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**STUDIES ON POLITICAL PARTIES
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1. Introduction

The formation of the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM) as a breakaway party from the former rebel movement, RENAMO, shocked the political system. It appeared that the MDM was strong enough to break the bipolarization that had characterized Mozambican politics since the democracy- founding elections of 1994. In fact, this was one of the party's key objectives as put forward by its leadership soon after the party's formation in March 2009. This objective earned the MDM much sympathy from different sections of Mozambican society.

The MDM enjoyed the widest nationwide tacit political support from its formation until soon after the 2009 general elections. The atmosphere resembled the 'winds of change' that swept in several African countries early in the 90s particularly those where the third wave of democratizations came in a form of national conference, for example Benin, Niger, Congo, and Mali. Its non-transparent exclusion from electoral competition in seven of the eleven parliamentary constituencies helped to build an image of a 'good' party which was victimized by the National Electoral Committee, the body that runs elections.

The MDM was formed after an internal power dispute as a breakaway party from RENAMO. The MDM and its leader were eventually seen as the long awaited rebirth of a multi-party ideal which despite not having a different political platform from the existing political parties had a new leader. Daviz Simango had shown good performance in the city management of Beira. The MDM had this successful young leader versus a self proclaimed father of democracy who had long ago failed to live up to his promises, Afonso Dhlakama.

Rapidly formed on the spur-of-the-moment, the MDM appeared to be most appealing to the segment of the young population who had not lived through the two great historical moments tinted by FRELIMO and RENAMO. The new party focused on issues these two major parties could not resolve such as employment, housing, urban and rural poverty, crime, widespread corruption. Generally speaking these problems are predominantly urban youth problems. This hadn't been the intention of the MDM as its leaders insisted that the party's support came from the rural areas.

As an organization, the MDM introduced a new pattern in Mozambican politics which is the dominance of family ties over political party's structures. The MDM is a two-headed party, not between the President and General Secretary, but rather between the party President and the head of the parliamentary group who are brothers. FRELIMO had elite which has dominated the party since its inception but has never been family based. RENAMO is dominated by Afonso Dhlakama who brought his relatives to the party but they were never above the party structures.

Resulting from the 2009 general elections, the MDM gained the right to form a parliamentary group. It has since been conducting normal politics after the hectic electoral days. Drawing on the context of political parties and that of the opposition parties in Africa and particularly that of breakaway¹ parties, this paper intends to place the MDM on the crossroad of the Mozambican political system, probing whether the MDM is about a new party or a new political leader.

Drawing on the media reports and some interviews with party leaders, the paper will argue that the MDM has new features but thus far it seems to be the "same food that the Mozambicans are used to". The difference is that this food is served in new plates. More broadly, the MDM is not substantively different from other parties. It is a platform for a new political leader to reach the political heights and path for several people to reach parliament, municipal assemblies and mayorships. Nevertheless, this does not remove MDM's potential to revive the multiparty system inbuilt to this particular party breakaway.

1.2. Context of African Political Parties

Political parties are instrumental organizations for modern politics (Crotty, 1993; Mohamed Salih, 2003; Mozaffar & Scarritt, 2005; Kuenzi & Lambright, 2005) and they are indispensable for modern democracies (Lipset, 2000; Randall & Svåsand, 2001; 2002). Compared to their western counterparts, African political parties are generally considered to be a weak link in the chain of elements that together makes for a democratic state (Kopecky & Mair, 2003 in Mohamed Salih, 2003; Randall & Svåsand, 2001; Rakner & van de Walle, 2007). Simutanyi (2011a) summarized the

1 A breakaway group or party can be defined as one where, due to irreconcilable differences between the party's leaders and some of its officials or members the latter decide to resign to form another group or party. In many instances, those perceived to be a threat to party leadership are purged forcing them to form parties of their own to settle old scores. However, noticeably the circumstances that lead to breakaway groups can be found in the nature of the party system itself, especially in the entrenched authoritarian and undemocratic tendencies in most of the parties of the region (Simutanyi, 2009:6).

characteristic features of African political party system as discussed in the literature as:

- Lack of institutionalization (weak bureaucratic & organizational structures);
- Lack of internal democracy (intolerance to dissent, absence of internal debate, and absence of competition to elective office);
- Highly personalized and personality-based (i.e. personal networks and loyalties);
- Informalisation (personal and clientlist networks);
- Highly fragmented;
- Less differentiated by ideology or programmatic concerns;
- Non-adherence to internal rules and procedures (e.g. informal rules & procedures);
- Lack a clear, distinctive and identifiable membership and regular mechanisms for collecting membership contributions;
- Elite and urban-based (not organically linked to society grassroots);
- Lack a sustainable funding base;
- Lack of transparency, especially accountability for election campaign finances, etc.

The weakness² of parties in the African context goes hand in hand with a declining political competitiveness and entrenchment of ruling parties and presidents (Van de Walle & Butler, 1999; Bogaards, 2000; 2004; Sanches, 2010). The general trend has been of independent parties and/or the former one party state enjoying prolonged periods in government to the point of becoming the parties of government. As Simutanyi (2011a) points it out, apart from Mauritius and Zambia there are no experiences of power alternation with ruling parties losing elections at polls to the opposition in the region in the last twenty years. For instance, the ruling parties that came to power through national liberation struggles, such as ANC, FRELIMO, MPLA, ZANU-PF and CCM are the ones with longest longevity in power for between 17 and 50 years.

2 The essence of the 'weakness' means that parties fail to contribute in the consolidation of democracy (Randall & Svåsand, 2001).

This is due to the national liberation movement control over the state which makes it difficult for newcomers to break in and challenge the control over the state simply because these parties got in first and have often found ways of blocking, obstructing, frustrating known and imaginary political opponents using all kinds of strategies (Rakner & van de Walle, 2007; Sanches, 2010; Simutanyi, 2011). It is however important to note that since the advent of multiparty politics in the early 1990s there have been several cases of leadership succession in the region which unfortunately did not lead to regime change.

According to Simutanyi (2011a) at least 11 former heads of state stepped down voluntarily at the expiry of their term in 9 countries of the region (Namibia, Botswana, Malawi, Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar, Mauritius, South Africa and Zambia) despite some attempts to extend term limits in Namibia, Malawi, South Africa and Zambia. To be specific these attempts are an indication of a trend of poorly institutionalized party politics. As a result this impacts on the quality of inner party governance and democracy which in turn "...stifles competition and participation resulting in breakaway groups or political parties" (Simutanyi, 2009).

Party breakaways are not novel in Southern Africa. According to Simutanyi (2009), the Zambia's United National Independence Party (UNIP) was a breakaway from the African National Congress (ANC) and after 1991 there have been several breakaways with the most important ones being the United Party for National Development (UPND), Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD), Heritage Party and Patriotic Front (PF). In Malawi, several parties were established as break aways from the UDF, with the DPP being the latest. In Zimbabwe, the ruling ZANU-PF broke away from ZAPU. In Namibia, a new breakaway party group, the Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP), was formed by disgruntled members of SWAPO. While in South Africa a group of disaffected members of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) formed the Congress of the People (COPE) in December 2008.

Although there have not been breakaways from the ruling FRELIMO, many opposition parties in Mozambique resulted from dissent within the opposition parties. The Social-Liberal and Democratic Party (SOL) led by Casimiro Nhamitambo (now deceased) broke away from the Liberal and Democratic Party (PALMO) led by António Palanga; the Party National Democratic Congress (PACODE) from the National Convention Party (PCN); the Labour Party (PT) of Miguel Mabote from the People's Progress Party of Mozambique (PPPM) of Padimbe Kamate. After the first general elections of 1994 the Communist Party of Mozambique (PACOM) and the National Unity Party (PUN) were constituted (Lundin, 1995). More recently, the Party for Peace and Development (PDD) of Raúl Domingos and the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM) broke away from RENAMO.

Analyses of parties' breakaways in Southern Africa help us understand the configuration and working of party systems in this region. According to Simutanyi (2009) there are six root causes for breakaway groups and parties in Southern Africa, namely the lack of internal party democracy; personal differences as opposed to policy disagreement; personalization of power and premium placed on personal loyalties; elite competition for power; victimization and harassment of real or imaginary opponents and intolerance to and failure to handle factionalism within the party.

