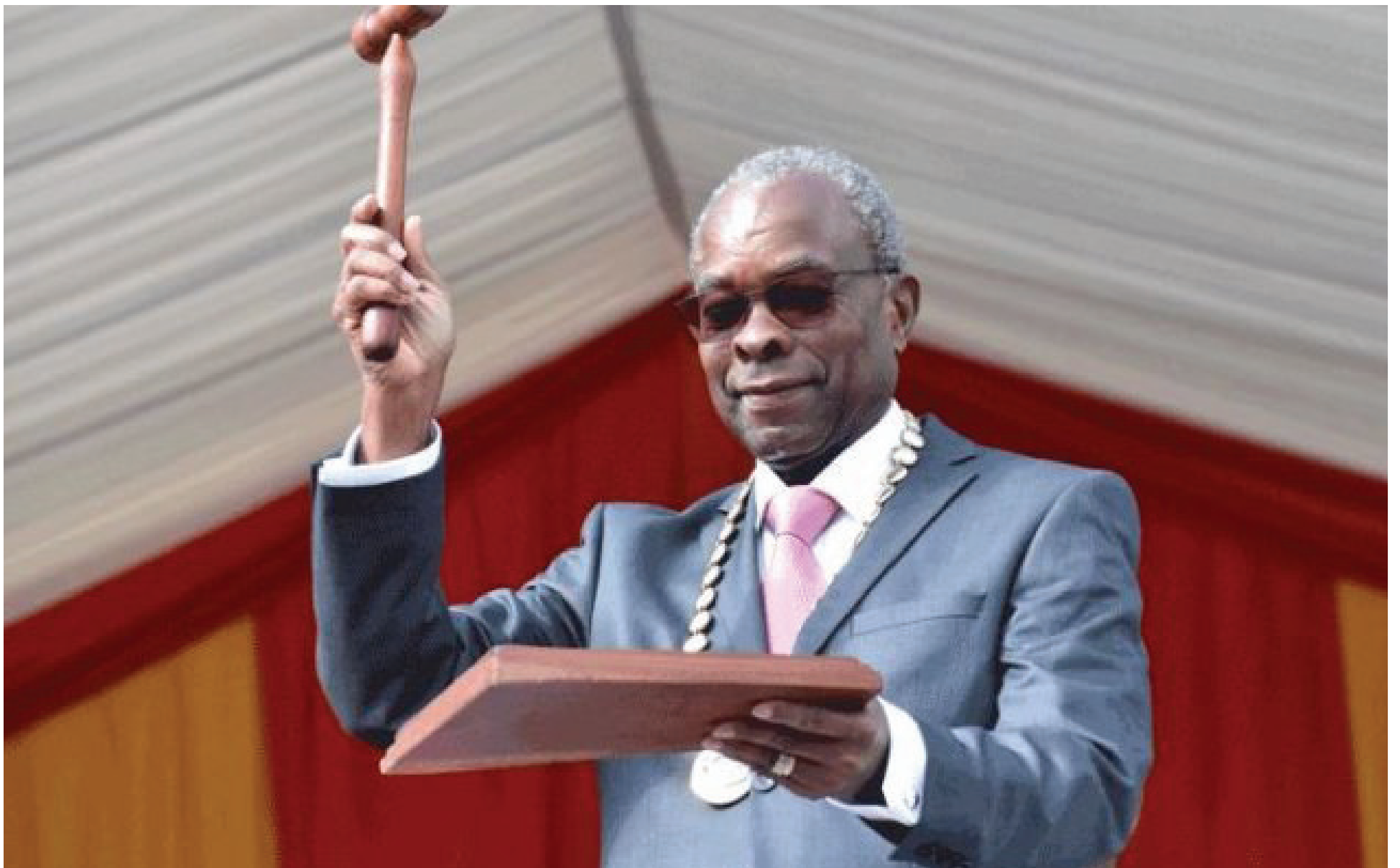


Three years after taking office, Comiche has not yet fulfilled a single promise to improve the lives of Maputo's residents

- It will be three years tomorrow since Eneas Comiche took office as the Mayor of the Capital City. Two years away from the end of his term, Comiche has not yet fulfilled a single promise made during his election campaign and on his inauguration day. The most recent promise was the suspended transport system called FUTRAN: work was supposed to start in September 2021, but to date there has been no sign and residents continue to be transported in degrading and humiliating conditions.



