



ELECTORAL INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

ELECTORAL SYSTEM REFORM,
DEMOCRACY
AND STABILITY
IN THE SADC REGION:
A Comparative Analysis



KHABELE MATLOSA



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2nd Floor, The Atrium
41 Stanley Avenue, Auckland Park
Johannesburg, South Africa 2196
P O Box 740
Auckland Park
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South Africa
Tel: 27 11 482 5495
Fax: 27 11 482 6163
Email: eisa@eisa.org.za
www.eisa.org.za

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EISA is a non-partisan organisation which seeks to promote democratic principles, free and fair elections, a strong civil society and good governance at all levels of Southern African society.

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PREFACE

The Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) has undertaken various initiatives, which have been aimed at facilitating the nurturing and consolidation of democratic governance in the SADC region. One such initiative is the first phase of the democratic consolidation research programme. Covering almost all the SADC countries, this research programme focused on the following key issues:

- Elections
- Good governance
- Gender and democracy
- Determinants of democratic consolidation
- Electoral systems
- Electoral administration
- Political parties
- Conflict and elections
- Democratic assistance

This first phase of the project has generated an enormous amount of stock of knowledge on the dynamics of democratic governance in the region over and above the intricacies of elections *per se*. It has demonstrated beyond any shadow of doubt that indeed there is more to democratic governance than just elections and electioneering. In a word, with hindsight, it abundantly clear to us today that an election, in and of itself, does not necessarily amount to democratic culture and practice. Put somewhat differently, an election is not tantamount to a democracy, in the strictest sense of the term. Various other determinants are critical too including, *inter alia*, multipartyism, constitutional engineering and the rule of law, gender inclusivity in the governance process, electoral system designs and reforms, transparent and accountable management of national affairs including elections themselves, responsive and responsible conduct by political parties, constructive management of various types of conflict and the form and content of external assistance for democracy.

All these issues are explored in a fairly rigorous and refreshing fashion in this first monograph to come out of this programme, although a deliberate

focus is given to electoral engineering in the form of reviews and reforms required in the SADC region in order for the selected countries to achieve the difficult goal of democratic consolidation. This first monograph will be followed in due course by various others that are country-specific exploring a broad array of challenges for democratic consolidation in the SADC region.

I would like, on behalf of EISA, to acknowledge, with gratitude, the invaluable financial support that EISA received from the Norwegian Embassy through NORAD and Open Society for Southern Africa (OSISA) for this first phase of the programme and without which this monograph and subsequent others would not have been possible. I would also like to thank the authors for their enormous contributions in this project. All said and done, the views and opinions expressed in this and subsequent monographs do not necessarily represent an official position of EISA. Thus any possible factual, methodological or analytic errors in this and subsequent monographs rest squarely on the shoulders of the authors in their own capacities as responsible academics and researchers.

Denis Kadima
Executive Director-EISA
Johannesburg

INTRODUCTION

The critical challenge for economic development and political stability in the Southern African region today, surely centres on democratic governance. Much of the existing literature that has propelled democracy discourse on the African continent as a whole and in Southern Africa in particular, attests unequivocally to this stark reality (Huntington, 1991; Bratton & van de Walle, 1997; Ake, 1996; Hyslop, 1999; Ake, 2000; UNDP, 2002; Luckham et al, 2003). Although the entire world has witnessed impressive progress towards democratic governance following the collapse of the ideological bipolarity of the Cold War era on a global scale, and the demise of apartheid in Southern Africa specifically, enormous challenges for the nurturing and consolidation of democracy still persist. Even within United Nations (UN) circles, the issue of democratic governance is increasingly seen as a key pillar for sustainable human development (UNDP, 2002).

The phenomenal development towards democratic governance – which the renowned American political scientist Samuel Huntington (1991) prefers to term the Third Wave – has in the recent past expressed itself in commitments by African governments to embrace democratic rule through various continental and regional initiatives. At the continental level, the newly established African Union (AU), which was formally launched in Durban, South Africa in July 2002, has openly committed member states to democratic governance, which will be monitored from time to time through the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) (Cilliers, 2002; Matlosa, 2003a). Inextricably linked to this is the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) – a continental socio-economic and political revival plan pioneered by presidents Thabo Mbeki (South Africa), Olusegun Obasanjo (Nigeria), Abdoulaye Wade (Senegal) and Abdelaziz Bouteflika (Algeria). NEPAD was unanimously adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Summit in Lusaka, Zambia in 2001 and was further embraced wholesale by the AU Summit in South Africa in 2002 (NEPAD, 2001; Matlosa, 2002; Hope, 2002; Anyang' Nyong'o et al, 2002). The NEPAD project clearly states that the key prerequisites for sustainable development in Africa revolve around four initiatives, namely:

- peace and security;
- democracy and political governance;

- economic management and corporate governance; and
- sub-regional and regional development (NEPAD, 2001).

At the regional level, Southern African states have made impressive strides towards democratic governance since the early 1990s, with Zambia (1991) and Lesotho (1993) leading the way through their epoch-making elections. In the case of Zambia, a *de jure* one-party system was replaced by a multiparty system, while in Lesotho a military junta was dislodged by a democratic order (SAPES/UNDP/SADC, 1998).

By investigating developments in this continental and regional context, we are better positioned to appreciate the strides towards democratic governance made by South African Development Community (SADC) member states thus far. It also enables us to identify key challenges that still bedevil these states' political systems. This study focuses specifically on Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Tanzania, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

1.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND REPORT OUTLINE

This research paper begins by acknowledging the positive developments that SADC member states have made, especially since the early 1990s, towards democratic governance. This has ensured a commendable political transition away from mono-party rule, one-person regimes and military juntas towards multiparty governance marked, in the main, by the holding of regular elections to put in place fairly legitimate and credible governments.

Although, the significance of the current political transition cannot be questioned or dismissed as inconsequential, what is still contested within academic and policy discourses in the SADC region, is whether these developments amount to democratic consolidation or if they are just some ephemeral political phenomenon that could easily be reversed, plunging the region back into the authoritarian rule of yesteryear. Put somewhat differently, the key question is whether current political liberalisation (read liberal democracy) is synonymous with the kind of democratic governance that is suitable for the SADC region (see Matlosa, 2003b).

The political liberalisation under way in a majority of states in the region is fundamentally steeped in and steered towards western-type liberal

democracy. This has indeed become part of the political conditionality of aid by western multilateral and bilateral donors as well as by powerful international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, upon whom these states so overwhelmingly depend for their economic survival.

This research report aims at discovering possible linkages and interfaces between electoral systems, democracy and political stability in the SADC region, with a special focus on Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Tanzania, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

The methodology used in this study revolves around a comparative analysis of existing electoral models in the seven selected countries and deliberately avoids a case study approach. The comparative approach is a very useful methodology in political science discourse as it portrays both the distinctiveness and similarities of phenomena. As such, this approach reveals many more insights in terms of contemporary political development in the SADC region. Given resource constraints and time limitations, not all SADC countries could be covered in this study. Be that as it may, key observations and findings made here resonate strongly in almost all the SADC states. Indeed, these findings can be replicated in the national settings of the other SADC states, even if they have not formed a direct part of the study.

Comparative analysis is a specific approach that falls within the rubric of a branch of political science better known as comparative politics. According to Jones and Olson, this field of political enquiry:

is of great interest and importance to political scientists. The comparative perspective allows us to develop more general theories about politics and government (remember that one goal of scientific knowledge is generalisation). It also helps us understand the multitude of differences in the world community. Finally, the questions posed in comparative politics are fundamental to the study of politics. Why are some political systems free and democratic while others tyrannise and torture their own people? In short, the field provides us an opportunity

to scientifically examine the fundamental political question 'which government is best (or at least better)?' (1996:132).

It is clear from this brief description why our preferred approach in this study is that of a comparative analysis.

The discussion begins with a fairly comprehensive survey of electoral democracy in the region with special reference to the selected countries referred to above. Section two, which essentially represents the anchor of the paper, chronicles the workings of various electoral systems or models in place in these countries and their impact on, or implications for, democratic governance and political stability of the states concerned and of the region as a whole. The third section turns to an examination of efforts under way in these countries to institute some reform measures to their electoral systems in order to strive towards democratic consolidation and political stability. The fourth section compares the main electoral models used in the SADC region – namely first-past-the-post and proportional representation. Section five provides lessons learnt from the electoral reform processes in Lesotho and Mauritius and revisits our major findings. The sixth and final section proposes some policy recommendations for electoral system reform in the SADC region. It is to the state of electoral democracy in the SADC region that the next section now turns.

2.0 ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY IN THE SADC REGION

A plethora of literature exists validating the argument that the African continent has been undergoing a major democratic wave since the 1990s (Ake, 1996; Hyslop, 1999; Reynolds, 1999; Ake, 2000; UNDP, 2002; Bratton & van de Walle, 1997; Huntington, 1991; Bujra & Adejumobi, 2002; Bujra & Buthelezi, 2002). According to Bujra and Buthelezi, democracy denotes the:

ability of the citizens in society or participants in an organisation to effectively take part in the choice of their representatives or leadership and to effectively participate in the decisions made on issues that affect them or society in general. And as a system, democracy should be biased in favour of social justice and equality of access to national resources (2002:1).

Democratic governance therefore ought to have the following general hallmarks:

- openness;
- representativeness;
- accountability;
- transparency;
- equitable distribution of resources;
- respect and observance of human rights;
- constitutional government;
- rule of law and separation of powers;
- politics of consensus rather than coercion; and
- regular free and credible multiparty elections.

The general observation that can be deduced from the existing literature on the democratisation process in Africa to date, is that this process has been vital in re-orienting African political systems away from authoritarian rule towards multiparty and competitive political governance, in particular by abandoning military dictatorship and thus deliberately steering politics from bullets (coercion and sanctions) to ballots (consensus and persuasion). This trend has also been critical in terms of progressively shifting politics from that based on personality cults towards politics predicated upon institutions. The personality cult culture has been largely responsible for poor leadership through either one-party or one-person rule in most states on the continent, whereby the ruling party was seen as being synonymous with the leader and vice-versa. The institutionalisation of politics reverses personalisation in that it shifts the political realm from individual leaders towards key institutions, despite not necessarily diminishing the key role of leaders.