Although breakaway groups tend to be seen as unhealthy phenomenon in party systems and to democracy at large, they may provide a fuel for the revival of the democratic multi-party dream. A distinction must therefore be made between breakaway resulting from policy and personal differences. Often breakaway parties that are based on policy differences stand a better chance to attract popular support than those that arise from personal differences or perceptions of deprivations or marginalization (Simutanyi, 2009).

It is against this background that the debate on the MDM as a breakaway party is presented and it questions whether it is about a new leader or a new political party. The debate is structured under the framework of the party institutionalization concept which is defined as a process in which individual political parties that participate in elections experience an increase in organizational stability and value.

According to Basedau and Stroh (2008:8) "the institutionalization of parties or organizations, is basically about increasing stability and value-infusion (...) with respect to their internal and external relations". Therefore an institutionalized party is externally autonomous and possesses a certain level of "systemness" internally, that is, "it is largely independent from other organizations and provides for functional working structures".

The party institutionalization concept assumes that a well-institutionalized political party should have stable roots in society and that these roots have to be balanced with their autonomy as organizations. While the coherence of a political party requires that it can act as a unified organization (Basedau and Stroh, 2008). The level of organization aims at assessing the level of organizational strength of political parties which is primarily concerned with the level of maintenance of the headquarters; the presence of personnel; and the material resources such as computers, offices, and information material including the activities in between elections in and outside the capital of the country (idem).

2. Origins of the MDM

Soon after the approval of the first ever multiparty constitution in 1990 and during the peace talks between FRELIMO and RENAMO in Rome, the first wave of political parties emerged. These parties were named unarmed in order to distinguish themselves from the rebel movement - RENAMO. The rebel movement accused FRELIMO of being behind the emergence of these parties, apparently to pre-empt its political space in front of Mozambican society and, especially, the international community. FRELIMO never responded to these allegations but the accommodating legislation that regulates political parties in Mozambique (Nuvunga, 2005) suggests that the appearance of these parties was also in the interest of FRELIMO.

It was in this context that Urias Simango's³ sons, Daviz and Lutero, founded the National Convention Party (NCP⁴) in 1992. The NCP has since been led by Lutero Simango⁵ and is one of the 18 political parties that were created after the General Peace Agreement and contested the democracy founding elections in 1994 obtaining a disappointing 1.27% of votes (Lundin, 1995). In 1999, the NCP and nine other

3 Urias Simango, born March 15, 1926 was a Protestant pastor of the United Church of Christ in Mozambique and one of FRELIMO's founding members. By 1969 he was its Vice President. He was expelled from the movement, accused of taking part in the plot that killed Eduardo Mondlane (FRELIMO's president) on February 3rd 1969 (Chichava, 2010). In April 1969 his leadership was replaced by a triumvirate comprising the Marxist hardliners Samora Machel and Marcelino dos Santos as well as Simango. In April 1970, Simango left for Egypt, with other dissidents like Paulo Gumane (FRELIMO's founding vice-General Secretary). He left FRELIMO to join another small liberation movement COREMO (Revolutionary Committee of Mozambique). He was joined by other prominent figures of the Liberation movement and the FRELIMO dissidents: Paulo Gumane and Adelino Gwambe (also a founding member of FRELIMO), Mateus Gwengere and Joana Simião. Uria Simango was arrested and forced to make a 20-page public confession on May 12, 1975, at the FRELIMO base in Nachingwea recanting and requesting re-education. Simango was later captured, interned and then secretly executed in October 1979. The Permanent Political Committee of FRELIMO accused him of desertion and betrayal of the national cause and had already sentenced to death Urias Simango, Lázaro Nkavandame, Júlio Razão Nihia, Mateus Ngwegere, Joana Simião and Paulo Gumane (Ministério da Segurança. Ordem de Acção n 50/80).

4 This acronym (NCP) was first used by Urias Simango for a party he created in 1974 after the overthrow of Marcelo Caetano in Portugal and was essentially challenged by the Lusaka Accords which recognized and legitimized FRELIMO as the only representative of the Mozambican people (Lundin, 1995; Chichava, 2010).

5 Lutero is Urias Simango's oldest son of three children. These children were educated in the Protestant church where their father was a pastor. Lutero is a technical engineer currently working for the Mozambique cement company and is the head of the MDM parliamentary group in the National Assembly while Daviz is a civil engineer trained at Eduardo Mondlane University and president of MDM.

opposition parties joined a coalition with RENAMO (RENAMO-Electoral Union⁶) and by virtue Lutero Simango was elected Member of Parliament in 1999 and 2004.

At that time, and within the spirit of the coalition, the then Head of the Mobilisation Department of the National Convention Party (NCP), Daviz Simango, was presented by Afonso Dhlakama as Beira city's RENAMO candidate for the 2003 local elections⁷. This appointment caused disturbance within the party, firstly, because Simango was not a RENAMO member at the time and, secondly, because RENAMO already had a candidate for the city, Fernando Carrelo⁸, who was a RENAMO member and was allegedly supported by the party in Beira. However Simango was confirmed as RENAMO's candidate and defeated FRELIMO's candidate becoming Beira's mayor.

This was the first time in the history of independent Mozambique that FRELIMO legally lost control of part of the Mozambican territory⁹ to the opposition. In the meantime, history breaking events took place within FRELIMO as for the first time ever an outgoing president (Joaquim Chissano) handed over power to a president elected in the Party Congress (Armando Emílio Guebuza). The two previous presidents had to be succeeded after their deaths¹⁰.

The new president, Armando Guebuza, who led the peace talks in Rome representing the Mozambican government between FRELIMO and RENAMO between 1990 and 1992, was seen as less tolerant to political opposition, especially, RENAMO. Politically, Guebuza wanted to recover the cities lost to RENAMO in the 2003 municipal elections.

6 The ten unarmed parties that were allied to RENAMO are: People's Progress Party of Mozambique (PPPM), the Patriotic Action Front (FAP), Mozambique United Front - Democratic Convergence Party (FUMO-PCD), Mozambican National Movement - Social Democratic Party (MONAMO - PSD), National Convention Party (PCN), Democratic Renewal Party (PRD), Independent Alliance of Mozambique (ALIMO), Democratic Reconciliation Party (PAREDE), Mozambique Ecological Party (PEMO).

7 These were the first municipal elections in which RENAMO participated in after having boycotted the first municipal elections in 1998, on the basis of allegations of irregularities in the electoral process particularly the alleged partisanship of the institutions tasked with administering and supervising the elections (Siteo et al, 2005).

8 Businessman and nephew of the Beira influential traditional leader, Luís (Chichava, 2010). Bulha was FRELIMO's first provincial secretary for Sofala and he was removed from office shortly after his defeat in the November 2003 municipal elections (O Público, November 7, 2011, number 106, pg. 3).

9 In the same elections FRELIMO lost control of the municipalities of Nacala-Porto, Mozambique Island and Angoche, in the province of Nampula; Beira, in Sofala province and there was a power sharing arrangement in Marromeu, where RENAMO won the presidency and FRELIMO obtained majority in the Municipal Assembly.

10 The first, Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane was the founder of FRELIMO and died in 1969 and the second, Marshal Samora Moisés Machel was the first president of independent Mozambique, who died in 1986 in a plane crash in South African territory under circumstances not yet clarified.

Apparently as part of the strategy, FRELIMO enforced the legislation providing for the central government representation in local governments. This aspect had been overlooked in previous years and due to political rivalry its effect was mostly felt only in municipalities governed by RENAMO.

From 2005, with the inauguration of President Armando Emilio Guebuza, the relationship between the state machinery and the municipalities governed by RENAMO was marked by an unstable atmosphere. The city of Beira was notable in this difficult relationship with the state machine. At any cost, FRELIMO wanted to regain the city of Beira but Simango resisted, and with the support of some Western donors, his administration managed to implement significant projects for the city.

For instance, the municipality managed to solve the critical environmental sanitation problem, by unblocking drainage channels; the rehabilitation and application of asphalt on major roads; the construction of a plaza that improved the appearance of the Munhava Matope area (named after Andre Matsangaissa, founder and first president of the rebel movement that gave rise to RENAMO); the construction of a market in the Nhangau neighbourhood (which was named after Casa Banana)¹¹ and the construction of a market in the Massamba neighbourhood, named after Daviz Simango.

