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EDITORIAL

BY VASU GOUNDEN

1 March 2006 was a significant day in my life. I cast my vote in the third local government elections in my country, South Africa. It was a good feeling. It is a good feeling to live in a country that is free and there is an extra special feeling of joy when you have spent the better part of your life struggling for this very freedom.

By all accounts the elections have been free and fair and without incidents of violence. Our democracy has once again been tested and it has been found to be durable and sustainable. The people of South Africa have again been given the opportunity to choose those whom we entrust with the governance of our country. All that we ask is that those we elect govern us fairly, equitably, transparently, and with good and noble intents.

South Africa, once thought to be a totally intractable conflict, is today a model for the negotiated settlement of complex conflicts. It is a model of effective compromise for the greater good of all people of South Africa. But has that compromise really led to tangible benefits for *all* people of South Africa? Has there been fair, equitable, and transparent distribution of the country's resources? In short, the question we have to ask is whether the post-conflict reconstruction of South Africa has created an environment for national development that will lead to a better life for all South Africans.

The South African post-conflict reconstruction (PCR) agenda is still being implemented presently. There is no doubt that huge strides have been made in addressing the developmental challenges that we inherited from the apartheid era. However, twelve years is a very short time-span to reverse decades of inequality and structural deficiencies of the apartheid system. Apart from time, huge financial and skilled human resources are needed to implement a post-conflict reconstruction agenda. The dilemma and challenge for any post-conflict society is balancing the rising expectations of the population with limited resources that cannot deliver in time. South Africa, despite its relative prosperity, is still

very much challenged by this dilemma. In the last year alone several hundred local-level community protests have taken place, some resulting in violence, over demands for accelerated delivery of social services. South Africa's past of racial discrimination has resulted in two nations: one rich and white and the other largely poor and black. In addition, with some positive developments in post-apartheid South Africa there is also a growing divide between rich blacks and poor blacks. These divides between and within groups continue to strain the nation-building aspects of PCR in South Africa.

I highlight the example of South Africa to illustrate the difficulties that a country with relatively good resources, good infrastructure, good institutional capacity, and a functioning economy with a firm tax base, has in successfully implementing its PCR agenda. How much more difficult is it going to be for Burundi, Liberia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to successfully implement a PCR agenda with all their attendant weaknesses in infrastructure, institutional capacity, economic stability, and most importantly their lack of financial and human resources?

This issue of *Conflict Trends* surveys the current PCR developments in Africa, highlights the challenges that are encountered during PCR and presents case studies of best practices and lessons learned. A significant lesson from South Africa very clearly illustrates that the process of PCR implementation requires lengthy time investment; the weaker the governing system and economy inherited, the lengthier the PCR process. Burundi, the DRC, Sudan, and Liberia will all have very protracted PCR phases because they lack the necessary resources to support and sustain the process. It is therefore incumbent on all stakeholders who desire a durable, sustainable peace in these countries, to make concerted efforts to provide the necessary resources for the successful implementation of PCR processes and not merely shift their attention and resources to the next media spotlight country in Africa! ▽



NATION-BUILDING, STATE-BUILDING AND POWER CONFIGURATION IN ZIMBABWE

WRITTEN BY **ELDRED V. MASUNUNGURE**

Introduction

Zimbabwe is a sovereign state presently under stress. But Zimbabwe, like many African countries, is not yet a nation-state. This is often a source of intra-state (and sometimes inter-state) conflicts and tensions. Many countries inherited states without nations. Nation-building, like state-building, is a work of art and many African leaders have proved to be good state-building artists but poor nation-builders. In countries with a kaleidoscope of cultural, ethnic, racial, religious and other salient social

identities, nation-building is a big challenge. This paper asserts that in such cases, a bipolar power structure is inherently unstable and breeds perpetual conflict. Furthermore, it proposes that a multi-polar power

Above: A Zimbabwean walks past election posters for Zanu-PF and the opposition party MDC, in Harare, 2005

configuration offers a more stable and viable arrangement if only because it is a more inclusive political formula.

This paper examines the nature of nation-building and state-building as political projects that have stood in competition with each other since Zimbabwe's attainment of national independence from Britain in April 1980. The focus is on two historical episodes in Zimbabwe's post-independence history: the period from formal independence to the Unity Accord of 1987; and the second period is the post-1999 era. Both have been deeply troubling and though separated by nearly one and a half decades, some of the underlying tensions and causative factors are the same. In addition, a common characteristic of both episodes is the bipolar nature of the power distribution.

The Post-Guerrilla Bipolar Conflict

Towards the end of the guerrilla campaign for independence, the two exiled and major liberation movements, led by the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) whose fighting army was called the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) whose fighting

animosities dated back to the 19th century and the old wounds had not healed by Zimbabwe's independence, notwithstanding that more than a century had lapsed and many political generations had passed by. This subterranean tension burst into the open soon after the country attained its independence.

With the achievement of formal independence, the new black government faced two challenges. The first of building a new, united nation from the ashes of colonial and racial subjugation and oppression. From the time of the country's colonial occupation in September 1890, it functioned as a bifurcated society. It was two nations within one territorial unit of rule. The two nations, one white and the other black, rarely saw eye to eye. As already alluded to, the blacks did not constitute a homogeneous community. They were divided ethnically between Ndebeles and Shonas and further sub-ethnic groups within the latter. The challenge was never to liquidate these racial and ethnic differences but to manage them. It was to create a nation united in its rich diversity. As we will see, the nation-building project was aborted in deference to the second challenge, that of state-building.

State-building entails creating and strengthening the

NATION-BUILDING, LIKE STATE-BUILDING, IS A WORK OF ART AND MANY AFRICAN LEADERS HAVE PROVED TO BE GOOD STATE-BUILDING ARTISTS BUT POOR NATION-BUILDERS

wing was called the Zimbabwe Peoples Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), forged a political alliance known as the Patriotic Front (PF). The PF came about for the purposes of synchronising political strategies to negotiate political independence from a common position. Indeed, the two parties seemed to share a common vision of an independent, non-racial, united Zimbabwe. Alas, this was not to be. After the multi-stakeholder ceasefire agreement and a political settlement in the form of the Lancaster House Agreement crafted in London in December 1979, the two political parties went their separate ways. This planted the seeds for tensions that later germinated into a low-level conflict now commonly referred to as the Gukurahundi or the anti-dissidence war in the western part of the country.

The roots of the misunderstanding go back to the split of ZANU from ZAPU in 1963 when factionalism took tribal and ethnic configurations and Joshua Nkomo's ZAPU became progressively Ndebele-dominated while Ndabaningi Sithole's ZANU became progressively Shona-led. The Shonas' and the Ndebeles' historical

institutions necessary to support and promote long-term economic, social and political development. It has been argued that state-building and nation-building are two overlapping but conceptually and historically different processes. Furthermore, to the extent that the two projects are not tightly overlapping and largely inseparable processes, the interaction of the two processes can and often does produce problems in the country concerned.¹

At independence, and even during the fight for it, the territorial integrity of the Zimbabwean state was rarely in dispute. What was in dispute, and for which the nationalists and the settler colonial regime were fighting each other, was the question of who would control the state. The 1979 Lancaster House Constitution answered that question only partially by allocating the control of the state to the black majority. However, it did not answer the question of who, among the blacks, would control the state and its destiny. This question Robert Mugabe and his Zanu-PF sought to settle by deciding to contest the February 1980 elections separately from PF-Zapu and thus presumably settling the question, once and for all,

of who had the majority support in the country and therefore who was entitled to rule it. As it turned out, Zanu-PF emerged the clear winner capturing 63% of the black vote and PF-Zapu a distant second with 24% of the vote.

One of the problems at independence was the contested and not yet fully resolved question of who constitutes the Zimbabwe polity or political community and which people should be members of that community.

Zimbabwe's politics is reflective of its multi-modal ethnic and cultural character. Although the most significant and 'permanent' line of social and political cleavage in present Zimbabwe is the ethnic polarisation between the majority Shona-oriented groups and the minority Ndebele-oriented ones, it is a popular and popularised myth that Zimbabwe is a bimodal country. This has led to a bimodal analysis of Zimbabwe politics.

The result has been to create what the late Masipula Sithole, one of Zimbabwe's foremost political scientists, called "a bi-polar power structure". In his view, such a power structure "tends to be tension-laden and therefore unstable, while a multi-polar power structure has less tension and is more stable".² Sithole was writing in 1979, a year before independence in Zimbabwe, and his observations were about the "struggles-within-the-struggle" in the two major nationalist movements. He further observed that tribalism and regionalism are as inevitable as social conflict but that instead of pretending that these tensions do not exist, "they must be faced fairly and squarely if they must be understood, managed and resolved properly".³ Sithole recommended "equilibrium theory" as "a framework for organizational management and conflict resolution".

The bane of Zimbabwe's politics is therefore rooted in its forced bipolarity in the context of a state that is yet to be a nation-state. The history of modern Zimbabwe teaches us that the country is at its most unstable and conflict-ridden when two major enemies face each other. The country has also not experienced a functional multi-polar power structure. It has either been a unipolar or a bipolar configuration. For instance, since the military conquest of the indigenous blacks in the 'First Chimurenga' uprising in the late 1890s, Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) was a unipolar country dominated entirely and almost comprehensively by the whites. Though blacks were a visible majority, they were so completely subjugated that they were not a political force to reckon with. This continued until the early 1960s, which saw the strengthening of the nationalist movement, particularly the radicalisation and militarisation of the nationalist struggle. This created a bipolar power structure with the nationalists pitted against the white settler regime. The bipolarity was essentially racial in substance until the power struggle between the whites and blacks was settled at the Lancaster House Conference.

Instead of the Lancaster House settlement ushering in a multi-polar power configuration, what emerged was another bipolar situation, but this time an ethnic rather than a racial one. The essence of bipolarity remained, with its inherent tensions and instability. Moreover, this bipolar power structure was expressed in explicit organisational terms in the forms of PF-Zapu and Zanu-PF.

After assuming power, Mugabe and Zanu-PF formed a coalition government in which PF-Zapu was a junior partner. Some analysts saw this offer to PF-Zapu as an attempt to weaken the party by offering it a secondary role in the coalition government "with a view to eventually swallowing it under a one-party state dominated by ZANU (PF)".⁴ The reality though was that Zanu-PF governed as if the other partner did not exist. It was a recipe for future conflict. Allied with this coalition government formula was the declaration by Mugabe of the then much-praised policy of "reconciliation" which was understood and practiced in bipolar terms and restrictively. Moyo thus points out that politics within the black community was not seen in terms of reconciliation but was viewed in terms of national unity. He argues:

While the objectives of reconciliation were clear in so far as they related to reconciling races which had been at loggerheads politically and economically, the objectives of national unity were not that clear beyond ZANU (PF)'s desire to impose or otherwise introduce a one-party state.⁵

As it turned out, the coalition government did not last long as the relations between the two major black parties deteriorated, culminating in the dismissal of Joshua Nkomo and his colleagues from the government in February 1982. His core supporters in the newly created national army also deserted and some of them allegedly fought running battles with the government later in a so-called dissident military campaign. The government responded massively and ruthlessly, deploying the notorious Fifth Brigade in a campaign code-named Gukurahundi and which reportedly killed about 20 000 civilians in Matabeleland and the Midlands provinces. Gukurahundi is Shona for 'the rain that washes away the chaff from the last harvest'. The Gukurahundi way of dealing with perceived and real enemies (the 'chaff') of Zanu-PF was diametrically opposed to the policy of reconciliation. Where reconciliation sought to resolve differences and bring together diverse groups, Gukurahundi sought to eliminate differences and their sources. It was a policy of annihilation and since the dissident episode, Zanu-PF and the government have resorted to Gukurahundi as a strategy to deal with its opponents. Gukurahundi was intended to be a military solution to a troublesome political problem. The failure

of Gukurahundi to liquidate PF-Zapu in its strongholds – as reflected in the 1985 elections when the party grabbed all 15 contested seats in Matabeleland region – convinced Zanu-PF to try other means of achieving the same end.

Zimbabwe has never implemented a genuine and functional multi-polar structural political arrangement as part of its conflict resolution mechanisms. In an effort to craft a presumably durable conflict resolution formula for the low-level war in Matabeleland, Zanu-PF went for a unipolar power arrangement. This was in the form of the Unity Accord intended as a political solution to a political problem. However, the Unity Accord was also a unipolar solution to a multi-polar problem and to that extent there was a mis-alignment between the nature of the problem and the nature of the solution. Zimbabwe is by all definitions a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-racial country but has never sought and implemented a multi-partite solution. Granted, in theory Zimbabwe is a multi-party state, but in reality it has never been a functional multi-party system.

If it is accepted that Zimbabwe is a multi-cultural society, it then behoves those competent in political and constitutional engineering to craft a constitutional

Post-1999 Bimodal Conflict

The formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in September 1999 saw Zimbabwe reverting to the bipolar situation which existed prior to the Unity Accord. Within six months of the MDC's formation, chaos erupted. The fast-track land reform programme, popularly referred to as *jambanja* in reference to its violent and chaotic nature, became the defining framework of Zimbabwe's politics from 2000 to date. The bipolar power configuration in which Zanu-PF faced an equally powerful, cohesive and well-resourced party delivered Zimbabwe into one of its most violent episodes in its post-independence history. In the run-up to the June 2000 parliamentary elections, at least 30 people were killed in politically motivated violence and over 18 000 others were victims of human rights violations. The conflict was between two sharply divided political gladiators, the MDC and Zanu-PF. This was a typical bipolar political dispensation.

The argument being advanced is that a bipolar power configuration in the context of an unfinished nation-building project is a recipe for disaster. This is particularly so when one of the political gladiators

ZIMBABWE HAS NEVER IMPLEMENTED A GENUINE AND FUNCTIONAL MULTI-POLAR STRUCTURAL POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT AS PART OF ITS CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS

dispensation that recognises this reality and design a solution that suffices. Proportional representation immediately suggests itself as such a viable formula in multi-ethnic and multi-cultural Zimbabwe. Proportional representation recognises, via the electoral process, the plural society that Zimbabwe is. It is also a multi-polar answer to a multi-polar question.

From the Unity Accord to September 1999, Zimbabwe was for all practical purposes a one-party state. Small episodic parties sprouted from time to time as they continue to do today but none has been of any political consequence with the possible exception of the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) that was formed just before the 1990 general elections and did win about 25% of the vote. However, soon after these elections, ZUM disappeared into political oblivion and the country effectively functioned again as a one-party state, or rather, a party-state. There appeared to be peace and calm but the underlying problems and issues attendant on Zimbabwe being a multi-cultural society did not disappear. It was indeed the calm before the storm.

is in command of a strong state or at least a state that can be relied on in battles against 'enemies' of the hegemonic party. Where the state-building project is preferred ahead of nation-building or where the nation-building process lags far behind that of state-building, a bipolar power configuration is extremely hazardous and certainly unstable and therefore unviable. In such situations, a unipolar political arrangement, which imposes the tyranny of a single organisation, a single truth and a single guide to action, may deliver transitory peace and a semblance of stability but only in the short term. Such an arrangement is inherently unstable in the medium and long-term because it is undemocratic and exclusionary. A unipolar dispensation assumes a social homogeneity that does not exist in many human entities, and certainly not in Zimbabwe. It will thus give way to either a bipolar power scenario, which is by definition highly conflictual and therefore unstable, or to a multi-polar power configuration, which, because it recognises and accommodates differences, is inherently inclusionary and stable. A structure that stands on two legs

tends to be less stable than one that stands on multiple legs. Such is the case with political structures.

The Zimbabwean state-building project proceeded as if the nation already existed, without being anchored on national sentiment, identity, or consciousness. The notion of nation, as the great German social scientist Max Weber pointed out, belongs to the sphere of values: it “means above all that it is proper to expect from

incessantly complains of unpatriotic behaviour and conduct on the part of many Zimbabweans and in many facets of life. In short, Zimbabwe the state is a reality but Zimbabwe the nation is still a fiction. To convert the fiction into reality requires, amongst other things, a power configuration that is multi-polar.

Besides re-engineering the electoral system to make it more representative of the pluralism and

AFP / TOUCHLINE PHOTO



Zimbabweans wait in line outside a polling station to cast their votes in the country's 2005 parliamentary election

certain groups a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups”.⁶

At independence, Zimbabwe inherited a functional (though weakened by war) state without a nation. Those who inherited the state sought to further strengthen it before they invented the nation. Zimbabwe has a functional state without a functional nation. This is precisely why the ruling elite, including the state president,

diversity of the society, constitutional crafters can also actively consider provincial assemblies for all the country's ten administrative provinces. If for reasons of economic viability and other pertinent considerations the provincial assemblies are deemed too many and fragmented, then the country could at the very least have regional assemblies. It is common knowledge that Zimbabwe essentially has four regions: Mashonaland

(inclusive of Harare), Matabeleland (inclusive of Bulawayo), Masvingo (including the Midlands) and Manicaland. Why not have elected and functional assemblies for each of the four regions? Under such a dispensation, the sense of being excluded and given a raw deal among the people of Zimbabwe would be substantially reduced.

Presently, there is a deep sense of being excluded from power experienced by people in Matabeleland, Masvingo and Manicaland. A four-dimensional distribution of power would be consistent with the multi-polar power configuration as argued above. This arrangement, coupled with the proportional electoral system, would

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go a long way to quelling the embers of conflict that are already feeding into secessionist sentiments, especially in Matabeleland. For instance, in late 2005 the MDC vice-president Gibson Sibanda, a Ndebele, was quoted as saying that there was a need for the formation of a separate Ndebele state along the lines of single-tribe nations like Lesotho and Swaziland. "Ndebeles can only exercise sovereignty through creating their state like Lesotho, which is an independent state in South Africa, and it is not politically wrong to have the State of Matabeleland inside Zimbabwe," he allegedly told the *Daily Mirror* newspaper. Sibanda later denied the allegation.

Even more ominous is a group calling itself "Mthwakazi" or "MTZ" that seeks to create a separate state called Umthwakazi Republic carved out of the three Matabeleland provinces and the Midlands, with five provinces. The movement offers no apologies for its use of a tribal framework to analyse Zimbabwe's present problems and its resolution. They allege personal humiliation of their late leader Joshua Nkomo and symbolically through him, of the Ndebele. They further argue: "Ominously, it [Zimbabwe] was always going to be a mechanism for the collective punishment of, and revenge against, the Ndebele for Ndebele ruled over the Shona before colonialism."⁷ MTZ also declares:

We remind all of these men here in case they had forgotten; Joshua Nkomo is the man who tried to build a nation called Zimbabwe, of all people who live in it, regardless of tribe, colour or creed. They denied him that chance. He didn't. That putative nation was never built. Any chance there was, was lost with Nkomo's departure in 1999. For our part, for our present generation, this Zimbabwe, and any attempts to maintain it in any guise in future as a state that includes uMthwakazi, is as false as it is silly. It is only part of the grand illusion of the whole Zimbabwe project created in 1980. ... What we have at the moment, courtesy of Robert Mugabe ... is their Zimbabwe, of Shonas, and a fledgling state for uMthwakazi which we have called UMR.⁸

The most stable and durable form of power is that which is shared and, conversely, the most unstable power form is that which is monopolised. This paper argues that both unipolar and bipolar power structures have been tried in Zimbabwe and many other African countries. The results have been less than favourable, especially in the context of an incomplete or defective nation-building project. A multi-polar power configuration in its various forms is therefore proposed but starting with a proportional representative formula. This produces a far more balanced polity and society and thus a more stable dispensation than has been tried to date. ▢

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- 1 Linz, Juan J., and Stepan, Alfred (1996) *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, Chapter 2.
- 2 Sithole, Masipula (1999) *Zimbabwe: Struggles within the Struggle*, Harare: Rujeko, p 11.
- 3 Ibid, p 12.
- 4 Moyo, Jonathan N. (1992) *Voting for democracy: Electoral Politics in Zimbabwe*, Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, p 24.
- 5 Ibid, p 22.
- 6 Roth, Guenther and Wittich, Klaus (eds) (1968) *Economy and Society*, New York: Bedminster, pp 921-926.
- 7 Mthwakazi (2006) 'Zimbabwe: A project for the humiliation of Nkomo and Mthwakazi', Available at: <http://www.mthwakazionline.org/nkomo2.asp> Accessed on 4 February 2006.
- 8 Ibid.