From the continental, through regional initiatives and to the micro-level of a nation state, evidence abounds in suggesting that the democratisation process is now firmly rooted in Africa, even if democratic deficits still exist, thereby threatening consolidation of the process (See Luckham et al, 2003). When in 2001 the OAU was transformed into a new continental structure known as the AU (and inaugurated a year later in Durban, South Africa), issues of continental political integration were elevated to top priority and placed on a par with imperatives for economic integration. For this reason and many

others, African leaders for the first time recognised the reality that without political integration, economic integration will always remain a chimera, continuously eluding even the most prudent policy initiatives. The first major step taken in the recent past by the OAU towards addressing democratic governance issues in a forthright manner was in 1993 when it held the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA), initiated by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, in Kampala, Uganda. In turn, the OAU agreed to and adopted the Kampala Declaration, which, among other things, committed members to political stability predicated upon democratisation, good governance and popular participation.

This proved to be the major continental initiative that confronted the governance problems facing Africa head-on since the onset of democratisation in the early 1990s. Indeed, the stability calabash focused attention specifically on democratisation, good governance and popular participation in Africa. Be that as it may, agreeing and signing/ratifying declarations such as this is one issue, while implementation of their recommendations is quite another. This explains in part why almost a decade later, a similar initiative was begun, ostensibly having no clear synergy with the Kampala Declaration. This is rather ironic as NEPAD, which was adopted by the OAU in Lusaka, Zambia in 2001 and endorsed wholesale by the AU in 2002, encompasses three main initiatives and ignores the Kampala Declaration. These initiatives are:

- the Millennium Partnership for African Recovery Plan (MAP) developed by the South African President, Thabo Mbeki;
- the OMEGA Plan for Africa developed by the Senegalese President, Abdoulaye Wade; and
- the Compact for African Recovery: Operationalising the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Plan developed by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (Hope, 2002; Anyang' Nyong'o et al, 2002; Matlosa, 2002).

Although the NEPAD document of 2001 makes no reference to, and seems to lack synergy with, the CSSDCA, subsequent official documentation recognises the dire need for synergy between the two initiatives. Like the

CSSDCA, the NEPAD project also commits African states to democratisation and good governance – which is perceived as one of the key pillars for economic progress. Among other things, the NEPAD democracy and political governance initiative is planned to be anchored on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), which is yet to be operationalised (Cilliers, 2002; Matlosa, 2002; Cilliers, 2003).

All these commitments and protocols for strengthening democratic governance in Africa have been concretised by the adoption of a political culture encompassing the holding of regular multiparty elections by African states. In fact, to give meaning to both the Declaration on Democracy and the APRM outlined above, the AOU/AU adopted a Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa during the 2002 Inaugural Summit of the AU. Complementary to the Democracy Declaration, the Democratic Election Declaration of the AU commits member states to the following:

- Democratic elections are the basis of authority of any representative government;
- Regular elections constitute a key element of the democratisation process and therefore are essential ingredients for good governance, the rule of law, and the maintenance and promotion of peace, security, stability and development;
- The holding of democratic elections is an important dimension in conflict prevention, management and resolution;
- Democratic elections should be conducted:
 - freely and fairly;
 - under democratic constitutions and in compliance with supportive legal instruments;
 - under a system of separation of powers that ensures in particular, the independence of the judiciary;
 - at regular intervals, as provided in national constitutions; and
 - by impartial, all-inclusive, competent and accountable electoral institutions staffed by well-trained personnel and equipped with adequate logistics (OAU/AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, July 2002).

It is against this setting that the paper discusses political changes in the seven selected SADC countries. It aims at assessing progress made thus far towards democratisation but specifically, it scrutinises the electoral model used in each in relation to both political representation and stability.

Three of the seven countries under scrutiny here attained their political independence in the 1960s, namely Lesotho, Tanzania and Swaziland. Mozambique gained independence in 1974, Angola in 1975, Zimbabwe in 1980 and South Africa in 1994. Since independence, some of these countries have adopted a liberal democracy, with varying characteristics.

Lesotho and Swaziland adopted a dynastic form of governance with the royal oligarchy in both countries playing a key role in the governance process. In the case of Lesotho a constitutional monarchy was adopted with the king as head of state while the prime minister is head of government. These two offices have historically developed rather uncomfortable – and at times acrimonious – relationships, which have in turn tended to destabilise the political system, much to the detriment of the country's fledgling democracy. Between 1970 and 1986, Lesotho switched its political system from a fairly embryonic liberal democracy to a *de facto* one-party state presided over by the then ruling Basotho National Party (BNP). It was characterised by repressive rule perpetrated by a highly politicised security establishment. Ironically (maybe predictably though), the security establishment that had been a key political base for the BNP's authoritarian rule was the same one that dislodged the BNP in 1986 ushering in, as it were, a military junta that further entrenched Lesotho's authoritarian governance. The eight-year military interregnum in Lesotho ended in 1993 when the country returned to its post-colonial roots of liberal democracy. This historic development was cemented by an epochal election in the same year, which catapulted the main opposition, the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP), into state power almost unopposed – the election result itself being a clear reflection of the country's skewed first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral model. Lesotho's political system has, since then, been marked by an enfeebled and fragile democratic arrangement, threatened from time to time by violent and non-violent conflict. Key organs of the state and political parties have locked horns in a fierce contestation over control of state power between and amongst themselves, culminating in a major conflict that almost precipitated a civil

war following the contested election of 1998. It was against this backdrop of grave political conflict and its concomitant instability, that in 2002, the country reformed its electoral model and adopted the mixed-member proportional (MMP) system, as will be argued later on.

Despite the positive developments regarding electoral reform in Lesotho and the consequent inclusiveness and broad political representation in the National Assembly, political tension is still rife in the small mountain kingdom, although this is unlikely to trigger a violent conflict of the 1998 proportions. First, it will take quite some time to heal the nation of the scars left by past violent conflict. As such, inter-party mistrust is still acute and the official opposition, the BNP, is yet to play the constructive politics of an opposition, while the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) is still to facilitate that development by allowing the BNP to assume this role through politics of accommodation. Second, smaller opposition parties are yet to stamp their political authority and make a meaningful contribution through their participation in the National Assembly. Given that they did not make a quantitative impact on the electoral contest, the challenge facing them is to make a qualitative impact on the law-making process. Third and finally, given the political diversification of the National Assembly combined with the traditional tendency for ruling parties to recruit Cabinet members from their own political circles, it has become increasingly difficult for the Lesotho prime minister to recruit directly from the National Assembly. Consequently, the prime minister has been compelled oft-times to look for relevant skills outside the National Assembly. Such recruitment requires that these individuals be appointed into the Senate – the upper house – and thereafter, appointed as ministers. This trend, if unchecked, could destabilise the ruling party as the elected MPs in parliament would soon become disenchanted if eclipsed by appointed, albeit capable, ministers who have no specific constituency to represent.

In Swaziland, a political system predicated upon executive or absolute monarchy was preferred by the dominant traditional leadership. Swaziland's political system is therefore the most bifurcated of all the countries under study in that the 'traditional' and the 'modern' state systems (to use modernisationist concepts), are clearly perceived not only as distinct and disarticulated, but the former is considered dominant and hegemonic over

the latter. Since the early 1970s, the dominant traditional elite in Swaziland agitated for the banning of all political parties and this *status quo* remains to date. Even the elections that are held regularly in Swaziland do not involve multiparty contestation for the control of state power, as no party candidates are allowed. Swaziland is therefore one of the few SADC countries that has not embraced multiparty electoral democracy and its governance system remains one of the most authoritarian in the region. The incessant political pressure that has been brought to bear on the Swazi leadership to steer the political system towards a multiparty electoral democracy has thus far borne little fruit.

Angola and Mozambique share a similar colonial history, both having been former Portuguese colonies until the mid-1970s. Both countries experienced protracted violent conflict following their hard-won independence. This conflict also bore the birthmarks of the Cold War on a global scale, and apartheid destabilisation regionally. In both Angola and Mozambique, a Marxist ideology of scientific socialism – which propounded the idea of the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ – was embraced, and this in part facilitated the adoption of a *de jure* one-party rule. The process of political liberalisation commenced in both countries during the late 1980s and early 1990s, moving them towards multiparty governance based on liberal democracy. While in Mozambique this transformation process was triggered by a successful political settlement of the violent conflict that had pitted the ruling Frelimo (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*) and the rebel movement Renamo (*Resistência Nacional Moçambicana*) against each other through the 1992 General Peace Agreement signed in Rome, the reverse was true of Angola. In Angola, the 1990 Bicesse Accords did not ensure a sustainable peace, hence the dismal failure of the 1992 election to nurture the country’s fragile peace. Angola was immediately plunged into yet another violent conflict as the rebel movement, Unita (*União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola*), contested the election outcome which had delivered the ruling MPLA (*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*) as victor.

Mozambique has therefore been able to make an impressive transition from war to peace and democratic governance, while Angola was not that fortunate. Mozambique consolidated its new-found peace with two rounds of successful elections in 1994 and 1999. The country is currently preparing

for a third round of general elections in 2004, in which the current president, Joachim Chissano, will not stand as head of state and has already appointed his successor (Lundin, 2003). This element surely adds more value to Mozambique's emerging democratic governance as good practice to be learnt and emulated by other SADC member states. In the case of Angola, no other election has taken place since the ill-fated 1992 election. Fortunately, the war has ended following the killing of Unita leader Jonas Savimbi, in early 2002. Much progress is under way to nurture the newfound peace and a general election is also planned for 2004, in which the current head of state, Eduardo dos Santos, will also not contest the presidency.

One interesting aspect emerges from these two cases: whereas the proportional representation (PR) electoral system has helped a great deal in assuring a stable and peaceful political system in Mozambique, this system has not had the same effect in Angola. As will be discussed later, this reality suggests that, although an electoral system can help a country consolidate its democratic governance and attain a fair degree of political stability, other factors have to be taken into consideration.

