

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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Negotiation, attacks, book review

Renamo-government agreement on elections respite renewed fighting

More opposition members on the National Elections Commission and the politicisation of the electoral machinery were agreed in negotiations between Renamo and the government Monday and today. The opposition MDM has objected to not being part of the discussion. Meanwhile, there has been renewed fighting between Renamo and the government.

On Monday, negotiators agreed to restructure the CNE, which now has 13 members - 5 Frelimo, 2 Renamo, 1 MDM, 3 civil society (including the chair), and two legal figures, a judge and a public prosecutor. Negotiators agreed to remove the two legal figures and add 6 more party figures. Numbers have not been publicly stated but there would probably be 7 Frelimo, 5 Renamo, 2 MDM and 3 civil society. As two of the civil society members of the CNE are close to Frelimo, this would maintain the Frelimo majority.

Keeping the civil society members would maintain Sheik Abdul Carmio as chair (president) and allow the electoral process to continue, with registration starting Saturday 15 February and elections for president and national and provincial parliaments on 15 October.

Negotiators today agreed to politicise the electoral administration technical secretariat STAE (Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral). STAE will now include deputy director-generals and deputy directors of each department appointed by the parties.

Renamo hopes to present a bill to parliament this week that includes the agreed changes. Details of the changes to STAE still have to be worked out tomorrow. Parliament announced on 31 January that the next session would start Wednesday 19 February, two weeks early, clearly in anticipation of having to deal with the election law revision as the first item of business.

Nothing has been said about possible change to the composition of provincial, district and city elections commissions and STAEs. Election commissions below the CNE currently have 11 members: 3 Frelimo, 2 Renamo, 1 MDM (which gives the opposition parity with Frelimo) plus 5 civil society. It is likely the parties will agree to similar changes to elections commissions and STAE's at all levels.

Meanwhile, MDM president Daviz Simango yesterday objected to Frelimo and Renamo meeting in secret to change the electoral law, directly affecting MDM but without including MDM in the discussion. It is "an assault on democracy", he said. (Sources: O Pais, Noícias, AIM 11 and 12 Feb.)

COMMENT: MDM did unexpectedly well in municipal elections, and Frelimo will be anxious to have Renamo back in the elections in order to divide the opposition. Renamo also needs to stand in this election because most of its funding comes from parliament members' salaries, government grants based on parliamentary seats, and funding for this election.

Another aspect is that there are 141 districts and 23 cities, each with their own election commission and STAE, plus 11 provinces with election commissions and STAEs. Each of these will probably have several Renamo posts. This gives the Renamo president hundreds of posts with salaries to give to supporters. And after 20 years as the opposition party, Renamo will have people in most districts to fill those posts.

But this works against MDM, which is a newer party and which does not yet have members it can put into sinecures. MDM will need to find 1000 candidates and more than 10,000 polling station party agents. It also must organise its first genuinely national campaign. Therefore, to take several hundred competent people out of the campaign and put them into STAEs and election commissions will weaken the MDM. But Frelimo and Renamo will be happy to work together to weaken MDM.

After STAE and election commission members in Zambézia blatantly tried to steal the election in Gurué, it would be hard to argue against the Renamo demand to have more people inside watching. Unfortunately, in the past large election commissions and politicised STAEs have proved to be slow and cumbersome, but Renamo was never able to use its position to prevent fraud.

After the 2009 election the Constitutional Council demanded an entirely new election code, and civil society moved (with some support in Frelimo) to organise public hearings outside parliament to draft a new code, and which would have proposed a non-party CNE selected in open hearings, following the South African model. Inexplicably, the budget support donors rejected this, and the settlement of the early 2010 donor strike involved government agreeing to reject the Constitutional Council, ignore civil society, and go back to parliament not to draft a new code but simply to amend the existing contradictory electoral laws. Inevitably, the parties in parliament demanded places for their parties on the election commissions - although Frelimo did resist the politicisation of STAE. Embassies have short institutional memories, so it is important to remind the budget support donors that they created the environment for the present process by rejecting the only chance for non-partisan election commissions. *jh*

Negotiations and mediators

Last year neither side seemed particularly interested in negotiating or in a settlement. But MDM success in local elections and looming national elections spurred both sides. Renamo had been boycotting the talks, in part in reaction to government rigidity and formalism. But on 27 January Renamo returned to the talks; Frelimo agreed to accept five national mediators/observers and Renamo dropped demands for international mediation.

CanalMoz reports that the two sides met in secret every day last week, including Saturday, in the parliament building, with some of the mediators present. They then returned to the official sessions in the Joaquim Chissano conference centre on Monday, with some of the mediators/observers present, and today, with all five, who are:

- + Dinis Sengulane, Anglican bishop.
- + Lourenco do Rosario, Vice-Chancellor of the Polytechnic University.
- + Padre Filipe Couto, the former Rector of Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) and founder and former Rector of the Catholic University.
- + Sheik Saide Abibo, Muslim cleric. and
- + Anastacio Chembele, minister of the United Methodist Church.

CanalMoz also reports that the government rejected two Renamo proposals for mediators: Alicia

Mabota, president of the Human Rights League, and Prof Gilles Cistac of UEM.

Negotiations today took five hours and were only about the composition of STAE; they will continue discussing STAE tomorrow, Thursday.

