



In the authoritarian government of Filipe Nyusi view: Frelimo members are the only citizens with the right to demonstrate in Mozambique

- In the middle of working days, Frelimo in Manica is mobilizing its members and civil servants to take part in marches saluting the supposed achievements of Filipe Nyusi, in his capacity as President of the Republic and of the Party. The marches - which have a parallel only in dictatorial regimes - began last Tuesday in the provincial capital (Chimoio) and will take place in all districts. Today it is the turn of Bárue district to stop and salute the achievements of the least prepared President that Frelimo has ever had in its almost sixty year history.

● The municipal authorities and the PRM, who have always allied themselves to repress marches organized by civil society, this time are committed to the security of the Frelimo Party demonstrators, who are by the way the only citizens with full rights in the Republic of Mozambique. The excuse that the march must take place at the weekend, often used by the authorities to ban the right to demonstrate, does not work when the promoters are “red card” holders of Frelimo. And there are still those who deny it when international reports assess Mozambique as an authoritarian state, where civic space has moved from obstructed to repressive.

In the last five (5) years, several reports from international organisations have assessed Mozambique as an authoritarian State, with a civic space that has gone from “obstructed” to “repressive”, the worst classification one can have. In fact, this assessment accurately reflects the hostile attitude of Filipe Nyusi’s government towards the freedoms and rights of citizens enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique.

Contrary to the Constitution of the Republic and other laws, the government of Filipe Nyusi simply banned the right to demonstrate in Mozambique. Since Filipe Nyusi came to power there has not been a single peaceful demonstration which has not been aborted by the police authorities and the organizers thrown into prison.

On several occasions, civil society organisations and citizens’ groups have seen their right to demonstrate invalidated either by the municipal authorities or by the police authorities. This in a State where all citizens have the right to freedom of assembly and demonstration under the law (Article 51 of the Constitution of the Republic).

In the last two years, the central government and the municipalities took advantage of the restrictions imposed under the COVID-19 prevention to ban peaceful demonstrations and marches by various civil society organisations and citizen groups. In Maputo City, for example, the municipal authorities had always prohibited peaceful demonstrations on the grounds that they posed a high risk of spreading COVID-19.

And because the enjoyment of the right to demonstrate does not require authorization, all that is required is to inform the competent authorities, there have been times when some people have taken to the streets to march, defying the illegal prohibition. However, any attempt to challenge the illegal orders of the Municipality of Maputo was repressed by the PRM, which prevented the march and returned to the cells of its promoters.

Now, Mozambique is a Democratic State under the Rule of Law based on pluralism of expression, democratic political organization, respect and guarantee of fundamental human rights and freedoms, under the terms of Article 3 of the Constitution of the Republic. Already in article 56(1), the Constitution of



the Republic states that “individual rights and freedoms are directly applicable, are binding on public and private entities, are guaranteed by the State and must be exercised within the framework of the Constitution and the laws”.

This means that it is the State’s responsibility, through its organs and institutions, to guarantee the enjoyment of individual rights and freedoms. In other words, both the municipal authorities and the PRM have the duty



to guarantee the realization of the right to demonstrate, regardless of the proponents. Contrary to the Constitution of the Republic and other laws, the government of Filipe Nyusi only recognizes the right to demonstrate to members of the Frelimo Party.

However, the marches organized by the organs of the Frelimo Party are the only ones which have not been the target of attempts to invalidate them by the municipal authorities, and their leaders have not ended up in PRM cells. In many municipalities, including the capital, young people from OJM (Frelimo youth organization) have organized several marches, with the right to protection by the police authorities.

Last Tuesday, 22 February, in the middle of a working day, the city of Chimoio was paralyzed for several hours when Frelimo members took to the streets to celebrate the (supposed) achievements of Filipe Nyusi, in his capacity as President of the Republic and President of the Party. Frelimo members dressed up and carrying placards with appealing messages walked along several

streets and avenues in the city of Chimoio, paralyzing traffic and some public institutions, as most of the leaders were on the march.

Among the hundreds of people who joined the march, the First Secretary of Frelimo in Manica, the Secretary of State of Manica province, Edson Macuacua, and the provincial Governor, Francisca Domingos, stood out. CDD understands that the marches are being replicated in all districts of Manica province and the demonstrators enjoy the protection of PRM.

After Tuesday's march in the provincial capital (Chimoio), on Wednesday it was the turn of Mussorize district to host the march in salute of Filipe Nyusi, and yesterday (Thursday) the march took place in Manica district. Today, Friday, the district of Bárúè will stop to receive the Frelimo march and at the weekend (Saturday of Sunday) it will be the turn of the districts of Macossa and Guro, respectively. All with the right to the protection of PRM, always helpful and helpful when the subject is to protect members of the Frelimo Party.






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