

CONSTITUTION-MAKING IN TANZANIA: PART THREE

By Dr. Stephanie M. Burchard

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The group's last suspected attacks took place earlier this year in June when a bomb was detonated in [Zanzibar](#). The group's demand: an independent Zanzibar, which it vociferously [advocated](#) for during the constitution-making process. [more...](#)



Tanzania President Jakaya Kikwete, left, accompanied with the Medical Director of Aga Khan Hospital-Dar es Salaam, Jaffer Dharsee, right, leave the hospital after visiting the two British women being treated from wounds received when assailants had thrown acid on them in Stone Town in Zanzibar. (Source: AP Photo/Khalif Said.)

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MOZAMBIQUE: OPPOSITION GAINS IN ELECTIONS

By Alexander Noyes

On October 15, 2014, Mozambique held its [fifth](#) democratic election since the end of its decades-long civil war in 1992. The election pitted the ruling FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique) candidate, former defense minister Filipe Nyusi, against Afonso Dhlakama of RENAMO (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana), the main opposition party, and Daviz Simango, head of an [alternative](#) opposition party, the MDM (Movimento Democrático de Moçambique). On October 24, the National Elections Commission (CNE) [announced](#) provisional results, with Nyusi capturing 57 percent of the vote, Dhlakama 36 percent, and Simango nearly 7 percent. Both opposition groups [contested](#) the results, alleging fraud. FRELIMO also won parliamentary polls, but did [lose](#) its two-thirds majority. While FRELIMO's win was expected, RENAMO's and Dhlakama's [surprisingly](#) large share of the votes firmly reestablishes RENAMO as the primary opposition party. [more...](#)



Mozambique President Armando Guebuza, left, and former RENAMO rebel leader Afonso Dhlakama, right, shake hands after signing a peace accord in Maputo, Mozambique. Dhlakama returned to the capital after a two-year absence to take part in elections on Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2014. (Source: AP Photo/Ferhat Momade-FILE.)

Alexander Noyes is an Adjunct Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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Unlike many of its neighbors in East Africa, Tanzania has no history of ethnic conflict, military takeovers, or coups d'état. Although the country is extremely diverse—it comprises more than 120 different ethnic groups and has sizable Muslim and Christian populations—neither ethnicity nor religion have translated into significant social conflict in the post-independence period. Part of the reason may lie with the [skillful policies](#) of former president Julius Nyerere, who established Swahili as the national language in the early post-colonial period and worked hard to unify Tanzania under his rule. Thus, the emergence of a radical Islamist group in Tanzania in 2011 has come as a shock to many. One of the most high-profile groups is UAMSHO (“awakening” in Swahili), which is believed to have been responsible for as many as 20 attacks targeting Christians, moderate Muslims, and tourists in Zanzibar since 2011. The group’s last suspected attacks took place earlier this year in June when a bomb was detonated in [Zanzibar](#). The group’s demand: an independent Zanzibar, which it vociferously [advocated](#) for during the constitution-making process.



Tanzania President Jakaya Kikwete, left, accompanied with the Medical Director of Aga Khan Hospital-Dar es Salaam, Jaffer Dharsee, right, leave the hospital after visiting the two British women being treated from wounds received when assailants had thrown acid on them in Stone Town in Zanzibar. (Source: AP Photo/Khalfan Said.)

Emergence of UAMSHO

The estimates of the Muslim population of Tanzania range from [30 percent to 50 percent](#). In Zanzibar, however, there is little debate about the religious affiliation of its residents. It is believed that [well over 95 percent](#) of the islands’ more than 1 million residents are Muslim.

UAMSHO, or the Association for Islamic Mobilization and Propagation, began as a Zanzibari Islamic charity in the 1960s. It officially registered as a nongovernmental organization in 2001 and radicalized in recent years. UAMSHO advocates Zanzibari independence and espouses [support for Wahhabism](#). It has called for a public code of conduct for tourists that includes modest dress and abstention from alcohol.

