CONFLICT TRENDS

ACCORD
THE AFRICAN CENTRE FOR THE CONSTRUCTIVE RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES

TWENTY YEARS OF CONTRIBUTING TO PEACE

CONTENTS

Baby boy Carlson-da Rocha was born to an African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) staff member in November 2012. This is a letter to the baby boy.

Dear Baby Boy Carlson-da Rocha,

Welcome to the world! We are all working to make this world a better place for you and millions of other children. Some children do not make it into the world because their mothers do not get basic health care. Others survive and then suffer the severe consequences of hunger even though there is plenty for everybody in the world. Some children die from diseases like malaria, which are easy to eradicate with a little money. But we fail in this regard while still spending billions on producing weapons. I hope that by the time you are old enough to understand much of this there will be minimal fighting in the world because we would have successfully educated people about engineering to build bridges and not missiles that kill people and destroy bridges.

Your dad and I are part of a wonderful team at ACCORD, an organisation that was born 20 years ago. The ACCORD team is dedicated to helping people to peacefully resolve conflicts in Africa. Some day you will be able to admire the beautiful rain forest of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Today it is not possible to visit there because of a raging war. Young children, who should be in school, are instead recruited to fight an adult war over resources that people do not want to share. I hope also that one day you will be able to visit the ancient library in Timbuktu, Mali. Sadly today this beautiful country is also caught in a violent war. This threatens to not only destroy the library but to harm many innocent people.

When the wild animals of Africa migrate across the great Serengeti Plains in Kenya it is one of the most spectacular natural sights. Perhaps you will see this someday too. The Kenyan people experienced a terrible conflict a few years ago. This shocked the world as we all knew them to be peace-loving people. The conflict left a nation deeply divided. Next year they will hold elections for a new government. We hope that these elections will be peaceful so Kenya can begin to unite and heal as it celebrates being the pride of the Serengeti again.

Baby Carlson-da Rocha, do not despair. Despite all these problems in Africa many people are working hard to address these challenges. We are succeeding! In South Africa people have peacefully resolved their conflicts after several decades. ACCORD was created around this time and played a small but important part in this peace process by training thousands of peacemakers. Similarly, many people in other countries like Burundi, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Angola, and Liberia have achieved peace. ACCORD has helped in all these countries. The African Union (AU) has made huge strides in building mechanisms to deal with conflicts in Africa. We still have a long way to go. But at least we have taken significant steps towards building meaningful structures for peacemaking. ACCORD has been involved in helping to create these structures in the AU since 1993.

So there you have it Baby Carlson-da Rocha: you are born into a world rife with challenges but there are many good people working to resolve these so that the world can be a better place for you and other children. I hope that someday you will think about other babies born long after you and will learn from our mistakes and successes. In doing so you too will contribute to making our world better!

Love,
Vasu

Vasu Gounden is the Founder and Executive Director of ACCORD.

ACCORD AT TWENTY YEARS

BY **VASU GOUNDEN** AND **DANIEL FORTI**

The Beginning

Over the past twenty years, the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) has evolved into an organisation that successfully promotes reflection, education and intervention in African conflicts. At our inception in 1992 we put forward the ambitious and progressive mission to 'encourage and promote the constructive resolution of disputes by the peoples of Africa and so assist in achieving political stability, economic recovery and peaceful co-existence within just and democratic societies'. Achieving this goal has required ACCORD's constant evolution so as to best anticipate and navigate Africa's continually changing socio-political climate. Our experiences reflect the fundamental reality that conflicts on the continent are complex and multi-faceted. These require a confluence of skilled intervention, practical knowledge and determined political will.

ACCORD initially emerged as an institutional and societal response to South Africa's democratic transition between 1990 and 1994. Following extensive consultations with political, business and grassroots leaders of all affiliations, we recognised an implicit shift in the mood of the country that took us away from the violence that marred the Apartheid era. There was both a need and a space for an organisation that could traverse the confines of the country's suffocating socio-political framework to shepherd a paradigm shift towards dialogue and negotiations. After situating our offices across five South African universities[1] we set about accomplishing three crucial goals in the then rapidly changing South Africa.

Above: ACCORD staff celebrate 20 years of working towards peace.

South Africa's shift towards a culture of mediation and negotiation was epitomised by the peaceful transformation of the Mpumalanga community in KwaZulu-Natal. Between 1986 and 1990, over 2 000 people were killed in this region which was dubbed 'Little Beirut'.[2] As a result, Mpumalanga was amongst the most devastated communities within the entire country. ACCORD worked with leaders of the local Peace Committees to transform the perspectives of the two central parties to the conflict, namely the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Peace was soon secured through the leadership of two local activists, Dr Meshack Radebe of the ANC and Sipho Mlaba of the IFP. In 1993 we recognised the community of Mpumalanga's momentous strides towards peace with ACCORD's inaugural Africa Peace Award.

Pioneering a New Field

ACCORD was established in a period of complex global transition. The end of the Cold War sparked fundamental shifts in the international system away from interstate conflicts and one-party states to an emphasis on multi-party democracy across the world. In many countries, especially throughout Africa, shifts to multi-party democracy were

In the early 1990s there was the need and space for an organisation to move the focus away from the violence that characterised South Africa to shepherd in a paradigm shift towards dialogue and negotiations.

First, ACCORD worked to support a fundamental transformation in the way South Africans negotiated and resolved disputes. During the Apartheid era, the struggle against the National Party (NP) regime was characterised by mass protests. Following the breakthrough in political negotiations, the challenge was to facilitate a societal shift from protest politics to negotiation politics. In this new era of democracy, all those who were in a position to resolve conflicts (on a local, regional or national level) needed critical skills to understand how to approach their counterparts and conduct constructive and engaging dialogue.
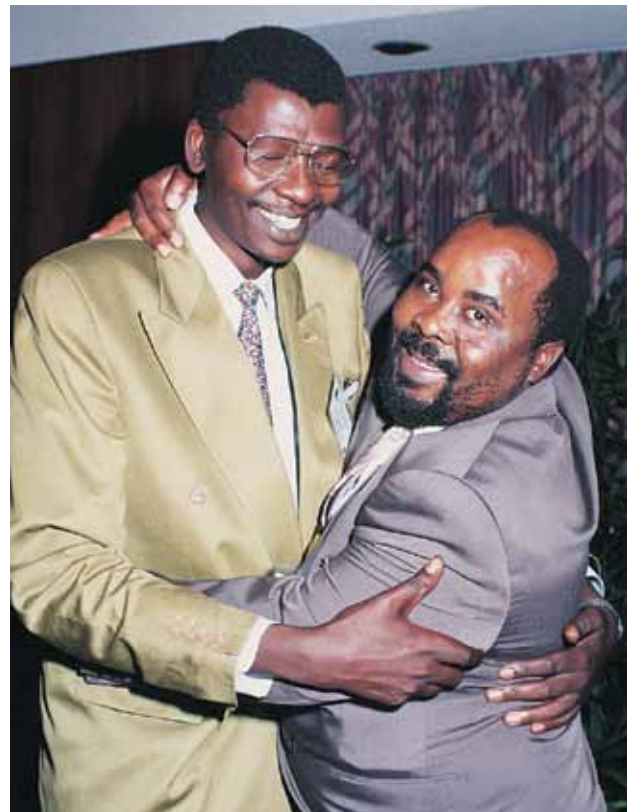
Second, ACCORD was one of the critical guarantors of South Africa's 1991 National Peace Accord. This was a structure intended to monitor and curtail political and violent conflict.

Third, our staff trained newly emerging political leaders and parties in a series of basic negotiating skills. This is an instrumental task towards facilitating non-violent mediation. Throughout these exercises we worked with high level and local leaders from all political affiliations ranging from political activists to the national and provincial secretariats of the National Peace Accord.

Peace was secured in the Mpumalanga community, in KwaZulu-Natal, through the leadership of two local activists, Dr Meshack Radebe of the African National Congress and Sipho Mlaba of the Inkatha Freedom Party.

accompanied by divisive political competition frequently characterised by narrow identity politics. This political competition inevitably fuelled outbreaks of violence and subsequently civil wars. These occurred from Somalia and Burundi, in Rwanda and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

This was the challenging environment in which ACCORD was established. The inherent fluidity of this context naturally carried new challenges for all those involved in conflict resolution. Few precedents or instruments had been established to aid in resolving these new forms of violent conflict. Out of necessity ACCORD embarked upon a path of creative engagement in these conflict environments. This involved experiential learning and subsequent innovation through the lessons learned. In 1994, based upon some of its early experiences, ACCORD developed its *Comprehensive Peace Plan.*

This is an institutional structure for developing the organisation's capacity to mitigate and resolve conflict. The *Plan* highlights the organisation's four main conflict resolution units:

• Education and training
• Intervention
• Research
• Communication and information

These were equipped to act as both stand-alone units while simultaneously complementing the work of the other branches. Each unit was designed to contribute towards building and strengthening preventative measures to conflicts and to address conflicts at their formation in order to stem the outbreak of violence.

These organisational structures became forerunners to ACCORD's current organisational design. They preceded similar instruments adopted by international organisations throughout the world. These include the United Nations (UN) Peacebuilding Commission (established in 2005), the UN Mediation Support Unit (established in 2006) as well as similar mechanisms developed by regional and sub-regional organisations. The most notable amongst these are the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). ACCORD's continuous work through grassroots and high-level interventions has allowed the organisation to pioneer transformative innovations in conflict resolution. The UN also endorses ACCORD's work in its 1996 'System-wide Special Initiative on Africa Report'.[3] In this ACCORD is cited as a 'model' organisation for promoting international peace, democracy and human rights in Africa.
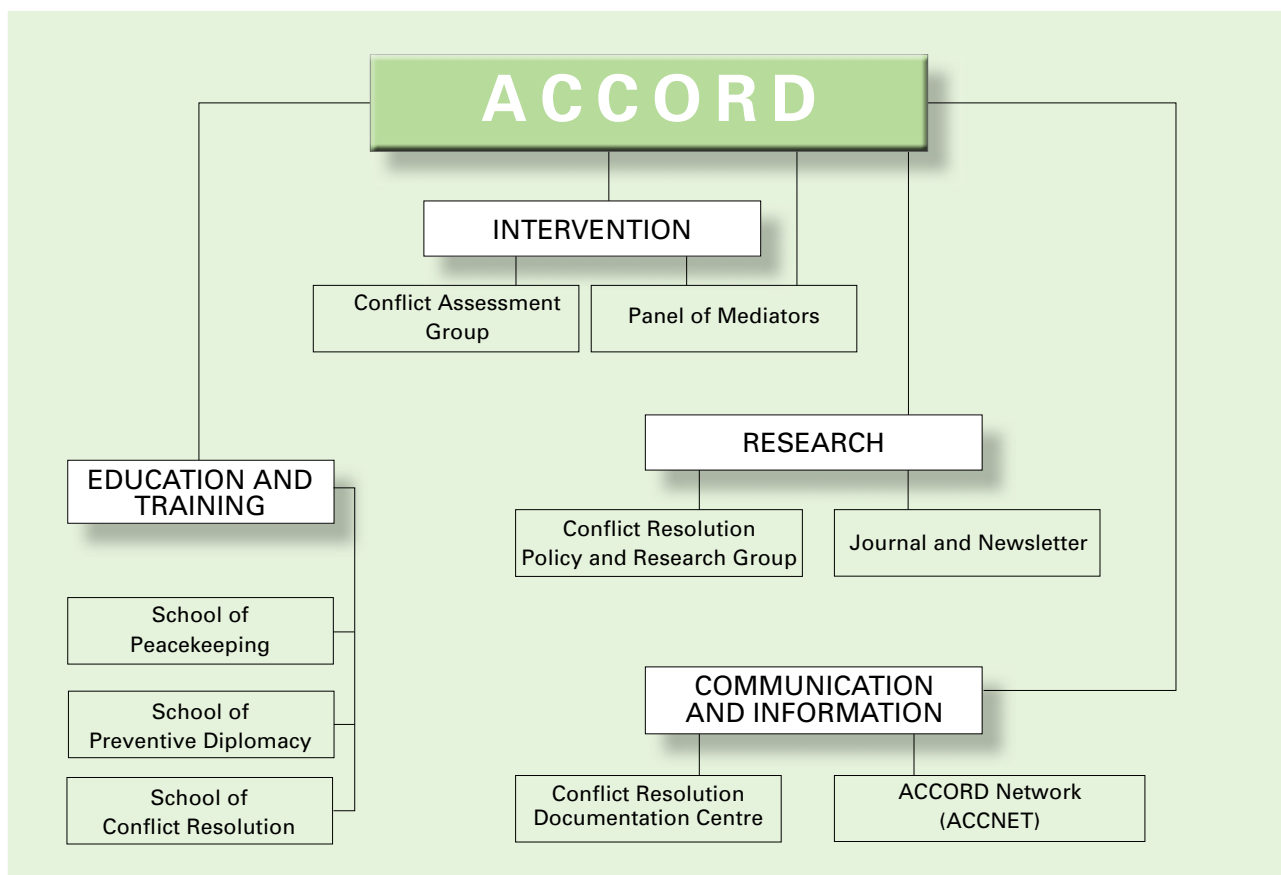
ACCORD's *Comprehensive Peace Plan*, **from the 1994 Agenda for Peace in Southern Africa.**

ACCORD played a significant role in supporting the mediation efforts of facilitators in the Burundi peace process, including former South African President, Nelson Mandela, and the current President, Jacob Zuma.

Our mediation experience began with local South African conflicts in 1992. By 1995, ACCORD was supporting the mediation efforts of former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere in Burundi. This intervention marked the beginning of an extended engagement in the Burundi peace process. ACCORD played an indispensable role in supporting the mediation efforts of subsequent facilitators who include former South African President, Nelson Mandela, and the current President, Jacob Zuma. ACCORD's specific efforts involved training all Burundian rebel groups in negotiations, preparing the constituents for peace talks and building a coalition for peace amongst local civil society organisations. Today, ACCORD employs 40 full-time staff in Burundi across five offices. It is committed to facilitating mediation processes related to land disputes between settled Burundian residents and returning refugees. This land mediation project is an innovative and pioneering initiative on the global scene. The subsequent lessons drawn from the intervention are applicable across several countries throughout the world wherever local land disputes are central to the dynamics of internal conflicts. ACCORD has also established an office within the Presidency in Burundi. It is responsible for predicting and mitigating short-term conflicts and advising on long-term strategic policy development. This office is yet another of ACCORD's creative efforts to establish sustained peace in a post-conflict setting.

ACCORD engaged in a similar initiative in the DRC and has supported the on-going peace efforts throughout the country since 1999. We provided strategic mediation process support to the former Botswana President, Ketumile Masire, in his role as the facilitator of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. ACCORD was also responsible for training the various Congolese rebel groups in negotiations and facilitating preparations for the peace talks. The DRC Initiative was pivotal in helping ACCORD to develop its conflict analysis and strategy-design model. This evolved out of the planning sessions that were initially conducted by President Masire's staff and ACCORD during the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Informed by our experiences in the Burundi mediations, this model contains a number of components.

THE UN'S 'SYSTEM-WIDE SPECIAL INITIATIVE ON AFRICA REPORT' CITED ACCORD AS A 'MODEL' ORGANISATION FOR PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL PEACE, DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA

ACCORD's flagship peacekeeping capacity-building initiative, the Training for Peace (TfP) programme, has trained over 7 000 civilians, government officials and police officers.

First, it specifically refers to the importance and involvement of local civil society organisations within the mediation process as feedback mechanisms between the political leaders and society at large. This is in order to promote greater local ownership of the peace process.

Second, it emphasises the equality of all stakeholders within the mediation. It works to ensure that all participants receive the necessary conflict analysis and negotiation trainings to engage in and sustain inclusive mediation efforts.

ACCORD has successfully used this model for its interventions in several other conflicts. It has also been employed to drive trainings for several thousand government officials, civil society members and people drawn from academia across Africa. These early experiences were pivotal in positioning ACCORD as a leading provider of conflict resolution expertise and training. ACCORD has thus far trained over 20 000 individuals and presently operates an extensive Mediation Capacity-Building Programme for the AU.

ACCORD has also been an innovative force in the peacekeeping field. Starting in 1996, ACCORD began conflict management training for peacekeepers in five African countries: Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Mauritius. Our organisation's Civilian Dimensions of Peacekeeping Training Programme has thus evolved into the leading initiative of its kind. As part of this programme ACCORD conceptualised, developed and conducted the first 'Senior Mission Leaders Training Programme' (SMLT) for the UN. It complemented this initiative with its regular 'Conflict Management Training for Peacekeepers Programme' which is conducted for all UN and AU peacekeeping missions operating in Africa. ACCORD's flagship peacekeeping capacity-building initiative, the Training for Peace (TfP) programme, is now in its 15th year. It has trained over 7 000 civilians, government officials and police officers. These programmes have undoubtedly rendered ACCORD a leader in building civilian capacities for peacekeeping.

