

Mozambique News Agency

AIM Reports

Report no.491, 16th September 2014



Foreign military observers arrive

The head of the team of international military observers which will monitor the cessation of hostilities in Mozambique arrived in Maputo on 14 September, according to Agriculture Minister Jose Pacheco, head of the government delegation in the dialogue between the government and the opposition party Renamo.

The head of the team is a brigadier from Botswana. Pacheco said that a group of officers from Zimbabwe have also arrived to join the mission. He expected that, over the next few days, the rest of the 23 military observers will arrive.

In addition to Botswana and Zimbabwe, the countries who will send observers are South Africa, Kenya, Cape Verde, Portugal, Italy, Britain and the United States. The team is to be known by the acronym EMOCHM (Military Observation Team on the Cessation of Hostilities).

Pacheco said “those who have already arrived can work with their military counterparts from the government and from Renamo. The conditions exist to start the work”.

So far there is little for the observers to monitor. This is because the agreement on the cessation of hostilities gives no timetable for the disarming and demobilization of the Renamo militia, and the integration of its members into the army, the police and civilian society.

The agreement merely states that teams of military experts from the government and Renamo will present a document to a plenary session of the dialogue, at an unspecified future date, “containing the questions relating to the integration of the residual forces of Renamo into the Mozambican Armed Forces (FADM) and the police”.

Once that integration is complete “all the military equipment will be delivered to the defence and security forces”, the memorandum says. “When the entire process is over no party should possess residual armed forces on the margins of the process of reintegration and the law”.

The 23 foreign observers are to work with 70 Mozambican officers, half from the government and half from Renamo. The overall command of EMOCHM will be in Maputo, and there will be EMOCHM sub-teams in the southern province of Inhambane, the northern province of Nampula and the central provinces of Sofala and Tete.

Constitutional Council sworn into office

President Armando Guebuza on 12 September swore into office six members of the Constitutional Council, the country’s highest body in matters of constitutional and electoral law.

Five of the judges were appointed by the Mozambican

parliament, the Assembly of the Republic, in August. Such appointments always reflect the make-up of the Assembly – thus the parliamentary group of the majority Frelimo Party chose four judges (Joao Guenha, Lucia Ribeiro, Domingos Cintura and Mateus Saize), and Renamo chose one (Manuel Franque).

Most of these judges were sitting members of the Council and were simply re-appointed. The only newcomer is Mateus Saize.

The sixth judge, Ozias Ponja, was appointed by the Higher Council of the Judicial Magistrature, the regulatory body for judges. Ponja is a former President of the Supreme Court. He replaces Jose Norberto Carrilho, who leaves the Constitutional Council to resume his seat on the Supreme Court.

The seventh member of the Council is its chairperson, Hermenegildo Gamito, whose term of office does not expire until 2016.

At the ceremony, President Guebuza urged the judges to pay full attention to speedy procedures – a reference to the longstanding complaint that the Mozambican judicial system works lethargically.

This year, in particular, the Council must work speedily in order to ensure that the results from the 15 October presidential, parliamentary and provincial elections are validated and proclaimed in reasonable time.

“We must all commit ourselves, with greater determination, to overcoming the obstacles which still persist, and which disturb our passage onto higher levels of well-being”, said the President.

He stressed that the administration of justice, of which the Council is a part, is a guarantee of the security and protection of citizens under the law. The leadership and response capacity of the organs of administration of justice were key to “raising the self-esteem of citizens and the constant value of human dignity”, he added.

This is a condensed version of the AIM daily news service – for details contact pfauvet@live.com

Simango promises to upgrade access roads

Daviz Simango, mayor of Beira and presidential candidate for the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM) has promised that, if elected, he will prioritise the construction of access road to facilitate rural trade.

Speaking in Tsangano district, in Tete, on 15 September, Simango said he had witnessed women waiting with their crops at the roadside, and all too often failing to sell them.

