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Frelimo replaces Assistant General Director of STAE

Finally Frelimo has found the man who will serve as a counter-weight to the unwanted Loló Correia, placed in the position by members of the opposition with the support of some discontented Frelimo members who defied their party. He is Lourenço Chiluvane, and he is currently a staff member at STAE-central.

The previous Frelimo assistant director general Agostinho Leviaque was forced to resign, and was said to have been penalised for being weak in defending the interests of the Frelimo Party.

Frelimo's first option to replace Leviaque was José Grachane, but this was blocked by the members of the CNE after systematic legal processes to oppose and challenge the swearing into office of the recently elected General Director of STAE, Loló Correia. Grachane forwarded two appeals, the first to the chair of the CNE, Dom Carlos Matsinhe, and the second to the Maputo City Administrative Tribunal. (See Bulletins 5, 6, 15 and 17)

Background

Renamo demanded a system that Frelimo controls

Three decades of Renamo-Frelimo negotiations and repeated last minute deals have created a party-based electoral system which Frelimo largely controls. Renamo always rejected the idea of a neutral electoral machine, demanding that it be partyised. But that gives control to the largest party in parliament, which is not Renamo but Frelimo.

In the past seven months, the agreed structure of the electoral machine has been shaped in an unusually public and very heavy-handed battle to maintain political control of STAE (Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration, Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral), which actually runs the elections. It started with the choice of a new Director General last year and ended with the naming of Lourenço Chiluvane last week.

National Elections Commission (CNE, Comissão Nacional de Eleições) members are partly nominated by parties in parliament, who then choose civil society representatives allied to their parties. The STAE director general is selected by the CNE in an open competition. But deputies at

national and lower levels and some technicians are selected by parties in parliament, ensuring party control.

In the DG competition last year, the selection panel of five members of the CNE considered seven candidates. Top of the list was Loló Correia, director of STAE in Tete since 2014, who is not a Frelimo insider. Bottom of the list was Helena Garrine, national STAE director for training and civil education, who had backing of key Frelimo people.

Correia was chosen, as some people with Frelimo links refused to follow party directions. Frelimo twice blocked the swearing in of Correia, but could not force through Garrine. Next it tried to push through José dos Santos Anjos Grachane, third on the list and a Frelimo member of the CNE 2000-2010. The courts were soon involved. Correia was sworn in 14 February, five weeks after his first scheduled swearing in.

To find someone strong to stand up to Correia, Frelimo in December forced its Deputy Secretary General Agostinho Leviaque to resign. He was regarded as weak in defending the interests of the party, particularly in the conflict over the new STAE DG. And Frelimo named Grachane to the post.

The CNE rebelled, saying that the documents filed in his legal actions claimed Grachane was better than the current CNE and Correia, which would make him impossible to work with. So the post remained empty, until Chiluvane, already a Frelimo nominated technician in STAE, was named as the Frelimo strong man who could control this situation. He will take up his post Monday (27 March).

Did the *CIP Elections Bulletin* open the purse strings?

The electoral administration bodies now have available a considerable part of the \$94mn (MT6bn) to put into operation their activities for this year's municipal elections. The news item published in the *CIP Elections Bulletin* alerted the Government which immediately ordered the release of the funds.

As we found from sources in the electoral administration bodies, the amount was released days after the *CIP Elections Bulletin* had denounced the fact that the government had given a cheque to the election management and administration bodies without money to cover it. That is, it put the sum into the system (as an accounting balance), but in real terms (available balance) the money did not yet exist in a form that could be used.

Since many of the items now have their budget available, STAE has begun to make payments for some services that were pending, including the \$39mn (MT2.5bn) for the Lexton/Artes Gráficas consortium which imported the materials for the voter registration. STAE had already paid \$23mn (MT1.5bn) to the consortium, and so the total paid comes to \$62mn (MT4bn).

10 day extension for party monitors of registration

Political parties, coalitions and citizen groups have 10 more days to submit requests for accreditation of their monitors for this year's municipal voter registration. The law sets the deadline as 30 days before the start of registration, 24 March, but other deadlines were missed due to government delays in disbursing money and approving key instruments such as territorial delimitations of the new municipalities.

The new deadline is 2 April, next Sunday, and was approved by the CNE after the meeting on 20 March with political parties in Maputo. Voter registration starts on 20 April and ends on 3 June. For 45 days potential voters will be registered in all districts with municipalities.


Not wishing to point a finger at the Government as being to blame for the delays, CNE explained that the extension of the deadline was "to allow for the correction of the requests for accreditation of inspectors already presented, based on the data contained in the documents distributed to the political parties at the meeting on 20 March."

The *CIP Elections Bulletin* (21 March) had already stated that CNE would continue to receive applications for accreditation from political parties even after the legal deadlines set by law had expired.

Accreditation of party monitors already started

The accreditation of the monitors of the political parties, coalitions of political parties and citizens groups started on 21 March. The process ends on 16 April, three days before the start of voter registration, as established by law.

Accreditation is done by local CNE support bodies - District or City Electoral Commissions. According to CNE sources, they are already accrediting monitors.

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