



# CHALLENGES FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA



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– CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS REPORT –

EISA ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM  
WANDERERS CLUB, ILLOVO, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA  
8-10 NOVEMBER 2006



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DIALOGUE ON  
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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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## RAPPORTEURS

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Sydney Letsholo (EISA)  
Patrick Masemola (EISA)

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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ACDESS	African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies
ACE	Administration and Costs of Election
ACBF	African Capacity Building Foundation
ACCORD	African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
AFRODAD	African Forum and Network on Debt and Development
ANC	African National Congress
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BESN	Botswana Electoral Support Network
BNF	Botswana National Front
BNP	Basotho National Party
CCM	Chama Cha Mapinduzi
CEFRAD	Centre for Rights and Development
CFA	Commission for Africa
CGE	Commission on Gender Equality
CMDEE	Conflict Management, Democracy and Electoral Education
CNOE	Consortium of Election Observers
CoD	Congress of Democrats
CPS	Centre for Policy Studies
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSSDCA	Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa
CSSR	Centre for Social Science Research
CWCI	Conference, Workshop and Cultural Initiative Fund
DANIDA	Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
DARU	Democracy in Africa Research Unit
DDR	Demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development
DoE	Department of Education
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECF	Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC Countries
ECN	Electoral Commission of Namibia
Ecosocc	Economic Social and Cultural Council
Ecowas	Economic Community of West African States
EMB	Electoral management body
EU	European Union
FARDC	<i>Forces Armées de la République Démocratique</i>
Frelimo	Front for the Liberation of Mozambique
GSSP	Special Guard for Presidential Safety
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Co-operation
Idasa	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IGD	Institute for Global Dialogue
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISS	Institute for Security Studies

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KANU	Kenya African National Union
KAS	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
LCN	Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organisations
LP	Labour Party
MACOSS	Mauritius Council of Social Services
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MESN	Malawi Electoral Support Network
MLC	Movement for the Liberation of Congo
MNR	Mozambique National Resistance
MP	Members of parliament
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NCP	National Party Congress
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NEC	National Electoral Commission
NEO	National Elections Observatory
Nepad	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIMD	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
NUL	National University of Lesotho
NWLG	National Women's Lobby Group
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OSCE	Organisation for Security Cooperation in Europe
OSISA	Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa
PAC	Public Affairs Committee
PAP	Pan-African Parliament
PEMMO	Principles for Election Management Monitoring and Observation in the SADC Region
PMXD	<i>Parti Mauricien Xavier Duval</i>
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategies Papers
PUDEMO	People's United Democratic Movement
RECs	Regional Economic and Security Communities
Renamo	Mozambican National Resistance
Renosec	<i>Réseau National des Observateurs des Elections</i>
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
RSC	Regional Service Centre
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAHRC	South African Human Rights Commission
SAHRIT	Southern Africa Human Rights Trust
SAIIA	South African Institute of International Affairs
SARPN	Southern African Regional Poverty Network
SAT	Southern African Trust
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SIDA	Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency
SNP	Seychelles National Party
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPPF	Seychelles Peoples' Progressive Front
SSR	Security Sector Reform
Swapo	South West Africa People's Organisation
TEDG	Tanzania Ecumenical Dialog Group



UDF	United Democratic Front
ULP	United Liberal Party
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
Unesco	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNISA	University of South Africa
UNITA	Union for the Total Independence of Angola
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
WTO	World Trade Organisation
YENEPAD	Young Entrepreneurs for the New Partnership for Africa's Development
Zanu-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZEC	Zanzibar Electoral Commission
ZESN	Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In celebration of its 10th anniversary, EISA held an inaugural symposium in November 2006 on the theme 'Challenges for Democratic Governance and Human Development in Africa'. The symposium attracted more than 200 academics from Africa and beyond, donors, civil society organisations, policy-makers, members of parliament, representatives of political parties, heads of electoral commissions and representatives from the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union (AU), the Pan African Parliament (PAP), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

The overall goal of the symposium initiative was to provide a dialogue forum for various stakeholders on critical issues that affect Africa's developmental and democratic prospects. The specific goals were to:

- generate debate around democracy and development between countries and across regions in the African continent;
- develop country case studies and regional comparative insights on democratisation and development;
- publish this information for wider dissemination; and
- use the findings to lobby and advocate for institutional and policy reforms.

The inaugural symposium was a pilot case for subsequent symposiums planned for October of each year.

Stakeholders deliberated for three days on two of the more daunting challenges that confront the African continent, namely: the institutionalisation of democratic governance; and the achievement of sustainable human development. While progress towards democratic governance has been made since the early 1990s – demonstrated by the holding of multiparty elections in most African countries – the key problem now revolves around how to successfully drive the democratic project and the development project at the same time. Although there have been successful transitions in countries such as South Africa, Mozambique, Ghana, Kenya and Lesotho, the transition has been limited to political change, leading to multiparty elections and the end of dictatorial, military and one-party regimes. A more people-centred approach to development still remains a dilemma confronting most African countries.

While the majority of African countries boast reasonable economic growth rates, human development still lags behind. As a result, millions of people are trapped in conditions of unemployment and poverty and are affected by HIV / Aids. It is a reality in Africa that democracy cannot take root under conditions of socio-economic deprivation, conflict and instability. Development requires the establishment of good institutional structures, while peace and security become crucial components for the attainment of democracy and sustainable human development.

The symposium explored the following themes:

- Democracy and development in Africa
- Democracy and development: International perspectives
- Democracy and human development: Regional perspectives
- Elections and democracy
- Political institutions and democracy
- Political institutions, leadership and democracy
- Civil society, democracy and development
- Nepad, APRM, democracy and development
- Education, democracy and development
- Local government and democracy
- Conflict, security and democratic governance: National perspectives
- Conflict, security and democratic governance: Regional perspectives
- The DRC political transition
- Democratic governance and poverty eradication

The presentations and discussions raised pertinent issues which SADC, Nepad, African scholars, policy-makers, civil society actors and other relevant stakeholders need to interrogate critically when considering issues of democracy and development in Africa. There was general consensus that political transitions had taken place, but that consolidation and moving beyond transition remain a major challenge for the African continent.

The causes, shape and pace of transition have varied considerably from country to country and region to region, but African states have embraced the tenets of liberal democracy and have defended these at both international and national forums.

Since the 1990s, Africa has witnessed democratic transitions in some seemingly intractable cases (such as South Africa and Namibia), as well as the cessation of deadly conflicts and civil wars in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola; however, conflict and civil strife continue in Darfur and Somalia.

Continental and regional institutions such as the AU, Nepad, PAP, SADC and the Economic Community of West African States, have put together frameworks, conventions and declarations whose primary intent is to exhort African countries to uphold democratic principles.

One of the most visible indicators of transitions has been the holding of multiparty elections. While elections do not necessarily equate to democratisation, good quality elections are a necessary condition for the institutionalisation of democratic governance; and while elections on their own do not amount to democracy, several African governments are in their third successive era of democratic power alternation. However, the current situation regarding respect for constitutionalism, adherence to the rule of law and the effective functioning of political and economic institutions remains mixed.

There was consensus at the symposium that Africa needs a human-centred development paradigm that places people at the centre of the development process. This kind of paradigm

shift in development thinking has a higher probability of success if it is pursued by a developmental state – one that has the capacity ‘to implement development policies sagaciously and effectively ... such capacity is determined by various factors – institutional, technical, administrative, and political’.<sup>1</sup> Democracy and development, while difficult to achieve simultaneously, must be mutually reinforcing: pursuing one at the expense of the other would be catastrophic. Effective leadership is, however, crucial for managing the developmental state. The inextricable interface between democracy and security is also worth emphasising.

While post-conflict elections in some West African countries have brought hope for democratic consolidation, more effort needs to be made to create developmental states that can mobilise resources, not only for sustainable human development but also for sustainable and durable peace and human security. The linkage between democratic governance and human development on the one hand, and democratic governance and peace on the other, has ripple effects on strategies for the eradication of poverty. A major challenge for Africa’s democratic prospects remains the eradication of poverty, which is exacerbated by poor governance institutions that fail at service delivery and at dealing proactively with the HIV / Aids epidemic.



# 1

## THE DEMOCRACY-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS IN AFRICA

The complexity of democracy and development continues to baffle practitioners, policy-makers and academics. Adebayo Adedeji endeavoured to place the debate on the democracy-development nexus in context by outlining some of the confusion that is inherent in the definitions of 'democracy' and 'development'. Despite existing literature on the subject, the democracy-development nexus is still hotly debated. While development and democracy have been treated as independent variables, they are intimately linked in the same way that politics and economics are inextricably bound together.

The 1990s witnessed a massive movement towards multiparty elections across the African continent, giving expectations of democracy to millions of voters after long periods of dictatorship. Democracy, at the very minimum, denotes the right of the people to choose their own government through an institutionalised multiparty system and periodic secret ballots. The holding of these elections has been used in many instances to qualify for donor support, debt relief and debt forgiveness by multilateral and development institutions: hence the term 'donor democracy'. Adedeji cautioned, however, that sustainable democracy is not a 'quick fix'; it is more than the competitive struggle for the people's vote, more than a pluralistic political system and more than the ballot box.

Democracy includes the struggle for recognition, which was first recognised by Plato in *The Republic*. As Fukuyama<sup>2</sup> asserts, humans crave personal self-esteem: the desire for recognition and the accompanying emotions of anger, shame and pride, which are so critical to political life, have fostered the need for democratisation in different societies. Hegel and Kojeve give an understanding of democracy and liberalism that places value, dignity and the desire for recognition (thymos) on the human being. Thymos, which is an innate human sense of justice, embraces democratic values such as participation, rationality, secularity, mobility, tolerance and empathy.

Adedeji outlined five cultural factors that inhibit the establishment of sustainable liberal democracy. These are:

- nationalism and ethnicity;
- religious fundamentalism;
- high socio-economic inequalities;
- the absence of a healthy civil society; and
- the absence of effective honest and moral leadership.

In defining development, Adedeji quoted a simple definition used by a Somali elder of Baidoa, who said that development was defined as the basic provision of water, food, good health, education, and peace and order. Development is impossible if these basics are not universally available or are absent. Adedeji reiterated that Africa needs a human-centred development

paradigm. Socio-economic deprivation perpetuates political deprivation: 'Democracy and human rights do not thrive in economic adversity. Where there is a pervasive lack of observance of political rights, economic rights will be severely compromised.'

Africa therefore requires a holistic developmental strategy working alongside a holistic approach to democratic development. There can be no sustainable development in the absence of a democratically determined developmental strategy which involves social mobilisation and popular participation.

There have, however, been deviations from the democracy-development nexus. An example is the East Asian Tigers, where the state single-mindedly pursued economic development. But this cannot be replicated in Africa. The political and economic environment has changed and requires new ideas and a paradigm shift that will put Africa on a developmental course. Furthermore, competitiveness and social discipline are important components for sustaining democracy and development. Competitiveness fosters efficiency, which is an output of research, innovation and technological development. Of crucial importance is the social discipline of a society. As stated by Adedeji at the symposium: 'The more disciplined a society as a whole becomes, the more hardworking and efficient it becomes.'

In conclusion, Adedeji called on Africans to create knowledge-based and knowledge-driven societies. Education, be it primary, secondary or tertiary, should be repositioned at the centre of development. Africa is in desperate need of a labour force that is literate, numerate, adaptable and trainable.

## 2

### DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

The two international perspectives on democracy and human development shared at the symposium focused on the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the Commonwealth approach to democracy and development. Udo Etukudo outlined the MDG targets for 2015 and emphasised the importance of good political and economic governance for these goals to be achievable.

The MDGs are the latest attempt at a human rights-based approach to development. They aim to tackle poverty and to discipline governments to deliver on poverty-reduction promises. The MDGs focus on improving the conditions of poor people around the world. There is indeed a developmental agenda, and this aims at reducing poverty by 2015. The UNDP is there to give technical assistance and support to member countries to prepare their MDG reports.

It has been realised, however, that development requires institutional change as well. While economic growth rates have averaged 5-6% in many countries, human development is yet to take place on a more sustainable basis. Institutional governance and discipline are crucial for achieving development goals. The MDG targets for 2015 are as follows:

- Goal 1: Halve extreme poverty and hunger.
- Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education.
- Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women.
- Goal 4: Reduce under-five child mortality by two-thirds.
- Goal 5: Reduce maternal mortality by three-quarters.
- Goal 6: Reverse the spread of HIV / Aids, malaria and tuberculosis.
- Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability.
- Goal 8: Develop global partnerships for aid, trade and debt relief.

However, firm and strict commitment from the leadership, as well as from all stakeholders, including civil society in any community, is required to achieve the goals. Etukudo reiterated that governance, both political and economic, is crucial as it provides the institutional framework for the achievement of the MDGs.

It was reported, however, that progress on attaining MDGs was mixed. Most countries would be able to achieve the gender equality targets, but no country would be able to reduce the child mortality rate or to improve maternal health significantly. Furthermore, reversing the prevalence of HIV / Aids remains a major challenge.

There seems to be optimism that the MDGs are achievable if countries put in place sound policies, including good economic management and pro-poor macroeconomic frameworks. Good governance provides the overall framework for the achievement of MDGs. Etukudo also outlined the governance challenges as access to justice by the poor, a free press, effective public



administration, respect for human rights, transparency and accountability, decentralised economic and political structures, and popular participation in policy dialogue. All these are components of the good governance agenda. Finally, Etukudo stated that there is no magic bullet. Every aspect of the good governance agenda is necessary for the achievement of MDGs. The international community is also expected to play a major role and the United Nations (UN) system is expected to provide technical support in the design and implementation of policies.

Ade Adefuye outlined the role of the Commonwealth in both political and economic development in Africa. There are a number of Commonwealth functional structures created to assist Africa on issues of political and economic development, including public sector reform, debt management and capital development, and to facilitate trade between North and South. The Commonwealth therefore pursues an agenda that aims to promote democracy and development within its 53 member countries. So far, the Commonwealth has observed 45 elections in its 30 member countries in Africa.

The Commonwealth recognises that democracy and development must be mutually reinforcing.

The Commonwealth secretariat assists member countries to design and amend existing constitutions. Examples have included Lesotho, Zambia and Swaziland. The Commonwealth has also demonstrated a capacity for conflict prevention and resolution. Commonwealth envoys and eminent persons have been sent to conflict areas in order to mediate and achieve conflict resolution. They have helped to resolve conflicts in Sierra Leone (2001), Lesotho (1998 and 2007) and the Gambia (1996 and 2006).

The Commonwealth realises Africa's challenges on issues of development, and through its Commonwealth fund for technical cooperation established in 1971, has been able to disburse resources for the purposes of strengthening democracy and creating a stable political climate. This fund also assists African countries on issues such as combating money laundering and matters of intellectual property rights.

The Commonwealth is also interested in the achievement of MDGs and involves itself with issues of debt management and debt reduction. The debt management section in the Commonwealth secretariat currently provides assistance to 25 African countries through the Commonwealth Debt Recording and Management System. This initiative has been successful in Nigeria. The Commonwealth secretariat has collaborated with other development partners, such as the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, to provide assistance and support to member states. In addition, the Commonwealth assists member countries in attracting foreign investment through the Commonwealth Private Initiative, which was launched by Commonwealth finance ministers in 1995 to assist small and medium-size enterprises. Trade is another area of importance for the Commonwealth, as are measures to reduce corruption. However, the Commonwealth is involved in holistic measures to promote economic and political development, which include supporting the achievement of MDGs through calls for an increase of overseas development assistance, reduction in corruption, negotiating trade terms with the World Trade Organisation and providing capital assistance for debt management, debt reduction and capital development.

Both the Commonwealth and UNDP approaches to development are mutually reinforcing. Although they may use different mechanisms, all approaches have the same overriding goal, which is to promote democratic governance and achieve sustainable human development in Africa.

### 3

## DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

In focusing on democracy and human development, the panellists in this section focused on Southern Africa and the continent as a whole. There was general agreement that democratic governance had been embraced in most Southern African countries, but that this was limited to formal procedures of merely holding elections, with a democratic culture still lacking. Khabele Matlosa focused on the progress made in the Southern African region and emphasised the role of a developmental state. He argued that socio-economic development remains a real challenge for most countries. Furthermore, exogenous factors, or globalisation, play both negative and positive roles in this developmental process. Most importantly, pursuing democracy and development in tandem requires a capable developmental state.

