



## ELECTION · TALK

*A fortnightly policy brief from the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa*

**No 9 · 16 February 2004**

**Po Box 740, Auckland  
Park, 2196  
41 Stanley Avenue,  
Auckland Park,  
Gauteng  
Tel 27-11-4825495  
Fax 27-11-4826163  
publications@eisa.org.za  
http://www.eisa.org.za**

**ISSN 1029-273X  
© EISA 2004**

**Editorial Board  
Dr Jackie Kalley,  
Shumbana Karume,  
Dr Khabele Matlosa,  
Claude Kabemba**

**Published with the  
assistance of NORAD  
& OSISA**

### CAN THE “MOZAMBICAN MIRACLE” SURVIVE THE SCENARIO OF FORCED CO-HABITATION?

*Dr Eduardo Siteo*

*Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique*

In the second local elections held in Mozambique in November 2003, the novelty of the country's new political configuration came from the village of Marromeu in the Sofala province. Despite the fact that Sofala is regarded as a RENAMO stronghold – not least because this party won there both the 1994 and 1999 general elections and it is home province to Afonso Dhlakama – the village of Marromeu witnessed one of the most contested elections of all municipalities. Indeed, João Agostinho of RENAMO won the position of Mayor with just one single vote separating him from his FRELIMO rival Alberto Joaquim. However, the electorate of the Marromeu village gave 17 more votes to FRELIMO than its rival and, as a result, FRELIMO has a majority in the Municipal Assembly of just one seat (7 to 6). Will this scenario of co-habitation function?

The story about the Marromeu village political co-habitation is relevant because it has all the ingredients that could be repeated at the level of the 2004 general elections. Let us look briefly at the statistics of the two previous general elections. In the 1994 general elections FRELIMO and RENAMO got 82% of the valid votes, with 44% for FRELIMO and 38% for RENAMO. Interestingly, in the 1999 elections the share of both parties grew to 88% of the valid votes, with FRELIMO gaining 49% and RENAMO 39%.

This result means amongst other things, that FRELIMO managed to increase its share of the valid votes with a higher margin compared to RENAMO despite the fact that RENAMO contested the 1999 general elections allied to 10 small political parties. Nevertheless, the statistics of the presidential elections present a somewhat different picture. While in the 1994 presidential elections – where there were 12 presidential candidates – Joaquim Chissano the leader of FRELIMO reached a score of 53% against 34% achieved by Afonso Dhlakama, the RENAMO leader did close this gap by reaching a score of 47% to Chissano's 52% in the 1999 general elections. This result is significant considering Joaquim Chissano's political background; who was both the first Prime Minister of the transitional government back from September 1974 to June 1975 and the president of the country from 1986 following the death of President Samora Machel.

Thus, Afonso Dhlakama's electoral appeal seems to have grown significantly against a recognisable formidable opponent. Furthermore, though Chissano managed to get more votes than his party

in both general elections and Afonso Dhlakama only managed to achieve the same in the 1999 general elections, the RENAMO leader's result was far more expressive. Indeed, in the 1999 elections Dhlakama got more votes than his electoral coalition with a margin of over half-million votes, considerably higher than the 300,000 reached by Chissano over his party. In the first week of February 2004 Afonso Dhlakama declared in the local media that Armando Guebuza, FRELIMO's General Secretary and its presidential candidate for the 2004 general elections, needs 15 years to achieve his (political) status. This somewhat pretentious statement can be taken as merely an indication that pre-election campaigning has already begun. Perhaps, and more worryingly, Dhlakama might as well be displaying one of RENAMO's political tactics, namely that of crystallising the idea of an early victory so that if the result is adverse then to come out and declare the election results as fraudulent. But, it can also be the result of Dhlakama's genuine assessment of his electoral fortunes as being brighter now that Chissano is not contesting the elections. If the latter hypothesis is

true then the Marromeu village story could repeat itself at the national level.

The problem with the political landscape of Mozambique is, as this description shows, the absolute domination of FRELIMO and RENAMO, as parties with a background of military organisation. These are, indeed, the only political parties in Mozambique with a clear organisational structure and with implantation in all districts of the country. Thus, the historical antagonism between these parties and their growing distrust present serious challenges to the successful democratisation of the country. To compound the problem, their zero-sum game style of politics means that the prospects of political co-habitation at the national level could be a daunting exercise. If so, can the *Mozambican Miracle* of peace and reconciliation survive the political turmoil of forced co-habitation?

