



# MOZAMBIQUE ELECTIONS OCTOBER 2019 A POLITICAL TIPPING POINT

POST-ELECTION REPORT



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## ACRONYMS LIST

CNE	National Electoral Commission/ <i>Comissão Nacional de Eleições</i>
EISA	Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa
EU	European Union
FRELIMO	Mozambique Liberation Front/ <i>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique</i>
MDM	Mozambique Democratic Movement/ <i>Movimento Democrático de Moçambique</i>
RENAMO	Mozambican National Resistance/ <i>Resistência Nacional Moçambican</i>
SADC	Southern African Development Community
US	United States

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mozambique is in the midst of a burgeoning political crisis as both major opposition parties, Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO/*Resistência Nacional Moçambicana*) and the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM/*Movimento Democrático de Moçambique*), have rejected the results of the 15 October 2019 election in which the ruling party Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO/*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*) won an unexpected landslide.

FRELIMO won a two-thirds majority in the legislature, the Assembly of the Republic; control of all ten provincial assemblies: and FRELIMO leader, President Filipe Nyusi, convincingly secured his re-election.

This result was surprising as RENAMO was widely expected to win control of between two to four provincial assemblies granting it the ability to govern provinces for the first time under the new decentralised political system. This new decentralised system was a key part of the August 2019 peace agreement and RENAMO's anticipated governing of provinces was seen as a way to ensure that the former rebel group invested in the political system and did not return to an armed insurgency.

Concerningly, there have been widespread reports of electoral irregularities ranging from suspiciously high registration numbers to reports of unusual numbers of spoilt ballots. These allegations are somewhat supported by unusual election results which saw FRELIMO win convincingly in districts where it had previously never won and, as recently as October 2018, had very little recorded support. Exemplifying this is the city of Beira which has long been an MDM stronghold and where FRELIMO secured an overwhelming majority of the votes.

These allegations of electoral fraud and irregularities have formed the basis of a court appeal by RENAMO to have the election annulled. This legal action is unlikely to succeed.

Accordingly, Mozambique is currently in a political crisis as RENAMO's leadership is under pressure to take action to reverse its fortunes against a resurgent FRELIMO. RENAMO's leaders are also feeling humiliated as the elections were the result of a prolonged peace process which was not universally supported within the party. If a political solution is not found it is possible that RENAMO will renounce the August peace agreement and return to its insurgency.

Should this occur Mozambique will experience a prolonged period of political and security uncertainty as the country is already fighting two other insurgencies at present, the Islamist insurgency in Cabo Delgado and a smaller weaker insurgency in the north-western provinces orchestrated by a RENAMO dissident breakaway group.

Although the political crisis is unfolding and a renewed violence is possible, the fact that FRELIMO has secured total political control on a provincial and national level will ensure an element of governance certainty. There was some concern about the uncertainty presented by possible RENAMO-led provincial governments and what impact these could have on regulatory predictability.

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## 2. BUILD-UP AND ELECTION DAY

Mozambique held its national general election on 15 October 2019 in what was touted as one of the most significant votes in the country's democratic history. This was due to the fact that it was the first national election to take place under the new decentralised system, meaning that the opposition could potentially win executive control of provincial governments. Previously, provincial governors were appointed by the central government. This new decentralised process was agreed to as part of the peace accords between RENAMO and the FRELIMO-led government and the successful legitimate holding of the election was a cornerstone of these accords and necessary to ensure a lasting peace. Both RENAMO and FRELIMO were under significant international pressure to participate in the elections and accept the result.

The run-up to the election was marked by political tensions and violence with reports of security forces intimidating opposition members and supporters. In one incident in Gaza security forces were found guilty of murdering a RENAMO election observer.

Gaza was, in particular, a point of concern ahead of the election as the National Electoral Commission (*CNE/Comissão Nacional de Eleições*) registered an impossibly high number of voters in respect of the provincial population. This led to the head of the country's statistics institute resigning in protest and allegations of premeditated voter fraud by FRELIMO. In addition, the suspicious voter registration numbers in Gaza hinted that the CNE officials themselves may have been involved in the potential vote irregularities.

