

CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN AFRICA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ANGOLA AND SOUTH AFRICA

By

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1. Introduction

In an address United Nations' Secretary-General Kofi Annan (1998) noted that *"... since 1970 Africa has had more than 30 wars fought on its territory, the vast majority of which have been intra-state in origin. Fourteen of Africa's 53 countries were afflicted by armed conflicts in 1996 alone. These accounted for more than half of all war-related deaths worldwide, resulting in more than 8 million refugees, returnees and displaced persons. The consequences of these conflicts have seriously undermined Africa's efforts to ensure long-term stability, prosperity and peace for its people"*.

Since these words were uttered a few months ago, little has occurred which detracts from the image of the African continent as being crisis-prone.

Consider here the border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the recent rebellion in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These suggest an urgent need for peace researchers to understand the root causes and trajectories of conflict in order to understand when and how to intervene in a conflict to

achieve a successful resolution. This is precisely what this chapter seeks to accomplish by means of employing a comparative perspective of two case studies: one, South Africa, a success and the other, Angola, a failure.

There are several factors which make these two case studies appropriate in contributing to the comparative perspective. First, both conflicts have a life history of about twenty years. Consequently, the conflict trajectory can be assessed in phases. Second; both countries are developing countries in the Southern African region, and both countries have historically contributed to each other's security dilemma. Consider in this regard, apartheid South Africa's repeated military invasions of Angola in support of Jonas Savimbi's Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and against the Movement for the Popular Liberation of Angola (MPLA) which, in turn, supported the African National Congress' (ANC) Umkhonto weSizwe (Spear of the Nation).

Third, in both countries there were ideological and ethnic overtones to the conflict. In the case of Angola, this was played out in the fact that UNITA portrayed itself as capitalist and pro-West and the MPLA was portrayed as Soviet Marxist. In the South African case, the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) projected itself as a staunch supporter of the free enterprise system, whilst the ANC was viewed as socialist in orientation. With the demise of the Cold War and the ideological precepts it engendered, conflicts in both countries increasing took on ethnic dimensions. In Angola, the MPLA was seen to represent the interests of the Mbundu and the mestizos; whilst UNITA was

seen as the guardians of the Ovimbundu ethnic group. In South Africa, some sectors of the South African population viewed the conflict between the ANC and Inkatha as tensions between the Xhosa and Zulu population groups respectively.

Fourth, to a certain extent, in both countries the conflict also revolved around the personalities of leaders to the extent that Dr. Mangosuthu Buthelezi was synonymous with Inkatha and Dr. Jonas Savimbi was synonymous with UNITA.

Moreover, in both cases violence prevention was attempted. In the case of Angola, the effort failed and led to greater levels of violence. In the South African case, the efforts were successful and led to a peaceful election. In addition, in the Angolan case study there were two parties involved in the mediation and the effort was conducted essentially by international mediators. In the South African case, there were many parties to the mediation and intervention efforts were undertaken by international, national and local actors. Furthermore, both government and non-governmental actors were involved.

An additional important difference in the contexts of the conflict situations was the fact that in the South African scenario the environment was characterised by a grassroots peace culture which grew organically from the need to deal with an unprecedented wave of violence that had developed soon after the negotiations had begun.

As a consequence of this violence the political leaders, of the several political parties engaged in the negotiation process, signed a National Peace Accord (NPA) that was brokered by the business and religious sectors in South Africa. The NPA made provision of the establishment of regional and local peace committees in every locality in South Africa. The result was the spontaneous development of a national “peace culture” from grassroots level to the national political leadership. This “culture” did not end the violence but arguably, it did mitigate the violence. It was the buffer that insulated the peace process and ensured that despite the high levels of violence in the country, the negotiation process could continue.

This “national peace culture” from the grassroots level to the national leadership was conspicuously absent during and after the Angolan peace process that led to the Bicesse Accords. Consequently, the peace process was not protected from the ongoing violence that resulted from sporadic clashes between troops of both sides and more importantly it had the effect of not bringing the general populous into the negotiation arena, as was the case in South Africa. This latter effect, of bringing the general population into the negotiation process, is the guarantor of any negotiated peace. Without “buy in” from the general population, implementation of a peace agreement is extremely difficult.

2. A Brief Narrative on the Nature of the Conflict in Angola and South Africa

The Angolan conflict began as a struggle for independence and national liberation from Portuguese colonial rule during the first months of 1961. By the time of independence on November 11, 1975, political rivalries between the two major nationalist groups – the MPLA and UNITA – who were fighting for independence, degenerated into a vicious civil war that seemed to have no end.