Shelling and attacks near Gorongosa

Government today (Wednesday) confirmed that it has been using "heavy artillery" to shell Renamo positions near Gorongosa since last Wednesday, but it denied bombing from aircraft. (AIM, @Verdade 12 Feb) Cristóvão Chume, a national director in the Defence Ministry, said the shelling was really just a demonstration, to show Renamo that the army had power to mount a major military offensive. In effect he was admitting that heavy artillery is of little use against a guerrilla force, O Pais (11 Feb) notes that the Gorongosa "mountain" is in fact 17 different peaks surrounded by dense forest.

O Pais (11 Feb) and STV report that the government military have occupied three former Renamo bases including Santungira, the former headquarters of Renamo head Afonso Dhlakama. Those bases are supplied by road from Gorongosa town. Renamo has attacked those supply convoys and bases on an almost daily basis, most recently killing 1 soldier and injuring 2 others on Friday. The shelling is a response.

There was also a confrontation between Renamo and government forces near Muxungue last Friday.

Other news

Attorney General Augusto Paulino said last week that he would prosecute electoral crimes. The Public Prosecutor's office had been criticised for rarely following up even gross electoral offenses. (O Pais, 7 Feb)

An air safety investigator sent by the US State Department to report on the aircraft crash that killed President Samora Machel in 1986, told AIM (4 Feb) that the South African apartheid regime did possess a mobile navigational beacon which could have been used to lure the plane away from its correct flight path. Alan E Diehl, an award winning aviation safety expert, now wants the United Nations or a similar international body to investigate the death of Samora Machel and his fellow victims, telling AIM: "this may well have been a crime against humanity and requires full disclosure. I hope that the US State Department will release my report to the investigating authorities".

Book review

Stephen Emerson, *The Battle for Mozambique*, Pinetown, South Africa: 30 degrees South, and Solihull, England: Helion.

This is a detailed military history of the 1977-92 war, based on interviews with participants and access to some archives. Author Stephen Emerson has a background in US military intelligence and the book is particularly good on Renamo and on Zimbabwean military involvement, but less good on Mozambique where he did not have access to archives or to senior military people..

As a journalist who covered the war, I find it interesting that although the book corrects many details, it also shows that much of what we knew or suspected at the time proves to be true.

Emerson stresses that this was a cold war proxy war, and that Renamo was only created and survived because of the support of Rhodesia and apartheid South Africa. He provides new

information on the Rhodesian creation of Renamo. He details the extensive command, logistic, supply and training support by South Africa, which at one point was airlifting 180 tonnes of material a year to Renamo, as well as substantial quantities carried by boats. There were South African training teams in Mozambique, and Renamo was supplied with a radio system more sophisticated than that used by the Zimbabwean and Mozambican government.

By the late-1980s Afonso Dhlakama did command a large and surprisingly mobile military force, but it collapsed when South African support was withdrawn.

Although the book stops at 1992, it gives important pointers on current issues. Emerson notes that "Renamo insurgents have been blamed for much of the brutality unleashed against civilians during the war. And rightly so." Noting that successful guerrilla warfare is supposed to involve gaining the confidence of the peasants, he asks why there was such consistent and "extreme brutality". He concludes, as many of us did at the time, that Renamo's main goals were military - cutting lines of communication such as road and rail, damaging the economy, and "the destruction of symbols of government power and presence, such as schools, health clinics, police stations, and Frelimo party offices." Emerson notes that as Renamo was purely a military force with no ideology driving it, it concentrated on military goals set by its South African sponsors rather than trying to gain popular support. Nearly all of its soldiers were initially kidnapped rather than joining voluntarily. There is an interesting discussion of South Africa's misguided efforts to keep control of the political side of Renamo, which made it difficult for the Mozambicans to develop a national identity and become a party. Dhlakama was a good operational military commander, but with strategy largely coming from South Africa. He was not a politician and the Renamo was not about organising local support, so it was unable to evolve and never became a proper political party. *jh*

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[The new book](#)

Zimbabwe takes back its land

by Joseph Hanlon, Jeanette Manjengwa & Teresa Smart is now available from the publishers

https://www.rienner.com/title/Zimbabwe_Takes_Back_Its_Land

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Do bicycles equal development in Mozambique?

by Joseph Hanlon & Teresa Smart

is now available in **paperback**, for £17.99 (+ p&p)

from the publisher <http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/store/viewItem.asp?idProduct=13503>

and on Amazon.co.uk for £17.09

Just Give Money to the Poor:

The Development Revolution from the Global South

by Joseph Hanlon, Armando Barrientos, and David Hulme

Most of this book can now be **read on the web**

tinyurl.com/justgivemoney

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Also on the web: Previous newsletters and other Mozambique material are posted on

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This mailing list is used to distribute two publications, both edited by Joseph Hanlon. This is my own sporadic "News reports & clippings", which is entirely my own responsibility. This list is also used to distribute the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, published by CIP and AWEPA, but those organisations are not linked to "News reports & clippings"

Joseph Hanlon

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Mozambique media websites:

Noticias: www.jornalnoticias.co.mz

O Pais: www.opais.co.mz

Macauhub English: www.macauhub.com.mo/en/

Savana: www.savana.co.mz

Canal de Moçambique: www.canalmoz.co.mz

AIM Reports: www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news

Carlos Serra Diario de um sociologo: <http://oficinadesociologia.blogspot.com>

Good daily newsletters:

English: Mozambique Investor. Send e-mail to joaquim.fale@clubofmozambique.com

Portuguese: Mozambique Hoje. Send e-mail to moçambiquehoje@clubofmozambique.com

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