

**Remarks by the Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of the United States of America,  
Mr. Todd Chapman  
on the occasion of a meeting of a group of ambassadors with the President of the  
National Election Committee, Dr. João Leopoldo da Costa**

Dr. Leopoldo da Costa, allow me to clarify a few issues. In this room you will find not only representatives of European ambassadors, but also representatives of other donors, such as the United States, all of whom totally support the statement of the European Union representative and of the other colleagues present. We have not come here to discuss legal details, since we are not lawyers, and it is public knowledge that the media present in this room have reported all the details, questions, and problems posed by those who felt excluded from this process. So let’s not enter into a point-by-point legal discussion. Transparency is essential, and it’s good that that’s what we are showing the public and ourselves today. We were under the impression we would have a private meeting with you, but according to your decision, the media were invited; and just as you have apologized for your frankness, so too I apologize, because I will be frank as well.

It’s the principles at stake that cause us concern. We can read on this sign on the wall what it says about elections, that they are to be transparent, free and fair; however, lately many representatives of the Mozambican civil society are questioning whether those principles are being honored; because people indeed doubt the integrity of this process. We cannot escape this reality being put forward by many. We have not come to you to speak of one single party; it was you who chose to concentrate on one party. We are here to discuss the democratic process. You have mentioned clearly that some have complaints, and you even used the diminutive of the word “complaint”. I personally believe that what we hope from CNE is exactly a solution to those “little complaints”, instead of using those “little complaints” to exclude people, parties and movements from the process. After all, the democratic process is not meant to exclude, but rather is meant to include all in the process. This is my vision, and one I believe I share with many – the inclusion of more people in the democratic process. Regrettably, this is currently in question.

We are not the only ones to make this assessment. We are here to observe, to consider and to communicate to our capital cities what is happening in Mozambique.

And so we hope that you can find ways of having an inclusive and transparent process, one that takes these concerns into consideration; concerns that are not only those of the international representatives, but more importantly, those of the national observers who have presented their complaints, or “little complaints”, as you referred to them. We hope to see a solution in the next few days, a step forward, that allows inclusion rather than exclusion in this democratic process that we all support, since we all want to see the country move forward.

Thank you.