Tanzania and Zimbabwe also exhibit certain distinctive similarities in terms of their political history since independence. This may not be surprising considering that both countries share a fairly similar colonial history. Tanzania achieved its independence much earlier (1964) than Zimbabwe (1980), but both countries adopted a *de jure* one-party system following their independence. In both cases the arguments for, and justification of, the one-party regimes were predicated upon some form of socialism, in much the same way as in Angola and Mozambique. Tanzania and Zimbabwe also reformed their political systems in the early 1990s to entrench multiparty electoral democracy by opening up the political marketplace for contestation of state power by a multiplicity of political forces other than the ruling party alone. For the first time since their independence, the ruling Tanu in Tanzania and the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union- Popular Front (Zanu-PF) in Zimbabwe therefore began to face stiff competition over the control of state power from the opposition parties that emerged as part of the political liberalisation process. In this vein, the hegemonic sway over state power that had been assured by the one-party regime of yesteryear, is certainly under severe threat in Tanzania and Zimbabwe. It must be accepted, however,

that, in part due to the weakness and fragmentation of opposition parties' in both countries, a dominant party system still assures the ruling parties hegemony over state power.

It is worth noting that both countries operate the FPTP electoral model. Tanzania has used this system since independence, while Zimbabwe used the PR model during its 1980 election but then switched to a FPTP system in the late 1980s, for reasons that have not become clear to this author. Given the deficiencies of the FPTP electoral model, the liberal democracy that exists in both countries has been a fairly fragile and conflict-ridden one. This democratic deficit has come to the fore during general elections in both countries. In all fairness, however, Zimbabwe seems to be in more dire straits in terms of deepening and nurturing its fledgling liberal democracy than Tanzania, and indeed all the countries under review in this study, bar Swaziland. The irony of the Zimbabwe political crisis is that whereas almost all political actors agreed on the need for electoral system reform, proposals for a change of the system to PR have been rejected, as discussed later on. Fortunately, part of the public debate currently aimed at finding a lasting solution to Zimbabwe's political crisis, is seriously grappling with electoral system reform measures and imperatives. What still remains, though, is a firm commitment from the leadership of the major political parties including Zanu-PF and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), to commit to inter-party dialogue and negotiations for an amicable resolution of Zimbabwe's continuously worsening political impasse, following the initiatives by Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Bakili Muluzi of Malawi and Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria early in 2003. However, by mid-June 2003 – following the mass action and stay-away organised by the opposition MDC, which in turn, led to the arrest of opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai and other top opposition politicians – prospects for constructive inter-party dialogue to resolve the political impasse in Zimbabwe are bleak.

Of all the countries in this comparative survey, South Africa appears to be rather distinct. This country went through the most authoritarian form of governance during its long years of the apartheid order, which were marked by political repression and racial bigotry that was condemned by the international community at large. Following a protracted liberation struggle, a political settlement was achieved in 1994. This was followed by the general

election of the same year, which ushered in a government of national unity (GNU). The manner in which the transitional government was conceived and the system used to elect members of parliament (MPs) were all hammered out during the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa), which began on 20 December 1991 (Lodge, 2003). The negotiations for selecting South Africa's electoral model therefore went through an elaborate inter-party process involving key political stakeholders in that country. The transitional GNU was an extremely useful foundation for peace, stability and reconciliation in a war-torn society upon which apartheid had wreaked much havoc. As in the case of Mozambique, South Africa adopted the PR electoral model and since its historic election of 1994, has held a second round of successful elections in 1999. Following that election, the GNU model of governance was jettisoned as the African National Congress (ANC) entrenched its political hegemony over other political contestants. A third round of general elections in South Africa is planned for 2004. All indications are that the ANC is still likely to win the election, given its dominant position in the political system. However, the PR system ensures that broader representation of parties exists in the legislature despite the unquestionable dominance of the ANC. A setback for the PR system in South Africa is, however, the recent and thorny issue of floor-crossing by elected MPs.

The PR system does not usually lend itself to floor-crossing, which is a basic tenet of FPTP. However, in a bid to resolve the dilemma of the centralisation of power in the party and the lack of freedom by MPs – which are inherent features of the PR system – the South African government allowed a constitutional amendment to facilitate crossing of the floor. If it is not well managed, this innovation may destabilise the South African electoral system, leading to the possible fragmentation of political parties and thereby further weakening the legislature. There is, however, ongoing debate in South Africa regarding possibilities for electoral reform that could lead to the adoption of an MMP electoral model. Whereas public debate on possible reforms to the electoral system in South Africa constitutes a healthy development for democracy, it is important to emphasise that it is in the interest of South Africa's new-found peace and stability that the country retains the PR system, given the political heterogeneity of its society and the reality that post-conflict reconciliation is still not firmly consolidated.

Having surveyed the record of these seven countries in terms of electoral democracy, a few observations are in order:

- All the countries, except Swaziland, have embraced liberal democracy since the early 1990s.
- Two of the countries have adopted a dynastic form of governance, namely Lesotho (constitutional monarchy) and Swaziland (executive monarchy).
- Prior to the 1990s, some of them adopted either *de facto* (Lesotho) or *de jure* (Angola, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zimbabwe) one-party governance systems; the only extreme case of authoritarian rule was in Lesotho, which experienced military rule between 1986 and 1993.
- Despite the varying electoral systems operated by these countries, the one common denominator to their electoral democracy is the all-pervasive trend of an entrenched dominant party system which, although not synonymous with a one-party state, does ensure the continued hegemony of ruling parties and constrains open political competition.
- Only Lesotho has successfully reformed its electoral model, moving away from the deficient FPTP system towards MMP. Interesting public debate on electoral reform is currently occurring in almost all these countries.

The next section turns the spotlight on the issue of electoral reform.

3.0 ELECTORAL SYSTEMS, GOVERNANCE AND POLITICAL STABILITY

Undoubtedly, elections play a critical role in the nurturing and consolidation of democratic governance in Africa as a whole, and in Southern Africa in particular (see Lodge and Pottie, 2002). This is because elections allow citizens to use their own choices and voices to appoint both local and national leaders to run state affairs on their behalf. According to Jackson and Jackson, the key functions of elections in entrenching democratic governance are that they:

- provide a routine mechanism for recruiting and selecting individuals who will occupy seats in representative institutions;
- provide for orderly succession of governments;

- provide a periodic opportunity for people to review government's record, assess its mandate and either renew the mandate or replace that government with an alternative one;
- provide an elected government with a moral title to rule, or what is also referred to as legitimacy locally;
- provide international legitimacy for the elected government in the arena of foreign policy and diplomacy;
- act as agents of political socialisation and political integration, providing a unifying focus for the country for nation-building purposes; and
- allow periodic opportunity for smaller parties and independent candidates to air their political views and canvass their programmes and manifestos (1997:366).

Table 1 depicts the current trends in the holding of regular multiparty elections in the SADC region.

Table 1: SADC elections calendar

COUNTRY	DATE OF LAST PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION	DATE OF NEXT PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION	NATURE OF LEGISLATURE	RULING PARTY
Angola	1992	2006	Unicameral	MPLA
Botswana	1999	2004	Bicameral	BDP
DR Congo	1993	2006	to be operational in 2003	Trans. Gvt
Lesotho	2002	2007	Bicameral	LCD
Malawi	1999	2004	Unicameral	UDF
Mauritius	2000	2005	Unicameral	MMS & MSM
Mozambique	1999	2004	Unicameral	Frelimo
Namibia	1999	2004	Bicameral	Swapo
Seychelles	2003	2006	Unicameral	SPPF
South Africa	1999	2004	Bicameral	ANC
Swaziland	2000	2003	Bicameral	Exec. Monarch
Tanzania	2000	2005	Unicameral	CCM
Zambia	2001	2006	Unicameral	MMD
Zimbabwe	2000	2005	Unicameral	Zanu-PF

Source: SAPES Trust Databank

KEY: **MPLA**: Movement for the Popular Liberation of Angola; **BDP**: Botswana Democratic Party; **LCD**: Lesotho Congress for Democracy; **UDF**: United Democratic Front; **MMM**: Mauritian Militant Movement; **MSM**: Militant Socialist Movement; **Frelimo**: Front for the Liberation of Mozambique; **Swapo**: South West Africa People's Organisation; **SPPF**: Seychelles Peoples' Progressive Party; **ANC**: African National Congress; **CCM**: Chama Cha Mapinduzi; **MMD**: Movement for Multi-Party Democracy; **Zanu-PF**: Zimbabwe African National Union Popular Front.

Their critical importance notwithstanding, the most important value of elections and their outcome lies in the electoral system adopted by each country. While elections basically refer to a process of selecting local and national leaders on a periodic basis defined in a national constitution, an electoral system refers to the method of selecting these leaders and translating votes into parliamentary seats. According to Reynolds and Reilly:

electoral systems translate the votes cast in a general election into seats won by parties and candidates. The key variables are the electoral formula used (i.e. whether the system is majoritarian or proportional, what mathematical formula is used to calculate the seat allocation) and the district magnitude (not how many voters live in a district, but how many members of parliament that district elects) (2002:7).

An electoral system encompasses procedures, rules and regulations for the electorate to exercise their right to vote and determines how elected MPs occupy their allocated seats in the legislature. The procedures, rules and regulations governing elections are commonly defined by both national constitutions and specific electoral laws. The administrative obligations and management of elections are the responsibility of specific public institutions tasked for that, either as government departments (as in Swaziland) or as independent electoral commissions (as in Lesotho).