His notable performance annoyed FRELIMO leadership in Beira who hoped for the failure of Simango's governance in order to show that Beira residents had made a wrong choice. In his turn Simango continued and further aggravated FRELIMO by assigning names with symbolic meaning related to RENAMO to every project implemented. Another issue which irritated FRELIMO was the alleged removal of municipal officials who were supposedly members or supporters of FRELIMO, to accommodate RENAMO members and its supporters. From this list of issues, Simango had several disagreements with the then Minister of State Administration, Lucas Chomera.

Daviz Simango's first term in office was accomplished with a feeling of victory considering all the obstacles he and his government faced from the FRELIMO machinery. Paradoxically, it was Afonso Dhlakama who felt threatened by Simango particularly because some circles of the international community began to turn their attentions to Simango as future leader of RENAMO in a similar fashion they had done with Raúl Domingos in 2000. This explains why Afonso Dhlakama withdrew

11 This was the major RENAMO military base which was located in Sofala Province and coordinated all military operations. It was here that Andre Matsangaissa, RENAMO's first president, was killed during a battle with FRELIMO on 17 October 1979 (Seibert, 2003) and Afonso Dhlakama was injured but escaped death during the assault by the Mozambican army with the support of Zimbabwean troops in August 1985 (Minter, 1998). However, RENAMO soon recaptured it (Seibert, 2003).

his support for Simango to run for his second term in the 2008 local elections and decided to support another candidate, Manuel Pereira¹². This decision caused fury within the population and important figures in the city who did not understand Simango's replacement after an exemplary leadership and management in the Beira municipality¹³.

The controversy which followed culminated in the expulsion of Daviz Simango from RENAMO in September 2008. Consequently, Simango with the popular support he enjoyed decided to run for the 2008 local elections as an independent candidate and defeated with 62% of the vote the candidates from FRELIMO and RENAMO, Lourenço Bulha (34%) and Manuel Pereira (3%) respectively (Hanlon, 2010). As in 2003 FRELIMO lost Beira assuming everything was under control. In the elections in 2008 when Simango stood as an independent candidate, many sources suggest that FRELIMO had not provided the necessary support for its candidate, Lourenço Bulha, who was seen as a 'rebel' against Maputo.

This victory confirmed Simango's political capital in Beira by demonstrating that FRELIMO can be defeated and it also showed that he could succeed politically without the support of either RENAMO or Dhlakama. The margin of this remarkable victory encouraged Simango and his supporters countrywide to establish a political party - the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM). However, the nucleus of the party came from RENAMO and from the aforementioned moribund National Convention Party. However, for many people, the birth of the MDM is umbilically associated with what is termed as the "Revolution of August 28"¹⁴ within the MDM ranks.

Conceptually the MDM emerged as a breakaway party, since its key leadership came from RENAMO. Indeed, important RENAMO deputies crossed the floor to join

12 He was RENAMO's provincial representative for Sofala province and he is the best known and most outspoken of RENAMO's provincial delegates. Pereira became RENAMO's first official provincial delegate (still clandestine) in 1990, following a long history of persecution by the FRELIMO government. He had been a mid-level provincial official in FRELIMO and had conducted investigations into corruption for the party. He says he parted ways with FRELIMO when he refused to comply with an order from Maputo to have all Jehovah's Witnesses rounded up and sent to re-education camps. That triggered a series of prison spells between 1976 - 1984. When he was released from prison for the last time, he began actively to seek RENAMO contacts, and soon found them (Manning, 1998:186).

13 Daviz has received several awards as a result of his good management of Beira. The most recent prize was awarded in 2011 in the categories of cleanliness, fighting crime and good management. The distinction was given by PMR Africa, a reputable international organization that promotes good governance and leadership in Africa (Canal de Moçambique, 24 May 2011).

14 It is the date Afonso Dhlakama replaced Daviz Simango with Manuel Pereira as RENAMO candidate for Beira municipality.

MDM lists and among these were Maria Moreno (the former head of the RENAMO parliamentary group)¹⁵, Abel Sana-Sana, Ismael Mussa, Agostinho Ussore (former employee of the Administration of the State Housing, Member of Parliament for two terms and also an adviser to RENAMO President Afonso Dhlakama), Artur Vilanculos, Cornélio Quivela, João Colaço, Joana Carvalho and Claudina Guimaraes¹⁶.

Many of these MPs were the so called 'intellectual faction' which joined RENAMO on the eve of the 2004 general elections. Their access to Afonso Dhlakama agitated RENAMO as the old members felt discarded. There have always been factional tensions within RENAMO as all competed for access to the leader, Afonso Dhlakama. The more these MPs voiced demands for change within the party the more they annoyed the party leader until they reached a point of no return which culminated with them approaching the MDM. Many of these MPs participated in the MDM constituent assembly but refused to join the newly formed party.

This was indeed a strategic matter, as joining the MDM would mean the loss of the Parliamentary mandate. Therefore they preferred to stay in limbo but clearly they had reached the end of the road with RENAMO. Most of them actually joined the MDM as a way into Parliament. RENAMO insisted that MPs that had links with the MDM should be expelled. A formal request to prevent these MPs from standing for Parliament on the MDM card was submitted to the Parliament but it was sharply rejected.

The formation of the MDM as a party features many of the root causes for breakaways referred to above, mainly the highly personalized, informalised and personality-based politics; lack of internal democracy and poorly institutionalized RENAMO. Indeed, as suggested above, the MDM results from personal reasons associated to the threat felt by RENAMO's leader and not from ideological or programmatic reasons. Nevertheless, the MDM and its leader were eventually seen as the rebirth of a multi-party ideal which despite not having a different political project as compared to existing political parties had a leader who had shown a different attitude in the management of public affairs.

15 Moreno was also a RENAMO candidate for Cuamba Municipality presidency in 2008 where she lost to Arnaldo Maloa, FRELIMO candidate, by 77.6% against 16.4%. Maria Moreno now representing the MDM is again a candidate for the presidency of Cuamba municipality at the northern province of Niassa. These elections are being held as a result of three municipality presidents decision (all FRELIMO members for Quelimane, Cuamba and Pemba) to step down from office due to personal reasons. However, rumours around this issue have circulated in the country indicating that FRELIMO had called them to quit.

16 Maria Moreno and Agostinho Ussore were appointed in 2011 as members of the National Political Commission. The other members belonging to the commission are: Carlos João, Alcinda da Conceição, Luís Boavida, Lutero Simango, Albano Carige (Construction and Urban Planning Councillor at Beira Municipal Council) Abdul Satar, Domingos Manuel (Institutional Municipal Councillor Beira) and José Lobo.

3. Ideological Orientation

In ideological terms, the MDM is defined as a centre-right party. This definition seems to be an attempt to place itself between the two major parties, namely FRELIMO which defines itself as a centre-left and RENAMO which claims to be to the right. However, in practice these ideological definitions have no practical effects on these parties' electoral manifestos. In this regard the Mozambican parties fall into the African pattern with political parties lacking clear programmatic and ideological orientation and, therefore, it is difficult to position them on the theoretical matrix of contemporary ideologies.

In this context, one needs to be more pragmatic to capture some of the key elements of the electoral program of the MDM and, from there, draw some conclusions about its programmatic and ideological orientation. The election manifesto had four governance drivers, namely, "the broadening of citizens participation in public life; targeting especially youth and women; accountability of elected representatives, production of wealth and its equitable distribution and the improvement of the quality of state public services "(MDM election manifesto, 2009). In reality, these drivers are very elusive, for example, about the role of the state in the economy and society, about the position of the state on taxes issues which, at present, are the focal points of the parties' ideological positions.

Analyzing the drivers listed above, Chichava (2010) concludes that although using a somewhat different language, the MDM message was not different from the one advanced by FRELIMO or RENAMO, its main opponents, except for the definition of youth as "the highest priority for the MDM"¹⁷. However, the fact that the ruling party, FRELIMO, is able to mobilize all segments of society from the farmers, traders, trade unions from various fields of economic activity, to the richest and claims to be inclusive from left to right, brings additional difficulties to opposition parties to find social segment and base of support for their ideological orientation.

The opposition parties with some level of political vision sought a pragmatic orientation focusing on key issues of national interest at that time. Probably that is why the MDM stated in its political manifesto that its initial purpose was not to win the presidency of the Republic but rather "to prepare, organize and mobilize the Mozambicans, concerned about the future of our young democracy, to prevent FRELIMO from winning it's so long desired qualified majority (two thirds) in the Provincial and Parliamentary elections (MDM Political Manifesto, 2009) as this would allegedly be a setback on the democratisation process and a return to a one-party regime.

