

Number 46-47 – 29 March 2022

Published by Centro de Integridade Pública, Maputo, Mozambique

Articles may be freely reprinted but please cite the source

To subscribe to the English edition <https://cipleicoes.org/eng/>

and the Portuguese version <https://www.cipleicoes.org/>

Frelimo majority approved Electoral Law change and Renamo demonstrates in parliament

Despite a demonstration by the Renamo parliamentary group, the Frelimo majority in parliament this morning (Wednesday 29 March) passed an amendment to the Electoral Law, which reduces from 18 to 15 months the deadline for fixing the date of the general elections in October next year.

Renamo demonstrated inside the parliament building against the alleged political orientation of the Frelimo leadership and its unilateral approval of the amendment to the Electoral Law. Renamo later walked out of parliament. According to the Renamo group, Frelimo appeared this morning with a bill which was accepted, but when Renamo presented a similar bill in February it was promptly rejected by Frelimo members of the parliamentary Standing Commission.

“We submitted a draft bill here which Frelimo rejected in this House [in February]; unfortunately it was thrown out [by Frelimo]. Today, we are facing a bill from one parliamentary group, which once again intends to violate democratic principles. So what are the criteria? The other parliamentary group brings the same bill and it must be debated”, said Viana Magalhães, head of the Renamo group.

Renamo says it is facing a risk of a return to dictatorship, and accuses Frelimo of considering itself equivalent to the law, the constitution and the parliamentary standing orders.

The Renamo bill was to set the structure for district elections next year, as required by earlier constitutional amendments agreed with the late Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama. The Frelimo amendment simply delays the setting of the date for general elections in October next year.

The three week delay is to gain more time until the Constitution allows Frelimo to amend it to eliminate district elections without needing any votes from the opposition. At present, Frelimo would need three quarters of the deputies which, without any votes from the opposition, would not be possible. But once five years have passed since the previous amendments to the Constitution came into effect (as from 12 June 2023), Frelimo can amend it without opposition votes, using a 2/3 majority rather than 3/4 of the deputies (see details in Bulletin 40).

The MDM says that trying to delay the elections is a serious violation of the constitution. Frelimo, through its spokesperson, Feliz Silva, states that the Renamo demonstration is an exercise in

democracy, and that Frelimo is calm. "Our desire was not to amend the Constitution on our own", said Silva.

Mocimboa da Praia still without a voter registration plan as CNE pushes the problem up to the Government

There is still no plan on how to carry out voter registration in Mocimboa da Praia, Cabo Delgado, partly because the CNE itself is divided. "The decision is up to the Government" said of the National Elections Commission President Dom Carlos Matsinhe, at a meeting Monday in Maputo with civil society organisations. In other words, it is a political issue whose decision is not up to the body he heads.

Within the CNE there is no consensus about holding elections in Mocimboa da Praia. Renamo argues that the municipality of Moçimboa da Praia should be excluded from these municipal elections because it has been depopulated and lacks the necessary security and infrastructure conditions, but one wing of the CNE argues the opposite: the conditions exist, but it is up to the Government to decide.

The town of Mocimboa da Praia was profoundly damaged by insurgents who set up their base there for more than a year. The buildings which used to house the headquarters of the District Elections Commission, and the schools where the brigades used to operate, were destroyed. Much of the population has been displaced to Mueda, Pemba and other districts.

The CNE is proposing that the voter registration be held in the municipal area, and not in the entire district. This suggestion is due to the lack of security and the depopulation of several villages in Mocimboa da Praia district.


New municipalities do not yet have boundaries nor projections of potential voters

Boundaries of the 12 new municipalities are still unknown and thus there is no estimate of the number of potential voters who can register. According to the General Director of STAE, Loló Correia, the electoral administration and management bodies only have information that the demarcation of the territories of the new municipalities is in the hands of provincial assemblies for their opinion, before being forwarded to the Council of Ministers for a decision.

According to Correia, the other municipalities already have projections. Voter registration will be in the entire district, but people living in or near the new municipalities will only know if they vote this year after they have registered.

FICHA TÉCNICA:

ENDEREÇOS:

 <p>CIP ELEIÇÕES 2023 - 2024</p>	<p>Editor: Lázaro Mabunda</p> <p>Advisor: Joseph Hanlon</p> <p>Director: Edson Cortez</p> <p>Translate: Paul Fauvet</p> <p>Sub-editor: Samuel Monjane</p> <p>Layout: Liliana Mangove</p> <p>Centro de Integridade Pública</p>	<p>English To subscribe: https://cipleicoes.org/eng/</p> <p>Web: https://cipleicoes.org/eng/ Portuguese Web: https://www.cipeleicoes.org/ Facebook: @cipeleicoes Instagram: @cip_eleicoes Tiktok: @cipmoz Telegram: +258 843890584</p>
---	--	---

Partners:

