

111912E FRELIMO: NEW POLITICAL COMMISSION ELECTED

Pemba (Mozambique), 29 Sep (AIM) – The elections on Friday to the Political Commission of Mozambique’s ruling Frelimo Party, towards the end of the Party’s Tenth Congress in the northern city of Pemba, have produced a double upset, with both the current Prime Minister, Aires Ali, and his predecessor, Luisa Diogo, failing to keep their seats on the Commission.

The 17 member Political Commission is the executive body of the Central Committee. The 195 strong Central Committee only meets two or three times a year, but the Political Commission meets every week and is thus effectively the most powerful Frelimo body.

Three people sit on the Political Commission ex officio – the President of the Party (Armando Guebuza), the general secretary (Filipe Paunde) and the secretary of the Frelimo disciplinary body, the verification commission (Jose Pacheco).

The Central Committee elects the other 14 members on the principle, applied to elections throughout Frelimo, of “continuity and renewal” – which means that 60 per cent of the members are re-elected, but 40 per cent must be new blood.

For the “continuity” section, eight places were available on the Political Commission – four for men and four for women. The election was simplified, in that one member of the outgoing Commission, Teodoro Waty (chair of the parliamentary Constitutional and Legal Affairs Commission), lost his seat on the Central Committee on Thursday, and so was no longer eligible to sit on the Political Commission. A second member of the outgoing Commission, Manuel Tome (deputy head of the Frelimo parliamentary group), announced that he was not standing for re-election. That left 12 people standing for eight places.

Those victorious were: Veronica Macamo (President of the Mozambican parliament, the Assembly of the Republic), Margarida Talapa (head of the Frelimo parliamentary group) , Alcinda Abreu (Environment Minister) , Conceita Sortane (former Central Committee secretary for training and cadres), Alberto Chipande (former defence minister and the man who fired the first shots in Frelimo’s war for Mozambican independence), Raimundo Pachinuapa (a prominent guerrilla commander in the war), Eduardo Mulembue (former chairperson of parliament) , and Eneas Comiche (chair of the parliamentary plan and budget commission, and former mayor of Maputo).

Those who lost their seats, in addition to Ali and Diogo, were Paulina Mateus (a former head of the Mozambican Women’s Association, OMM), and Aiuba Cuereneia (Minister of Planning and Development).

Both Ali and Diogo had been mentioned in the media as possible Frelimo candidates for the 2014 presidential election. Losing their seats on the Political Commission may prove a blow to any such hopes.

However, as long as Ali remains Prime Minister, he will continue to attend Political Commission meetings, but without the right to vote.

The election of the “renewal” component of the Political Commission did not occur until Friday afternoon, and the results were announced to the Congress that evening, giving the number of votes each candidate achieved.

Of the six seats available, four were reserved for men and two for women. The results were as follows:

Men

1. Alberto Viegas (governor of Tete province) – 133 votes (71.89 per cent)
2. Sergio Pantie (outgoing Central Committee secretary for organisation and Frelimo election agent in the municipal by-elections held in December and April) – 112 votes (60.54 per cent)

3. Carvalho Muaria (governor of Sofala province) – 110 votes (59.55 per cent)
4. Cadmiel Muthemba (Minister of Public Works) – 97 votes (52.43 per cent)

Women

1. Esperanca Bias (Minister of Mineral Resources) – 133 votes (71.89 per cent)
2. Lucilia Nota Hama (governor of Maputo City) – 130 votes (70.27 per cent).

The unsuccessful candidates were:

1. Hermenegildo Infante (Frelimo first secretary in Maputo City) – 91 votes (49.18 per cent)
2. Edson Macuacua (Central Committee secretary for mobilization and propaganda) – 63 votes (34.05 per cent)
3. Damiao Jose (spokesperson for the Frelimo parliamentary group) – 41 votes (22.16 per cent)
4. Antonia Charre (a Frelimo parliamentary deputy) – 77 votes (41.62 per cent).

The full membership of the new Political Commission is thus:

1. Armando Guebuza
2. Filipe Paunde
3. Jose Pacheco
4. Veronica Macamo
5. Eduardo Mulembue
6. Margarida Talapa
7. Alberto Chipande
8. Alcinda Abreu
9. Raimundo Pachinuapa
10. Conceita Sortane
11. Eneas Comiche
12. Alberto Vaquina
13. Sergio Pantie
14. Carvalho Muaria
15. Cadmiel Muthemba
16. Esperanca Bias
17. Lucilia Nota Hama

The Central Committee also elected its new secretariat, in charge of the day-to-day running of the Party. Here there were just seven candidates for seven places. They were: Sergio Pantie, Damiao Jose, Edson Macuacua, Carmelita Namashalua (Minister of State Administration), Aida Libombo (former Deputy Minister of Health), Carlos Moreira Vasco (a member of the Standing Commission of the Assembly of the Republic) and Jose Tomo Psico (director of the Mozambique Tourism Institute, INATUR).

(AIM)

Pf/ (790)

109912E FRELIMO: PAUNDE RE-ELECTED GENERAL SECRETARY

Pemba (Mozambique), 28 Sep (AIM) – The new Central Committee of Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party has re-elected Filipe Paunde as the Party's General Secretary.

Paunde was unopposed and he was elected at the first meeting of the new Central Committee on Thursday night.

A second term of office as General Secretary became a certainty when Paunde won 1,438 votes (77.4 per cent of the delegates present) in Thursday's election of the Central Committee at the Frelimo Tenth Congress in the northern city of Pemba. Paunde proved to be the most popular candidate on his section (male members of the outgoing Central Committee seeking re-election) of the complex ballot paper.

The Central Committee also elected unopposed Agriculture Minister Jose Pacheco as Secretary of the Verification Commission, the Frelimo disciplinary body. This is a post that had been held for the previous 20 years by Eduardo Mulembue.

Eight other members of the existing Political Commission were confirmed in their posts – Mulembue (who was also chairperson of the Mozambican parliament, the Assembly of the Republic, from 1994 to 2009), Alberto Chipande (former defence minister), Eneas Comiche (former mayor of Maputo), Raimundo Pachinuapa (a prominent guerrilla commander during the war for independence), Margarida Talapa (head of the Frelimo parliamentary group), Veronica Macamo (current chairperson of the Assembly), Conceita Sortane (Frelimo secretary for cadres and training), and Alcinda Abreu (Environment Minister).

As in all Frelimo bodies, only 60 per cent of the Political Commission could be re-elected. The other 40 per cent must be new blood.

One member of the outgoing Political Commission, Teodoro Waty (head of the parliamentary Constitutional and Legal Affairs Commission), was not eligible for re-election, since he lost his seat on the Central Committee. Another, Manuel Tome (deputy head of the Frelimo parliamentary group) was not standing for re-election.

Those who failed in their bids for re-election to the Political Commission included former prime minister Luisa Diogo, the Minister of Planning and Development, Aiuba Cuereneia, and the former general secretary of the Mozambican Women's Organisation (OMM), Paulina Mateus.

The meeting was adjourned because of the lateness of the hour and the tiredness of Central Committee members. It was scheduled to resume, to complete the election of the Political Commission, at 10.30 on Friday morning.

(AIM)

Mm/pf (379)

107912E FRELIMO: NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE ELECTED

Pemba (Mozambique), 28 Sep (AIM) – The election of the new Central Committee of Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party, held on Thursday at the 10th Frelimo Congress in the northern city of Pemba, was a personal triumph for the party's general secretary, Filipe Paunde.

On the complex ballot paper, which had ten sections, Paunde topped the list of male central committee members seeking re-election. He won 1,438 votes (77.4 per cent) of the 1,858 delegates who took part in the election, thus beating all the veterans of the national liberation struggle, and all members of the government who were standing.

The candidate with the second most votes (77.29 per cent) was former defence minister Alberto Chipande, who is usually credited with firing the first shots in the independence war on 25 September 1964.

Veteran nationalist and founder member of Frelimo, Marcelino dos Santos was third in this section, with 72.6 per cent.

He was followed by former Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi, with 63.35 per cent, a remarkably good result for someone who has been working outside of Mozambique for much of the past decade.

The rest of the top ten candidates in this category were the former mayor of Maputo, Eneas Comiche (62.7 per cent), Prime Minister Aires Ali (61.03), the head of the Frelimo mobilization and propaganda department, Edson Macuaucua (60.76), Samora Machel Junior ("Samito"), son of the country's first president Samora Machel (60.71), Raimundo Pachinuapa, a prominent commander in the liberation war (59.85), and Agriculture Minister Jose Pacheco (58.86).

The women's section of Central Committee members seeking re-election was topped by the President of the Mozambican parliament, the Assembly of the Republic, Veronica Macamo, with

87.19 per cent, followed by the head of the Frelimo parliamentary group, Margarida Talapa (85.52).

In third position was Samora Machel's widow, Graca Machel (75.83), while the Minister of State Administration, Carmelita Namashalua, came fourth (70.99).

The others who made it into the top ten of the women's list were Marina Pachinuapa, a founder member of the Frelimo Women's Detachment during the war (66.09), Environment Minister Alcinda Abreu (65.98), Nyeleti Mondlane, daughter of the founder and first President of Frelimo, Eduardo Mondlane (65.88), former Prime Minister Luisa Diogo (63.99), Deolinda Guezimane, who also served in the women's detachment of the guerrilla army (59.1), and Conceita Sortane, of the outgoing Central Committee secretariat (58.02).

Members of the government dominated the section of the ballot paper reserved for new blood, candidates who were not part of the outgoing Central Committee. Foreign Minister Oldemiro Baloi topped the men's list in this section with 67.33 per cent, followed by Finance Minister Manuel Chang (59.04), Defence Minister Filipe Nyussi (54.47) and Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Mateus Kida (50.54).

The top women newcomers were the Minister in the Presidency for Parliamentary and Municipal Affairs, Adelaide Amurane (59.74) and the Minister for Women's Affairs and Social Welfare, Iolanda Cintura (52.58).

The section on the ballot paper for young candidates (under 35 years old), was easily topped by the official government spokesperson and Deputy Justice Minister, Alberto Nkutumula, on 77.93 per cent.

In a new section for "Economic and Social Areas", which did not exist in previous Central Committee elections, the men's list was topped by the chairperson of the cell phone company M-Cel (and previous holder of various government positions, such as Information Minister and Labour Minister), Teodato Hunguana, with 74.11 per cent.

He was followed by the chairperson of the port and rail company (CFM), Rosario Mualeia (72.71) and the chairperson of the Insitec group of companies, Celso Correia (59.2).

At the top of the women's part of this section was former deputy health minister Aida Libombo (80.25), followed by the Executive Secretary of the National AIDS Council, Joana Mangureira (35.79).

Perhaps the greatest surprise was the election of businesswoman Valentina Guebuza, daughter of President Armando Guebuza, in the section reserved for veterans of the liberation struggle, even though she was born after the end of the independence war. She won 72.2 per cent of the votes.

Interviewed by the independent television station STV, Guebuza said she had been proposed by other veterans, using a clause in the statutes of the Association of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle, which grants the children of veterans the status of veterans.

Perhaps the most prominent of those who lost their seats on the Central Committee was Jorge Rebelo, who was once the head of the Frelimo Ideology Department. His was the most critical voice at the Congress, calling for more open debate within Frelimo.

"We have heard that the media are being repressed because of the criticisms they raise", he said, "From the moment that we shut the valve and the media don't say what they think, suspicions are raised. People need a safety valve".

He also warned of the dangers to national unity arising from speeches of some leading figures which posed "genuine" against "non-genuine" Mozambicans, and noted that, in the days of Samora Machel, "minorities were not manufactured in this country".

“I don’t know whether I’m genuine or not”, he added. “Is it because of the colour of one’s skin?”

Another member of the Frelimo leadership under Samora Machel, former security minister Jacinto Veloso, also failed to be re-elected. Two other figures from Samora Machel’s politbureau, former Prime Minister Mario Machungo, and former Minister of State Administration, Oscar Monteiro, did not stand for re-election.

The most surprising casualty was Teodoro Waty, a member of the outgoing Frelimo Political Commission, and head of the parliamentary Constitutional and Legal Affairs Commission. Since he failed to be re-elected to the Central Committee, Waty cannot be a candidate for the new Political Commission.

Among other candidates whose bids for re-election failed were the former chief of staff of the armed forces, Antonio Hama Thai, former health minister Ivo Garrido, the chairperson of the brewing company CDM, Isidora Faztudo, and two of Frelimo’s main parliamentary orators, Alfredo Gamito and Edmundo Galiza-Matos Junior.

The election took less than two hours, and occurred in two phases – first the Congress delegates confirmed by acclamation the election of 116 members of the Central Committee at the 11 provincial conferences that preceded the Congress. Then they filled out their ballot papers for the remaining 62 seats at stake.

Counting the ballot papers, with their five sections, each divided into men’s and women’s lists, took until early evening. The electoral commission announced that, of the 1,858 delegates present, 1,809 had cast valid ballots. There were also 25 blank ballots, and 24 invalid ones.

At its first meeting, the new Central Committee must elect the Party’s general secretary, the secretary of the Verification Commission (the Frelimo disciplinary body), the Political Committee, and the Secretariat, responsible for the day-to-day running of the party.

(AIM)

Mm/pf (1123)

102912E FRELIMO: GUEBUZA RE-ELECTED PARTY PRESIDENT

Pemba (Mozambique), 27 Sep (AIM) – Delegates to the 10th Congress of Mozambique’s ruling Frelimo Party, under way in the northern city of Pemba, on Wednesday re-elected Armando Guebuza, unopposed, to a further term of office as President of the Party.

In the secret ballot elections, 1,858 votes were cast. Of these, Guebuza won 1,835 (98.76 per cent). There were also 23 blank ballots (1.24 per cent).

1,939 delegates are attending the Congress, and are entitled to vote. But not all of them were in the Congress hall on Wednesday.

Some of the press regarded the vote as a huge victory for Guebuza. The editorial director of the independent media group Soico, Jeremias Langa, went so far as to say that the scale of the victory would give Guebuza the power to shape the rest of the party leadership.

In reality, however, Guebuza’s vote is not significantly different from that won by his predecessor, Joaquim Chissano, at the eighth Frelimo Congress in 2002. Then Chissano, also unopposed, won 96.9 per cent of the votes, while the remaining 3.1 per cent were blank ballots.

Following Guebuza’s re-election, speculation was rife that this would lead to “two centres of power” in Frelimo after the 2014 general elections. Guebuza would be head of the party, while somebody else (not yet chosen) would be President of the Republic (assuming that, as seems more than likely, Frelimo wins the election).

In theory, the term of office of the President of Frelimo is from one Congress to the next (five or six years). So it is not out of the question that Guebuza could head Frelimo for three or four years after 2014, while somebody else is head of state.

The only time this scenario has arisen before was after Guebuza won the December 2004 presidential election, and Chissano was still head of the party. Chissano ended any possible conflict by resigning as leader of Frelimo in March 2005, thus allowing the party once again to unite the posts of President of the Republic and President of Frelimo in the same hands.

Immediately after his re-election, Guebuza thanked the delegates for the confidence they had shown in him. He pledged "I shall continue to work so that our glorious Frelimo Party becomes ever more glorious, and more victorious".

He pledged to work to bring into reality "the dreams of our people, which are more than just the sum of the dreams of each of us".

He warned that "the dream of well-being and of happiness can only be achieved with a great deal of hard work".

"We all want well-being and all of us should play our part in contributing to this well-being, and to strengthening increasingly our unity, and above all our self-esteem", Guebuza added. "We have to respect ourselves as individuals and as a nation".

On Thursday, the altogether more complex election of the new, 180 strong Central Committee takes place. This involves ratifying the election of 116 members at the provincial conferences that preceded the Congress, and then electing the remaining 64 members.

The ballot paper is complex, given the Frelimo rules that only 60 per cent of the existing Central Committee can retain their seats, and there must be 40 per cent new blood. In addition, there are quotas for women, for young people (under the age of 35) and for veterans of the war for independence.

Any party member can be a candidate – provided they have not already run and lost at provincial level. This was the fate, for example, of one of Frelimo's best known intellectuals, who failed to secure re-election to the Central Committee from his home province of Tete.

At its first meeting the new Central committee will elect the Political Commission (currently 17 strong), the General Secretary, the Secretary of the Verification Commission (the Frelimo disciplinary body), and the other members of the Secretariat, responsible for the day-to-day running of the Party.

(AIM)

Mm/pf (662)

103912E FRELIMO" "NO-ONE ELSE WILL SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS" - CHISSANO

Pemba (Mozambique), 27 Sep (AIM) – The Honorary President of Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party and former head of state, Joaquim Chissano, on Wednesday urged Mozambicans to unite and struggle to solve their own problems.

Speaking during the debates at the Tenth Frelimo Congress in the northern city of Pemba, Chissano said Mozambicans must, in the first instance, rely on themselves, since nobody will come from outside to solve their problems.

"We must solve our problems, and let's take as an example this Congress", he declared. The high level of organisation shown at the Congress, the building from scratch of the Congress complex, and the determination of Frelimo members showed how it was possible to fight for a better life.

Chissano also called for greater value to be given to Mozambican languages, because of their importance in the cultural mosaic of the country.

“We have to ensure that our languages are increasingly spoken everywhere, and that those who do not know how to speak any national language, should make efforts to learn one”, he said.

In the 37 years since independence, there has been a considerable expansion in the number of Mozambicans who consider Portuguese, rather than any African language, as their mother tongue. The 2007 census counted 16,342,890 people aged five and above, of whom 1,750,806 (10.7 per cent) said that Portuguese was their mother tongue.

The vast majority of these must be black Mozambicans, since the census only counted about 173,000 people over the age of five who were white, mixed race, Asian, or of “unknown” skin colour.

Chissano’s call follows the plea from one of the country’s most prominent linguists, Armindo Ngunga, on Tuesday for Frelimo to give greater priority to teaching children in their mother tongues, rather than in Portuguese,

Chissano also proposed that, in order to reduce the level of abstention in elections, Frelimo should be organised such that each Party branch secretary takes all other members of the branch with him or her when going to the polling station to vote.

This proposal might work for branches in residential areas, where the members are all probably registered at the same polling station. But it is quite impossible for Frelimo workplace branches, whose members might well be registered not only at different polling stations, but in different constituencies (in a Maputo workplace, some members will vote in Maputo city, others in the neighbouring city of Matola).

(AIM)

Mm/pf (409)

104912E FRELIMO: REPORT FROM CREDENTIALS COMMISSION

Pemba (Mozambique), 28 Sep (AIM) – The 10th Congress of Mozambique’s ruling Frelimo Party, in the northern city of Pemba, is dominated by people who work full time either in the state apparatus, or in the party itself, according to the report from the Congress Credentials Commission.

The report, read to the Congress by the Commission’s chairperson, Eduardo Mulembue, said that 1,955 delegates had been elected to the Congress, of whom 1,939 were present in Pemba. The other 16 had justified their absence.

1,294 of the delegates are men, and 640 are women. 830 of the delegates are aged 50 and above (43 per cent), while just 32 are under the age of 25 (1.7 per cent), 363 are aged between 25 and 35 (19 per cent), 395 between 35 and 45 (20 per cent), and 319 between 45 and 50 (16 per cent). The oldest delegate is the veteran nationalist and founder member of Frelimo, Marcelino dos Santos, who is 83 years old.

But the most revealing aspect of the credentials report is the breakdown of the delegates by profession. 602 of the delegates work in the state apparatus, and 322 work for Frelimo itself. Between them these categories account for 48 per cent of the delegates.

For purposes of this report, the state apparatus does not include most people working in the education and health services. Teachers and nurses are counted separately from civil servants – thus 108 delegates to the Congress are teachers and 26 are nurses.

Although the majority of Frelimo's members are peasant farmers, only 96 delegates are subsistence farmers, and a further 25 are from the National Union of Peasants. Just five are commercial farmers. Taken as a whole, agriculture accounts for 6.5 per cent of the delegates.

Only seven delegates are industrial workers. They are outnumbered by businessmen – 75 delegates came from the business sector, and a further 54 described themselves as “proprietors”.

289 delegates described themselves as “technicians”, while there were 16 artisans and 52 students.

The surprisingly large number of 332 delegates were classified as “other” – which may mean that they did not fill in the section on the registration form asking for their occupation. Mulembue complained in his speech that not all delegates had given all the information requested of them.

The social breakdown of the delegates is similar to that given by the Credential Commission at the last congress in 2006, when 746 of the 1,326 delegates present were full time functionaries of either the state or the party.

(AIM)

Pf/ (423)

105912E FRELIMO: DELEGATE WARNS OF VOTE BUYING

Pemba (Mozambique), 27 Sep (AIM) – One delegate to the Tenth Congress of Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party, in the northern city of Pemba, on Wednesday claimed that some party members are willing to sell their votes in inner-party elections for money.

The delegate, Joao Afonso, claimed that this had happened when selecting Frelimo candidates for local elections, and he asked President Armando Guebuza to intervene personally to end the buying and selling of votes within Frelimo.

Afonso gave no specific examples, but insisted that some people are chosen as candidates because they have purchased the votes of their comrades, and not because of any intrinsic merit of their own.

“The best cadres are those who are elected by the will of the party militants”, said Afonso.

“Help us, Comrade President”, he urged Guebuza. “You were the National Political Commissar (of the armed forces) and you have a great deal of capacity. If Frelimo has serious comrades, you are one of them. So please help us solve this problem”.

Afonso also urged Guebuza to include “the best cadres” in his government at all levels.

“The comrades who are appointed to leadership positions must be known to the party militants”, he insisted. “Because often there have been problems of cadres who only became party members after they had been appointed”.

(AIM)

Mm/pf (225)

AIM NEWS CAST, WEDNESDAY 26/9/2012

97912E FRELIMO: SECURITY GUARDS SEIZE NEWSPAPERS

Pemba (Mozambique), 26 Sep (AIM) – Security guards at the 10th Congress of Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party, on Tuesday afternoon confiscated from all participants copies of the daily paper “O Pais”, an attitude justified by Congress spokesperson Edson Macuacua on the grounds that no authorisation had been granted to distribute the paper within the Congress premises.

The owners of “O Pais”, the independent media group Soico, had decided to distribute free of charge to Congress participants copies of Monday’s issue of the paper (Tuesday’s issue had not yet reached Pemba).

The cover story in this issue concerned an interview given by Eduardo Mulembue, former chairperson of the Mozambican parliament, the Assembly of the Republic, who said that he is willing to be Frelimo’s candidate in the 2014 presidential elections, if the Party were to choose him.

The paper was distributed to anyone interested when they left the Congress hall for lunch. But when the delegates and guests returned to the hall, security guards confiscated the paper from them.

Contacted by reporters, the Soico editorial director, Jeremias Langa, accused Macuacua, who is also Frelimo Central Committee Secretary for Mobilisation and Propaganda, of having given the order to confiscate the paper.

Speaking at a press conference shortly after the end of the afternoon congress session, Macuacua justified seizing the papers, on the grounds that Soico had violated the rules laid down to guarantee order at the Congress.

“People can’t just enter the Congress hall and distribute their documents without prior authorisation”, he said. “That’s an elementary rule for any paper”.

Any gifts being offered to the participants, he added, should be channelled to the relevant bodies which would ensure that they were distributed. Macuacua said that any offer had to pass through security controls.

“These papers didn’t pass through this mechanism”, he said. “We might be convinced that they are newspapers, but they might have been something else. And after passing through security, there’s a protocol for the distribution of all documents in accordance with the established rules”.

A journalist explained that in fact the security guards had opened the bags of everyone entering the hall, and had rifled through their possession. The only thing they took were the copies of “O Pais”.

Macuacua answered “if they’re in the bags, it’s even more dangerous, since you don’t know if they’re newspapers or not”.

99912E FRELIMO: CALL TO NARROW GULF BETWEEN RICH AND POOR

Pemba (Mozambique), 26 Sep (AIM) – At the 10th Congress of Mozambique’s ruling Frelimo Party, under way in the northern city of Pemba, a former leader of the party’s youth wing, the OJM (Organization of Mozambican Youth), Zacarias Kupela, called on Tuesday for narrowing the gap between rich and poor.