17 To enhance the focus on the role of youth in the party, the MDM started (2011) the establishment of Youth Political Committees in the provinces with the aim of revitalizing the party at the province and district levels.

This objective was very appealing in many sophisticated public opinion segments. However, the short time available to organize the party machine, articulate its ideology and mobilizing the electorate prevented the MDM from achieving the primary goal of all political parties which is political representation. At no time was it clear who the MDM represented and this was not surprising as Daviz Simango in one of his first public appearances had said¹⁸:

“Our ambition is to rule the country. Beira is maintained according to the popular will. We came to the conclusion that it was necessary to find our own political space where we could find people willing to see things in a dynamic way. It was young and old people who made the revolution and continue to ensure the existence of the MDM. Our ambition is to rule Mozambique. It's why we have decided to create a political party coming out from anonymity and make active politics competing in elections. Therefore, the challenge for the MDM is to leave the opposition and rule the country. We will leverage the capabilities of our members to bring solutions to problems that impede the development of the country. A party exists only when it can participate in all elections in the country. The elections of the Provincial Assemblies, to the Parliament and the presidency are part of the challenges for the MDM and are the reasons for our existence”.

Despite not having a clear ideological basis, the circumstances of its formation were instrumental for the widespread support and sympathy it won in the first months of its existence. Here stands the fact that although this breakaway party was not based on policy differences, its leader succeeded in heading up a new party because of his strong performance as mayor of the second largest city in the country; the organizational collapse and RENAMO's leadership inefficiency worked more as a ramp to the projection of a new national leader and catapulted the MDM as an important actor in national politics.

4. The MDM seen by FRELIMO and RENAMO

With the exception of the Party for Peace and Development (PDD) created and led by Raúl Domingos, there have been no cases where the emergence of a political party has shaken the Mozambican political system¹⁹ as dramatically as the MDM. The upsurge of the PDD was a subject of concern by those who advocated for a strong opposition. According to them the emergence of PDD represented a division

18 Interview to Savana in September 3rd, 2010, Number 869, p.5

19 In Mozambique there are currently 54 legally registered political parties (República de Moçambique (2010) Relatório de Revisão do País 2010. Mecanismo Africano de Revisão de Pares (MARP) e União Africana.

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and consequent weakening of the opposition. In fact, very few people actually saw PDD as an alternative to the two major political parties particularly because this party came into existence at a time when RENAMO had registered its highest electoral performance in 1999²⁰ and PDD electoral results had been disastrous. This party got only 2% of the votes in 2005 which was below the 5% required by law to elect a member of parliament.

When the announcement of the creation of the Mozambique Democratic Movement was made, FRELIMO and RENAMO positioned themselves on the same side disqualifying the new party. It was the first time FRELIMO publicly expressed hostility to the entrance of another party. According to Edson Macuacua, FRELIMO Secretary for Mobilisation and Propaganda, "the MDM, a recently created party in Beira is atypical and should be reduced to its own insignificance (...) MDM does not present new ideologies but hate and revenge, typical features of RENAMO. It is therefore a party with a pathological genesis resulting from the breakup and division within RENAMO and it is made up mainly of defecting politicians driven by hatred and revenge²¹". FRELIMO addressing both adults and young voters immediately after the local elections won by Simango, presented the MDM as equal to RENAMO which was a synonym of something created from outside and, therefore, it did not represent national interests.

On RENAMO's side, Afonso Dhlakama, who had initially portrayed the MDM as no threat to his party, allegedly because "... there have been several parties established in Mozambique for example, NCP, PDD and PIMO which were "not successful". Over time he started changing his speech especially because the press was reporting that an increasing number of RENAMO members were daily joining the MDM. In the press, Afonso Dhlakama, said "... Simango knew nothing about what he was doing²²," allegedly because he knew little of the complexity of political realities of Mozambique. For the then Brigadier Moses Lucas Machado, senior RENAMO officer, "... the MDM would have the same fate as the PDD²³." Another RENAMO member, Mario Barbato²⁴ also said that the MDM is composed by people from both RENAMO and FRELIMO, and therefore they could not be trusted because at any moment they

20 RENAMO got 38.79% of the votes corresponding to 117 seats in parliament (AfriMap and OSISA, 2009).

21 Noticias newspaper, November 11, 2009

22 Noticias newspaper, November 11, 2009

23 Magazine Independente news paper April 29, 2009, Number 108

24 He left active politics together with Fernando Carrelo after the 2003 election defeat (Chichava, 2010).

could return to where their ideologies and conscience belong²⁵.

What made RENAMO and FRELIMO react this way? For both parties, the MDM was a threat as we have mentioned elsewhere in this paper. For FRELIMO, the MDM had shown to have sufficient strength to disrupt its primary political objective in the general and provincial elections of 2009, a two thirds majority in Parliament and a landslide presidential victory²⁶. FRELIMO had interests in maintaining the status quo where both RENAMO and the other parties did not represent any threat to its supremacy.

Indeed, in an election campaign in the northern province of Nampula, the former president, Joaquim Chissano, made this clear, saying that the 2009 elections were complicated, among others, because there were new faces²⁷, a clear allusion to the MDM and Simango. Apart from being an obstacle to the political goals of FRELIMO in the 2009 elections, FRELIMO sought to ensure that the MDM did not turn into a national phenomenon of something that was seen as being local – Beira or Sofala electoral rebellion.

For this purpose, FRELIMO used all resources at its disposal to minimize the geographic reach of the MDM. For instance, in Manica province the local government authorities tried to prevent the establishment of an MDM headquarters in the neighbourhoods of Chimoio. More recently, the newly appointed MDM general secretary, Luis Boavida, was surprisingly brought to court in Pebane (Zambézia province) in an operation which suggests political influence over the judiciary²⁸. Simango's marketing and image adviser, Alexandre Junior (Alex) who recently died (2011) in Portugal from natural causes, was expelled from Mozambique in 2009 for not having permission to settle in Mozambique despite him living in the country for some time (O Autarca, 2011).

With regards to RENAMO, Simango had solved with a categorical superiority the imbroglio that led to his expulsion from this party, imposing a humiliating electoral defeat to Manuel Pereira, RENAMO's official candidate for Beira. This defeat had more profound political implications than RENAMO's simple loss of a municipality.

25 MAGAZINE Independente, March 3, 2010, Edition 152

26 The ruling party's control of three-quarter of the seats in the national legislature far exceeds the two-thirds majority needed to change the constitution (Manning, 2010). In terms of provincial assemblies FRELIMO won 703 (86.58%), RENAMO 83 (10.22%), MDM 24 (2.96%) and PDD 2 (0.25%) (EISA, 2010).

27 Savana, September 25, 2009, Number 820, Page 16.

28 He was accused of attempts to obstruct the work of an election census brigade and dual registration. Both cases pending since 2004 and according to the President of the MDM, Daviz Simango, were flawed and designed from the outset to prevent Luis Boavida from engaging in activities that the MDM had assigned to him (Canal de Mocambique, June 23rd, 2011).

Indeed, RENAMO failed to keep control of Beira which rivalled Maputo (symbol of FRELIMO's power) and from a symbolic point of view, Simango had just removed and replaced Afonso Dhlakama from the second largest national political centre of the country.

In fact, this explains why RENAMO demanded the reopening of the Rome Peace Accords Protocols²⁹. It was also an effort to claim that FRELIMO and RENAMO, regardless of election results were 'the real main political actors'. Moreover, the fact that Dhlakama left Maputo to be based in Nampula (the third largest city) and not Beira confirms the argument of deeper political implications which resulted from the defeat in Beira, a city regarded as a bastion of RENAMO. Afonso Dhlakama, a Ndaou from Chibavava, had every reason to fight the MDM because Daviz Simango's success, a Ndaou from Machanga, meant a deep division within the Ndaou family, whose consequences would be more substantive than the division caused by Raúl Domingos, an urbanized Sena, in 2000.

In terms of ethnicity, RENAMO has been portrayed as the party for the Ndaou ethnic group. In fact, both the founder and the current president of RENAMO are of Ndaou origins. Anthropologist Alcinda Honwana has suggested that the civil war may also have reflected ancient rivalries between the Shangaan-speaking people of the south, who provided the bulk of FRELIMO leadership, and the Ndaou-speaking people of the central provinces, who provided the early leadership of RENAMO. This gives particular importance to the Ndaou ethnic group and particularly its unity in relation to other ethnic groups.