## **NAMIBIA'S THIRD DELIMITATION COMMISSION**

*Dr Victor Tonchi*

*Chairman of the Namibian Election*

*Commission*

The Namibian Constitution provides for the establishment of a Delimitation Commission for purposes of creating new regions and constituencies. Over the past 12 years, three such commissions have been established. A Delimitation Commission is temporary and exists only during the period of its mandate. Upon completion of its task, a Delimitation Commission is dissolved. The President appoints members of the Delimitation Commission in accordance with Article 104 of the Namibian Constitution. It is composed of three members, one of whom is a judge and also serves as the chairperson. Section 5 (1) and (2) of the Regional Councils Act 22 of 1992 provides the intervals at which a Delimitation Commission could be constituted as well as its terms of reference. As a country that has just emerged from the policies of divide and rule under the apartheid system, the terms of reference for the Delimitation Commission tries by all means to rectify those anomalies. Subsection 2 of Section 5 of the Regional Councils Act, 22 of 1992, states that, the Delimitation Commission will give due regard to a number of factors. These include the number of eligible voters, some geographic features, existing infrastructure and the socio-economic characteristics of an area to be demarcated. Together with the key purpose of creating or making changes to existing boundaries of regions or constituencies, these terms of references form the main objective of the Delimitation Commission.

The first Delimitation Commission was constituted in 1992 and was tasked in demarcating new regions and constituencies. The task of the first Delimitation

Commission was extremely challenging as the 13 political regions as they are known today never existed previously. As the stated criteria for delimitation takes cognizance of the political history of the country, one of the tasks of the First Delimitation Commission was to create completely new regions from the then existing ethnic based homelands. This exercise has proved difficult to accomplish. Naturally many ethnic communities in Namibia reside in specific geographic areas and Namibia, being a sizeable country, these small ethnic populations could be scattered in a considerably large area. This makes it difficult to gerrymander regions or constituencies. Integrating ethnic groups in regions and constituencies through demarcation of political boundaries seems to have succeeded only in those regions with large urban populations. The criteria may have worked only in the creation of regions such as Khomas, Erongo and Oshikoto. Other regions continue to reflect the dominant ethnic characteristics. Some regions like Kavango and Caprivi even retained their colonial names.

The first Delimitation Commission was faced with many challenges. The most critical was the lack of information on Namibia's population. The results of the first census only came out after the Delimitation Commission had completed its report. Despite these difficulties the first Delimitation Commission drew boundaries of thirteen regions and 95 constituencies.

Subsequent Delimitation Commissions have made minor changes to those initial boundaries. The Second Delimitation Commission of 1998 made some changes to the boundaries of five regions and increased the constituencies to 101. The Third Delimitation Commission was constituted in June 2002 and was expected to complete its task by end of August 2002. The submission of the delimitation report by the end of that particular month was necessary because a general registration of voters was scheduled to commence in October the same year. The Delimitation Commission failed to finalise its report before the end of September and this led to the postponement of the general voter's registration in 2002 to July/August 2003. Although the law required the voter's registration to take place at the time, this proved inefficient since the Electoral Commission responsible for the registration of voters, did not have any information regarding the changes to be made on boundaries. Therefore, the decision of the Electoral Commission was to wait until the report was finalised. When the Delimitation Commission presented its report to the President, it showed that the total number of constituencies had increased to 105.

Although, the Third Delimitation Commission is now dissolved, the procedures leading to its appointment were nevertheless challenged in the court of law by the Congress of Democrats (COD)

one of the political parties represented in Parliament. In June 2003, the COD challenged the legality of the appointment of the Delimitation Commission as according to their view; it conflicted with the stipulations of both the Namibian Constitution and the Regional Councils' Act of 1992. This challenge was however dismissed by the courts.

## **MALAWI: OPPOSITION IN DISARRAY**

*Professor Wiseman Chijere Chirwa  
Chancellor College, University of Malawi*

Malawi's opposition politicians do not seem to have learnt any lessons from their neighbours in Zambia, Tanzania or Kenya. In both Zambia and Tanzania, the divided opposition parties twice failed to dislodge the governing parties in general elections. The opposition parties in Kenya suffered two defeats before realising the importance of forming a coalition and fielding a common presidential candidate. These events seem not to have provided the Malawi opposition parties with any meaningful lessons.

