



CENTRO DE INTEGRIDADE PÚBLICA  
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# 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS

## MOZAMBIQUE POLITICAL PROCESS BULLETIN

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## EU condemns elections saying results 'highly unlikely'

"EU observers detected numerous irregularities and malpractice both ahead of election day and during polling, counting and the tabulation of results. Irregularities included the unconcealed inflation of the voter register in Gaza and an under-registration of voters in other provinces, and the restriction of independent monitoring by opposition party agents and established independent national observer groups," declared the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) in its final report released today (12 Feb).

"EU observers also noted ballot-box stuffing, organised multiple voting, intentional invalidation of votes for the opposition, altering of polling station results with the fraudulent addition of extra votes, unlikely turnout figures, major results deviations between polling stations in the same polling centre, and many cases of poll workers, civil servants, electors, and observers found with ballot papers outside of polling stations."

"Irregularities were observed in all provinces, and were made possible through the inaction or complicity of local election authorities, the police, state officials, and overzealous ruling party sympathisers. Observed irregularities supported a trend in favour of improved electoral outcomes for Frelimo," the report says.

EU observers make clear they do not believe the results. "There was an astonishing reversal of results in opposition stronghold provinces of Sofala, Nampula and Zambézia and in opposition districts within the provinces of Manica, Tete and Niassa (such as Bárúè, Tsangano and Ngaúma, respectively). ... Such sudden, targeted, and significant shifts in voting preferences, strictly limited to opposition districts and contradicting the 2018 municipal election results, are highly unlikely

given the polarised political environment and deeply entrenched voting preferences."

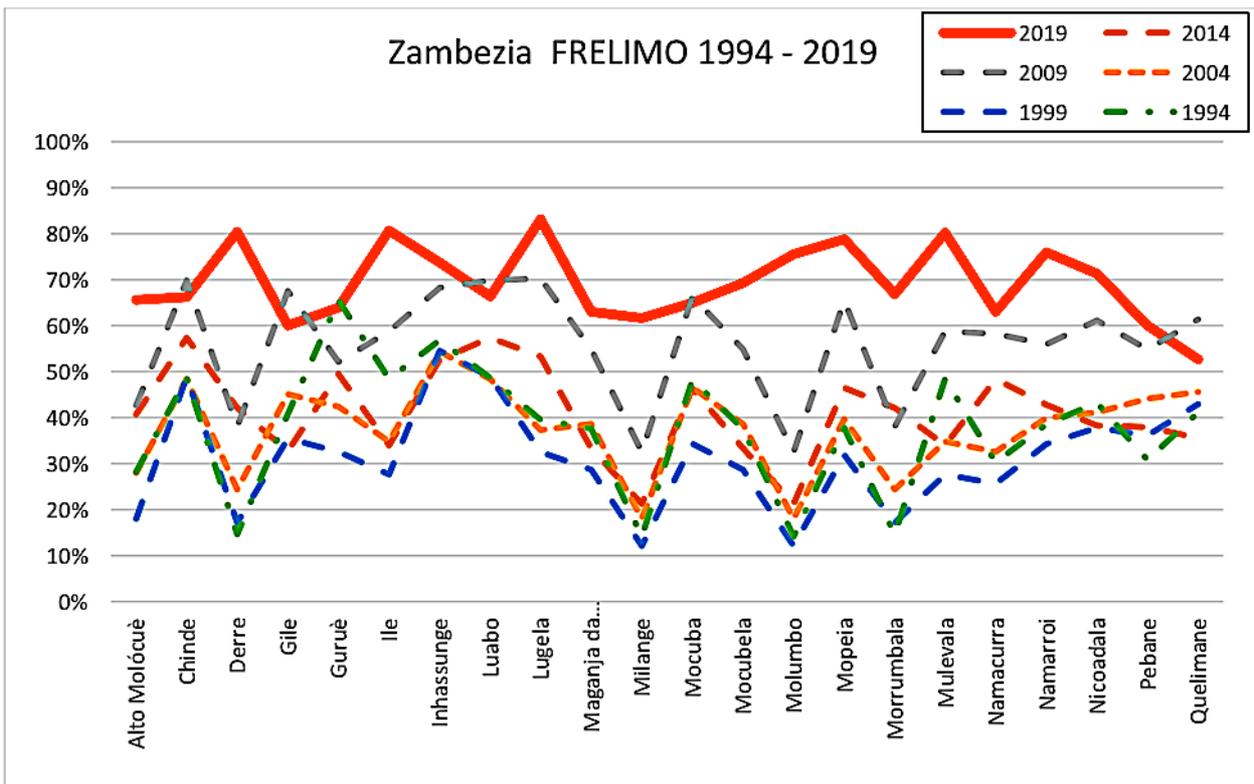
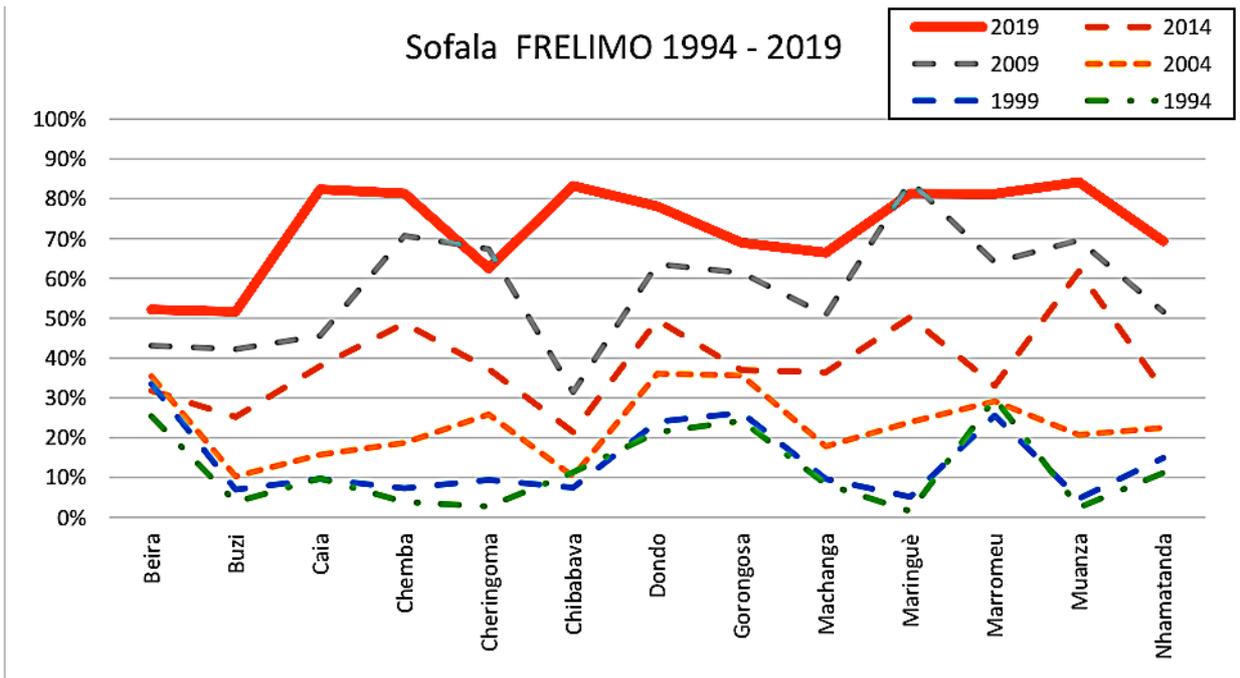
Phrases like "astonishing reversal" and "highly unlikely" are a diplomatic way of saying the published results cannot be true.

