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Why did the CC take Alto Molocue from Frelimo?

The Constitutional Council took Alto Molocue away from Frelimo and gave it to Renamo, in secret, and not on the basis of publicly available documents. All publicly available information suggests Frelimo won by a large margin. This is precisely the opposite of Maputo and Matola, where the *editais* are public and show Renamo won, but the CC gave the victory to Frelimo. The CC has given no reasons or explanations for these anomalous decisions.

In Alto Molocue the CC transferred 3,275 votes from Frelimo to Renamo. This is 25% of Frelimo's initial vote - the highest percentage transfer made by the CC. It is equivalent to a transfer of 63 votes in each polling station in Alto Molocue. Renamo's vote was increased from 31% to 48%, giving it a narrow margin of 107 votes (0.6%). There was a transfer of 5 municipal assembly seats, giving Renamo a 12 to 11 majority. The CC also tripled the number of votes for the MDM, giving it an extra 482 votes.

Yet Alto Molocue had a parallel count by the Mais Integridade civil society observation consortium. This was a double count, of both the results written on the classroom blackboard as the ballots were counted, and a parallel count of the results sheets (*editais*). Except in four polling stations, the blackboards and *editais* were identical and all but three gave Frelimo victory in the polling station.

	Regis-tered	Valid votes	MDM		Renamo		Frelimo			
Parallel count - 51 of 52 mesas										
blackboard	36,684	19,260	246	1%	6,421	33%	12,532	65%		
edital	36,684	19,260	252	1%	6,832	35%	12,112	63%	seats	
District edital	37,304	19,330	249	1%	6,078	31%	13,003	67%	Frelimo	Renamo
CNE	37,304	19,330	249	1%	6,078	31%	13,003	67%	7	16
CC		19,330	731	4%	9,353	48%	9,246	48%	12	11

On 15 November the CC demanded the *editais* from Alto Molocue, and these may have shown something different, but as the CC acts in secret these *editais* are not public.

Alto Molocue did not have a clean election. Observers notes that in many polling stations the count was delayed, or the declaration of the result was delayed or even not posted. And at least 15 polling stations showed evidence of ballot box stuffing.

Renamo made a formal protest about four polling stations, of which two showed clear evidence of ballot box stuffing for Frelimo, one had strangely low turnout, and one had a very high number of


invalid votes. The protest was upheld by the district court and by the CC, which confirmed the "irregularities" in those four polling stations. In its 30 October ruling, the CC also ruled that there should be new elections in those four polling stations.

But the CC overruled itself in its 23 November final decision when it simply handed the election of Renamo without new voting.

The CC has not always acted in secret. After the 2013 municipal elections the CC itself directly investigated Gurue and found *editais* had been altered not just in the municipality, but by the provincial elections commission. Full details were given [Acórdão 4/CC/2014 of 22 January 2014](#).

In this election the CC changed nine municipal results, all in secret and without explanation. But eight of those had some public justification - protests, documents, etc. Alto Molocue is extremely strange because it seems to be taking a municipality away from Frelimo that it clearly won. Many will say it was a sop to Renamo for not giving them Maputo and Matola which they really did win.

But the key question is how an election can be free and fair when the National Elections Commission and the Constitutional Council can move and discard tens of thousands of votes, in secret, with no explanation.

	FICHA TÉCNICA:	ENDEREÇOS:
	<p>Editor: Lázaro Mabunda</p> <p>Advisor: Joseph Hanlon</p> <p>Director: Edson Cortez</p> <p>Translator: Paul Fauvet</p> <p>Sub-editor: Samuel Monjane</p> <p>Layout: Liliana Mangove</p>	<p>Centro de Integridade Pública Bairro da Sommerschild, Rua Fernão Melo e Castro 124, Maputo</p> <p>English To subscribe: https://cipleicoes.org/eng/</p> <p>Web: https://cipleicoes.org/eng/ Portuguese Web: https://www.cipeleicoes.org/ Facebook: @cipeleições Instagram: @cip_eleições Tiktok: @cipmoz Telegram: +258 843890584</p>

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