Furthermore, ACCORD has been instrumental in promoting innovative and sustainable practices in the complex area of post-conflict peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is a complex and multidimensional process that occurs during the lengthy period after the formal termination of an armed conflict. Undertaken by a range of stakeholders throughout society from grassroots leaders to heads of state, peacebuilding efforts combine conflict prevention, management and transformation strategies in order to address the root causes of conflict and prevent future outbreaks of violence. ACCORD's peacebuilding initiatives in Liberia, Sierra Leone, the DRC, Burundi, and South Sudan are all framed around innovative processes. These are designed to internalise and incorporate the experiences and

Graça Machel, chairperson of ACCORD's Board of Trustees, speaks at the high-level seminar, '1325 in 2020: Looking Forward, Looking Back' in Durban, South Africa (October 2010).

perspectives of local communities in sustainable peace. Now in its fourth year, our Peacebuilding Unit is also grounded in ACCORD's previous interventions across other post-conflict environments throughout Africa. Our peacebuilding initiative is currently one of the most comprehensive and varied in complex conflict environments.

ACCORD has consistently championed the issue of gender and peace. In 2000, ACCORD together with Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) hosted an advocacy meeting on the peripheries of the inaugural AU Summit in Durban, South Africa. It did so in response to the calls by several civil society organisations for gender parity in the AU Commission. Gender parity was subsequently endorsed and implemented at this inaugural summit. ACCORD has in addition undertaken several initiatives to support and build conflict resolution capacities amongst women peacemakers.

ACCORD HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT SUPPORTER OF THE 2000 UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325. THIS IS A WATERSHED NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK THAT RECOGNISED THE LINKS BETWEEN WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

ACCORD has been an important supporter of the 2000 UN Security Council Resolution 1325. This is a watershed normative framework that recognised the links between women, peace and security. Ten years later ACCORD and the AU Peace and Security Council partnered to host an international high-level seminar, '1325 in 2020: Looking Forward, Looking Back.' It convened over 60 participants from civil society, governments, intergovernmental organisations and academia to reflect on the successes, obstacles and future of African women in the peace and security field. This landmark occasion not only celebrated the achievements gained since 2000 but also deliberated how best to overcome the remaining obstacles and adjust normative and policy frameworks within a constantly changing global society.

An important cornerstone of democracy is the conduct of free, fair and regular elections. However, elections have also been a source of conflict in many countries either emerging from internal conflicts or attempting to resolve conflicts through elections. In this context, ACCORD has worked tirelessly to build conflict resolution capacities for election observers across the continent. Through working with the SADC Parliamentary Forum, ACCORD successfully developed conflict management skills for election observers and parliamentarians participating in election contests across the southern African region. ACCORD used its expertise to

train over 2 000 election monitors in Nigeria. It subsequently hosted a high-level civil society observer mission in South Africa headed by the former Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo, for the 2010 South African national elections.

Knowledge Production

In the course of twenty years, ACCORD has taken key lessons from its practical experiences and transformed them into substantive knowledge. ACCORD distinctly shifted its focus from research to knowledge production. It did so in order to place a greater emphasis on developing knowledge that can both contribute to the organisation's interventions as well as to the theoretical growth of conflict resolution. To this end, the establishment of ACCORD's *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* (AJCR) fourteen years ago was a seminal development. The AJCR was the first academic journal on conflict resolution to be published in Africa. In providing the space for and serving to amplify the voices of African writers deliberating African issues, the AJCR has cemented itself as a staple of conflict resolution literature. Peer-reviewed by a group of eminent scholars, the AJCR is widely distributed around the world and is extensively used by academics and students.

Upon recognising that conflict resolution practitioners and policymakers preferred more succinct articles that maintained the highest quality of analysis, ACCORD established a new stable of publications in 1998. This is led by its flagship magazine *Conflict Trends*. Today, this quarterly publication is one of the leading magazines addressing peace, security and conflict studies. In addition to *Conflict Trends*, ACCORD now produces numerous policy briefs, monographs, conference reports and handbooks on various subjects related to conflict studies. The outstanding quality of its publications has earned ACCORD the recognition of being one of the top 100 think-tanks in the world by the University of Pennsylvania's *2011 Global Go To Think Tanks Report*.[4] The quality and richness of ACCORD's publications are due to research that is conducted on the ground in conflict environments, often done as events and assessments are unfolding.

ACCORD has also taken the lead in recognising and celebrating achievements towards sustainable peace and good governance across the continent through its Africa Peace Award. The Award was first instituted in 1993 to acknowledge individuals, communities, nations and institutions that have made momentous contributions towards the peaceful settlements of disputes, the good governance of public affairs and the protection of human rights across the continent. At this biennial event ACCORD has since recognised the community of Mpumalanga, the children of Africa, former President Nelson Mandela, and the nations of Burundi, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

ACCORD hosted a high-level civil society observer mission in South Africa headed by the former Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo, for the 2010 South African national elections.

In 2013, the Africa Peace Award will recognise the nation of Ghana for its continued efforts towards peace and good governance.

The continued support received by ACCORD from its donor partners is testament to its establishment of a well-structured and professionally managed organisation based upon good governance and accountability. Starting with a team of four people in 1992, ACCORD has today grown into an institution of 100 full-time staff and an equal number of external consultants. The emergent administrative and financial structures supporting the organisation and its programmes have effectively developed to ensure consistent and transparent accountability. ACCORD is a reliable partner within the international donor community, in pursuance of the shared goal of ending destructive conflict and building sustainable peace.

The Future of ACCORD

ACCORD endeavours to guarantee its long-term sustainability and expand its global influence. The Development Advisory Services (DAS), a full subsidiary of ACCORD, is a commercial consulting company designed to provide development services in post-conflict environments across Africa. Projects undertaken by DAS have primarily focused on statebuilding, capacity development and infrastructure development. These complement ACCORD's conflict-resolution work by contributing towards and cementing sustainable peace. Profits from the consultancies funnel directly into ACCORD's non-profit work, diversifying the institution's resource base and affording it greater flexibility in responding to today's challenges.

ACCORD is working to establish the Africa Peace Centre (APC). This is a residential mediation, training and research facility to address the on-going need in Africa for specialised training and research in conflict resolution. This will be a permanent facility where mediation of political conflicts can take place with all the necessary logistical, technical and intellectual support present. The facility will be open for use by regional and sub-regional organisations, governments, civil society associations and for high-level mediations. The APC will encourage and promote the constructive resolution of disputes by the people of Africa and so assist in achieving political stability, economic recovery and peaceful co-existence within just and democratic societies.

Finally, in line with ACCORD's 20th anniversary celebration and the 2013 Africa Peace Awards, the organisation launched its Global Peace Initiative (GPI) in October 2012. The overall goal of this project, in line with ACCORD's mission statement, is to create a new global social contract founded upon co-operation and dialogue. The intention is to empower all individuals to share, learn and express their concerns and ideas in a co-operative and inclusive manner. The GPI aims to draw upon the shared experiences and challenges of societies throughout the world to effectively complement global policy. It will thereby facilitate a movement towards empowering all individuals to contribute towards their own livelihoods, communities and environments. The GPI will address fundamental societal imbalances, defined by a small centre of society wielding disproportionate access to political and economic resources compared with the vast majority of individuals. The privileged power elites consequently perpetuate socio-political orders that reinforce their prosperity to the exclusion of and detriment to those on the peripheries. What emerges are crippling paradoxes and inefficiencies that undercut societies throughout the world. These include:

- Rapid economic growth coupled with rampant income inequalities
- Global surpluses of agricultural resources and increasing incidences of famine
- Revolutionary technological developments that fail to reach those individuals with the greatest need
- Flawed democratic political mechanisms that restrict pluralistic participation

This initiative will seek to address these challenges by first creating and uniting a global network of high-level policymakers to develop responses to key global policy challenges. The GPI will then complement this network by developing a broad-based social platform for mass engagement and interaction between individuals throughout the world and this global policymaker network. This will help inform policy recommendations and encourage a renewed commitment to a shared humanity and a more peaceful world. This initiative will further consolidate ACCORD's position as an influential catalyst for constructive global change. ◭

Vasu Gounden is the Founder and Executive Director of ACCORD.

Daniel Forti is a Junior Researcher at ACCORD.

Endnotes

1 Fort Hare University, University of the Western Cape, University of Durban – Westville, University of the North and University of the Transkei.

2 The conflict in Mpumalanga (and also within the greater province of KwaZulu-Natal) was defined by a violent political competition between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). KwaZulu-Natal served as an IFP stronghold as the vast majority of the political party's membership was drawn from the province's Zulu population. From 1985–1990, the IFP vigorously defended its territory from what it perceived as ANC attempts to marginalise the IFP. This competition, epitomised by the conflict in Mpumalanga, became increasingly violent, ensnaring men and women of all ages. The nickname 'Little Beirut' stems from the violent history of the Lebanese capital during the 1982–3 Lebanese War.

3 Boutros-Ghali, B. (1996) *The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa*. New York: United Nations.

4 McGann, J.G. (2012) 2011 Global Go To Think Tank Rankings. *University of Pennsylvania*, 18 January. Available at: < http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=think_tanks>

BRIDGING THE GAP: CONFLICT RESOLUTION PRACTICE AND RESEARCH AT ACCORD

BY **LESLEY CONNOLLY**

Conflict resolution seeks to resolve conflicts constructively, sometimes in novel ways. It aims to create situations in which violence is minimised, antagonism between adversaries is overcome, outcomes are mutually acceptable to the opponents and settlements are enduring.[1] Conflict resolution includes long-term strategies, short-term tactics and actions by adversaries as well as by mediators. It is based on the work of academic analysts and practitioners, both official and non-official. The rapidly expanding field is not a narrowly defined discipline. Rather, it is one that has been developing and changing for some 70 years. The growth of conflict resolution, as well as the changing nature of conflict, has generated a considerable amount of new research assessing the use and effect of the various applications of conflict resolution.[2]

Over the course of the past 20 years, the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) has

Above: Participants drawn from government departments and academic institutions in Botswana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan and Zambia participated in an 'Advanced Training in Mediation' in Durban, South Africa (September 2010). This training was the first activity under ACCORD's 'Building Mediation and Mediation Support Capacity in Africa' initiative.

ACCORD meets a representative of the Southern Sudan Bureau of Community Security and Small Arms Control in April 2011 in Juba, South Sudan.

attempted to successfully merge research and practice in a conflict resolution environment. In this context, 'research' can be defined as the process of inquiring into, uncovering and analysing conflict. Its aim is to identify the root causes of conflict and the inhibitors of peace in a specific situation in order to establish trends and identify methods of preventing, mitigating and resolving conflict. 'Practice' in conflict resolution refers to the action of executing methods used to intervene in a conflict situation, mediation or training. It has the aim of addressing the fundamental causes of conflict so as to prevent the re-escalation of violence. Traditionally, ACCORD is divided into two departments: 'Knowledge Production' and 'Interventions'. The goal of the organisation is to influence political developments by bringing conflict resolution, dialogue and institutional development to the forefront as an alternative to armed violence and protracted conflict. ACCORD specialises in conflict analysis and resolution via interventions in conflicts through mediation, negotiation and training supported by research and analysis. ACCORD has achieved many successes in bridging the gap between research and practice in conflict resolution over the past 20 years.

This article examines how ACCORD has attempted to bridge the gap between research and practice in conflict resolution. It considers the challenges that have been experienced in this regard and the lessons learned which can be taken forward by the organisation and the conflict resolution field as a whole.

Research and Practice at ACCORD

There is an obvious benefit to closing the gap between research and practice, especially when dealing with the dynamic and ever-changing nature of conflict. Practitioners usually have an understanding of the practical situation and the challenges which exist on the ground. Researchers hold knowledge and an understanding of conflict trends and analyses of the phenomenon. By integrating these two focal areas there would be an increase in the knowledge available to practitioners. This in turn would strengthen intervention practices as well as provide relevant knowledge about the situation on the ground to researchers. It would thus allow theories to be tested through application.[3] ACCORD has an advantage in bridging this gap in that the organisation is composed of researchers who are practitioners and

Trainings endow selected participants with capacity, perspectives and skills that enable them to contribute to the realisation of specific objectives that benefit their societies.

practitioners who have links to academia. Through this inter-disciplinary and integrated approach, ACCORD has been able to merge research and practice in conflict resolution in various ways over the past 20 years. These include, but are not limited to, trainings, seminars and action-based research.

Trainings

Trainings seek to endow selected participants with capacity, perspectives and skills that enable them to contribute to the realisation of specific objectives that would benefit their societies. Given the dynamic nature of conflict and post-conflict contexts it is imperative that these trainings are also adaptive so as to be specific and relevant in informing change. Evolving research can therefore be vital in ensuring that the modules and the contents of trainings are based on frameworks that are relevant and scientific. A conveyor belt of knowledge should be created in order to ensure this. Researchers and academics develop theoretical frameworks that guide intervention; practitioners deliver trainings and develop their modules based on the approaches postulated by researchers and the experiences of other practitioners. This cycle then feeds

back into knowledge and research, further strengthening the field.[4] An example is John Paul Lederach's theory on conflict transformation.[5] This advocates the transformation of a post-conflict society rather than merely transitioning the society to a situation of peace. This theory suggests a long-term approach to post-conflict development that aims to address the root causes of violence and create sustainable peace. Lederach's theory is often used by peacebuilding and conflict resolution trainers because the theory is considered academically driven, rooted in experience and yet applicable to present day situations. It is a theory which has closed the gap between research and practice.

At its very conception, ACCORD recognised the centrality of education and training in the pursuit of organisational (civil, government and corporate) transformation, development and peace. ACCORD informs citizens who are positioned to transform organisations and society, build security and respond to conflict creatively. ACCORD's trainings build capacity. This is done by equipping trainers as well as interested individuals and groups to work effectively to resolve conflict in their work environments, community organisations and in inter-group or inter-state relations.

ACCORD's Internal Staff Seminars provide opportunities for staff from the different departments to come together and share knowledge. This effectively links information and knowledge to practice and current challenges in conflict contexts. The departments are then better able to support each other in the work undertaken.

The trainings held in West Africa in 2010 are an example. Thirteen participants drawn from government departments and academic institutions in Botswana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan and Zambia participated in an Advanced Training in Mediation programme from 28–30 September 2010 in Durban, South Africa. The aim was to advance the skills of Mediation Process Experts and build a core mediation team that can advise mediation processes on the continent. The high level participant profile included senior government officials with mediation experience and academics who have in-depth knowledge of the field of conflict and peace studies as well as alternative dispute resolution methods. This training programme was the first activity under ACCORD's Building Mediation and Mediation Support Capacity in Africa Initiative. The outcome of this informed the next round of trainings and produced training manuals. The *Towards Sustainable Peace in Africa* manual was developed not only to guide ACCORD trainings but also the trainings undertaken by regional and international organisations.

Seminars, Workshops and Dialogue Forums

Conflict resolution practitioners do not operate primarily in the world of theory. But neither do they rely solely on specific procedures or intervention tools. Instead, effective conflict resolvers employ a combination of personal skills, substantive knowledge and practical concepts. It is the combination of this research-based knowledge and practical experience which informs their general practice. It allows such practice to both improve and reflect on what is needed on the ground.

ACCORD aims to create this link between research and practical knowledge in a sharing environment where researchers and practitioners come together and reflect on lessons learned in conflict resolution. An example of this is the South Sudan Initiative which seeks to mitigate violent conflict and insecurity and support peace for the people of South Sudan. ACCORD hosted a Dialogue Forum in Malakal, the Upper Nile State of South Sudan from 11–13 April 2012. The forum brought together 38 participants representing government, civil society, youth organisations, women's groups, traditional leaders, academia and personnel of the

A STAFF MEMBER PRESENTS ON A RELEVANT TOPIC THEREBY SHARING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE WORK THE DEPARTMENT IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN OR HAS BEEN WORKING ON

United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). It was tailored to engage participants at a grassroots level while allowing for the dissemination of critical peacebuilding skills to the different levels of leadership (regional, sub-national and national). A key output of the forum is a report that includes recommendations on the way forward for the Peace Commission of South Sudan.

ACCORD also holds a series of Internal Staff Seminars. These monthly seminars provide an opportunity for the staff from the Knowledge Production Department and the Interventions Department to come together. A staff member gives a presentation on a relevant topic thereby sharing knowledge about the work the department is currently engaged in or has been working on. It is an environment where knowledge and experience are shared and discussed. This effectively links information and knowledge to practice and on-the-ground challenges in conflict contexts. The departments are then also better able to support each other in the work undertaken.

Action-based Research

Over the years ACCORD has invested in action-oriented, participatory and policy relevant research in its approach to issues of African peace and security. Action-based research refers to types of research which, amongst others, include field research, interviews and exploratory missions. These activities involve both researchers and practitioners working together to uncover the root causes of conflict and methods of conflict resolution. Such work then results in detailed reports and policy documents that guide theories and the practice of conflict resolution in the future. Action-based research encourages creative methodology to establish new knowledge and improve practice so as to strengthen the objective of transforming conflicts in society.[6] At ACCORD action-based research occurs in many forms. These include but are not limited to exploratory trips, field assessment missions, study tours and project specific initiatives.

• Exploratory Trips

The most recent exploratory trip undertaken by the Knowledge Production Department in conjuction with the Peacebuilding Unit was to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). During this trip, many meetings were held with various persons and organisations to seek local perspectives on peace and security in the DRC. In these meetings, entry points for potential ACCORD interventions were examined and consultatively discussed.

ACCORD's Knowledge Production Department and Peacebuilding Unit staff undertook a joint exploratory trip to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in August 2012. Here, ACCORD staff members meet with a representative from Femme Solidaires pour la Paix et le Developpement (FSPD) in Kinshasa.

ACCORD staff meeting with former President of Madagascar, Marc Ravalamanana, during his visit to ACCORD in May 2010. ACCORD has been involved in the Madagascar peace process since 2010.

The information obtained will assist in establishing baselines for the aforesaid interventions which are projected to begin in September 2012. The Knowledge Production Department is also producing publications. These include specifically a Policy and Practice Brief as well as an Occasional Paper that will focus on the peace process in the DRC.

• Study Tours

One example of a study tour held between 22 August and 2 September 2011 in South Africa was a joint initiative by the Peacebuilding and Knowledge Production Departments with key peacebuilding stakeholders from five African countries. The participants exchanged professional expertise and enhanced their knowledge on the topic of "Elections, Governance and Conflict" during two weeks of conferences in Durban and Johannesburg. In the light of incidents of electoral violence in several countries on the African continent in recent years and the threat this poses to peacebuilding efforts, it is particularly important to strengthen the ties between peacebuilding actors from different countries. The study tour aimed to support an increase in coherence and coordination of peacebuilding efforts. It encouraged the development of shared visions and strategies for dealing with common challenges through adaptable and genuinely African peacebuilding solutions.

• Field Assessment Missions

One example of these is the field assessment project to Madagascar which took place in June 2012 with members of the Knowledge Production and Interventions Department at ACCORD. The overall aim of this project is to contribute to resolving the present political impasse in Madagascar. It does so by supporting the current mediators' efforts and by addressing the identified factors impeding the implementation of the agreed upon roadmap for the long-term stability of the country. The two departments travelled to Madagascar to meet with various stakeholders at different levels including military, corporate, government and non-governmental. The aim was to formulate and facilitate a plan of action to aid in the roadmap's implementation and to support a sustainable political outcome for Madagascar. The programme produced a Mission Report, a Policy and Practice Brief on the situation in Madagascar as well as an Internal Staff Seminar outlining the issues observed. The project also

DESPITE ACCORD'S SUCCESSES IN MERGING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE THERE REMAIN A NUMBER CHALLENGES TO FULLY REALISING THIS

Participants in the Burundi Land Initiative meet to explore how land conflict mediation addresses or relates to other longer-term challenges for peace in Burundi.

developed a feedback report which aided stakeholders in negotiating issues during the political impasse.

• Project Specific Programme

The Burundi Land Initiative was an individual project run by ACCORD in Burundi between July 2009 and February 2010. The purpose of the project was twofold. First, it explored how land conflict mediation addresses or relates to other longer-term challenges for peace in Burundi. Second, the project documented and analysed ACCORD's land conflict mediation practice in the two Burundi provinces of Bururi and Ruyigi. Two research missions were conducted during which a total of 159 people were interviewed. These included beneficiaries of ACCORD's mediation and capacity-building workshops. The data collected was analysed in terms of evaluating ACCORD's impact on the resolution of land conflicts in Burundi and a report was produced which highlights the findings and challenges.

Challenges

Despite ACCORD's successes in merging research and practice there remain some challenges to fully realising this.

The Long-term Nature of Research versus the Immediate Need for Intervention

Research is not immediate. Rather, it requires time to uncover the issues, develop a complete understanding of a situation and determine answers. Intervention is more immediate in conflict situations. When there is a need for it to take place there is often less than 24 hours before implementation must occur. Research examines situations in depth and seeks to determine the nuances of a conflict situation. Interventions tend to be directed at immediate crises where an action takes place and a required result is achieved. There are times when research can be rushed but even then it cannot take place immediately. Research generally contributes to expanding the existing body of knowledge in a discipline and tends to be generalisable to various situations or theories. Practice can very often be situation-specific, thus requiring immediate action. In this context, the engagement with theory is dependent on a number of immediate factors, such as time, logistics and political will. For instance, ACCORD has executed many interventions in various conflict situations. This means that there is a substantial reservoir of knowledge available. However, the theoretical and practical knowledge which informs an intervention in the DRC, may not apply to

Launch of ACCORD's *Views and Visions of Coexistence in South Africa* publication in Mpumalanga, South Africa, (August 2009).

an intervention in Madagascar. Despite the information available about the DRC, adapting it to meet the needs in Madagascar cannot be immediate and may not coincide with the deadline given.

The Feedback Loop

The nature of research and practice, as outlined above, is perceived as different by many. This creates challenges with establishing effective feedback loops where practice, research and knowledge should ideally complement and reinforce each other. While there has been some success in this area at ACCORD, achieving ideal feedback loops at the organisational level still remains a challenge. Continuous reflection and feedback between the departments is not always practically possible and at times the feedback loop may be initiated but not completed, or when completed it may not occur in the desired timeframe. For example, information and reflections might be shared from the field but it may not be incorporated into further research or a reflective analysis publication until much later. An effective feedback loop that bridges practice and research should also generate new knowledge that further improves interventions and contributes to stakeholder decisions and policies. Maintaining and enhancing this feedback loop for effective conflict resolution is ongoing work-in-progress at ACCORD, even while the organisation's processes and structures encourage practice, research and knowledge reinforcement

and feedback. This is evident in the significant collaborative work undertaken by the Knowledge Production Department and the Interventions Department. ACCORD's Land Mediation Initiative in Burundi, mentioned previously, is an example of the feedback loop in operation where practice and research was effectively facilitated.

Lessons Learned at ACCORD

There are lessons that can be drawn from ACCORD's successes and challenges in conflict resolution. With these lessons in hand ACCORD aims to proceed to the next level. This is one of being an organisation which not only reacts to conflict but is able to prevent conflict from occurring in the first place. These lessons can also benefit the conflict resolution field by strengthening the integration of research and practice for more effective conflict resolution in conflict and post-conflict societies.

Consultative Meetings

Effective coordination across research and practice is key for successful conflict resolution. ACCORD's Knowledge Production and Interventions departments are representative of this. Continuous efforts are made to strengthen inter-departmental collaboration through regular consultative meetings and joint activities. These efforts ultimately seek to address the challenges related to maintaining an optimal feedback loop between research and practice.

In September 2012, coordinators from ACCORD's Interventions Department and Knowledge Production Department met to discuss joint activities for 2013.

Results-based Initiatives

ACCORD is moving towards results-based initiatives. In these, clear objectives for the organisation are set and specific indicators to meet these objectives are established. The organisation's effectiveness is then evaluated upon achievement of the set objectives. This will enable the organisation to close some of the gaps in ideas, objectives and outputs between research and interventions. Both departments will have the same organisation-wide objectives. They will have specific departmental indicators and regular evaluation sessions to assess progress. Setting up structures to create such synergy between the departments will be a significant step towards more research-practice integration and holistic conflict resolution.

Conclusion

While research and practice may appear to be contentious in nature, effective conflict resolution requires the sharing and integration of ideas and practices. Researchers hold knowledge of patterns, trends and ideologies present in conflict; practitioners have on-the-ground experience with first-hand knowledge about situations as they unfold. ACCORD enjoys the unique advantage of having both researchers and practitioners who work together. It has thus been able to establish itself as a cross-cutting conflict resolution organisation in Africa and beyond. ACCORD continues to work towards creating a

mutually-supportive relationship and feedback loop between research and practice for holistic and relevant conflict resolution. There have been challenges in the last 20 years. Lessons can be drawn from these to not only strengthen ACCORD as a leading conflict resolution organisation but to strengthen the conflict resolution discipline as a whole. ⚑

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Endnotes

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2   Ibid.

3   Bero, L., Grilli, R., Grimshaw, J., Harvey, E., Oxman, A., and Thompson, M.A. (1998) Closing the Gap between Research and Practice: An Overview of Systematic Reviews of Interventions to Promote the Implementation of Research Findings. *British Medical Journal*, 317(7156).

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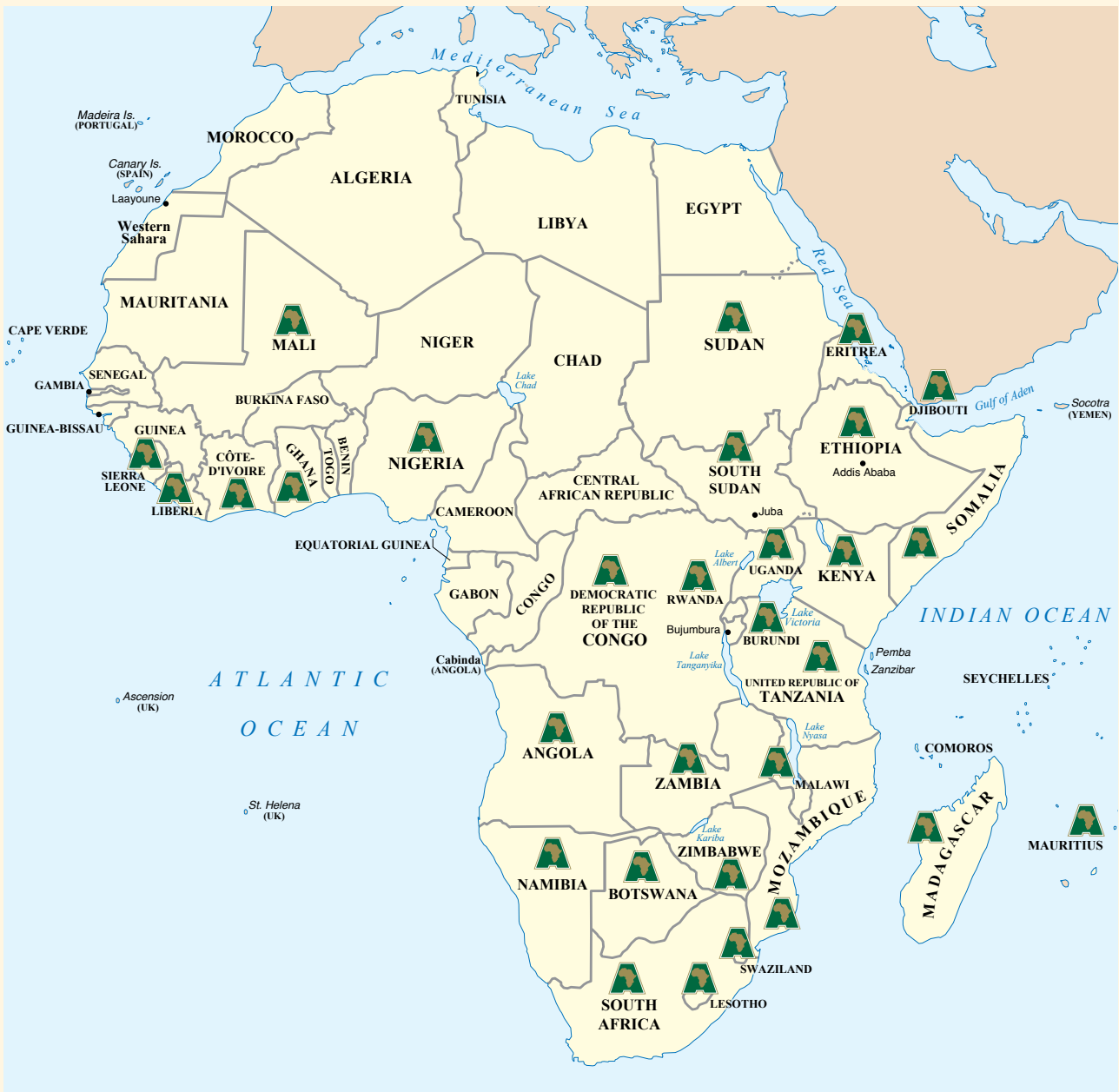
ACCORD'S PEACEMAKING WORK IN AFRICA: MEDIATION SUPPORT INITIATIVES

BY **MARTHA MUTISI**

Introduction

Conflict in the 21st century Africa reflects the growing role of peacemaking as intervention. Despite the upsurge of various types of conflicts in the recent past, there have been credible efforts towards concerted peacemaking especially by the continental body, the African Union (AU), as well as by regional economic communities (RECs). While the regional organisations continue to gain prominence in peacemaking, it is evident that they have limited capacity and expertise. Hence the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in enhancing peace processes. Operating in Track II diplomacy[1], CSOs are undoubtedly

important actors in the quest for peace in any environment.[2] The motivation for civil society's involvement in peace processes is also provided by Lederach who proffers a pyramid approach to peacebuilding. This is multi-layered and includes multiple actors such as governments, civil society and grassroots organisations.[3] Sustainable peacebuilding is achievable when all actors, including civil society, participate in peace processes.

CSOs such as the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) continue to occupy relevant spaces in the peace and security agenda, providing much needed training and research expertise. Recognising the centrality of peacemaking in the African peace and security architecture, this article pays special attention to the role played by ACCORD in enhancing the mediation capacity of the AU and RECs. The article identifies specific cases where ACCORD has worked towards enhancing the effectiveness of peacemaking processes of the continental body and RECs.

ACCORD's Peacemaking Efforts in Africa

Often conceived as the triangular or intermediate space between the state, private sector and the family, civil society has had a growing influence on the political and development landscape in Africa, particularly in connection with issues of peace, security and development.[4] Civil society is conceived of by the political scientist Diamond as an autonomous and self-regulating entity which provides space for citizens to interact with the state and in some cases to even interrogate the state.[5] Paffenholz presents civil society as an actor that possesses comparative advantage over government and other actors. This is especially because of its independence and flexibility. The increasing relevance of civil society is based on the recognition that this sector of society plays critical roles in ensuring the success and sustainability of peace processes. As a result, civil society has become an important component of the peace agenda.[6]

Figure 1: Civil Society Located Between State, Business and Family.[7]
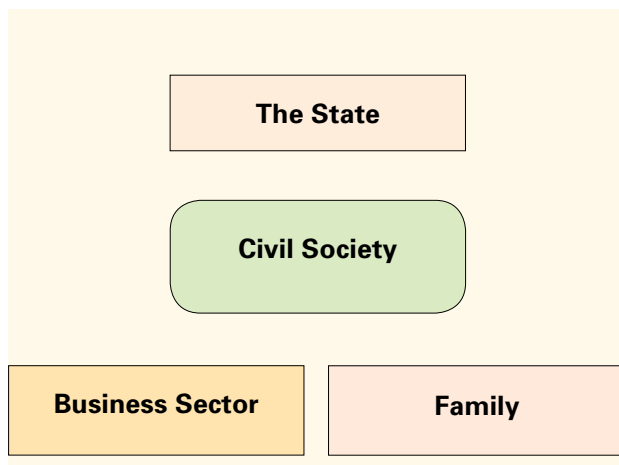
As a CSO that seeks to actively address the challenges of conflict on the continent, ACCORD has made the capacity enhancement of regional institutions one of its key objectives. ACCORD's overall goal is the prevention of violent conflict and the promotion of dialogue towards peaceful resolution of conflicts on the African continent. Over the past twenty years, ACCORD has worked towards advancing the peacemaking capacity and skills of regional organisations. It has continued to promote mediation, negotiation and facilitation as effective peacemaking tools.

To achieve this overall goal, ACCORD's Peacemaking Unit engages in different types of projects:
• The Africa-wide project which focuses on enhancing the mediation capacity of the AU and RECs.
• A country-specific initiative, the Sudan Conflict Transformation Programme (SCTP).
• Supporting ongoing peacemaking initiatives and enhancing the participation of women in peace processes.

This multi-tiered approach to peacemaking continues to make ACCORD a versatile organisation that seeks to effectively respond to the peacemaking needs of the African continent.