DEMOCRACY AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN AFRICA: CHALLENGES FOR POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

WRITTEN BY **KHABELE MATLOSA**

Introduction

While democracy is a fundamental prerequisite for development and stability throughout the world, the converse is also true; namely that authoritarianism breeds mal-development and instability. There is no doubt that one of the major explanatory factors for the state of development and peace in Africa today, barring external factors, has a lot to do with the extent to which the continent has embraced and institutionalised democracy since political independence in the 1960s.¹ A majority of African states embraced authoritarian rule following the departure of the colonial oligarchies, which, themselves, had entrenched an autocratic and conflict-prone governance regime during the heyday of colonialism. Colonialism aside, since the continent's post-colonial existence, the authoritarian rule of either mono-party, one-person, theocratic, monarchic or military varieties has had its [un]fair share of that mal-development and instability in the continent between the 1960s and 1980s, the period widely regarded by the United Nations (UN) as the 'lost' two decades. ²The experience over these two decades demonstrates vividly that without democracy and peace, people-centered development can neither be realised nor sustained.

Development and peace themselves cannot be achieved under conditions of conflict (especially violent conflict) that in turn generates political instability. It also goes without saying that political instability itself does not constitute a healthy diet for democracy. Put somewhat differently, a sustainable people-centered development requires a democratic setting; both democracy and development require political stability within an

environment in which there exist effective mechanisms for the constructive management of conflict.

What challenges face the African continent for achieving the complex triple agenda of (a) development; (b) democracy and (c) peace? The development-democracy-peace nexus is increasingly becoming a key feature in the extant literature. In a recent volume entitled *Liberalism, Democracy and Development*, Sylvia Chan explores the question of whether or not liberal democracy is good for economic development.² This debate also features prominently in a recent volume on democratic governance in Southern Africa.³ The interface between democracy and development and its implications for conflict resolution is also explored on the basis of the following assumptions:⁴

- Democratisation is directly and positively correlated with conflict resolution/prevention;
- Socio-economic development is directly and positively correlated with democracy; and
- Therefore, democratisation and socio-economic development are necessary prerequisites for the resolution/prevention of deep-rooted conflict.

In summary, linkages in the democracy-development-conflict triad are established.⁵ "Political instability within countries ... is most commonly associated with poverty, inequality and unequal access to resources, influence and power."⁶ This article provides a broad exposé of the challenges facing the African continent, especially post-conflict societies, in respect of the triad of development, democracy and peace. To what extent can the three be achieved as part and parcel of a compre-

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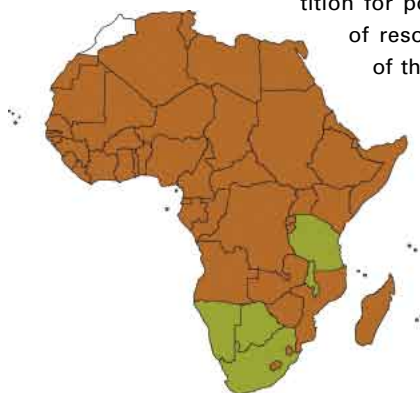
hensive post-conflict reconstruction agenda? The next section will define the problem; why has Africa experienced conflict that has in turn adversely affected its development and democracy prospects? Challenges for peace building in post-conflict societies are then discussed. The African Union's (AU) mandate for democratisation as part of conflict management is outlined. The discussion is concluded by highlighting the conundrum of pursuing democracy and peace-building in tandem in post-conflict reconstruction.

The Setting: What is the Problem?

We note from the onset that Africa has been a theatre of various forms of conflict since independence marked by both exogenous (example, the Cold War) and endogenous (example, authoritarian rule) factors for the larger part of its post-independence existence.

Since independence, African countries, one after another, have been engulfed in political turmoil which have (sic) not only derailed the hastily-launched pre-independence democratic process as a successor to the colonial oligarchic administration but has also brought about strife, violence and civil war in many countries in the course of competition for political power and control

of resources. In a large number of the countries, conflicts have become pervasive and civil strife a tragic and persistent plight of the population. Of the 53 member states of the African Union, only six – Botswana, Mauritius, Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania and post-apartheid South Africa – have been spared from civil strife and civil war.⁷



MEMBER STATES OF THE AU

- spared from civil strife & war
- civil strife & war

This observation is a serious indictment of the pervasive trend of political instability in Africa that has in turn undermined development and postponed for a long time the democracy-building agenda in a majority of the member states of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) particularly during the 1960s-80s period. Kwame Nkrumah, Africa's renowned visionary, rightly predicted that Africa needed the political kingdom (read African unity and political integration) before achieving the socio-economic kingdom (read socio-cultural and economic integration). Addressing the inaugural summit

of the African states at the founding of the OAU, Nkrumah poignantly proclaimed that:

African unity, is above all, a political kingdom which can only be gained by political means. The social and economic development of Africa will come only within the political kingdom, not the other way round.... In independent Africa, we are already re-experiencing the instability and frustration which existed under colonial rule. We are fast learning that political independence is not enough to rid us of the consequences of colonial rule. The movement of the masses of the people of Africa for freedom from that kind of rule was not only a revolt against the conditions which it imposed. Our people supported us in the fight for independence because they believed that African governments could *cure the ills of the past* in a way which could never be accomplished under colonial rule.⁸

With the benefit of hindsight, it is no exaggeration to observe that in a majority of independent African states that attended that epoch-making founding summit of the OAU, development was throttled, democracy asphyxiated and peace and security compromised by both endogenous and exogenous factors. "In the first two decades of independence, there were some forty successful coups and countless attempted coups."⁹ While the OAU played its role fairly successfully in pursuing the liberation of various parts of the continent, its achievements on the peace and security front were limited by the consideration of colonial boundaries and national sovereignty as sacrosanct and thus cast in diplomatic iron. The OAU has since 2000 been transformed into the African Union (AU) with important implications for the pursuit of collective security in conflict and post-conflict situations. Thus, while the OAU tackled most of the challenges of the continent relating to political liberation, the AU is pursuing the agenda of peace and security, development and democracy with greater impetus and resolve judging by the strides made thus far in establishing the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) and efforts underway to establish the Africa Standby Force (ASF).¹⁰ Additionally, AU member states are pursuing the triple agenda of development, democracy and peace through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).¹¹

The AU evolved as a successor to the OAU in July 1999 in Sirte, Libya. It was then formally launched in 2002 in Durban, South Africa. In pursuit of continental development, democracy and peace, the Constitutive Act of the AU adopted by the member states on the 11th July 2000 provides for ten organs of the Union.¹² While these institutions have begun to make their impact felt in

AS MUCH AS DEMOCRACY COULD ADD VALUE TO POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION, IF NOT WELL MANAGED IT COULD TRIGGER INSTABILITY OR POLITICAL DECAY

the three areas of democracy, development and peace, on the issue of whether or not the AU will in the final analysis achieve its overarching goal of political integration, unity and political stability, the jury is still out.

Challenges for Peace-Building

It is worth noting, though, that since the collapse of the Cold War and the demise of apartheid in South Africa, a new momentum for democratisation has set in throughout the African continent and this momentum has been accompanied by a noticeable trend of reduced incidences of inter-state violent conflict. "The liberalisation of political space that came through pluralism, multiparty politics and constitutional reform in the wave of democracy which swept through Africa in the 1980s and 1990s was a major achievement on a continent where authoritarian one-party and military regimes previously held sway."¹³ However, intra-state conflict still constitutes one of the major challenges facing the achievement of the triple agenda of development, democracy and peace as the war in Sudan's Darfur region and the violent conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Côte d'Ivoire clearly demonstrate. In order for us to see the bigger picture of conflict mapping in Africa and efforts towards peace-building, democracy building and post-conflict reconstruction, a continental scanning exercise would be helpful. The annual publication of the Nigeria-based African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies (ACDESS) classifies African states into six

categories in terms of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction.¹⁴ See Table 1.

Why have these conflicts persisted in Africa especially between the 1960s and 1980s? Many explanations have been proffered ranging from greed to grievance. One of the most profound political statements regarding the persistent political crisis and instability in Africa was made by Nkrumah during the founding of the OAU. His conviction was that post-independent regimes in Africa had not succeeded to "cure the ills of the past". In his own words: "if, therefore, now that we are independent we allow the same conditions to exist that existed in colonial days, all the resentment which overthrew colonialism will be mobilized against us."¹⁵ Table 1 validates Nkrumah's prophesy that unless real transformation takes place that reverses the colonial legacy, political instability will plague Africa; development will prove a distant mirage; democracy will remain elusive and political stability and peace will remain an unrealisable dream. It is evident that the challenge for peace-building and democracy-building is enormous and daunting, yet not insurmountable in Africa today. Already the democratic transitions of the early 1990s have helped reduce inter-state violent conflict considerably, thereby confirming the thesis that democracy can become a conflict management tool.¹⁶ A new trend in the world today is that traditional inter-state conflict is increasingly giving way to intra-state conflict whereas most violent conflicts over the course of the twentieth

Table 1: Conflict Mapping in Africa, 2005

Classification	Nature of Conflict / Conflict Management	Countries
Group 1	Countries engaged in major intra-state violent conflict	Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan & Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
Group 2	Countries engaged in major inter-state violent conflict	Ethiopia & Eritrea
Group 3	Countries experiencing low-intensity conflict	Nigeria, Uganda, Ghana & Senegal
Group 4	Countries where conflict is brewing	Zimbabwe, Guinea, Togo & Kenya
Group 5	Countries engaged in peacekeeping	Liberia, Burundi, DRC, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone & Guinea Bissau
Group 6	Countries engaged in peace-building and democracy building	Mali, Angola, Rwanda, Mozambique & Somalia

Source: ACDESS, 2005:5-6

century have been *between* states, in the 1990s almost all major conflicts around the world took place *within* states.¹⁷ Between 1989 and 1996, for example, 95 of the 101 armed conflicts identified around the world were such internal disputes. This also explains in part the fact that in Africa today, the only major inter-state violent conflict is that involving Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Challenges for Building Democracy

In a very encouraging and indeed bold move, the OAU adopted the Declaration on the Framework for an OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes of Government during the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Lomé, Togo in July 2000. The Declaration commits member states to prevent military coups and unconstitutional regime changes and to safeguard democratic governance. Within the framework of the Declaration, an unconstitutional change of government is perceived as:

- a military coup d'état against a democratically elected government;
- intervention by mercenaries to replace a democratically elected government;
- the replacement of a democratically elected government by armed dissidents and rebels; and/or
- The refusal of an incumbent government to relinquish power to the winning party after free, fair and regular elections.

While military coups and other forms of unconstitutional changes of government have occurred

as in Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, the Comoros, Central African Republic, Mauritania and Togo, the undeniable reality is that the spate of military coups has been severely scaled down. The AU intends to consolidate its resolve to eradicate the political culture of military coups by adopting a comprehensive



Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. The draft

Charter focuses on four main areas as follows:

- Culture of democracy and peace;
- Political, economic and social governance;
- Democratic elections;
- Measures to be taken in case of unconstitutional change of governments.

Pan-African Parliament

Through the proposed Democracy Charter, the AU will play a major role in assisting countries to build peace and democracy for sustained people-centered development. Furthermore, the democratisation agenda is being pursued with vigour by the AU today through its various structures, especially the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), located in Midrand, South Africa. The PAP came into being through a specific protocol acceded to by AU member states in 2004. It is made up of five representatives of parliaments from all the 53 AU member states.¹⁸ The long-term goal of the PAP is to evolve into an institution with full legislative powers, whose members are elected by universal adult suffrage. At the present moment, the PAP is an advisory and consultative body with little legislative or oversight functions vis-à-vis the AU Commission. The main objectives of PAP are as follows:

- Facilitate the effective implementation of policies and objectives of the AU;
- Promote the principles of human rights and democracy in Africa;
- Encourage good governance, transparency and accountability of member states;
- Familiarise the peoples of Africa with the objectives and policies aimed at integrating the African continent within the framework of establishment of the AU;
- Promote peace, security and stability;
- Contribute to a more prosperous future for the peoples of Africa promoting collective self-reliance and economic recovery;
- Facilitate cooperation and development in Africa;
- Strengthen continental solidarity and build a sense of common destiny among the peoples of Africa; and
- Facilitate cooperation among Regional Economic Communities and their parliament.

Whereas national parliaments will play an important role in terms of ensuring political integration of the African continent through the PAP, it is worth noting that regional legislative bodies are also poised to be at the centre of this process and could act as a bridge between the PAP and national parliaments in the five main sub-regions of the continent, namely West Africa, Central Africa, North Africa, Eastern Africa and Southern Africa. For the PAP to enhance its facilitative role for political integration and democracy in the African continent, it needs to play a critical role in four main areas:

- Contributing to the AU Peace and Security Council's efforts at conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict transformation (such as in the DRC, Darfur (Sudan), Côte d'Ivoire, etc);



Egyptian President Hosni Mubark and his Nigerian counterpart Olusegun Obasanjo chair an opening session of the NEPAD summit in Egypt

- Contributing to the NEPAD political governance initiative through the APRM process (learning lessons from the Ghana and Rwanda examples and involving the PAP more in subsequent countries such as South Africa, Lesotho, Mozambique, Senegal, Nigeria, Mauritius, Kenya, etc);
- Contributing to and encouraging electoral and parliamentary reforms in AU member states with a view to nurturing and consolidating democratic governance; and
- Contributing to election observer missions of the AU in all scheduled parliamentary and presidential (where resources permit even local government) elections as has been the practice thus far.

Furthermore, the NEPAD programme, especially its African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), is likely to assist in the post-conflict reconstruction programmes of the AU member states.

NEPAD/APRM Initiative

The APRM is a voluntary self-assessment mechanism for African states aimed at institutionalising and

consolidating democratic governance. It is acceded to by AU member states with a view to “foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration through sharing of experiences and enforcement of successful and best practice, including identification of deficiencies and assessing the needs for capacity building”.¹⁹ Participation in the APRM is open to all members of the AU through notification of the Chairman of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee, Olusegun Obasanjo, the president of Nigeria. A country that accedes to the APRM commits itself to be periodically reviewed in terms of its practice around four clusters of governance, namely:

- Democracy and good political governance;
- Economic governance and management;
- Corporate governance; and
- Socio-economic development.

Such a country is thus committing itself to a continuous and periodic review that takes place every two to four years. Conversely, in some instances, participating NEPAD Heads of State and Government could be

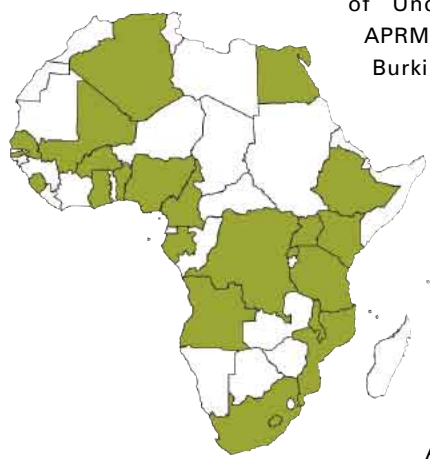
driven by signs of an impending socio-economic and/or political crisis to call for a review in a given country "in a spirit of helpfulness to the government concerned".²⁰

In essence, therefore, there are four types of reviews:²¹

- The first baseline review undertaken after eighteen months of the country acceding to the APRM;
- A periodic review every two to four years thereafter;
- A member can also request, on its own accord, a review which is not part of the mandated reviews; and
- Early signs of an impending political or economic crisis in a member country could also trigger a review which could be called by the participating Heads of State and Government.

The implementation of the review is coordinated by the Panel of Eminent Persons with administrative and logistical support from the APRM Secretariat. So far 23 countries have acceded to the Memorandum

of Understanding on the APRM. These are Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, Egypt, Benin, Malawi, Lesotho, Tanzania,



Angola and Sierra Leone. The APRM Panel

of Eminent Persons is deliberately drawn from all five sub-regions of the African Union.²²

The main functions of the Panel of Eminent Persons are (a) to exercise oversight with respect to the APRM process with a view to ensuring the independence, professionalism and integrity of that process; (b) to recommend appropriate African institutions or individuals to conduct technical assessment and country reviews; (c) to meet periodically to review and make objective assessments of country review reports submitted to it by the APRM Secretariat; (d) to consider and approve recommendations contained in the country review reports submitted to it by the APRM Secretariat; and (e) to present to the participating Heads of State and Government all country review reports with recommendations for consideration and adoption.²³ The medium to long-term impact of the APRM as part of a wider post-conflict reconstruction package is yet to manifest

itself in Rwanda, one of the two countries that have fully completed the review process (the other being Ghana).

Conclusions

The pacifying effect of the ongoing democratisation wave in Africa helps in reducing the incidence of intra-state conflict. Thus, democratisation can become part of the broader agenda of post-conflict reconstruction too. However, caution must be exercised here. Democracy accentuates diversity and provides room for multiple popular demands, and if this diversity is not well managed and if these demands are not met, instability could result. Thus, as much as democracy could add value to post-conflict reconstruction, if not well managed it could trigger instability or political decay à la Huntington, who has argued that under conditions where the institutional foundation of democracy is weak and popular demands are huge and not met by the state, instability becomes the end-result and this leads to political decay or disorder.²⁴ This decay and disorder could become costly to both democracy and post-conflict reconstruction. A good example of this outcome is the flawed democratisation and peace process in Angola.

The 1991 Bicesse Agreement did not bring about peace and allow a process of post-conflict reconstruction. The country held its presidential and legislative elections in September 1992 in the context of hostilities and where belligerents had not fully committed to peaceful engagement. The elections result delivered a victory for the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). In the presidential race, José Eduardo dos Santos of the MPLA secured 49.67% of the votes and the leader of the Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (Unita), Jonas Savimbi, received 40.07% of the total votes cast. In the National Assembly race, the MPLA won 53% of the votes and Unita just 34.10%. The election, instead of becoming a political asset, proved a political liability for post-conflict reconstruction. Angola has adopted the proportional representation electoral model, which is highly regarded as enhancing broader participation and thereby contributing to political stability. The Angolan situation provides sufficient evidence that elections alone are insufficient to bring about political stability, reconciliation and peace. The Angolan conflict is one of the most protracted and costly conflicts in Africa today. It is highly encouraging, indeed, that since the death of the UNITA leader, Jonas Savimbi, in early 2002, considerable progress has been made towards resolving this conflict constructively. A new peace agreement is in place and has brought about relative political tranquillity, harmony and reconciliation in most parts of the country. Consequently, the Angolan government and opposition parties are currently busy hammering out some constitutional reforms in advance of a general election scheduled for 2006.

THE APRM IS A VOLUNTARY SELF-ASSESSMENT MECHANISM FOR AFRICAN STATES AIMED AT INSTITUTIONALISING AND CONSOLIDATING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

But the reverse is true in other cases in the SADC region; democracy and elections could add value and become a political asset for post-conflict reconstruction. Witness, for instance, how Lesotho's 1998 violent conflict involving a power struggle for control of the state by the country's political elite was well managed through constitutional engineering that culminated in the displacement of the British-style first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral model and the adoption of the mixed member proportional (MMP) electoral model, first put to the test in the country's 2002 general election. There is general consensus in the democracy discourse today that one way of building peace and democracy in post-conflict societies requires, among others, electoral systems design.²⁵ It is for this reason that the example of Lesotho's electoral system reform is cited as one of the key lessons of experience for other African states embroiled in intra-state violent conflict. Since the adoption of the MMP model, Lesotho has experienced less political instability, has broadened the party political representation in the national assembly and enjoys a relatively enhanced level of public confidence in election management, credibility of the outcomes of elections, and legitimacy of rule. ▀

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- 14 ACDESS (2005) *Africa Conflict, Peace and Governance Monitor*, Ibadan: Dokun Publishing House.
- 15 Nkrumah 1963.
- 16 Harris, P. and Reilly, B. (eds) (1998) *Democracy and Deep-rooted Conflict: Options for Negotiators*, Stockholm: IDEA.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 The PAP's President is the honourable MP Mrs Gertrude Mongela from the Republic of Tanzania and she is assisted by four vice-presidents:
 - Hon. Prof. F. José Dias Van-Du'Nem (from Angola) – First Vice-President (South);
 - Hon. Dr Mohammed Lutfi Farahat (from Libya) – Second Vice-President (North);
 - Hon. Mrs Loum N. N'eloumsei Elise (from Chad) – Third Vice-President (Central);
 - Hon. Mr Jerome Sacca Kina Guezere (from Benin) – Fourth Vice-President (West).
- 19 African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) (2002) Midrand: NEPAD Secretariat.
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- 21 APRM 2002.
- 22 The Panel comprises the following:
 - Mrs Marie-Angelique Savane from Senegal, West Africa;
 - Prof. Adebayo Adedeji from Nigeria, West Africa;
 - Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat from Kenya, East Africa;
 - Dr Graça Machel from Mozambique, Southern Africa;
 - Mr Mourad Medelci from Algeria, North Africa;
 - Dr Dorothy Njeuma from Cameroon, Central Africa; and
 - Dr Chris Stals from South Africa, Southern Africa.
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President Denis Sassou-Nguessou of Congo took over as AU chair from Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2006



THE AU/NEPAD POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION POLICY: AN ANALYSIS

WRITTEN BY **TIM MURITHI**

Introduction

All of Africa's regions have been afflicted by political tension, civil unrest or violent conflict. In addition, in the task of resolving existing conflicts, the continent is also confronted with the challenge of promoting post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building. This article assesses the challenges of post-conflict reconstruction (PCR). It will highlight some of the fundamental elements of PCR before examining the policy framework which the African Union (AU) and its programme for economic recovery, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), have developed to address PCR. The AU has the primary responsibility for peace and security on the continent. NEPAD's role is in supporting post-conflict reconstruction and the mobilisation of resources for the AU Peace Fund.¹ In theory the AU and its programme NEPAD are supposed to be working closely together and coordinating.

In practice the communication lines between the AU secretariat in Addis Ababa and the NEPAD secretariat in Midrand, South Africa, are not as clear as they should be. There are, however, intentions to establish NEPAD as a specialised agency of the AU in 2006. This article will conclude with a discussion of the limitations and omissions of the PCR policy.

The Case for Post-Conflict Reconstruction

The conflicts that have plagued the continent have brought about the collapse of social and economic structures and generated political tensions. Infrastructure has been damaged and education and health services have suffered, not to mention the environmental damage which has been caused by conflict situations. Development has also been severely retarded as a result of the carnage and destruction caused by conflict. The effects of conflict in

terms of refugee flows into neighbouring countries and emergence of internally displaced persons (IDPs) have demonstrated that no African country is an island unto itself. Refugee camps in the Mano River Union region of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone have served as a source of instability for countries in the region. The camps in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) from the Rwandan conflict, which took place over ten years ago, remain a source of concern for all the key actors involved in the Great Lakes region. Refugee flows into Chad as a result of the violent conflict in Darfur have created tension along the border. These situations illustrate the need for effective post-conflict reconstruction processes and the necessary institutions to support them.

PCR refers to the medium to long-term process of rebuilding war-affected communities. This includes the process of rebuilding the political, security, social and economic dimensions of a society emerging from a conflict. It also includes addressing the root causes of the conflict and promoting social and economic justice as well as putting in place political structures of governance and the rule of law which will consolidate peace-building, reconciliation and development. Grassroots populations in war-affected regions generally tend to be the worst affected by the scourge of violence. Women and children are often faced with tremendous social upheaval. Reconstruction therefore needs to proceed with the active participation of these sectors of society. An effective strategy for promoting PCR therefore has to take into account all of these elements. Such a strategy has to ensure that it promotes measures and proposes the establishment of institutions that will strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.

The AU and NEPAD Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework

The AU has recognised that in order to achieve its goals of sustainable peace and development there is a need to adopt a comprehensive strategy for post-conflict reconstruction.² In this regard, the NEPAD programme has developed an African Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework through a broad consultative process which included partnering with civil society organisations.³ This Policy Framework emphasises the link that exists between the peace, security, humanitarian and development dimensions of post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building. In March 2002 the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC)

met in Abuja, Nigeria, to map out the objectives of the AU and NEPAD with regard to post-conflict reconstruction. The HSGIC requested the NEPAD Sub-committee on Peace and Security to “support efforts at developing early warning systems ... support post-conflict reconstruction and development ... including the rehabilitation of national infrastructure, the population as well as refugees and internally displaced persons”. The Implementation Committee also emphasised the importance of focusing on disarmament and demobilisation programmes aimed at terminating the illicit trade of small arms. The promotion of democracy, human rights and the upholding of the rule of law was emphasised as the basis for the African post-conflict reconstruction strategy. The intention behind the creation of the African Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework was to articulate a policy that would coordinate and guide the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, regional economic communities (RECs), civil society, the private sector and other internal and external partners in the process of rebuilding war-affected communities. This is based on the premise that each country should adopt a PCR strategy that responds to its own particular context.

Aspects of the Policy Framework

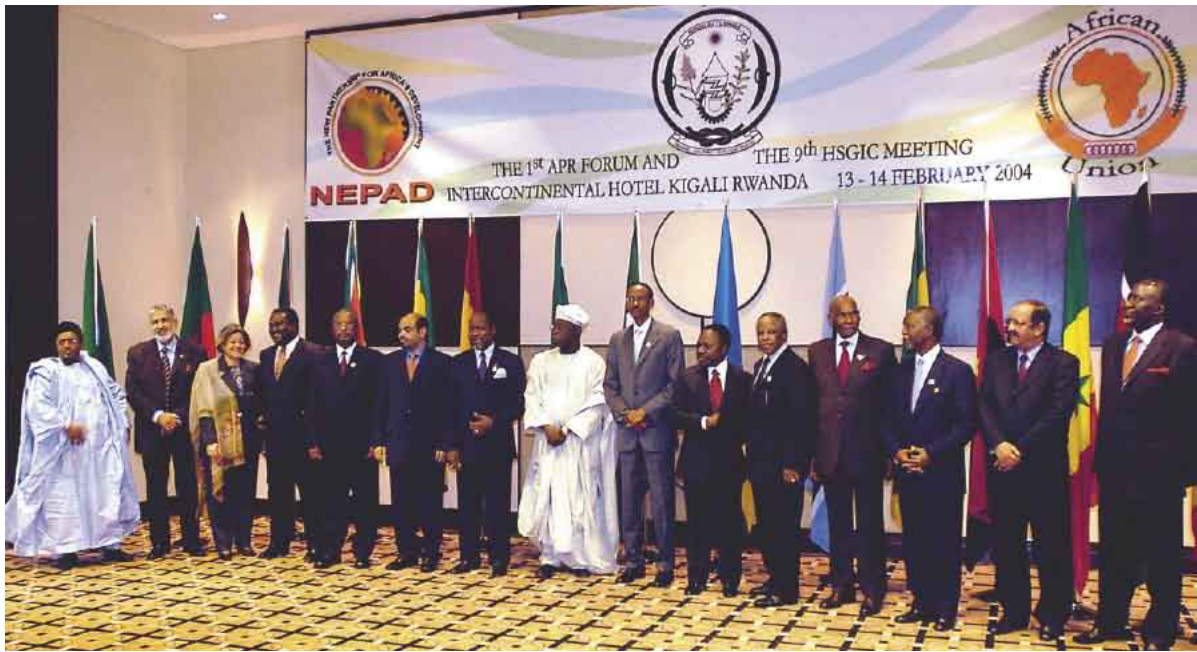
Key aspects of the Policy Framework include the attempt to put in place the pillars of a PCR system which recognises the importance of an appropriate response to complex emergencies, to social and political transition following conflict, and to long-term development. Therefore, according to the Policy Framework, a PCR system has at least five dimensions, including:

- security;
- political transition, governance and participation;
- socio-economic development;
- human rights, justice and reconciliation; and
- coordination, management and resource mobilisation.

In order to maximise the chances of establishing an effective PCR process there needs to be an acknowledgement of the importance of ensuring that there is a degree of complementarity and mutual reinforcement between these five dimensions. Policy planning therefore has to proceed on the basis of establishing coherence among the strategies that are adopted for each of the five areas.

The policy framework also acknowledges that each conflict situation is context specific. As such the PCR strategy adopted to respond must correspond to the specificities of each situation. PCR systems and strategies

THE AU HAS THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR PEACE AND SECURITY ON THE CONTINENT. NEPAD'S ROLE IS IN SUPPORTING POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND THE MOBILISATION OF RESOURCES FOR THE AU PEACE FUND



AFP/TOUCHLINE PHOTO

African Heads of State and government at a NEPAD summit in Rwanda (2004) where the peer review system was adopted

therefore have to be relatively flexible in responding to changing situations. For example, making the transition from a complex emergency situation in Sierra Leone may require different strategies to deal with peace-building given the particular nature of the conflict, which involved the massive looting of state resources, in particular diamonds and timber. The people of Sierra Leone need to feel reassured by any PCR process that the injustices of the past will be addressed. This means that the social and political transition after conflict has to reflect this need. The institutions and mechanisms put in place to consolidate PCR also have to emerge from these considerations. The Special Court for Sierra Leone was established to deal with the atrocities committed by the leaders of the various armed movements during the decade-long war. The Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established by the Lomé Peace Agreement in 1999, to address human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. Both of these structures have contributed to dealing with the difficult post-conflict situation that was confronted by Sierra Leone's citizens. This does not mean, however, that such structures can be transplanted to deal with the post-conflict process, for example, in Burundi, which had, and still to a certain extent has, qualitatively different challenges. Essentially, the African Policy Framework provides an overall strategy from which individual country programmes can develop their own context-specific plans and progress.

Other aspects of the Policy Framework include a recognition that there is a natural relationship

between peace, security and development. In this context, the Policy Framework proposes the need to address the false dichotomy that is often advocated between political stability and economic efficiency. In reality it is a false dichotomy because one presupposes and reinforces the other, that is to say you cannot have economic efficiency without political stability and you cannot have the effective management of economies without political order and the rule of law.

The Policy Framework also identifies "the lack of sufficient local ownership and participation" in PCR. Externally driven post-conflict reconstruction processes cannot be sustained if they are not effectively owned by the people that they are targeting. When the international community, in the form of the UN, bilateral actors and international civil society, come into a post-conflict reconstruction process they immediately distort the economies of the war-affected regions that they are operating in. It is vital for strategies to be adopted which emphasise transferring the management of all affairs directly to the local citizenry in the shortest time possible. In order to ensure this, there needs to be greater collaboration between the AU and NEPAD and the regional economic communities (RECs) as well as external actors to outline an exit strategy and timetable for external actors when a mission is being planned. This is vital in order for war-affected communities to become self-reliant and self-sufficient in the shortest time possible.⁴

The Policy Framework has proposed the establishment of an AU/NEPAD Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit to

undertake the day-to-day task of coordinating and implementing PCR. The Unit would also undertake advocacy and develop PCR programmes in partnership with RECs, civil society and other inter-governmental organisations.

Finally, the Policy Framework identifies the need for resource mobilisation. It emphasises the need for more strategic targeting of sections of the society that are in greatest need, including child soldiers, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, women, particularly victims of sexual violence, and those afflicted by HIV/AIDS. In order to focus efforts to raise funds an AU Peace Fund has been established to concentrate resources on PCR.

Recent Developments on the AU's Post-Conflict Reconstruction Agenda

The AU in collaboration with the NGO SaferAfrica convened a meeting from 4 to 5 September 2005 in Durban, South Africa, which brought together the AU's Peace and Security Council and other AU member states' permanent representatives.⁵ The objective of the meeting was to reflect on PCR and development in Africa. The meeting discussed the experiences and lessons learned by various organisations working in the field of PCR and development. The meeting also identified the key actors and the institutional set-up and coordination that will be required to generate broad agreement on the creation of an AU framework for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development. The meeting also proposed that in order to ensure the availability of the necessary resources to ensure effective post-conflict recovery, an AU-managed African Development Fund could be established to act as a catalyst for accessing and targeting resources for the continent's peace-building needs.

An effective AU post-conflict strategy must also focus on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants with a view to ensuring that demobilised fighters have access to rehabilitation programmes that enable them to acquire new skills and facilitate their transition back into society. Security sector reform (SSR) is also vital for ensuring that national defence and police forces re-orient their activities towards building sustainable peace in their respective countries. The meeting also noted that national institutions need to be rebuilt to ensure the consolidation of democratic governance, the rule of law, and the protection of the human rights of citizens in transitional societies. In order to guarantee the sustainability of these institutions, education and training must be provided to establish professionalism and integrity.

Limitations and Omissions of the PCR Policy Framework

One key omission that is not clearly articulated in the AU/NEPAD Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy

Framework is a commitment to gender mainstreaming. If PCR is understood as the process of rebuilding war-affected countries, then a policy framework that ignores the role and needs of more than half of the population cannot provide an effective basis for achieving these goals. Another limitation arises from the fact that the AU's Constitutive Act has recognised that civil society in general has an important role to play in the affairs of the continent. This therefore also implicates civil society in PCR processes. The AU has established mechanisms through which to interface with African people and their representatives. In particular, the Pan-African Parliament, the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) and the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights are institutions that have been established. The challenge is that on the specific issue of PCR civil society does not have a clear institutional interface with the activities of the AU/NEPAD, beyond discussing the issues at various forums. The Policy Framework does acknowledge that civil society "can make a critical contribution to post-conflict reconstruction". It identifies early warning, policy development, research, capacity building through training and education as areas where civil society can contribute to PCR.⁶ One limitation of the Policy Framework therefore is that it has not practically enumerated how civil society organisations can begin to work immediately with the AU/NEPAD to coordinate PCR efforts on the ground. The atrocities that have been witnessed in Sierra Leone, Angola, the Sudan and in the DRC mean that there has to be an effective policy for ensuring that perpetrators of injustice are brought to book. The Policy Framework does not explicitly recognise that impunity during times of civil unrest and conflicts cannot be allowed to stand. People need to be placed at the centre of the AU's strategy for building peace and reinforcing democratic governance and the rule of law across the continent. Civil society groups have taken the lead in pointing out that PCR cannot be consolidated if there is no healing or genuine effort to promote social and economic justice. The continental institutions are however taking steps to remedy this neglect of civil society. The AU has appointed a senior political officer for civil society at its headquarters in Addis Ababa. Similarly, NEPAD has also established a structure for interfacing with civil society as highlighted by Professor Nkhulu when he notes that "a civil society desk has been established at the NEPAD Secretariat with a view to having a one-stop focal point for civil society".⁷

Creating Economic Conditions for Post-Conflict Reconstruction

The Policy Framework needs to acknowledge that local PCR does not take place in a global vacuum. International financial institutions can adversely impact

upon PCR processes by imposing economic models on war-affected countries which actually undermine peace-building and reconstruction. PCR will not be successful unless there is an unambiguous recognition of the importance of creating the economic conditions to build a continental community at peace with itself in light of inequalities amongst the AU member states.⁸ This means that economic models must be adopted and implemented on the basis of the need to promote and assist in consolidating PCR. The capacity of countries emerging from war to establish a viable economy can also be affected by international trade rules and regulations. African farmers have borne the brunt of the subsidies and tariffs imposed by richer countries to protect their farming industries. Therefore North-South trade agreements have to be monitored for the potential impact that they may have on PCR processes. As part of the effort to consolidate the various PCR processes taking place around the continent, the AU/NEPAD has to find ways to increase intra-African trade, and the development of infrastructure through pooling resources where necessary in order to enhance the capacity of the continent when it comes to negotiating and engaging with international trade partners.⁹

Post-Conflict Reconciliation and the Cultural Factor

The Policy Framework does not explicitly address the issue of culture and how it can contribute towards PCR. Post-apartheid South Africa is an example of a post-conflict situation that has made some positive gains compared to other parts of the continent. Of course there are legitimate questions being raised about how long this post-apartheid peace can hold in the absence of a much more accelerated distribution of economic resources to improve the well-being of all of the country's citizens. There is an under-emphasis of the role that a culture of forgiveness plays in reinforcing PCR. The issue for other war-affected countries in Africa is not one of imitating the South African experience but of exploring whether there are any cultural resources within their own traditions that can assist them with putting in place a process of post-conflict reconciliation to heal the traumatised communities. These traditional cultural values can also be used to establish post-conflict systems of governance and the rule of law to ensure that any latent tensions within society are effectively addressed early before a violent conflict situation reignites. These cultural resources for rebuilding and reconstruction

of war-affected communities seem to be marginalised from ongoing PCR efforts on the continent. For example, NEPAD does not make an explicit reference to the way culture can be used to promote peace. Perhaps because they are misunderstood or viewed as taking the continent backwards to a place where patriarchal societies reigned supreme, it makes it problematic for African elites and external actors to interface with these systems. This however remains one of the areas where innovation can contribute towards stabilising communities. Beyond just stabilising communities they give the people the autonomy to manage their own social and political affairs through revitalising the positive aspects of their traditional structures. This can then also be used to achieve the social and economic justice that is necessary in order to build peaceful societies.

Consolidating Post-Conflict Democratisation through Indigenous Institutions

In a similar fashion to peace-building and reconciliation, the processes of democratisation in Africa are necessary in order to consolidate PCR. It would be worthwhile to assess the potentially innovative role that can be played by indigenous institutions of governance in enhancing and improving the quality of political participation, and the responsiveness of existing governmental structures to the needs of the people.¹⁰ This present crisis of the legitimacy of the state in Africa suggests that the process of re-legitimising the structures of authority and governance will require the revitalisation, or where necessary the creation, of institutions and mechanisms which are more responsive to the needs of the excluded, the marginalised and the alienated.¹¹ According to Deng et al, "government only becomes real to people as their possession when they are able to take part in self-rule on topics of local importance. This need is significant when ethnic and regional identities and concerns are the basis of demands and conflicts. Government structures need to include greater regional autonomy and a greater articulation of local and national government institutions to provide a bottom-up rather than a top-down hierarchy."¹² Thus, the crisis of the legitimacy of the nation-state model in Africa is unlikely to be addressed by superficial reforms of the state and more likely to be remedied by the revitalisation of sub-state, local or indigenous capacities of political participation and regulation based on the principle of the equitable distribution of socio-economic resources. This was the situation in Northern Somalia

ONE KEY OMISSION THAT IS NOT CLEARLY ARTICULATED IN THE AU/NEPAD POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION POLICY FRAMEWORK IS A COMMITMENT TO GENDER MAINSTREAMING

or Somaliland, as yet unrecognised by the international community, where indigenous structures of governance have been combined with systems inherited from the era of colonisation to construct a post-conflict governing mechanism that so far has managed to maintain relative peace and stability in the country.

The processes of political participation and decision-making should therefore reflect the decision-making values and procedures of the local populations involved. The Policy Framework does not acknowledge that indigenous institutions in particular would be well placed to perform the function of enhancing political participation and decision-making because of three overlapping but distinct factors:

- (i) they are more accessible to all members of a given society, brought up within a particular tradition;
- (ii) they are already embedded in the social and political structures of a given society and therefore the rules and procedures are more easily internalised;
- (iii) they enable all members of a society to be aware of their responsibilities and rights with regard to the community as a whole.

Indigenous institutional arrangements can therefore enhance the role of citizens in addressing their own problems rather than submitting, as passive objects, to the directives of a distant centralised authority. States for the most part have a limited capacity to enable such a degree of inclusive participation in the decision-making processes. With this in mind PCR strategies need to engage with indigenous structures of governance if sustainable peace is the objective.

Conclusion

Peace is vital for implementing the African continent's economic and development agenda. The AU's Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework is necessary because it brings much more focus to the issue of PCR. The Policy Framework suggests the establishment of PCR systems which will include a network of institutions, mechanisms and processes which can guide, plan, monitor and evaluate PCR in Africa. The challenge as always is one of transforming these policies into coherent and practical strategies on the ground. This will require a greater degree of partnership between the institutions of the AU and regional economic communities and the international community. Even though the Policy Framework exists, it is, however, unclear whether the AU/NEPAD will be able to mobilise their resources and build the capacity to undertake peace-building effectively. External actors like the UN and the World Bank have far more resources and experience in this critical area than Africa's institutions which have financial constraints.