Tsangano produces potatoes in abundance – but Simango lamented that often the potatoes rotted, because buyers would not come along the existing roads to purchase them, and the farmers could not find transport to take them to market.

Simango said an MDM government would prioritise the construction of roads that would allow farmers to move their produce to market. It would also create companies specialising in the purchasing of agricultural produce, so that farmers could dedicate themselves exclusively to production without having to worry about selling their goods.

Simango attacked the call for “continuity” which has been one of the slogans of the ruling Frelimo Party. He mocked “continuity” and claimed it suggested that “Mozambicans don’t want change and prefer to go on living with young people unemployed, teachers giving classes without basic conditions, and hospitals without trained staff or medicines”.

Tsangano is on the border with Malawi, and Simango told the crowd “when you fall ill, you are obliged to go to Malawi for treatment, and there they humiliate you, by asking ‘Don’t you have a government in your country?’”

Simango also promised that, under the MDM, “regulos” (chiefs) would be given a proper wage. Speaking in the neighbouring district of Angonia, in Malitene locality, he said that some regulos had been used to destroy MDM flags.

“They destroy our flags, but they forget that their bosses receive wages every month, while the regulos just receive an allowance of 400 meticaís (about 13 US dollars) every three months”, Simango said. But in those municipalities governed by the MDM, the regulos were receiving a salary of 5,000 meticaís a month, plus houses, transport and a fuel allowance.

President Guebuza campaigns for Nyusi in Inhambane

President Armando Guebuza, in his capacity as president of the ruling Frelimo Party, returned to the campaign trail on 15 September, this time in the southern province of Inhambane, urging voters to ensure that the Frelimo candidate, former defence minister Filipe Nyusi, succeeds him as head of state.

Speaking at a rally held in Cumbana, in Jangamo district, President Guebuza declared that the heart of voting for Frelimo and for Nyusi “lies in the drum and the corn cob” – this is the Frelimo symbol and so any Frelimo supporter who is illiterate just has to look for this symbol on the ballot paper.

“This is the symbol you must always bear in mind”, said President Guebuza. “It symbolises happiness and development”.

President Guebuza stressed that the key building a successful Mozambique lay in national unity, and it was this that had allowed Frelimo to triumph in the war for independence.

“When we understood that we should not discriminate against anyone because of their colour, race, religion or anything else, it took us just 12 years to defeat the colonialism that had been installed in the country for 500 years”, he said.

At the rally prayers were read out by representatives of various churches. President Guebuza said he regarded the prayers as “a blessing to help us see clearly the path ahead of us. They give us the conviction that the future of peace and unity is a reality in our country”.

Earlier in the day, President Guebuza spoke in the coastal district of Inhassoro, and told his audience that older residents of the district would remember the days when Inhassoro lacked the most basic conditions for development. “We didn’t have any banks, hospitals or electricity here”, he said, “but today this is all a reality in Inhassoro thanks to the serious and responsible work of the Frelimo government”.

To ensure continued growth, he urged, “on 15 October, whether the sun is shining, or whether it’s raining, whether there’s a wind or even a storm, and despite any small headache or stomach pain, you must all go and vote for development, peace and ever greater unity among Mozambicans”.

Nyusi promises to end border abuses

Filipe Nyusi has promised to end abuses that occur on the border between Ngauma district, in the northern province of Niassa, and Malawi.

Speaking on 12 September in Massangulo, the Ngauma district capital, Nyusi pledged to do away with illicit charges imposed by border officials, and to create facilities so that Ngauma residents could cross the border more easily and bring back goods from Malawi for sale in Niassa.

Nyusi insisted that he is committed to rebuilding the 268 kilometre railway between the city of Cuamba and the provincial capital, Lichinga. This line is a spur off the northern corridor running from the port of Nacala to the Malawian border. Rehabilitation of the northern corridor in the late 1980s did not cover the branch line to Lichinga, and there has been no regular train service along this railway for about three decades.

