

# CONFLICT

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## CONFLICT SUPPLEMENT EDITORIAL

Debates shift from the forms and causes to the effects of violence, but the task of trying to prevent its resurgence must continue. The threat of violence has become common in Africa as a whole, and few countries have escaped the cycles of conflict which impoverish the continent.

We are inclined to believe that South Africa's conflict is unique, but lessons can be learned from the struggles of other African countries, both against poverty and internal wars. The turbulence of African politics shows that spells of calm can be suddenly and violently overturned.

Government must be vigilant in dealing with structures like the Peace Accord and institutions such as the security forces, courts of law and prisons. Transforming the goodwill of South Africans into a stable and secure environment now depends on them.

The Peace Accord structures may be discontinued after a short and unobtrusive existence which has been regarded as expensive and ineffective. Success for them means preventing violence, but attributing the absence of conflict to particular events is hard. Field workers themselves may be unaware that their actions prevent attacks. Had these structures shared their activities more openly with the public, the value of their work might have been more apparent.

Launching peace initiatives when conflict is boiling over is never easy and discontinuing these structures when violence subsides is risky. Recent massacres and taxi violence indicate that violence still simmers in several areas. Local government elections may also induce conflict, and normalising community-police relations remains an impossible dream for many police officers and civilians.

The South African Police Services (SAPS) has to cope with the effects of a legacy of violent policing on its members. The Government has introduced new policing approaches, but ours remains a violent society which the stressed and underresourced police force must manage.

Community policing is a new approach, but turning an optimistic concept into a feasible programme is proving hard. The police are still widely perceived as a threat rather than as protectors. This hostile relationship undermines an already pressured criminal justice system, itself dealing with the aftermath of a repressive political system and insufficient funding. Acceptable structures to facilitate dialogue are still necessary whether these are related to the Peace Accord or not.

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*The high crime rate has provoked an outcry from the police and the public that criminals are being treated leniently and bail is granted too easily by the courts. The problem lies more with resources and training for police and prosecutors than with the new Bill of Rights.*

**S**outh Africa's first democratic election brought the real prospect of racial reconciliation. This has allowed the country to begin looking at some of the more pressing social problems, such as inadequate housing, poor education, inadequate social services and a chronic shortage of proper health care facilities.

The attention of most South Africans is however, focused on the problem of crime. This is true for people living in the suburbs or the townships. At the same time there has been an uproar from the police and the Attorney General's office complaining that criminals are being dealt with too leniently by the courts.

These complaints are supported by the fact that criminal suspects are being released on bail too easily and that their investigations are being seriously hampered by recent court decisions to allow accused people access to witnesses and their statements.

This argument implies that the Constitution itself is preventing the criminal justice system (the police and the courts) from dealing with crime properly. It is not however, the Interim Constitution and the Bill of Rights which is failing in the attack on crime, but the underresourced and inadequately trained police and prosecutors.

### Two models

Most criminal justice systems, including those that operate within a constitutional framework, have grappled with the tension of how to strike a balance between society's need for protection against crime on the one hand and safeguarding the rights of suspected or accused persons on the other.

The underlying issue is the purpose of the criminal justice system. It can simply ensure that criminals are apprehended, convicted and sent to jail, or that the conviction procedure acknowledges the rights of the

# HUMAN RIGHTS OR CRIMINAL JUSTICE?

**Azhar Cachalia**  
**Attorney, Cheadle Thompson and Haysom**

accused at every critical stage, before and during the trial. The first model is known as the crime control model and the second, the due process model.

The crime control model sees efficient, expeditious and reliable screening of persons suspected of crime as the central value to be served by the criminal process. For the due process model, that function is limited by and subordinate to the maintenance of the dignity and autonomy of the individual.

The crime control model is administrative and managerial while the due process model is adversarial and judicial. The former may be compared to an assembly line, the latter to an obstacle course.