With the assistance of the Cubans, the MPLA emerged the victor of the national liberation struggle and formed the government of post-independence Angola. This victory, however, was violently contested by Jonas Savimbi's UNITA. In the context of the Cold War, this conflict acquired ideological undertones with UNITA being seen as pro-West and the MPLA as pro-Soviet. The demise of global bi-polarity shifted the emphasis from an ideological paradigm to an ethnic one. Various attempts were made to resolve this conflict, with the Bicesse Accords of 31 May 1991 being the most significant and resulting in an election a year later. However, these Accords failed to bring peace to the sixteen year old conflict as UNITA challenged the results of the 1992 elections, a product of the Bicesse Accords. The inevitable result was renewed fighting which resulted in more than 120,000 people being killed in 18 months of fighting. This is almost half the number of people killed in sixteen years of civil war preceding the Bicesse Accords.

In the case of South Africa, its first democratic elections in April 1994, marking the demise of apartheid, was threatened days before the election was to take place, by the refusal of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) to participate in the elections. The implications of the IFP's non-participation was almost certain to

be increased levels of violence in KwaZulu-Natal. This would have had the potential of awakening other disparate groups in the country to violent opposition to the peace process, thereby plunging the entire country into a dangerous cycle of violence bordering on full-scale civil war.

In a series of international and national governmental interventions complimented by non-governmental efforts the IFP agreed, in the eleventh hour, to participate in the elections. Although, this development led to a peaceful transition from apartheid to democratic governance, the agreement itself became a source of continuing conflict between the government led by the majority African National Congress (ANC) party of Nelson Mandela and the IFP of Gatsha Buthelezi. The significance of this latter issue has diminished over the last four years and is testimony to the fact that the guarantor of a sustainable peace process is the development of a broader peace culture that can assist in building trust and sustaining peace.

The important issue for peace researchers is questions as to why the conflict persisted in Angola and was resolved in the case of South Africa? Why did interventions prove successful in the one case and unsuccessful in the other?

3. Theoretical Framework

It has often been said that theory is a construct which assists us in selecting and interpreting facts. In this sense, theory is intensely practical.

Consequently, a comparative study of conflict resolution efforts in South

African and Angola will be of little practical utility unless this was contextualised within a broader theoretical framework which would assist us in determining the strengths and weaknesses of specific intervention efforts and allow us to draw conclusions which would have a wider applicability.

For the purposes of this chapter, the conflict transformation model of Kumar Rupesinghe will be employed. Several reasons may be advanced to justify the utility of such a model in the comparative study of conflict and conflict resolution attempts in Angola and South Africa. In the first place, unlike conflict resolution models, which cannot escape the label 'Made in the West' and a product of the Cold War's emphasis on inter-state rivalry; Rupesinghe's model lays its stress on internal conflicts and, as such, is more appropriate in a post- Cold War Third World environment where such intra-state conflicts is the norm.

Secondly, because of the multi-dimensional nature of protracted social conflicts plaguing much of Africa, Rupesinghe (:65) emphasises the need for an *"...understanding of non-linear peace-building processes. Because of the complexity of many existing and emerging conflicts, a multi-sectoral approach to conflict transformation is needed..."* This multi-sectoral approach is a far more holistic approach to conflict transformation and, as such, allows it to be far more flexible in application than most conventional models which tend to be rigid resulting in a gap between theory and reality. This gap between words and actions adversely affects the quality of research findings. This is an issue which Rupesinghe (:77-78) emphasises when he notes, *"We can speak of*

conflict processes – conflict transformation, conflict endurance and stagnation, and conflict transformation and renewal However, as with human existence, conflict development is also solely linear and does not lend itself to neat compartmentalisation; it is rather a multi-dimensional, multi-faceted process”.

Thirdly, Rupesinghe’s multi-sectoral approach also necessitates the number of actors involved in the peaceful transformation of a conflict needs to be increased to reflect all constituencies of broader society. This fact was crucial to the success of the South African case. Several factors account for this. Firstly, all constituencies of society have a stake in peace and the peace process needs to be ‘owned’ by them if it is to succeed.

Secondly, it is these constituencies which would be playing a key role in post-conflict reconstruction. This is an important point if one considers Rupesinghe’s contention that the peaceful transfer of power is not meaningful transformation. Meaningful transformation also includes sustainable structural and attitudinal changes within broader society and the emergence of new institutions to address outstanding issues (Rupesinghe, nd :77).

Thirdly, the involvement of non-state actors is also vital in situations of intra-state conflicts where the state cannot play the role of non-partisan broker because the state may often be a party to the conflict.

Finally, the inclusion of non-state actors also reflect a broader theoretical point that the dominant realist state-centric paradigm which so dominated International Relations during the Cold War era is under threat; that, ultimately issues of peace and security revolve around people as opposed to states.