Ironically, [some believe](#) the power-sharing agreement reached between the government and opposition before the 2010 election has contributed to increased attacks in Zanzibar. The perceived co-optation of the opposition by the ruling party may have facilitated the radicalization process, as some claim that UAMSHO emerged to fill the political vacuum left by the opposition when it joined the ruling party. Because of the so-called [government of national unity](#) (GNU) in which the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and opposition Civic United Front (CUF) share power—regardless of who wins elections—there is no party left to advocate for Zanzibar’s interests. The union between Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania has long been [tense](#), with Zanzibaris often feeling marginalized by the dominance of mainland politics. CUF, although a national party, enjoyed the vast majority of its support from voters in Zanzibar. There are rumors in Zanzibar that politicians, [particularly those from CUF](#), are operating indirectly through UAMSHO because they can no longer officially oppose government policy.

The [constitutional review process](#), which began after the 2010 election and the GNU, seems to have galvanized UAMSHO. In 2011, UAMSHO began holding rallies and frequent [anti-government protests](#), advocating for dissolution of the union. These sentiments for more autonomy are widely shared among Zanzibaris. Based on data from an [Afrobarometer](#) survey conducted in 2012 in Tanzania, roughly 44 percent of mainlanders said there was no need to substantially alter the structure of the union with Zanzibar, whereas almost 90 percent of Zanzibaris wanted a change in the status, with 23 percent wanting a complete dissolution of the union.

Violent Attacks

In addition to the protests and riots associated with UAMSHO, the group is believed to be responsible for a series of [unsophisticated attacks](#) against religious leaders and tourists. [Three](#) Catholic priests were attacked in incidents occurring in 2012 and 2013. Two British [tourists](#) were attacked with acid in 2013. In January 2014, a bomb was thrown from a car at followers leaving a mosque where a moderate Muslim cleric had just finished giving a sermon on peace in the face of jihad. In February 2014, three separate attacks on churches in Zanzibar took place. The group has assassinated priests and moderate Muslim clerics, using guns, knives, hand grenades, and acid. Attacks have taken place largely in Zanzibar, but there have been reports of activity on the mainland in cities such as Arusha and Dar es Salaam and in rural areas surrounding Tanga and Mtwara. It is not clear if UAMSHO or followers of the radical cleric [Issa Ponda Issa](#) are responsible for the mainland attacks. Ponda, however, does have [ties to Zanzibar](#), so coordination between the groups is not out of the question.

Note that not all of these attacks can definitively be linked to a specific group. The government and media remain relatively tight-lipped when it comes to reporting on UAMSHO's activities, and it has been alleged that the Tanzanian government instituted [a ban on reporting](#) on UAMSHO. Most news coverage simply refers to such incidents as acts of terrorism.

Government Response

The government response has been swift. Police operations have resulted in several mass arrests, with at least [60 people arrested](#) in connection with terrorist attacks over the past two years. Sheikh Farid Hadi Ahmed and Sheikh Msellem Ali, both from UAMSHO, are currently [in police custody awaiting trial](#). Farid, believed to be UAMSHO's leader, was detained briefly before. He went missing in October 2012 and in response his supporters [rioted for two days](#). He was released shortly thereafter. According to Farid, he was kidnapped by the police, but the police have denied this accusation. He was [arrested](#) in late December 2012 and is being held in detention on the mainland.

Conclusions

It remains to be seen if UAMSHO, which is believed to enjoy substantial popular support in Zanzibar, is merely a temporary problem or whether it poses more of a long-term challenge for Tanzania. One of the many questions regarding UAMSHO's true motivation: is it a religious or political movement? Most of its attacks have been targeted at religious figures, but its stated demands are for political autonomy. This, coupled with the speculation that some Zanzibari politicians are tacitly supporting UAMSHO, suggests that it may be more of a political vehicle than an ideological movement. UAMSHO was active during the majority of the constitutional review process but has been silent since July. Although UAMSHO has said it will [not directly participate](#) in elections, it would not be surprising to see the group reemerge prior to the proposed constitutional referendum and upcoming elections in 2015 in an attempt to influence those processes.

