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2018 LOCAL ELECTIONS MOZAMBIQUE POLITICAL PROCESS BULLETIN

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Main Maputo challengers both under threat

Three big names are contesting the post of mayor in Maputo, but the two challengers to Frelimo are both under threat. Under the new law, the election is for municipal assembly (AM) but the head of the list that receives the most votes becomes mayor. The Frelimo list is headed by Eneas Comiche who is highly respected for the integrity and action of his earlier 2004-9 term as mayor, Renamo has Venancio Mondlane who won 40% of the vote as MDM candidate for mayor in 2013, and Samora Machel Junior ("Samito"), still a Frelimo central committee member, heads the list of a new citizens list, AJUDEM.

Mondlane has been declared ineligible to stand, but is appealing. Four AJUDEM candidates are now trying to withdraw, which would mean the list does not have enough members and could not stand. Neither issue will be resolved in less than 10-20 days. But if both of the two most prominent opponents are out of the race, this could clear the path for Frelimo and Comiche.

CNE evicts Venâncio Mondlane from the Maputo electoral race

Venâncio Mondlane was thrown off as head of the Renamo list in Maputo by the National Elections Commission (Comissão Nacional de Eleições, CNE) after three long sessions of debate Saturday,

Sunday and Monday. Failing to reach consensus, it voted 9 to 7 to exclude him. In a politicised CNE, Frelimo voted to exclude, Renamo to include, and both MDM and civil society were divided. The president did not vote.

The Renamo list will be published with the number 2, Hermínio Morais, moved up to number 1, and thus the candidate for mayor.

Mondlane was MDM candidate for mayor of Maputo in 2013 and won 40% of the vote, then became an MDM member of parliament. But he fell out with the MDM leadership, and agreed to head the Renamo list. MDM took its retribution by challenging Mondlane's right to stand. The election law is clear that if a person resigns from the municipal assembly (AM), they cannot stand for the same assembly in the next election. Mondlane did not win for mayor, but was elected to the AM. In 2014 he was elected an MDM member of parliament and had to resign the AM seat because a person cannot hold both seats.

Renamo challenges the decision.

The press statement on the 3-day meeting is available here (in Portuguese):

<http://bit.ly/2N5LJPK>

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20 day wait & arcane legal issues

Renamo is appealing against the ruling. It argues that the new election law (7/2018) is a new law and cannot be applied retrospectively to a 2015 resignation. Renamo's opinion (in Portuguese) is available here: <http://bit.ly/2Bwbasf> But some lawyers add another point. Mondlane's withdrawal was not a "voluntary" resignation; once elected an MP at national level, parliamentary rules required him to resign from the lower level assembly, and therefore the AM electoral restriction should not apply. Both are arcane points that can only be settled by the CC.

Renamo's appeal could take 19 calendar days. The first appeal is back to the CNE within 3 days, and the CNE has 3 days to respond. Renamo then has 3 days to appeal to the Constitutional Council (Conselho Constitucional, CC). The CNE has 5 days to comment, followed by 5 days for the CC to reply, giving a maximum 19 days in all. If any of these periods ends on a weekend, submission is the next Monday. So one must assume 20-21 days, which takes us up to 11 September. Only then can final, definite lists be published.

The campaign starts on 25 September, 15 days before the 10 October election.

Samito dissidents have 10 days to formalise withdrawal

Four members of the AJUDEM citizens list created by Samora Machel Jr ("Samito") told the CNE Friday that they did not intend to stand and that AJUDEM falsified some of their documents. AJUDEM claims the four came under pressure from Frelimo, who threatened that they or their family could lose jobs. A list for Maputo city assembly must have at least 67 members (64 assembly seats plus 3 alternates). The AJUDEM list has 70, so if four withdraw, the whole list would fall because it has too few members.

The case was the other part of the long three-day CNE meeting, and it was finally agreed to treat their letters as withdrawals which did not meet the formal regulations. Under the law, the four now have 10 days to submit proper notarised withdrawal letters, which also must be stamped by AJUDEM to say they have seen them. It appears that AJUDEM could simply refuse to stamp the letters. Thus it will be unclear for 10 days if Samito and his list will be allowed to stand.

3rd calendar change

A third change in the calendar, forced by delays in approving the elections law and the long meeting itself, was approved by the CNE. The deadline for submission of appeals to the CC is now 28 August,

while 3 September will be the day of publication of final candidates lists as well as the draw for the order of parties on the ballot paper. The full calendar change is available on <http://bit.ly/2Buhcto>

Voting materials contract won by company of Frelimo members

At a 14 August meeting, the CNE gave the contract to produce voting materials to the consortium Académica-Uniprint for 215,958,371 MT (\$3.5 mn). Académica is the company of Shafee Sidat and Rafik Sidat, who are active and influential in Frelimo.

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 subscreever <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>