The full report in Portuguese is on [http://bit.ly/UE-Fin\\_Pt](http://bit.ly/UE-Fin_Pt) and in English on <http://bit.ly/EU-Fin-En>.

On the next page are EU EOM graphs comparing the district results for Frelimo in all six general elections, showing how districts like Chibabava, Sofala and Molumbo, Zambézia were below 35% for Frelimo in the five previous elections but above 75% in 2019. Notable is the way Frelimo votes in opposition districts have doubled or more to ensure Frelimo has between 60% and 80% in every district - flatter distribution with less variation.

In addition, the EU estimates that STAE (Secretariado Técnico da Administração Estatal) registered 453,170 voters who did not exist in Gaza and "the inflated voter register amounted to an unwarranted boost of 280,137 votes for Frelimo. EU observers in Chokwé reported a strange pattern on election day, in which the first two or three polling stations within a polling centre had long queues, but the remaining polling stations were empty."

District level analysis of 1999-2019 Frelimo results for Sofala and Zambézia showing less variation and flatter distribution



EU EOM final report

## CNE illegalities hit

EU observers were particularly critical of the National Elections Commission (CNE), which violated the law.

"The CNE missed important legal deadlines without offering any reasonable justification at the same time that it required other stakeholders to strictly follow legal provisions and deadlines." Government money for campaigns was distributed 24 days after the legal deadline and after the start of the campaign. The CNE has not published its assessment of campaign spending as required by law.

Candidates lists were only made public a week before the election.

The CNE violated the law when it put Frelimo first on all three ballot papers, giving it "the advantage of the ballot order effect - where a higher ballot position translates into increased electoral success."

The EU also criticized CNE's "lack of transparency". The CNE refused to publish results disaggregated by polling station, even though there is a STAE centralization in which polling station results are digitised in a system where data is entered by two different people and only saved if the two match.

"The CNE website was rarely updated and there were no new posts on its institutional Facebook page from one month prior to election day. ... The CNE made minimal use of the media centre." Observers called on the CNE to "implement a more effective public communications strategy, including the prompt and complete publication of all decisions ... and the continuous dissemination of information to all stakeholders."