However, Gaza was considered a safe FRELIMO seat and the exaggerated registration numbers were generally viewed as an insurance policy by FRELIMO to ensure that it retained control of the country's legislature. RENAMO raised concerns but did not derail the elections as the prospect of gaining control of provinces was too tempting. In addition, given that Mozambique's political future and peace accords were dependent on the election it was generally assumed that there would be limited irregularities and voter fraud.

Ahead of the election, RENAMO was fairly bullish. The party appeared to have run a successful campaign targeting its major support bases in Sofala, Zambézia, Tete, and Nampula provinces. It was generally considered that RENAMO leader Ossufo Momade ran an effective campaign and most media observers predicted that RENAMO would secure around three provinces. Similarly, FRELIMO seemed confident it would retain control of the legislature, and President Nyusi's re-election was considered a certainty.

Previous elections appeared to support these positions. RENAMO managed to win 36.61% of the vote in the vote in 2014 and was the largest party in three provinces. RENAMO was particularly confident as in the October 2018 municipal elections it managed to reduce FRELIMO to only 51.8% of the vote if measured nationally.

The election day itself was generally a success, there were reports of violence and intimidation, but fears of major attacks by the Alhu Sunnah wa Jama'ah militant group in Cabo Delgado province did not materialise and neither did disruptive attacks by the RENAMO

Military Junta – a dissident breakaway group which has rejected the peace agreement and Momade’s leadership of RENAMO.

However, election observers recorded a low voter turnout of approximately 51% meaning that almost half of eligible voters did not come out and vote. The low voter turnout appeared to be worst in the central provinces in which the majority of RENAMO supporters are based.

Further concerning reports began to emerge on the day itself, including rumours of ballot-box stuffing and reports of inaccurately recorded figures. In a few voting stations electoral monitors were expelled or restricted. However, this was generally dismissed as falling below the anticipated levels of irregularities and the vote was generally deemed free and fair on the day.

### 3. RESULTS AND REACTIONS

Soon after the results began to be tallied and the initial preliminary results began to be released it was clear that FRELIMO was on track to a landslide victory.

The final results released by CNE on 27 October 2019 confirmed this. FRELIMO had stamped to a two-thirds victory and won a majority in every province. Not only that, but according to the CNE, FRELIMO won every one of the 154 districts in the country. This was among the best electoral results the party had recorded since Mozambique became an electoral democracy. It was also apparent that RENAMO and the MDM had had a devastating election with greatly reduced legislative presences and RENAMO had not won a single province for the first time since 2009. RENAMO and the MDM both rejected the results and called for the election to be rerun.

The official results were as follows:

PARTY	CANDIDATE	PRESIDENTIAL	LEGISLATIVE
FRELIMO	Filipe Nyusi	73.00%	70.78% (184 seats)
RENAMO	Ossufo Momade	21.88%	22.71% (60 seats)
MDM	Daviz Simango	4.24% (6 seats)	4.24% (6 seats)

PROVINCIAL	
CABO DELGADO	GAZA
FRELIMO: 74.01%	FRELIMO: 93,53%
RENAMO: 20.26%	RENAMO:2.60%
MDM: 3.10%	MDM: 1.71%
INHAMBANE	MANICA
FRELIMO: 77.37%	FRELIMO: 73.61%
RENAMO:13.83%	RENAMO: 22.35%
MDM: 4.44%	MDM: 2.53%
MAPUTO PROVINCE	NAMPULA
FRELIMO: 66.22%	FRELIMO: 58.03%
RENAMO: 26.27%	RENAMO:35.02%
MDM: 4.95%	MDM:3.35%
NIASSA	SOFALA
FRELIMO: 67.24%	FRELIMO: 66.25%
RENAMO:27.95%	RENAMO: 20.24%
MDM:2.93%	MDM: 12.30%
TETE	ZAMBÉZIA
FRELIMO: 76.34%	FRELIMO: 65.49%
RENAMO: 20.32%	RENAMO: 29.60%
MDM: 2.04%	MDM:29.60%

Even before the 27 October 2019 announcement of the official results, RENAMO and the country's second largest opposition party, the MDM, had denounced the results and alleged major electoral fraud and irregularities. RENAMO, in particular, cited the violence in the build-up to the election as a violation of the peace accords.