Since the early 1990s all the Southern African states except for Swaziland have steered their political systems towards Western-style liberal democracy. There has been enhanced political participation, and deliberate efforts have been made towards broader representation and accountability. However, the record of democratic governance in the Southern African region and in the African continent as a whole remains mixed and unclear. Regular elections do not necessarily lead to democratic governance, either in theory or practice. Swaziland continues to hold elections every five years and yet democratisation has been blocked by force and fiat. Matlosa categorised the four types of regimes in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region as:

- liberal democracies with stable and consolidating democratic structures: Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, and South Africa belong to this category;
- electoral democracies, which hold regular elections but have enormous democratic deficits: the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia fall into this group;
- grey-zone democracy: this is an ambiguous type of democracy – fuzzy and illiberal and referred to as a pseudo democracy or a liberalised autocracy: Zimbabwe is included in this category; and
- dictatorship: this can take the form of authoritarianism, closed authoritarianism or unreformed autocracy: Angola and Swaziland, which belong to this category, have not taken any steps towards political transition.

The most daunting challenge for most SADC states is to move closer to the social democracy or developmental democracy that scholars such as Claude Ake<sup>3</sup> consider to be relevant for Africa.

Although most of the former one-party regimes in Southern Africa have depoliticised development, there remains a great need to focus on sustainable human development. This is a process of enlarging people's choices in a manner that enables them to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives.<sup>4</sup> However, human development is facing decline because of the HIV/Aids epidemic.

The developmental challenges in Southern Africa can only be met by a 'developmental' state, which is one that plays a frontline role in advancing socio-economic development and does not leave this important task to market forces. Matlosa defined a developmental state as a state that intervenes in the economic development process in order to ensure equitable distribution of resources, and to redress inequities that tend to result from free enterprise economic systems. He also quoted Thandika Mkandawire<sup>5</sup> to define the ideological underpinnings of the developmental state as a state that conceives its mission as 'developmentalist', and as a state that is autonomous from social forces and has some social anchoring which prevents it from being predatory.

Matlosa argued that Southern Africa needs a transformed Afrocentric state that is institutionally conditioned and structurally embedded within the regional political economy, but which at the same time is not insulated from global changes. He argued that without socio-economic liberation, democracy is incomplete and development is constrained. The liberation of the people, state, society and economy must be from domestic tyranny and foreign domination. This type of state has, however, been difficult to construct especially under conditions of underdevelopment and pressure from external forces. Economic nationalism remains a repugnant ideology to Western countries and financial institutions that wield the power of resources. Striking a balance between an outwardly democratic state and a developmental state at the same time, remains a challenge for many countries following decades of authoritarian rule that were responsible for misdirected development.

While a developmental state would be ideal for Africa and its citizens, the states have to be able to survive in this globalised world. Martha Mutisi analysed the nexus between globalisation, development and democracy, and highlighted the effects of globalisation on both new and fully fledged African democracies. Globalisation has both opportunities and costs. Globalisation can empower those that take advantage of the changes, but it can be incredibly disempowering to those that do not have the institutional structures in place to take advantage of the sweeping changes. Globalisation has brought with it increased communication, enhanced technological development, the diffusion of ideas in the political market, and regional and international networks that put pressure on issues of democratisation and development.

Globalisation is an agent of democratisation as it gives multiple voices to different players in politics. Civil society in Africa has benefited from the effects of the global village as it has established networks with civic movements in other countries and has received support from international organisations. The prefects of the world economy, such as the United States (US), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, have put pressure on non-democratic countries. However, nobody has been in a position to police the prefects themselves. Most of the structural adjustment programmes have failed. Where they are said to have worked in Uganda and Mozambique, they have not displaced high levels of poverty and deep inequalities. With the globalisation of democracy, pockets of resistance remain in the Middle East, in the flawed elections of Zimbabwe, in the de facto one-party states of Botswana and Zimbabwe, and in the autocracy of Swaziland.

Mutisi concluded by calling for globalisation with a human face; a globalisation that does not lead to aggrandisement or the impoverishment of the grassroots. While there is no direct

relationship between globalisation and democratisation, a number of forces have been set in motion, which have led to positive political and economic change. However, there is a need for governments, civil society, and private and public organisations to take advantage of the space provided by globalisation and at the same time to cushion the people from the after-effects of a harsh and globalised world. Striking a balance between globalisation and people's needs is the critical challenge for African societies.

Conflict in Africa, however, seems to have decreased as a result of local and international peace processes. Conflict curtails democracy and development. Africa can benefit from globalisation if it tries to adapt to globalisation. With political will, Africa can harness the benefits of globalisation and minimise its vices.

While the states in Southern Africa are battling with issues of democracy and development, the transformation of the state to a more developmental state will not be complete without the transformation of gender relations. So argued Sheila Meintjes. South Africa stands out in Southern Africa as a successful example of gender transformation. South Africans have created a women-friendly state. Meintjes traced the history of the gender struggles in South Africa and how the women's movements worked together to place gender issues on the constitutional agenda. A gender-sensitive constitution and the setting up of gender machinery were linked in a positive way to promote notions of substantive democracy such as gender rights and women's needs.

The political representation of women was seen as a first step to institutional transformation. The active participation of the Women's National Coalition was crucial for these developments to be achieved. It opened the spaces for women's political engagement in the public arena. The Joint Monitoring Committee on the Quality of Life and Status of Women in parliament promotes gender equality and gender equality legislation in all areas of life. It now has a budget and monitors the implementation of legislation. The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) also plays an important role in monitoring the progress of gender equality in state and society. The commissioners are nominated by civil society and appointed by parliament.

Meintjes argued, however, that the litmus test for progress is having a look at rural women and how they have fared in terms of access to land, credit, livelihoods, education and decision-making. The CGE has found it difficult to confront government policy on some of these issues, especially those to do with HIV/Aids and social violence.

Relations between the CGE and civil society have been uneven. There have indeed been gains in the gender struggle but the overall norms and values remain male-centred or patriarchal. Meintjes argued that the agenda for transformation was lost in the 'femocratisation' of the state. This word is used to indicate that gender transformation has been subverted by a new women-oriented approach. The women's agenda and the women's movement have to rethink their strategies because women's inclusion and participation in the state has had an anti-political effect. Meintjes called on the women's movement to adopt a different set of theoretical tools and to revive the feminist critique and agenda.

Prospects for the consolidation of democratic governance in Africa will remain problematic until issues of race, gender and other challenges are properly resolved. Using Afrobarometer surveys,

Annie Chikwanha examined the prospects for the consolidation of democratic governance on the continent. She analysed African citizens' leading developmental priorities, evaluated government performance across key areas, and examined the quality of democracy that Africans experience. The Afrobarometer surveys reveal how citizens feel about the consolidation of democracy. They show that since 1999 African citizens continue to lack basic human needs and they portray a bleak picture of poverty on the continent.

While democratic constitutions, governance structures and elections have been introduced, citizens throughout the continent believe that their governments have failed to deliver on many basics. This has serious implications for the consolidation of democratic governance. The surveys show that unemployment continues to be a serious problem, with two in five of the citizens of Botswana, Namibia and Zambia confirming that job creation is a major problem. The most pressing issue, however, remains the HIV / Aids epidemic, and health is now a higher priority than education. Most Africans interviewed regard poverty and hunger as the problems most seriously on the increase in Africa.

Those interviewed also have very little confidence in the ability of their governments to manage national economies. The serious job creation problem identified in the three countries already mentioned extends also to Nigeria, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Uganda. Only in South Africa, Tanzania and Mali is there approval of government initiatives for job creation. Trust in political institutions varies. Taking two examples, the rating of Nigeria's President Obasanjo has gone down, while that of South Africa's President Mbeki has gone up.

In the 2005 survey, fewer Africans indicated their support for democracy. Tanzanians and Ugandans seemed to be uncertain about what democracy means for them, and Nigerians, Zambians and Malawians doubted the credibility of elections and the honesty of elected leaders. Electoral reforms boosted support for democracy in Lesotho. People of all races in South Africa have found democracy reassuring. Despite the reduction in support, three-fifths of Africans still find democracy preferable to any other form of government. Only a slightly lower percentage – 55% of all those interviewed – supported the multi-party concept as the way to force citizens to choose who should govern them. Given the clear support for democracy over any other form of government, the question is whether the present leadership will be able to deliver. While economic problems seem to be top of the list of African demands for better governance, democratic consolidation requires legitimacy, which includes equal freedom and equal representation. Democratic prospects remain bleak for some countries, especially those with a very low trust in their political systems, such as Zimbabwe.

As earlier indicated, Africa cannot choose between democracy and development: the two are mutually reinforcing. The linkage between democracy and development should be about how institutions are structured in order to provide space for citizens to participate collectively in decisions that impact on their own development. There was general agreement among the participants that democracy is taking root in Africa and that Africans are getting more and more experienced in organising elections. But the major concern was whether or not all the key institutions of democracy, such as political parties, electoral management bodies, civil society organisations and parliaments, have developed sufficient capacity to shoulder the burden of democratisation.

# 4

## ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY

In interrogating the importance of elections for democracy in Africa, Jørgen Elklit outlined the core principles of democracy which, according to David Beetham, are popular control and political equality. Democratisation is a much more complex process and should therefore not be confused by the mere holding of elections. Put in other ways, therefore, elections on their own do not amount to democracy, and the consolidation of democracy cannot be achieved by elections alone. But good quality elections form one of the major preconditions for democratisation and its consolidation. Staffan Lindberg<sup>6</sup> has qualified this position by saying that the mere holding of elections has at least a measurable impact on the average 'democratic-ness' of the country in question. Elklit outlined four institutional factors which increase the level of democracy, namely the:

- electoral system;
- party system;
- constitutional system; and
- election management system.

He noted that elections take place in specific institutional, political, socio-economic and cultural contexts, with particular implications for their credibility and the legitimacy of their outcomes.

Elklit identified nine significant levels through which elections contribute to the degree of democratisation (or 'democratic-ness') of African countries, namely:

- boundary delimitation;
- voter registration;
- nomination rules;
- campaign regulations;
- polling;
- counting;
- tabulation;
- election results; and
- voter education.

Voter education should include not only information about how to vote but also a good understanding of the political issues raised during the campaign in order to enable voters to make informed choices. Elklit and Reynolds<sup>7</sup> have recently developed a framework for measuring election quality, which has been pilot-tested in several countries. The election quality instrument allows one to measure the nine steps of the electoral process and to find out which need improvement. The legitimacy of newly elected parliaments depends on how rules are applied and implemented. Elklit stressed that administrative electoral procedures should never be overlooked as they are important for any democracy. The most important issue for any country is to ensure that all its citizens are able to participate on an equal and informed basis in

choosing the country's political decision-makers in a free and fair election. This is the essence of democratic elections as a stepping-stone to fully fledged democracy.

While in some African countries elections are conducted peacefully, in others they have tended to ignite violent conflict. Using data spanning the period 1990-2005, Dorina Bekoe reported on the incidence of electoral violence in Africa in order to:

- investigate whether there has been an increase or a decline in election-related conflicts;
- highlight conditions under which election-related violent conflicts occur;
- identify which period in the electoral process is most and least conflict prone; and
- probe whether countries that hold presidential and parliamentary elections separately are more or less prone to election-related political violence.

Electoral violence undermines progress towards strengthening democratic institutions and may reinforce the belief that the way to power is through bullets and not ballots. Recent incidents of electoral violence include:

- protests following Ethiopia's parliamentary elections (these claimed the lives of more than 80 people);
- political violence and intimidation throughout Togo's 2005 presidential election (this resulted in approximately 400 deaths); and
- disputes over the election results in Madagascar's 2002 presidential election (these resulted in a six-month stand-off between the political parties and divided the island in two).

Bekoe argued that electoral violence undermines sustainable democracy. The early-1990s in Africa were characterised by:

- demonstrations and protests against authoritarianism;
- national conferences that served as forums for the revision of constitutions; and
- the creation of political parties and civil society movements.

Students and civil society organisations protested against failed economic policies and demanded political accountability and inclusion. The internal and external pressures in favour of democracy paid off. Since the late-1980s, all but a handful of countries have held multiparty elections. Electoral violence may be caused by:

- people's frustration at continued authoritarian tendencies;
- ethnic marginalisation;
- the unwillingness of leaders to honour their public statements; and
- the general weakness of democratic institutions.

Election-related violence has many motivations and triggers. Bekoe outlined the triggers as:

- disagreements about the voter registration process;
- perceived or real fraud during vote counting;
- difficulties encountered in casting ballots; and
- questions about the overall fairness and transparency of the process.



### Examples:

- The violent protests following the 2000 general elections in Zanzibar were sparked by allegations of fraudulent ballot-counting procedures; clashes with police left 35 dead.
- The 2004 general elections in Mozambique were preceded by clashes between Renamo supporters and the government, leaving 10 dead.
- In Guinea, 18 people were killed on polling day violence in 1993.

While observers and the media focus attention on the immediate period around polling day, the seeds of electoral violence are often sown well before this day and before the arrival of international election observers. In this sense, the roots of electoral violence and the respect for democratic processes lie in structural and cultural factors that are less amenable to 'technical fixes'. Electoral violence could happen within the context of ethnic riots. When political parties reflect ethnic divisions and rivalries, conflicts during elections are more likely. Recent work points to a strong tendency for Africa's political parties to reflect ethnic cleavages. By and large, election-related violence tends to mark pre-election and post-election phases of the electoral cycle. Evidence suggests that polling day itself is usually less prone to violence.

## 5

### POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND DEMOCRACY

Strengthening national and international governance institutions remains one of the major challenges for Africa's democratisation process. Parliaments, political parties and regional institutions often remain too weak and too poorly resourced to perform their duties effectively. A history of weak institutions continues to haunt the democratic process in Africa. Chris Landsberg focused on SADC and probed institutional challenges for governance in the region. According to Landsberg, Southern Africa has established various political institutions whose mandate is primarily to strengthen and deepen democratic governance. The major challenge facing the SADC region is the perennial problem of weak institutions of governance.

Landsberg argued that SADC, which is the major institution entrusted with the promotion of democratisation and governance, is very weak and that politicians do not seem to give SADC its institutional importance and gravitas. Furthermore, SADC as an institution has not yet developed strong and mutually reinforcing working relationships with other non-state regional bodies such as the SADC Parliamentary Forum (PF), a forum of parliaments in the region established in 1997, and the SADC Electoral Commissions Forum, a forum of election management bodies created in 1998. Both these were deliberately established outside SADC's formal structures, and they both are mainly consultative forums and have no legislative mandates. It is interesting that the greatest success of both to date has come in the area of electoral democracy promotion, and not governance in general.

At present, three election management instruments are generally used in assessing the quality of elections by various observer missions. These are:

- the 2001 Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region, developed by the SADC-PF;
- the 2003 Principles for Election Management, Monitoring and Observation (PEMMO) developed by EISA jointly with the Electoral Commissions Forum; and
- the 2004 Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections in the SADC Region, developed by SADC.

Landsberg observed that most of these instruments and various other conventions or protocols developed at the regional level, especially by SADC itself, fail to translate into national laws and policies. Additionally, not all SADC countries have acceded to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). This demonstrates mixed signals that the states exhibit towards continental governance initiatives.

According to Landsberg, SADC is underperforming from the point of view of institutional effectiveness, which in turn has a negative impact on governance. Given the lack of political power which leaders are reluctant to afford it, and its reliance on donor funding, the SADC Secretariat tends to be bogged down in administrative matters and lacks political teeth. Also, there is a need for democratic space for public debate, and such space should be open and

institutionalised to improve the input of non-state actors in the content of policies and programmes relating to food security. In this regard, civil society must work to ensure that governments recognise and take their mandates seriously. The limited space for and awareness of existing mechanisms has the effect of limiting the nature and extent of input by non-state actors.

Political parties and party coalitions feature prominently in the current democracy discourse, largely due to the critical role of parties in the democratisation process in Africa today. Felix Owuor examined the politics of party coalitions in Africa, with special reference to Kenya. Party coalitions are a new phenomenon because multiparty politics was banned in Kenya soon after its independence. Furthermore, the restoration of pluralistic politics was not accompanied by corresponding constitutional, legal and administrative reforms. It became difficult to dislodge the ruling parties without forming a formidable coalition. The need to win elections directed the weaker parties into coalition politics. The historic general elections of 2002 were a major landmark in Kenya's political history. A major political coalition, the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), defeated the Kenya African National Union (KANU), which had been in power for more than 40 years since Kenya's independence. The political polarisation and politics of ethnicity in Kenya could not guarantee opposition victory in 2002. The overriding objective for the formation of the NARC was therefore the desire of opposition parties to forge a united front, cutting across ethnic cleavages, to beat KANU. The coalition parties signed a memorandum of understanding.