Therefore, in summary, the conflict transformation model of Rupesinghe (:76) argues that, “... *coming to an agreement on outstanding issues is of secondary importance to addressing the overall conflict process and coming to terms with the temporal aspects of conflict*”. The conflict transformation model of Rupesinghe has several component parts:

- a. Pre-negotiation stage
- b. Understanding root causes
- c. Ownership of the peace process
- d. Identifying all the actors
- e. Identifying facilitators
- f. Setting a realistic timetable
- g. Sustaining the effort
- h. Evaluating success and failure
- i. Strategic constituencies
- j. The role of outside peacemakers
- k. The role of local peacemakers

The next section is an analysis of the Angolan and South African conflict resolution processes in relation to each of the components of the model as elucidated above.

4. A Comparative Perspective of Conflict Resolution Efforts in the Angolan and South African Case Studies

4.1 Pre-negotiation stage

According to Rupesinghe, the aim of this stage is to bring conflicting parties into the negotiation process with the purpose of “... *the outlining of a logistical framework and timeframe for negotiations, and the setting of ambitious, yet realistic, goals for each stage of initial negotiations. The `strategic intent` of the pre-negotiation phase is to reduce intractability, to formulate and design a process which can bring parties to the negotiating table and to begin the trust and confidence-building necessary for a successful negotiating exercise*” (Rupesinghe, nd:80).

An important point to assess the success of the pre-negotiation stage (and, indeed, the entire negotiation process) is why conflicting parties come to the negotiation table. Do they really want to peacefully resolve their conflict (reduce intractability) or is it just a tactical manoeuvre to buy time to pursue the military option allowing one's forces to be regrouped and resupplied?

In the case of Angola, the changed international and regional environment resulted in a mutually hurting military stalemate. From the perspective of the MPLA, the disintegration of the Soviet Union removed one of its main sponsors for weapons. The withdrawal of Cuban troops, which formed part of the deal to secure UN Resolution 435 and the independence of Namibia, also weakened Luanda's capacity to sustain its war effort. This changed strategic environment, however, also adversely affected UNITA's military option. The end of global bi-polarity resulted in the United States being less willing to militarily aid its former surrogates fighting to defend capitalism. In addition, the withdrawal of South African forces from Namibia meant that UNITA could no longer count on the South African Defence Force (SADF) to come to its aid in its fight against the MPLA.

This military stalemate was clearly evident in the battle for Mavinga in December 1989. The MPLA armed forces launched a massive assault on this town and managed to drive UNITA out of the town but not far enough to claim a decisive victory. There were losses numbering thousands on either side. The result of the battle was the government coming to the realisation that a military solution was beyond its capacity. On the part of UNITA, it could not face another offensive like this without major losses on its side.

Clearly, then the warring parties came to the negotiating table not as a result of any change of heart; but simply because the military option at that stage was no longer viable and because of the pressure to negotiate by international sponsors such as the United States, Russia and Portugal. But, it

is also clear that both sides viewed the military option as a viable alternative should they not have their desires satisfied through negotiations. Thus, in violation of the Bicesse Accords, the MPLA shifted approximately 20 000 of its elite troops into a paramilitary police force; whilst UNITA kept its heaviest weapons and more than 25 000 battled-hardened fighters hidden in the bush.

Thus, in the Angolan scenario the pre-negotiation stage was already doomed and with it the Bicesse Accords. The conflicting parties came to the negotiating table for the wrong reasons hoping to continue to play the zero-sum games they played out on the battlefield so destructively. In this way, compromise was anathema and trust was non-existent. It was a negotiation to be dictated by Washington, Moscow and Lisbon but had no relevance to the situation on the ground in Angola. The international environment had changed but this had not yet impacted in a significant way at the local level in Angola.

In the South African case, while political parties came to the negotiating table with fixed position; they maintained a flexible posture to ensure that negotiations did not stalemate, although all parties played brinkmanship to the extreme. Besides the willingness to compromise, the other distinctive character about the South African case is that the willingness to talk peace came from local actors themselves and was not engineered by international brokers. However, it must be noted that this willingness to compromise also related in large measure to the various parties having a true appreciation of their relative strengths and weaknesses. The IFP and white right-wing parties knew that their bargaining power derived from the threat of violence by their

followers. Equally, the ANC and the National Party (NP) government, recognised the potential of these groups to destabilise any agreement. This threat provided the countervailing balance that provided one of the necessary incentives for compromise.