In addition, suspicious figures began to emerge as the preliminary and final results were released. This includes the rapid change in FRELIMO's fortunes itself. The party suffered in the 2018 municipal election, seeing its overall national vote fall to approximately 51%. The party has been increasingly unpopular due to the prolonged controversy over Mozambique's hidden debt and perceptions that the ruling party is marked by corruption. Admittedly, Nyusi is a popular and charismatic leader, but the party's surge to winning over 70% of the national vote after its municipal election was considered unlikely ahead of the election.

Another notable factor is that the CNE stated that FRELIMO had received the most votes in the city of Beira, Sofala province. Sofala has long been an opposition stronghold and has historically overwhelmingly supported RENAMO. Beira was a RENAMO stronghold until 2009 when Daviz Simango defected from RENAMO to form the MDM, which has since retained strong majority support in the city. However, the Beira election results show that FRELIMO won over two-thirds of the votes in the city. This is a highly improbable reversal of voting patterns in the city, particularly since the MDM won re-election in the city convincingly in October 2018.

In addition, numerous reports of suspicious behaviour of election officials have emerged. These include officials purposefully spoiling opposition ballots with additional ink marks or dirty hands. This has allegedly resulted in thousands of RENAMO and MDM votes being discarded. There is a notable portion of spoiled or incorrectly voted ballots in every election, but election experts consider anything above 5% of ballots spoiled at a station to be suspicious. In the recent election, several voting stations in RENAMO strongholds such as Sofala province reported 10% or more of total votes being spoilt.

The veracity of the election results has been further questioned by the fact that the governing committee of the CNE was divided on whether to authenticate the final result. The committee was split eight members to nine, with the FRELIMO-aligned majority passing the decision to support the final results. The eight CNE members who refused to back the results are aligned with opposition parties but still raised valid concerns. These include officials ignoring CNE guidelines in some districts and they accused the electoral body of failing in its constitutional duties.

As the initial reports of voter irregularities and FRELIMO's victory emerged in the days following the election, sporadic protests occurred in opposition strongholds across the country. However, there has not been a major protest campaign demanding the election be held again, nor have opposition towns and cities been brought to a standstill. This is likely due to a combination of the state's oppressive policies and an element of political and protest fatigue in the country. Further, the fact that the results were released in stages likely also deflated protest drives. The results were first gradually released as preliminary results, then the final results on 27 October 2019, and the country's highest court, the Constitutional Council is currently in the process of ratifying the results and will likely only rule on the matter and any disputes in December 2019.



However, political uncertainty continues in Mozambique. It was initially hoped that the election would be a clear-cut matter resulting in a new political age. This is not the case and instead, the election is being disputed. The two main opposition parties have outright rejected the election results and, as such, will be unlikely to accept their seats in the legislature. This is particularly concerning in RENAMO's case as the party may renounce the peace accords citing electoral irregularities and return to its armed insurgency. Such an act would greatly destabilise the country and another peace agreement would be unlikely as RENAMO's leaders will not trust the government after this election.

At least 58 electoral disputes have been lodged with the various district courts, the majority of which have been dismissed on technical and procedural grounds. This is a common tactic in Mozambique for the courts to evade getting involved in political matters. Several of these disputes are ongoing and to date over 290 people have been arrested on charges of electoral misconduct.

In addition, on 30 October 2019, RENAMO formally filed papers with the Constitutional Council calling for the election to be annulled and held again citing "massive electoral fraud".

International observers have expressed concern about the election and irregularities witnessed ahead of and during the voting and ballot counting. Most observer missions have not released their final reports, but the preliminary findings have been generally restrained.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA), the European Union (EU), and the United States (US), all released similar preliminary findings. These groups noted that there were concerning incidents of intimidation in the build-up to the election and that the voter registration was affected by irregularities, but, they did not feel it materially influenced the election day itself.

These observers are yet to comment on the vote tabulation process and the results themselves.

## 4. IMPLICATIONS OF THE ELECTION

The disputed election is threatening the emergence of a political crisis in Mozambique. It is difficult to see how the opposition parties can accept the result without causing a major internal divide. Similarly, the refusal of both the MDM and RENAMO to accept the result undermines the legitimacy of the election.

The largest concern is that the post-election political crisis will lead to a collapse of the August 2019 Peace Agreement which formally ended the recent low-level conflict between RENAMO and the state. Should this agreement collapse the likelihood of renewed conflict is heightened. Should this occur and RENAMO returns to its insurgency, it would be the third ongoing insurgency in Mozambique, adding to the Islamist insurgency in Cabo Delgado province and the RENAMO Military Junta's sporadic attacks in the north-western and central provinces.

