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Number 39 - 15 August 2018

Published by CIP, Centro de Integridade Pública (Public Integrity Centre),
Rua Fernão Melo e Castro, nº 124, Maputo. eleicoes@cipmoz.org <http://cipmoz.org:9000/elections2018/>
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Tight calendar hits parties as only 18 of 28 present lists

Of 28 parties and groups that registered with the National Elections Commission (CNE), only 18 presented candidates lists for the 10 October municipal elections. Of these, many had problems with candidates' documents being incomplete or out of date. Candidates have five days, until Friday 17 August, to correct irregularities.

According to CNE spokesperson Paulo Cuinica, 12 parties, 3 coalitions and 3 citizens lists submitted candidates lists. (See table). Only the three main parties with seats in parliament - Frelimo, Renamo and MDM - will stand in all 53 municipalities. The others will stand in one or more.

Parties have known for months that they would have to submit authenticated copies of five documents for each candidate, but some were still sorting out candidates lists at the last minute. Because of the delay in approving the electoral law, the period in which parties could submit lists and documents was cut from 22 to 8 days, which clearly hampered the small parties and citizens' lists.

Lists must contain enough candidates for all seats in the municipal assembly plus three alternates. Thus parties standing in Maputo had to present lists of 67 candidates - 64 seats plus 3 alternates.

	Parties, citizens lists & coalitions
1	Solidariedade Cívica de Moçambique - SCM
2	Partido Frelimo
3	Associação dos Naturais, Residentes, Residentes e Amigos de Namaacha - ANRAN
4	Partido Renamo
5	Partido Liberal para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável – PLDS
6	Partido Movimento Alternativo de Moçambique - PANAMO
7	Partido Accção do Movimento Unido para a Salvação Integral – AMUSI
8	Movimento Nacional para Recuperação da Unidade Moçambicano – MONARUMO
9	Movimento Democrático de Moçambique – MDM
10	Partido os Verdes de Moçambique – PVM
11	Coligação União Eleitoral – UE
12	Associação Juvenil para o Desenvolvimento de Moçambique - AJUDEM
13	Coligação Aliança Democrática – CAD
14	Partido de Justiça Democrática de Moçambique – PJDM
15	Partido de Ampliação Social de Moçambique – PASOMO
16	Coligação Esperança do Povo – E-POVO
17	Partido Progresso do Povo Moçambicano – PPPM
18	Partido Humanitário de Moçambique – PAHUMO

Source: CNE

2018 Local Elections is part of the Votar Moçambique programme



Those registered with the CNE who did not present lists include PDM, MPD, PANAMO/CRD, SOL, PPD, UD, JPC, UMODJA, CEANA and AMAJPS. Juntos pela Cidade (JPC, Together for the city) was the biggest and best known citizens list and won seats in Maputo city assembly in 1998, 2003 and 2008, but failed to submit a list this year.

These are the next steps:

+ Today, Wednesday 15 August, the list of accepted candidates will be posted.

+ Thursday and Friday 16-17 August proponents can protest about candidates excluded.

+ Friday to Wednesday 19-22 August the CNE will post the final list of candidates.

+ Friday 24 August the CNE will draw lots to determine the order of parties on the ballot paper.

Frelimo and Renamo heads of lists, who are the candidates for mayors of the 53 municipalities, are posted here: <http://bit.ly/2nwfLRD>

Law changes mean parties must be more vigilant

Political party agents will have to be more vigilant in the polling stations and during the count and at city level because of changes to the municipal elections law. And members of the CNE will have to be more vigilant during the national count to ensure that they are following constitutional council rulings.

Three changes are important:

+ Invalid votes (nulos) will no longer be checked at higher level.

+ Protested votes will be considered at city level, not at national level.

+ And in its ruling in 2014 the CC made clear that the CNE could not use the "provisional count" ("apuramento provisório") and must base its decisions on the provincial and city counts.

Mozambique's electoral system is designed to give power to the parties to prevent fraud and misconduct, but the parties must be awake and alert to use that power. The three articles below set out the implications for parties.

1. Watch the nulos and tally marks during the count

A new and important attempt at fraud was noted during the 2014 election. As the count continues, ballot papers are put in piles on the floor, often where it is quite dark. In some places, polling station staff took ballots from opposition piles on the floor, and put them into the invalid votes ("nulos") pile. In 2014, all nulos were checked by the CNE at national level, and those obviously valid ballots were counted. But under the new law, the nulos are never checked.

Each party has three members in the count - one member of the polling station staff and a party agent (delegado) and alternate. They must work together to do two checks.

First, late at night when it is dark and people are tired, opposition party members must keep an eye on the nulos pile to make sure no one messes with it.

Second, the count has an automatic check. As ballots are counted, a tally is put onto the

whiteboard of the classroom or onto a sheet of paper. Vigilance is required first to ensure that after each ballot is called out, the tally mark is put in the right place, and second to ensure that the number of votes on the results sheet (edital) is the same as the number of tally marks. (see photo)



This is also important to avoid two other frauds. First, ink is sometimes put on opposition ballot papers to make them invalid - which means that there will be more invalid votes in the pile on the floor than there are tally marks. Second, ballot box stuffing means giving many more votes for one candidate than there are tally marks. Often such editais are signed by opposition party delegates, which means they did not check the tally marks.

2. Consider protests at city level

In the polling station party delegates are allowed to make a formal protest about a voter or about a decision during the count. Under the new law, these protests are considered at city election commission level. Thus it becomes important that

party appointees of the city election commission understand the law and are able to accurately judge the protest - and if the protest comes from their party and they consider it valid, to be able to defend the protest.

3. Using the right count in CNE

The National Elections Commission will be under huge pressure, agreeing the results on 53 municipalities in just a few days. Information is coordinated by the technical secretariat, STAE, and in the past it has taken shortcuts. Copies of editais are sent to STAE in Maputo, for a "provisional count" ("apuramento provisório"), which is computerised and used to give rapid information to press and parties, but is not official. In 2014 the CC ruled that the CNE must use the signed editais from provincial and city level, and that its use of provisional count for the official result was "reprehensible".

The CNE can make corrections, but these must be detailed and provincial election commission informed.

Thus it depends on CNE members, particularly from the opposition, to always ask: "Where did these numbers come from?" "Are they different than the signed provincial edital?"

Just as the accuracy of the count in the polling station depends on the vigilance of party agents, the integrity and transparency of the CNE depends on the vigilance of members to ensure that the provisional count is not used incorrectly, and that a proper record is kept of changes in the results, and that the list of changes is sent to the provincial elections commission and published.

Detailed coverage of 2018 municipal and 2019 national elections is again being provided by the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, which has covered all of Mozambique's multi-party elections. We will have a large team of local journalists throughout the country, ensuring that our reports are accurate and verified.

The elections newsletter is also in Portuguese; para subscriver <http://eepurl.com/cYjhdb>
Previous issues of this year's newsletter are available on <http://cipmoz.org:9000/elections2018/>
Newsletters from 2013 local elections and 2014 national elections are on <http://bit.ly/2H066Kg>
There are two archives of historic elections data, at IESE on <http://www.iese.ac.mz/eleicoes-resultados/> and at London School of Economics on <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>