

Municipal Elections 5 - 5 October 2022

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and Joseph Hanlon j.hanlon@open.ac.uk. To subscribe : <https://bit.ly/Moz-sub>

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Registration will be postponed to April or June 2023

The postponement of voter registration is inevitable. The consortium which won the public tender to provide electoral material recently told the CNE it will only be possible to start registration on 20 April or 20 June 2023. The government had decided that it would start on 20 February, which is now impossible.

The government has so far neither made the money available nor signed the contract for the supply of census equipment and materials. Académica, the Mozambican company that won the contract, will only be able to import equipment and materials into Mozambique in time to start registrations on April 20 if air freight is used. But if the option is sea freight, which is cheaper, the equipment will take another eight weeks and voter registration will only start on 20 June.

The Dutch company subcontracted by Académica has experience of such operations in Africa, where it already works in Malawi and Ghana. According to a STAE source, the other important aspect is that this consortium does not depend on government disbursements to begin the process of producing the material. Also, the prices negotiated are attractive when compared to other competitors.

If the contract is signed and the money is at least in the STAE account by 10 October, the Dutch company will start work immediately. Production of the materials will last until 15 February, when they will be shipped to Mozambique.

If the equipment must be transported by sea, it will take 10 weeks to reach Maputo. If, at higher costs, air freight is used, the material will take only 2 weeks to reach its destination.

With the equipment and materials in Mozambique, the electoral management and administration bodies will need six weeks to train the operators and distribute them throughout the country. Which means the earliest start of registration is 20 April or 20 June next year.

The consortium's proposals come in handy. The CNE wanted the census to begin in March, because February is still the rainy season. To this end, it has already submitted a proposal to the Government. But even air freight means the registration will start two months late - and will government pay the extra? And four months late might mean a delay in the actual election.

Loló to be sworn in as STAE director-general Friday

The Frelimo party lost its month-long battle to impose its candidate as director general of STAE. In a confirmation of internal democracy and autonomy, the CNE accepted the choice of its selection panel, and Lolo Correia will be sworn in as Director General of STAE on Friday 7 October.

Correia is head of STAE (Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration) in Tete, and was the choice of a selection panel of members of the CNE (National Elections Commission). Frelimo tried to impose Helena Garrine, who came bottom of the panel's list, making several interventions trying to force a non-secret vote and force a re-run of the selection.

The final act of the soap opera came when the candidate ranked third, José dos Santos Anjos Grachane, said the lack of interviews of candidates violated Ministerial Diploma 61/2000 of 5 de July 2000, and the selection should be done again.

The protest was rejected by the CNE (National Electoral Commission) for "lack of legal grounds" and the swearing in of Loló Correia is scheduled for 7 October. The CNE accepted, without a vote, the opinion of its Legal Committee (CALD, Comissão de Assuntos Legais e Deontológicos), which found that Ministerial Diploma 61/2000 does not apply to this type of competition. The CNE is governed by different laws. The CNE is not part of the civil service and its rules do not specify interviews. Thus, the CNE's competitions obey the CNE Law, and "is not part of the common areas of the Apparatus of the State that fall within the scope of the said diploma", CALD said.

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FICHA TÉCNICA:	
	<p>Editor: Lázaro Mabunda Director: Edson Cortez Sub-editor: Samuel Monjane Layout: Liliana Mangove</p> <p>Centro de Integridade Pública Bairro da Sommerschild, Rua Fernão Melo e Castro nr.º 124, Maputo</p>
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