While RENAMO would be a weakened force following the disarmament process it could still severely disrupt transportation routes in the country as it proved in the 2013 and 2015/16 insurgencies.

From an operational perspective, little is expected to change in the short-term. Mozambique's political instability will worsen but will remain similar to the past five years. What is notable is that the reprieve which was anticipated following the elections will not occur. However, as FRELIMO appears set to control all aspects of the state and provincial governments there will be no policy or operational upheaval caused by incoming new RENAMO administrations.

The political crisis and possible worsening security situation, meanwhile, will distract officials from addressing the country's pressing needs such as the ongoing debt crisis and the deteriorating security situation in Cabo Delgado.

### FRELIMO

The ruling party has been left in a commanding position following the 15 October 2019 election. FRELIMO went into the election viewed as being on the defence with much of the pre-election narrative speculating about how the party would handle reduced political party support. The conventional wisdom held that FRELIMO would lose between two to four provinces and several seats in the Assembly of the Republic. Instead the party has total control of all ten provinces and a two-thirds majority in the legislature. FRELIMO is in its most politically secure position in several years.

The party has also displayed its total control of the Mozambican state, from the CNE to the security forces. The October 2019 election has reiterated that FRELIMO is synonymous with state power in Mozambique.

The election result, if upheld as assumed, has also affirmed the party's current leadership and presented the party with no tangible consequences for the 2016 hidden debt scandal. This failure to hold the party to account will make FRELIMO leaders even less inclined to push through the institutional reforms desired by international donors. Accordingly, the party is expected to continue its approach of betting on the anticipated financial windfall from the

country's nascent offshore liquified natural gas reserves to finance the national debt and continue to resist a full accounting of the debt.

The biggest winner of the election is clearly Nyusi. The President was left politically weakened by his poor showing in 2014 in which FRELIMO had one of its most significant electoral declines. Nyusi has spent much of the past five years in an uphill battle to secure his control of the party and sideline his influential predecessor Armando Guebuza. Accordingly, Nyusi has also spent a significant amount of his presidency boosting his personal reputation and popularity and has even been criticised for spending too much time campaigning and not enough governing the state.

By delivering such a dominant election result Nyusi has silenced his critics and cemented his control over FRELIMO. The fact that FRELIMO has secured control of all provincial legislatures and provincial governments means that he will not need to face a backlash from FRELIMO deployees who could have been pushed out by any new RENAMO administrations.

Nyusi is expected to start utilising his new political capital and strengthened position in the near future and a Cabinet reshuffle is likely at the start of his next presidential term. Speculation has already begun over who will be retained and who will be dismissed. Of the key portfolios, Energy Minister Ernesto Max Tonela is expected to be retained. Tonela has overseen an uptick in the gas operations and has worked closely with Nyusi and is considered an ally of the President. Given FRELIMO's continued dependence on the future success of the gas sector to recover the economy, Tonela will also represent continuity and stability in the sector. This will be essential given that RENAMO's rejection of the election result threatens political stability in the country.

Another key individual is the current Environment Minister Celso Correia. Sources connected to FRELIMO have confirmed that there are rumours within the party that Correia could replace Carlos Agostinho do Rosário as Prime Minister. This is despite Correia's formerly close ties with Guebuza. Correia has deftly pivoted to being a trusted member of Nyusi's inner circle in the past five years, running the election campaigns in 2014 and 2019. Correia similarly will benefit from the election success and will likely use FRELIMO's dominant performance to promote himself within the party. Regardless, when announced, Nyusi's new Cabinet will reflect the new balance of power within FRELIMO.

FRELIMO's dominance in the election has already shifted the party's focus from national elections to internal intrigue. The party's securing of a two-thirds majority and control of all provinces has shown that Mozambique has a de facto one-party state as neither RENAMO nor the MDM will be able to stop the ruling party's legislative agenda. The irregularities which occurred during the election also indicate that FRELIMO has little interest in risking its control in Mozambique. Accordingly, speculation has already begun over who will succeed Nyusi as President in 2024. It is believed that Correia is already angling to be the heir apparent but will likely face stiff competition from the current Interior Minister Jaime Basílio Monteiro and Foreign Affairs Minister José Pacheco. If Nyusi manages to maintain his current controlling position within the party he will likely manage to select his chosen successor. Regardless, internal machinations are likely to dominate FRELIMO in the coming five years as the party seems to have little fear of external opposition.