Ultimately, the AU/NEPAD needs to ensure that the broad policy framework that it has developed

is understood by all the stakeholders involved in promoting peace. This will avoid the unnecessary duplication of activities and waste of resources and energy, and ensure that all actors including the RECs, civil society and external actors are operating on the basis of a common understanding of the need for effective medium to long-term PCR in Africa. The primary challenge therefore remains one of popularising the Policy Framework and building the necessary institutional links to achieve the goal of sustainable peace in Africa. ▽

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- 2 Center for Conflict Resolution (CCR) and the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS), (2004) *The AU/NEPAD and Africa's Evolving Governance and Security Architecture*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 11-12 December, Available at: <http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za>
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- 6 NEPAD 2005, pp 26-27.
- 7 Nkhulu 2005, p 9.
- 8 African Development Bank (2000) *African Development Report 2000: Regional Integration in Africa*, Abidjan: ADB, Available at: www.afdb.org
- 9 Oyejide, T.A. (2000) 'Policies for Regional Integration in Africa', *Economic Research Papers Series*, 62, Abidjan: African Development Bank.
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- 11 Young, Crawford (1995) 'Democracy and the Ethnic Question', *Africa Demos*, 3, March, pp 24-25.
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Sudan is situated in the Horn of Africa, bordering the Red Sea between Egypt and Eritrea. With an area of 2 505 819 Km², the size of Western Europe, Sudan is the largest country in Africa. Geographically, culturally, politically and socially, Sudan straddles a fault line between Africa and the Middle East, a position that makes it highly strategic. While Sudan's climate is tropical, its terrain is generally flat plains, though there are mountains in the far South, North-East and West. The river Nile flows through eastern Sudan from south to north.

CONFLICT OVERVIEW – Three conflicts dominate Sudan:

Conflict in Darfur

- 1820** Sudan is conquered by Turkey and Egypt.
- 1881** Rebellion against the Turkish-Egyptian administration establishes the Mahdi state.
- 1882** The British invade Sudan.
- 1883** Sultanate of Darfur (an independent empire) conquered by the Mahdi State.
- 1885** Mahdi state formally installs an Islamic state in Sudan.
- 1898** Mahdi state defeated by Anglo-Egyptian forces.
- 1899** Sudan is governed by British-Egyptian condominium.
- 1899** Darfur incorporated into the Anglo-Egyptian condominium of the Sudan.
- 1916** Darfur Sultanate terminated and Darfur becomes a province of Sudan.
- 1956** Sudan gains independence.
- 2003** Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) attack military

Conflict in the Eastern Region

- 1957** Beja Congress (BC) founded as a lobby group.
- 1965** BC participates in democratic elections.
- 1990s** BC was a partner in NDA and fought alongside SPLM.
- 2003** BC attacks Tandalai Camp near Kassala.
- 2005** BC and Rashaida Lions (RL) form the Eastern Front.

North-south Conflict

- 1899** Anglo-Egyptian condominium administers north and south Sudan separately.
- 1946** North and south Sudan are integrated under one government.
- 1953** Self-government agreement for Sudan concluded.
- 1954** Parliament is inaugurated.
- 1955** Revolt in the south and start of the first civil war (Anyanya I).
- 1956** Sudan gains independence.
- 1958** The military overthrows civilian government.
- 1964** The military junta falls and the national unity government formed.
- 1965** Civilian government comes to power.
- 1969** Military coup brings Col. Jaafar Nimeiri to power.
- 1972** Addis Ababa peace agreement grants the south self-governance.
- 1978** Large findings of oil are made in Bentiu, southern Sudan.
- 1983** Introduction of Islamic law leads to resumption of civil war.
- 1985** President Nimeiri is overthrown in a military coup.
- 1986** A civilian government makes efforts to restore peace.
- 1989** National Islamic Front (NIF) takes power in a military coup.
- 2005** A Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) is signed in Nairobi, Kenya.

CURRENT STATUS

A National Unity Government (GNU) incorporating leaders of both the NCP government and allied forces and SPLM and allied forces was sworn in on 22 September 2005, as mandated by the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The Interim National Constitution was adopted on 6 July 2005. As per the CPA, the SPLM leader became the First National Vice-President and the President of South Sudan. The Government of the South has been sworn in and is based in Juba. The Government of South Sudan (GoSS) recently brought all the armed groups in the south to a conference in Juba, where they are engaged in south-south dialogue. But peace consolidation and post-conflict reconstruction (PCR) has been overshadowed by the on going conflict in the western Darfur region.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

DARFUR CONFLICT

2005 – present Abuja Peace talks.

NORTH-EAST CONFLICT

2005 Tripoli Peace Agreement between GoS and RL.

NORTH-SOUTH CONFLICT

- 1972** Addis Ababa Peace Agreement.
- 1986** Koka Dam Agreement between GoS and SPLM.
- 1995** Political Charter between GoS and SPLM-United.
- 1996** Political Charter between GoS and South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM) and SPLM-Bahr-al-Ghazal (BGG).
- 1997** Agreement between GoS and United Democratic Salvation Front (USDF)-SSIM and Union of Sudanese African Parties (USAP), Equatoria Defence Forces (EDF), SPLM, and SSIG.
- 1997** Agreement between GoS and South Sudan Democratic Salvation Front.
- 2005** CPA between GoS and SPLM.

PARTIES / ACTORS

- Government of National Unity.
- Government of South Sudan (GoSS).
- Opposition parties and Islamic groups in the north [i.e. UP, DUP, NDA, PNC and Communist Party (CP)].
- SPLM, South Sudan Defence Forces (SSDF) and other southern forces.
- Armed groups in Darfur and the north east (JEM and SLA and EF).
- Frontline states (Egypt, Libya, Chad, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Eritrea).
- Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD).
- The African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN).
- Middle East States.
- The Arab League.
- European Union and the United States.
- China.

MAIN CONFLICT ISSUES

- Fundamental issues of statehood.
- Citizenship and the choice of judicial system (whether Islamic, secular or both).
- Security and power sharing arrangements.
- Sharing of national resources.
- Devolution of power for the people at the periphery.

SOCIO-CULTURAL	Population	40.2 million
	Pop. growth rate	2.7%
	Birth rate	35.2 births / 1000
	Death rate	9.2 deaths / 1000
	Life expectancy	57 years
	Infant mortality rate	67 / 1000
	HIV/Aids	2.3%
	Ethnic groups	Black 52%; Arab 39%; Beja 6%; foreigners 2%; other 1%
	Religion	Sunni Muslim 70%; Indigenous beliefs 25%; Christian 5%
	Languages	Arabic (official); Nubian, Te Bedawie; diverse dialects of Nilotic; Nilo-Han Sudanese languages; and English
Education/literacy	61.1%	
POLITICAL	Main parties	National Congress Party (NCP); Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A); Popular National Congress (PNC); Democratic Unionist Party (DUP); National Democratic Alliance (NDA); UMMA party (UP); over 20 minor/pro-government parties
	Government type	National Unity Government (GNU)
	Refugees/Internally Displaced Persons	4.367 million
ECONOMIC	GDP & GDP Growth rate	US\$76.19 billion (Annual growth rate 6.4%; per capita income US\$490)
	Budget	Revenue US\$6.182 billion. Expenditure US\$5.753 billion, including capital expenditures of US\$304 million (2005 est.)
	Exports	Crude oil and petroleum products, cotton, gold, sorghum, peanuts, gum Arabic, sugar, meat, hides, live animals, and sesame seeds
	Imports	Pumping and refining equipment, chemical products and equipment, wheat and wheat flour, transport equipment, foodstuff, tea, agricultural inputs and machinery, industrial inputs and manufactured goods



COMMENTS

The north-south CPA was no doubt a landmark achievement for Sudan. There are, however, several critical challenges that face the Sudan. In the north, various forces and Islamist groups, which have had a firm grip on the Sudanese state, fear the CPA particularly the clauses of self-determination and wealth sharing. In the south, there are problems of capacity to establish and empower structures of governance, as well as transformation of the SPLM from a guerrilla movement to a government. There are also problems of armed groups and second tier conflicts which can easily hamper the operations of the GoSS. There are the challenges of the Darfur conflict, and the unresolved issues in the north-east. Indeed, the nexus between the Darfur, north-east and south-north conflicts leads to the conclusion that Sudan's crisis is a conflict between the center and the periphery. Lastly, there is the divergence between the perceptions of the various international players such as AU, UN, EU, and governments such as the US, China and Middle East states regarding the Sudan crisis. A major challenge is not to just narrow this divergence, but to determine how to resolve the Sudan conflicts conclusively without fragmenting the country.

SITUATION REPORT SOMALIA

BY KARANJA MBUGUA

Somalia is located on the East Coast of Africa, north of the equator and adjacent to the Arabian Peninsula. It shares borders with Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti, and the region is referred to as the Horn of Africa. Somalia's land area is 637 660 km² and its coastline is the second longest in Africa (2 720km) after South Africa. The northern part of the country is hilly, while the central and southern areas are flat. The Juba and Shabelle rivers flow through the country. Major climatic factors are a year-round hot climate, seasonal monsoon winds, and irregular rainfall with recurring droughts. The country's capital city is Mogadishu and other main towns include Hargeisa, Berbera, Merca, Kismayo, Bosasso, and Baidoa.

CONFLICT OVERVIEW

- 1960** British and Italian Somalia merge to form the Republic of Somalia.
- 1963** Border dispute with Kenya.
- 1964** Border dispute with Ethiopia erupts into hostilities.
- 1967** President Aden Abdulle Osman defeated in national polls.
- 18 Oct. 1969** President Rashid Shermake is assassinated.
- 21 Oct. 1969** Military coup led by General Mohammed Siyaad Barre.
- 1970** Barre declares Somalia a socialist state.
- 1974** Somalia joins the Arab League.
- 1977-78** Somalia-Ethiopia war.
- 1978** Coup attempt against General Barre fails; First guerrilla movement, Somalia Salvation Front (SSF), founded in the North East.
- 1982** Second guerrilla movement, Somalia National Movement (SNM), founded in the North-West.
- 1984** SSF converts itself to Somalia Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF).
- 1988** Peace Accord with Ethiopia signed.
- 1988** Third guerrilla movement, Somali Patriotic Front (SPM) founded in the south.
- 1989** Fourth guerrilla movement United Somali Congress (USC) founded in the central-southern region.
- 1990** Civil war engulfs the entire country.
- Jan. 1991** Somalia government and state collapses.

PARTIES / ACTORS

- Transition Federal Government (TFG).
- Faction leaders (warlords).
- Frontline states (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya).
- Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD).
- The African Union (AU).
- Middle East States of Saudi Arabia and Yemen.
- The Arab League.

MAIN CONFLICT ISSUES

- State control.
- Politicisation of identity (clans).
- Power sharing arrangements.
- The system of government – whether central, federal or confederal.
- Devolution of power.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- 1991** The Djibouti Peace talks.
- 1992** Mogadishu peace conference.
- 1992** US's Operation Restore Hope led by the Unified Task Force (UNITAF).
- 1993** Nairobi Peace Conference sponsored by the United Nations (UN).
- 1993** UN Peacekeeping Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM).
- 1993** Addis Ababa Peace Conference organised by the UN.
- 1994** National Reconciliation Conference in Mogadishu, Somalia
- 1995** Mogadishu peace agreement between Somali National Alliance (SNA) and Somalia Salvation Alliance (SSA).
- 1996** Sodere (Ethiopia) peace talks.
- 1997** National Reconciliation Conference held in Baidoa, Somalia.
- 1997** Cairo Peace Conference organised by the Arab League.
- 1998** Agreement between south and north Mogadishu leaders on the city's administration.
- 2000** Second Djibouti Conference is sponsored by the government of Djibouti.
- 2002** Peace talks in Eldoret city, 300 km north west of Nairobi (Kenya).
- 2003/4** Nairobi Peace Conference and Agreement.
- 2005** Yemen Peace Talks between TFG President Yusuf and Speaker Sheik Aden.
- 2006** Yemen Peace Agreement.

CURRENT STATUS

Somalia has no central government or authority and state institutions are non-existent. All national institutions disintegrated with state collapse in January 1991 when armed opposition factions drove General Mohammed Said Barre out of power. Since then, the country has been carved into 16 fiefdoms controlled by faction leaders (warlords). The Transitional Federal Government (TFG), elected on 14 October 2004 in Kenya, moved temporarily to Johwar, a small town 60 Km north of Mogadishu, because of insecurity in Mogadishu and disagreements between the Transitional President Abdullahi Yusuf and Mogadishu-based faction leaders led by the Transitional Assembly Speaker, Sheikh Aden. The Prime Minister, Prof. Ali Ghedi is technically the head of government and leads a cabinet of more than 50 ministers, but the government has never met since its formation in December 2004. A 275-member parliament was established in October 2004, but it has also never met; it is set to meet for the first time in Somalia in February 2006. The breakaway north-west region, which declared unilateral independence in 1991 and dubbed itself the Republic of Somaliland, is relatively stable. It has functional state institutions but is not recognised internationally.

SOCIO-CULTURAL	Population	8.6 million
	Pop. growth rate	2.9%
	Birth rate	45.62 births / 1000 (2005 est.)
	Death rate	16.97 deaths / 1000 (2005 est.)
	Life expectancy	47 years
	Infant mortality rate	120 / 1 000
	Ethnic groups	Somali 96%; Bantus and Arabs 4 %
	Languages	Somali; Arabic; Italian; and English
POLITICAL	Education/literacy	37%
	Main parties	None
ECONOMIC	Government type	None
	GDP and GDP Growth rate	Unknown
	Budget	None / unknown
	Exports	Livestock, bananas, charcoal
	Imports	Sugar, sorghum, corn, fish, khat, petroleum products and manufactured goods



COMMENTS

A sceptical world greeted the latest news of agreement between the Transitional Federal Government President, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, and the Speaker of the Transitional Federal Assembly, Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan. The two have led feuding camps since the Somalia Peace Agreement was signed in Nairobi in October 2004. At the heart of the disagreement is the location of the government, interpretation of some articles of the transition charter and deployment of international peacekeepers. Other than derailing the TFG operations, the disagreements have often degenerated into factional wars that have left many people dead and hundreds injured in different regions of the country. Given the propensity for the Somali peace talks or agreements to turn into causes of further conflicts, the question is: what does the latest agreement portend for Somalia, its neighbours and Africa in general?

SITUATION REPORT CÔTE D'IVOIRE

BY RICHARD KAMIDZA

Côte d'Ivoire, a West African country is situated on the North Atlantic Ocean between Ghana and Liberia, bordering Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso. The country has a total land area of 322 460 km² and a 515 km coastline. Côte d'Ivoire is endowed with natural resources including petroleum, natural gas, diamonds, manganese, iron ore, cobalt, bauxite, copper, gold, nickel, tantalum, silica sand, clay, cocoa beans, coffee, palm oil and hydropower.

CONFLICT OVERVIEW

- 7 August 1960** Country achieved Independence after french colonization.
- 25 December 1999** General Robert Guei overthrew the Henri Konan regime.
- 2000** Prominent opposition leader Alassane Quattara was excluded from contesting the elections.
- Protests forced Robert Guei to step aside and brought in runner-up Laurent Gbagbo into power.
- September 2002** Coup attempt by dissidents and disaffected members of the military.
- Rebel forces claimed the northern half of the country.
- January 2003** Rebels granted ministerial positions in a unity government under the Linas-Marcoussis Peace Accord.
- December 2003** Tensions increased sparking civil war.

CURRENT STATUS

For more than three years, the country has been in a state of civil war and is divided into two, with the south under government control and the north controlled by rebels. United Nations (UN) peacekeepers are stationed along the zone of confidence between the two conflicting forces. In November 2004, the African Union (AU) mandated South African President, Thabo Mbeki, to mediate in the conflict. But in spite of the international pressure and a flurry of AU mediation efforts, little progress was achieved in terms of disarmament, redressing issues of citizenship and political reforms. Political standoff between the belligerent forces continued. The elections scheduled for October 2005 were postponed for 2006.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The UNSC Resolution 1633 of 21 October 2005 recommended the appointment of the Prime Minister to govern the country. Both the incumbent and the rebels sought this position, which resulted in a political deadlock that was only resolved when Charles Koran Banny¹ was appointed as Prime Minister on 4 December 2005 in consultation with other African mediators². All the parties to the conflict accepted him. Banny was sworn in on 7 December 2005 and named a 32-member cross faction unity cabinet, composed of representatives of the ruling party, rebels and opposition parties. Protests by pro-Gbagbo militant groups erupted in response to the distribution of government portfolios which gave the Prime Minister control over sensitive communications and finance portfolios. He also has full authority over the transitional cabinet. Political tensions only settled when the constitutional court extended the legislature's mandate to October 2006. The cabinet is mandated to strictly implement the peace plan roadmap as per the UNSC Resolution. This entails restoring authority; reunifying the country; implementing a national disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme; overseeing the transition process; and organising the October 2006 elections.

The UN Resolution established a panel of mediators, the International Working Group (IWG)³ to assist Banny in implementing the peace plan. The IWG then terminated the National Assembly's (NA) mandate, which was previously extended by the constitutional court. This resulted in violent protests by the pro-Gbagbo militant youth faction, the Young Patriots⁴. The protestors paralysed the government controlled territory, demanding the withdrawal of UN and French peacekeepers. The protests and violence caused widespread panic among nationals and the FPI threatened to pull out of the peace process and transitional government.

The UN extended its peacekeeping mission to December 2006 and called for additional soldiers and police personnel to assist in the disarmament and demobilisation of combatants by mid-2006.

Endnotes

- 1 President of the Central Bank of Western African States.
- 2 Presidents of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo; South Africa, Thabo Mbeki; and Niger, Mamadou Tandja.
- 3 Comprises the AU, the UN, the European Union (EU), the International Organisation of the Francophone (French-speaking countries), the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank along with Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- 4 A nationalist movement that often uses violence and intimidation to express its support for the President.
- 5 President Laurent Gbagbo; rebel leader Guillaume Soro; two main opposition leaders Henri Bedie and Alassane Quattara; and the Prime Minister Charles Koran Banny.

PARTIES / ACTORS

- Front Populaire Ivoirien party.
- Forces Nouvelles (rebel forces).
- Opposition political parties.
- Civic bodies.
- South Africa.
- France.
- Economic Community of West African States.
- African Union.
- Donor agencies.
- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

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MAIN CONFLICT ISSUES

- Land reform and unresolved nationality questions.
- Statehood and self-determination.
- Poor relations between President Gbagbo and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).
- Ongoing safety, security and ethnic tensions.
- Human rights abuses.

SOCIO-CULTURAL	Population	17.298 million (2005 est.)
	Pop. growth rate	2.06% (2005 est.)
	Birth rate	35.51 births / 1000 (2005 est.)
	Death rate	14.94 deaths / 1000 (2005 est.)
	Infant mortality rate	90.83 deaths / 1000 (2005 est.)
	HIV/Aids	7% (2003 est.)
	Ethnic groups	Akan 42.1%; Voltaiques or Gur 17.6%; Northern Mandes 16.5%; Krou 11%; Southern Mandes 10%; other 2.8% (including Lebanese and French)
	Religion	Christian 20-30%; Muslim 35-40%; indigenous 25-40%; note: the majority of foreigners (migratory workers) are Muslim, 70% and Christian 20%
	Languages	French (official); 60 native dialects with Dioula the most widely spoken
Education/literacy	50.9% (2003 est.)	
POLITICAL	Main parties	Citizen's Democratic Union (UDCY); Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire-African Democratic Rally (PDCI-RDA); Ivorian Popular Front (FPI); Ivorian Worker's Party (PIT); Rally of the Republicans (RDR); Union for Democracy and Peace (UDPCI); plus a host of smaller parties
	Government type	Republic – multiparty presidential regime established in 1960
ECONOMIC	GDP & GDP Growth rate	US\$24.81 billion (GDP growth: 1.5%); GDP per capita: US\$1400 (2005 est.)
	Budget	Revenue US\$2.434 billion. Expenditure US\$2.83 billion. Deficit US\$396 million (2005 est.)
	Pubic debt	70.4% of GDP (2005 est.)
	Exports	US\$6,49 billion (2005 est.). Includes coffee, cocoa beans, palm oil, timber, petroleum, cotton, bananas, pineapple and fish
	Imports	US\$4,759 billion (2005 est.). Includes fuel, capital equipment and foodstuff



COMMENTS

Gbagbo fears losing power in the transition process. Disbanding the NA's mandate coupled with the Prime Minister's control of key portfolios has been interpreted as an erosion of existing authority during the transition period. His camp argues that elections under this arrangement could benefit the rebel forces and the opposition parties, but fears about this possible impending change abound in all sectors in the country, and are fuelling ongoing safety and security concerns. It remains to be seen how both the President and the rebel leadership will interact and cultivate their confidence in each other and the peace plan. After a month of political posturing over the Prime Minister's role and the possible implications for the scheduled October elections, five key players⁵ met for the first time since the war broke out more than three years ago and renewed their commitment to peace efforts. The four-hour meeting brought fresh impetus for a breakthrough in the stumbling efforts to unify the divided government-controlled south and rebel-held north. Although the meeting did not confirm a timetable for disarmament or the election date, it had significant positive implications for the peace process and ensuring a peaceful political climate.