The Senas are long time allies of the Ndaou but the former rebel movement has always been dominated by the Ndaou. A split of the Sena elite from the former rebel movement – RENAMO - to form a breakaway party had a relatively marginal importance compared to a split within the core Ndaou group as the later would result in the fragmentation and consequently weakening of the Ndaou in relation to other ethnic groups particularly the Shangaan-speaking people as categorized by Alcinda Honwana.

Apparently the strategy did not work as it appears that both FRELIMO's and RENAMO's actions contributed to the enhancement of MDM's popularity within Mozambican society, especially among the youth. Therefore, we believe that part of the success of the MDM in the 2009 general and provincial elections was a product

29 It is also true that the demand for the reopening the Rome protocols is associated with the spring revolution in the Maghreb, well used by RENAMO to suggest that a similar situation could also happen in Mozambique if there was not a national dialogue. After the events of September 1st and 2nd 2009, FRELIMO did not want to risk the possibility of political protest and for the first time since Guebuza came to power he admitted that there were talks between FRELIMO and RENAMO (Savana, May 20, 2011).

of the reactions of both FRELIMO and RENAMO and not actually due to urban and rural people's electoral sophistication.

5. Donor Community Support to the MDM

The fact that Simango made an international tour³⁰ to present the new political party, MDM, made FRELIMO and other people think that the party was serving foreign interests. Moreover, the presence of some foreign dignitaries from western diplomatic circles in the constituent assembly of the MDM, in Beira, raised the idea that this party had strong support from the donor community based in Maputo.

In truth there was no novelty in this type of support as in the recent past there were rumours that some of the international community based in Maputo provided financial, logistical and material support to RENAMO. For example, Mozambican press reports suggested that the then U.S. ambassador to Mozambique, Dennis Jett, had been seen in Zambézia providing financial support to RENAMO during the 1999 elections.

The internal disagreement which led to RENAMO's organizational weakening since these elections have apparently hardened relations between Afonso Dhlakama and the so-called international community leading to a shift in support of Raúl Domingos, who was expelled from RENAMO in 2001, and his emerging and promising PDD. Indeed, rumours circulated that the Maputo-based international community had donated, through a national commercial bank, around \$ 2 million to the PDD which was spent on the 2004 general election campaign. However, both Raúl Domingos and PDD electoral results were disappointing which made it clear that the PDD was not an alternative to the two main political parties.

For this reason Daviz Simango's successful leadership in Beira and particularly the categorical victory over FRELIMO and RENAMO candidates in the 2008 local elections excited the western diplomatic circle which saw the MDM as i) an alternative to RENAMO and ii) the hope to prevent the institutionalization of FRELIMO as a

30 In Portugal, Simango was received by representatives of the Social Democratic Party (at the time the main opposition party) and Socialist Party (then Party in government), the President of the Assembly of the Republic, Jaime Gama, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the offices of the Prime Minister, José Sócrates, and the President of the Republic, Anibal Cavaco Silva. The same round of international contacts led Simango to Brussels, The Hague, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Berlin. In Brussels, Simango made a speech in the plenary of the European Parliament entitled "A New Vision for Mozambique" (Savana. 20 de Março 2009, Edição 793, Page 3).

dominant party, since, in the eyes of many, RENAMO or at least its leadership was only interested in furthering their own position /playing FRELIMO's game and not promoting changes in the political system.

Two instances showed the support from the donor community based in Maputo to the MDM especially during the 2009 electoral process. The first is related to the partial exclusion of the MDM from the legislative elections by the National Elections Commission (CNE) and the second to the constitution of the MDM parliamentary group in parliament. With regard to the first, soon after its formal constitution, the MDM presented, in accordance with the electoral calendar, the application process for the three elections under dispute, namely: presidential, parliamentary and provincial assemblies.

Simango's candidature³¹ for president was accepted but the MDM was allowed to compete for legislative elections in only 4 (four) constituencies³², namely Maputo, Inhambane, Sofala and Niassa. Similarly there were many other parties which were also partially excluded but others which were completely excluded. Altogether fifteen (15) political parties and two (2) coalitions were partially excluded; six (6) political parties and three (3) coalitions of political parties were totally excluded from the elections by the CNE. FRELIMO and RENAMO were the only parties accepted to compete in all constituencies in the national elections.

CNE explained the MDM's exclusion from the legislative elections in most constituencies on the grounds of failure to deliver all key documents related to their candidates, such as residence certificate and criminal record. The MDM appealed to the Constitutional Council but its claim was rejected. The secrecy and lack of transparency within CNE prevented independent assessments on the legality of MDM's exclusion. The reaction from civil society and the press was very strong accusing FRELIMO and RENAMO of colluding to thwart the MDM. Most civil society explained the MDM's exclusion – with a conspiracy theory called 'FRENAMO' (FRELIMO + RENAMO) .

When Daviz Simango learned about the partial exclusion of MDM, his first public reaction was to request a meeting with the ambassadors of the European Union

31 Of the nine presidential candidates who submitted applications to the Constitutional Council (CC) only three were accepted, namely Armando Guebuza (FRELIMO), Afonso Dhlakama (RENAMO) and Simango (MDM). It must be bore in mind that by law each candidate must submit 10,000 signatures recognized by the notary, who support his/her nomination.

32 For national elections there are 13 constituencies namely: each of the 10 provinces, Maputo city and another two for Mozambicans living in the Diaspora. The parties submit separate candidates' lists for each constituency, with at least three more than the number of available seats. The candidates who have not submitted all required documents and the lists with insufficient candidates are excluded.

(EU), apparently to ask for support. The EU group was joined by the ambassadors from Canada, USA, Norway and Switzerland. They requested a meeting with the president of the CNE, asking for an explanation of the legal steps followed by the CNE to exclude parties, especially the MDM, from the legislative elections.

Similarly, the EU + 4 met with the president of the Republic, Armando Guebuza, on this same issue and in the end, they issued a statement which reads:

“We represent a large group of cooperation partners of Mozambique. We are very concerned about recent events. It is unfortunate the exclusion of many candidates to participate in various elections. We followed various groups defending their points of view that the process is not being fair or transparent. Many are concerned about the exclusion of entire lists, not just individual candidates. The justifications given by the CNE are not at all convincing. It is unclear whether the procedures were properly followed in all cases, or if the affected parties had an opportunity to present complaints or appeals. The credibility of the elections may be seriously impaired. Worse, we fear that rumours, conspiracy theories and vent frustrations may result in unrest and violence. Our capitals are becoming increasingly concerned and as friends of Mozambique, we would like to appeal that this situation be resolved urgently to enable the campaign to be undertaken without fear of mistrust and conflict,”

Clearly, the electoral process had ceased to be discussed by the relevant Mozambican institutions and became a matter of concern of the diplomatic community which spoke on behalf of parties excluded. However, the impression was that their main concern was the MDM.

Sidestepping the complaints of the donor community, the elections were held on 28 October, where a landslide victory confirmed FRELIMO and its candidate, President Armando Emílio Guebuza. As in 2004, their overwhelming victory was tainted by misconduct, discrimination, secrecy and confusion. “The good organization by the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration, STAE, on the day of elections and the tabulation process was overshadowed by bias, obsessive secrecy and lack of transparency, legal and procedural confusion, incompetence and gross misconduct in hundreds of polling stations”³³. The CNE has been harshly criticized by the Constitutional Council and all international election observation missions, especially in the lack of ‘level playing field’ for political parties standing against FRELIMO.

The second time the donor community supported the MDM was after the confirmation of the electoral results by the Constitutional Council. As the MDM was positioned in third place with 3.93% of votes it was able to elect eight deputies to the

33 Bulletin of the political process in Mozambique, Number 43 - November 19, 2009

National Assembly. However, this figure was less than the minimum of 11 members required by the Rules of the Assembly for the establishment of a parliamentary group³⁴.

The constitution of a parliamentary group was seen as important for the institutionalization of the MDM as a political party in the Mozambican political system, especially because under the Rules of the National Assembly, only members of a parliamentary group can formally ask questions to the government and are entitled to offices and administrative staff of their choice (Regiment of the National Assembly, Article 37 and 43).