● In December 2020, the World Bank approved a Grant of 100 million dollars to finance the Maputo Urban Transformation Project. A year later, the only transformation that can be seen in the capital is the considerable degradation of roads. Part of the amount was to be applied in the urbanisation of KaTembe, but on the ground there is no neighbourhood organisation work... In other words, KaTembe remains a rural area within the Mozambican capital.

On a Thursday morning, 07 February 2019, Eneas Comiche was sworn in as Mayor of the Municipality of Maputo City, 10 years after having held the same position. In his speech on the occasion, he promised the following: “We will do everything to improve living conditions in the neighbourhoods, opening up more roads, expanding public lighting and the water supply network and organising the practice of informal trade”.

Three years later, no promises have been fulfilled. In other words, living conditions in the capital’s neighbourhoods have not improved, access roads have not been opened up, public lighting and the water supply network have not been expanded, instead of organising informal trade, the authorities have battered and beaten informal vendors, expropriating their goods.

Comiche also promised a hotline to report cases of corruption and to take decisive action against offenders. Over the last three years, the municipality has mobilised its repressive apparatus (Municipal Police) to oppress thousands of residents who earn their living by selling on the streets and pavements of Maputo City. The violence of the municipal authorities against informal vendors took place at a time when thousands of residents had no other source of survival due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In December 2020, the World Bank approved a USD100 million Grant from the International Development Association (IDA) to support the Maputo Urban Transformation Project. The Grant will finance urban infrastructure and support the implementation of municipal reforms, with emphasis on the construction of the landfill (at KaTembe) and decommissioning of the Hulene Dump; the implementation of an urban plan for KaTembe Municipal District, where the most urban growth is expected to occur¹.

One year after the announcement of the World Bank Grant, works under the Maputo Urban Transformation Project are still not visible. KaTembe remains an area yet to be urbanised and informal settlements are already springing up in the only area available for urban expansion in the capital. There is no road opening, no road construction, no street lighting on the few existing roads,



no formal market, no transport terminal, no expansion of the electricity grid and water supply.

In the city Centre, the main avenues are bumpy, especially Guerra Popular, 24 de Julho, part of Julius Nyerere, Eduardo Mond-

lane, United Nations avenues, and others. In early 2021, the municipal authorities said that after the rainy season (it ends in March/April), major interventions would be made in the rehabilitation of the main roads. The rainy season of 2021 passed and the munic-

¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/pt/news/press-release/2020/12/10/mozambique-receives-100-million-for-its-maputo-urban-transformation-project>