Towards the end of last year, five opposition parties that are outside Parliament announced that they would be forming a coalition that would field one presidential candidate for the 18 May 2004 presidential elections. The parties were: the Malawi Democratic Party (MDP), MAFUNDE, the National Unity Party (NUP), the People's Progressive Movement (PPM), and the People's Transformation Party (PETRA). They were earlier this year joined by the Movement for Genuine Democracy (MGODE), a breakaway group of the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD); and the Republican Party, a breakaway of the old Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda's Malawi Congress Party (MCP). AFORD and the MCP are currently the two opposition parties in Parliament, with AFORD in a coalition arrangement with the governing United Democratic Front (UDF). The MCP and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), another opposition party outside Parliament, shunned the opposition coalition, each of them stating their reasons for doing so. The MCP thought that they were the largest opposition party and therefore should have been endorsed as the leaders of the coalition. They were opposed to having equal voting powers with the other parties. On their part, the NDA felt that the electorate on the ground should be involved in the choosing of the common presidential candidate. Choosing the candidate among themselves without the involvement of the electorate would amount to the "boardroom selection" of the candidate. They were also not sure if the coalition would amount to a merger of the parties because they were required to use a common symbol and common slogan which, it was feared, would compromise the individual identities of the parties. MGODE and PPM shared some of the MCP and NDA concerns but went ahead to sign the coalition memorandum of

understanding (MOU) with the hope that some of the issues would be later resolved. They were terribly mistaken! Their colleagues in the other parties had ganged up and rallied around the RP president Gwanda Chakuamba, once Dr Kamuzu Banda's Vice President in the MCP. In 1999 Gwanda Chakuamba teamed up with AFORD's Chakufwa Chihana in an alliance. They lost to Bakili Muluzi of the UDF.

On 9 February 2004, the PPM protested against the behaviour of the other coalition members and threatened to pull out of the coalition if it did not include the MCP and the NDA, and if it did not adequately address the concerns expressed by these parties and those expressed by the PPM, themselves. The other parties made a few concessions but did not change their position on equal voting rights to all of them and the selection of a common presidential candidate in the "boardroom".

On 13 February 2004, with the differences unresolved, the coalition parties went ahead to choose the RP's Gwanda Chakuamba and the PPM's Aleke Banda as the presidential candidate and running mate, respectively. Both Gwanda Chakuamba and Aleke Banda were cabinet ministers in Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda's government. They served in the Kamuzu regime from the late 1950s to the 1970s. They were in fact the longest serving members in Kamuzu's government. The combination of the two is seen in some quarters as a recycling of the old MCP.

The re-emergence and unification of the two old guards has split the new opposition parties into factions and blocs. Both PPM and MGODE are split between those that support the Chakuamba-Banda ticket and those that are opposed to it. At the inter-party level, blocs and camps have emerged. The MCP prefers to be alone and to be treated as the godfather of Malawian politics. The other parties should bow to them. A faction of PPM, a faction of MGODE and the NDA are talking to each other to form an alternative alliance; while all the other smaller parties have ganged up and rallied round RP and Gwanda Chakuamba. The PPM, MGODE and NDA bloc favour Justin Malewezi, the former Vice State President in the Muluzi government. Malewezi joined the PPM earlier in the year after having been denied the chance to succeed Muluzi, and later publicly humiliated by Muluzi and his lieutenants as a "dull", "unintelligent", "ineffective" and "inefficient" politician. PPM, MGODE and NDA followers and supporters are of the view that a ticket comprising PPM's Malewezi and NDA's Brown Mpinganjira would win the presidential race. Many other Malawians share this view. Mpinganjira served in various ministerial positions in the UDF-led government and is believed to be the founder of the UDF, which is currently the governing party. He fell out of favour with Muluzi when he opposed a constitutional change that would allow for a third term for the incumbent president. His bold step to oppose Muluzi from within has earned him the

reputation of being a courageous and principled politician. Furthermore, it is believed that both Malewezi and Mpinganjira represent a younger generation of Malawian politicians and would therefore provide a good transition from the old to the new Malawi.