In addition the presence of a national peace culture, as alluded to earlier, assisted the peace process. An important distinction between the Angolan and South African cases was the fact that in Angola you had two conventional armed forces matched against each other with each controlling formidable armed forces that were well equipped with heavy weapons and who controlled significant sectors of the country. This was not the case in South Africa, where the only party that controlled significant military capability was the South African Government. However, most if not all, of the protagonists to the conflict had the potential to unleash violence that ranged from violent mass demonstrations to armed massacres with guerilla-like hit-and-run tactics that was extremely difficult to control.

The countervailing balance of power was understood well by the ANC and the NP and resulted in their utilizing the 'carrot and stick approach' to deal with the IFP. Thus on 28 February 1994, Nelson Mandela made a passionate plea to the nation for peace and this was seen by the IFP as a sign that the ANC was willing to make further concessions. On the same day, President De Klerk declared that he will deploy troops in KwaZulu-Natal to counter any move by King Goodwill Zwelithini and the IFP to secede from the Republic. Thus whilst compromise and concessions were used to lure recalcitrant

parties to the negotiating table and also as a face-saving device; the alternative was also revealed in stark terms. In this way, minimax as opposed to zero-sum games prevailed.

South Africa was also blessed with leaders who understood the imperatives of the national interest and the need for ethnic, regional and other sectarian interests to be subsumed under its rubric. This was made abundantly clear in Mandela's address in 1990 to a huge public rally in Durban, soon after his release from 27 years of imprisonment, where he appealed to ANC supporters to end political violence and embrace reconciliation in the national interest.

This overarching concern with the national interest as well as a true appreciation of their relative strengths and weaknesses (thereby understanding how far they can push for their demands) on the part of political parties formed the basis of a common middle ground. The identification of this common middle ground and its expansion formed the basis of third party intervention to reduce intractability in this pre-negotiation stage. In this way trust and confidence between parties could be established.

4.2 Understanding root causes

Rupesinghe (nd:81) notes that it is abundantly clear from recent experiences in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia that there is the need for a thorough understanding of the root causes of a given conflict. It stands to reason that

any successful intervention is premised on knowledge of how and why the conflict started in the first place. Addressing the sources which generated the conflict would then form the basis of the resolution to the conflict.

In the case of Angola, it is difficult not to escape the stark fact that the root causes of the conflict had less to do with ideological (capitalism vs communism) and ethnic (Ovimbundu vs Mbundus) considerations and more to do with the unsatiated desire for complete control on the part of leaders who utilised such considerations as vehicles for their own naked political ambitions. Consider in this regard that in the 1992 elections large sections of the Ovimbundu voted for Mbundu candidates and *vice versa*. As for ideological considerations these were largely put to rest with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the almost unseemly haste with which Marxists in the MPLA rushed to embrace the free enterprise system. As for UNITA's concerns regarding the presence of Cuban troops in Angola; these were also met when the last 119 Cuban troops from Angola arrived in Havana on 27 May 1991.

Apart from personal ambitions, another underlying cause of the conflict was (and continues to be) the fear of domination. The levels of trust are so low in the Angolan case and the history is so checkered by indications of complete control on the levers of power that the politics of fear is as dominant a theme as is the politics of power. One of the main failures of the Bicesse Accords was its inability to recognise this fact and prepare the ground for a politically inclusive settlement as opposed to a "winner takes all" outcome.

In the case of South Africa, the desires of political leaders for irrational and uncontrolled political aggrandisement was less of a problem. Specific problems, rather, were identified by political parties as accounting for their antagonism and, on the part of the IFP, their threat of non-participation in the first democratic general elections to be held in the country.

Thus, in the case of the IFP their points of contention were the issue of a double ballot, the entrenchment of the Zulu monarchy in the new constitutional dispensation and the nature and extent of the devolution of political power from central to regional governments. While these were, indeed, thorny issues it did open up the process and set the agenda for third party intervention. The lesson to be learnt from this is that it is always easier to resolve a conflict where issues of divergence are clearly put on the agenda and where such issues go beyond the mere hunger for power among political elites.

4.3 Ownership of the peace process

According to Rupesinghe (nd:81), the sustainability of the peace process is also dependent upon the “... *empowerment of local actors so that they become the primary architects, owners and long-term stakeholders in the peace process*”. International pressure, Rupesinghe notes, is not applicable in many intra-states conflicts plaguing the world today. Even when ‘successful’,

such imposed settlements do merely serve to postpone the conflict as there is little internal support and root causes of the conflict are not addressed.

The truism of this statement is clearly borne out in the Angolan situation where the Bicesse Accords was, in large measure, imposed upon the parties. In this sense, too, US Secretary of State for African Affairs Herman J. Cohen; Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Kasimirov, US Secretary James Baker; Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessemertnylch; and UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar were the real architects of the Accords as opposed to Eduardo dos Santos and Jonas Savimbi. Small wonder then; that throughout the talks leading to the Bicesse Peace Accords fighting has continued. This is indicative of the fact that the Angolans themselves did not own the peace process and therefore did not feel obliged to obey its terms.