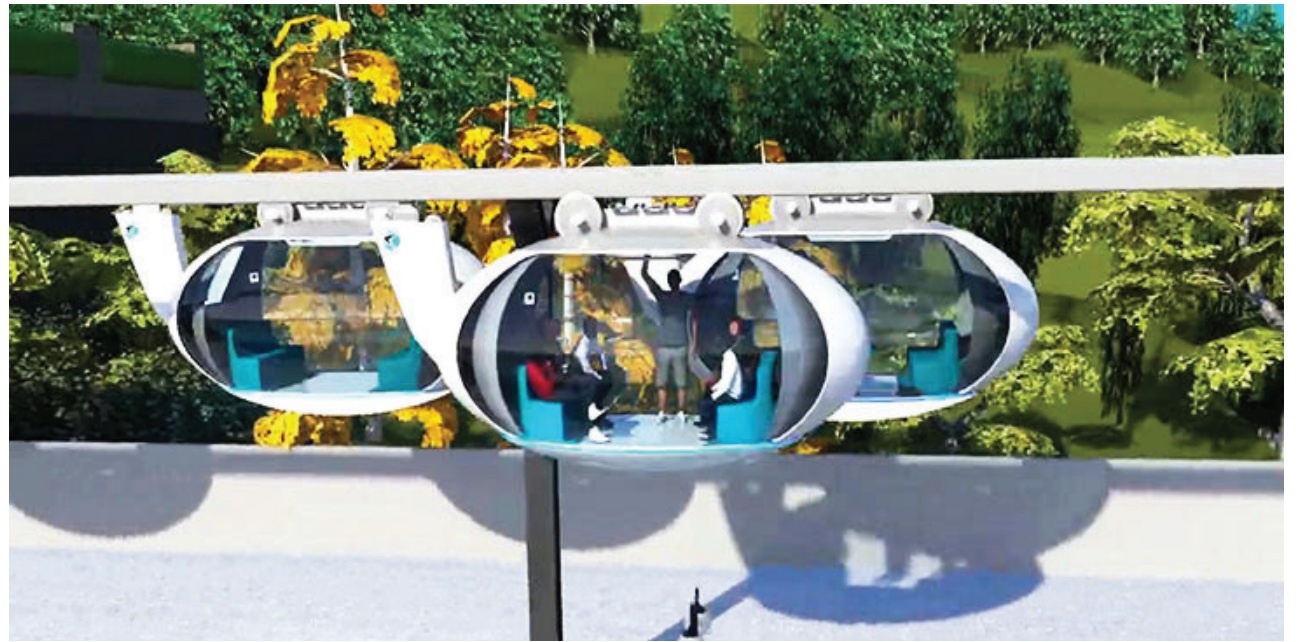
ipality did not make any major work. This year, in the middle of the rainy season, the municipal authorities are carrying out work of filling in the holes in the roads, a precarious and inconsistent solution.

Still on the list of promises, the capital's Mayor promised the "Tsutsuma Maputo Programme", whose objective was to improve the transport, mobility and accessibility system, through the implementation of the bus rapid transport system, a passenger transport railway system (Metro), the inter-modal system in Maputo metropolitan area, consolidation of the Metro-Bus operation in the Grande Maputo area, including the creation of stations to facilitate transfers from railways to roads².

Two years away from the end of his term of office, Comiche has not yet fulfilled any of the promises made to improve the urban transport system. At rush hour, bus stops are still crowded with passengers and the few buses available are overcrowded. In other words, the transport system remains precarious and is far from meeting the demand, either in quantitative or qualitative terms. In fact, travelling in the buses circulating in Maputo City has become an act of humiliation for the citizens whom Comiche swore to serve.

As if the promises made during the election campaign and on the day of taking office were not enough, the Maputo municipality once again promised a suspended transport system, called FUTRAN, which would link the capital and the municipality of Matola. The promise was made in the first half of 2021 and the works should have started in September. As with so many other promises, the FUTRAN transport system has yet to get off the ground.

When confronted by the press in June last year, Comiche reacted in the following terms: "We have not yet made any launch, you have learnt about it I don't know how, and you have started publicising it. However, it will happen, we will have the FUTRAN project by the end of 2022 or early 2023 at the latest. We will be in a position to give you



FUTRAN, Comiche's new promise for passenger transport



Comiche's only works consisted of filling holes

details when the time comes. Therefore, it is good not to get ahead of it before we know, in fact, what the subsequent steps will be."³

The capital's Mayor said that he would inform citizens about the details of FUTRAN

project "when the time comes". It is not clear when that "moment" will arrive when Comiche will finally talk about the new transport system, since the promise is that it will be operating by the end of 2022 or early 2023.

² <https://www.folhademaputo.co.mz/pt/noticias/nacional/tudo-faremos-para-melhorar-as-condicoes-de-vida-nos-bairros-eneas-comiche/>


³ <https://www.opais.co.mz/eneas-comiche-garante-que-fultran-sera-uma-realidade/>



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