The controversial nature of FRELIMO's win has reiterated that they place maintaining national power as the party's number one priority, even if this comes at the cost of internal peace or international goodwill.

## RENAMO

The election was devastating for RENAMO which had bet much of the party's future on achieving some success in this election. Instead of expanding its influence and increasing access to systems of patronage, the party has witnessed a decline in its political representation in all provinces and its presence in the Assembly of the Republic has shrunk from 89 seats to 60.

The result has also pushed RENAMO into an existential dilemma in which it must decide how it will move forward to challenge the results. If the party accepts the result it risks being abandoned by its supporters, the most militant of which will likely join the RENAMO Military Junta in its insurgency. Similarly, if the party returns to its insurgency it could risk alienating its wider support base and the Mozambican public, which is conflict fatigued. In addition, much of the disarmament and security force integration is already underway. This means that many RENAMO fighters have surrendered their weapons and a large proportion of those have been integrated into the military and police. RENAMO will struggle to convince these fighters to leave these new stable, paid positions to return to a militant insurgency in the Gorongosa mountains.

It appears that the party's current plan is to exhaust legitimate means of contestation before returning to an insurgency. This will enable RENAMO to claim that it attempted to abide by the peace agreement and assign the blame for the accords' collapse on FRELIMO.

The party has, therefore, filed a case with the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Council, to have the election annulled. The party is unlikely to succeed in this endeavour, following which the party will appeal to the international mediators who facilitated the peace talks before potentially abandoning the peace agreement.

Momade is under extreme pressure to regain some momentum for RENAMO. While it is evident that voting irregularities took place, the low voter turnout in key RENAMO provinces will be laid at his feet and he will need to take some responsibility for the party's poor showing. He was only elected as permanent leader in January 2019 and is still in the process of cementing his control over the party. The fact that he had led RENAMO to a successful municipal election in October 2018 as the party's interim leader helped ensure his victory during the elective conference. However, he was still not universally accepted and there was significant resistance to his leadership from some factions, including the dissident group which went on to form the RENAMO Military Junta.

Momade was similarly betting on a successful national general election to cement his control of RENAMO. Had he delivered three or more provinces to the party, it would have been difficult for anyone to challenge him within the party. Instead, RENAMO faced one of its worst electoral showings and Momade's position at the helm of the party has become uncertain. He currently has the backing of the party's political commission and key leaders, but he is under pressure to salvage some form of political win.

Should RENAMO's court application be unsuccessful, Momade will be under pressure to renounce the peace agreement and threaten a return to an insurgency in order to extract concessions from Nyusi. Even then, short of an election rerun, it is difficult to see how Momade can retain the leadership of RENAMO in the long run.

That being said, considering that the party's most militant member left with the junta, and a large portion of the RENAMO armed forces have been disarmed and demobilised the party will struggle to follow through on this threat. There is a possibility that the opposition party may find itself forced into accepting the result which could mean factional infighting and its eventual decline.

### **MDM**

The MDM also had a disastrous election, but as the party is not considered a major national player its loss will not have a major impact. The MDM will only have six seats in the next legislature, down from 17, and will have little more than a token role in the legislative processes. Similarly, given FRELIMO's dominance in all provincial elections, the party will not even play its previous role as kingmaker deciding the control of provincial legislatures as it did in Nampula following the 2014 election.

The MDM was also expected to lose votes to RENAMO, but the election results indicate that the party was routed by FRELIMO in the election. However, it was the MDM's poor showing in Beira which has raised allegations of vote-rigging. The party has long maintained a core support base in the city and won the municipal election comfortably in 2018. The reversal of its fortunes is suspicious.

Regardless, the MDM has been reduced to a local party mostly confined to the Nampula and Sofala provinces, particularly Beira. The developing post-election political crisis will focus on FRELIMO and RENAMO as will any solution, again excluding the MDM from any major discussions or resolutions.