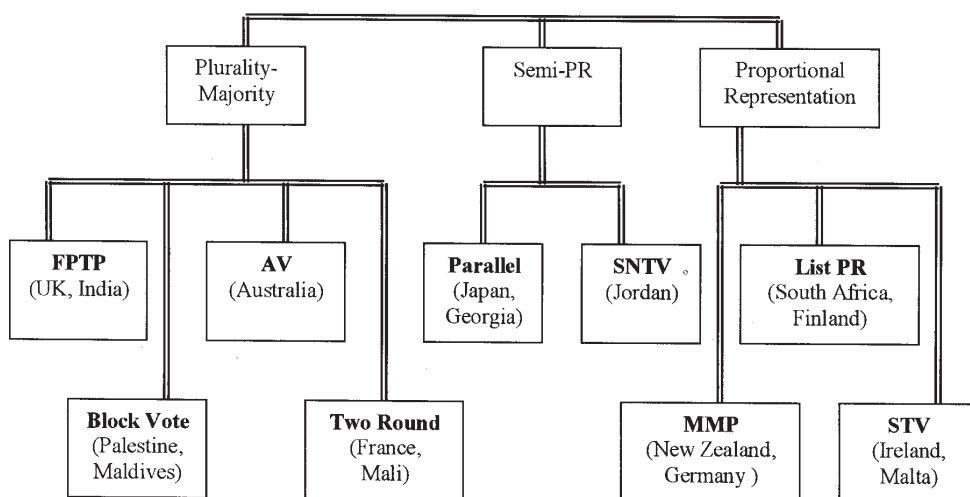
There are many electoral systems throughout the world and there is little consensus as to which is best for democratic governance and political stability. What is interesting to note, however, is that despite the centrality of an electoral system to the choice of a government, few countries make deliberate decisions to select a model that best suits their particular conditions and contexts. Thus, 'often the choice is essentially accidental, the result of an unusual combination of circumstances, of a passing trend, or of a quirk of history, with the impact of colonialism and the effect of influential neighbours often especially strong' (Reynolds & Reilly, 1997:1). As Jackson and Jackson aptly observe 'each political system offers certain benefits and disadvantages in terms of the representation of different groups in society' (1997: 371). Reynolds and Reilly advise appropriately that all countries should endeavour to review and deliberately design electoral systems that suit their own

conditions with a view to deepening democratic governance. In doing so, argue Reynolds and Reilly, it is advisable that eight key criteria are used to guide the process, namely:

- Ensuring a representative parliament.
- Making elections accessible and meaningful.
- Providing incentives for conciliation.
- Facilitating stable and efficient government.
- Holding the government and representatives accountable.
- Encouraging 'cross-cutting' political parties.
- Promoting a parliamentary opposition.
- Cost and administrative capacity (2002:9-13).

Although it is widely accepted that there are many electoral models throughout the world, all having their own distinctive advantages and disadvantages for democratic governance, experts are divided on exactly how to classify these electoral systems into composite categories or clusters. For instance, Reynolds and Reilly classify electoral systems into three categories, namely: plurality-majority; semi-proportional representation; and proportional representation systems. Within each of these there are various types of systems with further permutations among them (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Electoral system families



Source: Reynolds & Reilly, 2002.

Key: FPTP: First-past-the-post; AV: Alternative vote; SNTV: Single non-transferable vote; PR: Proportional representation; MMP: Mixed-member proportional; STV: Single transferable vote.

Table 2: Types of electoral systems and representation

Electoral System	Constituency representation	Party representation
Single-Member Plurality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains traditional link between representative and constituents Representatives often elected on a minority of total votes ('wasted vote' thesis) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distortion of votes:seats ratio Minor parties disadvantaged unless support is regionally concentrated Discourages multiplication of parties; tendency to two-party system; one party, dominant party system
Single-Member Majoritarian (a) Alternative Vote (AV) (b) Second Ballot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both maintain traditional link between representative and constituents In both cases representatives usually elected by a majority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distortion of votes:seats ratio 'Wasted vote' thesis does not apply; small parties survive even if unsuccessful Tendency toward multiparty system
Proportional Representation (PR) (a) Party List (b) Single Transferable Vote (STV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual representatives usually owe election more to party than to voters Representatives forced to compete for 'first preference' votes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximate congruence between vote shares and seat allocations Minor parties usually gain 'fair' representation; easy entry for new parties Tendency toward multiparty systems
Mixed Plurality/PR = Mixed Member Proportionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains traditional link between representative and constituents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximate congruence between vote shares and seat allocation Minor parties usually gain 'fair' representation

Source: Jackson & Jackson 1997.

For their part, Jackson and Jackson provide a slightly different classification of electoral systems that identifies four categories, namely: single-member plurality (SMP); single-member majoritarian (SMM); proportional representation (PR); and mixed-member proportionality (MMP) systems. The essence of each of these systems is summed up in Table 2, highlighting their distinctiveness in terms of constituency representation and party representation.

Table 3 illustrates the different electoral models used in the SADC region.

Table 3: Electoral system, size of legislature and nature of representation

COUNTRY	ELECTORAL SYSTEM	SIZE OF LEGISLATIVE	NO. RULING PARTY SEATS	% RULING PARTY SEATS	APPOINTED SEATS
Angola	PR	220	129	53.7	0
Botswana	FPTP	47	33	54.2	7
DR Congo	FPTP	210	–	–	–
Lesotho	MMP	120	79	66.0	0
Malawi	FPTP	192	93	47.3	0
Mauritius	Mixed	66	54	51.7	4
Mozambique	PR	250	133	53.0	0
Namibia	PR	104	55	76.1	6
Seychelles	Mixed	34	30	61.7	0
South Africa	PR	400	266	66.4	0
Swaziland	FPTP	85	–	–	30
Tanzania	FPTP	274	244	89.1	42
Zambia	FPTP	158	69	46.0	8
Zimbabwe	FPTP	150	63	53.0	30

Source: SAPES Trust Data Bank

As mentioned earlier, the electoral systems adopted by Southern African states are not a product of public debate and broadly based internal political consensus. Electoral systems in the region were ‘generally hardly ever debated and carefully chosen on the basis of consensus among political players and the population at large’ (Molutsi, 1999: 9-10). Independent Southern African states have simply inherited these systems from their colonial rulers together with other constitutional frameworks (Matlosa, 1999). It is therefore not surprising that of the 14 SADC states, seven – namely Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Malawi, Swaziland,

Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe – operate the FPTP system, given that Britain was a dominant colonial power in the region. Those SADC countries that have made a deliberate effort to adopt an electoral system of their own choice involving internal popular consultations include Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa, which have adopted PR, while Lesotho, Mauritius and Seychelles operate some hybrid of FPTP and PR.

Distinctions between FPTP and PR as dominant electoral systems in Southern Africa are worth considering. The next section focuses on these distinctions and locates the countries under scrutiny within either FPTP or PR models.

4.0 A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SINGLE-MEMBER PLURALITY AND PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SYSTEMS

4.1 THE FIRST-PAST-THE-POST SYSTEM

The FPTP or SMP system is the simplest of the electoral systems in the world. It is also the most commonly used electoral model, drawing from the traditions of liberal democracy in the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. Of the 52 states in Africa, 18 use the FPTP electoral system. In terms of our study, those countries using FPTP are Tanzania, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

The principal tenets of the FPTP system are many and varied. First, a country is divided into relatively equal constituencies from which only one representative is chosen to occupy a parliamentary seat on behalf of that constituency. It is as a result of this tenet that FPTP is reputed for ensuring accountability of the MP to his/her constituency. This is one of its major strengths *vis-à-vis* other electoral systems. Second, candidates contesting election in constituencies stand in their own right as individuals and not as political parties, even if their candidature is endorsed by their own parties. This feature of FPTP is often not understood by politicians, and has led to serious problems, especially during primary elections, emanating from conflict between constituencies and party leadership on choice of candidates. This usually results in intra-party squabbles, faction-fighting and, at times, even the rupture of parties into fragmented splinter groups (witness this problem in Lesotho [1998] and Zimbabwe [2000]). Disgruntled party faithfuls have had to stand as independent candidates while in some instances, parties

have made a ruling that they will not place candidates in certain constituencies because disagreements have not been resolved, even by the courts of law. Third, this electoral system allows for independent candidates to contest elections in their own right. Fourth, the winner of an election contest in any constituency may secure a simple plurality of votes and not necessarily the majority of votes. This leads to winners by minority votes both at the constituency level and at the national level. Both the candidates and parties that endorse candidates do not need an absolute majority of votes to form a government. This situation leads to the all-pervasive problem of ‘wasted votes’ whereby a considerable proportion of votes does not form part of the calculation for the election outcome. The 2001 parliamentary election in Zambia is a recent and vivid demonstration of a minority government brought about by the FPTP system. Table 4 depicts a situation in which the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) won the election on a paltry 40%. Surely if a government wins an election on less than 50% of total valid votes, this becomes a pyrrhic victory and amounts to disenfranchisement and wasted votes.

Table 4: Zambia parliamentary election results 2001

PARTY	NO. OF VOTES	% OF VOTES	NO. OF SEATS	% OF SEATS
Agenda for Zambia (AZ)	2 832	0.0	0	0.0
Democratic Party (DP)	115	0.0	0	0.0
Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD)	272 817	9.0	13	8.2
Heritage Party (HP)	132 311	3.0	4	2.5
LPF	175	0.0	0	0.0
Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD)	490 680	43.7	62	40.0
National Christian Coalition (NCC)	35 632	0.0	0	0.0
National Leadership for Development (NLD)	3 155	0.0	0	0.0
NP	1 228	0.1	0	0.0
Patriotic Front (PF)	49 362	1.0	1	0.6
Social Democratic Party (SDP)	809	0.0	0	0.0
United Party for National Development (UPND)	416 236	33.0	47	30.0
United National Independence Party (UNIP)	185 535	8.0	12	7.5
Zambia Alliance for Progress (ZAP)	3 963	0.0	0	0.0
Zambia Progressive Party (ZPP)	19	0.0	0	0.0
Zambia Republican Party (ZRP)	97 010	1.0	2	1.3
Independents	59 335	1.0	1	0.6
Total		100.0	159	100.0

Source: Electoral Institute of Southern Africa

For instance, Lesotho's 1998 and Botswana's 1999 election outcomes ignored the choice of almost 40% and 46% respectively due to this system. Furthermore, this situation has undermined legitimacy of governments in the region leading to major conflicts, as the Lesotho case clearly demonstrates. The 1965 pre-independence election in Lesotho delivered a marginal victory for the BNP, which won the election race on a minority vote of about 42% of the total valid votes – it was no wonder that the BNP government suffered a severe legitimacy crisis thereafter. The party was defeated by the opposition BCP in the subsequent election of 1970 in which the BCP won 50% of the total valid votes. However, the ruling BNP annulled the election, declared a state of emergency and institutionalised authoritarian rule from 1970 to 1986, when it was dislodged from power by the military.

Fifth, given the very nature of this system, FPTP tends to unduly advantage dominant parties either leading to a one-party / dominant party system or a two-party system (duopoly). In the case of the dominant party scenario, witness for instance how the BDP has managed to stamp its political hegemony through this system in Botswana, yet the country has not been subjected to major political conflicts. Table 5 below gives the election results in Botswana between 1965 and 1999.