## Crime control

Before the adoption of the Interim Constitution, the criminal process operated according to the crime control model. This infected our system in a serious way. A person charged under the Internal Security Act of 1982 with endangering the authority of the State was presumed to have intended to endanger the State's authority before the case began.

This relieved the State from proving its case beyond a reasonable doubt, which is a fundamental principle of criminal justice. In certain cases the Attorney General could order that the accused person is not released on bail or warning. This deprived the accused of his right to apply to an independent court to be released on bail.

If an accused was tortured and subsequently forced to point out a concealed weapon, this evidence would be admissible in a trial against him, to show that he had knowledge of the whereabouts of the weapon.

This approach seeks to underplay or ignore the rights of accused persons and contributes to a culture of lawlessness among law enforcement officials. Police also became

accustomed to the rules of evidence being changed, which made it easier to secure convictions and thus required less investigation on their part.

## Due process

The "due process" model adopted by the Interim Constitution emphasises the rights of accused persons. It concentrates on the individual and claims that the protection of the individual in the criminal justice system is in the best interests of society.

The protagonists of this model argue that it is better to acquit 10 guilty people than to convict a single innocent one. According to this approach the emphasis on rights takes precedence over the attainment of truth.

This means that a confession extracted by torture would not only be excluded because it is unreliable, but more fundamentally, because the rights of the accused person were violated. The crime control model is incompatible with a criminal justice system which complies with the due process model of the Interim Constitution.

## Improved investigations

The criminal justice system should emphasise protecting the rights of the accused. This does not mean that dangerous criminals will be allowed to go free because of some "technicality". It will in the first instance have the effect of ensuring the integrity of our criminal justice system.

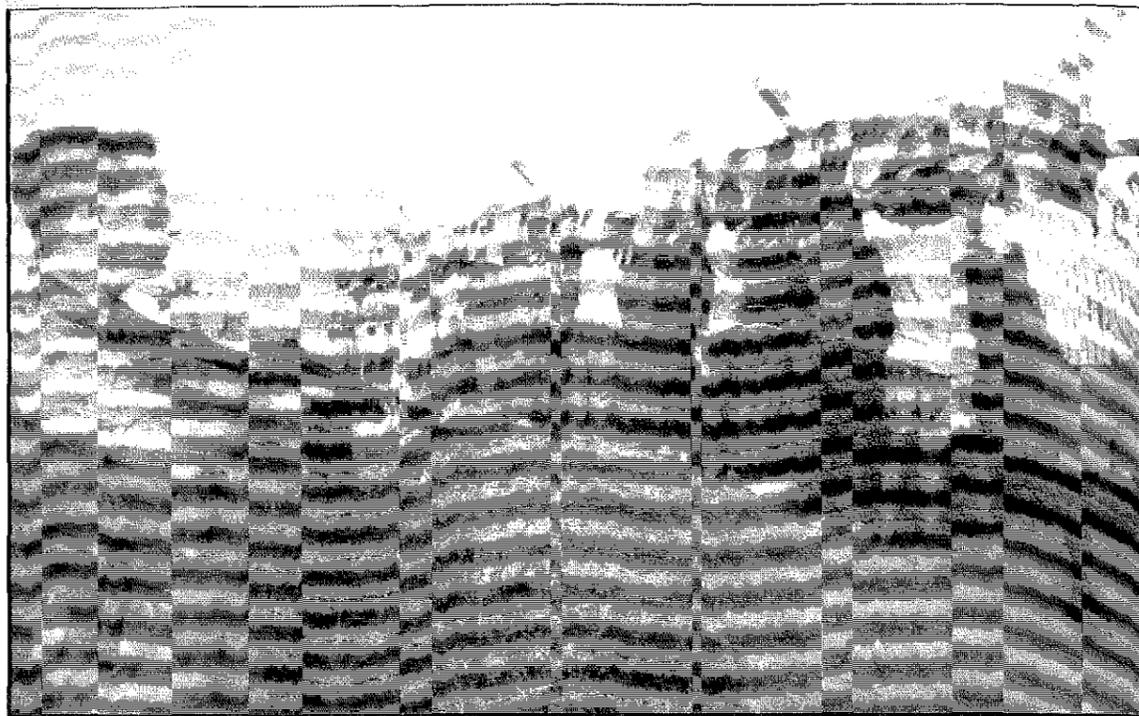
It is important that our society moves away from a culture which upheld the notion that the end justifies the means. Indeed, if this were the case why not simply resort to a vigilante system where all suspected criminals are simply lynched?