The line used to be the means by which most goods reached Lichinga, the Niassa provincial capital. When the railway ceased operation Lichinga had to be supplied by road, a much more expensive undertaking which drove up the price of goods in the city.

Nyusi stated that the project to rebuild the line now has guaranteed funding. He also promised that, if he becomes President, he will ensure that the road from Cuamba to Lichinga is tarred. These were projects begun by the current president, Armando Guebuza, he said, and he has pledged to complete them since they are fundamental for the circulation of people and goods and for the development of Niassa.

“Making this happen depends only on your decisions”, he told the Ngauma rally. “It depends on who you vote for on 15 October. But I’m sure Ngauma has no doubt that it should vote for Frelimo and its candidate”.

The Frelimo programme, he continued, envisages the construction of more schools and hospitals and the expansion of electricity grid and the water supply network into Ngauma district, and all the administrative posts and localities of the interior.

Nyusi promised that any government he headed would support family agriculture, by providing technical assistance to peasant farmers and supplying improved seeds. He added he would also bank on the mechanization of agriculture, to make the most of the fertile lands of Ngauma.

“With mechanised agriculture, we shall ensure increased production and productivity, and we shall also create more jobs, particularly for young people”, he stressed. But all of that would depend on electing Frelimo on 15 October.

Dhlakama visits Chimoio

Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama on 12 September surprised the population of Chimoio, capital of the central province of Manica, when he arrived unannounced at the local airport.

Dhlakama was expected in Chimoio on 16 September to launch his campaign for the 15 October presidential election. However, he decided to call in first at his home area of Mangunde, in Sofala province, where his father is “regulo” (chief) – and the easiest way of reaching Mangunde is via Chimoio.

Dhlakama was accompanied by armed bodyguards, part of the Renamo militia that must be disarmed and demobilised under the agreement signed by Dhlakama and President Armando Guebuza on 5 September. A police unit was rapidly mobilised to escort Dhlakama.

He did not wage campaign activities in Chimoio, but stopped briefly at the Renamo Manica provincial headquarters. He then left for Mangunde, where he intended to venerate the spirits of his ancestors.

Dhlakama’s long term plans include returning to Maputo. He left his house in Maputo in 2009, and went to live in the northern city of Nampula. In October 2012, he moved to the central district of Gorongosa, and lived in Renamo military bases there until 4 September this year.

Commentators have pointed out that Dhlakama is taking a laid-back approach to the campaign, which started on 31 August. His two opponents, Frelimo’s Filipe Nyusi and MDM’s Daviz Simango, started to campaign on 31 August and have spent all of their time on the campaign trail.

Dhlakama claimed that the campaign would be easy. “I don’t despise the other parties, but everybody knows that the opposition parties are the product of my struggle”, he said. “Now the MDM has eight deputies in parliament, and I would be pleased if the party could grow and increase from eight to 12 deputies”.

“I don’t want to point to the MDM as an adversary to clash with Dhlakama”, he added. He clearly regarded his real opponent as Nyusi.

“Frelimo is a historic party”, he said, “but if Nyusi continues saying he’s going to give continuity, then he’s lost. Continuity? What continuity is he talking about? Does he want to continue with corruption, unemployment, poor distribution of wealth, misgovernment, social exclusion? I want him to continue talking like that so that I can win”.

“I don’t think it will be a complicated campaign”, he added, “I’m not saying I’m going to win the election. During the campaign, I won’t waste much time talking about the other parties. I will just speak about what I will do to win”.

CNE and EU sign memorandum on observers

Mozambique’s National Elections Commission (CNE) and the European Union on 5 September signed a memorandum in Maputo establishing legal mechanisms for a mission of EU observers to come and witness the presidential, parliamentary and provincial elections scheduled for 15 October.

It was signed by CNE chairperson Abdul Carimo and by the EU charge d’affaires in Maputo, Joao de Carvalho.

Addressing the ceremony, Carimo said that the country has made great strides in the electoral area, particularly in election legislation. He hoped that 50 strong EU observation mission would help consolidate further gains.

