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'Polling station chairs must guarantee Frelimo's victory,' orders Frelimo Central Brigade in Gaza *- even if they are not being paid*

B“Now we have chairs of the polling stations. We need to prepare these people. But it must be a strong preparation to understand that the victory of Frelimo depends on them. They must guarantee Frelimo's victory”, ordered a member of the Frelimo provincial brigade (Four minute [video recorded during the meeting](#), Portuguese).

He was speaking at a meeting of directors and deputy directors of schools and to senior cadres of the Frelimo Party at a meeting held on 2 September, in Manjacaze, Gaza. Many polling station staff are teachers put there by Frelimo, and the speaker was clearly worried by teachers not receiving all their salary, and of registration party monitors not yet paid. Despite that, they must still work for Frelimo if they have been posted on a polling station.

“Maybe a teacher has not received overtime payments for three years. This teacher has to know that this is not be this time to demand accountability from the Party (Frelimo). We have to work. The problem will be solved and is being solved. The government has debts with teachers and with others. It's heavy. Those who work should receive their wages, but some situations dictated the appearance of this debt”, he explained.

This Frelimo member also revealed that the party still owes its party monitors for their work inspecting the voter registration held between 20 April and 3 June: “We have some debts with the monitors related with the registration work. These comrades should be united. When the conditions are ready, the matter will be solved, but not by stopping the work. Even this that they [the monitors and the teachers] are demanding, if Frelimo falls, we will get nothing”.

Polling station and registration staff, by law, must be neutral. But this has never applied in Gaza. In the same video, he advises the teachers to continue manipulating the elections, even if the State owes them payment for overtime and work on the registration.

In the April-June registration, [more than 83,000 ghost voters](#) - people who do not exist - were registered in Gaza.

Civic education agents found with Frelimo propaganda

In the densely populated neighbourhood of Namicopo, a stronghold of Renamo, in Nampula city, a group of five people were intercepted by Renamo members. They identified themselves as electoral [civic education agents, but they were undertaking Frelimo Party](#) political activities. In their rucksacks were found Frelimo Party t-shirts, flags, caps and leaflets, voter cards belonging to two women, and Frelimo Party lists containing the names of potential voters.

Three of the five agents who were campaigning door-to-door ran away when they were discovered, and the other two were neutralised.

One of the supposed electoral civic education agents had been a member of the voter registration brigades, and he had prevented one of the Renamo youths from registering. The Renamo member recognised him and remembered the incident. The former member of the voter registration brigade admitted that he had prevented the Renamo member from registering, but said they were not there now as brigade members but as civic education agents.

The Renamo member asked the former brigade member neutralised by the Renamo members in Namicopo: "do you remember that day when you stopped me from registering? He replied: brother, that's there and not here, let's leave it for another time".

As for the list of names, the electoral civic education agent said it belonged to his colleague who had run away, and had been hidden in his briefcase. He said his colleague had told him the list was intended to control the members of Frelimo.

Ghost voters and Frelimo priority noted by Mais Integridade observers

The only major observation of the April-June registration was done by the Mais Integriade (More Integrity) civil society consortium. Their [very detailed report \(English and Portuguese\)](#) was published Tuesday (12 September). This assessment is based on direct observation of the voter registration operations over 45 days in 27 municipalities, done by a team of 68 observers.

Many issues are raised, notably lack of transparency compared to previous registrations, illegal priority to Frelimo lists, ghost voters, and not learning lessons from the pilot registration.

The National Statistical Office, which good and trusted, did projections of the number of voting age adults. More than half of municipalities had more people registered than there are voting age adults. Six municipalities registered more than 150% of adults, which are surely ghost voters.

Gaza was the worst, with five municipalities with registration over 128% and the other two between 90% and 100%. All but one Zambézia municipality (Quelimane) was over 100%. (One exception, not included, is Ibo Island in Cabo Delgado where there are huge number of war refugees, which pushed up the registration levels.)

Municipalities with registration over 150% of voting age people		
Municipality	Province	
Malema	Nampula	196%
Maganja da Costa	Zambézia	171%
Bilene	Gaza	165%
Massingir	Gaza	163%
Mueda	CaboDelgado	157%
Homoine	Inhambane	154%

The observers also note that "in all the municipalities observed, except those located in Inhambane, Gaza and Maputo provinces, and in Maputo city, right at the start of the registration, there appeared at the registration posts the so-called 'priority lists' of citizens who should be granted priority in the registration. These lists consisted mostly of teachers, and were sent to the registration posts by school directors, branches of the Frelimo Party in the public administration, and neighbourhood secretaries and people chosen by the neighbourhood secretaries because they are linked with the Frelimo Party. None of these categories of citizens have priority in the eyes of the law."

"A consequence of the use of 'priority lists' is a guarantee that most members and supporters of the Frelimo Party manage to register and citizens whose political tendency is not formally pro-Frelimo are demobilised. A further consequence is the concentration of formally Frelimo voters in the same registration books, and consequently at the same polling stations, which will allow Frelimo, on voting day, to monitor the process and thus influence the rate of participation of its members and how they vote."

Other points included that lessons supposedly learned in the pilot registration, notably adjustments needed to take photos of older and albino people, and the need to regularly clean the printers, were not applied in the actual registration. Also "unlike the openness and transparency of 2018, in 2023 preliminary data were shared at irregular intervals, in an ad-hoc and restricted way," notes Mais Integridade.

Renamo head Ossufo Momade forecasts war if any mayoral candidate is assassinated

Following attempts on the mayoral candidates in Nampula and Quelimane, the President of Renamo, Ossufo Momade, warned that "Frelimo cannot think" that because Renamo has surrendered its guns, it can humiliate his party. The threat was made Monday (11 September) during his tour of Cabo Delgado and Niassa provinces.

In an interview with STV, Momade said Frelimo should not imagine that "it can trample on our heads". And he warned: "Humiliation could lead Renamo to seek other instruments to start an armed conflict". The Renamo leader forecast military clashes after the elections.

Momade said that at no moment have Renamo members disturbed rallies of Frelimo or of its President, but the activities of his party are frequently disturbed.

As an example, he said Frelimo had ordered that Renamo not be granted accommodation in the Niassa districts of Mandimba and Marrupa. “We wanted accommodation in Mandimba, and we received information that we would not have accommodation. I sent party members to negotiate accommodation with local businesses, and even with district governments” – but without success.


If any mayoral candidate is assassinated, Ossufo Momade threatened, “we shall bring Mozambique to a standstill. And we shall not forgive.”

Momade pointed to continual harassment, threats and murders of his members in the districts. He urged Frelimo not to use the police to intimidate Renamo members.

Recently the current mayor and Renamo mayoral candidate for the Nampula municipality, Paulo Vahanle, denounced an attempt to assassinate him, which was to have been carried out by a police agent, who was neutralised and presented publicly. This week, Manuel de Araujo, the Renamo mayoral candidate for Quelimane, also denounced an attempted assassination and presented publicly the supposed police agent, who would have been responsible for the act.

Frelimo blocks the presentation of the MDM mayoral candidate in Bilene

A group of Frelimo Party supporters Saturday (9 September) [sabotaged the presentation of the MDM mayoral candidate](#) for the Bilene municipality, Clara Cavele. The Frelimo members joined the march that the MDM members were holding to present their candidate. There was no violence because the MDM (who were in a minority) decided not to continue marching.

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