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia is a land-locked country located in Eastern Africa, in the region known as the Horn of Africa. The country's total land mass is 1 127 127 km². Ethiopia is bordered by the Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea and Kenya. The Blue Nile rises in T'ana Hayk (Lake Tana) in the North-West. Ethiopia's terrain is characterised by high plateaus and a central mountain range divided by the Great Rift Valley. Addis Ababa is the capital city.

CONFLICT OVERVIEW

ERITREA

Present day Eritrea was initially called Bahre Negash and was part of Ethiopia until it was renamed and colonised by Italy in 1890. When Italy was defeated during World War II, Eritrea was placed under British mandate (1942-1952). In 1952, Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia, but the federation was terminated in 1962 and Eritrea became a province of Ethiopia. A protracted guerrilla war led by the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) then ensued. EPLF assumed control of Eritrea after the fall of Mengistu's government in Addis Ababa in May 1991, and established a provisional government, which ran Eritrea until April 1993 when the Eritreans voted for independence in a United Nations (UN) monitored referendum.

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia, originally known as Abyssinia, is the oldest country in Africa. It is the only African nation that was not colonised. Its history is rich and ancient, interwoven with many legends.

- 1935** Italy invades Ethiopia.
- 1936** Italians capture Addis Ababa, Haile Selassie flees; Ethiopia combined with Eritrea and Italian Somaliland to become Italian East Africa.
- 1941** British troops defeat Italians and restore Haile Selassie to his throne.
- 1945** Ethiopia became a charter member of the United Nations (UN)
- 1952** UN federates Eritrea with Ethiopia.
- 1962** Ethiopia dissolves the federation and annexes Eritrea, triggering rebellion.
- 1962** Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), a separatist movement, takes to arms.
- 1960s** ELF splits and the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) is founded.
- 1970s** EPLF led-guerrilla secessionist war intensifies in Eritrea.
- 1974** Haile Selassie deposed in a coup led by Teferi Benti.
- 1975** Haile Selassie dies while in custody.
- 1977** Benti killed and replaced by Major Mengistu Haile Mariam.
- 1977-78** Ethiopia-Somali war.
- 1987** Rebel movements form the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a guerrilla movement.
- 1991** EPDRF defeated Mengistu's government after the fall of the Soviet Union.
- 1994** New constitution approved.
- 1995** First universal franchise elections in Ethiopia's history.
- 1998** Border war with Eritrea over the disputed Badme area along the border.

ERITREA

Eritrea is a former northern province of Ethiopia. The country's total land mass is 121 320 km². Eritrea is bordered by the Red Sea, Sudan, Ethiopia and Djibouti. The country has a high central plateau, a coastal plain, western lowlands, and about 300 islands comprise the remainder of Eritrea's landmass. The climate is temperate in the mountains and hot in the lowlands. Asmara is the capital city.

CURRENT STATUS

A border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea broke out in 1998 when Eritrean forces occupied the disputed Badme and Zalambessa territory. In May 2000 Ethiopia launched a major offensive that secured the disputed territory and drove further into Eritrea. The parties signed a cease-fire agreement in June 2000 that called for a truce and the establishment of a 15.5 mile temporary security zone (TSZ) patrolled by the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE). The agreement also called for the demarcation and delineation of the border by a neutral commission. A treaty was formally signed in Algiers, Algeria, in December 2000, but there was slow progress toward the goals of the treaty in the subsequent months. The border was established in April 2002, by the Hague Tribunal. The ruling generally favoured neither country, but some decisions in favour of Eritrea led to Ethiopian resistance in finalising the border, which to date remains incomplete. Relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea have deteriorated. A few months ago, the Eritrean government imposed restrictions on UNMEE helicopter flights and vehicle movements, and later expelled westerners working in the mission. Military movements on both sides were also detected.

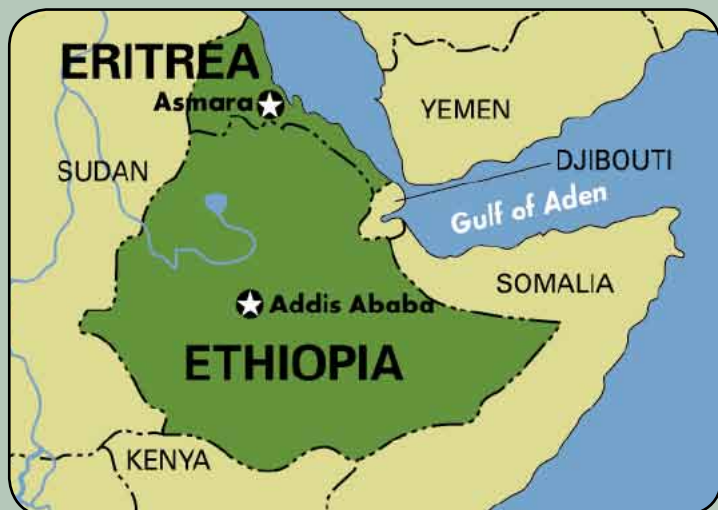
MAIN CONFLICT ISSUES

- Ethiopian territorial claims within the Tigray administrative zone.
- Land dispute along the common border areas of Badme and Zalambessa.
- Eritrea's monetary independence (signified by its decision to replace Ethiopia's Birr with its own currency).
- Sea access for Ethiopia.
- Ethnic politics in both countries.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- June 2000 Ceasefire agreement.
- December 2000 Algiers Treaty.
- 2005 US-UN mediation and diplomacy by the AU and the UN.

	ETHIOPIA	ERITREA	
SOCIO-CULTURAL	Population	77.4 million (2005 est.)	4.7 million
	Pop. growth rate	2.5%	2.6%
	Birth rate	41 births / 1000	39 births / 1000
	Death rate	16 deaths / 1000	13 deaths / 1000
	Life expectancy	48 years	58 years
	Infant mortality rate	100 / 1000	50 / 1000
	HIV/Aids	4.4%	2.7%
	Ethnic groups	Oromo 35%; Amhara 30%; Tigre 6.3%; Somali 6%; Sidama 6%; Gurage 4%; Wolaita 4%; Afar 2%; other nationalities 6.7%	Tigrinya 50%; Tigre 31.4%; Saho 5%; Afar 5%; Beja 2.5%; Bilen 2.1%; Kunama 2%; Nara 1.5%; and Rashaida 5%
	Religion	Ethiopian Orthodox Christian 45%; Sunni Muslim 40-45%; Protestant 5%; Indigenous beliefs 5%	Christian 50% (mostly orthodox); Muslim 48%; indigenous beliefs 2%
	Languages	Amharic; Tigrinya; Oromigna; Guaragigna; Somali; Arabic and English	Afar; Arabic; Tigre; Kunama; Tigrinya and other Cushitic languages
Education/literacy	42.7%	58.6%	
POLITICAL	Main parties	Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP); Gumuz People's Democratic Unity Front (BGPDUF); Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD); Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF); Gurage Nationalities' Democratic Movement (GNDM); United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF)	People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ)
	Government type	Federal Republic	Transitional government. (Constitution adopted in 1997 but has not been ratified; no elections held since the region seceded from Ethiopia in 1993)
	Refugees/Internally Displaced Persons	Refugees: 93 032 from Sudan and 23 578 from Somalia. IDPs: 132 000 (2004)	59 000 (2004)
ECONOMIC	GDP & GDP Growth rate	US\$59.93 billion (Annual growth rate 6.5%; per capita income US\$800)	US\$4.471 billion (2% growth rate). (2005 est.)
	Budget	Revenue US\$2.338 billion. Expenditure US\$2.88 billion (2005 est.)	Revenue US\$248.8 million. Expenditure US\$409.4 million (2005 est.)
	Exports	Beans, coffee, cotton, sesame seeds, hides/skins	US\$39 million (2004). Skins, meat, live sheep and cattle, gum Arabic
	Imports	Oil and petroleum products, consumer goods, machinery and transport equipment, industrial supplies, and food items/cereals	US\$335 million (2004): food, military material, fuel, manufactured goods, machinery, and transportation equipment.



PARTIES / ACTORS

- Government of Ethiopia.
- Government of Eritrea.
- Frontline states.
- Middle East countries.
- UN mission in Eritrea & Ethiopia (UNMEE).
- International institutions including the AU, UN and the EU.
- Major world governments including the US and the UK.

COMMENTS

In January 2006, the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, indicated that the situation along the Ethiopia-Eritrea border had become 'increasingly untenable' because of the potential for conflict. Annan requested that the Security Council send a delegation to resolve the situation, promote peaceful dialogue and assist in the de-escalation of tensions in order to prevent the resumption of war. The situation remains volatile.

WOMEN AND POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION IN AFRICA

WRITTEN BY **HARRIETTE E. WILLIAMS**



President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia dances at a gathering of women's organisations

On January 16, 2006 when Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf stepped up to the podium to deliver her acceptance speech as Liberia's president, she was not only making history as Africa's first elected female head of state, but she was to become the only elected African president of a country emerging from civil war to expressly recognise,

in her inaugural address, the role women had played as transformers of conflict.¹

Evocative of a number of recent conflicts in Africa, Liberia's fourteen-year civil war was punctuated with widespread human rights atrocities of which women bore the brunt. Women were particularly targeted and

subject to rape and sexual slavery. However, women have proved to be more than just victims of conflict. Across the continent, in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), women have persistently advocated the cessation of hostilities at the local and regional level. They have demonstrated their effectiveness as negotiators and mediators, often coming up with innovative approaches to intractable situations of conflict.

As African countries continue to experience civil wars, identifying factors that increase the incidence of conflict is crucial for intervention strategies. However, attempting to pinpoint the root causes of any civil conflict often results in intensive debate and lack of consensus. An important factor to note, especially in the case of Africa where civil conflicts are often lumped together, is that each conflict possesses its own unique complexities whether they be centered on economic, political or social grievances or a combination of all three. Across the board, however, the nexus between security and development is indisputable. Insecurity hampers development and the absence of inclusive development substantially exacerbates factors that lead to conflict.

Given this reality and the propensity for the effects of war to extend beyond country borders, the end of civil wars in Burundi, Sierra Leone, Angola, Liberia and Senegal (Casamance) bodes well for the continent and heralds a climate conducive to economic investment and the establishment of good governance structures for post-conflict countries. The post-conflict reconstruction period, however, is often fraught with difficulties with about half of all countries at risk of relapsing into conflict within a decade.² It is therefore crucial to approach post-conflict reconstruction in a holistic manner taking into account the importance of synergy across programmes that address economic, political and social development. Successful post-conflict reconstruction also requires local ownership of programmes and the broad participation of all stakeholders in shaping and implementing peace-building processes.

Women thus have an integral role to play in post-conflict reconstruction. Comprising half or more of the population in most countries, their full participation is essential for sustainable peace and development. This article argues that far from an essentialist notion of women's effectiveness in peace-building, the fundamental principle of equitable rights that forms the bedrock of a successful post-war environment demands that women be given full access to all spheres of development. Given the many ways women contribute to society and their untapped potential to contribute even more with the right resources and access, excluding or curbing women's involvement in development processes is short-sighted and lacks justification.

Women in the Aftermath of Civil War: Challenges

The implications and effects of war are different for women and men. Women suffer the adverse effects of war, advocate peace and yet find themselves unjustifiably marginalised in the peace-building process. As such, the signing of a peace agreement signals the end of one struggle for women, but the beginning of another for services and legal instruments addressing the specific post-war challenges they face, and their full participation in conceptualising and implementing these processes.

Sexual Violence

In many of Africa's recent wars, sexual violence against women has been used as a weapon of war. During Rwanda's genocide for example, witness, medical and victims' accounts confirm that women, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, were subject to sexual cruelty.³ Internally displaced women and refugee women who sought safety in camps were also vulnerable to abuse. For female survivors of sexual violence, the post-war period can be especially difficult on an emotional and physical level. Many, on return, face ostracism in their communities due to the high stigma associated with rape, pregnancy as a result of rape, sexual slavery and sexual mutilation. There is a widespread need for a targeted response that effectively addresses the trauma women experience as a result of sexual violence.

Land and Inheritance Rights

Compared to pre-war levels, changes in demographics due to war-related casualties or missing persons show an increase in the number of female-headed households in post-conflict societies. Customary law, however, which in some communities holds more credence than statutory law, does not always accommodate this new reality. In respect of land, the vast majority of customary law practices are based on patrilineal systems that limit the possibilities for women to own property. As such, should a woman become widowed, there is a high possibility that she will not inherit land that she may have acquired jointly with her husband. Instead, to ensure that the property stays within the family, the land will be given to a male member of the family. Customary land tenure systems also tend to disfavour women making it difficult for women to acquire land titles. Given that the livelihood of a majority of the population in countries that have experienced civil war is highly dependent on subsistence farming, such legal practices not only subordinate women, but also place their survival in jeopardy.

Social and Political Roles

Women, as a result of their circumstances, often redefine their traditional roles during conflict. From the

periphery of political life in the pre-war period, women have galvanised during war to publicly protest against armed hostilities and human rights abuses and advocated ceasefire agreements and democratic elections. In refugee and internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps where women make up the majority, they become the lead decision-makers in their families as heads of households. In some cases, women in camps have access to schooling, skills development training and family planning services, for the first time in their lives. On return to their post-conflict communities, however, they are at risk of losing these newfound gains because access to these resources is denied or severely curtailed, as women's participation in such activities does not fall within the standard framework of behaviour that is expected.

Economic Opportunity

At the 2004 annual meeting of the African Development Bank, a participant posed the question, "If women contribute about 70% of total agricultural labour, why do they receive less than 10% of the credit given to small farmers?"⁴ This is the reality for women in most post-conflict environments. Even though there is a demonstrated need for increased levels of credit, women are generally disfavoured over their male

immensely to the establishment of governance, reconciliation and economic structures. Much more needs to be done, however, to improve women's access to peace-building processes and to ensure that their concerns are addressed.

Justice and Reconciliation

A key concern in the post-conflict environment relates to the psycho-social effects of the conflict on the population, which if not addressed, can seriously impede the recovery of a nation.

The criminal courts in Rwanda and Sierra Leone should be applauded for setting international standards for the prosecution of perpetrators of sexual violence. These courts are an acknowledgment of women's traumatic experiences and signal a commitment by their countrymen and the international community that such crimes are serious violations of human rights and will not be committed with impunity.

In South Africa, following the end of the apartheid regime, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established to provide an avenue for victims and perpetrators to share their experiences. Much of South Africa's post-conflict healing success can be attributed to the effectiveness of the TRC to which women made

WOMEN SUFFER THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF WAR, ADVOCATE PEACE AND YET FIND THEMSELVES UNJUSTIFIABLY MARGINALISED IN THE PEACE-BUILDING PROCESS

counterparts and are more likely to only receive micro-credit. In addition, women's lack of property ownership, which serves as collateral, also tends to adversely affect their borrowing ability.

Successful Post-Conflict Reconstruction Includes Women

What makes for successful post-conflict reconstruction in Africa? Is there, and should there, be an 'African' approach to determine success? Rule of law, human security, political, economic and state security, respect for human rights and participatory rights are all seen, and rightly so, to characterise a strong state. Central to effective transformation, however, is local ownership of programmes and tailoring interventions and programmes to reflect the unique history and make-up of each society. As such, a focus on a set formula for reconstruction, especially in as richly diverse a continent as Africa, is limiting and could be a missed opportunity to explore innovative strategies to peace-building.

Throughout the continent, in various approaches to post-conflict reconstruction, women have contributed

significant contributions. They were involved in its planning and women witnesses comprised 56.5% of the 21 227 submitted testimonies. Forty-one percent of the commissioners and 75% of the regional managers were women. In addition, a significant number served as administrators.⁵

At the local level in post-conflict societies, women have been pivotal in re-integrating male and female ex-combatants, including child soldiers, into the community. In Sierra Leone, women have 'adopted' child soldiers and have conducted traditional cleansing ceremonies for ex-combatants to facilitate their re-entry into society.

Governance

At 48.8%, Rwanda tops the global chart for female representation in parliament. Mozambique at 34.8%, South Africa at 32.8% and Burundi at 30.5% follow Rwanda's lead to land spots within the first twenty groupings of women in parliament.⁶ All of these countries, with the exception of Burundi, which only conducted elections recently, are on a strong path to reconstruction and have reported immeasurable gains from women's participation in government. Countries such as Sierra Leone at

14.5% should strive to improve women's political participation, as it is a step in the right direction in entrenching good practices of governance in post-conflict settings.

Economy

In sub-Saharan Africa, women comprise about 60% of the informal sector, provide about 70% of the total agricultural labour and produce about 90% of the food.⁷ Yet, as outlined earlier, women for the most part only gain access to limited credit and encounter major obstacles in acquiring land. Such practices

Making Successful Post-Conflict Reconstruction a Reality

In the early phases of post-conflict reconstruction, there is usually a rush of activity as internal and external actors in the form of African regional organisations and governments, international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), agencies and institutions, tackle the issues they deem crucial to creating a viable state. To ensure a cohesive, directed approach to reconstruction, it is necessary that the national government, with the broad participation of internal stakeholders,

AFP/TOUCHLINE PHOTO



Liberian women pray for peace on the eve of the presidential and legislative elections

are not only discriminatory against women, they deliberately impede a country's economic growth.

Due to the volatility of world prices for agricultural products, diversification has been touted as the way forward to protect African economies from price shocks. Women have demonstrated resourcefulness when dealing with changing economies during conflict and should be fully engaged in post-conflict diversification processes.

formulates an overall country strategy. Mozambique, for example, which is now enjoying a gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 8.2%, attributes its post-conflict success to the inclusion of all sectors – government, private sector, civil society, and international donors.⁸ Women should be allowed to participate fully in this process to enable them to highlight their concerns and to help conceptualise gender specific strategies.

WOMEN SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THIS PROCESS TO ENABLE THEM TO HIGHLIGHT THEIR CONCERNS AND TO HELP CONCEPTUALISE GENDER SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

To enable effective ownership of programmes, it is crucial that internal actors are well equipped and skilled to deal with the challenges of post-conflict reconstruction. In most post-conflict societies in Africa, a lack of skilled personnel is one of the major impediments to post-conflict reconstruction. As such, it is necessary that donor agencies focus resources on skills development and training to strengthen the capacity of internal actors. Local and international agencies should make use of sex-disaggregated data to ensure that women are fully involved in all programmes.


Reconciliation and trauma counselling are ongoing processes. Given the sensitive nature of sexual violence, a special effort should be made to employ women as trauma counsellors and to create support groups that deal specifically with the challenges women face. It is also the responsibility of the national government and local leaders to educate the population about sexual violence and to address discriminatory practices that ostracise women on cultural grounds.

Post-conflict environments usually present the opportunity to revise and create laws that are inclusive and equitable across the board. Laws and practices that discriminate against women, such as those that prevent women's access to land, credit, and formal and informal education should be replaced with those that protect women's human, social and economic rights. Information programmes and campaigns should be used to increase national awareness and to ensure that women take advantage of these new laws.

Conclusion

Post-conflict reconstruction is a long, arduous process and thus requires the long-term commitment of internal and external actors. It is also a costly process, which makes foreign aid and investment necessary for its success. Women, as much as other internal actors, have a stake in post-conflict rebuilding. They, in fact, bear the major brunt of conflict societies and have a legitimate interest in resolving and averting conflict. Women are essential to stable societies and as highlighted, have much to contribute to sustainable development.

Leaders lead by example. President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's public commitment to fully include women in Liberia's peace-building process is not only refreshing, but it is also the constructive approach to post-conflict reconstruction and a step in the right direction for Africa.