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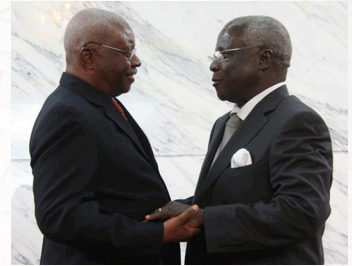
On October 15, 2014, Mozambique held its [fifth](#) democratic election since the end of its decades-long civil war in 1992. The election pitted the ruling FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique) candidate, former defense minister Filipe Nyusi, against Afonso Dhlakama of RENAMO (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana), the main opposition party, and Daviz Simango, head of an [alternative](#) opposition party, the MDM (Movimento Democrático de Moçambique). On October 24, the National Elections Commission (CNE) [announced](#) provisional results, with Nyusi capturing 57 percent of the vote, Dhlakama 36 percent, and Simango nearly 7 percent. Both opposition groups [contested](#) the results, alleging fraud. FRELIMO also won parliamentary polls, but did [lose](#) its two-thirds majority. While FRELIMO's win was expected, RENAMO's and Dhlakama's [surprisingly](#) large share of the votes firmly reestablishes RENAMO as the primary opposition party.

As discussed in the July 23, 2014, [edition](#) of *Africa Watch*, a peace agreement was inked between RENAMO and FRELIMO just [weeks](#) before this year's elections. The deal put an end to the low-level insurgency launched by RENAMO over the past two years, which left up to [54 dead](#), [alarmed](#) foreign investors in Mozambique's high-growth economy, and [threatened](#) to return the country to civil war. The deal secured [amnesty](#) for Dhlakama's fighters, called for further integration of RENAMO rebels into the armed forces, and marked Dhlakama's and the party's reentrance into electoral politics (RENAMO had boycotted local elections in 2013).

Despite more than [doubling](#) his vote percentage from the 2009 election (where he captured only 16 percent), Dhlakama and RENAMO rejected the provisional results of the October 15 election, alleging fraud. These claims echo allegations the party has [made](#) after all other elections since 1992. RENAMO [maintained](#) that irregularities occurred in four out of 10 provinces. RENAMO's spokesman, Antonio Muchanga, [asserted](#) after the vote: "We don't accept the results ... the results should be annulled and new elections held." Dhlakama, sensing his newfound popularity, [called](#) for a negotiated unity government. "This cannot be treated technically. We must negotiate an outcome," he said.

Although the MDM did not fare well on the presidential ballot (in 2009, MDM won 9 percent), the party increased its parliamentary seats, moving from eight in 2009 to 19. Despite these gains, the MDM also alleged fraud, with Simango [asserting](#): "No conscious citizen in the world can state that the Mozambican elections were free and fair." MDM representative Lutero Simango echoed Simango's assertion: "FRELIMO is not prepared to lose. We reject the results." Despite claims of fraud and ballot-box stuffing, the European Union, Southern African Development Community (SADC), and other international observers [endorsed](#) the results, noting that irregularities were not widespread or egregious enough to delegitimize the vote. The provisional results are not final until the constitutional court ratifies the count. Paulo Cuinica, the CNE spokesman, said that all election complaints would be investigated, [maintaining](#), "We don't want any doubts to remain."

Assuming the October results are ratified, Nyusi will be the first president of Mozambique who was [not part](#) of the liberation movement. Dhlakama's resurgent popularity and Simango's poor showing in the presidential contest may dash hopes that this election could have helped move Mozambique into a new era beyond the ossified FRELIMO–RELIMO divide. That said, the opposition's combined strong showing in parliament, ending FRELIMO's powerful two-thirds majority, will help check FRELIMO's long-held grip on power. As Simon Allison [argues](#), "Now FRELIMO has to listen." While this is a positive development for Mozambique's democracy, Dhlakama's resurgence also sets a troubling precedent: violence [works](#).



Mozambique President Armando Guebuza, left, and former RENAMO rebel leader Afonso Dhlakama, right, shake hands after signing a peace accord in Maputo, Mozambique. Dhlakama returned to the capital after a two-year absence to take part in elections on Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2014. (Source: AP Photo/Ferhat Momade-FILE.)

A slumping Dhlakama had become increasingly irrelevant before he launched renewed attacks on the government. Now he is confident enough to demand a negotiated power-sharing government that may include a post of [vice president](#) for him. Dhlakama is again using the implicit [threat](#) of renewed violence to strengthen his negotiating position. The risk of violence during this period remains high, but it would likely be low level and limited, given RENAMO's recent gains at the ballot and the negotiating table. Post-election power-sharing accords may have some [utility](#) in deeply flawed, violent, and too-close-to-call elections. But given FRELIMO's sizable margin of victory and the seemingly limited degree of irregularities, Dhlakama's demands for a unity government do not seem credible.

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