Without a parliamentary group, the MDM would be silent in Parliament³⁵ and, more importantly, would have no access to the State political finance which is only attributed to political parties with seats in parliament. Therefore, without resources and recognition in parliament the institutionalization of MDM, in particular, and of minority political parties in general, would be very difficult mainly due to the absence of alternative sources of financing for political activity.

At the same time, the partners who provide direct budget support to the State, commonly known as G19³⁶, had a set of concerns presented to the government covering three (3) main areas, namely political inclusion and electoral reforms, transparency in economic governance and the fight against corruption. These concerns were raised at a time when donors should have made fund disbursements for the year 2010. Therefore, there was an impression that this was a condition for disbursements.

The Government of Mozambique commenting on the concerns raised by the development partners indicated with regard to political inclusion that the elimination of the 5% threshold in the 2009 parliamentary elections represented an example of its commitment towards greater participation in the National Assembly. The partners considered, however, that the elimination of the barrier could be an argument in

34 The number of members needed to create a parliamentary group was set at 9 in 1994, because this was the number of members of the smallest group, the Democratic Union coalition. With no small parties in parliament, the number was increased to 11 in 2001, shortly after the 1999 general elections, where only FRELIMO and RENAMO elected deputies.

35 Time allocated to debate a particular topic is usually established by the Permanent Committee of Parliament and then divided by the parliamentary groups in accordance to the number of members. Members who are not part of a parliamentary group may only contribute to the debates when authorised by Permanent Committee permit (Regulations of the AR Law 6 / 2001, articles 39 and 77).

36 This group is composed by the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Commission, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Denmark among others.

favour of other reforms, for example, the increase of the minimum number required to form a parliamentary group.

This observation left implicit the idea that members of the G19 referred to the need for the Assembly of the Republic (AR) to revise its Rules in order to enable the establishment of the MDM as a parliamentary group. However, it is important to note that RENAMO did not support the revision of the Rules of the Assembly to enable the establishment of the MDM in the parliamentary seat. Nonetheless, the FRELIMO parliamentary group proposed at the first session of the VII Legislature that the AR revise its regulations, reducing the minimum number to form a parliamentary group to 8, thus allowing the formation of the third parliamentary group, the MDM.

This gesture promoted greater closeness between FRELIMO and MDM. For example, in September 2011, RENAMO threatened to hold demonstrations throughout the country, in apparent protest against the marginalization of its fighters in the National Army. Afonso Dhlakama made a tour to Zambézia and organized crowded rallies to mobilize RENAMO's members and supporters for the possibility of undertaking demonstrations. The scenario became frightening as the Rapid Intervention Force (a special branch of the police used to prevent and combat violent riots) was ready to intervene. Two days after Afonso Dhlakama left Zambézia, Simango went to the same places Dhlakama had been and tried to calm the population. The Mozambican public Television (TVM) gave surprising political coverage of Simango's work in Zambézia.

On March 26, 2010 Savana newspaper headline was "The pressure from donors worked". This was an allusion to the fact that the FRELIMO parliamentary group, with a majority of two thirds, retreated from its initial position and accepted to review the Regime of the AR in order to facilitate the creation of the MDM parliamentary group. Without, however, accepting that it had been the donors who pressed for this revision, the head of the FRELIMO parliamentary group, Margarida Talapa, said that the review was a requirement which resulted from past elections experiences and contributions from various social spheres. Therefore, she concluded that FRELIMO in fulfilling its role as a party which boosted democracy and inclusion took the initiative to propose the revision of the AR Rules.

It is important to note, however, that the donor community wanted to support the MDM within Mozambican institutional processes, particularly in the electoral process and the establishment of a parliamentary group, as a by default support to the multi-party process and not a direct financial and material support to the MDM. Conversely, this strategy had two side effects. On the one hand, the MDM leadership had taken for granted that donors support included financial and material means, such as cars, etc. On the other hand, this has caused division within the donor

community itself, as some understood that there should be a substantive support to the MDM through support to Beira while others felt that this was excessive. Nevertheless, despite the differences of understanding, the donor community supported the design of the strategic plan for Beira city and in the public launching of the plan some promised to provide financial support for its implementation. But only two donors finally contributed to date.

6. The MDM at the cleavage crossroads

When the creation of the MDM was announced many people commented on its potential impact on the national political system. Some stated that Simango confused Beira with Mozambique and that he could not repeat the election success he had in Beira on a national scale. Allegedly this was because the political system was dominated by two parties with military background, namely FRELIMO and RENAMO. People could not avoid comparing the MDM to the failed PDD which after it had raised expectations within society got disappointing electoral results in 2004 and 2009.

The fact that Simango was based in Beira was seen as an indication that he, more than Afonso Dhlakama, understood the symbolism of Beira in relation to Maputo which was a central concern, as Urias Simango thought. As Chichava (2010) points out, for FRELIMO, "Sofala is a symbol of protest of central and north elites against what they consider as discrimination by the elites from the south which led to internal conflicts within FRELIMO, leading not only to expulsion and the desertion of many militants from these regions, but also to the emergence of regionalist movements demanding independence of their region". Consequently, Daviz Simango and MDM were seen as contributing to the revival of the south - center/north divide and Simango's age and success in Beira made him an attractive among the youth who distrusted both FRELIMO and RENAMO.

In this reading, the MDM and its president are associated to a generational cleavage. In this matrix, FRELIMO and RENAMO had popularity within the age groups marked by the processes that led to their creation as political parties, namely the struggle for national liberation and in the case of RENAMO the reference was the civil war waged from 1977 to 1992. Thus, the MDM devoted attention to the segment of the population who has not lived the early struggle and focused on issues these two major parties could not resolve such as employment, housing, urban and rural poverty, crime, widespread corruption among others. Generally speaking these problems are eminently urban youth problems. As it can be seen, the last two interpretations saw great potential for the MDM to

explore, on the one hand, the regional south - center / north cleavage which is a product of the history of national liberation struggle and therefore able to mobilize a segment of voters from the central region i.e. the provinces of Sofala, Tete, Manica and Zambézia. On the other hand, the generational divide, where FRELIMO and RENAMO both tried to capture the electorate composed of the generation of the national liberation struggle and civil war, while the MDM mobilized the segment of the electorate born post the peace agreements (1992 onwards).

The exclusion of the MDM in seven constituencies mainly in the central region of the country, namely Manica, Tete and Zambézia, does not allow a thorough assessment of the MDM potential to mobilize voters around the regional cleavage. As Simango competed in all constituencies and assuming that the vote for Simango and MDM would be equal, one can conclude that the MDM is eminently an urban phenomenon especially because he got 23.4% in Beira and 16.5%³⁷ in Maputo.

It was curious to note that the MDM defeated FRELIMO at an elite area in Maputo (Polana cimento and Sommerschild). More importantly, the MDM won three seats in the Maputo city constituency³⁸, which is something never accomplished before by any opposition party, not even by RENAMO which had never gone beyond two seats (Hanlon, 2010; Chichava, 2010). This signals an increasing political consciousness of urban as compared to rural population particularly due to the exposure to a diversified array of means and source of information.

With regards to the regional dimension, the election results showed a different picture to the one expected before elections. For example, in the central region of the country, Simango obtained 6.9% in Zambézia, 5.3% in Tete, 7.4% in Manica, well below Afonso Dhlakama who got 38.8% in Zambézia, 8.8% in Tete and 22.2% in Manica. RENAMO had almost the same figures as its leader in these constituencies. Therefore, the idea of regional cleavage seems to fall down, at least judging by these election results.

The 2009 election showed clearly that the MDM was not necessarily limited to Beira. The same results also confirmed the tendency of many opposition parties in Africa which have a strong presence in two or three strongholds (constituencies) and a national minimum base of electoral support. In this context, the MDM fits the trend of African opposition parties which tend to enjoy support from urban constituencies

37 According to Chichava (2010) this shows that "this is an electorate tired of FRELIMO, disillusioned by RENAMO, or even an electorate which has never been identified with RENAMO and saw the MDM as an opportunity to unravel these two parties, regardless of whether the party had an ideology or an alternative political program " (p.18).

38 Ismael Mussa was elected to the Assembly from Maputo city, where he was head of the MDM constituency list.

which often coincides with a spiral of higher levels of electorate sophistication.

Although the media have shown that MDM's campaign attracted a lot of young voters, there is still no quantitative evidence to sustain that this party has greater popularity among the youth. Therefore, the assertion of MDM's large support among the youth still needs to pass through other elections tests. Can we, then, consider that the support for the MDM by urban voters, particularly in Maputo and Beira, reflects its social base in the sense of 'roots in society,' to the point of thinking in terms of a cleavage theory?

