moslem cleric Sheik Abdul Carimo remains president (chair).

At provincial and district levels, elections commissions now have 11 members: 3 Frelimo, 2 Renamo, 1 MDM and 5 civil society. Initially Renamo proposed to remove 2 civil society, but could not figure out how to do it. A special session Saturday 22 February was delayed all day while Renamo MPs consulted higher officials, and it finally proposed to add 4 civil society members, bringing the total to 9 and the commission membership to 15. This has been accepted.

STAE (Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat): National STAE has a director-general and three department directors - organisation, training, and administration & finance. There will now be 26 additional political appointments: two deputy-director generals (1 Frelimo, 1 Renamo, no MDM), six deputy department directors (3 Frelimo, 2 Renamo, 1 MDM) and 18 other politically appointed staff (9 Frelimo, 8 Renamo, 1 MDM).

At province, district and city there will be the same 8 high figures - 2 deputy directors and 6 deputy department heads, and 6 further politically appointed staff (3 Frelimo, 2 Renamo, 1 MDM). AIM estimates at total of 2,312 political appointees in STAE.

COMMENT: This is a recipe for confusion, confrontation, and increased fraud, and Frelimo will be the main beneficiary. Renamo's main interest is simply paid jobs for its members. But Renamo

president Afonso Dhlakama and the rest of the leadership have always believed that the more people they have, the easier it is to spot fraud. In fact, the opposite is true - the more people who are around, the easier it is to divert attention while fraud is committed. A third issue is that Renamo wants to be inside in order to make secret political deals.

Both Frelimo and Renamo are concerned about the MDM, the new and more successful political opposition. Frelimo has been happy with a weak Renamo as opposition while Renamo is worried about votes lost to MDM, so both are happy to gang up against MDM (and will probably do so in polling stations and in STAEs). Indeed, the restructuring at all levels is designed to marginalise and weaken MDM. As the newest party with the weakest national organisation, MDM will be hard pressed to find nearly 15,000 members to fill all these posts - and these will be important potential campaigners lost to electoral administration at a critical time.

Frelimo, with a large and well-oiled party machine, can make the best use of these changes. For example, there were complaints in Zambézia during local elections of Frelimo party people going to talk to - and apparently give instructions to - individuals on the polling station staff. Now that there is a formal nominated person, the party will exert even more control over their member on the polling station table (mesa). MDM and Renamo cannot match that degree of organisation.

So Frelimo gains by having the best political machine to take advantage of the new arrangement, by marginalising and weakening the opposition it most fears (MDM) and by boosting the weak and safe opposition (Renamo).
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Mozambique media websites:

Noticias: www.jornalnoticias.co.mz

O Pais: www.opais.co.mz

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Carlos Serra Diario de um sociologo: <http://oficinadesociologia.blogspot.com>

Good daily newsletters:

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