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Fake observer caught bribing opposition monitor to ignore Frelimo ballot box stuffing

Several thousand Frelimo party activists have been accredited as observers, in order to stuff ballot boxes. One was trapped and caught dramatically in a Maganja da Costa, Zambézia, Secondary School polling station, as he bribed a Podemos polling station monitor with 50,000 meticaís (\$780) to allow him to stuff the ballot boxes in favour of Frelimo.

Adérito dos Santos Macie was an observer for the National Youth Council (CNJ), accredited by the Zambézia Provincial Elections Commission (CPE). The CNJ is one of a range of fake or little known outside organisations used by the Frelimo party youth wing OJM to accredit their ballot box stuffing teams. In Maganja da Costa, the group consisted of both men and women. Each of its members attempted to negotiate with the opposition monitors at each polling station.

The returning officer (president) of polling station 080109-05, Gamito Grilo, a member of the Maganja da Costa Municipal Police and also a member of Frelimo, called the young Podemos monitor to tell him: "I have some coins to give us space to do our thing" - namely ballot box stuffing - according to the Podemos monitor. The first proposal was for 10,000 meticaís (\$156), which was immediately refused. The sum rose to 15,000, but was again refused.

Feeling under pressure, the young Podemos delegate informed his party's election agent that he was being harassed to receive money from Frelimo to allow ballot box stuffing.

The election agent instructed him to accept the proposal and receive the money as a way to obtain evidence that Frelimo was bribing opposition monitors and polling station chairs in order to allow ballot box stuffing. The monitor returned to his post, showing apparent lack of concern over the bribe negotiations.

Adérito dos Santos Macie, displeased by the young man's refusal to accept the bribe, came up with a higher proposal: 40,000 meticaís. He told the PODEMOS monitor: "Boy, accept it and I'll give you 40,000". The offer was again refused. The supposed observer did not give up. He raised the offer to 50,000 meticaís. The proposal was accepted, but the acceptance now contained a trap.

Adérito dos Santos immediately took 15,000 meticaís (\$234) that he had on his person and passed it to the Podemos monitor with a promise that he would go to the bank and take out the missing 35,000 meticaís to complete the promised 50,000.

At the same time, the Podemos monitor alerted his election agent that he had received the money as evidence. The election agent called the press and the police, and Adérito dos Santos was caught red-handed. There are two videos:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=yO5CMRqtkOw> and <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=bQ0geyjKTuE>

The false observer was violently attacked. He tried to run away, but he was stopped and the attacks continued until the police intervened.

It is not known how many fake observers were accredited by the Frelimo Party, but in the 2019 elections, Zambézia province had more than 3,000, all from organisations controlled by Frelimo.

Teacher and member of the Provincial Assembly detained in Maganja

Aldino Material, a secondary school teacher who was standing for a further term as a member of the Zambézia Provincial Assembly, was detained by the police after he assaulted an opposition monitor who was trying to neutralise an individual carrying a list of supposed members of Frelimo. It is believed that this was a list of those who would vote fraudulently.

It all began when the opposition monitors discovered the attempted fraudulent scheme, and immediately intercepted the person with the list. When Aldino Material saw this, he went to the defence of his colleague carrying the list. He assaulted the opposition monitor who had taken the list from the hand of the Frelimo member when he was trying to tear it up.

Podemos accuses Frelimo of planning to grant second place to Renamo

Preliminary counts indicate that Renamo and Podemos will have similar numbers of members of parliament; the one with the most seats will become the official opposition. In a letter published Monday (14 October) Podemos denounced an alleged plan between Frelimo and Renamo to prevent Podemos from being declared the winner, and even "preventing it from occupying second place in these general elections".

According to Podemos, there are “higher orders”, addressed to the National Elections Commission (CNE), the Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat (STAE) and the Constitutional Council (CC), to ensure that the district and provincial elections commissions prevent Podemos and its presidential candidate from being proclaimed victorious, and also forbidden from occupying second position.

According to Podemos there are three goals:

+ To ensure that Frelimo and its candidate win with more than 50% of the votes, thus guaranteeing their parliamentary supremacy.

+ To ensure that Renamo, whose leader has political agreements with Frelimo according to Podemos, be accommodated in second place and thus Momade keeps his status as leader of the opposition.

+ To ensure that Frelimo and Renamo keep their members of the National Elections Commission and of the Constitutional Council, who Podemos accuses of being accomplices in the electoral fraud, remain in that position.

The Podemos document adds that Frelimo and its President want to ensure that Podemos “won’t be able to do anything except sing and march through the streets until they get tired because the Mozambique Republic Police (PRM) are ready to use disproportionate force to dissuade and neutralise any demonstration repudiating the fraudulent alteration of the results of Podemos and its presidential candidate”.

The Podemos letter says that the intermediate results published by the district elections commissions do not correspond to the electoral truth expressed at the ballot box.

“These results are adulterated and corrupted and so are false, and we distance ourselves from them”.

Observers and journalists prevented from observing district count

Journalists and observers have been barred from attending some counts of the results at district level in Inhambane, Gaza, Niassa and Nampula.

This law states “Observers and the mass media may attend the count of results and shall be notified in writing or by notices, in terms of the law”. But the National Elections Commission (CNE) on 20 September reversed this, making the district count secret. The CNE defines a new category called “physical operations” (operações materiais), which is the entire process of physically checking and adding up the polling station results sheets (editais) to obtain the district total, and even writing the final district results sheet (edital). This is carried out by STAE (Secretariado Técnico da Administração Eleitoral, Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration). This is the actual work of doing the district count, and will be done in secret.


The response to this has been mixed at district level.

In Inhambane province, our observers were prevented from observing the count in Inhambane city, Massinga and in other districts. In Inharrime, the process was interrupted for more than an hour, with staff saying they were waiting for “higher orders” before proceeding. This also happened when deciding what to do about invalid and disputed ballots.

In Gaza observers were banned in Manjacaze, Chókwè and other districts. In Manjacaze they alleged that the activity under way was “centralisation” and not the count.

In several districts in Niassa, journalists and observers were prevented from observing the count of the district results.

In Mecuburi, Nampula, the process took place in complete secrecy so that none of the observers knew where the count was taking place. When they managed to locate the place, the observers were prevented from entering the room.

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