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CNE SAYS PROVINCIAL COUNT  
HAS FINALLY STARTED

Tabulation of votes has finally begun in all 11 provinces and at national level in Maputo, Filipe Mandlate, spokesman for the National Elections Commission (CNE) said Wednesday afternoon. Most provinces started inputting results sheets (editais) into the computers five days late and there is no chance that they will complete their work by the end of today, as required by law.

Processing in two provinces, Gaza and Cabo Delgado, was held up by Renamo objections, but Mandlate said these had been resolved. In Gaza, Renamo demanded that press, observers and party delegates be invited to the start of data input and that all be given the list of polling stations and their registration book numbers (which has never been made publicly available).

The worry in Gaza is that the original register was substantially inflated, apparently by including many register books more than once. The register was cleaned in the weeks before the election and many duplications removed. But revisions were rushed and were only finished two days before the election and observers wanted to be sure that registers were no longer included twice; without a list there was no way to check this. If a register was in the data base twice, it is possible that editais could be entered twice, which in Frelimo-voting Gaza could potentially increase the vote for Armando Guebuza.

Contrary to the report in yesterday's Bulletin, processing was delayed in Niassa because of problems finding a suitable location for the computer, and data input only began late Wednesday afternoon.

#### SOFTWARE, TABULATION & TRANSPARENCY PROBLEMS CONTINUE

STAE left the writing of the tabulation software for the 12 computers until very late and it was completed only at the very last minute. Then the CNE unexpectedly commissioned an audit by Solucoes Ltda, which recommended significant changes, especially in the security to block access to the data base by senior STAE officials. It also discovered other shortcomings. Computer staff within STAE were unable to make the changes quickly enough, so they were done by Solucoes itself. The company worked through last weekend, after polls had already closed, to correct problems in the STAE-written software.

But the patching done by Solucoes was very rushed, so it seems likely that problems remain with the tabulation software. Each of the 11 provincial computers contains a data base with a list of all polling stations and their respective register books. This is the famous list which remains a "state secret" and has never been released by STAE or CNE. One reason is that the list was still being compiled for some provinces, including Tete, after the election was already over. The lists for Tete, Gaza and Maputo province, at least, contained many errors, and it seems likely that not all have been corrected.

Radio Mozambique reports that on Wednesday afternoon STAE (Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat) technicians in Manica found they had too many polling station results sheets (editais). There were 732 polling stations in Manica, so there should be 1,464 editais (each polling station produces two of them, one for the presidential and one of the parliamentary election), but in fact there were more. This is exactly the confusion that worried people when no list of polling stations was ever produced. It probably reflects an error in the data base, but it could just as easily be a fraudulent attempt to introduce editais from false polling stations.

The effect of these problems is that the CNE and STAE in Maputo will have to make a number of legitimate changes to the final results, simply to correct errors. As ex-President Jimmy Carter noted, no other country where the Carter Center monitors elections feels the need for such a correction procedure. The problem for domestic and foreign observers is that these and other corrections and changes are made completely in secret. In past elections, no list of the corrections and changes was ever published, leading to some distrust.

Domestic and foreign observers have been pressing for more transparency in the final correction process as well as in provincial tabulation, but so far this has been denied. The Commonwealth said yesterday that without this, the entire process will lack credibility.

Dr Vaughan Lewis, chair of the Commonwealth Observer Group, issued a pointed statement on this yesterday on his departure. He said: "We hope that the transparency and credibility that characterised the preparation, campaigning, voting and counting phases of the elections process that we observed will also characterise the rest of the process still taking place as we leave Mozambique. This is a pre-requisite for the credibility of the entire exercise." Lewis noted that although the observer team left yesterday, it has been replaced by a Commonwealth Expert Team to observe the concluding phases of the collation and tabulation of votes at the provincial and national levels. The European Union and Carter Center still have observers here. So the struggle between the CNE and observers for more transparency continues, with the continued threat that international observers will not give the election their full approval.

## CONFLICTING RENAMO PROTESTS

The Renamo deputy president of the CNE, Raimundo Samunje, said yesterday that data input should stop in all provinces until the changes recommended by the software audit have been implemented, AIM reports. Samunje seemed unaware that his demand had already been met by Solucoes.

But Eduardo Namburete, head of the Renamo election office, told the BBC Africa service in an interview due to be broadcast this morning that the problem is not computers at all, but was fraud on the voting days. He called for the election to be annulled and for Joaquim Chissano to remain as president until a new CNE and STAE are established and new elections can be held. He said the election commission members are "all working for

Frelimo", which seems a bit hard on the Renamo nominated members of the CNE.

Namburete said Renamo delegates had been kept out of polling stations throughout the country and there had been widespread ballot box stuffing. Yet one observation made by all observer groups is that Renamo had delegates in nearly all polling stations. It is clearly true that Renamo delegates were kept out of some polling stations in Tete and there was ballot box stuffing in Changara and Tsangano in Tete, but this is too small to account for Renamo's massive loss of support.

#### STRANDED POLLING STATION

Staff at the polling station in Mucangadazi, Zumbo, Tete and their editais and other materials have still not been collected, STAE director Antonio Carrasco said yesterday. Continued heavy rain has made it impossible for a helicopter to land to pick them up, and STAE is now trying to send a boat. This is apparently the only polling station in the country from which electoral material has not been collected.

#### PROVINCIAL RESULTS AT 20.00 WEDNESDAY

Radio Mozambique on Wednesday night gave detailed results from the vote tabulation in three provinces. Only Manica has counted more than half of its polling stations. With results from 482 polling stations (58%) the race is very close:

##### Manica Presidential election

Armando Guebuza 62,603 (48%)  
Afonso Dhlakama 61,287 (47%)

##### Manica Parliamentary election

Frelimo 57,658 (47%)  
Renamo 55,755 (45%)

In Zambezia less than a quarter of the votes have been counted. With 524 presidential editais (21%) the partial result is

Armando Guebuza 48,360 (42%)

Afonso Dhlakama 60,647 (53%)

In the parliamentary elections, with 438 editias (18%) processed, the results were:

Frelimo 35,208 (42%)

Renamo 43,941 (48%)

According to AIM, the radio's account of Nampula only gave percentages.

With 414 presidential editais (16%) the partial result was

Armando Guebuza 47%

Afonso Dhlakama 48%

With 380 parliamentary editais (15%) processed, the partial result is a tie:

Frelimo 45.2%

Renamo 44.9%

In the parliamentary race in Nampula, 6% of ballots have been blank and 7% have been invalid (nulos). The invalid votes are sent to Maputo for reconsideration.

If after two days of tabulation Nampula and Zambezia have processed less than one-quarter of the votes, it seems likely that it will take until the weekend to get full provincial results.

Requalification of invalid votes continues in Maputo. So far nulos from Maputo city and province and Inhambane have been reclassified and work has started on Gaza.

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