Table 5: Botswana parliamentary election results: 1965-1999

Party	1965	1969	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999
BDP	28	24	27	29	29	31	27	33
BPP	3	3	2	1	1	0	0	0
BIP	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
BNF	-	3	2	2	4	3	13	6
BPU	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
BCP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
BAM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total	31	31	32	32	34	34	40	40

Source: Molomo, 2000

Three important observations are worth noting from this data. The first is that since the first election to date, the BDP has entrenched its political hegemony over the Botswana polity through some form of a *de facto* one-

party system. Second, representation of parties in the Botswana National Assembly is certainly not broadly inclusive and this also undermines oppositional politics. Third, the unfettered political hegemony of the ruling BDP and the marginalisation of opposition parties tends to trigger feelings of bitterness on the part of opposition politicians and a lack of confidence in the system, which in the case of Lesotho has also resulted in overt violent conflicts.

Despite the fact that the FPTP electoral system in Botswana has not really led to open violent political conflicts, it has ensured and entrenched the dominant party system in a way that excludes and marginalises other key actors in the political system. In this manner, the foundations of Botswana's world-acclaimed liberal democracy still remain shaky. This explains in part Molomo's critique of Botswana's electoral model that:

there are growing concerns in Botswana that while the FPTP electoral system has consolidated electoral competition in the country, it has in many respects denied the electorate the chance to shape their political future... Democracy is ... about ensuring that electoral outcomes reflect the will of the people. The FPTP electoral system has fared poorly in this regard (Molomo, 2000: 109).

It is on the basis of FPTP deficiencies that observers, including Molomo, have raised profound arguments for Botswana to reform its electoral system. According to Molomo, 'what is desirable is the formulation of an electoral model that provides for an effective link between MPs and their constituencies and also one that allocates seats in proportion to the popular vote' (2000: 118). His suggestion for an alternative electoral model is the adoption of the MMP electoral system akin to that recently adopted in Lesotho. For Botswana, this could mean that the current 40 constituencies are retained and contested on the basis of FPTP to keep the accountability element, with the proportionality element then addressed by the introduction of, perhaps, 20 more seats allocated on the basis of the party poll of the popular vote.

This system would address both issues of linking MPs to particular constituencies and constituting a representative Parliament' (Molomo, 2000: 118).

Table 6: Election results in Lesotho: 1965–2002

YEAR	MAIN PARTIES	NO. OF VOTES	% OF VOTES	NO. OF SEATS	% OF SEATS
1965	BNP	108 162	41.6	31	51.6
	BCP	103 050	39.7	25	41.7
	MFP	42 837	16.5	4	6.7
Total		259 825	100.0	60	100.0
1970	BCP	152 907	49.8	36	60.0
(election annulled)	BNP	120 686	42.2	23	38.3
	MFP	7 650	7.3	1	1.7
Total		285 257	100.0	60	100.0
1993	BCP	398 355	74.7	65	100.0
	BNP	120 686	22.6	0	0.0
	MFP	7 650	1.4	0	0.0
Total		532 978	100.0	65	100.0
1998	LCD	355 049	60.7	79	98.7
	BNP	143 073	24.5	1	1.3
	BCP	61 793	10.5	0	0.0
	MFP	7 460	1.3	0	0.0
		582 740	100.0	80	100.0
2002	LCD	304 316	54.8	77	65.3
	BNP	124 234	22.4	21	17.8
	BAC	16 095	2.9	3	2.5
	BCP	14 584	2.7	3	2.5
	LPC	32 046	5.8	5	4.2
	NIP	30 346	5.5	5	4.2
	LWP	7 788	1.4	1	0.8
	MFP	6 890	1.2	1	0.8
	PFD	6 330	1.1	1	0.8
	NPP	3 985	0.7	1	0.8
Total		554 386	100.0	118	100.0

Source: Matlosa, 2003b

In the same way as in Botswana, the FPTP system has ensured a *de facto* one-party system in Lesotho, as Table 6 above depicts. More importantly, however, is the fact that unlike in Botswana where the one-party hegemony has been

sustained and reproduced under conditions of political stability, in Lesotho the reverse was the case until the electoral reform of 2002. The difference between Lesotho and Botswana in terms of political stability, despite a common electoral system, surely has to do with other factors, principally resource endowment, political culture and institutionalisation of governance. All three factors have stood Botswana in good stead and has nurtured its liberal democracy. In the case of Lesotho, lack of resources, political intolerance and personalisation of governance have reinforced violent conflict.

As stated, Table 6 above demonstrates how the FPTP system can lead to a one-party parliament (particularly the 1993 elections outcome), disenfranchising a considerable number of voters with adverse effects for democratisation and political stability. Although the conflicts that engulfed Lesotho after the 1993 and 1998 election emanated from a multiplicity of factors, the electoral system has played a part in this instability. As a result, the government and the Interim Political Authority (IPA) agreed to reform the electoral model, shifting towards an MMP system. It is worth noting that the reform of Lesotho's electoral system, like that of South Africa, involved a variety of key political parties. Unlike the South African situation, the Lesotho development was mediated by an external broker – South Africa. Besides political parties, the various other stakeholders that participated in the reform exercise included NGOs, academics and the Church. This author contributed directly in the debate on Lesotho's electoral reform and was one of the proponents for the adoption of MMP during a conference organised by the IPA and sponsored by the UNDP in early 2001.

The FPTP system is conventionally regarded as critical for ensuring political stability as it does not lend itself to coalition governments. However, this model has been identified as one of the factors behind different types of violent and non-violent conflict, as seen in Lesotho, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania although, as discussed above, it has not triggered conflicts of such magnitude in Botswana.

The most interesting outcome of FPTP in the region to date, is the ushering in of a possible two-party (duopoly) system scenario in the recent general election in Zimbabwe (see Table 7).

Table 7: Zimbabwe parliamentary election results, 2000

PARTY/ REPRESENTATION	NO. OF VOTES	% OF VOTES	NO. OF SEATS	% OF SEATS
ZANU (PF)	1 205 844		62	51.7
MDC	1 171 167		57	47.5
Zanu-Ndonga	15 776		1	0.8
Other	114 186		0	0.0
Total	2 507 973	100.0	120	100.0

Source: Electoral Institute of Southern Africa

Of the total 120 elected parliamentary seats, the ruling Zanu-PF won a simple majority of 62 seats (about 49% of the total valid votes) while the main opposition, the MDC, secured 57 seats (about 46% of the total valid votes). Zanu-Ndonga came third with only one seat and less than 1% of the total valid votes. Only time will tell whether Zimbabwe will evolve into a duopoly system, as is seemingly suggested by this outcome. Since the 2000 election, however, many by-elections have been held in urban and rural constituencies and these have been won by Zanu-PF, thereby reducing the number of MDC seats to about 52 – a development that has the potential of giving Zanu-PF a two-thirds majority in the legislature, thereby vesting it with power to amend the constitution on its own. The challenge for Zanu-PF as a dominant and hegemonic party is to play the politics of accommodation, thus allowing room for divergent opinion, even that which is highly critical of its own policies within the framework of multipartism. The major challenge for the MDC is to prove beyond the election that it is a viable, vibrant and sustainable opposition party able to engage the dominant party constructively within the framework of politics of consensus. Both parties will play a crucial role in either making or breaking the seemingly emergent two-party system in Zimbabwe, and from which the region could learn significant lessons. However, prospects for a vibrant two-party system in Zimbabwe look rather remote given the profound political polarisation of that country's social fabric.

Sixth, FPTP is also known for its marginalisation of smaller parties as it entrenches the hegemony of either one or two dominant parties. This feature has implications for the inclusivity and representativity of the legislature in its law-making and decision-making functions. It is generally accepted that the more inclusive and the more representative the governance system, the

more legitimacy will a government draw from the electorate. It is, in part, due to this system that opposition parties are generally weak, ineffective and fragmented in countries using FPTP, reinforcing either the one-party or dominant party situations. Equally important here is the critique that FPTP does not increase gender equality and women's participation in the political process (Molokomme, 2000). Tables 10 and 11 demonstrate this stark reality.

4.2 LIST-PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION (PR) SYSTEM

PR is relatively more complex than FPTP. It draws its inspiration from the traditions of social democracies. Countries that have adopted this system include, *inter alia*, Denmark and Sweden. Although the system has multiple variants, that commonly used is the party-list. In Southern Africa, only Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa use this variant of PR.

PR has a number of tenets and features with implications for the election outcome, democratisation and political stability. First, the whole country is considered as one single constituency for the election, hence there is no need for the delimitation of election boundaries. Rather than being a constituency-based system, it is an opinion-based electoral system. Put simply, voters' choice is not restricted and determined by geographically confined electoral zones, but rather it is driven by their opinions/inclinations regarding the ideologies and manifestoes of contesting parties.

Second, candidates do not contest elections as individuals but as party candidates appearing on a predetermined list. This explains why in the Southern African context, the PR system does not provide room for independent candidates to contest elections, unlike in the case of FPTP. Voters also do not elect individuals but political parties. The party list of candidates is 'usually equivalent to the number of seats to be filled' (Asmal & de Ville, 1994: 6). As Jackson and Jackson observe 'essentially, ~ in all party list systems the election is primarily to ensure that the legislature reflects the relative popularity of the parties: individual candidates are a secondary concern' (1999: 373).

This links to the third feature, namely, that after the election, MPs are accountable to the party rather than to voters. PR is therefore often criticised for its inability to ensure accountability of MPs to the electorate, while

subjecting them to the dictates of the party leadership. The winner is determined by a calculation of total proportion of votes of each party relative to the overall valid votes cast. Using a threshold for qualification of parties to enter parliament (e.g. 0.5% in South Africa), qualifying parties are allotted parliamentary seats in equal proportion to their electoral strengths.

Fourth, unlike FPTP, PR is reputed to encourage more inclusive and fairly representative mechanisms of governance. PR lends itself easily to coalition governments. Whereas coalition governments, or governments of national unity, could be a recipe for political instability, if well managed they could prove useful in building politics of consensus and compromise, as the Mozambican and South African experiences clearly show. The inclusivity of the Mozambican electoral system can be demonstrated by the nature of the election outcomes in 1999, as Table 8 illustrates.