Enhancing the African Union's Capacity: The Mediation Capacity Support Project

The AU is an important partner of ACCORD in peacemaking. A significant effort has been made by ACCORD in providing support to strengthen the AU's mediation capacity. Against this background, the AU Mediation Capacity was initiated in July 2009. It seeks to develop strategic frameworks and practical mechanisms to enable the AU to further enhance its ability to undertake and support mediation interventions. Its operationalisation includes the training of AU officials and mediation support teams in mediation, assisting the AU in curriculum development as well as providing support for the AU's rostering and deployment of mediation experts. Now in its second phase, the project is located in ACCORD's Peacemaking Unit. It is being jointly implemented with the AU's Conflict Management Division (AU CMD) and the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI). To date this project continues to enhance the operationalisation of the African peace and security architecture (APSA) by providing critical support to the AU's peacemaking entities. These include the offices of Special Envoys, the Panel of the Wise as well as various AU Liaison Offices located in conflict 'hot spots' on the continent.[8]

Peacemaking Support to Regional Organisations

ACCORD has partnered with RECs to address context specific challenges in particular regions. For example, in 2011 ACCORD signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) which has been involved in notable peacemaking

A Joint Steering Committee Meeting for the African Union Mediation Support Project implemented by the African Union Conflict Management Division, ACCORD, Crisis Management Initiative and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, was held in Durban, South Africa (31 March 2010).

activities in the region. With ICGLR, ACCORD's focus is currently on the gendered dimension of peacemaking. This approach is understandable given the prominence of sexual violence in conflict situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Within Southern Africa, ACCORD recognises the importance of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in promoting peace and conflict resolution in the region. Through its Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS) also known as the Troika, SADC has become more focused on issues relating to peacemaking. Given political developments in Madagascar and Zimbabwe which threaten the stability of the region, the SADC Troika has since adopted a more direct role in promoting peace and security. ACCORD has worked closely with the SADC Troika on several peacemaking agendas. Currently SADC intervention in conflict has mainly been characterised by preventive diplomacy and mediation for which ACCORD has often been 'unofficially' requested to provide support.

An important observation is that ACCORD is yet to cover the breadth of RECs in Africa. These include the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern African (COMESA) States and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). While the organisation has not developed specific programmes targeting these RECs, ACCORD has over its lifetime worked

indirectly with these regional blocs. It has done so either by engaging them in training processes or by conducting the requisite regional consultations for conflict management programming.

Country-specific Focus: The Sudan Conflict Transformation Programme (SCTP)

The Sudan Conflict Transformation Programme (SCTP) is a typical example of how ACCORD as a CSO has been supporting mediation initiatives between conflict parties, in this case Track I actors.[9] The programme provides support to peacemaking efforts in Sudan. Recognising the important role played by Track II initiatives, ACCORD's Peacemaking Unit launched the SCTP to support local peace process efforts in Sudan and South Sudan. Target groups included CSOs from Sudan and South Sudan who were exposed to various conflict intervention processes. These include study

THE UN'S 'SYSTEM-WIDE SPECIAL INITIATIVE ON AFRICA REPORT' CITED ACCORD AS A 'MODEL' ORGANISATION FOR PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL PEACE, DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA

Participants at the training support group meeting organised by ACCORD in Durban, South Africa on 25 March 2010. The training was geared towards building the African Union's mediation capacity in identifying lessons learned and sharing good practices based on previous mediation missions conducted by the African Union.

tours and dialogue forums as well as conflict resolution and mediation training.

ACCORD's Track I peacemaking initiatives have been crucial in supporting and sustaining other non-official peacemaking processes which ultimately led to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005. At the official Track I level, peacemaking efforts in Sudan were driven by IGAD with support from the AU. While IGAD's concerted effort was important, other non-state actors also provided substantive peacemaking support in Sudan. This facilitated a more broad-based peace agenda in a process that was largely dominated by the political and military elite.

The CPA is testimony to the outcome of persistent mediation efforts given that the conflict between Sudan and South Sudan has been deemed one of the most protracted conflicts in the world. Following the signing of the CPA in 2005, Sudan has moved towards consolidating this peace through the January 2011 referendum. This resulted in an overwhelming majority of Southerners voting to become a separate State. Although the CPA ended Sudan's civil war, the post-CPA facilitation processes are yet to significantly address the unresolved crises. These include Abyei and Blue Nile territorial disputes, contestation over oil as well as other contentious issues.[10]

Supporting Ongoing Peacemaking Initiatives

ACCORD has also been involved in country-specific peacemaking efforts focused on bringing together conflicting parties. ACCORD's peacemaking strategy is usually

characterised by the provision of mediation support to the mediation team as well as the engagement of Track II actors to support Track I peacemaking efforts. In Burundi, the DRC, Sudan, Somalia and Madagascar ACCORD provided various forms of support towards enhancing the mediation and negotiation capacities of the different actors.

Burundi

ACCORD has been directly and indirectly involved in notable peacemaking activities in Burundi, the DRC, Sudan, Somalia and Madagascar. In these countries, ACCORD provided various forms of support to Track II actors. These include conflict resolution training, negotiation, mediation support and capacity building for women's movements, rebel groups, political parties and other actors. ACCORD also works towards supporting Track I diplomats. Notable among these initiatives were:

- Mediation support to the former President of Botswana, Ketumile Masire, who was the facilitator for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.
- Support to the special envoy, Nicholas 'Fink' Haysom in his roles as both the chairman of the committee negotiating constitutional issues during the Burundi Peace Talks (1999–2002) and as the principal adviser to the Mediator in the Sudanese Peace Process (2002–2005).
- Support to the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General (UN SRSG) in the Somalia Peace Process, Ambassador Ould-Abdallah.

Nelson Mandela, facilitator for the Burundi peace process and Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister of Foreign Affairs in South Africa, attend a security council meeting on Burundi (15 November 2001).

This process, led by Ould-Abdallah, is credited with bringing together the Somalia Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS), the main opposition group, for talks in Djibouti in June 2008. This ultimately resulted in a ceasefire agreement and the establishment of a Unity Government.

• Support to the AU High Level Implementation Panel on Sudan (AU HIP) in post-CPA negotiations.[11]

In Burundi, ACCORD was involved from the first phase of the mediation process which began in November 1995 under the leadership of the former Tanzanian President, Julius Nyerere. He was given the mediation mandate by the Great Lakes Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi. ACCORD's technical and conflict analysis expertise assistance to the Burundi mediation process was further consolidated in 1999 when the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU) tasked the former South African president, Nelson Mandela, to head the mediation team. This followed on the death of Julius Nyerere.

ACCORD also provided conflict resolution and negotiation skills training to political parties and rebel groups in Burundi such as the Council for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD, currently the ruling party) and

the Forces for National Liberation (Palipehutu-FNL). The Mandela-led mediation process resulted in the signing of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement (also known as the Arusha Agreement) on 28 August 2000. The Arusha Agreement is hailed for directly addressing the ethnicity issue in Burundi. It devised a power-sharing arrangement which both guaranteed security to the minority Tutsis and democracy to the majority Hutus.

After Mandela's exit from the Burundi mediation process, AU/UN peace negotiations followed in 2002 under the leadership of the South African President, Jacob Zuma (then Deputy President). These talks ushered in a new era in Burundi which culminated in the first post-conflict elections in June 2005. Confident that Burundi is consolidating its peace dividend, the UN Peacebuilding Commission classified Burundi as a country in the post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding phase. Burundi held its second post-conflict elections in October 2010.

Peacemaking processes in Burundi have become less of a priority. The focus is now on peacebuilding as well as on the implementation of the Arusha Accord. Subsequently, ACCORD's peacemaking initiatives in Burundi have become further refined as the organisation focuses more on peacebuilding and peace facilitation. Having established an office in Burundi in 2000, ACCORD currently concentrates

on addressing post-conflict challenges such as land rights. ACCORD has been implementing a land mediation programme in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

In the DRC, ACCORD provided mediation support to ongoing peacemaking processes, especially to the former President of Botswana, Ketumile Masire, who was the facilitator appointed by the OAU in 1999. ACCORD supported the Inter-Congolese dialogue in many ways including bringing together CSOs to contribute to the peace process in Sun City, South Africa. More recently, ACCORD's efforts towards enhancing and strengthening peace in the DRC have shifted to peacebuilding. Through its African Peacebuilding Capacity Programme (APCP), ACCORD engages with key stakeholders to consolidate sustainable peace efforts in the country. The programme seeks to promote coordination and coherence in peacebuilding approaches among the various actors. These include civil society, the government, local leaders and the UN.

Madagascar

ACCORD has been involved in Madagascar since 2009. It initially provided conflict analysis and assessment expertise following the coup.[12] In 2010, the organisation sent a team of analysts to the country to undertake a conflict assessment which subsequently produced a detailed conflict scan. The fragile political situation in Madagascar has attracted concerted regional and international mediation efforts by SADC, the AU and the UN. Currently the SADC Troika is mandated to steer the mediation process in Madagascar with the former President of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano, as the mediator. ACCORD's engagement with peacemaking efforts in Madagascar focuses primarily upon analysing the conflict and proffering policy recommendations to the institutions involved in the Malagasy peace process. These include the SADC Troika (which until September 2012 was chaired by the South African Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Marius Fransman), and the Southern African Mediation Reference Group of which Vasu Gounden, the Executive Director of ACCORD, is a member.

From 21–26 July 2012, an ACCORD delegation comprising both programme and research staff undertook an assessment of the political situation with the purpose of proffering strategic approaches to secure a stable Madagascar. The organisation was further invited by the SADC Troika to participate in the SADC Heads of States summit held in Maputo in Mozambique in August 2012. The issue of Madagascar was extensively discussed in these forums. The SADC Summit endorsed recommendations emerging from the report of the Troika on Politics, Peace, and Security. This included the full endorsement of the electoral calendar developed by the UN and the National Election Commission whose scheduled date for the elections was

RECOGNISING THAT PEACE IS GENDERED, ACCORD'S PEACEMAKING EFFORTS HAVE ALSO BEEN DIRECTED TOWARDS INCLUDING WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS IN ANY PEACE PROCESS

May 2012. The Summit communiqué also urged Presidents Ravalomanana and Rajoelina to continue discussions in a way that prioritises the Malagasy people and to both consider not contesting the upcoming elections. As the year 2012 draws to a close, ACCORD continues to be involved in efforts towards unlocking the political stalemate in the Madagascar peace process.

Building Women's Mediation Capacity

Recognising that peace is gendered, ACCORD's peacemaking efforts have also been directed towards including women's organisations in any peace process. Using the 'nested paradigm', the peace scholar Dugan illustrates how issues of conflict resolution need to address relational, systemic and structural issues.[13] This realisation has informed ACCORD's dedicated focus on gender and peacemaking over the past twenty years. Despite women constituting a demographic majority in the population

In pursuit of greater representation of women in peace processes ACCORD hosted a high level seminar in October 2010 on the United Nations Security Council's Resolution 1325 within the context of the African Union Year of Peace and Security and the African Women's Decade (2010–2020). Some participants at the 1325 seminar are pictured here.

Participants at a seminar on "Mediating Peace in Africa: The Role of African Women Mediators" organised by ACCORD in collaboration with the African Union Conflict Managment Division and the African Union Peace and Security Department in Johannesburg, South Africa (May 2012).

composition of Africa, they remain minimally included in key processes that influence their social, economic and political spheres including mediation processes.

ACCORD's 20 years of peacemaking in Africa have been characterised by efforts aimed at enhancing the capacity of women in peace processes through providing training and mediation support. The organisation continues to implement the UN Security Council's Resolution 1325. This, among other international frameworks, calls for the increased participation of women in peace processes. To this end ACCORD has been conducting mediation and negotiation training for selected women from government, academia, business and CSOs. For example, in February 2012 ACCORD conducted conflict resolution training for the Progressive Women's Movement of South Africa (PWMSA). This is a CSO which seeks to empower a cross-section of South African women politically, economically and socially. Additionally, ACCORD convened an African Women Mediators Seminar in Johannesburg, South Africa in May 2012. Its aim was to consolidate the organisation's Africa-wide strategy towards accelerating the participation of women in peace processes. Ultimately such initiatives will build a critical mass of trained and qualified women who can effectively engage in peace processes in various decision-making capacities. This includes negotiators, mediators and mediation support experts.

Twenty Years of Peacemaking in Africa: Lessons Learned

Throughout the experiences highlighted above ACCORD has grown and generated a substantive number of lessons in peacemaking. The following are some of those acquired

in the course of twenty cumulative years of sustained involvement in peacemaking in Africa.

*   *Collaborative Partnerships:* ACCORD's 20 years of peacemaking has demonstrated the importance of collaboration as epitomised by the AU Mediation capacity-building project. In this project ACCORD, CMI and the AU are partners who share the same objective of enhancing the mediation capacity of the AU and supporting the operationalisation of the African peace and security architecture. The collaboration of civil society with an intergovernmental institution such as the AU provides testimony to the possibility of the effective intersection of civil society, regional organisations and member states in efforts towards strengthening Africa's peace and security frameworks.

*   *Continued Mediation Capacity Building Support*: ACCORD's involvement in peacemaking initiatives with the AU, RECs and Track II actors has demonstrated that substantial support and capacity-building will continue to be required. Training, research and skills transfer will remain critical in addressing the challenge of peace on the continent.

*   *Supporting Peace Implementation*: For effective and sustainable peacemaking in Africa peace agreements should not only be correctly planned but the design and agreement should also be correctly linked. Mediators must address the regional dimensions of national conflict while measures for supporting and evaluating the crafted framework for peace are put in place. All actors including the policy community, conflict intervention practitioners and CSOs must continue to work towards developing rigorous approaches to supporting and evaluating peacemaking

efforts and, in particular, to implementing peacemaking outcomes and peace agreements.

- *Integral Role of Gender Considerations:* Gender should remain a high priority issue in all peacemaking initiatives. ACCORD understands that programming activities must be developed for women to encourage their active participation in peace processes.

Conclusion

ACCORD's 20 years of peacemaking reflects a strong focus towards integrating Track I and Track II actors in operationalising the African peace and security architecture. While at the programmatic level it might seem that the dominant focus has been supporting the AU and RECs, ACCORD's peacemaking support efforts have also been rendered to particular states, civil society and specific mediation teams and facilitators. ACCORD's role in peacemaking visibly demonstrates that CSOs can and should be able to support the peace agenda at all levels. These include the AU, RECs, member states and other CSOs. The relevance of organisations such as ACCORD in the peacemaking arena remains undisputed. As conflict in Africa continues to unfold and to require effective resolution, it is evident that a combination multi-track diplomacy approach will continue to be required for sustainable peacemaking processes.[14] With experience in conflict resolution spanning the past 20 years, ACCORD is poised to remain a critical player in the peacemaking field. ᴬ

Dr Martha Mutisi is the Manager of the Interventions Department at ACCORD.

ENDNOTES

1. Track II diplomacy is distinguished from Track I which includes governments, military and political elites. Track II often includes non-state actors such as civil society, religious and traditional leaders.

2. Saunders, H. (1999) 'The Multilevel Peace Process in Tajikistan.' In Crocker, C. A., F.O. Hampson and P. Aall (eds.). In *Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World*. Washington DC: USIP Press.

3. Lederach, J.P. (1997) *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Herndon, VA: USIP Press.

4. Spurk, C. (2010) 'Understanding Civil Society.' In Paffenholz, T. (ed.). *Civil Society and Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment.* Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner.

5. Diamond, L. (1999) *Developing Democracy Towards Consolidation.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

6. Paffenholz, T. (2012) 'Civil Society and Peacebuilding.' In Paffenholz, T. (ed.). *Civil Society and Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment.* Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner.

7. Figure 1 is based on the author's own conception, adapted from Spurk (2010), p.7.

8. The AU's Peace and Security architecture includes institutions such as Special Envoys which are appointed by the Chairperson of the AU Commission to engage in peacemaking activities in an identified conflict area. Additionally, the AU also established the

Panel of the Wise which comprises senior former statesmen and civil society organisations who possess significant political and social capital necessary for engaging in peacemaking. Among other tasks, members of the AU Panel of the Wise were mandated with the responsibility of promoting peace, security and stability on the continent, including preventing and managing conflict, monitoring elections and mediating disputes between political parties.

9. The terms, Track I actors and Track I diplomacy were coined by Harold Saunders (1999) to refer to official actors in peacemaking. These include government actors, the military and political elite. Track I is distinguished from Track II which includes actors that undertake unofficial processes in peacemaking. For details, see Saunders. H. 1999. The Multilevel Peace Process in Tajikistan.' In Crocker, C. A., F.O. Hampson and P. Aall (eds.). In *Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World.* Washington DC: USIP Press.

10. The outstanding issues between Sudan and South Sudan can be divided into four critical issues:

    1. Citizenship - especially as it relates to states such as the Abyei - where both Sudan and South Sudan claim that Abyei belongs to them;

    2. Border issues and security, which essentially involves cross-border security arrangements, where currently both states contest the ownership of the Heglig/Panthau oilfields;

    3. International agreements, where both states have not agreed on how to carry forward international agreements that were signed before the 2011 separation, (for example, the Nile Water Agreement);

    4. Economic arrangements, particularly how the two states will share the burden of debt which emerged from the loans borrowed before South Sudan's independence.