## 5. THE WAY FORWARD

The political situation in Mozambique remains uncertain and fluid; however, it is clear that it is unsustainable, and some form of a political solution will need to be reached. Nyusi will be aware that Momade and RENAMO's current position is untenable and the militant elements of the party will be pushing for a withdrawal from the peace agreement and a return to armed insurgency.

Therefore, Nyusi will be under pressure from international donors and organisations such as Southern African Development Community (SADC) to reach out to RENAMO and offer some form of political concession. This will likely include some form of overture that will bring RENAMO into the fold and make them invested in the system. This was the fundamental intention of the decentralised electoral system in the first place. If RENAMO had some form of governance and political power it would be disincentivised to engage in armed insurgency and be invested in the political process.

That dream is now dead, but Nyusi may still be able to ensure that the party remains within the system by offering key RENAMO leaders senior roles within the state. This would entail fast-tracking the integration of the armed forces and ensuring that RENAMO's generals and senior officers are provided for within the Mozambican security forces. This would discourage these militant leaders from recalling their forces to an insurgency.

Secondly, Nyusi could offer RENAMO figures Cabinet and government posts. This would be an unpopular move within FRELIMO as such positions are highly coveted. However, if the political situation worsens and conflict becomes increasingly likely, Nyusi may find himself forced into agreeing to some form of a government of national unity. Such a move would appeal to international mediators and is a favourite solution of SADC's to political crises, but in the Mozambican context this would be an unsustainable solution. There is far too much distrust and enmity between RENAMO and FRELIMO for a unity government to last. Similarly, FRELIMO is too centralised and structured to enable an external governing partner. Such a unity government would collapse sooner rather than later, likely within a year.

The most likely outcome is that Nyusi and FRELIMO will attempt to press their advantage. RENAMO is severely weakened and its militia force has been largely demobilised. RENAMO is also still struggling from a lack of entrenched leadership following the death of former party leader Afonso Dhlakama and, as stated before, Momade is in a weakened position. This the ruling party's best opportunity to potentially destroy its long-time enemy or at least weaken it irrevocably. FRELIMO hardliners were always opposed to negotiating with RENAMO and a significant faction would welcome a return to conflict with a weakened RENAMO. In this scenario RENAMO will have little choice to either return to an insurgency or to accept a significantly reduced role in Mozambican politics – like the period following the 2009 election when the party was last routed in a disputed election in which alleged irregularities occurred. It should be noted that it was from that weakened position that RENAMO launched its 2013 insurgency. FRELIMO will be betting on the absence of Dhlakama's popular leadership and RENAMO's partial demobilisation to prevent a recurrence of the insurgency.

There is, however, still one major uncertainty in the coming weeks. The Constitutional Council still needs to hear RENAMO's request for an election annulment and rule on the legitimacy of the election.

It is generally accepted that the court will rule in favour of FRELIMO and declare the election valid, likely citing an issue of process or legal technicality to dismiss RENAMO's appeal. However, rumours have emerged of a dispute within the court over this matter. These rumours have been further confirmed by privileged sources with knowledge of the judiciary.

There is potentially enough evidence to justify an election annulment. The number of recorded irregularities regarding the voter registration and the vote tallying process might be sufficient to undermine the authenticity of the election results in the eyes of the court. This will be bolstered by the CNE's 8-9 split decision to authenticate the final results. The Constitutional Council only needs to regard the process as corrupted to order a rerun of the national election or some provincial elections.

It is possible that the Constitutional Council has also been pressured by international organisations and donors to ensure the legitimacy of the election or it is simply that the judges are invested in ensuring that the election is free and fair. Such a ruling would be unlikely and unexpected but not impossible. Relations between the government and the Constitutional Council have been more strained than usual. In June 2019, the Court made a surprise ruling against the government ruling that the controversial debt acquired through secret loans was unconstitutional and that Mozambique was not obligated to pay it back. However, the government has ignored this ruling and proceeded with the debt restructuring and payment schedules. This reportedly irritated several senior justices and potentially undermined the court's traditional sympathy for the FRELIMO-led government.

In the unlikely event that the Constitutional Council annuls the election result, Mozambique will be thrown into further political uncertainty. The build-up to a new election would be fierce and politically motivated violence will be likely. Similarly, the process will be under even more scrutiny as RENAMO will view a new election as an existential matter and any further reports of electoral fraud could potentially spark protests and acts of recrimination and even violence.