Speaking in debates on the draft programme submitted to the Congress, he warned that, unless attempts are made to overcome great disparities in wealth, Frelimo will be sowing winds which in future will produce whirlwinds and cyclones.

Cupela warned that, if Frelimo is to attain its goals of consolidating national unity, preserving peace and stability, and avoiding constant strikes and other social upheavals, it will have to find ways of reducing systematically the gulf between rich and poor. That gulf, he said, has been growing “in a dramatic and frightening fashion”.

“If we don’t narrow this gap, we may be sowing the winds, and future generations will reap the whirlwinds and cyclones, that tear out the individual and collective history of the liberators of this country”, he said.

Kupela suggested that, in seeking solutions to this problem, Frelimo could borrow from the experience of other parts of the world, such as the Nordic countries.

One of Frelimo’s most prominent intellectuals, Sergio Vieira, called for energetic measures to improve the performance of Mozambican agriculture, and to maximize the returns from the exploitation of non-renewable natural resources.

Vieira, who was Minister of Agriculture in the early 1980s, said investments had to be made throughout the chain of agricultural production – including access to land, electricity, water and seeds (some of which the country is still importing), storage and conservation of crops, agro-processing, marketing and the continual training of those who work in agriculture..

Finance for agriculture was critical, and Vieira denounced the exorbitant interest rates charged by the banks when lending money to farmers. “We have no bank aimed at agriculture, and you can’t undertake this activity at interest rates of 29 per cent”, he said. “It’s under these poor conditions that we have to compete with South African produce which, when exported, is subsidised by the South African state. That’s why farmers in Chokwe (in the Limpopo Valley) and elsewhere in the country complain that their products don’t reach the markets”.

As for non-renewable resources, such as minerals, Vieira called for a new law that would force mining companies to process minerals inside the country, would fix monthly limits on how much could be exploited, and would set up a sovereign wealth fund”.

Frelimo founder member and former Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi said his dream today is the same as it was at the meeting on 25 June 1962 when three nationalist organisations merged to form Frelimo.

50 years later, “my dream is the same as in 1962 – to implement a programme so rich in all that we desire to create a different Mozambique, in terms of development, while guaranteeing the values and the statutes which say who should be a member of Frelimo”.

(AIM)

Mm/pf (508)

AIM NEWS, TUESDAY 25/9/2012

93912E FRELIMO: JORGE REBELO CALLS FOR MORE OPENNESS

Maputo, 25 Sep (AIM) – Former information minister Jorge Rebelo on Monday called on Mozambique’s ruling Frelimo Party to be more open to divergent opinions.

Speaking at the Tenth Congress of Frelimo, in the northern city of Pemba, Rebelo, cited in Tuesday’s issue of the Maputo daily “Noticias”, urged greater dialogue, both within Frelimo and within society at large, and warned against attempts to interfere with freedom of the press.

“We have heard that the media are being repressed because of the criticisms they raise”, he said, “From the moment that we shut the valve and the media don’t say what they think, suspicions are raised. People need a safety valve”.

Interviewed outside the Congress hall by the independent television station STV, Rebelo, who headed the Frelimo Ideology Department in the 1980s, declared that views which differ from the official opinions “are either banned or repressed when people wish to speak”.

“Without dialogue, we won’t go far”, he warned. “We have to allow people to speak without fear of reprisals”.

The greatest danger, he added, was that, without a spirit of open debate, Frelimo leaders would not know what Party members think and want, and so would be unable to take the necessary corrective measures.

“Nobody is perfect”, Rebelo told STV. “Even the leaders make mistakes. That’s why they need to know what the public is thinking”.

“In the past, it wasn’t like this”, he added. “I hope this Congress finds a path to greater openness, With openness, this party would be much stronger”.

Far from all Frelimo veterans agree with Rebelo. Former Prime Minister Mario Machungo and former Defence Minister Alberto Chipande both told STV they disagreed with Rebelo. As far as they were concerned, claims about lack of debate inside Frelimo were merely Rebelo’s personal views.