"My Administration shall...endeavor to give Liberian women prominence in all affairs of our country. My Administration shall empower Liberian women in all areas of our national life. We will support and increase the writ of laws that restore their dignity and deal drastically with crimes that dehumanize them. We will enforce without fear or favour the law against rape recently passed by the National Transitional Legislature. We shall encourage families to educate all children, particularly the girl child. We will also try to provide economic programs that enable Liberian women – particularly our market women – to assume their proper place in our economic process." (Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf – 16 January 2006) 

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REINTEGRATION OF EX-COMBATANTS: THE LIBERIA CASE

WRITTEN BY **JOSEPH N. SANY**

Introduction

Many authors, policy-makers, and practitioners argue that security is crucial for post-war initiatives; there can be no elections, empowerment of civil society, or economic prospects without security. By the same token, many argue that disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) are key processes in ensuring security during post-conflict reconstruction. However, experiences of DDR reveal an important international focus on resources for and commitment to disarmament and demobilisation with fewer resources devoted to reintegration. Reintegration is thus reduced to addressing gaps left by demobilisation and the reinsertion of ex-combatants into civilian life, leaving policy-makers and implementers to deal with a narrow array of choices and complex dilemmas. On one end of the spectrum, there are ex-combatants with expectations and needs, and on the other end, there

are unmet community needs and untapped potentialities. This limited focus on reintegration jeopardises the reinsertion of ex-combatants and challenges the goals of reintegration: at the individual level, the healing of relationships between ex-combatants and their communities; and at the societal level, the transition to a peaceful society that favours reconstruction and development.

The role of communities, other than serving as hosts for ex-combatants, is still very blurred. The impact of war is devastating for communities, both physically and as the bedrock of political and social institutions, informal networks of relationships, common history and shared memories. However, despite the destruction that accompanies war, experiences of post-conflict reconstruction show that by the time reintegration

Above: Handing over weapons to United Nations peacekeepers in Monrovia, Liberia

WHILE DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILISATION CUT EX-COMBATANTS' TIES WITH MILITARY LIFE, REINTEGRATION FOCUSES ON ENABLING EX-COMBATANTS TO STRENGTHEN TIES WITH CIVILIAN LIFE AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

starts, local populations have already begun a process of socio-economic reconstruction. As soon as there is a sense of security, residents and some early returnees begin the difficult task of rebuilding relationships, traditional institutions and the local economy, as well as addressing the trauma resulting from the conflict. It is this quiet, community-driven reconstruction process that makes reintegration a viable option for ex-combatants.

Too often, the focus on ex-combatants overshadows this community-driven reconstruction process, thus hindering stakeholders from tapping into the potential within communities. As Saunders states, "Only human beings can transform hostility into relationships of peace. There is a human dimension in starting and ending conflict, and building peace is also a human not just an institutional task".¹ The human dimension of conflict and the role of citizens as individuals or in organised structures has become the basis of many conflict resolution strategies; the same holds for reintegration.

This article defines disarmament and demobilisation and establishes the link between these two processes and reintegration. Building on this theoretical framework, as well as the framework of DDR in the case of Liberia, the challenges and issues related to reintegration in Liberia are analysed by examining the relationships between ex-combatants and communities. Suggestions to improve community involvement and relationships between communities and ex-combatants are finally provided.

Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration

The processes of DDR are crucial to maintaining stability and sustaining peace. These programmes are often bundled together, despite different objectives and procedures. **Disarmament** is the process of removing and destroying small arms and light and heavy weapons from warring parties. It may also entail transferring ownership of weapons from insurgents or rebels to the newly created army. **Demobilisation** refers to disbanding military structures and the control and commands of warring parties. While disarmament addresses the means of violence, demobilisation focuses on the structures and organisation created to carry out the violence. For individuals demobilisation breaks their ties with military life and prepares them for civilian life.

While disarmament and demobilisation cut ex-combatants' ties with military life, **reintegration** focuses on enabling ex-combatants to strengthen ties

with civilian life and their communities. Reintegration is fundamental in supporting ex-combatants as productive and accepted members of their local communities. After being disarmed and demobilised, ex-combatants must build a livelihood, develop relationships, reconcile with former enemies and sometimes victims, and fit into the web of relations and trust that hold communities together. Kingma identifies three dimensions of reintegration: economic, social and psychological.² Economic reintegration involves ex-combatants re-establishing a livelihood and contributing to the creation of wealth and growth in the community. The psychological dimension consists of a series of psychological adjustments the ex-combatant goes through to fit into the value system of civilian life. Social reintegration addresses the wounds, scars, and broken relationships within communities and between them and ex-combatants. The goal is to reconcile the ex-combatant with his or her community and to build and restore trust to a level where the ex-combatant can both contribute to and benefit from the nascent network of community relationships.

Reintegration in Liberia

The exile of Charles Taylor to Nigeria on August 11, 2003, the signing of the Accra Agreement on August 18, 2003, and United Nations Resolution 1509, which established a stabilisation force, on September 19, 2003, led to a new era of hope and peace in Liberia. Seizing the opportunities created by these initiatives, the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), with the support of the international community, developed the Result-Focused Transition Framework (RFTF) as the overarching framework and planning tool for setting goals and actions in ten priority areas called clusters. Cluster two dealt with disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRR).³

The Strategic Framework of DDR in Liberia

In the RFTF, DDRR corresponds to cluster two. However, in the Community Resettlement and Reintegration Strategy (CRRS), developed by the NTGL and the international community, the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants was aligned with cluster three, which dealt with refugees, returnees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The reintegration of ex-combatants was linked to the resettlement process as a way to create a strong framework that will accommodate all groups and facilitate the

physical, economic and social reconstruction of the entire society. This approach was justified by the experience of the 1997 DDR process, which showed that “programs aimed only at ex-combatants divided communities and caused considerable resentment on the part of civilians who received no special assistance”.⁴

The CRRS promotes a holistic approach, based on the principle that the individual needs of various groups of returnees and members of the local populations should be addressed through an integrated, community-focused approach. The CRRS provides a framework that identifies the groups in need of assistance and recognises that only an integrated approach to address these multiple needs will avoid disparities and feelings of discrimination that could undermine reconciliation. However, the implementation of the CRRS raises several challenges and limitations, which become apparent when analysing different aspects of reintegration, with an emphasis on the role played by communities.

Economic Reintegration: Rebuilding Livelihoods

“During the period under review, ex-combatants awaiting reintegration programs protested delays in the delivery of reintegration opportunities...In addition, the majority of ex-combatants who were illegally occupying the Guthrie Rubber Plantation and the Butaw Oil Palm Corporation failed to register for reintegration programs due to the lucrative nature of their illegal activities”.⁵

This story is symptomatic of the threats facing reintegration in Liberia. Insufficient funding, illegal commercial activities and the incapacity of local economies to absorb ex-combatants are serious concerns for the government and key stakeholders on the ground.

In the agricultural sector, prospects for ex-combatants are obscured by the complexity of a dual system of land tenure in Liberia. The government owns and administers public land, while some families and communities can apply to acquire deeds of ownership. Elders generally manage land owned by families and communities, which has led to instances of inter-generational exploitation and exclusion where young people feel exploited. Young ex-combatants have the choice of either returning to rural areas and joining an exploitative agrarian system or moving to urban areas; but to succeed in the towns they need skills training that will help them acquire jobs. The other option is for the government to distribute public land to these youth and provide them with training on farming as well as initial resources, but this requires funding. There are reports that the lack of economic prospects is partly why some ex-combatants in Nimba and Grand Geddeh counties are crossing the border to offer their warfare skills to either Guinea or Côte d’Ivoire.

Despite this sombre image, business activities are

slowly picking up in rural communities and in cities. Progress has also been made in other areas, such as security, basic services, restoration of productive capacity and livelihoods, due to the assistance of bilateral donors, financial institutions and specialised organisations. In addition, as soon as security was re-established following disarmament and demobilisation, communities returned to the forms of organising that helped pre-war communities. In their Post War Rapid Social Assessment, the authors report, “the strong culture of community co-operative organization, for agriculture, community self-defense, savings and commerce has survived the war”.⁶ These are promising avenues for community development, still

AFP / TOUCHLINE PHOTO



Former women fighters in Liberia’s civil war, some of them former sex-slaves for the male soldiers, learn to sew at a vocational training centre in Monrovia, as part of a reintegration programme

modest, but a start to build the sense of normalcy and provide some impetus to local economic recovery.

Economic reintegration in Liberia suffers from insufficient funding, which prevents key players from supporting ex-combatants and community initiatives that may provide viable alternatives. The October 2005 elections that led to the victory and inauguration of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, on 16 January 2006, as the first woman president of Liberia could be a blessing or a curse for the future of Liberia. Two scenarios are possible. First, the successful democratic elections and President Sirleaf’s commitment to fight corruption and promote good governance may

encourage the international community to invest more funds in the reconstruction and reintegration process. Second, the electoral success may be interpreted as “mission accomplished” by the international community; thereby diverting the expected and needed support to other competing emergencies and conflicts. The second scenario is disastrous. Given the problems posed by reintegration and the unstable context in Liberia, failure by the international community to strengthen their support to Liberia would jeopardise the country’s reconstruction.

Healing and Social Reintegration

In their reintegration assessment report of March 24, 2004, the Oxfam team found that the majority of respondents expressed the desire to forgive and possibly to forget. However, the report links social acceptance of ex-combatants to their behaviour in the community and also to the type of assistance the community would receive, meaning activities that will help community members and ex-combatants acquire resources and skills to work together and sustain their livelihood.⁷ By the same token, ex-combatants were also hopeful that they would be accepted, provided they behave with respect and contribute to the well-being of the community. There were some concerns for those who were accused of atrocities.

Both ex-combatants and members of the community have come to rely on traditional processes of reconciliation. One example of community mediation and conflict resolution are *moots*, which are well established in Bong county among the Kpelle. *Moots* are informal forms of dispute resolution used to settle marital disputes, boundary disputes, and cases of delinquency. They are chaired or facilitated by chiefs and elders and include prayers, purification rituals, apologies, and forgiveness. A social assessment conducted by the World Bank and UNDP reports that, “Many informants argued (including some of the fighters) that re-admission of ex-combatants to communities should be based on a moot-like process – perhaps combining confessions or some discussion of injustices and atrocities perpetrated, followed by a ritual process enacting cleansing and re-incorporation”.⁸

These community-driven rituals have gained support among ex-combatants and communities in part due to their success in neighbouring Sierra Leone. These rituals and ceremonies are also helpful in starting the healing process. Community cleansing rituals are believed to be particularly crucial for children and girls, as they are meant to drive away “bad spirits”.

On another front, the spectre of corruption, mismanagement and personalisation of public resources that was observed before the war continues today, thus further de-legitimising state institutions at the local level. Fortunately, the mistrust of state institutions is mitigated by the increasing trust people have in local and traditional

leadership structures and the recent elections. There is also a dense network of community associations, particularly in the northern regions. In Bong County, the resurgence of Kuu groups and other associations is reviving community life and its institutions. These community efforts to rebuild new ways of relating and governing, provide implementers of reintegration programmes with the opportunity to support the development of political and social institutions that not only facilitate social cohesion and collective action but also promote democratic governance and accountability. In turn, this community revival creates conditions that facilitate cost-effective delivery for reintegration because it lowers transaction costs that can be extremely high in a post-conflict context; thus making reintegration an attractive option for ex-combatants.

The rapid spread of community radios managed by youth and supported by the local community is another sign of community vibrancy and potential. Nearly every Nimba County community has an amateur community radio station with a signal range of two to seven miles. These stations represent an untapped tool for peace. Some of the community radio areas such as Sacleapea, Yekepa in Nimba country broadcast important UNMIL (United Nations Mission in Liberia) programmes of reconciliation and sensitisation campaigns, prior to disarmament and demobilisation. Combatants and local populations relied on them for information on disarmament and demobilisation. These initiatives reduced the information vacuum in rural areas about the DDDR process and the return of IDPs and refugees.

Social reintegration in Liberia is yielding mixed results. While there are challenges, there are also opportunities in the traditional institutions and community organisations in Liberia. These challenges and opportunities come together to make social reintegration in Liberia a complex yet promising undertaking.

Recommendations and Conclusions

DDR in Liberia reveals different ways through which communities assist in the reintegration of ex-combatants; thus reaffirming the indispensable role of community input during post-conflict reconstruction. But it also highlights current gaps and weaknesses of DDR processes to harness, support and build on community potentials for sustainable peace. Several strategies can be implemented in this regard:

Avoiding a “Stove-pipe” Approach to Reintegration

Reintegration covers various groups with different needs. While most reintegration programmes recognise this, they tend to overlook the fact that different groups of people will share the same host community. It is therefore recommended to design programmes (social and income-generating activities) in a way

that will address individual needs and at the same time strengthen the sense of community and its resilience. One way is to engage all representatives of these various groups, not only agencies in charge, in initial planning phases and in the implementation of activities; devote resources to activities that promote rapprochement between different groups; and engage communities through dialogue in developing and implementing local initiatives of common interests.

Local Participation, Transparency and Accountability

In general, post-war institutions are tainted by suspicion and lack of legitimacy, as in Liberia. This situation poses problems and dilemmas for intervention, including deciding whether to reform institutions and risk upsetting established interest groups and power holders, or maintain the status quo and risk not addressing the root causes of the conflict. Community participation promises to be a solution to these issues. As members of the community become engaged and informed about the issues, and the challenges and resources made available, they develop a sense of responsibility and ownership that deters local authorities' abuses. Community participation should be accompanied by efforts to make local institutions more transparent and accountable. These two notions require political will as well as capacities and skills, which are sometimes lacking. Decades of corruption, favouritism and personification of public resources cannot be wiped away solely by political will. Communities need to be prepared and supported to fulfil their responsibilities and role in the participatory process. Local and traditional authorities also need support in addressing these new expectations and reforms.

Support for Local Reconciliation and Conflict Resolution Processes

Liberia provides concrete examples of how the reintegration of ex-combatants is facilitated through private community initiatives. Such initiatives present planners of DDR processes with a unique opportunity for investing few resources for maximum impact and reconciling ex-combatants with local populations. Both community members and ex-combatants recognise each other through them. These initiatives offer possibilities of rapprochement and build a sense of community by bringing participants into processes of healing, forgiving and forgetting. Some of these community initiatives also tackle conflict prevention and resolution.

Facilitating Access to Land

The issue of access to land is a peculiar one in Liberia where land is not only a contentious issue between ethnic groups, but also a social and inter-generational issue between elders and youth. It is important for the

government to facilitate some access to public land for ex-combatants and other disenfranchised youth and help reform the rather complex land tenure system in Liberia.

Sub-regional Considerations

The Mano River conflict zone of which Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone are a part illustrates how conflict can spill over from one country to another and create instability in an entire region. More than 600 foreign fighters mainly from Guinea and Sierra Leone have been disarmed in Liberia. The reintegration of these foreign fighters raises issues such as their legal status, and their personal security in Liberia and their countries of origin. This extends beyond the competence of a single country. It is important for planners and implementers of DDR to develop comprehensive strategies and allocate resources to address these issues regionally. This requires working in a coordinated way with various peace-keeping missions, governments and local communities.

Conclusion

Reintegration is more than just a process of ex-combatants severing ties with their military lives; it is also a process of strengthening ties with their communities. Several strategies have been recommended, however it should be borne in mind that their implementation is no substitute for a comprehensive and well planned DDR process: reintegration has not succeeded with flawed disarmament and demobilisation processes. ▽

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VETERANS OF PEACE IN POST-CONFLICT SOUTH AFRICA¹

WRITTEN BY **SUSAN E. COOK**

Post-conflict reconstruction in Africa has received a great deal of attention from scholars and policy-makers over the past decade, both because of the proportionally large number of conflicts on the continent, and because of the lessons learned from them about the role of democratisation in post-conflict reconstruction,² the importance of civil society and international organisations in socio-economic restructuring,³ and how different forms of post-conflict justice impact on social reconciliation.⁴

The process of post-conflict reconstruction is usually understood to include:

1. the cessation of hostilities;
2. military reorganisation;
3. political transition; and
4. social and economic reconstruction.⁵

When it comes to the “how” of this, international organisations reached informal consensus in the 1990s on the “democratic reconstruction model”, involving two major components: military restructuring (including the demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants into civilian life, and the formation of a new national army), and the promotion of democracy (usually consisting of a new constitution, formation of political parties, and the holding of elections within two years of the end of hostilities).⁶

South Africa rarely features as an example or case study in discussions of post-conflict reconstruction in Africa. It may be that events in Angola, Mozambique, Somalia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire better illustrate some of the now ‘classic’ problems of post-conflict reconstruction. But South Africa’s exclusion from the ranks of post-conflict countries is also the result of South Africa’s own self-construction as a ‘miracle’ transition, in which the forces of freedom and democracy prevailed over the deeply flawed logics of racism and oppression. Figures like Nelson Mandela, Walter

Sisulu, and Desmond Tutu became national symbols of moral and political heroism that stood not only for South Africa’s triumph, but indeed that of proponents of justice throughout the world. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s framing of a new official version of contemporary South African history cast the liberation struggle in terms of victims and perpetrators, with little room for realities and experiences that fell outside those categories.

In short, the architects of South Africa’s transition to democracy invested considerable energy in portraying the change as a seamless and peaceful one. The emphasis was on the future of the Rainbow Nation, and the problems of history were encouraged to recede from view. Nonetheless, few would deny that South Africa in the early 1990s faced many of the same problems as post-conflict countries elsewhere on the continent. This article focuses on one of the outcomes of South Africa’s effort to construct its transition to democracy as peaceful, negotiated, and transcendent. Specifically, I argue that those who fought in the armed struggle have been symbolically removed from the now-dominant understanding of how we got to where we are as a nation.

The demobilisation of the different armed forces that took part in the conflict between the 1960s and the 1990s has been well documented.⁷ What emerges from these accounts is a picture of a process that failed to identify or effectively address the wide range of needs and realities represented by the different groups of former combatants, including the South African Defence Force (SADF), the Bantustan armies of Transkei, Venda, Bophuthatswana and Ciskei, the African National Congress (ANC’s) Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), and APLA (the armed wing of the Pan African Congress). Even within these groups, there was significant heterogeneity in terms of age, length of service, and the social and emotional wherewithal to re-adapt to civilian life. The financing of once-off demobilisation grants was not well

THE GOVERNMENT’S EFFORTS TO HELP TENS OF THOUSANDS OF DEMOBILISED SOLDIERS TO REINTEGRATE INTO SOCIETY WERE INADEQUATE AT BEST



Many of South Africa's veterans are now in the 'security' business

thought out; the social and political aspects of the formation of a new army, the South African Defence Force (SANDF), left many with the impression that a handful of soldiers from the liberation armies were being incorporated into the SADF; and the services provided to those who were expected to return to civilian life were woefully inadequate, including skills training in the Service Corp and psychiatric services for those with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and other psychological problems.

At the time, some analysts wondered what the repercussions of this sub-optimal demobilisation process would be for South African society. Did the existence of so many angry unemployed men trained in the arts of war constitute a security threat? Would political stability be undermined by those in society who felt bitter towards the ruling party, which, in their minds, had done little to recognise their contribution to the struggle? And what of the project of nation-building and social reconciliation in a young democracy when all war veterans were understood to fall into one of two categories: a handful of heroes and patriots like Chris Hani, and the rest – the walking wounded – depressed

and violent men unable to overcome the traumas of combat and the institutions of war. The case study that follows of one ex-combatant fits into neither category, and therein lies the importance of examining it. Thabo's story suggests a category of men and women whose social and political ideals not only motivated them to leave home and join the struggle, but continue to underlie the civilian projects that they are busy with today.

Thabo N.⁹ is a clean-shaven, muscular, 47-year old man who lives with his wife and children in one of the townships north of Tshwane (Pretoria), South Africa. He wakes up before dawn each day to oversee the shift changes and staff assignments for his employees who guard commercial and residential properties throughout Gauteng. Thabo started his own private security company about five years ago, and has steadily increased his staff and client base to a point where the company nets approximately R3 million per year and employs about 300 people. Unlike other security companies that rely heavily on the skills of former combatants, Thabo's guards are young men in their 20s and 30s recruited from the townships around Pretoria. Very few of them were formally involved in the liberation struggle.