Table 8: Mozambique's election results, 1999

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION			
PARTY	CANDIDATE	TOTAL VOTES WON	% OF TOTAL VOTES WON
Frelimo	Chissano	2 338 333	52.3
Renamo	Dhlakama	2 133 655	47.7
Total		4 471 988	100.0
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION			
PARTY/ COALITION	TOTAL VOTES WON	% OF TOTAL VOTES	PARLIAMENTARY SEATS
Frelimo	2 005 703	48.53	133
Renamo	1 603 811	38.81	117
Other	532 789	12.66	–
Total	4 132 303	100.00	250

Source: SAPES Trust Data Bank

In this way, the PR system has been found to be extremely useful as a conflict resolution mechanism, especially for countries emerging from violent conflict, such as Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa (Matlosa 2001).

Witness for instance, the enormous contribution made by the inclusive and broadly representative PR system in helping the South African political transition by ushering in a GNU following the 1994 election, and the subsequent nurturing and consolidation of peace, reconciliation and political stability through the second successful 1999 election. Although various other factors are, of course, at play in terms of South Africa's stable democracy, there is no doubt that PR has played its part in the remarkable progress made by South Africa thus far in the management of the most protracted armed conflict in Africa and in deepening its democratic governance. Table 9 illustrates the inclusivity and representativity of the PR system in South Africa by depicting the outcome of the 1999 election.

Table 9: South Africa's election results, 1999

PARTY	TOTAL VOTES WON	% OF TOTAL VALID VOTES	PARLIAMENTARY SEATS	% OF SEATS
African Christian Democratic Party	228 975	1.4	6	1.5
African National Congress	10 601 330	66.4	266	66.5
Afrikaner EenheidsBeweging	46 292	0.3	1	0.3
Azanian People's Organisation	27 257	0.2	1	0.3
Democratic Party	1 527 337	9.6	38	9.5
Federal Alliance	86 704	0.5	2	0.5
Inkatha Freedom Party	1 371 477	8.6	34	8.5
Minority Front	48 277	0.3	1	0.3
New National Party	1 098 215	6.9	28	7.0
Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania	113 125	0.7	3	0.8
The Government by the People Green Party	9 193	0.06	0	0.0
The Socialist Party of Azania	9 062	0.06	0	0.0
United Christian Democratic Party	125 280	0.8	3	0.8
United Democratic Movement	546 790	3.4	14	3.5
Vryheidsfront / Freedom Front	127 217	0.8	3	0.8
Abolition of Income Tax and Usury Party	10 611	0.07	0	0.0
Total	15 975 052	100	400	100.0

Source: <www.home.Global.co.za>

As a conflict resolution mechanism, this system could also well serve countries such as Angola and the DRC in order to entrench peace and security, at least as part of the political settlement of the war. This suggests that before a PR system can contribute positively to the constructive management of a conflict, a solid peace agreement must be in place to which all belligerent parties should adhere (Matlosa, 2001).

PR is also considered conducive to enhancing gender equality in politics and increased participation of women (Molokomme, 2000). In a recent study, Molokomme discovered that although PR alone is not a sufficient guarantee for increased women's participation in the legislature and Cabinet, it was at least a noteworthy catalyst. Table 10 depicts women's participation in parliament in the SADC region, while Table 11 sketches out the scope and extent of women's participation in politics in the SADC region.

Table 10: Women in parliament in the SADC region

COUNTRY	ELECTION	SEATS	WOMEN	% WOMEN	ELECTORAL SYSTEM
Angola	1992	224	34	15	PR
Botswana	1999	47	8	18	FPTP
DRC	1970	210	–	–	FPTP
Lesotho	1998	120	12	10	FPTP
Malawi	1999	193	16	8	FPTP
Mauritius	1995	65	5	8	Block
Mozambique	1999	250	71	28	PR
Namibia	1999	99	19	19	PR
Seychelles	1998	33	8	24	Mixed
South Africa	1999	400	119	30	PR
Swaziland	1998	95	7	7	FPTP
Tanzania	1995	275	45	16	FPTP
Zambia	1996	150	16	10	FPTP
Zimbabwe	2000	150	13	9	FPTP

Source: Molokomme, 2000

It is worth noting that the right of women to vote came with political independence in a majority of the states. Furthermore, it is the same period that marked women's rights to stand for elections. SADC states signed the declaration on Gender and Development during the 1997 summit in Blantyre,

Malawi. The summit committed member states to equal gender representation in all key organs responsible for decision making by the state by the year 2005. In this regard, member states committed themselves to achieve immediately at least 30% representation of women in decision-making structures. It is within this context that Tables 10 and 11 must be understood.

Table 11: Women's political participation in SADC

Country	Year women received right to vote	Year women received right to stand for election	No. of women in Cabinet % of total (2000)	Seat in parliament as % of total (2000)	
				Lower House	Upper House
Angola	1975	1975	14.7	15.5	–
Botswana	1965	1965	26.7	17.0	
DRC	1967	1970	–	–	–
Lesotho	1965	1965			
Malawi	1965	1965			
Mauritius	1956	1956	9.1	5.7	–
Mozambique	1975	1975	–	30.0	
Namibia	1989	1989	16.3	25.0	7.7
Seychelles	1948	1948	23.1	23.5	–
South Africa	1930,1994	1930,1994	38.1	29.8	31.5
Swaziland	1968	1968	12.5	3.1	13.3
Tanzania	1959	1959	–	22.3	–
Zambia	1962	1962	6.2	12.0	–
Zimbabwe	1957	1978	36.0	10.0	–

Source: UNDP, 2002

It is clear from these tables that the representation of women in both Cabinet and parliament in almost all SADC countries is fairly low, save in South Africa, Mozambique, Seychelles and Namibia. It noteworthy that three of these states operate the PR system while one (Seychelles) operates a mixed system. The worst faring countries in terms of women representation in parliament are Swaziland, Malawi, Mauritius and Lesotho. Three of these countries use a FPTP system, while one uses a mixed system. A plausible argument can therefore be made that PR is surely a better system for the enhancement of gender equality in the legislature. MMP is the next best system suited for this purpose, while FPTP is the worst case scenario for increased women's participation in the legislature.

We turn now to the challenges for electoral system reform in SADC.

5.0 ELECTORAL SYSTEM REFORM IN THE SADC REGION: SOME PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS

This research paper has established the interface between electoral systems and democratisation in Southern Africa. It argues strongly that for an electoral system to add value to democracy, it must enhance accountability of MPs to their constituencies, while at the same time ensuring broader representation of key political forces in the legislature. In this way, a political system becomes more inclusive and participatory as well as according the rulers legitimacy to govern. This further ensures that instability does not undermine the region's political systems. SADC states must therefore make deliberate efforts in addressing both election-related conflicts and war by, among other factors, reforming their electoral systems accordingly.

Most SADC states have embraced the principle of regular multiparty elections. As discussed, the dominant electoral systems used in the region are FPTP and PR. These electoral systems differ fundamentally in terms of their essence and features as well as in their impact on election outcomes and political stability needed for democratic governance. We have argued that elections and electoral systems are crucial but not the only ingredients for political stability and democratic governance in Southern Africa. Generally, PR is more conducive to stability and broad representation in the process of governance than is FPTP. However, despite its multivariate defects and deficiencies, FPTP is noted for enhancing accountability of MPs to the electorate.

A reform process aimed at the adoption of an admixture of FPTP and PR systems could stand the SADC region in good stead in terms of nurturing and consolidating democratic governance. The recent electoral system reform processes in Lesotho and Mauritius could assist the region by imparting their experience in introducing MMP as a preferred electoral model. This model is used mainly in Germany and New Zealand.

5.1 THE LESOTHO ELECTORAL REFORM PROCESS: LESSONS LEARNT

Lesotho has operated the FPTP electoral model since independence in 1966. This model was part of the legacy of the inherited political and constitutional

arrangements left behind by the departing British colonists. The country's historical record points to a disturbing trend of violent and non-violent conflict, most of which was election related. It was against this backdrop that electoral reform in the small mountain kingdom was subjected to public debate. Finally, in May 2002, the FPTP system was abandoned in favour of the MMP system. Thus, Lesotho 'became the first African country to test the MMP electoral model in a parliamentary election' (Elklit, 2002:1). Lesotho used this electoral model for the first time during the 2002 National Assembly elections (see Elklit, 2002). MMPs main tenets are as follows:

- Constituency-based seats are retained – constituency vote.
- Party-based seats are introduced – party vote.
- The total of constituency-based and party-based seats make up the legislature.
- A specific formula is developed to regulate entry into parliament and the calculation of seats (e.g. in New Zealand two conditions apply, namely that: a party must cross the threshold of at least 5% of party votes; and it must win at least one constituency seat). In Lesotho, the entry threshold is determined by each party's quota of total valid votes cast.
- Voting may take place on the basis of either two ballot papers or a single ballot paper. The latter is used in New Zealand and could prove convenient and cost-effective for the SADC region. Lesotho uses a rather cumbersome system of a double ballot, which could potentially bureaucratise the voting process as well as make it costly.

The MMP system has great potential for deepening democratic governance and ensuring political stability in Lesotho. The electoral reform process should not, however, be confined to the political elite alone, but should involve all sectors and sections of society from the planning stages, through design stages and up to the implementation and review stages. This is an area in which the Lesotho reform process has been at its weakest, and to counteract this, vigorous voter education was required prior to the 2002 election.

Given the positive result of the MMP electoral model following the May 2002 election, there is no doubt that much of the spotlight in SADC democracy

discourse will focus on Lesotho, as regional states attempt to review and reform their electoral models. Although a strong case can be made that some SADC states will do well to reform their electoral models along these lines, it is important to note that those countries that have just emerged from violent protracted conflict will certainly be better served by PR. These include the DRC, among others (see Kadima, 2003b). We therefore concur with Elklit that:

there can be no doubt that the experiences from this first national level application of this electoral system to African soil will be studied carefully in many quarters, including outside the mountain kingdom. This is because discussions about possible electoral system changes are now part of the political discourse in many African countries or have been so recently. Countries where the MMP model has already been discussed include South Africa (where MMP is applied in local government elections), Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Mauritius (2002:1).