Owuor identified a number of factors that have contributed to the formation, survival and collapse of coalitions in Africa:

- In parliamentary systems such as in Mauritius, the government's survival depends on the maintenance of the cohesion of a party coalition.
- In presidential systems such as Kenya and Malawi, the dependence of the presidential party on its electoral alliance is stronger before elections because their support is needed to win. Once in place this dependency diminishes.
- In the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system, political parties choose to enter into pre-election coalitions in order to avoid wasting votes.
- In proportional representation (PR), there are more post-election coalitions on the basis of the number of seats won.
- In most countries, however, there is a lack of legislation governing party coalitions and this sometimes deprives the coalitions of legitimacy and the opportunity to grow stronger.
- The floor-crossing legislation in South Africa allows parties to pursue coalitions, without the fear of losing their seats. Floor crossing, however, has benefited the ruling African National Congress rather than the smaller parties.
- The incompatibility of character, personal ambition and power struggles among key leaders has often caused factionalism within alliances, leading to their collapse.
- Financial security and being in government can be a powerful incentive for parties to maintain coalitions.

However, the nature and content of the coalition agreement, the coalition management procedures and the implementation of the agreement, impact on the longevity and effectiveness of party alliances. Conflict management mechanisms are crucial.

The central issue that emerges is that of opposition party strategies for survival. In both authoritarian and electoral authoritarian political systems, does it really matter what the opposition does: whether they boycott or contest the elections or whether they reject or accept the outcome? Staffan I Lindberg focused on opposition parties' strategies during and after elections in Africa's new electoral regimes. He examined the extent to which the behaviour of parties in opposition during the early formative years acts to increase the prospects of successful democratisation. He further looked at opposition strategies that facilitate rather than mitigate democratic transitions. In 81% of the elections held in the 53 countries in Africa the opposition participated fully, and in 75% they also accepted the outcome.

Opposition parties seem to participate in flawed elections as a way of further democratising the regime, mobilising support, creating more organisational capacity and capabilities, and attracting international sympathy. By choosing to contest the elections and accept the outcome of those contests, opposition groups greatly enhance the likelihood of the regime becoming democratic, even if the elections do not fulfil the free and fair requirements according to international standards.

Lindberg further argued that in Africa a non-competitive system never really displayed high levels of competitiveness. Furthermore the mere existence of dominant parties does not mean that the system is not competitive and elections are not democratic. Lindberg found that dominant party systems are mostly found in FPTP electoral systems. He argued, however, that repetitive elections in Africa tend to be self-reinforcing, leading to successively more democratic elections even if initially the elections were flawed and circumvented. Some of the elections have had a positive impact on gender representation, on opposition parties learning and adapting to electoral politics, as well as on enhancing and deepening de facto civil liberties in society.

Lindberg defined electoral autocracies as neither politically closed authoritarian systems nor electoral or fully liberal democracies, although they might continue to hold elections. Opposition participation in elections in authoritarian regimes is important for the full realisation of a democratic system. Political participation and competition are the two core components of democracy or 'polyarchy'. It should be stressed that without opposition there is no choice, and that when there is no choice the people cannot exercise their discretion to be ruled via representation. The existence of opposition parties contesting elections is a prerequisite for political competition, which is instrumental for the realisation of self-government.

On the other hand, elections may be flawed, irregular, wholly orchestrated, or dominated by the incumbent party to the extent of making the outcome a foregone conclusion. Elections may be less free and fair, and violence may affect electoral campaigns. Opposition parties may participate even when elections stand no chance of being free and fair or legitimate. Total or partial boycotts are staged by discontented opposition parties. However, opposition disunity is seen in the form of partial boycotts. One would assume that it would be easier for opposition groups to come together in protest against the incumbents. Lindberg argues that even when it comes to protesting via the exit option, opposition forces in Africa cannot unite. Most often some but not all opposition forces in Africa boycott elections. Another opposition strategy is the acceptance or non-acceptance of results. Losing parties may challenge the results in order to gain political advantage from the international community. This can also be a strategy for

bad losers to undermine the legitimacy of their rivals. Sometimes electoral authoritarianism can be reproduced even when the opposition parties and candidates choose to participate fully and even accept the outcome of perhaps dubious elections. Lindberg outlined the effects of opposition participation as follows:

- *Voter turnout*: This is generally understood to be an important dimension of the quality of democracy. Increased participation of opposition parties and candidates would lead to higher levels of popular participation by inducing choice and competition.
- *Winners' share of votes*: The winning candidates' share of the votes as percentages of the total votes is important. This can be diluted by the opposition's participation.
- *Two-thirds majority*: Such a majority in parliament typically gives the ruling party a free hand to introduce changes in the constitution unilaterally. Opposition might or might not affect this majoritarian principle, but PR systems tend to produce multiparty systems.
- *Turnover of power*: When alternations of power occur peacefully, we can begin to say that democracy is being consolidated.
- *Regime survival*: Opposition participation facilitates the goal of regime survival.

Opposition parties play an important role in democracies as they ensure competition for state power and open possibilities for the alternation of power. From this perspective and with all things being equal, acceptance of results by all parties is a crucial element of the legitimacy of governments following a free and fair election. In conclusion, Lindberg emphasised the context of elections as very important for opposition participation. The extent to which elections are free and fair, and whether or not political violence is used during the campaign and polling day, determine the level of opposition participation. In Africa the quality of competition and the power of the opposition can explain the level of 'democratic-ness' of a country.

The aspect of money and politics is of crucial importance in a discussion on strengthening democratic institutions. Richard Calland and Judith February argued that one of the greatest threats to democracy is the impact of money on the political process. For example, in South Africa high-profile companies have tried to buy influence from political parties. A number of political scandals in South Africa show the pressures on political parties to raise money for their parties. However, in South Africa there has been a campaign for a social consensus on the issue of money and politics, and a call for transparency on this issue and for regulations to guide issues of disclosure. Should citizens and civil society demand this transparency of their political parties? In South Africa, political parties are funded according to agreed formulas but still the citizens are not aware of how much money the parties spend. Most of the money comes from private donations, which are not disclosed. So if laws of disclosure are put in place, who is to enforce them?

Calland and February called for a proper regulatory framework that would restore and protect the integrity of political donations and civil society engagement in the democratic process. Regulating political finance may prevent corruption and unethical conduct, enhance fair political competition between parties, empower voters through disclosure of donations and thereby promote greater political participation, and strengthen parties as effective participants in the

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democratic arena. It is important that funds donated to political parties should be utilised to deepen debate on issues of national concern, both within parties and within the broader society.

One issue that has baffled analysts and political actors alike is the new trend of manipulation of constitutions for prolonging the tenure of incumbent presidents – which has serious implications for democratic consolidation. Marcellin Zounmenou posed a number of questions on why some African presidents tamper with their constitutions. Do they uphold the sanctity of their constitutions? Following democratic transitions of the late 1980s in Africa, in a majority of countries constitutions were drafted and subjected to referendums. Then elections were held, and in some instances new presidents came into power. Civil society has remained vocal in opposition to constitutional manipulations meant to allow for a third term of office for incumbent presidents. The third term mania happens at two levels – a real change of the constitution and a behind-the-scenes manipulation. This constitutional meddling remains one of Africa's greatest threats to democratic consolidation and stability.

## 6

### POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, LEADERSHIP AND DEMOCRACY

There seems to be a conflict between governance structures and processes that are either rooted in the history and culture of indigenous societies or that come with the process of political modernisation of African societies. By far the most frequent criticism of traditional leadership is that it is autocratic by its very nature and therefore is incompatible with any democratic system of government. Using Cameroon as a case study, Thaddeus Menang examined the idea of the incompatibility of democracy and traditional leadership and how this has either hampered or fostered democratic consolidation in Cameroon. He gave a historical perspective and described the characteristic features and the major role of that country's kind of leadership.

The suggestion that traditional leadership is incompatible with democratic principles and thus should be abolished in so-called modern states arises both from prejudice against traditional cultures and from insufficient knowledge of traditional leadership institutions. To be well understood, traditional leadership should not be seen as contrasting with modern forms of governance but rather as an indigenous form of leadership that developed from indigenous (African) cultures and existed before the various indigenous polities came under the influence and domination of foreign (mostly European) powers. Seen in this light, traditional leadership in Africa cannot essentially contradict democratic principles because what has come to be known as democracy today itself developed from forms of governance that were indigenous to other parts of the world. Besides, a closer look at forms of traditional governance in Cameroon, and elsewhere in Africa, reveals that some of the underlying principles are similar in nature to principles that support democratic practice today.

Menang outlined the difference between traditional leadership and democracy. He said that incompatibility between traditional leadership and democracy lies in the fact that the former is hereditary while the latter involves the holding of regular elections to choose leaders. This appears to be true at first sight, but a closer look reveals that in both traditional and 'modern' democratic governance, the leader is chosen from a number of eligible candidates. The leader in either case is not imposed on the people. The only difference is the criteria for eligibility. One may also argue that even among Western-style democracies, leadership eligibility criteria tend to differ from one country to the next. In many regions of Cameroon, for instance, the heads of the major families that comprise the tribe or clan are usually consulted before a new leader is chosen. The people, through their recognised representatives, participate in the choice of leader even if this does not take the form of elections as they are generally understood under 'modern' democratic governance.

With Cameroon's return to multiparty politics in the early 1990s, traditional leaders came under increased pressure from post-colonial administrators, who expected them, in addition to their usual administrative duties, to lend their support to the political regime in place. Whereas under the one-party system traditional leaders simply served as auxiliaries of the administration and were not expected to make purely political choices, the advent of a pluralist political system

posed a serious challenge to these leaders, who many expected would continue to exercise some measure of neutrality so as to allow their people free support for the party of their choice. But most leaders failed to remain neutral in the face of pressure from local administrative officials to declare their support for the ruling party and to try to convince their people to do likewise. This has led to a further estrangement of traditional rulers from their people in some parts of the country, particularly in the northern and western provinces where traditional institutions have remained relatively powerful and where the people continue to exercise their right to criticise their rulers.

Menang outlined instances where traditional leaders have been involved in undemocratic activities. Reports of human rights abuses by traditional rulers have come from some provinces in Cameroon as the leaders have tried to coerce their people to adopt their political choices. In an effort to support the ruling party, these leaders simply prohibited opposition party activities within the areas under their control, and opposition activists who persisted in carrying out political activities were often arrested, molested and detained by the leaders' private guards.

Traditional leadership in Cameroon, and perhaps in the rest of Africa, stands at the crossroads today. The days of the great African empires when this leadership was at the height of its glory are gone, even though such leadership survived decades of manipulation at the hands, first, of the colonial powers and then of the largely one-party post-colonial state. With the start of a new era of multiparty democracy, traditional leadership is still struggling to adjust in order to survive. For it to survive and find itself a place among the governance structures of the new democratic era, the leadership of the post-colonial state must be willing to accommodate and make the best use of the many possibilities that traditional leadership offers for the realisation of grassroots-based development.

Some voices have been heard suggesting that because traditional leadership is outdated and fails to meet the basic conditions for democratic governance, it should be scrapped and replaced by elected village or community heads or existing local councils. Such suggestions, however, seem to ignore the social and cultural context within which traditional leadership structures have thrived for centuries. In the first place, in view of the social and cultural setup of the country's ethnic communities, the suppression of traditional leadership structures is liable to create a power vacuum that the precarious structures of the post-colonial state may not be able to fill. Past experience in Cameroon, and elsewhere in Africa, has shown that traditional leadership structures cannot be suppressed without dire consequences for peace and social harmony.

Menang appealed for traditional leadership to be put back on to the governance agenda. He argued that in order for democratic governance to take root in Africa, it will be necessary to marry democratic principles and practices with African values and way of life. Traditional leadership, as an African idea of leadership, thus needs to be taken into consideration as Africans pool their resources for building their continent. In this respect, it is urgent for African states to rethink their democratic processes and determine the institutions and practices that are best suited to their respective situations. In the course of this rethinking of democratic models for Africa, there is little doubt that traditional African leadership institutions, having been tested through long periods of adversity, will be an important source of inspiration. This rethinking



has indeed begun at the level of African intellectuals who are proposing ways and means of integrating traditional leadership in the governance structures of the 'modern' state.

African societies have tended to move away from the traditional governance mode to put more emphasis on modern institutions of governance such as parliaments. But it has been argued that comparative knowledge about African parliaments is still limited. Lia Nijzink examined the institutional capacity of African parliaments and how their citizens perceive them. There is very limited knowledge of how African parliaments compare with one another, and of the relative power of Africa's parliaments and presidents. There seems to be agreement that African parliaments are extremely weak institutions with relatively powerful presidents. However 85% of countries in Africa have elected presidents. While the president has the power to appoint members of the cabinet, in 24% of cases he needs legislative approval for such appointments. In 81% of the cases in Africa the president has full powers to dismiss the cabinet or individual ministers. In only 16% of those cases are the powers of the president restricted.

The available literature on parliaments examined variables such as the colonial legacy, the appointment and dismissal powers of governing parties, executive control of state resources and role perceptions of legislators. These factors in a way contribute to the institutional weaknesses of the African legislatures in their limited role in policy-making and law-making. However, although African parliaments are labelled as weak there are cross-national variations. The authority of the legislature ranges from being very weak in Senegal to moderately strong in Kenya, with Benin and Ghana falling somewhere in between. On the whole, existing studies of African legislatures provide sketchy evidence on the relative strength of African parliaments in terms of law-making and policy-making, oversight and representation.

Nijzink observed that legislatures in Africa's current regimes seem to have institutional capacity to represent citizens, to make laws, and to ensure presidential accountability. Although a number of donors have focused on the capacity-building of parliaments, these donor efforts and their impact on parliaments' role to enhance the quality of democracy has not been fully studied. What is known, however, is that some parliaments are equally weak, while some have greater resources, powers and autonomy than others.

According to Nijzink, it is well known that institutional capacity in terms of resources is generally low among African legislatures, especially compared to Western standards of very well-resourced legislatures such as the American Congress and the German legislature. However, in spite of the support from international donors, the parliament of Malawi is still housed in temporary office space and lacks adequate research support. On the other hand there is the well-resourced South African parliament, housed in extensive office buildings in Cape Town with a well-staffed research section. African parliaments further differ in size and the size of parliaments influences their capacity. Members are one of the most important human resources of a legislature. They offer their individual skills and time to fulfil their collective responsibilities. More members simply means more hands to get the various jobs done – including assessing proposed legislation, drafting amendments, scrutinising budgets, reading departmental reports, introducing motions, asking questions, attending plenary meetings, participating in debates and voting. Furthermore, African members of parliament (MPs) are generally less financially independent than are their Western counterparts.

In looking at the autonomy of African legislatures, Nijzink said that the constitutional design of executive legislative relations is an important part of the institutional capacity of Africa's parliaments. In cases where the president and parliament have separate electoral mandates, the executive does not depend on the continued support of the legislature to stay in power. This is different where the executive is selected by the legislature and stays in power only as long as it has the continued confidence of the legislature. With the exception of Zambia, former British colonies adopted parliamentary systems at independence. However, with the displacement of democratic governments by authoritarian regimes soon after independence, most inherited parliamentary systems were replaced by presidential systems in which presidents had extensive governmental authority. Botswana, Mauritius and South Africa retained the parliamentary regimes they inherited as part of their British colonial legacy. The executive still needs the continued confidence of the legislature in order to stay in power and shares its electoral mandate with the legislature. Where executive and legislative powers are fused rather than separated, it is difficult to measure the autonomy of the legislature in terms of formal constitutional powers. Legislatures in parliamentary regimes have the power to censure the executive.

Another measure of autonomy is the separation of offices. In some countries the constitution explicitly prohibits the combination of a seat in parliament and a ministerial position. In countries such as Cape Verde, Mozambique, Mali, Senegal and Nigeria, ministers are compelled to give up their parliamentary seats when they join the cabinet. There are also countries where the combination of a position in cabinet and a seat in parliament is required. The constitution stipulates that all ministers need to be MPs in order to be part of the cabinet. This is the case in Kenya, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Lesotho. There are also cases where the combination of offices is not constitutionally required but merely allowed – as in Ghana, Malawi and South Africa. In these countries not all ministers have to be MPs on appointment, although most ministers happen to be recruited from parliament and retain their seats once they are appointed to the cabinet.

Elected presidents enjoy a wide range of executive power – from unrestricted power to restricted discretion or no power at all. Cape Verde, Mali and Namibia are the only countries in which the president's power to dismiss a cabinet member is restricted. In other countries the president can dismiss ministers at will. On the whole the studies reveal that weak parliaments are faced by strong presidents. Combined with generally low levels of parliamentary resources, this means that the institutional capacity of African parliaments to hold strong presidents to account is fairly limited. Nijzink noted that the surveys indicate widespread support among Africans for the institutions of representative democracy and a firm rejection of authoritarian alternatives. Furthermore, Africans support the independence of parliaments from presidents.

Citizens' perceptions of parliaments as either rubber stamps or as ineffective have also been studied. Legislative parliaments have followed in the wake of the democratisations of the 1990s. Parliaments in Africa concentrate more on the representative function. Using Afrobarometer surveys, Elisabete Azevedo noted that African citizens under a presidential system are more able to express an opinion about their presidents and also about their representatives. Furthermore, Africans express more trust towards presidents than parliaments, with levels of trust high for presidents, except in Nigeria and Cape Verde. However, the dominant party

system is seen as a current weak point for the role of parliaments. Nearly 80% of Africans advocate limitation of presidential terms and reject presidents for life.