All of them first became involved with Thabo as students of karate. As a fifth-dan black belt, Thabo has trained thousands of students throughout South Africa. Those who advance through the stages of their training and show the necessary strength of mind, body, and spirit, are recruited to train as security guards. Thabo handles his staff with both authority and affection, and strongly believes in the power of personal and professional pride to transform individuals and families who have never known anything but desperation and hopelessness.

Wearing a coat and tie, gold watch, and polished dress shoes, sitting behind the wheel of his new-ish and spectacularly clean BMW, Thabo appears to be permanently on his cellphone, talking to his staff, clients, and associates. As sole shareholder and managing director of his own company, he is the picture of black economic advancement, an advertisement for the entrepreneurial opportunities open to all in the wake of apartheid. Beneath the surface, though, Thabo does his work, heads his family, and lives his life with constant and unsettling reminders of his time “in the bush”: the things he did and did not do during his nearly fifteen years as a soldier and commander in MK. Over lunch in a crowded

a gesture meant to symbolise that they were taking only what they needed to survive, Thabo promised never to eat tomato sauce with his food again for the rest of his life. Twenty years later, he’s never broken that promise.

Thabo’s ideas about equality, respect, and compassion reside somewhere so deep in his consciousness that he doesn’t attribute them to this or that political movement, or this or that period of time. While being interviewed recently by a group of foreign policy-makers interested in programmes that combat inner-city crime and juvenile delinquency (such as teaching young men from the townships self-respect through karate before they learn the security business), Thabo was asked, “Are you a very religious man?” His answer, after a few seconds of thought, was “I’m very cultural.” By which he meant that his commitment to equality and social justice for all South Africans, when he was young as now, derives as much from the lessons he learned from his elders as a child, as from his political education during the struggle.

Thabo, like many others, made a personal and courageous commitment in the 1970s and 1980s to help overthrow a regime that systematically discriminated against those it deemed inferior. He sacrificed his chance

BECAUSE OF THE COUNTRY’S ATTEMPTS TO DOWNPLAY THE VIOLENT NATURE OF THE CONFLICT, AND TO IGNORE THE MESSY AND NOT EASILY NARRATIVISED EXPERIENCES OF THE VARIOUS ARMED FACTIONS, SOUTH AFRICA’S FORMER COMBATANTS REMAIN ESSENTIALLY INVISIBLE

restaurant in Tshwane, Thabo tells me about an operation he conducted in a neighbouring country. He and the soldiers he commanded had been in the bush without food for days, and identified a local farmhouse where they thought they could obtain food and supplies. Thabo describes with “like-yesterday” detail, the expression on the face of the white farmer when he entered the house, sat down with the family, and explained who they were and why there were there. Thabo reassured the farmer that they would not be hurt, but that he and his men were fighting to liberate their country from racist oppressors, and they were very hungry. He told the farmer: “You don’t need to instruct your staff to cook for us; they’re outside with my men, and they’ve already begun preparing our meal.” He said the farmer and his family relaxed a little, and the “operation” proceeded without incident. It was important for Thabo to add that, by the time he left the farmer’s house, the farmer wept (with relief?), and professed support for the ideals of the soldiers. Thabo, in turn, thanked the farmer and his family for allowing them to raid the kitchen and storerooms of the farm. In

to be educated (he never finished high school), his chance to have a carefree and innocent adolescence, and his chance to feel truly relaxed ever again. He gave those things up of his own volition. He left home at 17, joined the underground, and was sent to Russia and North Korea for military training. He rose through the ranks and became a respected commander in MK, leading missions in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, Swaziland, and Namibia, and later serving as a covert operative in Bophuthatswana.

Thabo spent more than four years overseas. When he returned to South Africa in 1990, the ANC was unbanned, and the call came for MK soldiers to lay down their arms. Thabo complied. He had returned to a small family, no job, and no clear idea of what the future held. The people around him in the poverty-stricken urban dumping-grounds of Bophuthatswana were angry, unemployed, and looking for outlets for their frustration. Thabo propagated ideas of self-respect, self-control, and restraint in the interest of a cause. Some heeded his message. Others didn’t.

He independently intervened in gang wars and crime syndicates – to good, if temporary, effect. A hero to many, Thabo still couldn't grasp whether this was the new South Africa he had been fighting for all those years.

These experiences lie very close to the surface as Thabo goes about his daily life in the present. Having learned to withstand extremes of cold and heat, to do without bathing, and to maintain his razor-sharp focus despite being sleep deprived and hungry, he routinely works 20-hour days and seven-day weeks without complaining. He also seeks to instill the same kind of dedication and focus in his employees. His "zero tolerance"

economic battlefield. Cynical about the political path the country has followed, Thabo neither votes nor expresses surprise when political leaders don't live up to their promises. When he runs into former comrades in the course of his work, he is polite but distant. At home, he confides neither in his wife or children about the demons he battles when he closes his eyes. He expresses disappointment in the shallow goals and interests of the consumerist youth culture of South Africa today, but he also acknowledges that the freedoms his children enjoy today are those for which he voluntarily risked his life.

As a middle-aged former combatant trying to make

JUDA NGWENYA / REUTERS / THE BIGGER PICTURE



Former South African President, Nelson Mandela addresses a rally to mark the 40th anniversary of the African National Congress's (ANC) armed wing Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), meaning 'spear of the nation'

attitude towards insubordination, failure to comply with company policies, and any display of deceit or laziness leads to a certain amount of turnover in his company, but there never seems to be a shortage of new recruits.

More soldier than businessman, Thabo gives total attention to the mission at hand, and treats the people around him with impeccable manners and respect, but not a hint of self-disclosure. For him, every friendship contains a seed of betrayal and trust is a risk rarely worth taking. Limited objectives, careful planning, and well-trained cadres; those are his tools for success on the

his way in present day South Africa, Thabo's attitude could be characterised as one of ambivalence – a little disappointed that life hasn't improved more for so many South Africans, but also optimistic that things will get better. His unwavering belief in the possibility of a just, free society, and his desire to inculcate these values in younger generations through his work as a private citizen, is striking. He has few regrets about the decisions he has made, and carries himself with the pride and satisfaction of one who is confident that he has done his best along the way.

Analyses of former combatants in South Africa often



Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) soldiers arrive at a special public hearing of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

emphasise the dire circumstances in which many of these people found themselves, post transition.⁹ And with good reason. The government's efforts to help tens of thousands of demobilised soldiers to reintegrate into society were inadequate at best. But the country's failure to recognize the plight of those who, while functional, are socially, emotionally, and (arguably) economically disadvantaged, is also important to consider.

Former soldiers like Thabo understand the benefits of rigorous physical training, the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions, and the benefits of working patiently and steadily towards one's goals. As such, they are an important source of wisdom and leadership in a country suffering from multiple health crises, economic entitlement, and an instant-gratification consumer culture. And while it is true that the problems of crime and domestic violence in South Africa are not unrelated to the problems of ex-combatants, there are also those, like Thabo, who eschew violence with the passion that only those intimate with death can.

From the perspective of its former combatants, then, South Africa is undeniably a post-conflict country facing many of the challenges usually associated with other African countries. But because of the country's attempts to downplay the violent nature of the conflict, and to ignore the messy and not easily narrativised experiences of the various armed factions, South Africa's former combatants remain essentially invisible. As a result, the insights and ideas of those who have perhaps the deepest appreciation of all for their rights and freedoms are lost to the rest

of us. Isolated and lacking any collective voice, individuals like Thabo are but a faint reminder that the road to freedom in South Africa was a harsh and violent one. ▽

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AFRICAN NATION-BUILDING AND RECONSTRUCTION: LESSONS FROM RWANDA

WRITTEN BY **PAUL NANTULYA**

AFP / TOUCHLINE PHOTO



Rwanda is one of the few African countries that has integrated traditional and modern peace mechanisms practically and holistically. In the early years after genocide, the designers of Rwanda's peace models studied in significant detail the experiences of other countries but no clear solutions emerged. The entrenched patterns of sectarianism and exclusion which culminated in the 1994 genocide had impacted on the country to such an extent that reconciliation strategies and tactics could simply not be borrowed wholesale.

Fatuma Ndagiza, Executive Secretary of the

Above: A woman, charged with murder, appears in front of the population of Runda as part of the traditional community justice system

National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), captured this very well, when she said:

We had to think of fresh, original and unique models and not just copy others blindly. For us, perpetrators and survivors had to continue living



A gacaca committee member addresses a participant during a trial

side by side. If we had resigned ourselves to the conventional way of doing things and forgotten our own rich traditions and heritage of dealing with conflicts, we would have ended up with a rather formalized, legalistic and elite driven mechanism, with little or no relevance at all to the grassroots. That, is not the route we wanted to follow.¹

Gacaca Justice

In the pre-colonial context, *Gacaca* was a traditional dispute resolution mechanism that was used to relieve intergroup tensions. Gacacas were mediated by members of the community known as the *Inyangamugayo* or 'persons of exemplary conduct' who exhibited virtues of courage, honour, justice and truth. To be counted among this special group of people, one had to live according to high moral and ethical standards, and undergo the required training and monitoring by the community for several years. These values and skills would be systematically handed down in each generation.

Today, the *Inyangamugayo* serve a dual role as facilitators of Gacaca trials and cases, and 'persons of integrity', who derive their moral power and legitimacy from the wider society. They are selected by the community on the basis of the following: a clean record of service, leadership and dedication to the community

and adherence to truth, fairness and justice enshrined in the concept of *ubumwe' bw' Abanyarwanda* (unity and togetherness of Rwandans). They can also be removed by communities for abusing their roles. Reintroducing them in a modern context was not difficult because the concept and virtues of the *Inyangamugayo* are deeply entrenched in Rwandan culture. Since time immemorial, they have been part of the fibre that kept Rwandan society together.

In the course of my work with the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation and Rwandan institutions including Gacaca and NURC, I have witnessed and documented several Gacaca trials and interviewed several *Inyangamugayo*. There are 60 505 *Inyangamugayo* currently facilitating 12 101 Gacaca jurisdictions established countrywide. Consistent with the values of service, leadership and honour, the *Inyangamugayo* are not paid. In order to safeguard community ownership over this institution, a law was passed which forbids people working in, or associated with, governmental or judicial organs to serve as *Inyangamugayo*.

The combination of tradition and modernity is evident in the actual cases. At the start of a session, a charge sheet is formally read to defendants, by the *Inyangamugayo*. Through dialogue, they cross-check and re-confirm the charges, spell out the rules of the court

and rectify anomalies. Once this is done, testimonies from defendants and accusers are received, interrogated and captured for the record. Once all sides have signed their testimonies the trials start in earnest by way of open-ended, but facilitated dialogue. Considering that a Gacaca sitting normally has anywhere between 300–400 people, the process is usually long and tedious. Western legal analysts contend that the dialogue process in particular drags on more than is necessary to establish key facts. Those involved in the Gacaca process, however, insist on the importance of unhindered and participatory dialogue in seeking out truth. Charles Mironko, a leading Rwandan anthropologist, had this to say:

Notwithstanding the challenges, this type of justice is not abstract, but very practical. Genocide was committed in broad daylight... no effort was made to hide the crimes... indeed that was part of the genocide strategy. This is why Gacaca trials take place *exactly* where the crimes were allegedly committed. In that way, we build memories from the ground, which are used to create a record of the past. Communities are central in all this... perpetrators, survivors, those seeking forgiveness, onlookers, everybody. Without their active participation and contribution, Gacaca becomes meaningless. We should therefore think about ways in which we can improve and enhance Gacaca instead of dismissing it blindly.²

The rules of the courts apply regardless. At one session, the presiding judge asked one of her fellow judges to leave the bench in a case where a defendant challenged the impartiality of the judge in question. After a brief adjournment, that judge was removed from the case and joined the hearing as a normal participant. This is something that does not happen in classical courts.

The nature and form of the trials differ significantly based on the issues at hand and the social norms of communities. In this sense, Gacaca is a dynamic and evolving process. Once the population takes control, it often shapes the institution in line with local norms, needs and beliefs. The hearings have exposed the inapplicability of the popular thesis of 'ethnic conflict' to the Rwandan situation. Several documented cases involve in-laws, and direct relatives. Others involve perpetrators who killed in some locations and saved lives in others. I was told of a case of a woman survivor

who adopted the person who killed her family members and offered to pay his bride price as a gesture of reconciliation.³ Such stories indicate that the possibilities for reconciliation are available and institutions such as Gacaca are well placed to exploit them.

National Unity and Reconciliation Commission

In 2005, I was privileged to lead an independent evaluation and impact assessment of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), under the auspices of the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation and NURC. My team and I conducted random interviews, focus group discussions, beneficiary workshops, stakeholder meetings and field visits to communities and NURC projects in all provinces. We also randomly interviewed 765 respondents in six regions.

Unlike other post-war reconciliation commissions, the NURC is not modeled on a strict mandate with a limited time-frame. It is designed to stimulate reconciliation at the grassroots level and to gradually transfer ownership of the reconciliation process to communities. It is a non-prosecutorial mechanism which complements the Gacaca courts. Madame Aloisie Inyumba, the former Executive Secretary of NURC, summarised the commission's role when she said:

In our experience, we found out that the people had to come first. The only thing they need is an enabling environment... and once that is in place... they will take up the reconciliation agenda on their own. We wanted to have a structure that would evolve from within communities. For a whole year, we carried out consultations with communities throughout the country, which were very successful. That is when we realized that the people are a resource in themselves. We followed suit, and worked hard to set up programmes based on those consultations.⁴

The NURC has adopted the following tools in its reconciliation and peace-building work:

Ingando

Ingando is taken from the Rwandan verb *Kuganda* that refers to halting normal activities to find solutions to national challenges. In ancient Rwanda, *Ingandos* were first developed by the military. Whenever Rwanda faced disasters (wars, natural calamities, etc), the *Mwami* (King) mobilised and prepared the population through

GACACAS WERE MEDIATED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY KNOWN AS THE *INYANGAMUGAYO* OR 'PERSONS OF EXEMPLARY CONDUCT' WHO EXHIBITED VIRTUES OF COURAGE, HONOUR, JUSTICE AND TRUTH

Ingandos. They were communal retreats where people shared in decisions on war and peace and how Rwanda was governed.

“This is one of the many ancient institutions that Rwandans received undivided, and where people from all shades could actually touch and feel their country,” General Frank Rusagara, the Commandor of the Rwanda Military Academy, told me.⁵

He is one of the architects of the ‘*Rwandanicity*’ concept, which is a philosophy of self-development and enhancement from within, as a tool to propel Rwandans forward on the basis of self-confidence, resilience, local knowledge and historical experience.

In the post-genocide context, the new army revived *Ingandos*. Because they were modeled on the pre-colonial cultural experience, *Ingandos* were easily accepted and understood by communities. The first beneficiaries were the ex-FAR (former Armed Forces of Rwanda), as part of the nation-building and integration programme of the RPA (Rwanda Patriotic Army; renamed Rwanda Defence Forces, or RDF). Next came the ex-combatants and insurgents from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), who had responded to peace moves. Motivated by the army’s success, the NURC formally adopted *Ingandos* as one of its key interventions to bring about community engagement. It entails problem-solving retreats for different categories of people. In the initial years, the programme focused on refugees and demobilised soldiers. It later expanded to include school-going youth and students at secondary and tertiary levels. By 2002, the training was extended to informal traders, and other social groups including survivors, prisoners, community leaders, and people with disabilities.

Today, *Ingandos* are carried out countrywide and most are co-facilitated with communities. At their peak, the programmes bring together 300–400 people for extended sessions lasting between three to five months. Topics are covered under five central themes:

1. analysis of Rwanda’s problems;
2. history of Rwanda;
3. political and socio-economic issues in Rwanda and Africa;
4. rights, obligations and duties; and
5. leadership.

Approximately 3 000 students undergo *Ingando* each year. To cope with the intake, a National *Ingando* Centre was built in Nkumba, Ruhengeri as a permanent facility to house programmes.⁶

Abunzi

Section four Article 159 of the constitution establishes a mediation committee in each sector. The mediation committee members or *Abunzi* are responsible

for mediating conflicts between parties. It is only when the *Abunzi* fail that disputes can be brought before ordinary courts. Each committee comprises 12 residents of every sector who are persons of integrity and acknowledged for their mediation skills. The NURC works through them as part of its peace-building and conflict management programme. It equips them through conflict management courses, technical support and training resources. There are over 800 *Abunzi* active countrywide.

Abakangurambaga

The creation of the *Abakangurambaga* was an innovative strategy of the NURC. They are “peace volunteers” selected from within communities to promote reconciliation and build confidence. They also help communities to solve basic problems, and address wider social conflicts that do not fall within the purview of the *Abunzi*. There are 720 *Abakangurambaga* countrywide. They work voluntarily for the NURC, which provides them with training manuals, reference material and bicycles to facilitate their access to communities. Plans are underway to train more *Abakangurambaga*, as part of the NURC’s local peace network.

Ubudehe as a Tool for Consultation

Ubudehe is a tool to encourage communities to become more involved in their welfare. In ancient times, it brought communities together to support one another in various activities including farming and harvesting. Currently, it has been adapted by formal institutions including the NURC and the Ministry of Local Government to place communities at the center of development planning. The process entails community-based consultations and dialogue on specific issues. Ideas are then taken up through community development committees which form the basis for policy making. The NURC has integrated this approach in all its interventions. In 1999, when it was established, community-based consultations were used to elaborate the programmes of the commission. Since then, the community consulting approach has been used to evaluate programmes and highlight new or emerging issues.

Community-based Reconciliation Associations

The emergence of voluntary and community-based reconciliation associations is an interesting feature of the Rwandan reconciliation model. While they have not been comprehensively documented, there are 135 known associations currently based in communities throughout the country. From the start, the NURC identified poverty as one of the impediments to meaningful reconciliation. The thinking was that if issues of underdevelopment were not addressed, people would not be willing or able to accept reconciliation.

This was aptly captured by former Executive Secretary, Aloisie Inyumba, when she said:

You can't tell peasants about elaborate programmes such as Vision 2020 and so on. You can't even tell them about what will happen in one or two year's time. They won't listen. One time I organized a reconciliation concert... just music... people came and sat outside the stadium because they could not afford the entry fee of 100 francs. We hadn't realized that it was too expensive for them. This is when we

irrespective of their differences. It is striking to find perpetrators and survivors working together in the same associations. One association, known as *Abiyunze*, actively mobilises offenders to build houses for survivors.⁸

NURC and the Gacaca Courts

The NURC's involvement in the Gacaca process occurs at four levels: working with prisoners before they are released to participate in Gacaca (in 2003 alone, 40 000 were released and the programme is ongoing);

AFP / TOUCHLINE PHOTO



A gacaca court session in process in Rukira, Rwanda

realized that for reconciliation to be real, we needed to help communities to address such basic issues like lack of food and water.⁷

Between 1999 and 2005, the NURC provided up to 60 grants to selected associations in their fight against poverty and to strengthen capacities. The thinking behind this was that if people created initiatives together, they would be inclined to defend and nurture them

organising *Ingandos* to prepare prisoners for Gacaca; working with offenders who have been sentenced to community service; and preparing survivors to receive offenders. Where the NURC is not able to intervene, the *Abakangurambaga* respond directly. The community-based reconciliation associations also play a role in this regard. The added value of the NURC is probably best captured by Chief Prosecutor Jean de Dieu Mucyo, when he noted:

THE LESSON TO LEARN IS THAT HYBRID PEACE AND RECONCILIATION MODELS WHICH INTEGRATE CULTURE AND MODERN APPROACHES HOLISTICALLY AND PRACTICALLY CAN BE JUST AS USEFUL (IF NOT MORE) AS STRICTLY FORMAL MECHANISMS

We are working in concert. Every week, my office, the NURC, National Service for Gacaca Courts, and Ministry of Justice meet to exchange notes, coordinate and fill gaps. NURC works with prisoners, at all steps after their release. We value them.⁹

Key Lessons

In the Rwandan model, different aspects of the reconciliation process are handled by different institutions. Truth telling and restorative justice are handled by the Gacaca Courts. The classical courts and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) handle cases involving planners and architects of genocide. The NURC handles community healing, confidence building and reconciliation. Community service programmes to integrate offenders back into society is the responsibility of the Travaux d'intérêt general (TIG). These models complement and facilitate one another.