It should be noted, however, that in comparison to the FPTP electoral model, MMP is somewhat complex in nature because it combines two systems into one composite hybrid. In fact, the most difficult aspects of this system is devising the formula for MPs' entry into the legislature and the allocation of parliamentary seats.

Reform processes in SADC states must not merely lead to an adoption of a particular MMP because of its successful implementation in New Zealand and Lesotho. Rather, these reform processes must be in accord with the particular political culture of each SADC state. In other words the electoral reform process must be home-grown and driven by a national vision rather than being externally derived and driven by aid donors (see Mako, 2003; Matlosa, 2003b).

5.2 THE MAURITIUS ELECTORAL REFORM PROCESS: LESSONS LEARNT

As in the Lesotho case, Mauritius has also embarked upon a deliberate process of electoral system reform. It is interesting to note that whereas electoral system reform in Lesotho was informed and driven more by desire to reverse an age-old pervasive phenomenon of political instability, the main

motivation in Mauritius was to entrench an already mature and relatively stable multiparty democracy.

Within the SADC region, the two most mature and stable liberal democracies are Botswana and Mauritius. Mauritius is renowned for its constitutionally entrenched democratic tradition of regular elections –which have been held since its independence in 1968 – and for its subsequent installation of legitimate and credible government. Since independence Mauritius has operated a fundamentally British-style FPTP electoral system. In contrast to the Lesotho FPTP, the Mauritian FPTP was improved by the introduction of a compensatory mechanism known as the best loser system (BLS). This was an attempt to improve on FPTP deficiencies concerning broader representation and inclusivity and, by extension, to the broader participation of parties in the National Assembly. Despite the compensation factor introduced by the BLS, Mauritius has not been satisfied with the FPTP system in terms of value added to its democratic governance.

The most recent election held in Mauritius on 11 September 2000 still demonstrates the inadequacies of FPTP. The election outcome saw the MSM-MMM alliance claiming state power on a paltry 51.7% of total valid votes and grabbing all the 60 parliamentary seats. Although this disequilibrium is compensated for by the BLS, the negative effect of the FPTP system on Mauritius' flourishing democracy still remains.

Consequently, following protracted debate in that country, the government recently engaged a high-powered commission on Constitutional Electoral Reform. The Sachs Commission (as it is now commonly called) undertook its noble assignment during the latter part of 2001 and completed its task on 24 January 2002. The members of the commission were Justice Albie Sachs (South Africa, chairperson), Mr BB Tandon (India, member) and Mr R Alnee (Mauritius, member). Among its many terms of reference, the Sachs Commission was tasked to:

- make proposals regarding representation in parliament on a proportional basis within the context of the existing electoral system; and
- make proposals for the prohibition of communal or religious political parties.

In much the same way as we have argued in the case of Lesotho, the Sachs Commission was unwavering in its critique of the FPTP system in that it unduly rewards dominant ruling parties to the disadvantage of relatively smaller opposition parties. An enormous amount of evidence in this regard was provided to the commission by a number of deponents.

It is thus no surprise that the commission observed that:

... there was unanimity that the FPTP system in the three-member constituency frequently produced results which were grossly disproportionate to the share of votes obtained by different parties. At times although obtaining a substantial vote, the opposition was either completely or nearly completely eliminated. Thus, in 1982 and 1995 the result was 60-0, while in 1991 and the year 2000, the presence of the opposition barely reached symbolic levels (Sachs et al, 2002; 13).

After critically exploring several options provided by numerous deponents, the Sachs Commission proposed the adoption of an MMP system in which a proportion of MPs will be elected on the basis of FPTP, while the other parliamentary seats will be occupied on the basis of a compensatory list PR system. The threshold for party candidates to claim seats under PR has been set at 10% of the total national vote. This threshold was meant to preserve the system of strong, broadly representative parties and ‘to prevent the emergence of a multitude of communally-based or single-issued parties which would fragment the nation and promote governmental instability’ (Sachs, et al, 2002: 19).

The introduction of the MMP system in Mauritius is a positive political development for the country. The FPTP system has generally been retained for purposes of accountability, but the PR component has been introduced in place of the BLS. The introduction of the MMP system will strengthen democracy in Mauritius by:

- enabling leading figures who could not contest elections through the FPTP route to enter parliament;
- facilitating greater participation of women in parliament and government structures as a whole;

- creating awareness for disadvantaged social groups to participate in the governance process;
- eliminating possibilities for sectarian communal and religious based parties; and
- establishing mechanisms that subsume the BLS and embracing its underlying affirmative action (Sachs et al, 2002: 25).

The actual workings of the new MMP system for Mauritius are as follows:

- Sixty-two seats in the National Assembly with 20 constituency seats each returning three members and Rodrigues two members.
- The introduction of a further 30 parliamentary seats contested on the basis of a list PR system.
- The establishment of a 10% threshold for parties contesting the 30 PR seats to claim seats in the National Assembly.
- Election candidates would not be allowed to contest on both FPTP and PR tickets at the same time.
- Participation of women in governance should be ensured through a requirement that in each bloc of three candidates nominated for the FPTP seats, at least one be a woman and that every third candidate on the list PR system be a woman (Zebra PR).

The Mauritian government has, in principle, endorsed the recommendations of the 2002 Sachs Commission and it is anticipated that the new MMP system will be put into effect during the next general election scheduled for 2005.

The Lesotho and Mauritius cases clearly show that commendable efforts are under way in the SADC region towards electoral reforms and that these efforts will nurture democratic governance in the region. It is hoped that various other SADC member states will follow these examples and revisit their electoral models with a view to deepening and consolidating their democratic governance.

5.3 ELECTORAL REFORM PROCESS: A WAY FORWARD

Of the seven countries under study, Mozambique and South Africa reformed their electoral models following the political settlement of their protracted conflicts in 1992 and 1994 respectively. As we have already stated, both

countries adopted the PR electoral system, with this development being the culmination of the negotiations that ended violent conflict. It could therefore be argued that the adoption of the PR system in these two cases was indeed part and parcel of constructive conflict management and in a sense, therefore, an electoral model could then be perceived as a conflict resolution mechanism. From these two cases, we can strongly argue that the PR system is a perfect model for war-torn societies emerging from deep-seated violent conflicts.

Having said this, however, the Angolan case also suggests that the electoral model alone is not a sufficient ingredient for the constructive resolution of violent conflict. Here we have a country operating the PR electoral model and which was deemed by many observers to be making good progress in the early 1990s towards resolving its protracted war, especially after the signing of the Bicesse Accords. This positive prognosis was, however, undermined by Unita's refusal to accept the 2002 election outcome. But this case does not invalidate our thesis that the PR system is a perfect model for the resolution of protracted violent conflict. What this case does suggest is that the PR system can only play a conflict resolution role if the belligerent parties sign a peace agreement and abide by the letter and spirit of that agreement. This was the case in Mozambique and South Africa, whereas in Angola both the 1990 Bicesse Accords and the subsequent 1994 Lusaka Accord were not adhered to.

It is interesting that Zimbabwe adopted the PR electoral model during its 1980 elections but later changed to the FPTP system. It is not quite clear why Zimbabwe changed its electoral model in the mid-1980s, but what is obvious is that this proved to be a major retrogression for that country's political system. Since the early 1990s there have been calls for electoral reform from various political forces and civil society organisations in Zimbabwe. In fact, the one major single issue which the diametrically opposed government-led Constitutional Commission and the civil society-led National Constitutional Assembly agreed on during the 2000 constitutional review exercise, focused on the reform of the Zimbabwe electoral model, moving away from FPTP and towards the PR model. This debate still continues and it is possible that Zimbabwe may adopt the PR system, perhaps even before the next general election scheduled for 2005. This electoral reform was proposed in the draft

constitution devised by the Constitutional Commission, but it was rejected during the 2000 national referendum. This issue has to be urgently revisited as part of a long-lasting solution to Zimbabwe's current political crisis.

The situation in Tanzania also points to a dire need for a reform to its electoral model, especially given the last conflict-ridden general election of 2001. The violent conflict that marked that general election, especially in Zanzibar, points to the deficiencies of the FPTP system. A similar spate of violent conflict rocked Lesotho's political system from the 1970s until the electoral model was changed from FPTP to MMP, as previously illustrated. It is therefore imperative that Tanzania seriously considers reform to its electoral model before its next general election planned for 2006. The lessons learnt from Lesotho and Mauritius clearly demonstrate that MMP would be a more suitable electoral model for Tanzania.

Swaziland is a rather eccentric case when compared to the other countries under review in this study. Unlike the other six countries, Swaziland's major challenge is not so much electoral reform, but rather reform of the entire political system away from dynastic oligarchy towards multiparty democratic governance. It is only on settling this bigger challenge, that Swaziland can consider electoral reform. The Swaziland case therefore suggests that a country cannot consider reforming its electoral system until, and unless, the institutional, systemic and cultural aspects of a working democracy are firmly in place. Thus, Swaziland should reform its political system towards a constitutional monarchy along the lines of Lesotho, and then institutionalise multipartyism in which the king remains the head of state and the prime minister becomes an effective head of government. Having done this, Swaziland should then proceed to adopt MMP along the lines followed in either Lesotho or Mauritius, as outlined above.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study provides a comparative analysis of electoral models in the SADC region, bringing into sharp relief the key challenges that confront the region in terms of democratic consolidation. Whereas the study reinforces the point that the SADC region has made tremendous progress in terms of democratic transition since the 1990s, it argues strongly that democratic deficits still

bedevil the uncertain road to democratic consolidation. The study is thus a modest attempt to pinpoint some persisting democratic deficiencies in the SADC region through a fairly comprehensive comparative survey of seven SADC states, namely: Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Tanzania, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Evidence adduced in this study clearly suggests that these countries are at various stages in establishing, nurturing and consolidating their electoral democracy systems. Obviously Swaziland occupies the lowest rung of the democracy ladder while, by all indications, South Africa occupies the highest rung. The other countries are somewhere in between these two polar opposites. From the aspect of those countries applying the PR electoral model, Angola is a worst case scenario, not so much as a result of the failure of the model, but due to a lack of political commitment by the belligerent parties to uphold peace. Of those countries applying the FPTP electoral model, Zimbabwe is the worst case scenario having switched from PR at independence to the FPTP system in the mid-1980s. Reality now demands that Zimbabwe revert back to the system that it once operated, but only if a sustainable solution to the current political impasse is to be found.