The Afrobarometer surveys show that African citizens have a very high awareness of the institutions of the presidency and parliament, and are quite able to distinguish between the two. In the survey results, of the 15 countries surveyed, the citizens of eight have ratings of more than 50% for their presidents. Only in Nigeria was trust for the president very low. Azevedo examined contacts between citizens and parliamentarians, with her data revealing that only one in ten Africans had contact with parliamentarians. She found that citizens' awareness of political institutions is a prerequisite for accountability in a democratic regime, and that African legislatures need to be more visible and reachable by the populace.

Botswana has a high level of presidentialism, with the general elections since independence in 1966 producing no change of government. Kenneth Good argued that state power is centralised in Botswana in the person and office of the executive president. He examined the Botswana 'miracle' of economic growth and democracy as two duopolies, with the country's economic sphere being dominated by a close interrelationship between the government and Debswana, the diamond-producing company, and its political sphere being dominated by a 'presidentialist' state and a preponderant ruling party. Economic power and political power are highly centralised in these two paired, interlinked and dominant entities. Civil society is small and weak, regular elections produce no change, and an unelected president is vested with enormous power. The main levers of state power – the bureaucracy, the military, the police, information and broadcasting, and the anti-corruption agency – are in the hands of the presidency. The country's judiciary is weak, with the high court judges not enjoying uniformity of pay and conditions of service. Instead, they are dependent on the executive for their conditions of service and salaries. The power of the president in Botswana is increased by the dominance of the ruling Botswana Democratic Party, which has comfortably commanded legislative power at every election, while the opposition splits and fragments. The small size and the dependency of civil society in Botswana remains a limiting factor. Participation in elections has also been very low.

However, Botswana has managed its diamond revenues very well fiscally and has achieved infrastructural development, both physical and human. Diamonds have brought roads, railways, airlines, telecommunications, education and health facilities – indeed, an immense wealth and a strong currency. Good pointed out, however, that the emphasis on monetary policy has produced wasteful and corrupt practices. Prioritising growth and accumulation left such sectors as agriculture neglected. He observed that the government and Debswana have locked Botswana into diamond dependency. Botswana's sustained commitment to diamonds and De Beers is a risky strategy because much of the diamond industry operates in a secretive and non-transparent manner, which makes effective regulation by government difficult.

The Botswana miracle has engendered a palpable complacency among the rulers, and has seriously reduced their capacity for change. Government uses different tactics to discredit an opposition that is frail and disorganised. Good characterised Botswana as a presidentialist democracy with an over-concentration of wealth in diamonds and an over-centralisation of political power in the presidency and the ruling party. Dependency on diamonds is heavy and diversification is negligible. The duopoly of presidentialism and dependency dominates

democratic institutions and stifles change. Poverty and inequalities are unjustifiably high and non-accountability and hostility to criticism negate the democratic dynamics of the Botswana society.

Danga Mughogho and Kimberly Smiddy discussed the tug of war between the executive and the legislature in Malawi. Malawi provides a case study of a president and a legislature in crisis. While Malawi's constitution clearly provides for a separation of powers, parliament only rarely challenged the president during the first 10 years of the country's independence, except on the contentious third-term issue. Since the May 2004 elections, the battle between the legislature and executive has continued unabated, with relations far from stable and a clear pattern yet to develop.

Recent calls from both domestic and foreign advocates of alternative institutional arrangements tend to view the effect of institutions on political behaviour in a mechanistic manner and to downplay or ignore the legacy of personal rule. The speakers on Malawi said that the problems of Malawi's young democracy are not due to the formal set of rules but rather to the lack of informal rules, procedures and norms that govern intra-elite relations.

It is not yet clear whether Malawi's political elites will choose the path leading to greater accountability, whether they will continue with the neo-patrimonial politics of the past or whether there will be an even worse outcome. Until political leaders on all sides agree to find mechanisms for compromise and dialogue, the casualties will be the poor people of Malawi. As the politicians from the government and the opposition continue to battle, the Malawians suffer. 'When the elephants fight the grass is trampled.'

# 7

## CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Bhekinnkosi Moyo and Charles Mutasa examined the role of civil society in democracy and development, and how civil society engages with the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (Ecosocc). Mutasa, on the one hand, provided a positive outlook on this relationship and indicated how it can be strengthened by creating more structures for cooperation between civil society and the African Union (AU). Moyo, on the other hand, was critical of the structure, mandate and powers of Ecosocc as a mechanism for enhancing popular participation in development and democracy.

Both Moyo and Mutasa recognised the important role of African civil society in the development of Africa. The fundamental premise is that Africa's development must be about development of people. As early as 1990, the Arusha Charter on Popular Participation recognised the need for African governance to fully integrate African civil society in the structures of key institutions, so that they could fully participate in defining the long-term development policies of the continent. While the charter of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) had made no reference to African civil society, the OAU increasingly began to invite African civil society organisations (CSOs) to participate as observers in some of its meetings and structures.

The third summit of the AU held in Addis Abba, Ethiopia, in July 2004 saw African leaders opening their arms to the effective formal participation of the wider CSOs in Africa and the diaspora by approving the statutes of Ecosocc. The establishment of Ecosocc under the provision of articles 5 and 22 of the AU's constitution is a confirmation and assurance that popular participation in the activities of the AU, as enunciated in the African Charter for Popular Participation, is a prerequisite for its success. With the establishment of the AU in 2002, the importance has been recognised for CSOs not to be observers of AU proceedings but to be an integral part of the organisation's decision- and policy-making process. The AU's Assembly of Heads of State and Government Decision AHG Dec. 160 (XXXII) of July 2001 in Lusaka stressed the importance of involving African non-governmental organisations (NGOs), socio-economic organisations, professional associations and CSOs in Africa's integration process, as well as in the formulation and implementation of the AU's programmes.

Article 22 of the AU's founding charter defines African civil society as an advisory organ and explicitly invites African civil society, through its various organisations, to participate fully in its institutions, particularly Ecosocc. This has now been extended to participation in various other institutions and committees, such as the African Parliament, the African Court of Justice, the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation and specialised committees, all of which are required to involve CSOs in their work.

Moyo discussed Ecosocc as 'an invented space', 'an invited space' or 'a free space', and described the opportunities it provides for civil society. The objectives of Ecosocc are:

- the promotion of continuous dialogue between all segments of the African people on issues concerning Africa and its future;

- the forging of a strong link between governments and all segments of civil society, in particular women, the youth, children, the diaspora, organised labour, the private sector and professional groups;
- the promotion of the participation of civil society in the implementation of the policies and programmes of the AU;
- support for policies and programmes that promote peace, security and stability in Africa;
- the promotion and defence of the culture of good governance, democratic principles and institutions, popular participation, human rights and freedoms; and
- the promotion and defence of gender equality.

The greatest challenges for civil society will be ensuring its legitimacy and demonstrating its ability and value to the continent by introducing viable solutions and alternatives to such crucial questions as disease in general, the lethal impact of Aids on food security and livelihoods, poverty, conflict and authoritarianism. Civil society needs to respond to the heartbreaking events in Sudan's Darfur region and to the beleaguered regions of Ituri and Kivu in the DRC. There is need for both civil society and African leaders to work together and to convince the people of the continent that the lives and safety of their fellow Africans are sacrosanct, and that there can be no substitute for the fruits of peace.

It is not an easy role that civil society is called upon to play in promoting democratic values, good governance, the rule of law and human rights – which are all indispensable for the continent's economic and social development. Indeed, CSOs are quick to point out that the AU itself has not been willing to name and shame member states which violate human rights and continue to exercise authoritarian rule. If CSOs are to be serious about their relations with the AU, they must strongly condemn evil and uphold good within their own ranks. Failure to do this will lead to them being at loggerheads with the people they are pledged to serve.

Moyo outlined both the limitations and opportunities of Ecosocc's functions. The problem is that Ecosocc plays the advisory function without any influence on policies. While Ecosocc is a platform for participation it has no power to change the status quo. It is therefore only 'an invited space' and not 'a free space' or 'an invented space'. The fact that there are some 150 CSOs provides another reason for their effective participation. Furthermore, the eligibility criteria for Ecosocc membership effectively limit CSO participation. To qualify, CSOs need to be national, regional or continental or be from the diaspora, they must have objectives and principles consistent with those of the AU, and they must have been registered for at least three years. A number of CSOs cannot meet these requirements.

The speakers noted that civil society's aims and the aims of other democracy-supporting institutions are similar. All stakeholders aim at promoting democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance, as well as peace and security. Civil society represents a strength that African governments can draw on.

Even though civil society faces many challenges – including strained relationships with governments, mistrust by states and sometimes excessive donor dependence – there are still good reasons for governments to engage with and work with this civic sector.

The role of civil society in democratisation was further examined in the case study of Malawi. Jacob Nkambule noted that no fewer than about 400 CSOs were represented in this country, working in areas such as health service provision, education, water supply, sanitation and agricultural services. They also deal with human rights education and promotion and democratic processes, including election monitoring and voter and civic education. Civil society has been involved in making democracy grow. As an example, the CSOs played important roles by providing election monitoring and voter and civic education during the 1999 and 2004 national elections as well as the 2000 local government election. Networks of CSOs including the Church NGO Consortium, the Public Affairs Committee and the Malawi Electoral Support Network provided leadership in carrying out these tasks. These networks and many other individual CSOs aroused the interest of citizens in the electoral process. Voter education messages also guided the electorate on the need to select quality leaders.

Civil society in Malawi has been active in advocacy and lobbying campaigns for an increase in the number of women candidates in the elections. NGOs such as the Women's Lobby, Women's Voice, and the Pan-African Civic Education Network have specific programmes aimed at promoting the participation of women candidates. The CSOs have also been involved in development work, such as in the building of schools and clinics, providing a range of maternity, safe-sex and other health services, providing clean water and facilitating the development of small-scale enterprises and other income-generating activities. Owing to the heavy costs involved, these roles have largely been undertaken by international NGOs.

CSOs in Malawi continue to face a number of challenges, including:

- mistrust and suspicion by the state;
- inadequate resources;
- their concentration in urban areas prevents them from giving sufficient attention to rural communities;
- they generally lack coordination and often compete against each other; and
- their growth is often stifled by onerous legal requirements.

Despite these problems, however, better ways of engagement between civil society and the state need to be pursued.

Citizens, civics, and government engagement are the foundation for an effective democracy. Ilona Tip and Bronwen Wilson Thompson delved into the mechanisms for effective participation. Citizen participation in democratic governance was reiterated. Citizenship participation is an important dimension of 'the continent's democratic governance tenets'. This is reflected in the preamble to the AU's constitution, which states that the AU 'will be guided by our common vision of a united and strong Africa and by the need to build a partnership between governments and all segments of civil society, in particular women, youth and the private sector, in order to strengthen solidarity and cohesion among our people needed in a new democracy.'

The preamble noted that participatory democracy is people driven and that a vibrant democracy requires the active engagement of citizens in the decision-making process. Democracy cannot be sustained if citizens participate only at election time. There should be a continuous process

of engagement. Citizen participation contributes towards sustaining the institutions of democracy, and democracy deepens when there is transparency and accountability. Furthermore, citizen's initiatives are becoming recognised as the catalyst for new ideas and for change.

There remain, however, many challenges in engaging with citizens in order to make democracy meaningful. Some of the biggest problems are how to include citizens in the decision-making process, how to empower citizens to become partners with government and how to deepen democracy by substituting participation for mere representation. When new democratic laws are being enacted, citizens often do not fully take advantage of them.

A number of programmes have been designed by EISA to strengthen citizen participation and civil society. The first is the 'One in a Million' programme, which focuses on youth participation, while another is the 'Active Citizenship' programme, which focuses on community organisation. All these programmes seek to create an active citizenry.

Citizen participation remains an important cornerstone of democracy. However, rules of engagement and the general political environment in the different African countries affect the way civil society and the citizens participate in the political process. Some CSOs are regarded as being in opposition to the governments of the day. While Ecosoc might provide an enabling environment for civil society to engage at the continental level with continental bodies, its role is only advisory and it lacks the power to compel governments to be more accountable to the people and to ensure greater citizen participation in governance and development. The relationship between the state and CSOs remains a very complex area, and one that depends on the type of regime and the politics inherent in a country. Development NGOs do not normally confront the governments of the countries in which they operate, as they are normally apolitical. However, advocacy groups have tended to be confrontational and they have often developed tense relationships with governments. A third group, community-based organisations, is often free from interference by the state. Funding from outside donors usually attracts attention from the governments concerned. Some CSOs should accept that their mandate is not to govern but to monitor those that govern.



## 8

### NEPAD, THE APRM, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Ross Herbert outlined the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) process and highlighted its key strengths and challenges. The APRM is an integral part of Nepad, which is the new blueprint or vision for Africa's development, governance and continental integration. There were high expectations of the APRM, with some having expected it to solve the governance crisis in Zimbabwe. The APRM, however, is definitely not a tool for solving crisis situations such as that prevailing in Zimbabwe. Peer review has led to mixed perceptions: some countries have acceded to Nepad and the APRM and are positively disposed towards both; others have not acceded to these initiatives and are critical of their intended goals and objectives.

Grant Masterson examined the prevailing definitions of civil society in the context of African governance and identified a suitable means of conceptualising civil society more specifically in the context of the APRM. Civil society was again redefined, as well as its role with regard to the APRM process. Masterson traced the long history of civil society in political thought that has been defined and redefined from Adam Ferguson, Hegel, Marx and Tocqueville. Most of these early definitions conceived of civil society in its relationship to the state. The Gramscian notion is that civil society should be outside the state. There are a number of opposed views on the composition of civil society and what constitutes civil society. In the context of the discussion of the APRM, civil society is defined as the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. Civil society is populated by organisations such as registered charities, development NGOs, community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations and advocacy groups.

The APRM document on standards and objectives stresses the importance of a fully consultative process. The importance of civil society is clear in the APRM document, and civil society participation is considered essential if the process is to succeed. The definition of civil society is, however, not made very clear in the APRM document. The document refers instead to 'stakeholders'.

Ghana has been engaged in the APRM process and the central role that civil society played in the process was hailed as successful. Rwanda, however, is said to have adopted a narrow and restrictive view of stakeholder engagement. The Kenyan process made significant allowances for the engagement and participation of civil society, with some of the CSOs having even delayed the implementation of the process as they tried to further their own interests.

It is important that the participating government and civil society should map out the parameters for participation and possibly the rules of engagement in the APRM process. This would establish a platform for meaningful and effective participation by all stakeholders in the process of governance review. Masterson emphasised the central role of civil society in the governance discourse at local, provincial, national and even regional levels. He questioned the lack of consensus regarding the description and scope of civil society in the context of the APRM.

Sheila Bunwaree traced the APRM process in Mauritius and outlined its failure to be an all-inclusive process. People have high expectations of the Mauritian democracy but its APRM process has not been as spectacular as its record of holding democratic elections. Mauritius joined the APRM process in July 2003, becoming the 16th country to do so since the APRM was first adopted at a summit in Abuja, Nigeria, in March 2003. This process has had problems in terms of the engagement with civil society. The APRM process has unfortunately not been completed. This is rather surprising for a country such as Mauritius with such outstanding democratic credentials.

To start the process, the government announced that the National Economic and Social Council (NESC), a statutory body composed of representatives of government, business, labour and civil society, would manage the APRM process in Mauritius. The role of the NESC was to act as the focal point for the APRM process, liaising between the country's stakeholders and the APRM secretariat, and to be responsible in the first instance for preparing the APRM self-assessment report and a preliminary national programme of action.

Problems affecting the APRM process in Mauritius included the lack of a common vision when embarking on the APRM self-assessment, given that not all stakeholders had the same interpretation of the exercise. There was very little understanding and appreciation of the philosophy of the APRM, and the exercise therefore became rather state-centric. Target groups identified as respondents were government dominated. The irony was that while government through the NESC relied heavily on departments within the different ministries to respond, the state itself was seen as rather detached and indifferent to the peer review exercise that was supposed to be taking place in the country. Another factor that may have hampered the process was that attention of the key players was focused on elections and election campaigns.

Given that government had appointed the NESC as the focal point, the latter should have driven the project while ensuring broad and strong civil society participation. Bunwaree suggested that the choice of the NESC to be the focal point was inappropriate. Furthermore, communication with the media remained rather weak. There was no effort deployed to ensure that the media was part of the exercise. Bunwaree argued that no particular methodology was devised by the NESC or any other stakeholder to ensure that the exercise took the form of a national dialogue and gave a voice to the people. The process basically consisted of convening a few workshops and asking different ministries to fill in the parts of the questionnaire that were relevant to them. The failure to comply with APRM guidelines on the setting-up of teams of technical expertise meant that the APRM process in Mauritius was not sufficiently research oriented. This was the main reason for the poor quality of the report. A major problem with the process was the apathy of civil society. Of the few CSOs responding to the questionnaire, the Mauritius Council of Social Services, the Mauritius Labour Congress, the Senior Citizens Council and *Union Mauricienne*, a political party, were the most prominent.