“The country has advanced a great deal, but there are still various challenges to be faced”, said Carimo. “We hope that the contribution of the EU will help us meet those challenges”.

Carimo added that other international bodies, such as the African Union, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Carter Centre have expressed an interest in observing the elections, and the number of observers (Mozambican and foreign) could reach 5,000.

Joao de Carvalho said although a team of five EU observers will come from Europe, much of work will be done by staff of the embassies of EU countries in Maputo.

President inaugurates gas distribution network

President Armando Guebuza on 11 September inaugurated the Maputo and Marracuene Natural Gas Distribution project (PDGM), which will make piped natural gas available for homes and industries in the capital city and nearby areas.

Speaking at the gas pressure reduction station, President Guebuza recalled that the government’s five year plan for 2010-2014 envisaged making natural gas available for an ever larger number of citizens. With natural gas piped to their homes, reliance on bottles of cooking gas would become a thing of the past, he said.

PDGM was “an example of the use by Mozambicans of their own natural resources”, he declared. “It shows that, with our resources, we can visualise the dawn of a new era of well-being”.

Switching to gas would bring significant savings to individuals, households, companies and to the country as a whole. President Guebuza said it would have a visible impact on Mozambique’s balance of payments.

The gas comes from the deposits at Pande and Temane in Inhambane province. It is treated by the South African petrochemical giant Sasol, and most of the gas is exported by pipeline to Sasol’s factories in the South African city of Secunda.

But secondary pipelines are already supplying Mozambican industries in the Matola area (including the Mozal aluminium smelter), and gas-fired power stations at Ressano Garcia, on the border with South Africa.

Currently the main Mozambican use of the gas is for electricity generation. The gas-fired stations are currently producing 418 megawatts, and in 2015 this is expected to rise to 500 megawatts.

The Maputo and Marracuene gas distribution network will run for 62 kilometres, and involved an investment of US\$38.2 million by the National Hydrocarbon Company (ENH), and its partner Kogas of South Korea. Work on the project began in April 2013, and it was inaugurated on time.

ENH chairperson Nelson Ocuane told the ceremony that the first client was connected to the distribution network on 30 June. This was Autogas, the company that converts vehicles to run on gas. Its fuel pumps are now receiving 1,000 gigajoules of gas a month, equivalent to about 27,800 litres of liquid fuel. In the first month after the connection, Autogas supplied over a thousand vehicles running on natural gas.

Another ten consumers are now being linked to the pipelines, including the Maputo municipal bus company (EMTPM) and three hotels.

Ocuane said “we are working to find the best technical and financial options for the mass connection of domestic consumers”.

ENH argues that piped natural gas will be much cheaper than bottled cooking gas, firewood, charcoal or electricity, and so households who switch to natural gas will make substantial savings.

Ncondezi reaches agreement with EDM

The London-based company Ncondezi Energy announced on 10 September that it has reached a commercial deal with the Mozambican publicly owned electricity company, EDM, on the sale of power from the Ncondezi power project in the western province of Tete.

Ncondezi's coal mining licence covers an area of 38,700 hectares in the Moatize coal basin. Unlike most of the mining companies in Tete, Ncondezi is more interested in thermal rather than coking coal. The company plans to mine thermal coal to supply Mozambique's own requirements.

It plans to build a coal-fired power station in phases of 300 megawatts up to a total capacity of 1,800 megawatts.

Ncondezi said it has agreed a commercial deal with EDM that "includes the range for the starting electricity tariff to be paid by EDM, which will then be subject to adjustments during the 25 year operational life of the project".

The deal is subject to a number of conditions that must be satisfied by the end of 2014. These include "the introduction of a strategic investor acceptable to EDM" and "confirmation of the availability of political and commercial risk cover".

Negotiations have been under way for the past six months between Ncondezi, EDM and the Mozambican Ministry of Energy on such crucial matters as the structure and content of the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) and the Power Concession Agreement (PCA).

