



## THIS ELECTION WAS THE MOST FRAUDULENT SINCE 1999

This election was the most fraudulent since 1999, because, step-by-step Frelimo has been taking control of the entire electoral process. By law, elections commissions and STAE are dominated by Frelimo because it is the largest party in parliament, and Frelimo uses that power to ensure it remains the largest party. Opposition parties can nominate people to STAEs and elections commissions, but they are marginalised and not trained to be the eyes of the opposition. Power over STAEs led to the registration of one million ghost voters - more registered voters than there are voting age adults in various districts.

Frelimo control was extended last year and this year by taking control of polling stations. Four members of the polling station staff (MMVs) and their trainers should be selected by open competition, but instead they are now selected by Frelimo. Mainly they come from schools, where Frelimo has particularly strong power. After they were trained and selected, on the weekend before the election, they were given special Frelimo training on how to cheat - and to do so openly. Polling station heads were seen by observers with a pile of ballot papers in front of them and they gave extras to selected people to vote more than once.

During the tabulation, there were various frauds. One important one is to put an extra ink mark on an opposition ballot paper to make it invalid - nulo - or to simply put an opposition ballot paper in the pile of nulos. The law requires that the CNE check all invalid ballot papers and give back the real votes to the opposition. But this year, the CNE illegally did not requalify the nulos, probably costing the opposition thousands of votes. In writing up the results in the polling station, numbers are shifted - for example if Frelimo is not doing well, then the number of votes for Frelimo and Podemos were simply switched. A new trick last year and

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this year has been for the polling station head to fail to complete the results sheet until after midnight, sometimes only at sunrise. Observers and party delegates have fallen asleep by then, so the polling station president can write an entirely fictitious edital. In this year's election the law was violated by polling station heads refusing to post the results sheet on the polling station door, or by coming back later with a new edital which has more votes for Frelimo. These new editas replace the old one on the door and are given to the district elections commission for the count. Payments were being made to people who agreed to cheat.

The immense electoral fraud has discredited the entire electoral process and does not legitimise the announced winners. The entire electoral system must be changed to become transparent and neutral, and the newly elected parliament is not legitimate to do this on its own. This requires a central role for civil society. But this cannot be done quickly.

But we cannot allow a parliament in which Frelimo can change the constitution at will and in which the opposition has been allowed only a tiny voice.

Therefore we demand something which is already called for in the existing electoral law.

We demand a recount of the votes in all polling stations across the country, and we demand that this be done publicly, in the presence of observers and media. And we also demand the publication of the original editias of all mesas. The existing law permits the CNE to order this now. If the CNE refuses, then the CC has the power to issue such an order.

This will not correct all of the ballot box stuffing and other fraud. But it will show the extent of the fraud and reduce the overwhelming power of the ruling party. And it can be ordered by the CNE today. And if the CNE continues to refuse, the CC can order this.

Maputo, 25th October 2024