There was also little civil society participation in the 31 March 2005 validation workshop, leading the NESC to decide to reopen the process to public submissions. Cronyism and insufficient representation proved to be considerable obstacles to broad participation in the process. The level of independence of civil society was also questionable in a few other quarters. Mauritius could have thought that the APRM process was just another African thing and therefore did

not accord it the importance it deserved from both government and stakeholders. Given the plethora of problems encountered, it is evident that Mauritius was not quite prepared for this exercise. Bunwaree wondered why Mauritius even volunteered itself for the African peer review process.

Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni made a case for Zimbabwe to accede to the APRM just like any other country. While the whole APRM process is unfolding, Zimbabwe seems to continue to be embroiled in a crisis of governance. As such, it is therefore in critical need of the APRM process. The crisis in Zimbabwe has become so serious that it is high time that it is resolved. There is a need for a post-crisis discussion for Zimbabwe and how it can be accommodated into the discussions of the APRM process. There is a need to restore peace and the rule of law, as well as to achieve national reconciliation and a clear developmental policy. The challenge is how this can be realised as Zimbabwe descends more and more into political decay. Several attempts have been made to resolve the Zimbabwe crisis, but in Ndlovu-Gatsheni's view APRM could make a substantial contribution. Since the APRM is based on stakeholder engagement and dialogue, this could offer Zimbabwe a comprehensive starting point to return to normalcy.

Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe, has criticised Nepad and the APRM as fronts for Western imperialism. Mugabe continues to enjoy the support of other African leaders who keep a low profile when issues of the Zimbabwe crisis come up for discussion in both the AU and SADC. However, Zimbabwe needs to return to normalcy and Ndlovu-Gatsheni believes that normalcy can be achieved only by getting involved in the APRM process. This would allow Zimbabwe to self-assess its economic and political situation and then give recommendations for the way forward. This should be an inclusive process. Zimbabwe needs to be aware of the benefits of the APRM process, which will lead to a realistic improvement in policy-making.

By joining the APRM process, Zimbabwe will gradually shake off the stigma of being seen as an absurdity in SADC and as an outpost of tyranny at the international level. Furthermore, this will receive enormous support, as it will be seen as Zimbabwe's commitment to normalising its situation. Zimbabwe could use the APRM process to investigate what went wrong with its governance. Furthermore, an APRM process would be a good way to re-engage citizens and organisations that have disengaged from the state and the political process. The state and civil society are at loggerheads; APRM offers room for full participation of civil society and the private sector in the development of a comprehensive turn-around strategy.

# 9

## EDUCATION, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Education is considered to be one of the cornerstones of a democratic society. Sherri Le Motte placed education at the centre of democratic development. Education, she said, is a route to 'democratic enculturation', a way of building an ethos of human rights in society, a means to social transformation; a humanising experience which, if acted upon, should propel the world into a better place. Regardless of this, education often escapes being a focus of attention by some sectors. This lack of a unified strategic approach to education, democracy and development seriously hinders the potential of education to impact on broader issues in society.

Despite the lack of concrete interventions, the linkages between democracy, human rights and development are supported time and again in statements made by politicians and world leaders. This point is made in a number of declarations and conventions, namely:

- the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 ratified in 1996;
- the Charter of the United Nations;
- the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights (1981);
- the African Charter of the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990);
- the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation Recommendations Concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education Relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1974).

Human rights and democracy are important for human peace and stability and, ultimately, for human survival. Education for democracy and human rights is also education for development. Education is the means of creating the necessary conditions for continued human survival.

Since wars begin in the minds of men (and women), it is in the minds of men (and women) that the defences of peace must be constructed.<sup>8</sup> The more people know their rights and the more they respect the rights of others, the better will be the chance that they will live together in peace. Only when people are educated about human rights can we hope to prevent human rights violations, and thus prevent conflict as well.

Education therefore furthers sustainable human development in all its dimensions. Democracy and human rights should be one of the areas of focus of education for development, as well as one of the outcomes of education for development. In summary, both democracy and human rights education and development education could be described as:

- providing an educational response to the issues of development, human rights, justice and world citizenship;
- facilitating the development of the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills with which young people enter society and provide them with the necessary 'currency for survival' with dignity;

- promoting the voices and viewpoints of those who are excluded or marginalised from an equal share in the benefits of human development;
- promoting an understanding of the world as interrelated and interdependent, and in which coexistence is critical to the survival of all;
- developing the potential of each child and young person in order for them to become whole, empathetic human beings who are able to live their lives justly, fairly, equally and with dignity;
- developing within each person the necessary citizenship skills, which include criticising, challenging, participating in and transforming society.

Citizens who are not sheep but who are creative and critical thinkers and problem-solvers will take the initiative and bring their dreams and visions to reality. These are the people who will be produced by such an education, who will ensure that democracy itself is developed and that human development is taken further.

If education is to have its 'mandated' impact on democracy and development, a strategic and holistic plan of action needs to be integrated into the systems of education, as well as into the institutions responsible for implementation. Such a plan will also require broader economic, political and social support.

Clearly, the impact needs to go beyond what children and young people are able to regurgitate. It needs to provide the context in which they learn, how and why they learn, who learns and who does not, what they learn and why, and who teaches. Many and varied initiatives have been put in place to respond to this challenge. Among these have been the Education For All campaign, which seeks to motivate countries to fulfil their obligation to provide a 'universal quality education for all'. Within this framework issues such as gender disparities, child labour, violence and abuse, poverty and any hindrance to the right to education are monitored and reported.

Sherri outlined EISA's role in many civic education initiatives. EISA has for some years been involved in a range of education initiatives across South Africa and within SADC. These initiatives have focused on civil society programmes as well as on the formal education sector. Much of the work has been based on the premise that although education cannot cure all the ills of society, it can and should play a significant role in furthering democracy and development.

Work in South Africa undertaken in schools included:

- lobbying and advocacy work in collaboration with other institutions for the inclusion of democracy, human rights and peace in school curricula;
- working collaboratively with initiatives set up by the Ministry of Education to ensure that this happened;
- identifying policy implementation gaps;
- using this information to seek funding and to work collaboratively with the ministry to address these issues;
- keeping an open dialogue between CSOs and the Ministry of Education;
- developing learning support materials and training programmes which model good practice; and

- offering workshops and training programmes for educators and, where appropriate, learners at school.

The review emphasised that most countries have put in place Education For All plans, policies and practices for schools which support the development of democracy and human rights. These countries have focused on non-discrimination, gender equity, the banning of corporal punishment, and including these important principles in curricula. The review also raised the following key challenges facing the implementation of education for democracy and human development in schools:

- *Overburdened curricula:* The curriculum tends to be seen as the vehicle for all learning about democracy, human rights and even development. Instead of unchanging notions of the knowledge that is required in a curriculum, emphasis needs to be placed on holistic learning, on the concept that 'the medium is the message' and on learning that is not just about 'what I hear or read' but also about 'what I experience' and 'what I am required to do' or 'how I should act'. These behavioural implications are particularly significant when we are engaged with values in education.
- *The absence of a school programme that effectively incorporates human rights and democracy:* Shifting attention from an exclusive curriculum focus must acknowledge that approaches should be holistic and involve all aspects of the school and community life. Schools do not operate in a vacuum: they reflect what happens in society around them. An example of this last point is the current violence in schools and children coming to school with weapons. For schools to turn this around and to become agents of change in society, they need to interact with the world outside.
- *Socio-economic factors impacting on learners and their families:* These include poverty, HIV and Aids, child labour and gender issues.
- *Capacity:* The main issue here is under-qualified educators who are over-extended by the system. Also of importance are inadequate teacher development programmes. Most educators in SADC countries – as is the case with other members of society – have been through an education system which was authoritarian and based on learning by rote. Expecting them to recognise the links between what they teach, how they teach and the context within which they teach and democracy, human rights and development often requires a paradigm shift combined with retraining. All of this takes time, planning, work, energy and, above all, heart.
- *Lack of material and human resources:* In order to be able to introduce this relatively new approach to teaching – in which some of the content is also new – 'good' materials for schools are required. Not much money is available for the printing and distribution of these materials. Many of today's textbooks continue to be based on ideas that embrace a 'content' approach to knowledge. In the worst cases, where resources hardly exist, children may not have access to any textbooks in their schools.
- *Negative perceptions:* Many educators, parents and other members of society end up blaming the introduction of human rights or democracy into the school syllabus for the things that go wrong in education. We often hear: 'These things did not happen before we taught human rights ... we need to bring back discipline ... bring back the cane!' Instead, what we should be hearing is: 'Human rights and democracy are about dignity, respect, equality, non-discrimination.'

- *Uncoordinated initiatives*: When this happens, the impact of initiatives is reduced, as is the longevity of the programmes being implemented.
- *Education is not 'sexy enough'*: Such a view seeks to find ways of bringing stakeholders together to recognise the importance of education. We need to ask ourselves why politicians, school teachers and bankers don't sit down together to discuss the importance of education. Perhaps if education were 'sexy enough', there would be a significant alteration in the perceptions of education, bringing about much-needed attention, focus and economic support.

Victoria Maloka also focused her presentation on how national human rights institutions have used education as a mechanism for strengthening democracy and promoting and protecting human rights. Maloka insisted that education is central to human existence. Through education, people may gain a new realisation of the significance of human rights and dignity. Education, too, has long been found to be a workable mechanism for uplifting the poor from the debilitating circumstances of poverty. Education empowers women and safeguards children from hazardous environments. There are linkages between democracy, human rights and education. For example, human rights will flourish in a democracy but not in an authoritarian political system. Human rights are a fundamental component of democracy, and education is an important right that leads to the enjoyment of other rights and which in turn lead to socio-economic development.

The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) is one of the democracy-supporting institutions established under Chapter 9 of the South African constitution. The SAHRC contributes to the development of an accessible social justice system and a culture of respect of human rights. The commission is required to educate the public about their rights. A training centre has been set up to provide human rights education and democracy-training interventions through workshops and seminars. The SAHRC is also working to secure the institutionalisation of human rights, and it interacts on human rights issues with professional groups such as educators, health professionals, CSOs and government officials.

The Tanzanian Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance was established as an independent statutory body and national focal point for the promotion and protection of human rights. The commission is mandated to advise government bodies and private institutions on specific issues relating to human rights and administrative justice. In this way the commission contributes to policy formulation by ensuring that policies of government and private institutions are in line with required human rights standards. These institutions are crucial for the advancement of democracy and human rights. Education is therefore an important mechanism to ensure that human rights and democracy flourish in our societies.

# 10

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND DEMOCRACY

Jaap de Visser noted that there has been a growing momentum in developing countries towards enhancing the role of decentralised government. Though previously often overlooked or undervalued, local government is now fast becoming a key driver in developing Africa. The emergence of the 'Africities' summits in 1998, 2000, 2003 and 2006 rejuvenated debates about local government in development. The participants at these summits endorsed the need to strengthen the role and status of local government.

Various countries in Africa are embarking on strategies to transfer political, financial and administrative responsibilities to sub-national governments. Uganda, Mali, Mozambique and Malawi are some examples. The most recent example can be found in the DRC. Its 2006 constitution establishes decentralised territorial entities (including cities, communes, sectors and chiefdoms) that benefit from free administration and autonomous management of their economic, human, financial and technical resources.

De Visser described the benefits and dangers of decentralisation. Using the South African example as a case study, he identified three processes of development. The first and most straightforward one is the improvement of material well-being – higher living standards and the reduction of absolute poverty. The second emanates from everyone's inherent dignity and concerns empowerment with choice. Every individual should have the right and the opportunity to make choices about his or her own well-being. Third, development must benefit everyone. Without redistributive equality, economic growth is unlikely to have a positive impact on the most vulnerable sections of society.

De Visser contended that the development goal of improving material well-being is best served by a decentralised system of government. Material well-being mainly has to do with income and economic growth. In general, it can be said that there is more decentralisation in high-income countries. Developing states can overcome a great deal of their institutional backlog by opting for decentralisation. A centralised system that seeks to reach out to countrywide needs requires a high degree of institutional capacity and great sophistication in information gathering, finance, accounts and audit systems.

These systems are likely to be weak in developing countries. Moving decision-making closer to the people minimises the negative impact of the underdeveloped status of these aspects on good governance. 'Half-baked decentralisation' does more harm than good to economic growth.

Decentralisation makes significant contributions to enhancing people's choices. It improves a government's capacity to gauge people's needs and can strengthen the links between state and society. The existence of strong sub-national entities enables the 'upward communication' of local needs to higher levels of government. It also improves people's ability to hold their government accountable. The development goal of equity presents the weakest link in the relationship between decentralisation and development. Because regional inequities can be compounded by inadequate decentralisation policies, central government is better equipped



to deal with regional inequities. In spite of this generalisation, however, recent studies have provided evidence that decentralisation does not necessarily lead to the widening of regional inequities.

De Visser noted that three principles maximise the benefits of decentralisation and minimise its dangers. They are autonomy, supervision and cooperation. These three principles are put forward as important considerations in a decentralisation design that aims to facilitate development. Applying these principles to South African local government structures, De Visser evaluated the South African local government system, concluding that the system is democratic and that municipalities are instructed to promote citizen participation. The constitutional protection of local government powers by listing them in the constitution, as is the case in South Africa, has advantages in terms of strengthening local government autonomy and demarcating powers. South Africa's legal framework scores reasonably when it comes to cooperation. The impressive normative framework, its prominent status in the constitution and its application by the courts serve as examples for other countries. The municipal planning framework, if implemented correctly, can make an important contribution to integrated governance.

The constitutional recognition of organised local government and its voice in parliament is unique, but it is meaningless if it is not matched by appropriate institutional arrangements and applied effectively. The institutionalisation of intergovernmental structures and mechanisms has adequately taken local government into account, and now provides a sound framework within which healthy intergovernmental relations can be conducted. Despite a few isolated problems, De Visser concluded that the South African legal regime for developmental local government is progressive and has the potential to make good on the promise of development.

Bornwell Chikulo gave an overview of decentralisation reforms and the resultant structures of local governance in Southern Africa. Almost all the countries in the region have instituted decentralisation reforms, with the stated objective of improving democratic decentralised local government, development management and effective public service delivery. Decentralisation reforms entail the creation of provincial or regional administrations, district administration and local government, as well as attempts in some countries to institutionalise local government structures.

By 1997, almost all countries in the region had established systems of elected local governments – generally referred to as local authorities. In all the countries, a hierarchy (a tier system) of local authorities, such as urban and rural municipalities, was put in place. Local authorities derive their powers either from the constitution or from acts of parliament, which provide for the existence of local government systems based on democratically elected councils on the basis of universal adult suffrage. The principal enabling legislation that constitutes the institutional and legal framework of the local government systems in the example of Botswana, is indicated below.

While the constitution of Botswana does not establish local authorities, and while local government is not enshrined in the constitution and hence has no inherent constitutional competence, these authorities exist by virtue of ordinary acts of parliament.

The main legislation governing local governments is:

- the Local Government (District Councils) Act of 1965;
- the Townships Act of 1965;
- the Unified Local Government Service Act of 1973; and
- the Town and Country Planning Act of 1980.

Local government is single-tiered in Botswana but comprises both urban and rural councils. In total there are two city councils, three town councils, one township authority, nine district councils, 12 land boards and 12 tribal administrations. Subsequently, recommendations of the 1979 Presidential Commission on Local Government Structure resulted in the strengthening of local authorities in the country. The councils are responsible for:

- overall district development, including support of productive activity and social development;
- initiation and implementation of programmes of local infrastructure and services;
- preparation of district development plans and budgets for district operations, including the contributions of the decentralised departments of central ministries; and
- coordination and supervision of non-decentralised arms of central ministries at district level.

Chikulo reviewed the key challenges of decentralised democratic local government. The decentralisation process in Southern Africa holds considerable promise in terms of:

- enhancing transparency and accountability;
- facilitating citizen participation;
- effective and efficient public service delivery; and
- integrating society with the state.

The challenges that remain, however, include resistance and a lack of political will. Lack of cooperation from central ministries and a reluctance to transfer sufficient functions and powers to local government structures are seen as major challenges. Furthermore, management incapacity is a major hindrance to effective decentralisation. There is insufficient human resources capacity to cope with a multiplicity of unconcentrated and devolved functions that have to be carried out more or less simultaneously by the decentralised democratic local government structures. In rural municipalities, the problem is exacerbated by the remoteness of these municipalities from urban centres.