But Oscar Monteiro, who served in government in various positions in the 1980s, thought that Rebelo had a point. In any organisation, he told STV, there are always people who think that everything has already been solved, but in reality “Frelimo has grown through debate and through the permanent incorporation of new knowledge. This assumes that, at each moment, we go to people to find out through discussion what they have to give to enrich the collective thought”.

“All of us develop bit by bit, those who are in front and those who are behind”, said Monteiro. “That is what allowed Frelimo, which started with just a few intellectuals, to attain independence as a movement with a great capacity for thought”.

That required an environment of permanent discussion, sometimes confrontation, and permanent openness. “I would say this is the effort that must always be undertaken”, he stressed. “The intention of Jorge Rebelo synthesizes the way in which we grew, without bitterness, without the belief that only some people know anything. I think this openness, this humble willingness to listen to others, is what has made this organisation of ours”.

Monteiro recalled that when he was a government and party leader, he came under criticism “and I’m not going to say that I liked it, but it’s part of the process, and it’s part of leadership to know how to accept criticism”.

Also during the debate on the Central Committee report to the Congress, veteran nationalist Marcelino dos Santos stressed the importance of industrialization – Mozambique must not be regarded as nothing more than “a tourist destination”, he said.

Cited by “Noticias”, dos Santos urged the state to pay greater attention to housing for young people. He criticised the high costs of buying a house, pointing out that this is particularly damaging for young couples and for public servants. He found it disheartening that, to obtain a mortgage for a house in a new complex at Intaka, in the southern city of Matola, the would-be house owner would need to earn at least 40,000 meticaïs (about 1,390 US dollars) a month.

Unlike the first day of the Congress, the debates were not broadcast live. The cameras were only allowed to record the more formal moments of the Congress, such as speeches by delegates from the foreign parties invited. On Monday evening, prominent academic Lourenço do Rosario, Vice-Chancellor of the Polytechnic University, declared that with this attitude Frelimo “has shot itself in the foot”.

(AIM)

Pf/ (717)

Pemba (Mozambique), 25 Sep (AIM) – Tomas Salomao, a former finance minister, and currently the Executive Secretary of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), on Tuesday told the Tenth Congress of Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party, that a serious reflection is needed on Frelimo's electoral performance – particular the party's poor showing in the municipal by-election in the central city of Quelimane last December.

In that election, the opposition candidate for mayor, Manuel de Araujo of the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM) won with 63 per cent of the vote, while Frelimo could only secure 37 per cent.

Much worse was the fact that some Frelimo members themselves did not vote for their own candidate. "Why was the number of votes for our candidate lower than the number of party members who live in Quelimane?", asked Salomao.

There must have been Frelimo members who thought that their party could not lose, "or behaved negligently, or for whatever other reason stayed at home", he added.

The incoming Central Committee, he urged, must look at the matter seriously "to ensure that it doesn't happen again".

Linguist Armindo Ngunga criticized Frelimo for its silence on mother tongue education. As from 2003, an experimental scheme to teach children in their own Mozambican languages, rather than in Portuguese, began in 23 schools. It has now spread to 384 schools – still a small percentage of the primary schools in the country.

Ngunga called on Frelimo to make the mother tongue education project its own, in order to boost the quality of education. He regarded this as part of the struggle for self-esteem, a principle dear to the heart of the Frelimo leadership.

"We can only have self-esteem if we learn in our own languages", he declared, warning that some of the elected delegates might feel unable to address the Congress because they do not speak Portuguese.

Prominent economist Firmino Mucavele stressed that Frelimo should prioritise mechanisation of agriculture in order to promote development and should value local knowledge. He also wanted to see revenue from mineral resources used as a basis for advancing social programmes and food security.

Graca Machel, widow of the country's first president, Samora Machel, called for Frelimo to establish its own five year plans, just as every new Mozambican government works on the basis of a five year programme. This should be the basis for strengthening the party "in quality, and not just in numbers".

On Tuesday, the entire proceedings of the Congress were broadcast live on Mozambique Television (TVM) – unlike what had happened the previous day when the live broadcasts had been interrupted.

(AIM)

Pf/ (437)