In the South African case, the situation was reversed. The role of outside mediators such as Dr. Henry Kissinger, Lord Carrington and British Defence Secretary of State Douglas Hurd were minimal. Even the important and vital role of Professor Washington Okumu, the Kenyan mediator who played a major role in brokering the IFP's entry into the elections, was largely complimented by the efforts of several other South African peace brokers who worked in trying to influence different constituencies. Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Reverend Frank Chikane are the most notable local actors who were involved in brokering the IFP's entry into the elections.. In this way, the peace process was truly owned by all parties and more importantly, by South Africans in general, and as such they had a vested interest in its maintenance.

4.4 Identifying all the actors

Rupesinghe stresses the importance of identifying all actors (big and small) and bringing them to the negotiating table. Failure to do this could result in the alienation of key stakeholders and role-players from the peace process.

In the case of the Bicesse Accords in Angola little effort was expended on bringing the factions comprising the Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave (FLEC) to the negotiating table. Little wonder that they issued a statement on 31 July 1992 saying they would boycott the elections and carry on an armed struggle until independence for Cabinda was won. This was to prove disastrous for the Angolan State and for post-conflict reconstruction since FLEC was operating in oil rich Cabinda on whose revenues Luanda was almost completely reliant upon.

In the case of South Africa, the emphasis was on an all-inclusive process of 26 parties including large and powerful ones such as the ANC, NP and IFP; as well as comparatively smaller and weaker ones such as the homeland governments of QwaQwa and Gazankulu. From the start the main political actors realised that an inclusive process meant that the outcome of the

negotiations would be more credible amongst South Africans generally and that such an inclusive process also increases the number of stakeholders who would then serve to sustain that agreement.

4.5 Identifying facilitators

Rupesinghe notes that it is crucial to identify in the design of a peace process appropriate facilitators “...*who have the background knowledge, analytic and mediation skills to make a positive contribution to the design process*” (Rupesinghe, nd :81).

In the case of Angola, because the peace was imposed and the architects were outside sponsors, facilitators came from these sponsoring countries and these, too, were, imposed upon the belligerents. There were no internal facilitators whom the parties could agree upon. This once again underlined the fact that the Bicesse Accords was not owned by Angolans themselves.

In the case of South Africa, the situation was once again reversed. South Africa has a large and experienced pool of facilitators such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu who greatly contributed to the peace process. Moreover inside the political parties there were a large and vocal pro-peace lobby whose proponents were well schooled in the art of facilitation and negotiation.

These skilled negotiators and facilitators were present at both the regional and national levels. An example is the region of KwaZulu Natal which was the scene of the highest levels of violence immediately preceding and during the negotiations. In this case the IFP's Frank Mdlalose and the ANC's, Jacob Zuma both skilled mediators, played an important role in brokering local peace efforts.

At the national level the main protagonists to the conflict, the National Party and the ANC, both had skilled negotiators who had formal training in negotiations and who had vast experiences in the art of negotiations. The ANC negotiation team was led by Cyril Ramaphosa, a trade union leader who honed his negotiation skills over years of negotiations in the labour-management arena. The National Party negotiation team was led by Roelf Meyer, a seasoned negotiator who had received formal negotiation training and who honed his skills in government over several years. This meant that there was the necessary resources, skills and goodwill in South Africa to facilitate the resolution of the conflict and to sustain such a peace effort even after agreement was reached.

4.6 Setting a realistic timetable

Rupesinghe emphasizes the importance of setting a realistic timetable, from the identification of root causes and significant actors, through such phases as cease-fires, to the elaboration of mechanisms of political and social accommodation, for the success of the peace process. A timetable which

attempts to do too much over a short period of time may result in most tasks not being done or being done very badly (such as demobilisation of former combatants). This could then serve to undermine the credibility of the entire peace process. On the other hand, a timetable which results in protracted peace negotiations over a considerable period of time may result in the momentum for peace being lost. Both options are equally dangerous.

In the Angolan case, the Bicesse Accords called for the formation of a national army, the establishment of government administrations all over Angola and the institution of a multiparty system. Elections were to be held between September and November 1992 and these were to be prepared for. A joint Political-Military Commission (JPMC) was to be established and charged with overall responsibility for the peace process, including the cease-fire. The United Nations Angola Verification Mission II (UNAVEM II), under the direction of the JPMC, was responsible for policing the transition. In addition, the Accords committed UNITA and the MPLA to demobilisation; and UNITA was to convert to a political party, presenting its candidates in national presidential and legislative elections. Clearly, it was impossible to accomplish all these tasks within fifteen months; but this was precisely what the Accords bound them to.