Fiscal dependency remains a major challenge in Southern Africa. Local government is rendered ineffective in some countries because of limited financial resources. In some countries, also, the ability of local authorities to derive revenue from local sources such as property taxes and service charges is constrained by the central government for fear of eroding political support among the urban populace. In some cases local authorities not only have to depend on central government allocations but the allocations are inadequate and often irregular. The financial crisis faced by most local governments is a serious impediment to their effective public service

delivery and to sustainable human development. Furthermore, dependency on the central government compromises the autonomy of local authorities.

Despite the various problems, Chikulo nevertheless acknowledged the importance of decentralised local governance in development. Although significant progress has been made in most countries to establish policy frameworks and institutional structures to facilitate and anchor effective service delivery of socio-economic development, almost all countries are faced with difficult constraints and challenges in enhancing the effectiveness of local government for sustainable human development. Despite the commitment to promoting democratic government, the strength of decentralised local governance remains limited. Central local relations continue to be characterised by a strong and dominant centre. The participation of civil society and NGOs in local governance is still peripheral in most of the countries in the region. Enhancing meaningful participation of civil society therefore remains a major challenge.

While local governance remains central to development, citizens continue to participate less and less in local government elections. Maxi Schoeman and Charles Puttergill provided explanations for the voting behaviour in South Africa's 2006 local government elections. They gave three broad explanations of voting behaviour – namely, rational choice, party identification and the sociological model. These speakers also focused on youth voting behaviour based on a pilot study prepared by political science and sociology students at the University of Pretoria.

In the run-up to the March 2006 local government elections in South Africa, service delivery was a thorny issue among different classes of residents, with some being disillusioned to the point of rejecting the elections. President Mbeki had himself identified delivery as the main focus of his presidency. As such, opposition parties focused on the lack of such delivery. The media also focused on issues of service delivery. Issues of corruption in municipalities were raised. The issue of demarcation was represented by protests from Khutsong and Matatiele. Voter turnout was 48%, or much the same as in the previous local government elections.

Youth participation in the service delivery protests was reported to be very high. About 64% of the 18-24-year age group was uncertain about whether to register to vote or not. The majority feeling among the youth was that there was no good reason to vote. Student surveys, however, identified politics, party politics and some elements of the sociological model, including socio-economic status, race and gender, as unsatisfactory areas of local government. These surveys therefore provided a better explanation of the reluctance of many young people to vote. It should at the same time be noted, however, that apathy among South Africa's youth towards politics is generally in line with the feelings of youth internationally.

Themba Nkwinika examined the concept of citizen participation in local governance and the potential barriers in South Africa. Citizen participation is about collective decision-making, control by stakeholders, consultations and information-sharing. Barriers to citizen participation were identified as:

- power relations;
- the level of citizen organisation;
- a lack of participatory skills;

- political will; and
- insufficient resources at a local level.

However, local participation in South Africa started during the apartheid era as a struggle for democratic and accountable governance. After 1994, citizen participation in local governance was institutionalised in the national constitution, the White Paper on Local Government of 1998, the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 and the Municipal Structures Act.

Channels for local government participation are structured in ward committees, representative forums, unstructured *imbizos* (discussion gatherings) and ward meetings. However, citizen participation remains a challenge and there is a need to involve CSOs at every stage of the decision-making process. There is also a need to develop explicit measures through which citizens can hold their elected representatives accountable. Entrenching citizen participation in all municipal processes is crucial. There is a need for ward councillors to stimulate citizen participation in their constituencies. Remaining challenges include:

- a lack of trusting relationships between citizens and the state;
- the appropriation and adaptation of legislation to meet local context through by-laws and council resolutions; and
- weak demand for participation by CSOs at the local level.

Themba also outlined the broad benefits of citizen participation. These included:

- the involvement of citizens in governance;
- the vibrancy of local democracy;
- the inclusion of the vulnerable sectors of the community in governance;
- integrated, reflective and improved municipal plans and budgets;
- improved and accepted quality of services;
- effective and efficient municipal functioning and resource utilisation;
- collective ownership of municipal plans and actions; and
- improved community confidence in their municipality.

These plus-points will all increase the interest of residents in, and support for, municipal initiatives.

# 11

## CONFLICT, SECURITY AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE: NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Peter Vale discussed the issue of security in the context of elections and posed two questions. Why are electoral studies an exercise in management? Do electoral studies reinforce state power?

Electoral studies as understood within EISA are tied to an American conceptual framework. These studies helped in understanding and in transforming the meanings of citizenship and democracy. Electoral management is about codes of surveillance and control. Because electoral studies emphasise politics in states, they exclude the possibility of politics beyond the state. In Southern Africa the states are the dominant players, but states are a very recent phenomenon in Southern Africa. Social relations are about money, being viewed only through economic lenses. Electoral studies are a recreation of the debate around African nationalism in the guise of democracy. If they are not to remain an intellectual fad, electoral studies need to start to deal with issues of uneven development and uneven economic distribution of social goods.

At the centre of issues of security is the issue of the effectiveness of Africa's regional economic and security communities. Martin Rupiya gave an overview of these communities. Security and development are interrelated. Since the 1990s Africa has been challenged to develop a continental security policy framework. Conflicts on the continent have become endemic, complex and protracted, clearly defying the effectiveness of institutions. The African continent has been a latecomer and late player in the international security system. Security of the state and human security are equally important, and the one cannot be divorced from the other. The AU has been trying to put together a security system structure that responds to African conflicts.

From 1945 to 1960, Africa's security was in other people's hands. In the 1960s, Africa's security reflected Cold War spheres of influence. Only after 1993, when the US pulled out of Somalia, did Africans start to think of taking charge of their own security. By 1994 Africa had begun to put into place a concept and a theory that responded to Africa's own security needs.

A number of conflicts – in Rwanda, the DRC, Sudan and elsewhere – tested Africa's resilience in security planning. Africa now has a Common African Defence and Security Policy, and under this there has been the creation of a Peace and Security Council. There is also the Military Affairs Committee, which is a think-tank, and the African Standby Force.

But there are weaknesses in the whole African defence system; there is overlap and duplication. A number of structures are, however, already in place. The AU is not coping with the conflict in Sudan and there are competing organisations that could be harnessed to make a response to this conflict more effective. It can be said that Africa's security system lacks a dominant force. A range of serious problems calls for an African Crisis Response Initiative.

The discussion centred on a number of issues involving linkages between democracy and security.

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- Is it a fact that democracy ensures security, or does democracy open up avenues for instability and insecurity?
  - Do elections themselves manage conflicts, or do elections open up conflict arenas and then lead to some kind of instability?
  - Do elections add value to peace and security?

Most of the regional structures have established early warning systems. A looming crisis can be picked up in the public domain. But has this made Africa a better place and a conflict-free area?

# 12

## CONFLICT, SECURITY AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE: REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Abdul Lamin examined conflict and governance in West Africa. This regional perspective provided an overview of governance in West Africa and the major causes of conflict in the Mano River Union states – Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. Conflicts in these countries are part of the long history of military coups and social upheavals which have plagued West Africa since the 1960s.

The first military coup took place in Togo in 1963 and this was followed by similar events across the region. Instability in the region intensified after the Cold War began unravelling in 1989, the year that saw the outbreak of war in Liberia, which later spread to Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire.

Since then, however, post-conflict elections have created some hope for consolidating the gains that have been made. The fierce contest over shrinking economic resources, the elite manipulation of ethnic, religious and regional identities, and the influence of external actors are the major causes of conflict in West Africa. With globalisation dominating international relations since the end of the Cold War, African leaders whose political survival had hitherto depended on the goodwill of external patrons found themselves isolated internationally as the continent entered the 1990s. Furthermore, their legitimacy was contested domestically. This combination of domestic and external pressure precipitated the removal from office of many of the authoritarian regimes that had been entrenched for decades. These regimes lost power in one of two ways.

The first of these was the result of organised political opposition that brought together diverse interests, including political parties and civil society groups. Such alliances harnessed peaceful internal resistance that undermined and ultimately brought down the *ancient regime*. Benin and Mali were two such examples. Their long-standing authoritarian regimes were forced to liberalise their respective political systems in the early 1990s due to a combination of internal and external pressure.

The second method of regime change in post-Cold War Africa was more violent and manifested itself in brutal civil wars or coup d'états. Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire were examples of this form of political change. In all three countries, coup d'états and brutal civil conflicts were accompanied by devastating consequences for both the civilian populations and the infrastructure of the countries concerned.

While the dynamics of the conflicts in the region varied, a common thread was an outright failure to manage the fallout from the previously entrenched authoritarian regimes. The various scenarios gave way to a shared need for a range of serious governance challenges to receive attention throughout the region.

This region, indeed, has in the past two decades come to symbolise the failure of political governance, the disintegration of government authority and, in many cases, the utter collapse

of states. Attempts to address the range of governance deficits in the region will not be possible without a full understanding of the problems. Such an understanding must start with an acknowledgement that West Africa is in transition. This transition can take the form of either of two contending political realities.

At one extreme are states that have made progress towards consolidating democratic governance through the reform of one or more parts of the framework of the state, such as the constitution, public institutions such as the civil service and the judiciary, and the electoral system. In these countries, periodic elections have been held and a space for public debate has been opened up to the extent that political and civil rights have been guaranteed, at least on a *de jure* basis even if the *de facto* implementation has left much to be desired. However, while these gains should be celebrated, serious challenges continue to pose a threat to long-term consolidation. Three examples are:

- the attempt by certain segments of the political class in Nigeria to manipulate the constitution to prolong the term of office of the president;
- the uneasy tension in civil-military relations, as seen in Ghana; and
- the uncertainty about convening presidential and parliamentary elections in Senegal in 2007.

At the other extreme are countries that are at various stages of transition from war to peace, where the governance challenges that partly created the condition for conflict remain unaddressed. There is therefore a fear that these states might relapse into conflict, particularly with the reduction in international assistance in the security sector. Three examples, again, are:

- Sierra Leone, where presidential and parliamentary polls are scheduled for 2007;
- Liberia, where successful post-conflict elections were held in 2005. These led to the election of the first female president in Africa. However, worries remain that unless the challenges of reintegration of ex-combatants are properly addressed, and unless the massive problem of unemployment is confronted head on, peace may not endure in the long term, notwithstanding the attempts to reform key institutions of governance; and
- Côte d'Ivoire, where the UN endorsed an AU plan to extend the transitional period by one more year. Here there are concerns that unless a comprehensive disarmament programme can be concluded and the hotly contested issue of citizenship can be properly addressed, attempts at creating lasting peace and entrenching democratic governance may be merely illusory.

In these three countries, therefore – Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Côte d'Ivoire – the indications are that if the transitions are not properly managed, particularly with respect to the twin problems of governance and security, the countries may relapse into conflict. After more than three years of armed conflict in Côte d'Ivoire and more than a decade each in Liberia and Sierra Leone, it is clear that this sub-region remains volatile. The relative progress made, particularly in the past three years, to build and consolidate peace in the sub-region risks being undermined unless concrete steps are taken to address the underlying conflicts in all three countries. Essentially, therefore, peace will remain tenuous until governance challenges are seriously dealt with.



The leaders of the various armed factions and political groups in all three countries must ensure that this opportunity does not slip away from them. They have a responsibility and a duty to put their respective countries ahead of their own personal political agendas. Disarmament is a critical issue. Secondly, the international community, through various UN field missions in the region, must continue to work with African institutions such as the AU and the Economic Community of West African States, within a broader framework to ensure that the key actors in all three countries take practical steps towards consolidating peace. It remains likely that if a lasting peace cannot be achieved in Côte d'Ivoire, the gains already made in Sierra Leone and Liberia will be eroded.

Finally, it is important to reflect briefly on the prospects for democratisation in the aftermath of elections in all three countries – Liberia in 2005, and Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire in 2007. It must be acknowledged at this critical stage in the transition of this sub-region that the elections are by no means a panacea. In other words, while it is theoretically good to have elections, particularly in the aftermath of violent conflicts, they are merely the first step in the long journey to lasting peace. Elections are meaningful only if they serve as a basis to begin reforming the entire political system and tackling the problems in society. It is therefore incumbent on all stakeholders in the three countries to work towards achieving this goal.

### **East Africa**

In reviewing conflict and governance in East Africa, Timothy Othieno argued that East African states are not model democratic transition countries or developmental states, but are mainly entangled in some form of conflict. Although some of the countries have made more progress than others, there remains to a large degree a politicisation of ethnicity and the exploitation of this by the various leaderships. It has become apparent that Kenya has not made any significant progress as regards the good governance of the country after the fall of the Moi regime. On the contrary, corruption, which was a fundamental problem of the Moi regime, remains endemic in Kenyan politics, thus contributing to the bad governance and consequently the side-tracking of development as a major challenge of the Kibaki government.

Although Museveni was once admired by the West as *the* progressive African leader, he has now been more or less isolated by the West, and this has had a negative impact on the economy and development of Uganda. A number of aid packages have been withheld or withdrawn altogether as a result of the changing of the constitution to lift presidential term limits, and problems exist with opening up the political space and with human rights and corruption issues.

The situation in Sudan is indeed a worrying one from both democratic and security perspectives. This is because Sudan has hardly embarked on a genuine democratic transition process and because the National Party Congress's (NCP) hold on power, despite domestic protest, is a classic case of an unpopular and undemocratic government. The NCP government has decided to use force to keep a grip on political power despite commanding very little following in Sudan. The transition from authoritarian rule to a vaguely democratic system that was meant to occur with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005 has still not taken place. The state of Sudan today appears no different from the pre-2005 phase. In contrast,

the Sudanese government under Bashir, despite forming a government of national unity with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, has not made the required effort to distribute the strategic ministerial portfolios in a fair manner, and has refused to call for general elections because it believes that it will perform dismally in any public and democratic process. Instead, the Khartoum regime preoccupies itself with security matters more than anything else.

The anarchical situation in Somalia cannot in any way begin a movement towards democracy or the pursuit of development goals. In a country that has been accustomed to war for the past decade and a half, it would be foolhardy to think that democracy could emerge with the election of a president whose election in the first place is not recognised by the majority of Somalians. The security issue needs to be addressed before any attempt at democracy can take place. The levels of insecurity in Somalia do not and cannot allow democratic values to be established.

Neighbouring Eritrea also seems to be stuck in its transition to democracy and development. One of the main reasons for this is the troublesome separation from Ethiopia. From the outset the two states did not work out a process or a programme of separation to ensure the smooth and problem-free implementation of the separation process. This would have included the administration of overlapping populations, the status of each other's nationals living on the other side of their borders, and the nature of state-to-state relations. Eritrea therefore finds herself stuck in a war mode, with an estimated one-tenth of its population serving in the military and a defence budget representing some 17% of gross domestic product. This situation ties up a large portion of the country's material and human resources, which could otherwise be used for development. Eritrea's postponed national elections have been abandoned, and the government has given short shrift to those demanding the continuation of the pre-war reform agenda. The government has also arrested critics, shut down independent media and imposed a repressive regime over the entire population, thus making democracy only a distant dream.

While, unlike its Eritrean counterpart, the Ethiopian government did not abandon democracy, it did not allow it to flourish either. The ethnic federalism that was meant to promote plurality and the devolution of power to different ethnic regions is heavily influenced by the ruling coalition, while some of the regions are actually controlled by proxies of the central government.

It can therefore be concluded that the institutionalisation of democracy and the achievement of sustainable development in East Africa are not yet far down the track. While the region has a huge potential for development, it continuously misses opportunities to democratise itself.

### **The Great Lakes Region**

Che Ajulu traced the crisis in the Great Lakes region back to the transition to independence and the violent struggles for power that followed immediately after independence. The events leading to independence in Rwanda, Burundi and Congo had serious implications for the future political landscape and long-term effects on the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups in the region. The events that took place in Rwanda before independence set that stage for what was to follow in Burundi because of the ethnic similarities between the two countries. Neighbouring Congo (DRC; the former Belgian colony) also faced a future of post-independence political instability and violence. Immediately after independence in 1960, Congo was engulfed in political

turmoil following the assassination of Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba in February 1961. The cycle of violence at the onset of independence in the former Belgian colonies set the scene for a culture of violent power struggles that spiralled throughout the Great Lakes region. The culture of violence led the post-colonial political elites in Burundi, Rwanda and the DRC to favour political assassinations and executions and a range of undemocratic practices as ways of resolving differences and gaining control of the states.

Ajulu said that conflicts in the Great Lakes region arose during the process of state formation. These conflicts concerned the choice of who should control the states. As a result, the states became the core contested terrain, with ethnic groups or coalitions of ethnic groups vying to control the states and their resources. The state bureaucracies controlled arsenals of patronage positions, disburseable public finances, and public educational institutions (which played an important role in the recruitment of members of the elites for the bureaucracy and the political classes). These became prime targets for competing ethnic groups, and led to ethnic struggles for the control of state resources.