The way the MDM was created and its trajectory was marked by victimization and partial exclusion may have attracted a certain segment of voters in urban areas who voted for it as a sign of protest against the conspiracy by 'FRENAMO' which aimed at hampering the institutionalization of the MDM. Can the MDM maintain its stronghold in Beira without Simango? Can Simango keep alive the momentum of the MDM while living outside of Beira (for example, staying in Maputo?) There are currently more questions than answers with regard to the institutionalization of the MDM and that is happening to the extent to which it will help break the bipolarisation of the Mozambican political system.

7. The MDM in Parliament

The distrust between FRELIMO and RENAMO which dates back to the negotiations of the Peace Agreement in Rome is such that both FRELIMO and RENAMO parliamentary groups consistently oppose each other whenever there is a proposal from either side. This occurs regardless of the substantive value of the policy except when the proposals are related to MP's benefits when there is always consensus.

Since the first democratic legislature FRELIMO has always had a majority to pass any legislation brought before or raised in parliament. In the 1994 elections, FRELIMO got 129 seats, RENAMO got 112 and 9 went to the coalition known as the Democratic Union. In the 1999 election, there was no small party represented in parliament only FRELIMO (133 seats) and RENAMO-Electoral Union (117 seats). Again, in 2004 there was just FRELIMO (160 seats) and RENAMO-Electoral Union (90 seats). It was only in 2009 that again a third political party managed to get to the parliament and the distribution of seats was as follows: FRELIMO (191 seats), RENAMO (seats 51) and MDM (8).

In the current legislature FRELIMO has a hegemonic presence to govern alone and even to approve the amendments to the Constitution of the Republic while RENAMO and MDM have a symbolic presence. Reduced to mere protest, RENAMO continues

its parliamentary strategy that consists of vetoing everything that FRELIMO proposes but in the meantime, RENAMO has been regularly calling press conferences to present their intentions and voting decisions, which is a break with its past behaviour.

The most difficult situation is faced by the young MDM which must position itself between the two giants whose parliamentary strategy is informed by the country's recent history. In an interview to the press³⁹, the then MDM General Secretary, Ismael Mussa, said that the MDM has gone to parliament to defend the real interests of the Mozambicans. For instance, "the Constitution of the Republic refers to the ordinary legislator many matters to be regulated, but until now nothing has been done in this regard".

Knowing the MDM limitations to play a significant role in parliament, the then General Secretary rightly said that in the current legislature one of this party objectives will be to put pressure on so that postponed law proposals are approved⁴⁰. We are confident that the adoption of these laws will increase the degree of citizens' political participation providing them with tools to better defend themselves against injustice and better interact with the state in the defence and promotion of their civil and political rights. For this reason, the MDM will fight for this and other constitutional principles to be respected. For instance, many powers constitutionally assigned to the municipalities are being removed and given to the governors; competences legally assigned to the Administrative Court are also going to the governors, limiting the principle of decentralization.

The issues on the MDM agenda are clearly an attempt to answer part of the main problems affecting the quality of governance in Mozambique. The issues chosen by the MDM made people think that this parliamentary group would distance itself from RENAMO's veto strategy but at the same time be distinct from FRELIMO on the ground of technical arguments. Therefore, it was expected that the MDM would have a more technocratic role making coalitions with civil society and media to push through its agenda.

The MDM strategy in the National Assembly so far has not been clear. The party's vote logic on major matters of governance has not been coherent with its public statements. The MDM vote has followed the FRELIMO parliamentary group⁴¹ and it

39 Savana, March 26, 2010, Number 846, Page:14-15.

40 For example, the Law of Popular Action; the Referendum Act; Antenna Right Law; the Law governing the conflict of interests, the anti corruption, public companies law on, as well as operationalization of the law which establishes the Ombudsman.

41 It is interesting to note certain proximity between FRELIMO and MDM parliamentary groups. In the parliamentary arena, FRELIMO prefers MDM to RENAMO. Probably, the MDM have softened its tone of voice to suit this FRELIMO preference.

has abstained only in very few occasions. Therefore, the long-awaited technocratic work to be undertaken by the MDM parliamentary group under the leadership of the then general secretary of the party has not yet been effective.

In an interview Mussa recognised that “the MDM voting position is complicated by the handicap of being few in numbers. We have 8 members and half of those eight have never been in parliament. We are not able to be part of all committees in parliament and the greatest activity is not made in the parliament plenary but in the committees and we are too few to be part of all the commissions. Often we will discuss in plenary documents which have already been discussed in more specialized forums where we do not participate due to our limited number”.

It seems that in 2010 the MDM was busy with organizational aspects and in 2011 the emphasis was on dealing with aspects of internal governance in particular the power struggle and a scandal on an illicit deal involving the leadership of the parliamentary group. For all these reasons, the potential of the MDM parliamentary group in the AR has been curtailed.

8. MDM: The Internal Dimension

The MDM is a very young party with only two years of existence which suggests caution when analyzing its political potential in the Mozambican political system. It was created at a constituent assembly which also elected the Party’s Political Committee⁴² and Daviz Simango as the party president. Apparently because there was some rush to prepare for the 2009 general and provincial elections, the party President who was based in Beira for more than a year performed both the role of President and party general secretary.

When the general secretary was later elected there was no transfer of important dossiers to the newly appointed post holder. Everything continued under the supervision of the president and the general secretary was in charge of Foreign Affairs, Social and Religious Affairs and, research and projects. In short, all the electoral operations were run from Maputo but the ‘political headquarters’ was in Beira. At some stage several teams of canvassers were created and appointed from Beira and sent to work countrywide which led to some duplication, and in some cases, much friction⁴³ between the president and the general secretary.

42 Among the elected were Daviz Simango relatives (Chichava, 2010) and it was with this Political Committee that all the relevant documentation was submitted to the Ministry of Justice for the legalization of the party.

43 Extract of an Interview with Ismael Mussa undertaken in May 2011.

Obviously this did not help the good functioning of the party which was also undermined by the violation of the party statutes. According to these statutes, the creation and dissolution of the Political Committee is a responsibility of the party's congress. However, in a clear violation of the statutes, ten months after the creation of the party, Simango dissolved the Political Committee, claiming that he wanted to provide a new dynamic in the functioning of the party. But according to Chichava (2010:19) the goal was "to get rid of Ivete Fernandes⁴⁴, which was confirmed by the fact that she was the only person from the former Political Committee members who had not been designated for a new position within the Party".

In terms of levels of organization, inner workings of the party, the party's national presence and implementation of activities beyond the electoral process, the MDM has fallen far short to the expectations. The whole dynamic and enthusiasm around the MDM had disappeared with the end of the general elections 2009 which came as no surprise as the MDM meant an avenue for Parliament for many of its big names who were basically those who crossed the floor from RENAMO and who were not properly embedded within the party, their only goal to seek election or re-election for Parliament.

An internal power struggle began between Maputo, where the general secretariat and other collegiate bodies of the party were based, and Beira, which hosted the party's president and the so called hard wing of the party which is intimately associated with the proclaimed "August 28 Revolution". This marred the after-election real politics which featured a kind of language that characterized the process of party formation basically around a self proclaimed revolution.

Simango was seen as using similar methods to those of Afonso Dhlakama, RENAMO president. In April 2010, Lutero Simango, Daviz's elder brother, was appointed head of the MDM parliamentary group. For many, this appointment was the peak of Simango's allocation of party senior level positions to his relatives. This preceded accusations from both RENAMO and FRELIMO arguing that the City Council of Beira was apparently packed with Simango relatives. Similarly, during his first term in office, Simango was harshly accused of dismissing municipal officials and employees who were considered loyal to FRELIMO and, apparently, hiring his relatives and RENAMO supporters.

The scandal around customs exemptions, where senior party cadres used the legal right to exemption granted to political parties to import luxury cars, to benefit a

44 Widow of Evo Fernandes, the RENAMO general secretary who was murdered in Lisbon in 1987 (AIM, 2009).

famous businessman in Maputo, surprised national public opinion⁴⁵. The main problem was that this illicit deal apparently benefited some people within the party but not the party. In many parts of the world, the opposition does not have clean hands. It has been so in Zimbabwe, Zambia and other countries but the difference is that in these countries these methods were used to raise funds to oppose the ruling parties and not for private enrichment.