11. The AU High Level Implementation Panel on Sudan (AU HIP) was appointed by the AU to address the outstanding disputes between Sudan and South Sudan. Its mandate is to facilitate negotiations relating to South Sudan's independence from Sudan in July 2011 including disputes over oil, security, citizenship, assets, and their common border.

12. Madagascar is currently experiencing a fragile political climate. The Malagasy political crisis can be traced back to 2009 following the closure by the then President, Marc Ravalomanana, of Andree Rajoelina-owned Viva Television after it had aired a speech by the former President Ratsiraka. What followed was a political contestation between President Ravalomanana and Rajoelina on issues around press freedom and state security. Rajoelina was able to mobilise anti-government protests, which found support from the population due to the poor state of the Madagascar economy at the time. The demands from protesters included the respect for press freedom as well as the creation of an enabling atmosphere for democracy. In January 2009, Rajoelina, who had managed to galvanise support from many opposition parties, declared that he was taking over State control and establishing a National Transitional Government (NTG). Rajoelina is still the President of the NTG while Ravalomanana is in exile in South Africa.

13. Dugan M.A. (1996) 'A Nested Theory of Conflict', *A Leadership Journal: Women in Leadership - Sharing the Vision*, 1, pp. 9-20.

14. Multi-track diplomacy is a concept which was proposed by Diamond and MacDonald (1996) to explain the interconnectedness of several actors in peacebuilding. Each track signifies a particular actor; there are 13 tracks involved in peacemaking and peacebuilding, and they range from government, the military, civil society, business, academia, religious leaders, traditional leaders and community based organisations, among others. For details, see Diamond, L. and J.W. McDonald (1996). *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace.* Virginia, USA: Kumarian Press.

SIERRA LEONE

BY **LESLEY CONNOLLY**

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

	About 20 Years Ago	2012 / Recent Years
Population	2 274 540 (1992)	5 485 998 (2012)
Main Ethnic Groups	Temne 35%, Mende 31%, Limba 8%, Kono 5%, Kriole 2%	
Life Expectancy	45 years	56.55 years
Literacy	31.4 %	35.1%
GDP per Capita	US $800 (2009 estimate)	US $900 (2011 estimate)
Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	1991 – 2002 2 million displaced with 490 000 fleeing to Liberia and Guinea.	In 2007 there were 27 311 refugees in Liberia.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

SIERRA LEONE

- ✪ National capital
- ◉ Provincial capital
- ○ City, town
- ✈ Major airport
- ––·––·–– International boundary
- –·–·–·– Provincial boundary
- —— Main road
- —— Secondary road
- —— Railroad

0 20 40 60 80 km
0 10 20 30 40 50 mi

Map No. 3902 Rev. 5   UNITED NATIONS
January 2004

Department for Peacekeeping Operations
Cartographic Section

ACCORD's WORK

- Conference held by ACCORD and the UN on "Local Ownership in Peacebuilding Processes in Sierra Leone" in November 2009.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between ACCORD and the government of Sierra Leone in 2010. The MoU looked at funding the deployment of a Cuban Medical Brigade in Sierra Leone. This was part of Sierra Leone's "agenda for change" aiming to promote peacebuilding in the country.
- In 2010 President Koroma was invited to South Africa by ACCORD to accept the Africa Peace Award on behalf of the nation of Sierra Leone.

ACCORD FILES

SIERRA LEONE CONFLICT OVERVIEW

	About 20 Years Ago	2012 / Recent Years
Main Conflict Issues	1991–1999: • Devastating poverty and related conflict effects from Joseph Momoh's rule. • Conflict over control of the diamond mines in Sierra Leone. • Inequality inflicted during colonisation where specific ethnic groups were deemed superior to others. • Unemployment and general dissatisfaction with the socio-economic conditions in the country due to inefficient leadership, corruption, marginalisation and nepotism.	• The new government's priorities include furthering development, creating jobs and stamping out endemic corruption. Also dealing with the widespread displacement of people and refugees as a result of conflict. • The Government of Sierra Leone is still trying to fulfil the recommendations made by the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission. These include providing housing, health care, education and employment to the population.
Main Political Parties and Significant Groups	• All People's Congress (Joseph Saidu Momoh). • Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel group (Foday Sankoh). • National Provisional Ruling Council (Valentine Strasser). • Sierra Leone People's Party (Ahmad Tejan Kabbah). • Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Johnny Paul Koroma). • Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).	• Sierra Leone People's Party (Ahmad Tejan Kabbah). • All People's Congress (Ernest Bai Koroma). • People's Movement for Democratic Change (Charles Margai). • United Nations (UN).
Significant Events	**1991** - Start of civil war. Former army corporal Foday Sankoh and leader of the RUF begins campaign against President Momoh, capturing towns on the border with Liberia. **1992** - President Joseph Momoh ousted in military coup led by Captain Valentine Strasser. **1996** - January - Strasser ousted in military coup led by his defence minister, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. **1996** - Ahmad Tejan Kabbah elected president in February, signs peace accord with Sankoh's rebels in November. **1997** - Peace deal unravels. President Kabbah deposed by Major Johnny Paul Koroma in May. **1999 May** - A ceasefire is greeted with cautious optimism in Freetown amid hopes that eight years of civil war may soon be over. **1999 July** - Six weeks of talks in the Togolese capital, Lome, result in a peace agreement. Under this the rebels receive posts in government and assurances that they will not be prosecuted for war crimes.	**2002 January** - War ended. UN mission says disarmament of 45 000 fighters is complete. Government and UN agree to set up war crimes court. **2002 May** - Kabbah wins a landslide victory in elections. His Sierra Leone People's Party secures a majority in parliament. **2004 February** - Disarmament and rehabilitation of more than 70 000 civil war combatants officially completed. **2004 May** - First local elections in more than three decades. **2006 March** - Liberian ex-president Charles Taylor is arrested in Nigeria and handed over to the war crimes court in Sierra Leone which indicted him. **2012 April** - The UN-backed Sierra Leone war crimes court in The Hague concludes its work with the conviction of former Liberian leader Charles Taylor for aiding and abetting war crimes in the Sierra Leone civil war.

SIERRA LEONE CONFLICT OVERVIEW

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THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

BY JOHN AHERE

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

	About 20 Years Ago	2012 / Recent Years
Population	39 million	73 million
Main Ethnic Groups	More than 250 ethnic groups of which the majority are Bantu. The four largest groups - Mongo, Luba, Kongo (all Bantu), and the Mangbetu-Azandemake make up about 45% of the population. The country also has 60 000 Belgians.	
Life Expectancy	47.2 years	55.74 years
Literacy	67.3%	66.8%
GDP per Capita	US $208	US $210
Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	The number of IDPs prior to the 1996 – 1998 war was at least 100 000	1.7 million

ACCORD's WORK

- Celebrating 10 years of conflict resolution work in Africa, ACCORD presented the 2003 Africa Peace Award to the "Children of Africa" with a focus on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Symbolising the future of Africa and the continent's hopes and dreams, the prestigious award was presented to a group of children drawn from various regions in Africa.

- ACCORD conducted trainings and workshops through its African Peacebuilding Coordination Programme throughout the DRC from 2008 to date. The peacebuilding training courses focus on key themes including elections, governance and conflict. During the 2011 elections the adverse impact of possible electoral violence for the DRC's peacebuilding efforts required the Programme's engagement with various stakeholders, specifically focusing on their roles in the mitigation and prevention of election-related violence. The trainings have been fundamental in linking and supporting various stakeholders from government and civil society as well as international actors.

- ACCORD also provided strategic mediation process support to the former Botswana President, Ketumile Masire, in his role as the facilitator of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.

ACCORD FILES

UN PHOTO/MARTINE PERRET

DRC CONFLICT OVERVIEW

	About 20 Years Ago	**2012 / Recent Years**
Main Conflict Issues	The following characterised President Mobutu's era: • Mobutu changed the constitution at his discretion. He banned other political parties while making membership in his party compulsory. • Severe human rights violations and political repression. • Significant corruption in the political system. • DRC violence and spill-over into Rwanda, Burundi and the region – and vice-versa.	• Serious human rights violations against civilians by armed groups. • Increased offensive action in the eastern DRC by rebel groups such as M23, Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Nduma Defense of Congo (NDC), Forces de Résistance, Mai-Mai Rai Mutomboki, Patriotiques en Ituri (FRPI).
Government Type	• Mobutu's system of patronage replaced the DRC judicial system as the true arbiter of disputes.	• Based on the 2006 constitution: A Republican government which is highly centralised with executive power vested in the president.
Main Political Parties and Significant Groups	During the Mobutu regime: • Popular Revolutionary Movement. • Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS). • Party of Independent Republican Federalists (UFERI). • The Democratic and Social Christian Party (PDSC).	Based on the 2011 elections and the political arrangements shortly thereafter: • People's Party for Reconstruction and Development (PPRD). • Democracy and Social Progress Union (UDPS). • The Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC). • The Congolese National Union (UNC). • Social Movement for Renewal (MSR). • People's Party for Peace and Democracy (PPPD). • Unified Lumumbist Party (PALU). • Congolese Rebirth Alliance (ARC). • National Congress for the People's Defense (CNDP).
Significant Events	**1991**: Following riots in Kinshasa by unpaid soldiers, Mobutu agrees to a coalition government with opposition leaders, but retains control of the security apparatus and important ministries. **1993**: Rival pro- and anti-Mobutu governments created. **1994**: Rwanda genocide occurs and the Interahamwe escape into the eastern DRC, destabilising the region further. **1996-1997**: Tutsi rebels capture much of eastern Zaire while Mobutu is abroad for medical treatment. **May 1997**: Tutsi and other anti-Mobutu rebels, aided principally by Rwanda, capture the capital, Kinshasa; Zaire is renamed the DRC; Laurent-Desire Kabila is installed as president.	**2011 January**: Constitution is changed which some say boosts President Joseph Kabila's election chances. **2011 July**: Voter registration for November elections is marred by demonstrations by opposition supporters alleging irregularities. **2011 November**: Presidential and parliamentary elections. Kabila gains another term. The vote is criticised abroad and the opposition disputes the results. **2012**: Rebel forces advance towards main eastern city of Goma. Rwanda has denied UN accusations of training the rebels. **2012**: Warlord Thomas Lubanga becomes first person convicted by the International Criminal Court since it was set up 10 years ago. He is sentenced to 14 years in jail for using child soldiers in his rebel army in 2002 and 2003.

SOMALIA

BY **LUCKYSTAR MIYANDAZI**

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

	About 20 Years Ago	2012 / Recent Years
Population	Nearly 7.7 million (1991)	10 085 638 (2012)
Main Ethnic Groups and Clan Families	-Two main ethnic groups: Hamitic stock and associated clans, and Bantu. - Main Clan Families: Darood, Dir, Hawiye, Isaaq.	
Life Expectancy	46 years	50.8 years
Literacy	24.1%	37.8%
GDP per Capita	US $210	US $600
Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	2010 - 542 000 refugees in the four main asylum countries in the region – Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Yemen and about 1 550 000 IDPs.	2012 - 1 017 649 refugees mainly hosted in Kenya, Yemen, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Tanzania and Uganda, and internally displaced people (1.4 million) settled mainly in Somaliland and the south-central regions.

Map No. 3690 Rev. 7 UNITED NATIONS
January 2007

Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Cartographic Section

ACCORD's WORK and ROLE

- 1997 - ACCORD undertook its first fact finding visit to Somalia.
- 2006 - An ACCORD delegation traveled to Mogadishu, Somalia for a fact finding mission and consultations towards the development of a country programme.
- 2008 - ACCORD staff members participated in Somalia peace talks in Djibouti. A field research mission was conducted by the Interventions Department the same year.
- 2009 - The Training for Peace (TfP) Programme at ACCORD conducted a Mission Preparedness Civilian Peacekeeping and Peace building Course (CPPC) and an Administration and Finance Specialisation Course for the African Union (AU) Mission for Somalia (AMISOM) in Nairobi, Kenya. The course specifically aimed to familiarise AMISOM personnel with the Somali context including inter alia an analysis and understanding of the conflict, cultural sensitisation and tolerance.
- 2012 - The TfP Programme at ACCORD in partnership with the AU convened a workshop in Nairobi, Kenya to consider the mainstreaming of protection of civilians considerations into the operations of AMISOM.
- 2012 - ACCORD and the AU convened a Security and Contingency Planning session for AMISOM in Nairobi, Kenya.

ACCORD FILES

SOMALIA CONFLICT OVERVIEW

	About 20 Years Ago	**2012 / Recent Years**
Main Conflict Issues	• Clan dynamics including rivalry and power struggles. • Warlords - the ousting of Siad Barre's regime in 1991 created a power vacuum with the rise of warlords controlling the different territories in Somalia. • A 'greater Somalia' - the idea of reincorporating all Somalis living in the Horn into a single State has caused tension with neighbouring countries particularly Kenya and Ethiopia. Ethiopia/Eritrea relations - Continued rivalry between the two countries has fuelled conflict in Somalia as well. • Ethiopia/Eritrea relations - Continued rivalry between the two countries has fuelled conflict in Somalia as well. • Islamic courts and Sharia law emphasis - The Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) challenged the government to lead the country based on Sharia law. • The failure of the United States led operation Restore Hope in 1993 formed the basis for Somali retaliation against the West.	• 'Failed State' status- conflict has engulfed Somalia for more than two decades and has led to lawlessness, poverty, poor socio-economic standards, and armed conflict. • Terrorism evident in the rise and spread of the al-Shabaab terrorist group with links to al-Qaeda. The al-Shabaab control most of southern Somalia and are pushing into parts of the capital Mogadishu with terror attacks. • Piracy continues to be a major challenge. • Border conflict - Somali militia groups and the al-Shabaab are involved in border disputes with the neighbouring states of Ethiopia and Kenya.
Government Type	• No central and permanent national government; transitional, parliamentary federal government.	
Main Parties and Significant Groups	• Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP) - Said Barre was secretary general of SRSP which remained the sole legal party until his overthrow in 1991. • Somali National Movement (SNM) - In 1991 SNM seized control of the North and declared an independent Republic of Somaliland (though not internationally recognised). • United Somali Congress (USC) - Dominated in Central and Southern Somalia. Split into Somali National Alliance (SNA) and Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA). • Somali Democratic Movement (SDM). • Somali National Union (SNU). • Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) - Ogadeni dominated.	• Democratic Party of Somalia (DPS). • Somalia National Party (SNP). • Peace and Development Party (PDP). • United People's Democratic Party. • Somali National Congress (SNC). • Somali Independent Constitutional Party (HDMS). • Somali African National Union (SANU). • Liberal Somali Youth Party (PLGS). • Somali Democratic Union (SDU).
Significant Events	• 1991 - Military dictator Mohamed Said Barre is ousted after almost 22 years in power. Clan rivalry for control of Somalia results. Somaliland in the northwest region declares its autonomy and independence with the formation of the 'Republic of Somaliland' (not recognised internationally). • 1992 to 1995 - UN peacekeeping mission is operational in Somalia. • 1992 - US military entered Somalia to lead 'Operation Restore Hope' aimed at protecting food packages from warlords. • 1998 - Puntland leaders in the northeast declare the region autonomous (not recognised internationally).	• 2004 - With a commitment to establish and nurture a central government after 14 attempts since 1991, the transitional federal parliament of Somalia was inaugurated. • 2009 - UN sponsored peace talks led to the expansion of parliament and election of Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as president. • 2012 - Somalia's National Constituent Assembly delegates votes to approve and adopt the first ever constitution for the country in 52 years.

DRC CONFLICT OVERVIEW

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SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN

BY ANYWAY SITHOLE

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

	About 20 Years Ago	2012 / Recent Years	
	SUDAN	SUDAN	SOUTH SUDAN
Population	39.47 million (1997)	25.95 million	8.26 million
Life Expectancy	57 years	63 years	61 years
Literacy	70%	61%	27%
GDP per Capita	US $1 153	US $3 000	US $1 546
Refugees and IDPs	• 209 000 in Uganda, 110 000 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 78 000 in Ethiopia, 28 000 in Kenya and 27 000 in the Central African Republic. • As a result of drought in the region, in 1997 Sudan was host to about 415 000 refugees from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Chad and Uganda. By 2004, there were 662 302 IDPs as a result of the civil war, particularly because of the Darfur crisis.	• In January 2012, there were a total of 4 270 000 IDPs, comprising 473 000 returnees and about 700 refugees.	• In October 2010, returnees from the North to South Sudan were 365 000. The number of IDPs in 2011 was 330 000 and these included 100 000 people displaced from Abyei and 18 500 from South Kordofan who came to South Sudan.