Within this broad context, the post-colonial states and their institutions developed as ethnic-patronage networks struggling to entrench ethnicity within the bureaucracy, the public and private sectors and the educational institutions. Patronage and cronyism were developed as a culture and used for wealth accumulation by the political elites and their clients. This system contributed to the history of marginalisation and in some cases resulted in civil wars and armed uprisings.

For example, the 1993 failure of democratic transition in Burundi exposed the inadequacies of negotiated and political transformations informed by international pressure. Notably, the failure of the democratic reforms under President Mobutu also exposed the inability of political processes to address deep-seated ethnic differences and the culture of violence that has survived for decades of authoritarian rule. Beyond political transformation, there is a need to address marginalisation, poverty and ethnicity in conflict situations.

# 13

## THE DRC POLITICAL TRANSITION

Vincent Tohbi and Henri Boshoff looked at the transition process in the DRC with the major challenge being that of demilitarisation, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of the armed militias. After nearly three years and a number of delays, the transition period in the DRC was to come to an end by 31 July 2006. A new constitution was adopted by referendum in late-2005, paving the way for presidential and legislative elections, which were held on 30 July 2006. There was unfortunately no outright winner of the presidential election and a second round of elections was to take place on 29 October 2006 between the two main rivals, the incumbent Joseph Kabila and Jean-Pierre Bemba. The violence on 20 August 2006 in Kinshasa between Kabila's Special Guard for Presidential Safety (GSSP) and Bemba's Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) pointed to the importance of the completion of the reform of the Congolese army, the *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique* (FARDC). The organisation of elections has not been the only transition objective that has been significantly delayed. Another key task of the transition process was the creation of a new, unified national army from the various armed groups that had fought one another during the five-year war. While it was stressed that this was a priority, in reality the transition government did little until early-2005 to move this process forward.

Although the former belligerents have been part of the same government in the capital, Kinshasa, the animosity between them remains largely intact, and they have made little effort to cooperate with each another. The failure of disarmament and demobilisation has, in one view, been counterbalanced by the success of the first round of elections. The threat of violence during the second round of elections between the GSSP and MLC soldiers, who did not demobilise as part of the national demobilisation, was a reality as the two forces could mobilise about 11,000 and 2,000 troops respectively in Kinshasa. This indicated the transitional government's failure to develop and enforce good governance principles. The failure to develop disciplined and effective integrated brigades was another example of poor governance. The legacy of this inaction and unwillingness to create and support a new national army is far more dangerous than any delay in the holding of national elections. If the DDR process is not completed and a new defence force is not established, a new war could break out. Although the military reintegration process has now been in motion for close to a year – with some progress being made – a number of serious problems remain, including ongoing conflicts, competing loyalties, spoiler armies, human rights abuses and regional instability.

The daunting task after the elections will be completion of the DDR and security sector reform (SSR) processes. This will require a political will and commitment from the new government, and coordination between all role players. The FARDC must take responsibility for leading this process. SSR is one of the most important outstanding reforms that any country emerging from conflict should implement. It is needed in order to align all security-related structures and instruments with the government vision and policies for building peace. These activities must take place in an environment where the DRC government departments accept responsibility for the process, and the donor community provides technical support (knowledge and financial support) to the process in order to enhance capacity and to establish international principles.

# 14

## DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND POVERTY ERADICATION

Sue Mbaya focused on the linkages between poverty eradication, democracy and development in Southern Africa. In her presentation, definitions of poverty, governance and poverty reduction were questioned, with the conclusion that these varied widely.

The definition of poverty was extended beyond the concepts of hunger to include notions of powerlessness and lack of representation and freedom. Similarly, the concept of democracy was extended by a definition that goes beyond the conduct of free and fair elections. The notion of democracy now incorporates more substantive perspectives concerned with the extent to which citizens are able to exercise institutionalised influence over the conduct of their governments, including the direct engagement of non-state actors in decision-making.

In this extended concept of democracy, it can be argued that the current wave of electoral democratisation that has swept across Southern Africa has failed to halt the ongoing increase of poverty and the entrenchment of poverty levels in the region. This is borne out by the fact that the 2006 United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) report on the state of governance in the Southern African region observed that in spite of improvements in political governance – as evidenced by constitutional adherence, electoral process and liberalisation of the political systems – there still remained some challenges such as human rights protection, civil society capacity and weaknesses in the civil service. In the area of economic and corporate governance, the report noted that there was still a need for better infrastructure, stronger measures against corruption and improved service delivery. In addition, in terms of institutional effectiveness, opportunities remain for strengthening the checks and balances on the use of executive power.

It was reported that complex, overlapping and mutually reinforcing layers of inequality exist in the Southern African region. The importance of inequality in the context of poverty is founded on the fact that these inequalities (including those relating to gender, race, access to education, health and wealth) tend to be transmitted between generations and, *inter alia*, have the effect of keeping communities and their successive generations poor. Hence, progress towards the absolute eradication of poverty is heavily conditioned by inequality.

The history of racial tension and inequality prevailing in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia has been related to the prevalence of poverty. While past injustices can be cited as the basis of much of the inequality existing in the region, the inequality debate has more recently accepted these factors as responsible for perpetuating and entrenching inequality.

HIV / Aids remains a key challenge to development and is perhaps the gravest threat to human development in Southern Africa. HIV / Aids is now also recognised as a major threat to democratic governance, and is increasingly challenging the capacity of people to avail themselves of and participate in various processes. This has important implications for governance and

democracy. Prolonged illness and the very large number of deaths associated with HIV/Aids have also had an impact on the functioning of institutions at all levels.

Furthermore, women in Southern Africa have been, and in many instances continue to be, disadvantaged economically, socially and politically. While gains have been made in some sectors of some countries, gender discrimination continues to exist in several of the countries in law, in practice and in prevailing attitudes. Much more therefore still needs to be done in order to address the gender imbalances that place women at a disadvantage and which keep them at risk, disempowered and oppressed. The empowerment of women necessarily involves their increasing access to decision-making platforms at all levels. The general marginalisation of women has in itself been a key hindrance to efforts at increasing the number of women in government and in public life, particularly at local levels. The marginalisation of ethnic minorities, youth, the disabled and others has had the effect of excluding such groups from an equitable access to resources and services, and to access to governance platforms and processes. The poverty levels of these groups may ultimately be entrenched.

In dealing with poverty eradication, states need to have a developmental agenda. States in the region require governments that are able to mobilise the resources required for development, to increase investment and to create growth and employment policies that are pro-poor and that thus ultimately reduce poverty. The effectiveness of aid in delivering development and poverty eradication has been increasingly challenged. Donor countries have largely failed to live up to the promises they have made about the levels of aid to be made available to developing countries. Views relating to aid effectiveness and governance have emerging policy implications. Prevailing governance conditions appear to determine the nature and extent of aid.

Good governance remains crucial for economic growth. The past decade has witnessed improved macroeconomic performance in many countries in Africa. The challenge of macroeconomic stability sufficient to deliver sustained growth, employment, higher living standards and poverty-reduction remains real. While it is true that successful poverty eradication requires sustained high levels of economic growth, something more is required. Human development and, ultimately, poverty eradication can be influenced by a variety of factors – not all economic – including a healthy and well-educated population which can pursue its economic, social and political aspirations in an environment free of conflict, intimidation and repression.

SADC articulates the mission to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development in the context of its regional integration agenda. In this respect, the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) has been articulated by the SADC secretariat to provide the framework and policy direction within which SADC sectoral programmes will be devised and implemented. The strategy focuses on deepening the integration agenda of SADC with a view to accelerating poverty eradication and attaining other economic and non-economic development goals. The RISDP has articulated priority intervention areas including:

- trade, industry, finance and investment;
- food, agriculture and natural resources;
- social and human development and special programmes;

- infrastructure and services;
- HIV and Aids;
- politics, diplomacy, international relations, peace and security; and
- gender.

Through these intervention areas, the RISDP intends to mobilise support for the socio-economic cooperation and poverty eradication objectives of SADC. It is envisaged that the implementation of initiatives under these priority areas will be by member states and their stakeholders under the coordination of the SADC secretariat. However, SADC continues to be plagued by capacity constraints.

The underlying intention of the RISDP to promote the eradication of poverty is supported by implementation principles that reflect governance considerations. Perhaps key among these are the requirement of broad participation and consultation as well as the principle of subsidiarity, which is in keeping with the principle of decentralisation and the empowerment of local levels.

Development actors, including the originators of the MDGs and PRSPs (namely, the UN and the World Bank), are now emphasising the importance of integrating the MDGs into PRSPs in order to ensure that these become central to national policy processes. PRSPs are seen as constituting the primary strategic and implementation vehicles to reach the MDGs. The PRSP process can provide the mechanism for mobilising national actors to achieve the MDGs. For instance, in what has been described as good practice, Cameroon's PRS indicators are aligned with the MDGs, having included several MDG indicators. However, partnerships, complementary efforts and regular, frank consultation between national institutions and development partners involved in poverty eradication efforts, together with the adoption of good governance principles by all involved, will be required.

Until relatively recently, governance aspects were marginal to the poverty eradication agenda. Today, however, the linkage between human development and democratic governance has become central to the poverty eradication agenda. Efficiency and accountability of governments (and other leadership structures), together with human development as a function of economic growth, international governance and aid efficiency, are increasingly considered to be important for poverty eradication. Similarly, it is now widely accepted that poverty eradication strategies and programmes should be oriented more closely to the local level, being responsive to and having regard for the voices of the poor.

Barbara Kalima Phiri reviewed various poverty-reduction strategies. She said that during the early 1990s the governance debate in development policy took off, with different influences and interpretations of the issues. The failure of governments, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, to effectively implement the economic adjustment programmes prescribed by international financial institutions was a motivation for examining the effectiveness and accountability of governments. Recent developments in the global arena have prompted a more heightened discussion around governance – for example, the decision by the Gleneagles G-8 session in 2005 to increase aid flows to Africa, the increasing number of countries acceding to the APRM (currently 25), the implementation of Nepad and the growing recognition to develop democratic

states (for example, strengthening democratic systems and processes through elections, anti-corruption agencies and commissions). She described the governance dimensions as:

- the process by which governments are selected, held accountable, monitored and replaced;
- the capacity of governments to manage resources efficiently and to formulate, implement, and enforce sound policies and regulations; and
- respect for institutions that govern economic and social interactions.

There are two key emerging discussions, namely:

- that poverty reduction and sustainable human development should be the goal of governance: this is often articulated in policy documents including Nepad, UNDP Human Development reports, the Commission for Africa, MDGs and the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan; and
- that there is a linkage between the strength of political representation of the poor and the incidence of poverty, suggesting that increasing political representation may be instrumental in reducing poverty and that improved governance structures and processes lead to greater participation by the poor and an improvement in their well-being.

In development cooperation, some donors have instituted a wide range of measures under the banner of promoting good governance. Some measures have been 'punitive', including the attachment of political and economic conditionality to development aid or loans; other measures have perhaps been 'positive', mostly involving support for various kinds of institutional building processes. These include improving public sector management, civil service reforms, strengthening legal and police systems, and political reforms, such as promoting a free press, support to CSOs, election monitoring and constitutional reform.

More recently, in drawing up PRSPs for heavily indebted poor countries, broad participation of CSOs and other development actors is one of the key prerequisites for assessing concession finance from the World Bank, IMF and other bilateral donors. This over-emphasis on participation as an aspect of accountability, rather than for effectiveness and impact, has raised serious concern about the success of most poverty-reduction strategies.

Strengthening governance in poverty reduction strategies should ensure that:

- governance structures and processes (including corruption, lack of political space for the poor, lack of resource allocation to poverty-reducing efforts and, to some extent, stringent donor conditionality on development assistance) that continue to impede the institutionalisation of policies, rules, norms and practices which support the interests of the poor are seriously reviewed;
- a poverty perspective is incorporated into governance analysis, and policy formulation should not be restricted to any one domain (e.g. civil society) but should cut across all domains, such as the private sector and government, and make links between them; and



- strong 'developmental states' are supported – as they have a comparative advantage in promoting both economic growth and human development, even in the absence of systems of openness, accountability and human rights: these are also more responsive to the needs of the poor.

Marc de Tollenaere examined the different levels of resources that various forms of democracy support with varying degrees of success in Mozambique. Massive democratic assistance was poured into Mozambique after the civil war. After the first successful multiparty elections, multilateral and bilateral institutions and NGOs shifted their focus from emergency and rehabilitation assistance to structural development projects and programmes. The focus therefore fell on reconstruction of infrastructure. However, democratic assistance under the UNDP was to be directed towards parliament, the police, the legal sector, local elections and the independent media. The UNDP received the mandate to formulate separate projects that were to be co-financed by various donors. Democratic assistance focused on electoral support, which included capacity-building and equipment for the electoral authorities, voter registration and elections. This also included capacity-building of political parties and CSOs to participate in the electoral process through campaigns, civic education and monitoring. Democratic assistance was also given to the reform of the justice system, restructuring the police force and the media. Parliament also received several types of support, which included the rehabilitation of the plenary chamber as well as the construction of a new library and documentation centre. Technical support was given to MPs with the drafting of bills. However, external support for parliament dwindled afterwards. Political party support has been very marginal, with only small amounts having been invested in building political parties. However, a range of ad hoc support came to help political parties for campaigns, media relations, candidate selection and training.

There are now new aid modalities, which have come in the form of PRSPs. At the core of the PRSPs are technical reforms in finance management, public sector reforms in public finance management, and justice reform. Donors have abandoned the idea that their external support can be an effective way to broker and guarantee transparent elections or an independent judiciary. The focus is now on more technical reforms that should guarantee more service delivery. Elections, human rights and the media are no longer referred to in the PRSPs. The approach towards political issues has turned more technical.

Marc de Tollenaere noted that the post-conflict democracy assistance programmes do not achieve the initial objective of a quick and fully fledged democratic transition through the establishment of democracy-based institutional infrastructure.

Corruption and the misuse of resources have also become a major hindrance to development in the continent. The complex nature of corruption and its devastating effects on any country has made it necessary to create anti-corruption commissions. For example, in Hong Kong in the early-1970s, corruption was rampant both in the public sector and in the civil service.

Noel Kututwa gave a regional overview of anti-corruption commissions in Southern Africa. He said that grand corruption tends to involve highly placed and well-connected government officials. In some instances it involves heads of state or former heads of state. It is with this in mind that it becomes imperative to establish, maintain and strengthen national anti-corruption

authorities and agencies. Oversight institutions can include other bodies as well as anti-corruption commissions. The nature of corruption is such that more than a mere police service in a country is needed to fight it effectively. The fight against corruption goes beyond a police service and indeed beyond any one law-enforcement agency. There is a need for a number of entities to deal with corruption in all its forms. Although the police services may be a good institution to fight petty corruption, which may not involve a lot of money but just a bribe perpetrated at the lowest levels of the civil service, it may, however, not be the best institution to deal with cases involving the corrupt awarding of government contracts worth millions of dollars. This is because the police may not have the expertise to unravel the entire deal and to understand how the crime was committed. Secondly, the police may not have the necessary political clout to investigate the personalities involved, as these may be government officials, high-ranking ruling political party representatives or persons who may be very close to the head of state. Institutions will also include the judiciary and the national parliament, as the arms of the state. Taken together, oversight institutions and regulatory mechanisms are there to ensure sound administration and protection of the public purse.

Anti-corruption commissions are accordingly necessary in any country if the fight against corruption is to be effective. The media is a necessary ally. The media must be independent and free. The role of the media will be necessary in that it is through the media that the public will get to know of the prevention strategies that anti-corruption institutions are willing to put in place. As the work of an anti-corruption institution goes beyond that of law enforcement, it is necessary to set up these institutions if states are serious about fighting corruption.

The basic condition for the implementation of effective anti-corruption measures is political will. When this element is lacking, efforts to sabotage anti-corruption initiatives will be inevitable. Conditions for effective anti-corruption measures were identified as the following:

- *Political support:* This should not only be from the head of state but also from a broad array of national political leadership.
- *Political and operational independence:* This is necessary for a meaningful investigation into the highest levels of government.
- *Access to documents:* This is an essential aspect of the power to carry out investigations unhindered.
- *A focus on three key areas in the fight against corruption:* These are investigation, education and prevention.
- *Leadership with integrity:* A country's leadership must be honest and accountable to its citizens.

Political will can be demonstrated through statements that are made at presidential level; it can also be demonstrated through policy formulation and decisions taken by government. Other examples that demonstrate the level of political will to fight corruption in a country include:

- the legislation passed by parliament to fight corruption;
- the arrest and prosecution of alleged offenders regardless of their rank and profile in society;
- the moral and financial support that is given to anti-corruption bodies; and

- the extent to which political leadership in a country does not interfere with the execution of the functions of those whose duty it is to fight corruption.