In the South African scenario, flexibility in one's negotiating posture and flexibility around time-scales were the watchwords to ensure an all-inclusive process. Consider the following. On 8 January 1994, the IFP threatened to boycott the elections. At this stage, the IFP had until 24 January 1994 (until

the special parliamentary session) to find a compromise and become involved in the elections. On the 5 March 1994, way after this deadline, the IFP announced it would consider registering, pending international mediation. On 7 March 1994, the South African government announced it was prepared to extend the election registration date and on 25 April (two days before the election), the South African Parliament sat to effect amendments to the constitution to enable the IFP to participate in the elections.

The important lesson to be learnt from the South African scenario is that the government displayed no flexibility regarding the election date of 27 April 1994, thereby preventing protracted negotiations resulting in the loss of a peace momentum. At the same time, the government displayed considerable flexibility to ensure that the all-inclusive character of the negotiations was maintained and that root causes were being addressed in the process (the role of the Zulu king, the power of provinces). In this way a realistic timetable was maintained.

4.7 Sustaining the effort

According to Rupesinghe (nd:82), a “... *comprehensive approach to peace requires an adequate investment of financial resources, patience and a sustained commitment from sponsors*”.

In the Angolan case, clearly this commitment on the part of the sponsors was lacking. For example, the international community erred by under-resourcing

the peacekeeping operation with a mere 400 observers. This translated into one observer for every 333 soldiers whereas in Namibia there was one observer for every six soldiers. Part of the reason for this could be that the international community's attention was deflected elsewhere to Iraq and the Middle East.

More specifically however, was the ambivalent response on the part of international sponsors, especially the United States, to Savimbi's rejection of the results of the 1992 election, which was hailed as relatively free and fair by the United Nations, and which UNITA lost. An unambiguous condemnation of UNITA's actions may have resulted in their coming back into the process and the civil war which followed in the immediate post-1992 period may have been avoided. Instead, UNITA may have been encouraged by the ambivalence of the United States.

In the South African case, as was mentioned above, international sponsors played a minimal role and most of the effort to sustain the process (even after Inkatha participated in the 1994 elections) was left in the hands of the parties themselves. This they successfully accomplished since inclusion was stressed even after the 1994 period. Consider in this regard the 27 May 1996 high level meeting between the ANC and the IFP which resulted in a closer working relationship and recognition of the IFP as a liberation movement. In addition, at this meeting it was acknowledged that there were no major ideological differences between the ANC and IFP.

One of the reasons bringing the IFP and ANC closer together was the nature of the South African constitutional engineering process and the final constitution itself. The process itself sought consensus as opposed to majority domination. This influenced the manner in which both the ANC and the IFP have been conducting their politics. There was a major shift away from confrontation to cooperation thus reducing tensions. Both parties made concessions regarding policy issues and, as such, the IFP dropped the demand regarding international mediation.

This thawing of relations can be seen in several ways. When the National Party chose to leave the post-election Government of National Unity, the IFP chose to stay in it with IFP leader, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, continuing to be Minister of Home Affairs and, on various occasions, in the absence of President Mandela, he wore the mantle of Acting-President of South Africa. At the time of writing there is much speculation regarding the integration of the IFP into the ANC with Buthelezi being offered the Deputy Presidency of the country under President Thabo Mbeki since Nelson Mandela has decided to step down.

4.8 Evaluating success and failure

Rupesinghe (nd:82) notes that a crucial element “... *of any peacekeeping design should be a process of evaluation which indicates whether the main interests of the parties are being addressed, the precedents and principles used in searching for a solution (and whether they were useful), the obstacles*

encountered and factor which led to progress, alternatives and missed opportunities, co-ordination with other peacemaking activities, and what could be learned from the process”.

In the Angolan case, such a built-in system evaluating success and failure was not designed into the process. If it was perhaps the parties and international sponsors would have asked why throughout the negotiations leading up to the Bicesse Accords, fighting on the ground continued. Part of the problem could also have been an unrealistic timetable (as explained above) which made no provision to evaluate whether each of the requirements of each phase were being met. Another problem which may have hindered an evaluation of success and failure is that the root causes were not properly spelled out. As such, it would be difficult to assess whether issues of divergence were being addressed or not.

In the South African case, this clearly was not the case as problem issues were clearly put on the agenda thus progress towards a resolution of the conflict could be assessed in terms of whether these root causes were being addressed or not. In the case of the IFP the demands included the future role of the Zulu King in any constitutional dispensation as well as the devolution of power between the central and provincial governments. Having put this on the agenda the parties could now look at ways to resolve these problems and it was on this basis that success or failure could be evaluated.

