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Frelimo makes district elections unlikely in 2024

Frelimo has withdrawn the draft legislation proposed by Renamo which is indispensable for holding district elections next year. These are imposed by the Constitution, resulting from the peace agreement of 2019.

Renamo presented bills on the elections for discussion at the next sitting of the Assembly of the Republic, but the Standing Commission of the Assembly withdrew them from the agenda. The decision by the Standing Commission makes it more unlikely that the district elections will be held next year.

Renamo believes that removing this matter from the agenda is “in compliance with the instructions of (President) Nyusi” and it will only happen because “they are the majority” on the Standing Commission.

Last December, Nyusi promised that a multi-sector commission would be set up in January (but it has not yet been formed), which would undertake public consultations to assess the pertinence and viability of electing district administrators. The objective was “the consolidation of a more consensual democratic model”.

In May 2022, during the closing session of the 5th ordinary meeting of the Frelimo Central Committee, the Head of State warned of the need for the country to reflect on the viability of the district elections, on the grounds that Mozambique may not be prepared to hold this event ([See the news item here](#)). These statements by the President of Frelimo could signal the lack of will of the Party to extend the election of leaders to the district level.

District decentralisation, with elected administrators and assemblies, was agreed between Filipe Nyusi and the late leader of Renamo, Afonso Dhlakama. The district elections are part of the package of the Agreement on Peace and National Reconciliation signed in August 2019 between the Mozambican government and RENAMO. But it still requires legislation on the elections and on the decentralisation of administrative and financial authority. So, two bills were submitted by Renamo, namely the Bill on District Elections and the bill on the Institutional Framework for the Districts.

Pilot Registration: poor turnout due to rain in the south, but crowds in the north

The torrential rain and flooding that have hit Maputo city and province have prevented voters from making their way to the voter registration brigades. But in the north, crowds are continuing.

Our correspondents distributed across six of the nine districts that are hosting the pilot registration report contradictory scenarios. In the Maputo registration brigades, located in Magude, Matutuine and Moamba districts, turnout at the registration posts has slowed down since the rain began to fall heavily, as from last Wednesday.

But in Nampula province, in Mogovolas, for example, there are reports of long queues and, because of an intense heat wave, the voters put stones and other objects in the queues to mark their places, while they wait in the shade for their turn to register.


Pilot registration: slowness marks the last few days

In the last few days, our correspondents in Magude, Mogovolas and Murrupula report some slowness in registering voters. In the initial days, it took between 3 and 5 minutes to register a voter.

In Magude, in Maputo province, in the registration post set up at the Inhongane EPC, attendance lasted between 8 and 10 minutes per voter. Registration took the same average time in Murrupula, in Nampula.

In Mogovolas, in Nampula, on Friday, the typist took 15 minutes to complete the registration of one voter, which left the voters worn out.

The pilot registration is intended to train staff and test the equipment that will be used in the full voter registration scheduled to begin on 20 April. People are not receiving a genuine voter card and they will still have to register officially in 2024.

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