A number of Southern African countries have set up anti-corruption agencies. These countries include Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Lesotho, Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Tanzania and South Africa. In the South African case, there is more than one agency dealing with issues of corruption, with each of several agencies having a clear and specific mandate on which issues of corruption it is required to deal with.

According to an Organisation for Security Cooperation in Europe handbook, *Best Practices in Combating Corruption*, an anti-corruption commission must have the following for it to operate successfully:

- guaranteed access to information;
- the power to freeze assets and bank accounts;
- the power to seize travel documents;
- the power to protect informers; and
- the power to blacklist or debar corrupt foreign and domestic companies from public contracts.

The anti-corruption institutions in the region have different powers when it comes to arrest:

- In respect of prosecution, this role must be retained by the director of public prosecutions or the attorney general, as the case may be, in a particular country. This will ensure that in the fight against corruption all law enforcement agencies are seen to be cooperating and providing complementary services.
- The participation of the director of public prosecutions is important in another respect, as it ensures that a neutral person scrutinises the case presented by the agency with regard to its chances of securing a conviction.
- The preferred method of reporting would be to parliament, the argument being that the president and the minister of justice are interested parties and that the report may reflect poorly on their government. It is further argued that with due cognisance to national interest issues, the defence of the report should occur before a duly elected parliament.
- The political will in the fight against corruption should at all times be extended beyond the personal influence of the head of state or government to ensure the long-term sustainability of the anti-corruption agenda.
- Anti-corruption agencies should be given direct access to the Consolidated Revenue Fund in order to ensure that their operations are not unduly hindered by operating as part of a larger budget under a line ministry or government department, and to reflect their independence.
- Anti-corruption agencies must be protected from any impression that they act without oversight mechanisms to counterbalance their actions. In this regard, their active and required cooperation with other law-enforcement agencies, such as the police, the attorney general and the director of public prosecutions, must be promoted and emphasised.

# 15

## CONCLUSION

The complexity of democracy and development and the idea of a developmental state remain critical issues for further research. At the EISA symposium, however, there was consensus that democracy and development must be mutually reinforcing. Owing to its past history of deprivation and underdevelopment – which was further exacerbated by the whims of the post-colonial predatory state – Africa needs a human-centred development paradigm to place people at the centre of the development effort and to ensure that people are in the driving seat. This requires not only political will but also capable and effective leadership. Development should not be undertaken on behalf of the people. It should, rather, be the organic outcome of a society's value system. Politics and economics are inherently bound together, like the horse and the carriage. More importantly, 'democracy and human rights do not thrive in economic adversity'.<sup>9</sup> The correlation between the enjoyment of political rights and economic rights is quite obvious. Although there seem to be disagreements on what constitutes development, sustainable development is pro-people, pro-nature, pro-jobs, and *ipso facto* pro-youth and pro-women. Gender relations and transformation remain crucial in the overall approach to a developmental state. While a number of states remain behind in transforming gender relations at both the household level and in decision-making, positive steps have been made in some countries, which accept that this is a developmental goal.

Although the continent has now had extensive experience in the holding of elections, elections in Africa have not become less controversial. Results continue to be rejected by losers for various reasons, which range from violence to the lack of a credible electoral process or the lack of a level playing field.

Regional and continental institutions created for the sole purpose of promoting democratic governance are not given the level of importance they deserve. Conventions and treaties are signed without any strict adherence to their contents. The 1997 SADC Declaration on Gender remains a good example of the case where a few countries have put in place mechanisms to achieve the target of 30% women's representation. Furthermore, principles governing democratic elections are well known, but ruling parties continue to disregard them when it suits their purpose.

While some Africans have put institutions of governance in place – including constitutions – the sanctity of constitutions has continued to be disregarded in a number of countries. There have been conflicts between powerful presidents and lame parliaments. Accountability and legitimacy remain questionable, and issues of political succession continue to cause instability. Electoral systems still need to be reviewed as they are at times the sources of serious discontent with the electoral process. While there are claims that traditional institutions are undemocratic, they continue to hold resonance and value to the rural populace. How they should be included in the governance process should be strictly country specific.

While CSOs continue to play their noble role of democratising the political space, they should ensure that they abide by the same democratic principles in their actions and accountability. The

creation of Ecosocc shows the importance that CSOs are being given at the continental level. But Ecosocc structures and functions need to be properly operated and to function in ways that Africans can accept and begin to own, and be able to participate effectively in policy changes that affect human and political developments on the continent.

Nepad and the APRM form a welcome process for Africa's development prospects, but countries need to be convinced of the benefits of being part of these processes. Why is it that some countries accede to the APRM and others do not? Reviewing our educational systems to suit our democratic and developmental situations is crucial if we are to build democratic communities which believe that democracy is the only game in town. A democratic culture needs to be inculcated early in life.

While there have been local government reforms in several countries in response to the clamour of democracy, Africans still do not give local governance and issues of service delivery the importance they deserve. Democratic and decentralised local governance has increasingly been advocated as an important component of policy packages to improve governance and facilitate sustainable development. Most African countries are faced with difficult constraints in enhancing the effectiveness of local government. These constraints include shortages of resources, skills and political leadership. Enhancing effective local governance should be at the heart of the poverty-eradication policies.

**NOTES**

- 1 Mkandawire T, Thinking about developmental states in Africa, *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 25, 2001.
- 2 Fukuyama F, *The End of History and the Last Man*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1992.
- 3 Ake C, *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa*. Dakar: Codesria Books, 2000.
- 4 UNDP, *Human Development Report 1990: Concept and Measurement of Human Development*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- 5 Mkandawire, op cit.
- 6 Lindberg SI, *Democracy and Elections in Africa*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.
- 7 Elklit J & Reynolds A, A framework for the systematic study of election quality, *Democratization* 12(2), April 2005.
- 8 Constitution of UNESCO, 1945 <[www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)>.
- 9 Adedeji A, Keynote address at EISA symposium 'Challenges for Democratic Governance and Human Development in Africa', Wanderers Club, Illovo, Johannesburg, South Africa, 8-10 November 2006.

APPENDIX 1  
SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME

DIALOGUE ON CHALLENGES FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE  
AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

WANDERERS CLUB, ILLOVO, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA  
8-10 NOVEMBER 2006

DAY ONE  
8 NOVEMBER 2006

**SESSION 1**

**Chairperson: Dren Nupen, EISA board member**

09:00-09:30      **WELCOME AND OFFICIAL OPENING**  
*Leshele Thoahlane, chairperson of the IEC, Lesotho and  
chairperson of the EISA Board  
CWCI, Representative  
Dr Khabele Matlosa, senior advisor-research, EISA*

**Introduction to the symposium**

**Chairperson: Denis Kadima, executive director, EISA**

09:30-10:00      **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**  
**DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA**  
*Professor Adebayo Adedeji, Eminent Member of the APR Panel,  
leader of the APRM Mission to SA and founder and executive director,  
African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies – ACDESS*

10:00-10:20      TEA BREAK

**SESSION 2**

**Chairperson: Brigalia Bam, chairperson IEC, South Africa**

10:20-11:00      **DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT:  
INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES**  
  
Governance challenges for the achievement of MDGs  
*Udo Etukudo, UNDP Regional Service Centre*

Democracy and development in Africa: The Commonwealth approach  
*Professor Ade Adefuye, Commonwealth Secretariat, London*

11:00-11:30 **Discussion**

**Chairperson: Dr Abdul Lamin, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa**

11:30-12:30 **DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES**

Democracy and Development in Southern Africa

*Dr Khabele Matlosa, EISA*

Prospects for the consolidation of democracy on the African continent:  
 Evidence from the Afrobarometer survey

*Dr Annie Barbara Chikwanha, Afrobarometer, Institute for Democracy in  
 South Africa (Idasa), South Africa*

Gender and democratic governance in Southern Africa

*Professor Sheila Meintjes, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa*

Globalisation, democracy and development in Africa: An analysis

*Martha Mutisi, Africa University, Zimbabwe*

12:30-13:00 **Discussion**

13:00-14:00 LUNCH BREAK

SESSION 3

**Chairperson: Dr Abdalla Hamdok, director, Africa Program, IDEA**

14:00-15:00 **ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY**

Democracy and elections in Africa

*Professor Jørgen Elklit, University of Aarhus, Denmark*

Multiparty democracy and electoral violence in Africa

*Dr Dorina A Bekoe, US Institute of Peace, Washington*

Elections as a peace building instrument

*Professor Dirk Kotzé, University of South Africa*

Electioneering process and the crisis of legitimacy in Nigeria

*Mike Opeyemi, Nigeria*

15:00-15:30 **Discussion**

15:30-15:45 TEA BREAK



## SESSION 4

**Chairperson: Professor Jørgen Elklit, EISA board member; University of Aarhus, Denmark**

15:45-16:30

**POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND DEMOCRACY**

Democracy and political institutions in Southern Africa

*Dr Chris Landsberg, Centre for Policy Studies, South Africa*

The politics of party coalitions in Kenya

*Felix Owuor, National Democratic Institute, Kenya*

Opposition strategies for democracy and development

*Professor Staffan I. Lindberg, Florida, United States*

Funding of political parties

*Richard Calland and Judith February, Idasa, Cape Town*

Third term mania and the shortening of the African democracy

life expectancy

*Dr Marcellin Vidjennagni Zounmenou, Monash University, South Africa*

16:30-17:00

**Discussion**

## SESSION 5

**Chairperson: Dr Patricia Joubert, University of Swaziland**

17:00-18:00

**POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, LEADERSHIP AND DEMOCRACY**

Traditional leadership and democracy in Cameroon

*Dr Thaddeus Menang, National Elections Observatory, Cameroon*

Powerful presidents, weak parliaments, identifying best practices of executive legislative relations on the African continent

*Lia Nijzink, Democracy in Africa Research Unit, University of Cape Town, South Africa*

African citizen perceptions of presidents vs. parliaments

*Elisabete Azevedo, University of Cape Town, South Africa*

Diamonds' dependency and presidentialist democracy in Botswana

*Professor Kenneth Good, University of Melbourne, Australia*

When the elephants fight the grass is trampled: Executive legislative relations in Malawi

*Danga K Mughogho and Kimberly Smiddy, Cape Town, South Africa*

18:00-18:30

**Discussion**

DAY TWO  
9 NOVEMBER 2006

SESSION 6

**Chairperson: Dr Roukaya Kasenally, University of Mauritius**

08:30-09:30

**CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT**

The role of civil society in democracy and development, experiences from Ecosocc  
*Charles Mutasa, executive director, African Forum and Network on Debt and Development, Zimbabwe*

Unpacking popular participation in development and democracy:  
A study of Ecosocc  
*Dr Bhekinnkosi Moyo, Idasa, South Africa*

The role of civil society in democracy and development in Malawi  
*Jacob Nkambule, Malawi*

Active citizenship: The foundation for an effective democracy  
*Bronwen Wilson Thompson and Ilona Tip, EISA*

The role and place of civil society in regional integration in Lesotho  
*Nthakeng Pheello Selinyane, National University of Lesotho, Lesotho*

09:30-10:00

**Discussion**

10:00-10:30

**TEA BREAK**

SESSION 7

**Chairperson: Prof Sheila Meintjes, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa**

10:30-11:30

**NEPAD, APRM, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT**

Strengths and key challenges of the APRM process  
*Ross Herbert, South African Institute of International Affairs, South Africa*

Defining civil society in the context of the APRM  
*Grant Masterson, EISA*

Are Nepad leaders democrats? Mbeki, Wade and Obasanjo's domestic politics and Nepad's ethical norms.  
*Dr Yves Choula, University of Yaoundé 11 Cameroon*

The APRM process in Mauritius: A feminist perspective - A story untold  
*Professor Sheila Bunwaree, University of Mauritius, Mauritius*

Zimbabwe: A country that needs the APRM more than any other country in Southern Africa.

*Dr Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Monash University, South Africa*

11:30-12:00

**Discussion**

12:00-14:00

**ACE LAUNCH AND BUFFET LUNCH**

The ACE Electoral Knowledge Network is a partnership of seven organisations from across the globe namely, EISA, International IDEA, IFES, UNDP, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Elections Canada and IFE-The Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico. It seeks to address electoral management bodies' emerging challenges by facilitating information sharing, peer review, peer support, and peer learning, particularly between election practitioners who face the same challenges in different locations. The ACE Electoral Knowledge Network has three components: knowledge services; the practitioners' network; and capacity development.

**SESSION 8**

**Chairperson: Stranger Kgamphe, Secretary General, South African National Commission for UNESCO**

14:00-15:30

**EDUCATION, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT  
ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**

The role of education in promoting democracy and development

*Grace Kaimila-Kanjo, Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, South Africa*

The role of education ministries in promoting democracy and development

*Granville Whittle, Department of Education, South Africa*

The institutionalisation of democracy and human rights in the educational system

*Victoria Maloka, South African Human Rights Commission, South Africa*

Building democracy and development through education

*Sherri Le Motte (EISA)*

15:30-16:30

**Discussion**

DAY THREE  
10 NOVEMBER 2006

SESSION 9

**Chairperson: Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, President of United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA)**

08:30-09:30      **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND DEMOCRACY**

Local governance and development in Southern Africa  
*Professor Bornwell Chikulo, University of North West, South Africa*

Developmental local government: A case study of South Africa  
*Dr Jaap de Visser, University of the Western Cape, South Africa*

The March 2006 local government elections in South Africa  
*Professor Maxi Schoeman, University of Pretoria, South Africa*

Challenges and opportunities for citizen participation at local government level in South Africa  
*Themba Nkwinika, EISA*

09:30-10:00      **Discussion**

10:00-10:15      TEA BREAK

SESSION 10

**Chairperson: Professor Staffan I. Lindberg, University of Florida, United States**

10:15-11:00      **CONFLICT, SECURITY AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

The inter-linkage between democratic governance and security in Southern Africa  
*Professor Peter Vale, Rhodes University, South Africa*

A critical security overview of Africa's RECs  
*Dr Martin Rupiya, Institute for Security Studies, South Africa*

11:00-11:30      **Discussion**

**Chairperson: Professor Jotham Momba, University of Zambia**

11:30-12:30      **CONFLICT, SECURITY AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE: REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES**

Conflict and governance in West Africa  
*Dr Abdul Lamin, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa*

Democracy and security in East Africa  
*Dr Timothy Othieno, Institute for Global Dialogue, South Africa*

Conflict and security challenges in the Great Lakes region  
*Che Ajulu, Institute for Global Dialogue, South Africa*

Democratisation in Angola: Challenges and prospects  
*Augusto Santana, EISA, Angola*

12:30-13:00 **Discussion**

13:00-14:00 LUNCH BREAK

#### SESSION 11

**Chairperson: Professor Susan Booysen, University of the Witwatersrand**

14:00-15:00 **DR CONGO POLITICAL TRANSITION**

Constitutional developments  
*Vincent Tohbi, EISA-DRC*

Demilitarisation, demobilisation and reintegration of armed militias in the DRC  
*Henri Boshoff, Institute for Security Studies, South Africa*

15:00-15:30 **Discussion**

#### SESSION 12

**Chairperson: Dr Sheila Bunwaree, University of Mauritius**

15:30-16:30 **DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND POVERTY ERADICATION**

Poverty reduction strategy initiatives, democracy and development in Southern Africa  
*Sue Mbaya, executive director, Southern African Regional Poverty Network, South Africa*

A review of poverty reduction strategies  
*Barbara Kalima-Phiri, Southern Africa Trust, South Africa*

A decade of democratic assistance to Mozambique  
*Marc de Tollenaere, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Mozambique*

A regional overview of anti-corruption commissions in Southern Africa  
*Noel Kututwa, executive director, Southern African Human Rights Trust, Zimbabwe*

16:30-17:00 **Vote of thanks and official closing**

*Ilona Tip Senior, advisor, Conflict Management, Democracy and Electoral Education, EISA*

19:00 for 19:30 GALA DINNER  
 BANQUETING HALL WANDERERS CLUB

APPENDIX 2  
PARTICIPANTS' LIST

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## ABOUT EISA



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 was formerly the secretariat of the Electoral Commissions Forum (ECF) composed of electoral commissions in the SADC region and established in 1998. EISA is currently the secretariat of the SADC Election Support Network (ESN) comprising election-related civil society organisations established in 1997.

### **VISION**

Promoting credible elections and democratic governance in Africa.

### **MISSION**

EISA's mission is to strengthen electoral processes, good governance, human rights and democratic values through research, capacity building, advocacy and other targeted interventions. The organisation services governments, electoral commissions, political parties, civil society organisations and other institutions operating in the democracy and governance fields throughout Africa.

### **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 main programmes namely: Conflict Management, Democracy and Electoral Education; Electoral and Political Processes; and 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 and 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 and 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:**

- 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