Emphasising the rights of the accused will also compel the police to realise that courts will not condone lawlessness by state

*In the past the criminal process ignored the rights of accused persons and contributed to a culture of lawlessness among law enforcement officials*

*Protecting the rights of the accused will ensure the integrity of our criminal justice system*

*Our society must move away from a culture which upheld the notion that the end justifies the means*



John Woodroof

*The police should be taught that the proper investigation of crime does not have to include maltreatment of criminal suspects*

enforcement officials. This will have a positive effect on the police, as it will encourage them to improve their investigative techniques.

It is not permissible to "beat the truth" out of someone. The police should be taught that the proper investigation of crime does not have to include maltreatment of criminal suspects. Of course, this takes time, effort and personnel. Other factors also complicate the police force's task of collecting evidence and securing convictions.

The complete breakdown in police-community relations means there is little trust between police and ordinary people. For this reason the Community Police Forums have made it their express task to rebuild these relationships, enabling the police and community to fight crime together, rather than from opposing sides.

The way in which resources were distributed in the past for safety and security is another obstacle to effective crime control. The bulk of the funds were spent on security at the expense of other important areas in common law, such as drug control and other ordinary policing functions.

The police service has to be properly resourced to enable the training of personnel in order to combat crime effectively. It is therefore shortsighted of our politicians to propose, as they have done, that the present police budget is cut by 4%.

At the same time the Department of Justice needs to upgrade the quality of its prosecutors in both the lower and superior courts. Constitutional litigation differs from ordinary litigation, and a lack of experience in this field will require retraining of prosecutors.

The poor salaries paid to prosecutors are responsible for the alarming exodus of skilled lawyers from the government service into the private sector. This adds to the already enormous workload which prosecutors are faced with, which often means cases are not properly prepared in advance.

All these factors burden the criminal justice system. If the government does not address these concerns urgently, police will continue to take shortcuts while investigating crime, and prosecutors will try to run criminal trials like a conveyor belt system. The Interim Constitution's emphasis on the rights of accused persons will then ring hollow.

It is dangerous to link the escalation of crime with the Interim Constitution. South Africans should be proud of the rights enshrined in the Constitution and should seek to uphold them. After all, these are the rights that have been denied to all South Africans for so long.

To question the efficacy of the Bill of Rights then misses the point completely. These rights have been won in a hard struggle for freedom, and the real criticisms should be directed at the shortcomings of the criminal justice system. ~~UPA~~

# FACING THE ENEMY

**Captain Theo J. Burgers**  
**Institute for Behavioural Sciences, SAPS, Witwatersrand**

*A cycle of violence places police in constant contact with victims while often becoming victims themselves or being forced to use violence against criminals. This overexposure to death and disaster means high rates of suicide, medical boardings and hospitalisation, with massive costs for society.*

**T**he incidence of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the South African Police Service (SAPS) must be seen against the background of the police force's 80 year history and the current state of South African society. This country has inherited a violent past which cannot be easily changed.

When an aspiring police official starts his/her training it is like realising a dream. The highlight comes six months later with graduation from training college as a constable, ready and determined to serve and protect the public. The constable can at last share in the "excitement" of chasing and apprehending criminals.

This dream quickly makes way for reality. The dismay and shock on the face of a robbery victim is unexpected and the dismembered body at an accident scene is not easily forgotten. For many civilians murder, robbery and rape are just newspaper articles or television pictures. For police officers, the horror and hatred cannot be erased by the switch of a button.