CONFLICT OVERVIEW

	Sudan	Sudan	South Sudan
	About 20 Years Ago	**2012 / Recent Years**	
Main Conflict Issues	• Fundamental differences in culture, religion and identity as well as substantial domination and economic marginalisation of the southern part of Sudan by the northerners.	Following South Sudan's autonomy: • Demarcation of borders. • Ownership of resources especially oil in the Abyei region. • Debt-sharing. • Infrastructural development.	
Government Type	Federal Republic	Republic	Republic
Main Political Parties and Significant Groups	• National Congress Party (Omar al-Bashir), Popular Congress Party (Hassan al-Turabi), Democratic Unionist Party (Hatim al-Sir), Sudanese People's Liberation Party (John Garang 1998). There were numerous other political formations which also existed in the country.	• Currently, there are 17 political parties and numerous other political players, human rights and civic organisations	• Sudanese Liberation People's Movement (Salva Kiir) and 15 other opposition political parties. Numerous civic organisations currently exist in South Sudan.
Significant Events	• Civil wars from 1955 to 2005. • Adoption of a new constitution with multi-party system. Registration of new parties began in 1999. • The second civil war ended in 2005 following 2 years of intense negotiations which ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).	• Elections were held in 2010 and a referendum was conducted in January 2011. • Independence of South Sudan from Sudan on 9 July 2011. • John Garang died in a helicopter crash 3 weeks after signing the CPA. • Salva Kiir became President of South Sudan in 2011.	

ACCORD's WORK

ACCORD started the Sudan Conflict Transformation Initiative on 1 December 2010, a project which ended on 30 April 2012. This programme focused on peacebuilding efforts both in the Sudan and South Sudan. To this end ACCORD signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of South Sudan in April 2011 and in February 2012 ACCORD, with support from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), began the process of opening an office in Juba, South Sudan. This presence has allowed ACCORD to not only interact more effectively with partners in South Sudan, but also to further develop thinking around future programmes in a more organic fashion.

ACCORD has also conducted field research and civil affairs training for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). The institution has sought to engage at both the national and local level to allow for the dissemination of critical peacebuilding skills to the state and county levels in South Sudan. Against this background, the South Sudan Initiative is designed to engage at the grassroots level to allow for the dissemination of critical peacebuilding skills. The programme focuses on various aspects of conflict sensitive planning and development, conflict management, conflict transformation, and peacebuilding to empower stakeholders in South Sudan to effectively play the role mandated to them in promoting sustainable peace.

ACCORD FILES

ACCORD FILES

ACCORD's WORK

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AN OVERVIEW OF PEACEKEEPING IN AFRICA IN THE PAST TWENTY YEARS (1992–2012)

BY **ZINURINE ALGHALI** AND **PRIYAL SINGH**

Peacekeeping is an international conflict management and response tool. It is utilised by multilateral institutions like the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) as part of a political process to assist parties in conflict to move from active combat towards implementing a peace agreement achieved through negotiations and/or mediation. As a dominant response mechanism, peacekeeping has served as one of a range of international peace and security tools considered by the UN and the AU against other available response options. It has and continues to be a central mechanism employed to assist countries in the aftermath of conflict to facilitate the move from conflict to sustainable peace. It consumes more resources, employs more people and occupies a greater share of the UN Security

Above: Peacekeeping is a central mechanism employed to assist countries to move from conflict to sustainable peace.

Peacekeeper's responsibilities increased with multidimensional and integrated missions to include the protection of civilians and delivering humanitarian assistance.

Council's and the AU Peace and Security Council's time than any other issue. No instrument has had a greater impact on the provenance and application of international law and international humanitarian law than peacekeeping mandates. Better than any other collective endeavour, it represents the concept of member states cooperating in the maintenance of international peace and security.[1]

Peacekeeping, like many other facets of the contemporary international system, is underpinned by numerous political, economic and social considerations. These impact upon, shape and influence one another due to their inter-linkages as parts of the broader international system and framework. While remaining cognisant of such broader considerations, this article pays particular attention to the ways in which peacekeeping has effectively transformed within this system in the past twenty years (1992–2012). It also maps the broad trends which have characterised the nature of modern international peacekeeping operations.

The Emergence and Rise of Intrastate Conflicts in Africa in the 1990s

The period of the early 1990s was a critical point for the direction, nature and implementation of peacekeeping operations. The clearly delineated nature of interstate conflict initially gave way to a seemingly golden age of peace and security. However, this early optimism was quickly tempered by the growing acknowledgement that the many festering political, economic and social ills which were largely kept at bay by patronage systems during the Cold War were now major causes for concern. With the exception of Eastern Europe, no region of the world was more affected by such changing international circumstances than Africa.

The quelled tensions between the superpowers resulted in a significant loss of the continent's international strategic value since Africa was no longer perceived as a contested ideological theatre. This, coupled with years of imposed and ill-informed structural adjustment policies by the world's leading international financial institutions, meant that Africa's political and economic outlook rapidly deteriorated. It was not long before these developments reached tipping-point. As domestic grievances turned violent, conflict across the African continent assumed a new character. This subsequently paved the way for the rapid rise of intrastate warfare.

As a result, peacekeeping in its traditional sense[2] became somewhat obsolete. This was primarily due to the fact that it could not properly address the new nature and dynamics

A United Nations Police (UNPOL) Training Officer demonstrates how to subdue a criminal suspect using non-violent methods, during a training session with Liberian National Police recruits, in Unification Town, Liberia (May 2011). Expanded mission mandates include the training and restructuring of local police forces.

of conflict. Traditional peacekeeping operations were found to be considerably ill-equipped to deal with key challenges. These were the breakdown of law and order, the destruction of infrastructure, the collapse of government structures and systems, the targeting of civilians and associated humanitarian crises, human rights abuses and addressing the vulnerability and displacement of civilian populations.

The establishment of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in 1992 underscored this increasing emphasis placed upon the role of peacekeeping in terms of the UN's response to peace and security challenges on the continent. This development in itself, exclusive of revising fundamental principles as well as of the types of mandates and the modus operandi of UN peacekeeping, was not sufficient to deal with the new realities of conflict. Such inadequacies were clearly manifested in the cases of Somalia and the Rwandan genocide where the prevention of escalating violence could not be effectively contained. This was as a result of the parameters of peacekeepers with regard to the principles of neutrality and impartiality. Added to this was the lack of strategic direction and support provided by UN headquarters in responding to the rising

challenges and new realities peacekeepers were faced with on the ground.

The fundamental principles of impartiality and neutrality were subsequently called into question concerning the need to provide much more effective responses in terms of intervening in countries. This was to address impending humanitarian crises and specifically to protect civilians and vulnerable groups. These were hard and bitter lessons learned by the UN. They generated and sustained substantial debate whilst echoing the failures of the UN and the international community in maintaining peace and security.

The End of the 1990s and the Start of the 2000s

At the turn of the twenty-first century a notable juncture in the evolution of peacekeeping was marked by the Report of the Panel for the Review of UN Peacekeeping Operations, commonly referred to as the Brahimi Report. This produced a number of critical findings and recommendations that formed the conceptual basis and framework that directs and continues to shape UN peacekeeping operations.[3] However, noting that UN peacekeeping has been conducted in a manner which draws primarily upon the UN Charter and that

The African Standby Force (ASF) represents an increasing regional institutional capacity across Africa to deal with security issues.

the Brahimi Report was simply a review brought on by the prior failures experienced by the UN, it became quite clear that there was a dire need for a holistic policy document. It was required in order to provide clear strategic guidance and explicitly outline the framework for the strategic direction and implementation of UN peacekeeping operations. This took the form of the UN Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines (also known as the Capstone Doctrine). It was developed in 2008 and represents the conceptual basis and guidelines for UN peacekeeping which, in conjunction with the Brahimi Report, serves as the basis for all UN peacekeeping operations. The timely operationalisation of experiences and lessons in the 1990s and the policies and guidelines that emanated thereafter were particularly relevant in the UN's responses to the crises in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). These have largely worked to re-establish the efficacy of the organisation's peacekeeping role in an era of distinct peace and security challenges.

In 1999 the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the DRC (MONUC) were mandated as the first multidimensional and integrated peacekeeping operations.

As multidimensional peacekeeping operations they had a military component to facilitate security and stability, a police component to assist in reinstating law and order and a civilian component to assist in the re-establishment and extension of state authority essentially in order to rebuild and effectively 'restart' society. In addition to their multidimensional composition and mandate they utilised an integrated approach by working closely with the humanitarian and development communities. This was to ensure that the UN's responses are collaborative ventures between the peacekeeping mission and the UN's funds and programmes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

Consequently, peacekeeping quickly developed from being a modestly challenging and occasionally employed collective response to interstate conflict to a mechanism frequently employed when dealing with intrastate conflicts and crises threatening a region's stability.[4] Thus peacekeepers' responsibilities increased and ranged from assisting in the implementation of peace agreements to protecting civilians and delivering humanitarian assistance. These expanded mandates were further inclusive of assisting with the demobilisation of former fighters and

The African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) Force Commanders exchange their military head-gear for the United Nations blue beret during a ceremony that signified the transfer of authority from the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) to UNAMID in El Fasher, Darfur (December 2007).

their return to civilian life, the training and restructuring of local police forces and oversight of inclusive political processes which bolstered local capacities in terms of good governance and institution-building. The aim was not only to quell violence and ensure law and order but also to aid in the re-establishment of legitimate state authority[5] and the promotion of functioning civil services.[6]

Such local capacity support services offered by peacekeeping operations assist countries in the aftermath of conflict to enhance core capacity gaps in the areas of safety and security, justice and rule of law, inclusive political processes, core government functions and economic revitalisation.[7] Thus peacekeeping operations created under such multidimensional mandates, in contrast to traditional operations conducted by the UN in the early 1990s, became much larger in size in terms of personnel deployments and the number of mandated tasks and functions they have to implement. This is one of the reasons why peacekeeping operations are now complex and multifaceted. Their

functions and tasks include assisting countries in the aftermath of conflict.

Peacekeeping in the 2000s and Africa's Increased Involvement in Peace Operations on the Continent

As the decade drew to a close, Africa's peace and security experiences kept pace with the proliferation of intrastate conflicts. These stretched from Angola to Burundi and from Somalia to Sierra Leone. Faced with insufficient international responses to conflict and crises as well as an increasing burden being placed upon Africa and the Global South in general in terms of troop contributions, the continent moved towards the development of its own peace and security architecture. Premised upon the notion of African solutions to African challenges, the AU was established by the July 2002 Durban Protocol. It included the creation of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) which defines the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and its constituent components.[8]

The structures within this support matrix aim to assist the AU to secure stability on the continent, anticipate and prevent conflicts, promote and implement peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction activities and coordinate and harmonise continental efforts in the prevention and resolution of conflicts.[9] Unlike the UN, the AU does not talk about peacekeeping. This is as a result of the connotation which prescribes that it is deployed to assist parties in conflict to implement a peace agreement. This is because the AU's conceptual basis for response to peace and security challenges is to address conflict and crises irrespective of whether or not there is an existing peace agreement between or among the relevant parties or stakeholders. Thus the AU uses the blanket term Peace Support Operations with the intention of utilising the appropriate mechanism within APSA to respond to crises on the continent. Nonetheless the African Standby Force (ASF)[10], Africa's intra-continental

2004 highlights this increasingly utilised approach in Africa. In this instance a UN Security Council mandated peace operation was only forthcoming pending the efforts of the AU mission in Burundi (AMIB). This peace support operation first sought to secure a comprehensive ceasefire agreement and was later transformed into the UN Operations in Burundi (ONUB). These so-called 're-hatting' exercises wherein peacekeeping operations initiated by regional actors such as the AU transforms into a UN peacekeeping operation was also experienced in Sudan. Utilising a hybrid model saw the transformation of the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) into the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). Presently, a more modern and unique support model approach has been adopted for the AU mission in Somalia (AMISOM) through the establishment of the UN Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA). It provides AMISOM with mission support (administrative and logistical) functions and services.[13]

THESE TRENDS ARE INDICATIVE OF A LARGER GLOBAL MOVE TOWARDS WHAT HAS BECOME KNOWN AS 'LAYERED RESPONSES' TO CRISES AND CONFLICT

and multidimensional standby arrangement that is part of APSA, represents Africa's future peacekeeping capacity and mechanism. It utilises the continent's five Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs)[11] as its effective building blocks to respond to the continent's security dilemmas in terms of peace operations and related crises.

While the ASF reached its initial capability in 2010, much remains to be done in order to fully consolidate it by 2015. Nevertheless, its development indicates an increasing regional institutional capacity across Africa to deal with security issues. Furthermore, the increasing willingness of the AU to shoulder responsibility by initiating peace processes utilising the capabilities of RECs and collaborating with the UN among other international and external actors stands in stark contrast to its predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). This was much criticised for its position of non-interference in the affairs of other member states. While challenges still abound the AU is making considerable progress, especially when compared to other continental organisations. However, inter-organisational partnerships and coordination between the AU and the UN will be key in fostering such efforts. This is because peacekeeping operations have become increasingly complex, multi-faceted and almost impossible for one single entity to undertake.

These trends are indicative of a larger global move towards what has become known as 'layered responses' to crises and conflict. This refers to the creation of security mechanisms in which effective responses to conflict can be filtered up from local or national level to the respective sub-regional or regional organisations and ultimately to the international level.[12] The case of Burundi from 2003 to

The need to better tailor such inter-organisational collaboration to utilise the comparative advantages of peace and security institutions at the various levels to enhance a coordinated global peace and security response mechanism cannot be understated.[14] This firm realisation demonstrates the need for stronger and equal partnerships among the UN, AU, RECs (member States, and various other relevant organisations and actors, including civil society and non-governmental organisations). The purpose is to enhance their relations to deal with peace and security matters on the continent more effectively. Additionally, there is a need to consider the utilisation of available civilian capacities within countries that host peacekeeping operations. This would ensure mentoring and enhancement of local capacities and skills as well as local ownership and demand-driven support to national priorities along with the sustainability of international efforts. Collectively, these will assist countries which are emerging from conflicts through their transition to peace.

Current Peacekeeping Dynamics

The current complex nature of conflict has therefore led to a dramatic change in the size and scope of modern peacekeeping operations. This has resulted in an increased number of multidimensional peacekeeping operations which have acquired an added dimension of peacebuilding. As a result, peacekeepers are now often referred to as 'early peacebuilders'. Thus the peacekeeping-peacebuilding nexus and a better understanding of the peacebuilding roles undertaken by peacekeeping missions are key in the implementation of peacekeeping operations.

The peacekeeping-peacebuilding nexus also lends itself to the issue of consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal

of missions. In 2009 the withdrawal of two important peacekeeping operations on the continent (UN missions in the Central African Republic and Chad - MINURCAT and the DRC - MONUC - now MONUSCO) were demanded by the host governments. Eritrea similarly withdrew its consent from the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). These developments directly impact on peacekeeping in terms of its relationship with a host country and the authority a peacekeeping operation possesses in ensuring the implementation and achievement of its mandates. Negating this will mean that peacekeeping operations have to demonstrate more tangible results and achievements in their efforts to foster protection of civilians and in their contributions to peacebuilding within a clearly defined timeframe as per the mission's mandate. Also, such support and contributions to post-conflict countries should enhance existing systems instead of trying to develop and establish new systems that will not be sustainable following the exit of peacekeeping operations.

An even more recent trend in peacekeeping operations is the development of missions which have exclusive peacebuilding mandates, with civilians forming more than 90% of the staff capacity.[15] Examples of these include the AU Liaison Offices in post-conflict countries like Liberia, South Sudan and UN Special Political Missions in Somalia and Guinea Bissau. These developments indicate the critical roles played by civilians in peace operations with civilian experts now representing approximately one quarter of the UN staff employed in the field. Additionally, the demand of modern multidimensional peace operations have further underscored the significance of civilian expertise and roles within substantive components. This has led to the strengthening of civilian capacities both at the AU and UN levels.

The current UN Civilian Capacities process which responds to the recommendations of the UN Civilian Capacities Review Report[16] supports the UN and the international community's efforts in nurturing and generating needed civilian capacities to respond to and support post-conflict countries in the aftermath of conflict. From an AU perspective, the development of the civilian dimension of the ASF has been on-going since 2006 such that fundamental gaps and challenges are addressed in order to ensure that the civilian component is on a par with the military component by 2015.

Conclusion

The multidimensional and integrated peacekeeping approaches employed in recent times have proven very useful in ensuring appropriate responses to conflicts in Africa. They continue to be improved as new missions are deployed and mandates are revised. Additional to the military roles and functions, the roles played by police and

The demands of modern multidimensional peace operations have further underscored the significance of civilian expertise and roles within substantive components. This has led to the strengthening of civilian capacities both at the African Union and United Nations levels.

civilians continue to help re-establish and enhance civil services and civil society whilst also enhancing the rule of law in facilitating the functioning of the state. Civilians and police officers continue to help their counterparts in post-conflict countries in implementing systems and processes that contribute to maintaining peace and paving the way for development.

