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CC confirms gross fraud can now be ignored, reversing earlier policy

If only part of a gross fraud is appealed to the Constitutional Council (CC), then the fraud can be ignored, the CC ruled Monday (30 Oct). This reverses [a policy set in 2014](#) when the CC forced a re-run of the elections in Gurué because of "flagrant violations of the law on the part of polling station staff and the Zambezia Provincial Electoral Commission." In that case, the CC actually carried out its own investigation to confirm widespread fraud.

This year the CC was ruling on complaints about Marromeu and Alto Molocue, and changed its policy. We reported that in both the misconduct was so widespread, starting with the registration, that the results were not credible. But the CC said that the parties did not identify enough individual frauds to change the results, so they could be ignored.

For Alto Molocue we said "[The chaos from beginning to end](#) makes the election in Alto Molocue totally corrupt and unacceptable." There had been disruption and confusion in the registration and we estimated that Frelimo registered at least 1,549 people from outside the municipality, so they could vote in the election. At the end of the registration, observers could not inspect one-third of register books, and many voter never received the voters card.

On voting day there was significant ballot box stuffing and three polling stations had more people voting than there were registered voters.


Observers were barred from the count in 13 polling stations. In at least 16 polling stations the count was illegally delayed and the *editais* were not posted until well after midnight.


In Marromeu we [did a parallel count in 28 polling stations](#), and we found 11 of that group had ballot box stuffing. We could do this by comparing *editais* at the same school, and by comparing numbers written on the classroom blackboard during the count with the *edital*. For example, at Julius Nyerere school, two polling stations showed 88% and 83% turnout, and the *edital* had 124 and 232 more votes for Frelimo than were on the blackboard. Polling stations in the same school where the *edital* agreed with the blackboard had turnouts of 51% to 69%. The official high turnout is ghost voters added to the *edital*.

CC ruling means Renamo should win Quelimane

Renamo has proven ballot box stuffing in Quelimane, the Constitutional Council (CC) ruled on Tuesday (31 October). This means the CC will accept this evidence when it considers the final results of the 11 October election which have been submitted by the National Elections Commission (CNE). The CNE said Frelimo won, but replacing the results of just 12 polling stations (*mesas*) would turn a Frelimo win by 3509 votes into a Renamo victory by 1675.

In its petition to the court, Renamo cited 39 polling stations with ballot box stuffing. However 12 of those are particularly obvious. Renamo submitted the district election commission (CDE) table of the results in all 180 polling stations. And 15 of these have a curious blank space for the number of votes (shown by the blue arrow):


 REPÚBLICA DE MOZAMBIQUE
 STAE – SECRETARIADO TÉCNICO DE ADMINISTRAÇÃO ELEITORAL
 DIRECÇÃO DISTRIAL DE QUELIMANE



Mapa de Apuramento Distrital
Eleição dos Membros da Assembleia Autárquica

PROVÍNCIA: ZAMBÉZIA
 DISTRITO DE: QUELIMANE
 AUTARQUIA DE: CIDADE DE QUELIMANE

Assembleia de Voto	Código de Ass. de Voto	Eleitores Insritos	Nº de Votos na Urna	Votos Validos	M D M	R E N A M O	F R E L I M O	Á C R D A	C A D
EPC Quelimane	080001-01	800	701	672	9	228	435	0	0
	080001-02	550	408	393	10	181	202	0	0
	080003-01	800	634	622	9	220	393	0	0
	080003-04	800	543	539	9	256	273	1	0
	080003-03	800	644	618	9	243	365	1	0
	080003-02	800		337	25	98	210	2	1
	080003-05	449	329	307	10	97	200	0	0
	080002-01	800	608	598	15	260	323	0	0
	080002-02	800	563	553	12	210	330	1	0
	080002-03	800	504	499	8	145	295	1	0

That probably happened when officials in STAE (Election Technical Secretariat) were rushing to change the Frelimo and Renamo votes, and did not have enough time to add them up, so left the spaces blank. Of those 15, Renamo has its copies of the official results sheets (*editais*) which are signed and stamped for 12. *Editais* are posted on the polling station door and copies are given to party delegates and observers; if they are signed and stamped, they have legal standing.