In other case studies (including South Africa, Chile and Guatemala), post-war reconciliation was handled by non-judicial truth commissions which, although strong on the recovery of truth and memory, fell short of carrying forward the reconciliation process through longer term structures owned and shaped by communities.

"For us, reconciliation is a strategic imperative, and not just the duty of one person or institution. We all do the work of NURC," Hon. Tito Rutaremara, the Ombudsman observes.¹⁰

The potential benefits of popular ownership are captured well by a Burundian journalist, Carine Kaneza, when she notes:

People forget that as early as the 9th century, Rwanda and Burundi were two of the most well organized societies in the Great Lakes. When the early explorers came into contact with us, they found strong and durable political and administrative institutions, standing armies, common social norms, and unified territories. So advanced were our social institutions that the colonizers concluded wrongly that both civilizations could not be African, but European in origin. The problems that this created in my country Burundi, and in Rwanda, are well known. What we must do, is to find in our history, reference points that can unite and embolden us to devise peace models that make sense to us, and not imposed by others. First is to have collective

ownership of the tragedy, and second is to have collective ownership of solutions.¹¹

The lesson to learn is that hybrid peace and reconciliation models which integrate culture and modern approaches holistically and practically can be just as useful (if not more) as strictly formal mechanisms. "Our culture saw us through as a change agent. Positive change did not happen just like that... it had to be caused and it was rooted," comments Joseph Karemera, the former Rwandan Ambassador to South Africa.

In a world where Africans are consistently being knocked off the rails of history, and are yet to be acknowledged for their contribution to world civilisation, Rwandans should be commended for charting a way forward, based on validating and adapting their culture in the spirit of African Renaissance. 🇷🇺

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- 1 Interview with Ms Fatuma Ndingiza, Executive Secretary of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission in Kigali, Rwanda.
- 2 Interview with Dr Charles Mironko in Bujumbura, Burundi.
- 3 Interview with a volunteer at a Gacaca trial in Kanombe, on the outskirts of Kigali.
- 4 Interview with Madame Aloisie Inyumba, former Executive Secretary of NURC and currently a member of the Senate in Kigali, Rwanda.
- 5 It has a state-of-the-art conference room equipped with the latest audio-visual equipment, a modern kitchen and dining facility, spacious recreational grounds, self-contained dormitories, a library and an administration block. Resource persons are drawn from government, the non-governmental sector, international organisations and NURC staff.
- 6 Interview with Gen. Frank Rusagara, Commandant of Rwanda Military Academy in Ruhengeri, Rwanda
- 7 Comment by Madame Aloisie Inyumba, former Executive Secretary of NURC.
- 8 The activities of these associations involve income generation, small business, sensitisation and peace promotion.
- 9 Interview with Jean de Dieu Mucyo, the Chief Prosecutor in Kigali, Rwanda.
- 10 Interview with Hon. Tito Rutaremara, Ombudsman and Former President of the Constitutional and Legal Commission in Kigali, Rwanda.
- 11 Comment made by Ms Carine Kaneza at a regional workshop of experts hosted by IJR in Bujumbura Burundi.



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: IMPLICATIONS FOR POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

WRITTEN BY **INGRID PALMARY**

Introduction

This article draws on research undertaken with Rwandan refugee women living in South Africa to argue that the distinction that is often made between gender-based violence and political violence is a largely artificial one that results in women's marginalisation within post-conflict reconstruction efforts. My aim is to raise a number of questions about how we understand the violence that women suffer in times of war and peace and the possible continuities and changes that these undergo. Issues of gender-based violence have occupied a difficult position within post-conflict reconstruction at least in part because violence against women has typically been rendered domestic in contrast to the conflict of war which is considered political. There is an assumption within asylum legislation that those who are displaced by violence are typically men resulting in laws that, although purporting to be universal, privilege men's wartime experiences.¹

This article draws on two case studies from a broader research project with women from the African Great

Lakes Region who are living in Johannesburg, South Africa. I use this to argue that the distinction made between domestic and political violence tends to define much of the violence that women suffer in times of armed conflict. Rendering these experiences as "domestic" places them outside of the scope of many post-conflict reconstruction activities.

Domestic and Political Violence: A False Distinction

At the heart of the question about how post-conflict reconstruction affects women is a question about how women suffer in times of war – as well as the role they play in it. Understanding this can shape post-conflict interventions that are more gender equitable. One of the most common descriptions that women gave in the

Above: Violence against women – a common phenomenon during conflict – is usually not recognised as a central part of post-conflict resolution efforts

above-mentioned research was of how their position as children of mixed ethnic marriages, or themselves being in such marriages, shaped the violence they experienced. The following case study is a typical example of this:

Case Study 1

M fled to South Africa after she was threatened because she, a Tutsi woman, was married to a Hutu man. Both she and her husband were attacked because it was assumed that he was a supporter of Tutsis, given his marriage to her, and that she was leading him away from other Hutus. In particular, she was concerned for the safety of their children. She said that her children were constantly being harassed because their ethnic identity was in doubt. Her daughter was expelled from school because of her 'mixed' ethnicity. On another occasion someone attempted to abduct her daughter and it was this incident that led the family to finally flee. She described how the propaganda of the war paid particular attention to people in 'mixed' ethnic marriages. She described this saying that: "That's where from '59 a Hutu is the enemy of the Tutsi. That's what they taught me – as a Hutu they are enemies. Like my husband was Hutu. He could kill me with all my children because they've got that blood of the Tutsi. Then as an example, he'll give you a good example and first start with his wife, kill [her]. Then if the children are lying with his wife [kill] all. To show you that this blood, he doesn't need it again."

For many women interviewed the positioning of their children within a 'mixed' marriage was a central reason for their flight. Much of the violence they suffered was because they had married someone of an opposing ethnic group or because they themselves were children from such a marriage. The Hutu nationalist propaganda of the war paid particular attention to people in these kinds of marriages and identified killing a spouse from another ethnic group as the ultimate act of commitment to the conflict.

For example, of the widely promoted Hutu Ten Commandments published in a December issue of the newspaper *Kangura*,² four regulated marriage and sexual relationships across ethnic divisions. They stated that:³

- Every Hutu should know that a Tutsi woman, wherever she is, works for the interest of her Tutsi ethnic group. As a result, we shall consider a traitor any Hutu who: marries a Tutsi woman; befriends a Tutsi woman; employs a Tutsi woman as a secretary or concubine;
- Every Hutu should know that our Hutu daughters

are more suitable and conscientious in their role as woman, wife and mother of the family. Are they not beautiful, good secretaries and more honest?

- Hutu woman, be vigilant and try to bring your husbands, brothers and sons back to reason;
- The Rwandese Armed Forces should be exclusively Hutu. The experience of the October [1990] war has taught us a lesson. No member of the military shall marry a Tutsi.

Tutsi women were socially positioned at the permeable boundary between the two ethnic groups, which accounts for the particular focus on them.⁴ In addition, these 'commandments' indicate that women were given particular duties in monitoring and regulating men's sexual behaviour, in addition to their own. This is evident in the direct address to women that they return their men to reason in the fourth 'commandment'. In this way, sexual transgressions of this sort, and the resulting violence within families, were a central basis of women's persecution. This is equally evident in the following case study:

Case Study 2

K is a Tutsi woman who was about to be married to a Hutu man. When the war broke out they fled together, but were soon separated. She spent two months in the forests of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) during which time the child she was breastfeeding passed away from starvation. At this point she decided to return home. After returning home, her family tried to force her to marry another Tutsi man who was very senior in the military, claiming that he was an important person and was "of the same blood as her". They insisted on this marriage even after this man raped her. As a result of the rape she left Rwanda and fled to South Africa to find her fiancé. She has been unable to have any further contact with her family.

Each of these case studies indicates a context where the violence that women suffer could be defined as domestic violence. However, in each case it is clear that the nature of the violence they have suffered is rooted in the conflict and shaped by it. That the violence took place within the family does not negate the fact that it was motivated by the ethnic conflict. These case studies indicate that gendered sexual relations are a central aspect of armed conflict. However, this has often been marginalised in a way that considers women as disengaged from war. Far from seeing this kind of violence as a central part of conflict, it is often assumed that the role of women in conflict is to support men's political engagements:

ISSUES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE HAVE OCCUPIED A DIFFICULT POSITION WITHIN POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AT LEAST IN PART BECAUSE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN HAS TYPICALLY BEEN RENDERED DOMESTIC IN CONTRAST TO THE CONFLICT OF WAR WHICH IS CONSIDERED POLITICAL

These apparently ethnic wars are, in a sense, also gender wars. The communal power these political movements, armed with guns, seek to establish or defend is (among other things) gender power, the regimes they seek to install are (among other things) gender regimes. As well as defining a relation between peoples and land, they shape a certain relation between women and men. It is a relation of male dominance, in some cases frankly patriarchal. It is constituted at best in a refusal to challenge the existing balance of power enforced by male violence, at worst in an essentialist discourse that reasserts a supposedly natural order and legitimates violence.⁵

Many authors on the Rwandan genocide have noted that marriage across ethnic groups was common.⁶ However, most have not paid attention to how this shaped the violence that women suffered and the specific gendered ways in which they were targeted through the wartime propaganda. For most authors, it is simply stated that Rwanda is a patrilineal society and children take the ethnic identity of their fathers. The Rwandan identity cards⁷ stated the ethnic identity of the adult person carrying them under the photograph with space on the opposite page for the names of all children. This would, bureaucratically, work to ensure that the system of ethnic difference could be sustained with children taking the ethnic identity of their fathers. Indeed, for some women, this was equally a source of distress. For example, a Tutsi woman describes how she tried to explain to her daughter that although she was a Tutsi, her daughter was a Hutu because of her father's Hutu identity. "She said that she doesn't understand. I said to her, 'You know you're a Hutu and I'm a Tutsi'. She said, 'No mum! I can't believe it, no. The Hutus kill'...."

Patrilineal practices such as these serve a central function in ensuring that people belong clearly to one group or another thereby reinforcing the notion that there are two distinct groups, Hutus and Tutsis, to which every person belongs without ambiguity. However, in spite of these bureaucratic and social structures that work to sustain the belief in 'pure' ethnicity, the extent to which Tutsi women married to Hutu men or 'mixed' ethnicity children were persecuted suggests that this is far more complex and needs to be explored further to understand violence against women in this conflict.

Implications for Post-Conflict Reconstruction

Although there has been significant progress in the last decade in ensuring that rape, in particular, and violence against women more generally is recognised as a central part of war, this has not often translated into post-conflict reconstruction efforts. Nor has this always resulted in a challenge to the notion that some rape is political and some is criminal or domestic. In Truth Commissions, women have been in the minority of those that testify and have tended to testify about the actions of male family members. For example, in spite of widespread rape during the South African conflict very few cases of rape were brought before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and women considered the violence they suffered as secondary to the violence men suffered.⁸ Furthermore, violence within the family, as is evidenced in the above case studies, is almost never reported and is typically seen as different from the violence of war. It is, at least in part, for this reason that it is possible for a country to be considered post-conflict even if the levels of rape and violence against women remain as high as they were during the war.⁹

Moments of transition to democracy offer unique opportunities for issues of gender equality to be profiled and incorporated into the often massive policy and legislative changes taking place. However, this is often a complex and contested process. For example, in Rwanda although representation of women in senior levels of government is one of the highest in the world, this does not necessarily change the lived experiences of women. Indeed, in post-conflict societies there is often a call for a return to tradition and values and a concern for how families have broken down during the war. This can easily become a call for entrenching and legitimising gender inequality in the name of peace. In times of war, women often move out of the spheres to which they are socially confined and take on new, typically masculine roles in society, the workplace and their communities. Periods of political transition, as much as they may offer opportunities for gender justice, are also often met with the return to a previous (gender unequal) way of life.

Similarly, processes created for post-conflict justice have often not accommodated women's needs. For example, supporters of Rwanda's *Gacaca* process have argued that it is useful precisely because it utilises 'traditional' mechanisms of justice. Although this may be true, such traditional mechanisms of justice have often

excluded women's participation and seldom made decisions that are in women's favour. Thus, there is a risk of over-romanticising 'tradition' in ways that reduces women's opportunities for participation in post-conflict reconstruction activities and undermines their right to justice.

Finally, this debate raises questions about the nature of post-conflict reparations for women. Although some reparations programmes have included attention to gender-based violence, there have been a number of challenges raised for how we understand reparation.



GETTY IMAGES / TOUCHLINE PHOTO

Women play a significant role in maintaining and developing their communities in times of war and peace

For example, reparations programmes have seldom accounted for the consequences of violence against women that are not directly linked to the specific harm such as the stigma of rape or the inability to remarry – a significant source of economic security for women in many contexts. In addition, there have been times where lobbying for the inclusion of gender-based violence into reparations programmes has itself drawn on and reinforced gender stereotypes, for example, where rape has been included as a crime against the community (rather than the woman) or where emphasis on the stigma that women suffer after rape risks reinforcing this stigma rather than challenging it. Finally, reparations programmes have often not accommodated situations where women have been targeted because of the actions

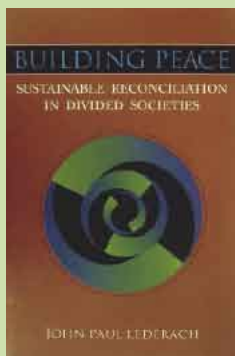
or political involvements of male relatives, or where the violence they suffer is a result of seemingly domestic activities such as cooking for troops or (as in the case mentioned previously) refusing to marry one's rapist.

Conclusion

How we understand what happens to women in times of armed conflict, and the way that we conceptualise violence against women shapes efforts for their incorporation into post-conflict reconstruction plans. The division that is created between domestic and political violence can function to render much of women's wartime experiences 'domestic' and reduce their engagements with, and in, post-conflict reconstruction efforts. This discussion has focused on those activities that tend to take place in the immediate period following conflict such as criminal tribunals and truth commissions. However, the conceptualisation of violence against women in times of conflict can have long-lasting effects as broader political transition enables or forecloses opportunities for gender justice. ▽

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BUILDING PEACE: SUSTAINABLE RECONCILIATION IN DIVIDED SOCIETIES

Author **John Paul Lederach**
 Year **1997**
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 ISBN **1-878379-73-9**
 Pages **197**

John Paul Lederach, a seminal figure in the academic and practical field of conflict resolution, provides foundational and important ideas and strategies for peace-building and reconciliation in his book, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. The innovative ideas and practical suggestions for building peace in deeply divided societies are timeless and applicable across various conflict contexts and cultures. The book emphasises the need to move beyond traditional diplomacy with top-level leaders and short-term objectives to holistic and integrated approaches emphasising multiple levels of actors, long-term objectives, and the healing of relationships and people. An integrated framework for sustained peace-building and reconciliation is thus provided.

Building Peace is divided into two parts. Part one is an introduction to understanding contemporary armed conflict including defining current conflicts as identity-based and locating them more internally (intra-state) than internationally, with diffuse power and weakened central authority characteristics. Conflicts are protracted because they become lodged in long-standing relationships and are characterised by social-psychological perceptions, emotions, and subjective and cultural experiences. International and traditional diplomacy alone is deemed inadequate for dealing with the root causes of conflicts as such interventions involve authority figures and empowers few people only, largely encourages military capacities, solutions are sought within a framework of compromise, and the focus tends to be on substantive issues of territory and governance only and not necessarily on building relationships and addressing the socio-psychological issues that render conflicts intractable.

Part two, the substantive part of the book, therefore addresses the need for a comprehensive, integrated, and strategic approach to the transformation of deep-rooted conflicts. As such a conceptual framework for peace-building

and sustained reconciliation, composed of the interdependent components of structure, process, reconciliation, resources and coordination is presented and explained in detail.

Reconciliation: Building relationships, with the focus on emotional and psychological aspects of conflict, is central to conflict transformation. Lederach introduces the concept of “reconciliation-as-encounter,” that is, the need to provide space and opportunity for encounters between conflicting parties at various levels to articulate past pain (acknowledgement) and envision an interdependent (shared) future. The underlying challenges of reconciliation, that is, the paradoxes of truth, mercy, peace, and justice are also explained. In deeply divided societies, reconciliation is often hampered by the tensions of promoting truth around past actions while also encouraging healing through merciful amnesties and forgiveness, as well as encouraging peace and opportunities for all (including perpetrators) while also implementing mechanisms for justice and impunity. These paradoxes of reconciliation define the practical challenges many post-conflict countries experience as they attempt to move forward peacefully *and* address past human rights abuses and injustices. *Building Peace* therefore maintains that reconciliation occurs in the space where these tensions are validated, for example, through truth and reconciliation commissions (TRC’s). Dialogue is also important for embracing paradoxes and achieving reconciliation.

Structure: Effective leadership is a crucial aspect of conflict transformation and reconciliation. Top, middle and grassroots levels of leadership are congruent with top, middle and grassroots approaches for interventions.

1. Top-level leadership (high status, power, authority) = Top-down approach: goal is negotiated settlement and cease-fire.
2. Middle-level leadership (civil society) = Middle-out approach: located to build peace infrastructure,

problem-solving workshops, trainings and peace commissions.

3. Grassroots-level leadership (the masses) = Bottom-up approach: pressure from the masses, more indigenous and traditional interventions in communities.

Middle level leaders are ideally situated as they are connected to people at the top and grassroots but not necessarily constrained by either. Leaders at this level are more suited to execute the co-ordination and implementation of holistic peace-building plans and programmes. The middle level approach to interventions is therefore also considered ideal for peace-building and reconciliation.

Process: Transforming conflicts and addressing the root causes must be concerned with the long-term nature and progression of conflicts. Conflicts are not static but expressive, dynamic, dialectical and progress through stages from unpeaceful to peaceful. Contemporary conflicts tend to be locked in a cycle of confrontation, negotiations and ceasefires, which are not enough to sustain reconciliation. Conflict transformation must consist of multiple interventions, roles, and functions depending on the stage of conflict being addressed. The book lists and explains a number of these roles and functions. Peace-building as process is therefore based on conflict as progression (ceasefires or negotiations are not enough for peace).

Integration: An integrated framework for building peace and sustained reconciliation needs to reconceptualise time frames for planning and action, and link 'structure' with 'process.' There needs to be a long-term view of conflict progression, which recognises the distinction between the time-frame needed for responding to humanitarian disasters and that needed for building peace. Any immediate intervention must be connected to movement toward the longer term goal of sustainable peace. In order to transform conflicts short-term efforts at resolving conflicts (cease-fires) must be informed by long-term vision and implications (sustained peace). The aim is not to find quick-fixes that manage conflict temporarily, but to heal and rebuild relationships in the long term. Peace-building must therefore be based on 'decade-thinking approaches' that link the immediate crisis experience with a better future in which such crises can be prevented. In an integrated peace-building infrastructure:

1. Social change is designed in time-units of decades and crisis management is linked with future visions.
2. Crisis issues are connected to systemic roots so that conflict resolution approaches are anchored within relationships and subsystems.
3. The integrative potential of middle-range leaders is recognised.

Resources and Coordination: Financial support is essential for effective peace-building, but people, organisations and cultural mechanisms must also be recognised as resources. It is important to empower the people and practices within the conflict context. In addition, mechanisms to improve coordination, communication and collaboration between people, organisations and interventions, internally and externally, must be a part of the peace-building plan.

In the final chapters Lederach provides useful tools for conflict resolution practitioners by applying the peace-building framework to conflict resolution trainings and providing information on the evaluation of peace-building programmes. Training is a process of strategic capacity and relationship building. The transformative approach suggests that it is less about the transfer of information than it is about creating a dynamic process for people to come together and dialogue. Useful techniques for training, such as dilemma framing and reflection-in-action are discussed. Evaluation is an intrinsic part of peace-building and practical tips for designing appropriate peace-building evaluations are provided.

Although *Building Peace* draws on multiple models and the diagrams presented can seem complex and overwhelming, the theoretical and foundational ideas discussed are grounded in practice and have significant application for the transformation of contemporary conflicts. Indeed the book concludes with the application of these foundational peace-building ideas to four conflict case-studies in Africa: Sudan, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Somalia. Transforming conflicts in deeply divided societies, through peace-building and sustained reconciliation, is the ultimate goal of conflict analyses and resolution programmes. In *Building Peace* Lederach provides foundational ideas and innovative practical tips for achieving this. 🐘

CONFLICT TRENDS

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