The growing categorisation of UN, AU and RECs response options to peace and security challenges are a good indication of the tools that these institutions have at their disposal to address specific challenges across Africa and the international system as a whole. This needs to be further enhanced to avoid a misuse of peacekeeping as a one-size-fits-all mechanism. Moreover, the on-going efforts to strengthen inter-organisational partnerships and collaboration will help these entities to further shape and categorise their peace and security mechanisms to deal with the ever changing nature of crises and conflict. Ensuring tailored responses to specific types of crises or conflicts through the utilisation of appropriate response tools will undoubtedly result in greater efficiency and success in the years to come.

The next twenty years may witness changes in the direction and nature of peacekeeping even more profound than those of the last two decades. Peacekeeping is entering an era of increasing consolidation marked by efforts aimed at scaling-down over-centralised and over-burdened structures. The international system may thus come to be characterised by an ever-expanding preference for inter-organisational partnership, local ownership and the provision of increasingly specialised niche civilian capacities. What is certain, however, is that peacekeeping will continue to evolve as new and existing concepts and processes generate more clarity and understanding among member states and are verified by the Special Committee on peacekeeping operations (referred to as C34)[17]. This will be as a result of the ever-changing nature of conflict. It is this which has and will always be the primary determinant of the composition and implementation of peacekeeping operations. Practitioners, policy-makers, scholars and politicians will have to ensure that the practice of peacekeeping remains effectively responsive to conflict in whatever form it may take, thereby meeting the particular safety and security needs of our societies. ⚐

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Endnotes

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2   'Traditional peacekeeping operation' refers to an inter-positional force deployed with the consent of the parties in conflict to monitor a ceasefire agreement while mediators seek a political solution to the underlying conflict.

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7   UN. (2011). Independent Report of the Senior Advisory Group on Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict, A/65/747-S/2011/85. Available at: <http://www.civcapreview.org/LinkClick. aspx?fileticket=SE-205TrKg0%3D&tabid=3422&language=en-US>

8   These components refer to the Common African Defence and Security Policy, the Military Staff Committee, the African Standby Force, the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise and the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

9   Alghali, Z. and Mamadu, M. (2008) The African Standby Force and Regional Standby Brigades. *Conflict Trends* 2008(3) pp. 34 – 38. Available at: <http://www.accord.org.za/downloads/ct/ ct_2008_3.pdf>

10   Ibid. pp. 34 – 38.

11   The following Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs) serve as the building-blocks of the ASF – the North Africa Regional Capability (NARC), the East Africa Standby Force (EASF) Coordinating Mechanism (EASFCOM), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

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15   UN. (2011) Letter from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, S/2011/496. Available at: <http://www.securitycouncilreport. org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/ PKO%20S%202011%20496.pdf>

16   The UN Civilian Capacities Review Report is available on http:// www.civcapreview.org/

17   The Special Committee was established by General Assembly resolution 2006 (XIX) of 18 February 1965 to conduct a comprehensive review of all issues relating to peacekeeping. It reports to the General Assembly on its work through the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization) and is comprised of 144 member states, mostly past or current contributors of peacekeeping operations.

EFFECTIVE PEACEBUILDING TOOLS: STUDY TOURS AT ACCORD

BY **GUSTAVO DE CARVALHO**

ACCORD FILES

Above: A women's study tour delegation visits Constitution Hill in Johannesburg, South Africa (November 2007).

There have been important developments in the conflict resolution field In the past twenty years. During this period several approaches towards consolidating peace have been strengthened and increased attention has been given to the promotion of long-term solutions in countries coming out of conflicts. In this context, peacebuilding emerged as one of the most important approaches in supporting the establishment of peaceful societies. This is done through the development of strategies that aim to prevent violent conflict from igniting, escalating or relapsing.[1]

The idea of creating mechanisms that support the establishment of durable peace is not new. For instance, in past decades the peacebuilding concept has been widely discussed by academics. In particular, Johan Galtung presented the view that peacebuilding is the process of achieving sustainable peace through addressing the root causes of conflicts and supporting indigenous capacities for conflict management and resolution.[2] It was only during the 1990s, however, that peacebuilding became increasingly popularised not only in academic environments but

Participants engage in a small group discussion at the Sudanese Civil Society Study Tour and Conflict Resolution Training in Pretoria, South Africa (July 2010).

At all these levels and stages a core issue lies in the capacity of national actors to provide sustainability for the country's peacebuilding processes through an understanding of the central role played by local and national ownership. This follows from the premise that no peace process is sustainable in the absence of a meaningful degree of appropriate local involvement.[6] Several peacebuilding organisations have developed capacity building strategies that aim to train and increase the individual and collective capacity of peacebuilding stakeholders. As a result, they achieve a better understanding of their own environment and are able to identify solutions that are applicable and effective for local and national stakeholders.

'It is necessary to interact and exchange ideas and experiences with people outside your country who have had a similar situation like ours, so you can get a better understanding of the process of coming out of such a situation and learn how they managed.'

Quote from a participant at the Joint Peacebuilding Training and Study Tour, Durban and Pretoria, October 2009.

This article provides an overview of how a particular tool is designed to enhance the capacity of stakeholders in dealing with post-conflict societies. It highlights a specific pedagogical tool, namely study tours, analysing its benefits and potential impact on participants and their roles within overall peacebuilding processes. The article presents the development of this strategy by the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) in this area. In particular, it identifies some common aspects of how participants benefited from the cross-cultural experience and how they have seen the applicability of the tool in their own contexts.

Study Tours as Peacebuilding Tools

'*The great difficulty in education, is to get experience out of ideas*'

George Santayana[7]

Study tours have been utilised by several disciplines and fields as a tool to link theory and practice. They provide participants with a practical cross-cultural opportunity for experience sharing and learning. As one of the components of peacebuilding relates to the understanding of structures and long-term transformation of a conflict situation, study tours are an important pedagogical tool in this respect.

Study tours are defined as short-term activities developed to provide participants with structured exposure to an external environment. The immersion and experience enables them to better understand their own environments. The activity is strongly based on the idea of transfer between different societies where different actors mutually learn

mainstreamed at the core of interventions in conflict settings. Peacebuilding was defined in the 1992 United Nations (UN) report, *An Agenda for Peace*, as those activities that aim to 'identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict'.[3] This definition was followed by an understanding that, rather than following a linear progression, peacebuilding overlaps and interlinks with other responses to conflict. These include preventive actions, peacemaking and peacekeeping.

Peacebuilding initiatives target a country's institutional and human capacities in addressing post-conflict challenges. These involve strengthening institutions and mechanisms as a means of preventing the resumption or escalation of violent conflict and establishing a durable and self-sustaining peace.[4] As a result, a large variety of peacebuilding tasks have been conducted at different levels (grass-roots, sub-national, national and international) and stages of a conflict spectrum (pre-conflict through to post-conflict environments). These tasks range from the disarming of warring factions to the rebuilding of political, economic, judicial and civil society institutions.[5]

Participants of the Sudanese Civil Society Study Tour and Conflict Resolution Training in Pretoria, South Africa (July 2010).

from each other. They do so in a process that engages them in reflection about their own realities and potential ways for improvement.

Lederach's views on peacebuilding support the rationale for study tours. He presents an argument that 'social conflict emerges and develops on the basis of the meaning and interpretation people involved attach to action and events.'[8] By drawing on connections between participants, study tours allow them to make comparisons, contrast experiences and identify potential avenues for strengthening or changing processes. As a result, study tours aim to change the attitudes, behaviours and skills of those individuals engaged in the activity and to determine ways to promote better responses to their own situations. In discussing academic study tours for university students Chesworth notes:

'...one of the more obvious short-term effects of the study tour is that students express a greater appreciation of their own home, culture and country. (...) the student will naturally make comparisons between their home country and the host country while on the tour.'[9]

This is a core achievement of study tours of all types.

Study Tours at ACCORD

'I'm going to share what we did, based on conditions that prevailed in our time. You will have to decide what can be applied in your context.'

Jerome Sachane, ACCORD's Deputy Director, explaining the rationale for study tours to participants.

Since its creation in 1992, ACCORD has developed extensive experience in sharing best practices and lessons learned from various peace processes in Africa. Study tours to South Africa form one of the organisation's significant tools used to promote constructive change in conflict-affected societies. This is achieved by exposing and immersing participants in the South African experience of transition from Apartheid to democracy. Since 1995, when the first study tour was organised (see box below), further tours have included the Burundian military and political leaders, Rwandan parliamentarians, Somali women leaders, former Congolese armed movements and Angolan civil society representatives. ACCORD also organised a series of joint peacebuilding trainings and study tours. These focused on bringing participants from several post-conflict societies - including Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi, Sudan and South Sudan - to South Africa.

The first study tours organised by ACCORD occurred in the second half of 1995 in the context of a partnership with the British-based non-governmental organisation, International Alert. At the request of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General to Burundi, Ambassador Ould Abdallah, International Alert and ACCORD organised two study tours to South Africa for a group of senior and influential figures from Burundi, including military officers and politicians. The purpose of the visit was to study the process of the difficult but largely peaceful transition in South Africa to see if there was experience and expertise relevant to the resolution of the crisis in Burundi. A secondary objective was to provide an opportunity for participants to meet and discuss their differences in a less pressurised environment than that existing in Burundi. The study tour with the Burundian military officers also had the objective of encouraging reform in the Burundian army through learning about South Africa's experience of change in the composition of the armed forces.[10]

Study tours target key peacebuilding stakeholders in particular countries to learn about the South African experience. These tours expose visiting participants to the dynamics that prevailed in the South African transition. Participants are selected from amongst those who have direct roles in shaping the peacebuilding processes in their own countries. The tour is tailored around their separate roles and the particular aspects of the South Africa experience which could be beneficial for them. It thus extracts key people from their own conflict scenario and immerses them in an environment where they are able to learn about a different society. They can potentially identify lessons from the other society's successes and failures in a focus area relevant to them. Jerome Sachane, ACCORD's Deputy Director, explains: 'By using graphic experiences and presenting details of the process of transitioning in South Africa, these tours have the objective of showing participants that despite challenges countries can find solutions that address their own situation.'[11]

> 'I think it is a great privilege for us to hear about your experiences in South Africa, and to realise that gender problems are universal problems.'
>
> Comment from a participant during the 'Sudanese Women's Study Tour to South Africa', February – March 2000, Durban and Cape Town.

The tours are designed to be highly participative and experience based, including a strong focus on building conflict analysis skills. By combining conceptual and theoretical approaches with practical and observed experience, the tours provide a multi-level understanding of conflict realities and peacebuilding. A strong component of study tour activities relates to conflict analysis and strategy design. Participants are assisted in better understanding

Roelf Meyer (centre), the former South African government's chief negotiator, addresses the Iraqi Study Tour delegation (July 2008).

An Angola Electoral Platform Study Tour participant learns about the South African electoral experience (July 2009).

and identifying conflict dynamics, thereby allowing them to realise the extent to which their own contexts relate to the South African experience.

Visits are made to key South African institutions as part of the study tours. These allow participants to not only learn from South Africa's transitional experience but also to share their insights from their own transitional processes with South African stakeholders. Interactions with the latter create opportunities for participants to identify some of the considerations for South Africans within the constraints of their specific scenario. These visits thus provide a further platform for mutual learning and a deeper understanding of political participation.

Have ACCORD's Study Tours Achieved Their Objectives?

This section is based on recurrent issues raised in the study tour participants' evaluation forms, direct feedback, and also as identified by some of the organisers. It is not an exclusive list of key issues nor an attempt to scientifically show the impact of the activities. Rather, it is intended to provide examples of the relevance of study tours as perceived by many of its main beneficiaries.

As a starting point, South Africa is generally seen by participants as a positive example. Although not perfect, it provides many successful examples of how a relatively peaceful transition can be implemented. Many participants commented that South Africa provides lessons in terms of the transition and transformation of societies, as well as of the creation of numerous complex structures, processes and mechanisms that are required in a transforming society.

The "Women in Dialogue for Peace in Africa" Study Tour group visits South Africa's Apartheid Museum in Pretoria (November 2007).

Participants identified the significant lessons learned from their study tour experience as follows.

- *Role of Leadership*

> *'The leadership has been very consistent throughout the struggle. We would like our leaders to learn from the South African experience.'*
>
> Comment from a participant of the 'Sudanese Women's Study Tour to South Africa', February – March 2000, Durban and Cape Town.

> *'The delegation was particularly struck by the quality and by the spirit of responsibility of people met. In its opinion, this reinforces the key role which leaders must play in any peace process.'*
>
> Quote from a press release issued by Burundian politicians who attended the 'Burundi Study Tour to South Africa', September 1995.

One key recurrent issue presented in the evaluation forms and reports received from participants relates to the issue of leadership. As a common understanding in most of the study tours assessed, participants acknowledged that to a large extent the pragmatism of leaders in South Africa allowed reconciliation to become a viable process. During the transition from apartheid to democracy in the 1990's, civil war was averted in South Africa due to a combination of the political compromise between the

National Party and the African National Congress, the pressures placed upon the South African economy and also the military's acquiescence to the transition. The opportunity to interact with many of these South African leaders showed participants that not all decisions are easy to make. However, they felt that they had achieved a better understanding of how different variables influenced such decisions. This allowed them to reflect on such challenges and on their applicability to the participants' own contexts. Focusing on leadership capacity was thus seen as a core aspect for sustainable peacebuilding processes.

- *Local and National Ownership*

> *'The visit to relevant sites helped me to understand what is actually meant by the transformation of conflicts. For example, for me, understanding the struggle against Apartheid helped me to understand how to empower those who were previously marginalised.'*
>
> Quote from a participant of the Joint Peacebuilding Training and Study Tour, Durban and Pretoria, October 2009.

Understanding the role of local and national ownership was also frequently mentioned as an important lesson from South Africa that could be mirrored in other peacebuilding contexts. The understanding that the main players in South Africa avoided third-party intervention during negotiations allowed many participants to understand the importance of

locally driven processes. During the trainings participants usually focused on determining how much external support in peacebuilding is appropriate for their own countries. They often presented strong views about national and local ownership. Participants usually appreciated that the South African transition process was largely nationally driven and they identified better with such a scenario for their own countries.

- • **Understanding the Long-Term Process of Achieving Peace**

Concerns about the long-term character of peacebuilding were evident in recent study tours. Participants realised that some of the challenges still present in South Africa almost two decades later indicate that peacebuilding requires a long-term commitment from the leadership and society in general. Many participants expected that South Africa would have overcome most of its challenges. They were somewhat surprised to find that there are still significant challenges in the South African reconciliation process. Other participants made reference to the need for showing peace dividends to the population on a regular basis as one of the means for ensuring sustainable peace.

- • **Peacebuilding as Context Specific**

Question: 'Can the South African model really be replicated elsewhere?'

Answer: 'The South African model may not be replicated elsewhere, but it offers useful lessons for countries transitioning from conflict. It is therefore up to the people of Sudan to choose what will work.'

Question and Answer session during the 'Study Tour and Conflict Resolution Training for Civil Society Organisations from Sudan', July 2010.

Many of the participants also questioned how much of the South African experience and lessons were actually relevant to their own situation and context. They mentioned that some of the challenges were too specific to the South African context and could not see how these experiences could be replicated in their own scenarios. While this may be a potential shortfall of study tours they still have a positive impact on participants. Firstly, study tours allow participants to question why and how particular solutions can be applied to their environments and the relevance of addressing the root causes of their conflicts. Secondly, the tours allow them to understand that in order to generate relevant responses for peacebuilding challenges the approaches, mechanisms and processes used must be specific, appropriate and culturally adaptive.

Conclusion

Study tours need to be seen as part of a larger process of peacebuilding engagement, where the impact of interventions are appropriately measured and understood.

Organisations will thus be able to better understand the extent and roles played by their initiatives in helping to promote changes in behaviour and in supporting the establishment of sustainable peace.

While more in-depth and rigorous enquiry into study tours is required for a full assessment of the impact of such activities, this article provides some indication of the relevance of study tours as peacebuilding tools. Study tours provide the forum and space for beneficial comparing and sharing between different societies. ACCORD's significant work with study tours shows that participants are indeed able to identify lessons from experiences in other countries and recognise the relevance of these experiences to their own environments. ⚑

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BURUNDI: THE PATH TO PEACE CONSOLIDATION

BY **KARISHMA RAJOO**

ACCORD FILES

Introduction

2013 will mark ten years since the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) intervened in Burundi. This will be a milestone in the path to supporting and building sustainable peace in the country. It is also a milestone for an organisation that is currently celebrating 20 years of peacemaking. ACCORD's experience in the Burundi peace process as well as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has ensured that its capacity for supporting peacemaking on the African continent is now firmly entrenched. In tracking and analysing conflicts across the continent, Burundi was already on the list of countries being monitored by ACCORD. As South Africa emerged from its own transition with rich lessons, ACCORD's work in Burundi commenced with an exchange programme for Burundian parliamentarians and diplomats with their South African counterparts. ACCORD's collaboration with Burundi began in earnest and the organisation's ability to coordinate and facilitate such exchange programmes is now one of its trade mark strategies for conflict resolution and confidence-building with a range of political actors in Africa.