On the 18 January 1994, following talks between the Government and King Goodwill Zwelithini, President De Klerk informed the King that adequate provision was to be made for the entrenchment of the Zulu monarchy in the envisaged KwaZulu-Natal constitution. Moreover, on the following day a meeting was convened between the Government, the ANC and the Freedom Alliance, of which the IFP was a part. The focus of this meeting was on the powers and functions of provinces; provincial constitutions; safeguards for provincial status; self-determination and the two ballot issue. On 6 February 1994, the ANC threw its weight behind a demand to have the Zulu King enshrined as a constitutional monarch over the entire province of KwaZulu-Natal.

To once more underline the central thrust of this argument: knowing what the points of divergence are forms the basis for the successful resolution of the conflict and, hence this is the first step in the evaluation of success or failure of the peace process.

4.9 Strategic constituencies

Rupesinghe also identifies the need for strategic constituencies to sustain peace processes. According to Rupesinghe (nd:82) these include “... *relevant non-governmental organisations, the media, human rights and humanitarian institutions, peace institutions, religious institutions, independent scholars, former members of the military, members of the business community, intergovernmental and government officials and donors. To*

maximize their impact, various constituencies would form strategic alliances focused on particular conflicts, aspects of violent conflict or the overall goal of prevention”.

In the Angolan case no such peace constituency existed, with civil society being relatively underdeveloped. Consequently, there was not a sufficient domestic pro-peace lobby to sustain the process before and after the signing of the Bicesse Accords.

In the South African situation, things were dramatically different. South Africa has a strong and vibrant civil society nurtured by their opposition to apartheid. This proved in many instances a deciding force during negotiations when faced with recalcitrant parties playing the role of spoiler.

Throughout the period of the negotiations leading to the 27 April elections, public opinion in favour of the elections was voiced through the media, mass marches throughout the country and mass religious and political rallies. The South African Chamber of Business also strongly came out in support of the elections. Non-governmental organisations such as the Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMPD) also played a role in getting the IFP to participate in the elections. On 31 March 1994, at a time when the IFP leadership was still ambivalent regarding their position, the IMPD released the results of its survey which indicated that most people, including the majority of IFP supporters would vote in the election. From the perspective of the IFP, what

gave this survey greater credibility was the fact that the Director of the IMPD, was a former Secretary-General of the IFP.

Public opinion was, perhaps, most dramatically displayed in the case of the Boputhatswana homeland government which on 7 March 1994 announced that it would not to participate in the April elections. Mass popular uprisings occurred which resulted in the toppling of the Mangope regime on 11 March 1994. Public opinion so overwhelmingly in favour of the elections, was possibly one of the factors which pushed the IFP to participate in the elections for fear of following the route of the Mangope regime.

4.10 The role of outside peacemakers

Rupesinghe (nd:84) notes that traditional “...*diplomacy and outside non-governmental peacemakers have important roles to play in mediating the mitigation or resolution of violent internal conflict*”. This was clearly borne out in the recent Norwegian intervention on the Israeli-Palestinian question which resulted in the Oslo Peace Accords.

On the other hand, the role of outside peacekeepers can adversely affect negotiations as was the Angolan experience. As was illustrated above, outside sponsors did not commit sufficient resources to sustain the peace effort. In addition, they misunderstood conditions on the ground and drew up an unrealistic timetable.

Moreover, the Angolan peace process also raises interesting question regarding the motivations and interests of third parties who seek to mediate. Consider in this regard the short-lived Gbadolite Peace Accords. Seizing the opportunity presented by the 1988 New York Accords, President Mobutu Sese Seko convened this initiative six months later. But this initiative was as much about Angolan peace as it was about bolstering Mobutu's international image. President Mobutu's manipulation of the parties by feeding them with false information as to what each had agreed to with him in private, led to no agreement being secured. To the contrary, it led to the hardening of attitudes.

In the South African case, as was mentioned above, the role of outside peacekeepers was minimal. A strong case could be made to argue that even the role of Professor Washington Okumu was one of facilitation, selling the basis of compromise already largely reached between the parties. The South African experience, once more, underlines the need for ownership of the peace process to reside with local actors.

It is important to note however that Professor Washington Okumu's success in facilitating dialogue derived from his twenty-odd year relationship with Chief Buthelezi and the enormous trust that existed between them. It could be argued that this factor was a crucial link in the chain of peace that was used to secure the peace process.