The MDM became clearly divided between the party President, based in Beira, and the General Secretariat, based in Maputo. The president took strategic decisions for the party in conjunction with the leadership of the parliamentary group exercised by his brother. The general secretariat which was led by the proclaimed “intellectual wing of the party”⁴⁶ became redundant and months passed without any correspondence between the president and general secretary.

The press reported, for example, that in February 2011 Simango and Ismael Mussa met unexpectedly in Lhanguene cemetery during the funeral of a MP and apparently neither knew of the possible presence of the other, stated differently, the party President travelled from Beira to Maputo without the knowledge of his General-Secretary based in Maputo. This is not new in Mozambican politics. Within RENAMO a similar thing happened in the years that followed the 1999 general elections, where Raúl Domingos, head of the RENAMO parliamentary group, was more than 12 months without formal correspondence with its president, Afonso Dhlakama, because Domingos was seen as overshadowing the president. In fact, it was the result of this that Raúl Domingos was expelled from RENAMO in 2001.

As an organization the MDM inaugurated a new pattern in Mozambican politics which is the dominance of family ties over political party's structures. The MDM is a two-headed party, not between the president and General Secretary, but rather between the party president and the head of the parliamentary group who are brothers, and this is institutionally problematic. FRELIMO has an elite which has dominated the party since its inception but it has never been a family elite. RENAMO is dominated by Afonso Dhlakama who brought his relatives to the party but they

45 It is estimated that on this operation, the Mozambican state has been defrauded of more than 25 million Meticals (about 1 million USD). For many, this was a ‘stain on white cloth’ however, Savana newspaper claims that the abuse of tax exemptions by Members of Parliament to facilitate the import of vehicles to third parties for a fee is an old scheme, that is, before MDM entering parliament (Savana April 15, 2011).

46 These were essentially Ismael Mussa, Dionisio Quelhas, João Colaço who were advisors to Afonso Dhlakama; they abandoned the party in 2008, accusing him of authoritarian leadership. Some of these former RENAMO members were appointed to the General Secretariat of the MDM namely: João Colaço was Head of Research and Projects; Julieta Anselmo for Administration and Finance; Bernabé Lucas Nkomo for the area of Training and cadres; Elias Impuire for Information and Propaganda; Geraldo Carvalho for Mobilization and Information and Abel Mabunda for Foreign Affairs (O País, March 15th, 2010).

were never above the party structures.

The intellectual wing of the party led by the General Secretary, Ismael Mussa, concerned with the direction of the party wrote a letter to the party president entitled "Concerned Party Cadres" which addressed several issues where the signatories argued that they were "witnessing the development of a political organization based on family and region trust". They accused the party president of ignoring or choosing to ignore the statutory limits assigned to him and the existence of parallel structures, managed by the President and the General Secretary. They also denounced the mismanagement of party funds, where, according to the letter the General Secretariate has no access to the party accounts which are managed from Beira by the party President⁴⁷.

The letter also claims that "the political committee is essentially dominated by the president's relatives and people from his personal relations and vassals (...) this is also reflected at the level of other management positions"⁴⁸. The letter goes on saying that "the direction that the MDM is now treading which results from the presidents arrogance, intolerance, intransigence and lack of strategic vision, is removing the party from its main goal to govern the country".

As a result, the party's hard wing accused the intellectual wing of working for FRELIMO and, therefore, said they deserved to be expelled from the party⁴⁹. In this regard, the three Mozambican main parties are similar. In both MDM and RENAMO, if a member criticizes the inner workings is labelled as a "FRELIMO infiltrated" while for FRELIMO, a member who challenges the party is seen as being "not one of us", an apparent allusion to RENAMO.

In its editorial, the newspaper 'Magazine Independente' is an adamant critic stating that "when the MDM was created, we thought it was a different kind of political force which was more organized and democratically structured. No one had thought that this new born would come to exacerbate the negative connotation of the Mozambicans who cannot express a different thought, without being considered infiltrated by this or that party"⁵⁰.

47 Apparently the cheque signatories are the same as the one at the Beira municipal management: Daviz Simango, the President, the finance director and the treasurer (Chichava, 2010). However, it is not clear at this point if they belong to the MDM party structure.

48 The MDM Parliamentary group (led by Lutero Simango); the President of the Youth League (led by Sande Carmona (Daviz Simango's cousin); the National Jurisdiction Council led by Eduardo Elias, a Ndau, who is Simango's brother in law).

49 Magazine Independente Editorial April 20, 2011.

50 Magazine Independente Editorial, April 20, 2011.

As a result of the above mentioned issues Ismael Mussa resigned from office⁵¹ and months later, the party met in a National Conference where the outgoing General Secretary was not invited. Moreover, the national conference recommended that Mussa be expelled and the President of the party proposed the appointment of a new General Secretary, Luís Boavida⁵², who was ratified by the Political Committee.

9. Conclusions

Although breakaway parties tend to be seen as unhealthy phenomena for democratic consolidation and most recent data tends to suggest that the hopes for this type of parties to succeed in electoral competition are marginal, the MDM trajectory is somewhat different. The motives leading to its formation as breakaway party indeed fall into the African pattern of root causes for such parties, mainly highly personalized, informalised and personality-based politics; lack of internal democracy and poorly institutionalized mother parties.

Following from the above, like many other African breakaway parties, the MDM broke away not over policy but rather disputes for power. Nevertheless, the MDM and its leader were originally seen as the rebirth of a multi-party ideal which despite not having a different political agenda compared to existing political parties had a leader who had shown a different attitude in the management of public affairs. From this perspective, the MDM's formation concerned policy in the sense that it posed a well performing and young leader, Daviz Simango, versus a self proclaimed father of democracy who long ago failed to live up to his promises.

Similar to many other African parties particularly in opposition, the MDM's ideological base is not firm. There is no consistency between its self-proclaimed ideological positioning and its manifestos. However, Daviz Simango's successful leadership resulted in two consecutive defeats to FRELIMO candidates in Beira municipality. It relegated Afonso Dhlakama to the third largest city in the country and the party's potential to entrench itself within the regional and generational space meant the people's interest in the party's ideological positioning was negligible. Pragmatism

51 After this Ismael Mussa made an accusation in the press claiming that Lutero Simango was a member of two parties simultaneously violating the law on political parties. However, Mussa had never mentioned this during the election campaign. It has only become an issue since Mussa's voluntary resignation as the MDM general secretary, and subsequent moves in the party to remove him from the post of deputy head of its parliamentary group (AIM, 2009).

52 Boavida is perhaps the most surprising of the figures who defected from RENAMO to the MDM - he was a RENAMO parliamentarian for 15 years, and gave every indication that he was an unconditional supporter of Afonso Dhlakama. Yet he switched allegiances in 2009, and in recent months has been mobilizing support for the MDM in the northern provinces of Niassa and Cabo Delgado (AIM, 2011).

tends to orient the ideological positioning of the party. MDM's key ideological positioning before the 2009 general elections was to break FRELIMO's desired two thirds in Parliament. After the 2009 general elections, the key ideological goal was to govern the country.

The results of the 2009 election showed clearly that the MDM was not necessarily limited to Beira. Having done well in Maputo city, it suggests that its popularity is more associated with urban than rural electorate. Although it did not contest in several constituencies the assumption is that the MDM would have equal share of the vote to Simango's in all constituencies including those of the SOTEMAZA region. This suggests that the regional cleavage has to be discarded, since Simango has performed poorly in these constituencies. More elections are needed to test the generational cleavage assumption.

One is forced to conclude that the perception of a party amongst the MDM leadership is similar to that existing in other parties: a social network to capture and control the state and its resources. Definitely the MDM will bring new people to the national political elite mostly people coming from a different background than the military base of FRELIMO and RENAMO, but generally speaking the MDM is not substantively different from other parties. Nevertheless, this does not remove MDM's electoral potential especially in a political context marked by reduced electoral sophistication, usual political parties lack of transparency before their electorates, regional voting trends etc.

MDM's electoral performance in 2009 suggests that the party could have done more if it was not victimized by the National Electoral Commission. This rightly raised the expectation that the MDM would move towards party institutionalization. Not only did this not happen but there were also internal fights, a family type of party management featured the party's real politics post election. The real politics suggest that the MDM has new features but it is thus far the same food that the Mozambicans are used to. The only major difference is that this food is served in new plates.

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