The success of the initial exchange programme led to a series of other exchanges and study tours with Burundian military officials, women parliamentarians from Burundi and Rwandan and Burundian youth. This was an added benefit for ACCORD by increasing its ability to understand the dynamics and details of the conflict and possible strategies for its resolution in the early stages. ACCORD

Above: ACCORD's office in Bujumburu, Burundi was established in 2003.

Map No. 3753 Rev. 6   UNITED NATIONS
September 2004

Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Cartographic Section

Beyond Arusha: Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and the Promotion of Peace, Reconciliation and Effective Governance

The Arusha agreement allowed for a transitional government which continued the peace negotiations process with the last and outstanding armed groups, namely the National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) and the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People – National Forces of Liberation (Palipehutu-FNL). The political climate was tenuous in spite of the transitional phase. However, these armed movements joined the Burundi government following the signing of ceasefire agreements in 2003 and 2008. A significant year was 2005 when the first democratic elections were held with the support of the UN Mission in Burundi (ONUB) and the CNDD-FDD emerged victorious in the election.

The elected government received the support of the African Union (AU), UN and the international community. It set out to engage in a programme to demobilise militias and reform the army and police. It also sought to reintegrate ex-combatants, returning refugees and internally displaced persons. Simultaneously it sought to rebuild the country's economy, judicial institutions and social services. This has not been without challenges. ACCORD, in defining its own role in Burundi, recognised that its interventions would continue beyond the peacemaking support it offered to civil society. It gave them a voice in the Arusha negotiations. This included offering its skills to the armed movements in understanding the political and strategic significance involved in negotiations. ACCORD's country office in Bujumbura, Burundi, was thus established in 2003 with the primary focus being capacity building in conflict resolution

also conducted several capacity-building workshops for a wide range of stakeholders. These included the armed movements in preparation for their ceasefire negotiations with the transitional government under the facilitation of the then Deputy President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma.[1] ACCORD's strength in conflict management and its ability to use training as a key approach helped to build the skills needed to understand how to manage conflicts in a country still dealing with armed conflict.

Today, Burundi has set its own benchmarks for peacebuilding after the signing of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation agreement in 2000. The country's path to building its peace is guided by the fact that it has crossed historical thresholds with the holding of two elections in 2005 and 2010. This democratic dispensation showed it to be moving away from the political and ethnic violence between Hutus and Tutsis that so strongly characterised the history of the country for the periods 1965, 1972, 1988 and 1993. In addition, the support received from the United Nations (UN) Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) for projects under the first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the formulation of the second PRSP in accordance with the key planning instrument *Vision Burundi 2025* are sure signs that Burundi's consolidation of its peace process has significantly progressed since Arusha. However, issues which remain include land tenure, slowed economic growth, widespread unemployment, governance challenges, the role of the opposition in the post-2010 election context and regional instability. These continue to impact upon the country's efforts in peacebuilding.

Former South African President Nelson Mandela (centre), requested that ACCORD host a Burundi civil society leadership consultation in Pretoria, South Africa. The consultation was hosted by Graça Machel (not present in photo) in her capacity as an ACCORD Trustee and Bineta Diop (left), former Executive Director of Femmes Africa Solidarité. Vasu Gounden, Founder and Executive Director of ACCORD is on the right.

ACCORD staff lead a youth training on conflict resolution in Bujumbura (November 2006).

for local civil society organisations, fostering their constructive involvement in the transitional government. It also provided conflict resolution capacity-building for senior representatives in government, most notably the ministry charged with the Mobilisation for Peace and National Reconciliation. With the armed movements transformed into political parties, ACCORD's trainings in conflict resolution and confidence-building as well as its ability to fuse the South African experience and lessons with the Burundi experience created an interface between the political level and civil society. This facilitated a better grasp by stakeholders of the challenges that a transitioning Burundi was facing.

The newly elected government had a five year election term and a mammoth post-conflict reconstruction task on its hands. The political climate was already showing signs of tension in 2008 despite the FNL integration into the administrative and security structures. International attention and emphasis was placed on ensuring that Burundi was a post-conflict success.

Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding: Defining National Priorities

In 2007, the process of developing a Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding was launched through a broad based consultative process. Included were the UN Peacebuilding Commission and key stakeholders in the country such as civil society organisations, the private sector, religious communities, political parties, UN agencies and bilateral and multilateral partners. The priorities of the government's five-year programme were further developed into the Burundi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP 2007–2010). This together with the five-year programme constituted the overall programmatic framework that guided the main peacebuilding priorities.[2] Burundi was allocated US$ 35 million from the UN PBF and this was jointly managed by the UN Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) and the Burundi government.

The key peacebuilding priority areas included:
1. Good governance
2. Strengthening the rule of law within security forces
3. Strengthening justice, promotion of human rights, reconciliation and the fight against impunity as well as reaching a consensus on the modalities of the implementation and functioning of transitional justice mechanisms
4. Addressing land disputes, particularly in the context of the reintegration of affected populations and community-based recovery especially aimed at women, the youth and affected populations.[3]

An independent evaluation was conducted in 2009 and highlighted that the PBF funds provided both an opportunity and a challenge. It was an opportunity from the perspective that the US$35 million was immediately available to the government and the UN to focus on urgent peacebuilding projects particularly in the security, governance and justice sectors. In addition, the funds were able to fill the gaps and shortfalls from bilateral and multi-lateral donors who felt that the projects selected and its design were high risk. With regard to challenges, the funds were allocated to Burundi at a time when the relationship between the UN and the government was strained. This related most notably to the government's request for ONUB to leave the country at the time when the funds were being negotiated. Coupled with these tensions, the 'capacity for both national and international institutions to deliver sustainable services to the population remained relatively weak and funding scarce', and the guidelines, systems and staff capacities of the UN and the government were also limited in providing effective support to the various projects.[4] However, the reality is that the funds did provide the Burundi government with the opportunity and ability to make important contributions in peacebuilding for sectors. These were key in giving

A mediation session conducted by ACCORD's Legal Aid Clinic Project staff in Rumonge (May 2009).

Transitional Justice consultations undertaken jointly by ACCORD and the South African Embassy in 2006, to introduce civil society to the different mechanisms of transitional justice that exist in order to contribute to the success of the reconciliation process in Burundi.

legitimacy to new institutions and created a solid foundation to reform and recast political and social order.

Moving forward, Burundi has also finalised the second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP II). It is based on *Vision Burundi 2025* and provides adequate solutions to the current challenges and issues related to the stability and development of the country. It is based on the following four strategic areas which essentially follow from the PRSP I:

- Area 1: Strengthening of the rule of law, consolidation of good governance and the promotion of gender equality
- Area 2: Transforming the Burundi economy for sustainable job-creating growth
- Area 3: Improving the access rate and the quality of basic social services and strengthening social protection
- Area 4: Managing space and the environment for sustainable development.[5]

Through this second PRSP the government aims to make the strategy and its priority action programmes more functional by drawing on lessons from the PRSP I. It plans to adopt a strong monitoring and evaluation mechanism. This is to assess the progress of the different projects and also to ensure that the national budgeting process as well as resource mobilisation will be based on the PRSP II.[6] However, a widely shared opinion is that the success of PRSP II and the government's ability to mobilise the necessary resources for its implementation is dependent on how the government will deal with issues of corruption, transitional justice processes and opposition leaders

Dealing with Land Challenges

For ACCORD, its work and programmes reflected the country's peacebuilding priorities. Its conflict resolution

initiatives became strongly embedded in the different phases of the country's progression, specifically for civil society organisations. In particular, by 2004 its work on the land issue became significantly pronounced and continues to be implemented today. As early as 2002 Burundi was dealing with an influx of refugees mainly from the DRC, Rwanda and Tanzania. This in itself posed a variety of challenges between the returning refugees and their process of repatriation and reintegration into existing communities. On returning to their respective communes returnees have often found that their land has been occupied or sold. In some cases their property has been occupied by either neighbours or relatives. Additionally, some returnees have found their land to have been expropriated by the government without any form of compensation. In some cases returnees have also arrived back with new families. The majority of returnees and host communities continue to struggle to receive assistance from the relevant institutions such as the courts, the local administration and the police. This is primarily due to many being unaware of the legal procedure to follow. Thus ACCORD established its Legal Aid Clinic Project (LACP) with support from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to provide support for the reintegration of returnees into their host communities.

ACCORD is currently operational in the provinces of Bururi (Communes of Rumonge, Buyengero and Vyanda), Rutana (Communes of Giharo, Bukemba, Gitanga and Mpinga-Kayove), Makamba (Communes of Nyanza-Lac, Mabanda, Kayogoro, Kibago and Vugizo), Bubanza (Commune of Gihanga and Mpanda), Cibitoke (Communes of Buganda and Rugombo), and Bujumbura rural (Communes of Mutimbuzi and Kanyosha). It continues to provide mediation services to resolve conflicts peacefully, organises awareness and sensitisation missions and monitoring

ACCORD faciliated a civil society dialogue before the 2010 elections in Bujumbura. The dialogue session allowed participants from civil society and the security forces to jointly address issues that could trigger violence in the post-electoral period and to formulate strategies for violence prevention and management.

and provides legal assistance. It also ensures the building of capacity of community leaders and administrative authorities at the community level to effectively assist the returnees. In June 2010, ACCORD signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Commission on Land and other Properties (CNTB). The main goal of the MoU is to collaborate and coordinate land mediation initiatives in the different provinces. In addition, ACCORD is tasked with building the capacity of CNTB members in conflict resolution and the mediation of land conflicts. The capacity building workshops in conflict resolution help to improve the ability of CNTB members to better understand land disputes and to design appropriate and constructive responses. Furthermore, CNTB is able to validate the agreements reached by the LACP as part of the broader national effort to achieve durable solutions for displaced persons. From April 2002 to April 2012, UNHCR has assisted with facilitating the return of 514 976 refugees.[7]

Transitional Justice and Reconciliation

The discussions for the establishment of a transitional justice mechanism were an important factor in the country's peace consolidation efforts. This was in order to support strengthening justice, promoting human rights, reconciliation and the fight against impunity. The country needed a way to deal with its past and the perpetrators of the violence in a constructive way. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and a Special Court were to be completed in 2003 as stipulated in the Arusha agreement. However, there have been several delays with the establishment of the TRC.

A 2005 Security Council Resolution reiterated the importance of establishing the transitional justice mechanism. The political environment did not easily allow for the creation of the TRC, post-Arusha. The ceasefire agreement with Palipehutu-FNL was only signed in 2006 followed by its demobilisation and transformation into a political party. Clashes still continued until 2008 which limited the prospects for the full establishment of a TRC. Additionally, negotiations between the government and UN at this time were difficult in deciding on the Special Tribunal and the TRC. These negotiations ended without success. Thereafter the preparations for the 2010 elections were underway which meant that processes in relation to the TRC's establishment were postponed until after the elections.[8]

In 2006 ACCORD, in partnership with the South African Embassy in Burundi and the government, hosted a national dialogue on the mechanisms for transitional justice. This included experts from Rwanda, Sierra Leone and South Africa and sought to achieve local ownership and consensus for such mechanisms. There have been several other organisations in recent years that have held discussions on this topic. Under the government-established Tripartite Commission (government, the UN and civil society) a comprehensive national consultation was completed in 2010 which took the form of individual interviews; focal groups; community meetings; and consultations via internet to include the diaspora.[9] In addition, a draft law on the establishment, powers and functions of the TRC has been developed by a technical committee responsible for the preparation of the TRC. This committee's report

was officially submitted to President Nkurunziza on 18 October 2011.[10] The UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Šimonovic, who visited Burundi at the end of April this year again expressed the UN call in that, 'A credible and independent [Truth and Reconciliation] Commission that meets international standards and ensures broad participation and ownership by all segments of the society, with commissioners selected in an open and transparent manner, will help to build people's trust in mechanisms of transitional justice.'[11]

It is clear that mechanisms for transitional justice will need to be preceded by security and human rights guarantees. The track record remains tainted for the current government because of allegations of the harassment and intimidation of activists and journalists who are perceived to be working with the opposition. The establishment of the TRC was originally scheduled for January 2012 in the government timetable and this was submitted to the UNHCR in May 2011. The TRC establishment has again been postponed until a later date. The challenge is its timing which is strongly defined and influenced by the scheduled 2015 election which is fast approaching. The question remains as to whether or not a TRC process will be established before the 2015 elections. This is especially critical as the TRC will have only a two year mandate.

Elections in 2010 and Consolidating Peace to 2015

As the country proceeded on its peacebuilding path, elections 2010 soon came into focus and tensions were already mounting. The establishment of an Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) was essential. However particular disagreements were emerging with the establishment of CENI. These included the revised electoral code in relation to parties reaching agreement on the 'voting modalities, financial issues and sequencing of the polls as well as complaints from the different political parties about the process for the appointment of the CENI members as they felt they were not consulted sufficiently.'[12] The 2010 elections were also intended to be organised primarily by Burundians themselves. This meant that the requisite funds, in this instance US$52.8 million, had to be sourced by the government. This compounded the challenges in the preparations for the elections. The build-up to the presidential poll was marred by the arrests of opposition party members, restriction of opposition activities, acts of intimidation and property destruction. But there was also keen optimism that the elections would be free, fair and peaceful.

One important aspect in the progression of the political process in Burundi is that eight opposition parties decided to boycott the rest of the electoral cycle. This was after the CNDD-FDD victory during the first round of the commune elections held on 24 May 2010. It was claimed that there had been electoral fraud and intimidation.[13] The opposition parties forming the Democratic Alliance for Change in Burundi (ADC) now regrouped as ADC-Ikibiri. It made a strong call for the election results to be annulled and for the commune polls to be reorganised, further declaring the leadership of CENI as partial and the institution as incompetent. The irregularities and weaknesses were duly noted by the various observers. These included the Belgian election observer mission, the Civil Society Coalition for Election Monitoring (COSOME), and the European Union Electoral Observer Mission (EU-EOM). CENI sought to improve upon during the second round of elections but the outcome was still a landslide victory for the ruling party.[14] President Nkurunziza was re-elected with 91.62% of the vote. The boycott by the opposition brought fears and concerns of a potential threat to peace and stability. The ADC itself was not seen as a legal entity and therefore any attempts to convene as an alliance was curtailed by government. The difficulty in the decision taken by the opposition to boycott their participation in the election is that they are unable to offer any official opposition on government decisions and law making until 2015. How their status will be perceived in the light of the new law for political parties is also important.

With opposition leaders still in exile, concerns have been expressed about military re-engagement in neighbouring countries as there have been limited opportunities for political dialogue since the outcome of the 2010 election. Additionally, the government's new law on political parties has added to the frustrations as parties have to garner greater membership from across the country in order to qualify to participate in elections. Party heads must also prove that they reside in Burundi. Coalitions are banned under this law except during election campaigns and the government would have oversight powers on the implementation of internal party statutes.[15] This has created a tense political climate and led to the deterioration of the security situation in 2011. The exiled leaders have indicated that they are eager to return to the country in preparation for the next election but have expressed a need for security guarantees. However, this remains questionable with accusations against the government of reprisal killings, attacks and extra-judicial killings since the election in 2010, all of which have been denounced by the government.

A subsequent special commission which probed the allegations of the extrajudicial killings has found that no such deaths took place. Nevertheless, Burundian human rights groups have denounced the killings and found it unsurprising that no official wrongdoing had been identified.[16] All this only confirms that political dialogues and strategic engagement at the highest levels remain critical. This is so as Burundi

EXILED LEADERS HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY ARE EAGER TO RETURN TO THE COUNTRY IN PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT ELECTION

prepares for the next election and also continues in its peacebuilding trajectory. Most notably it must deal with the priorities it has set itself in the two PRSPs and related priority action plans. The ADC-Ikibiri however maintain that the new law puts Burundi's hard earned democracy at risk.[17]

Conclusion

Burundi has indeed had several successes in sustaining its peace. Following strategic frameworks and a visioning exercise for the country, the opportunities to deal with its peacebuilding challenges in relation to land, economic growth, reconciliation and sustainable development are now part of an institutionalised process. The reality remains that President Nkurunziza and CNDD-FDD, as the ruling party, are now increasingly responsible for shaping and ensuring the political, social and economic vision for Burundi. Thus the challenges of opening up the political space, changing some of the electorate's perceptions concerning the government's credibility especially in matters of good governance and the promotion of national cohesion and reconciliation are important factors that require a firm and deliberate response. Upon close reflection the government has made efforts to engage in discussions and consultations but the urgency is in these issues needing concrete actions. Without the promotion of national cohesion and reconciliation the challenges of preventing another outbreak of the violent conflict which characterised the country's past is likely to impede Burundi's progress. Much will depend on continued engagement and technical support from both international and regional organisations and from Burundi's own civil society in maintaining critical checks and balances for the country's future. ⌂

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