At the CNE's 26 October assembly for the national tabulation of results, "there was no actual tabulation or verification of the results received from provincial levels, but rather a slideshow presentation of already aggregated election results. As such, the assembly was less of a tabulation more of a presentation by the CNE of a *fait accompli*."

## 'Unlevel playing field'

"An unlevel playing field was evident throughout the campaign," observers noted. "Limitations to freedoms of assembly and movement of opposition parties were often reported. ... The campaign of Renamo's presidential candidate was particularly affected."

"The EU EOM media monitoring unit noted an imbalance in [state media] news bulletins and programmes covering the campaign. ... Frelimo received the largest share of coverage, often in an

uncritical tone." TVM devoted half of its coverage to Frelimo, often opening with Frelimo and its presidential candidate. Privately owned stations STV, Miramar, and TV Sucesso were also imbalanced in favour of Frelimo.

"The EU EOM observed the use of state resources at one third of Frelimo campaign events. Compulsory financial contributions to the ruling party and/or compulsory participation of civil servants and teachers during work hours in Frelimo's campaign activities were reported in Nampula, Zambézia, Sofala, Tete, Cabo Delgado, Manica, Inhambane and Gaza."

Established national observer groups could not obtain credentials for thousands of observers. But tens of thousands of observers from unnamed observer groups obtained credentials. "The electoral authority subsequently shared that a large component of these observers were from Frelimo youth groups."

The assassination of Gaza civil society observation head Anastácio Matavel by members of the national police a week before voting "resulted in further limitation of national observation efforts [and] had the effect of exacerbating an already existing climate of fear and self-censorship prevalent in Mozambican society."

## Voting and counting

"EU observers were made aware of hundreds of cases countrywide of polling station presidents expelling opposition party agents and party-appointed poll workers, often with the assistance of police." In Tete more than 500 Renamo and MDM part agents and poll watchers were expelled by polling station presidents and police. The conduct of police showed a "clear bias in favour of the ruling party".

"There was several reports throughout the country of persons caught with pre-marked or blank ballot papers outside polling stations on election day."

"The mission was aware of specific cases involving up to 30 ballots per person in Maputo, Gaza, Sofala, Manica, Tete, Zambézia, Nampula, and Cabo Delgado."

One-third of observed polling stations did not follow the correct closing procedure. Counting was not transparent in one-third of polling stations. Results sheets were sometimes filled in long after the count finished.

EU observers noted "a significant number of inconsistencies" including the number of votes exceeding the number of ballots or number of voters.

The district count was "disorganised" with correct procedures followed only half the time.

The EU observers also point to extensive problems with the legal structures for carrying out the elections, and note that most past EU observer recommendations were not carried out.

**This Bulletin's final report on the elections is on <http://bit.ly/MozEIFinal>**

## Malawi court annuls elections

Malawi is very different than Mozambique. After widespread irregularities in the 21 May 2019 election there were three months of demonstrations and even riots with citizens protesting. And on 3 February the Constitutional Court annulled the elections, with harsh criticism of the Malawi Election Commission.

In Mozambique there was no public protest against equally massive irregularities in the 15 October 2019 elections. And Mozambique's Constitutional Council approved the election with no criticism of the National Elections Commission and rejected all protests without even looking at evidence of irregularities.

"In every election there will be irregularities but in the present matter, it has been our finding that the irregularities were so widespread, systematic and grave that the results of the elections have been compromised and cannot be trusted as a reflection of the votes", said Healy Potani, the head of the Malawi panel of five judges. (Financial Times, 3 Feb 2020)

The election had become known as the "Tipp-Ex election" because of the way correction fluid had been used to change results sheets.

The Constitutional Court also ruled that Malawi's parliament should consider replacing the current electoral commission. (BBC's Alan Harding called it "an important blow against a widespread culture of impunity." <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-51369191>)

Thirdly, the judges said the current system where the new president is simply the candidate with most votes is unconstitutional. In future, they said, the winner needed to gain more than 50% of the vote, which could mean a second-round run-off (as is already the case in Mozambique).

In the May 2019 election incumbent President Peter Mutharika was said by the Malawi Elections Commission to have won with 38,6% of the vote, and challenger Lazarus Chakwera took 35,4%



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**Detailed coverage 2019 national elections** is again being provided by the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, which has covered all of Mozambique's multi-party elections. We will have a large team of local journalists throughout the country, ensuring that our reports are accurate and verified.

The elections newsletter is also in Portuguese; para subscrever <http://eepurl.com/gnZXPz>

The newsletters covering the 2018 local elections are on <http://bit.ly/LocEI2018>

Newsletters from 2013 local elections and 2014 national elections are on <http://bit.ly/2H066Kg>

There are two archives of historic elections data, at IESE on <http://www.iese.ac.mz/eleicoes-resultados/> and at London School of Economics on <http://bit.ly/MozEIFData>

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