

MOZAMBIQUE 294

News reports & clippings

16 July 2015

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Election study collaboration: We have detailed election data from 1999 through 2014 and are inviting scholars to use this data collaboratively.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/internationalDevelopment/research/mozambiqueElections/home.asp>

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Defamation trial of Carlos Nuno Castel-Branco set for 3 August

The trial of Carlos Nuno Castel-Branco and Fernando Mbanze has been set for Monday 3 August, and will be a major test of freedom of speech and the press in Mozambique. Castel-Branco is co-founder of IESE (Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos; Social and Economic Studies Institute) and one of Mozambique's most important academics; Mbanze is editor of MediaFax, one of the oldest and most respected independent newsletters.

The charges relate to an open letter that Castel-Branco published on his Facebook page in November 2013 and which was widely reprinted. The open letter is a very strong attack on the then President, Armando Guebuza, and starts "Mr President, you are out of control." Castel-Branco's letter resonated with the educated urban youth, and was widely circulated on social media.

Castel-Branco is accused of defaming the president, which is a state security offense, and he is charged under article 22 of the State Security Law (Lei 19/91). Mbanze is charged with abusing the freedom of the press by publishing the letter.

Fernando Veloso, editor of *Canal de Moçambique*, was originally charged as well for reprinting the letter, but he is ill and out of the country, so has not been called for the trial. Lawyers for Castel-Branco have asked for a delay in the trial to 31 August, as he will not be in Mozambique on 3 August.

The Amnesty Law passed by parliament in August 2014 as part of the agreement with Renamo applies to all state security offences committed between March 2012 and August 2014, and thus should cover the Castel-Branco letter and its republication. But the two defendants are not raising that, because they want to use the trial as a public defence of freedom of the press and of expression.

(See newsletters 289, 257, 256, 255, 237)

The open letter, in Portuguese, is on

http://macua.blogs.com/moambique_para_todos/2013/11/carta-ao-presidente-de-moçambique.html

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NOTE OF EXPLANATION: This mailing list is used to distribute two publications, both edited by Joseph Hanlon. This is my own sporadic "News reports & clippings", which is entirely my own responsibility. This list is also used to distribute the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, published by CIP and AWEPA, but those organisations are not linked to "News reports & clippings"

Joseph Hanlon

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Also on the web: Previous newsletters and other Mozambique material are posted on bit.ly/mozamb

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Chickens and beer: A recipe for agricultural growth in Mozambique by Teresa Smart and Joseph Hanlon

E-book for Kindle and iPad, for \$9.32 from US Amazon -

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00NRZXXKE> - £5.14 from UK Amazon.

In pdf format, 6 Mb file, free on <http://bit.ly/chickens-beer>

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