The changes made to the results when STAE was making its table are so huge that just 12 polling stations are enough to make a difference. In those dozen polling stations, 1514 votes were taken from Renamo and 3669 votes were added to Frelimo. In three of those polling stations, STAE gives Frelimo more than 600 votes and a turnout of nearly 100%.

If the constitutional council accepts Renamo's signed and stamped 12 *editais*, which by law it should do, then Renamo would be declared victor.

For those 12, we have done a table of the differences between the polling station *edital* and the CDE chart.

Mesa	code	Polling station edital			District Elections Commission			Difference			
		MDM	Ren	Fre	MDM	Ren	Fre	votes	MDM	Ren	Fre
EPC 3 de Fev.	080005-01	14	258	133	20	45	478	138	6	-213	345
EPC Unidade Popular	080008-02+	7	111	129	17	111	234	115	10	0	105
EPC Torrone velho	080012-06+	5	133	83	2	109	201	91	-3	-24	118
EPC Aeroporto	080012-03	13	230	210	5	95	433	80	-8	-135	223
EPC Janeiro	080021-02	11	148	81	2	23	376	161	-9	-125	295
Camp Benfica	080028-05	12	304	178	21	122	451	100	9	-182	273
EPC Acordos de Lusa	080031-03	18	239	185	15	152	613	338	-3	-87	428
EPC Coloco	080034-02	21	278	161	8	96	599	243	-13	-182	438
EPC Coloco	080034-06+	0	163	98	22	101	237	99	22	-62	139
EPC Manhaua	080041-02	25	281	153	15	127	517	200	-10	-154	364
EPC Manhaua	080041-05	20	281	116	15	81	655	334	-5	-200	539
EPC Sampene	080048-01	20	217	210	24	67	612	256	4	-150	402
Total		166	2643	1737	166	1129	5406	2155	0	-1514	3669
					Change in difference between Renamo and Frelimo:						5183

Others in Renamo's 39 are equally gross. In two polling stations 300 votes were added, pushing turnout to near 100%. In an IFPELAC polling station 300 votes were just added to Frelimo while in a second polling station in EPC Unidade Popular 377 votes were added to Frelimo and Renamo lost 68, in order to keep the turnout just below 100%.

The STAE *mapa de apuramento distrital* - district totals by polling station - is treated as a secret document by STAE and the CNE, and thus has had to be leaked to us. The electoral law give observers access to all parts of the count. Law 14 of 2018 says that for municipal elections:


- "1. Election observation covers all stages of the electoral process, from its start to the validation and proclamation of the election results by the Constitutional Council.
2. Observation of the electoral process focuses primarily on observing the following:
 - a) the activities of the National Electoral Commission, the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration and its support bodies at central, provincial, district and city level throughout the electoral process".

But the CNE and STAE have always denied this. They say documents such as STAE's *mapa de apuramento distrital* are internal documents not covered by "all activities" of STAE as set out in the law.

And in the name of transparency, less and less information is public. Results are no longer released for each polling station, as they were until the 2014 election, and the internal tabulation process is not open.

Quelimane is unusual in another way. In all but three municipalities, the CNE simply accepted and published the district elections commission results sheets. But Quelimane was one of three where the CNE changed the results. This table shows the process.

Quelimane						
	Registered voters	Votes in ballot box	MDM	Renamo	Frelimo	Others
PVT 88%	115,711	70,674	2,410	34,268	28,257	300
		61.1%	4%	53%	43%	0%
CDE	130,691	81,952	2,561	35,087	38,595	300
		62.7%	3%	46%	50%	0%
CNE	130,691	83,511	2,782	36,393	38,592	300
		63.9%	4%	47%	49%	0%

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