A number of conclusions emerge from this study. First, the extent to which the western-type liberal democracy embraced by the SADC states is an appropriate democratic model for the region, still remains a moot point. Some scholars have, in fact, strongly suggested that although liberal democracy is a move forward given the region's previous mono-party or military authoritarianism, a strong case can be made for the adoption of a developmental or social democracy. Second, linked to this imperative for the transformation of the entire political system, is the dire need for SADC states to review and reform their electoral models, taking into account the criteria for electoral system designs elaborated in this study. The following recommendations therefore flow from the main findings of this study:

- **Angola** ought to take advantage of the currently prevailing peace and tranquility in the country predicated upon a new peace agreement, to make arrangements for general elections in 2004. Elections should not, however, be held until and unless peace has been established in the entire country; only then will the country's PR electoral system add substantial value to its conflict resolution mechanisms and begin to nurture its electoral democracy.

- **Lesotho** should consolidate the positive developments made since the adoption of MMP in 2002 by undertaking further reviews of, and refinements to, the system through, for instance, an election post-mortem so that the gains made are not reversed. One step in this direction would be the holding of a regional conference on lessons learnt involving representatives from other SADC member states and including both state and non-state sectors; the MMP system should not be subjected to any substantial changes before the 2007 general elections.
- **Mozambique** should adhere to its PR electoral system and consolidate the gains made since the political settlement of its violent conflict in 1992. There is no need for this country to reform its electoral model in any substantial way before the 2004 general elections; all that Mozambique needs is to put in place effective conflict management mechanisms to deal with multivariate election-related disputes.
- **South Africa** need not make any attempts to reform its PR electoral model as this model has helped the country a great deal in achieving sustainable peace and reconciliation. The same model should therefore be used in the forthcoming 2004 general elections. South Africa needs to ensure, however, that the recent constitutional amendment that allows MPs to cross the floor does not destabilise the system.
- **Swaziland** must first reform its entire political system, moving away from dynastic authoritarianism towards a working multiparty electoral democracy before reforming its electoral model – that is, changing from FPTP to MMP along the lines of Lesotho and Mauritius – before its next general election in 2005. Democratic reforms cannot be established on their own in Swaziland and pro-democracy forces have to agitate for these changes. This suggests a vibrant role for civil society groups in Swaziland if meaningful democracy is to take root.
- **Tanzania** has to reform its FPTP electoral model, especially following worrisome election-related conflicts that have taken place in the recent past. It is certainly in Tanzania's interest to transform its electoral model from FPTP to the MMP system before its next election in 2005. The experiences of Lesotho and Mauritius will serve this country well in this regard.
- **Zimbabwe** is surely the most politically polarised of all the countries under study. It is a fact that all the SADC countries are internally

polarised along partisan political lines, but the profundity of this polarisation differs from country to country. This polarisation is too deep in Zimbabwe and is often worsened by violent conflict during and between elections. Part of the Zimbabwe crisis revolves around the electoral model in use, namely FPTP. Zimbabwe thus has to abandon its FPTP electoral system and revert back to its earlier PR system which was used only once, in 1980. This development should take place before its general election of 2005.

These recommendations apply neatly to almost all other SADC states. It is therefore imperative that those states not forming part of this study, still review and reform their electoral models accordingly. For ease of reference for the SADC states as they embark upon electoral system reform, we provide below in summary form the advantages and disadvantages of the two main electoral models in the region, namely the FPTP and PR systems.

They should also keep in mind Reynolds and Reilly's criteria for electoral systems design, which are worth repeating, namely:

- Ensuring a representative parliament.
- Making elections accessible and meaningful.
- Providing incentives for conciliation.
- Facilitating stable and efficient government.
- Holding the government and representatives accountable.
- Encouraging 'cross-cutting' political parties.
- Promoting a parliamentary opposition.
- Cost and administrative capacity.

Table 12: Advantages and disadvantages of the FPTP Systems

PR-LIST		FPTP	
Advantages	Disadvantages	Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair translation of votes into seats • Few wasted votes • Minority parties' access to representation • Inclusive and socially diverse list of candidates • Minority social groups stand better chance for election • More women likely to be elected • Regional freedoms restricted • Leads to more efficient government • Power-sharing more likely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instability of coalition government • Platform for extremist parties • Inability to throw a party out of power • Weak MP-constituency link • Too much power to the party • Little room for independent candidates • Less known and less familiar in Africa • Does not allow crossing of floor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear-cut choice between two main parties • Gives rise to single party governments • Gives rise to coherent parliamentary opposition • Advantages broadly based political parties • Excludes extremist parties • MP-constituency link strong • Voters choose people rather than parties • Gives room for independent candidates • Simple, well known and familiar in Africa • Allows floor crossing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excludes minority parties • Excludes minority groups • Excludes women • Encourages sectorian parties • Exaggerates regional freedoms • Problem of wasted votes • Problem of minority government • Unresponsive to changes in public opinion • Open to manipulation of electoral boundaries

Source: Reynolds and Reilly, 2002

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DR. KHABELE MATLOSA is the Senior Advisor-Research Department at the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), in Johannesburg, South Africa. He obtained his Masters degree at the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom in 1987. Thereafter he completed a Post-Graduate Diploma in Conflict Resolution at the University of Uppsala in Sweden in 1988. He proceeded to graduate in 1995 with his Ph.D from the University of the Western Cape. He is a governance specialist and has researched and written widely on various governance topics such as electoral reform, political parties, conflict management, election administration, election observation and monitoring and local government. He has observed elections in various SADC countries including Lesotho, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. He played an instrumental role in terms of technical expertise to the Interim Political Authority (IPA), through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) during Lesotho's electoral reform process between 1999-2002. This process witnessed a change of the electoral system in that country from the British-style First-Past-The-Post system to the new Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system. He is the editor-in-chief of the Journal of African Elections (JAE) produced biannually by the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA). He is also the guest editor of the forthcoming issues of the African Journal of Conflict Resolution produced by the African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) in Durban. He was one of the experts who produced the Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC region jointly undertaken by the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa and the Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC.

ABOUT EISA

The Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) is a not-for-profit and non-partisan non-governmental organisation which was established in 1996. Its core business is to provide technical assistance for capacity building of relevant government departments, electoral management bodies, political parties and civil society organisations operating in the democracy and governance field throughout the SADC region and beyond. Inspired by the various positive developments towards democratic governance in Africa as a whole and the SADC region in particular since the early 1990s, EISA aims to advance democratic values, practices and enhance the credibility of electoral processes. The ultimate goal is to assist countries in Africa and the SADC region to nurture and consolidate democratic governance. SADC countries have received enormous technical assistance and advice from EISA in building solid institutional foundations for democracy. This includes electoral system reforms; election monitoring and observation; constructive conflict management; strengthening of parliament and other democratic institutions; strengthening of political parties; capacity building for civil society organisations; deepening democratic local governance; and enhancing the institutional capacity of the election management bodies. EISA is currently the secretariat of the Electoral Commissions Forum (ECF) composed of electoral commissions in the SADC region and established in 1998. EISA is also the secretariat of the SADC Election Support Network (ESN) comprising election-related civil society organisations established in 1997.

VISION

Realisation of effective and sustainable democratic governance in Southern Africa and beyond.

MISSION

To strengthen electoral processes, democratic governance, human rights and democratic values through research, capacity building, advocacy and other strategically targeted interventions.

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Key values and principles of governance that EISA believes in include:

- Regular free and fair elections
- Promoting democratic values
- Respect for fundamental human rights
- Due process of law / rule of law
- Constructive management of conflict
- Political tolerance
- Inclusive multiparty democracy
- Popular participation
- Transparency
- Gender equality
- Accountability
- Promoting electoral norms and standards

OBJECTIVES

- To nurture and consolidate democratic governance
- To build institutional capacity of regional and local actors through research, education, training, information and technical advice
- To ensure representation and participation of minorities in the governance process
- To strive for gender equality in the governance process
- To strengthen civil society organisations in the interest of sustainable democratic practice, and
- To build collaborative partnerships with relevant stakeholders in the governance process.

CORE ACTIVITIES

- Research
- Conferences, Seminars and workshops
- Publishing

- Conducting elections and ballots
- Technical advice
- Capacity building
- Election observation
- Election evaluation
- Networking
- Voter/Civic education
- Conflict management
- Educator and Learner Resource Packs

PROGRAMMES

EISA's Core Business revolves around three (3) main programmes namely (a) Conflict Management, Democracy and Electoral Education; (b) Electoral and Political Processes; and (c) Balloting and Electoral Services.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT, DEMOCRACY AND ELECTORAL EDUCATION

This programme comprises various projects including voter education, democracy and human rights education; electoral observation; electoral staff training; electoral conflict management; capacity building; course design; citizen participation.

ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL PROCESSES

This programme addresses areas such as technical assistance for electoral commissions, civil society organisations and political parties; coordination of election observation and monitoring missions; working towards the establishment of electoral norms and standards for the SADC region; providing technical support to both the SADC-ECF and the SADC-ESN.

BALLOTING AND ELECTORAL SERVICES

The programme enhances the credibility and legitimacy of organisational elections by providing independent and impartial electoral administration, management and consultancy services. The key activities include managing

elections for political parties, trade unions, pension funds, medical aid societies, etc.

EISA'S SPECIAL PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- Rule of Law, which examines issues related to justice and human rights;
- Local Government, which aims to promote community participation in governance ; and
- Political Parties, which aims to promote party development at strategic, organisational and structural levels through youth empowerment, leadership development and development of party coalitions.

EISA'S SUPPORT SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Research
- Publications
- Library
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

EISA PRODUCTS

- Books
- CD-ROMS
- Conference Proceedings
- Election Handbooks
- Occasional Papers
- Election Observer Reports
- Research reports
- Country profiles
- Election updates
- Newsletters
- Voter education manuals
- Journal of African Elections
- Election database

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Patrons

EISA's patrons are His Excellency Sir Ketumile Masire, former President of Botswana and the instrumental broker of the peace negotiations that ushered peace and reconciliation in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2002 and Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, a key negotiator during the political transition to democratic governance and majority rule in South Africa in 1994 and a businessman of standing in the new South Africa.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EISA has an International Board of Directors comprising the following:

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