## **BOTSWANA'S ELECTORAL POLITICS IN 2004**

*By Professor Balefi Tsie  
University of Botswana*

### **Introduction**

General elections in Botswana are held every five years. The country is the oldest multiparty democracy in Southern Africa. Since the pre-independence general elections of March 1965, there have been seven general elections held in Botswana. All these elections have been won by the BDP with landslide victories except for the 1994 general election, in which the opposition won 13 seats out of 40 that were contested, a spectacular feat given their past dismal performance. These elections have been acclaimed by both domestic and international observers as free and fair. Voter turnout has been relatively good hovering around 60% except for the 1974 and 1999 general elections where it was rather poor. They are also cost-effective. General elections are held on one polling day (usually on Saturday from 7.a.m to 7 p.m.) during which eligible voters elect Members of Parliament and Local Government Councillors. The objective of this short briefing note is to provide an overview of the road to 2004 general election, most likely to be held in October this year.

### **Highlights on Build-Up to 2004 General Elections**

The first highlight is Parliament's decision in 2002 to increase the number of contested seats from 40 to 57. Besides these 57, there are four additional seats reserved for Specially Elected Members of Parliament. Following that decision the Judicial Service Commission appointed a Delimitation Commission as per Section 64(i) of the Constitution in July 2002. Section 65 of the Constitution outlines the functions and powers of the Delimitation Commission. Suffice to point out that the main responsibility of the Commission is to demarcate constituency boundaries such that the number of inhabitants in each constituency is as close to the population quota as possible. The Commission released its report in 2003. It is worth stressing that the Commission's decisions are final.

After the release of the report of the Delimitation Commission, the IEC (Independent Electoral Commission) initiated the demarcation of Polling Districts and identification of Polling Stations. Demarcation Committees were set up in all 57 Constituencies to afford stakeholders an opportunity to make an input. 400 Polling Districts have been demarcated meaning that there will be 400 Council Seats to be contested for in 2004 general election.

2000 Polling Stations have been identified. After the completion of these key process-steps, general registration of eligible voters took place for two weeks in November 2003. The results are not very encouraging. Out of an estimated 920,000 eligible voters, roughly 419,769 registered (approximately 46%). This low registration number suggests that there is a problem of voter apathy in Botswana. It is to this issue that we now turn attention.

### **The Creeping Problem of Voter Apathy**

Soon after the 1999 general elections, the IEC commissioned a study in order to find out possible causes of voter apathy. The study revealed the following causes of voter apathy, amongst others. First, the Winner-Take-All Electoral System disregards the popular vote in the allocation of seats in Parliament. For instance, in 1999 the BNF's 25% of the popular vote only translated into 15% of parliamentary seats whereas the BDP's 54% of the popular vote gave it 83% of seats. The electoral system can thus be said to be discouraging eligible voters from registering and voting in large numbers because popular vote for the opposition does not count much.

Second, the dominance of the BDP in Botswana's electoral politics sends a discouraging message of why one should register and vote in a contest whose results are known in advance. A weak and continuously fragmenting opposition compounds the problem. For example, the main opposition party, BNF, has split twice since 1998 and continues to show signs of disunity. Third, an increasing percentage of eligible voters feel that politicians use them as canon fodder in the race for power and accumulation. Politicians are increasingly perceived as the self-enrichment elite which has little commitment, if at all, to the interests and aspirations of ordinary citizens. This perception is particularly widespread amongst the youth, many of whom have very little sense of civic responsibility.

In response to this creeping problem of voter apathy, the IEC launched a vigorous voter education campaign in 2001 using print and electronic media, billboards, workshops and *kgotla* meetings as fora. The IEC has also forged strategic partnerships with key civil society organisations such as churches to promote its voter education campaign. Although the number of eligible voters who have so far registered is low, the campaign appears to be yielding positive results. Already, the number of registered voters (423,808) is approximately equal to that of the 1999 general elections (459,662), and this is only in the first registration round. A supplementary registration round is planned for 13-21<sup>st</sup> March 2004. Continuous registration is also going on. The IEC has targeted a figure of at least 700,000 registered voters by the end of June 2004. This is a realistic target considering that 55% of Botswana's population of 1.7 million, is under 18 years of age.