4.11 The role of local peacekeepers

Rupesinghe (nd:85) emphasizes the role of local peacemakers who are influential "... *members of local communities with a first hand knowledge of conflict, actors, the political and economic situation and the cultural background will have a distinct 'comparative advantage' over other potential peacemakers wishing to act as third-party mediators*". The role of these local peacekeepers take on added importance if one considers the erratic and ambivalent role played by outside peacekeepers, as was displayed in the Angolan case. More disconcerting though is the fact that in the Angolan case there were no local peacekeepers which meant that parties were increasingly dependent on the attention of outside sponsors. In 1991 the Angolan crisis was dominated by the Gulf crisis. It can be argued that had local actors been given the resources to mediate in the Angolan conflict their closeness to the conflict and deeper understanding of the nuances may have brought a sharper appreciation of what was possible within a realistic framework and a more sustained presence that may have yielded a different result.

As was previously mentioned, South African had such local expertise and these were utilized. Thus, Archbishop Desmond Tutu chaired the meeting between Nelson Mandela and Mangosuthu Buthelezi. The Archbishop understood each individual very intimately since he had a personal relationship with each of them, he was familiar with the cultural nuances of African culture and tradition and was acutely aware of the political and economic dimensions of the South African milieu.

5. Conclusion

Utilizing the theoretical framework as espoused by Dr. Kumar Rupesinghe, it is abundantly clear why the Bicesse Accords failed whereas intervention to avert the crisis was much more successful in South Africa. One crucial aspect, lacking in the above analysis however, was the role played by culture.

Angola's political history unlike South Africa, is mainly militant. The militant political culture developed through history as a response to Portuguese colonialism which was extremely brutal and left behind a strong legacy of underdevelopment and poverty. Since the thirteenth century, indigenous Angolans resisted colonialism for decades before finally succumbing to the Portuguese onslaught with the support of Boer settlers. The post World War II period witnessed a significant rise in Portuguese brutality as well as the rise of nationalism. Angolan nationalism was met with hostility, suppression and brutality. The frustration and lack of legitimate ways of channeling grievances led to the formation of armed liberation movements. Independence from colonial rule, as was mentioned above, did not bring about peace; rather conflict escalated between UNITA and the MPLA. For the next two decades, Angolan society became highly militarized, battle-hardened and violently socialized. Under these conditions, civilian culture and civil society could not develop independently from the state. The war peaked in 1988 with far reaching effects that paralyzed the infrastructure, caused hundreds of thousands of casualties and displaced many more Angolans.

Unlike South Africa, warring factions in Angola sought control of the state. The state machinery is a symbol of power and wealth. Angola is well endowed with natural resources that could turn around the economy within a short period of time. The presence of oil in Angola further complicated the dimensions of the war. Oil, alone, can pay for Angola's development in the same way gold paid for industrialization in South Africa. In this way, the Angolan conflict could not be viewed against the same background as South Africa.

Furthermore, South Africa's conflict was low intensity and interest based as opposed to Angola's one that is resource-based. The political differences between the IFP and the ANC were over strategies to bring down apartheid while in Angola it was for the control of the state and its resources. It was therefore much easier to contain the IFP as it had very little stake nationally that could have otherwise complicated the transition process. The IFP never sought national leadership, but rather intended to retain its traditional support at KZN province. An understanding of these dynamics formed the basis of compromises and concessions reached.

Unlike South Africa, the Angolan conflict involved powerful actors who had independent power bases and each faction was backed by a superpower. The MPLA had access to oil and other resources while UNITA controlled large areas suitable for agriculture and rich in gold and diamonds. Some analysts estimate that UNITA accrues over US\$ 500,000 from the illegal diamond trade. This is a budget which sustains smaller economies like Zambia. This

also meant that both UNITA and the Angolan Government had sufficient resources at their disposal to purchase sophisticated weapons. Under these same circumstances, it is highly unlikely that either side could have conceded defeat. These conditions also militate against minimax strategies and encourage parties to play zero-sum games.

What the above demonstrates is that over and above a thorough understanding of the technical aspects of the peace process, third parties seeking to resolve a conflict also need to understand the broader context in which such intervention takes place. This context or background includes both an understanding of political culture as well as an assessment of the nature of vested interests and how that impacts on the broader conflict.

This chapter began with an overview of conflict in Africa. Perhaps it would be ideal to conclude on a more optimistic note. In recent months, South African Deputy President, Thabo Mbeki, has popularized the term of an 'African Renaissance' to describe the resurgence of the continent. One aspect of this Renaissance is Africans accepting more responsibility for their own actions. This has been eloquently expressed by OAU Secretary-General Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim (1997):

"... OAU Member States can no longer afford to stand aloof and expect the International Community to care more for our problems than we do, or indeed to find solutions to those problems which in many instances, have been of our own making. The simple truth that we must confront today, is that

the world does not owe us a living and we must remain in the forefront of efforts to act and act speedily to prevent conflict from getting out of control'.

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