Ncondezi says the EDM board has approved the deal with a view to concluding the PPA and PCA, and other key project agreements, by the end of this year.

Ncondezi Chief Executive Officer, Paul Venter, described the agreement as "a very significant milestone and the culmination of all our hard work over the past two years".

The financial close of the project is scheduled for the end of the first quarter of 2015, and Ncondezi hopes to start building its power station in the second quarter.

Mozambique and China sign Beira fishing port agreement

The Mozambican and Chinese governments on 10 September signed an agreement in Maputo for financing the rehabilitating the fishing port in the central city of Beira.

The agreement, signed by Finance Minister Manuel Chang and the Chinese ambassador, Li Chanhua, is a necessary step towards an agreement between the Mozambican government and the Chinese Eximbank on a soft loan for US\$120 million.

"This agreement falls within the scope of the Mozambican government's priority projects for the period 2013-2015, which were submitted to the Chinese government for financing", said Chang, after the signing ceremony.

He added that the rehabilitation of the Beira fishing port will stimulate the economy of central Mozambique, and particularly of Sofala province. When the work was complete, the port will handle 70,000 tonnes of fishery produce a year, he predicted.

District judges to be trained in electoral legislation

Mozambique's Supreme Court, in coordination with the Attorney-General's Office, is organising training for district judges and prosecutors on the new responsibilities that now face district courts arising from amendments made to electoral legislation earlier this year.

Speaking at a press conference on 9 September, Supreme Court judge Pedro Nhatitima said the amendments make the district courts responsible for handling election disputes.

Under previous legislation disputes were handled by the electoral bodies themselves. An appeal against any irregularity at a polling station would go up to the district elections commission and eventually to the National Elections Commission (CNE). But, at the insistence of Renamo during dialogue with the government, the power to handle election disputes has been handed over to the courts.

Nhatitima said that, under the amended legislation, candidates or their election agents, if they feel that an offence has been committed at a polling station, must first submit a protest to the polling station staff. If they are not satisfied with the answer, they can appeal within 48 hours to the district court which has a further 48 hours to respond.

Nhatitima said that the district courts must be prepared to work over the weekend following the polling day (15 October) to meet these deadlines.

The law now states that dealing with election disputes takes priority over all the routine business of a district court.

As in the previous legislation, the final court of appeal remains the Constitutional Council, the highest body in matters of constitutional and electoral law.

The Supreme Court and the Attorney-General's Office is arranging training sessions in Maputo, Xai-Xai, Quelimane, Chimoio, and Pemba, which will be attended by 433 district judges and prosecutors. The training sessions will be given by senior magistrates and members of the CNE.

He said that all election cases brought before the courts would be dealt with in accordance with the law, and there would be no double standards whereby complaints against the ruling Frelimo Party receive a different treatment from those against opposition parties.

But he warned "it is not enough to have a suspicion" – candidates who believed an irregularity had occurred must present proof, otherwise there is nothing that any court could do.

Violations of the electoral law have already been reported – notably the illegal use of state assets such as vehicles for campaigning by Frelimo. Nhatitima said the courts cannot act on this unless someone files a complaint via the police or the public prosecutor. Without such a formal complaint, backed up by evidence, the courts were powerless to act.

Complicating matters is the fact that not all districts have courts. Nhatitima said that, in cases of districts without courts, the court in a neighbouring district would take over the responsibility.

Mozambique News Agency, c/o 26 Withdean Crescent, Brighton BN1 6WH, UK. Tel: +44 (0) 7941890630 - mozambique-news@geo2.poptel.org.uk

Subscription Rates (24 issues)	Individuals	Institutions
UK	£15.00	£25.00
Europe	£25.00	£40.00
Rest of the World	£30.00	£50.00

Overseas subscribers are requested to pay in sterling. If payment is made in another currency, add the equivalent of £6.00 to cover bank charges.