The police have several roles, many of which place them in gruesome or terrifying situations. They may have to dispose of a corpse that has been fed on by stray dogs or the decomposed remains of a baby in a plastic bag. The bodies of a family in a quiet suburb, each with a bullet wound in the head, makes a policeman wonder about his own family's safety.

Entering a house where arms and drugs are concealed, or where a suspect is hiding, can be answered with a hand grenade explosion in the policeman's face, and can cost him his life. Fear and suspense are overwhelming in these situations and the desperation to keep a colleague alive is beyond description.

Life threatening situations and death are faced by members of the Internal Stability Unit (ISU), the Flying Squad and Robbery Reaction Units on a daily basis. Exposure to violence is not haphazard or coincidental, but part of the routine police duties.

Our society is saturated with media exposure to violence and people are becoming aware of the effects this can have on them. This awareness has helped change the public perception that the police are immune to pressure and stress.

## Stressful situations

The police are also victims, not only of violence but of other kinds of disasters. Six types of victims have been distinguished in a collective danger situation: the dead; the bereaved families; the survivors and their families; the onlookers; the rescue workers; and those responsible for the disaster.

Police officials are often described as secondary victims because of their daily exposure to Critical Incident Stress (CIS). A critical incident causes uncomfortable emotions in people at the scene which affect their short and long term behaviour. As part of their duties, the police are present in most stressful situations which can cause CIS:

- ⊗ the serious injury or death of a child;
- ⊗ the serious injury or death of a colleague;
- ⊗ the suicide of a colleague;
- ⊗ the serious injury or death of a woman/mother who leaves small children;
- ⊗ the physical abuse of children;
- ⊗ any incident in which odours, sounds and sights trigger uneasy feelings, such as decomposing bodies, shooting incidents and bomb blast scenes where the smell of explosives, scattered debris and human remains often cause discomfort;

*Life threatening situations and death are faced by units of the SAPS on a daily basis*

*The public perception that the police are immune to pressure and stress is changing*

*The police are also victims, not only of violence but of other kinds of disasters*

*Suicide is considered more often by police officers following a shooting, especially if the assailant is killed*

**Table 1: Suicide among Police Officers**

YEAR	NUMBER
1991	65
1992	106
1993	134
1994	148*

\* Projected estimate, based on a figure of 74 suicides during the first six months of 1994

Source: Nel, 1994

some critical incidents are so acute that people exposed to these events will develop PTSD regardless of the assistance that is offered.

## Police as victims

The effects of exposure to critical incidents like retrieving and identifying human remains and shooting incidents are well known. The consequences of violence and crime for those trying to control these ills, has only recently been recognised.

Suicide statistics are alarming (Table 1). If the incidence of suicide among police officers during 1991 (60 out of every 100 000) is compared with that of the general population during this period (5 out of every 100 000), the extent of the problem is evident. The fact that police are also victims might explain these high suicide rates.

A stressful situation and the resultant narrowing of available options characterise the victim's predicament. Feelings of helplessness become pervasive and lead many victims to take their own lives. Suicide is considered more often by police officers following a shooting, especially if the assailant is killed (Nel, 1994).

Medical boarding due to stress related disabilities constitutes a high percentage of medical retirements. Since 1991 there has been a massive increase in medical boardings for psychological reasons, including PTSD (Table 2). These statistics reflect how police officials experience their present circumstances.

The continuous exposure to trauma forces officers to seek a way out rather than to seek help. This may include exaggerating or fabricating PTSD symptoms, often in an attempt to avoid having to deal with changes in the police force as a result of political changes in the country.

The costs of boarding police officials are high in terms of loss of valuable manpower and often irreplaceable expertise. Equally distressing is the expense to the taxpayer of boarding 904 police officials in the first six months of 1994 which amounted to R250 million (Nel, 1994).

The high turnover in personnel also reflects the state of mind within the SAPS. About 23 362 members (10% per annum) have left the SAPS since 1991. Along with an increase in medical boardings, this has reduced the number of police officers, which means the young, new recruits are often unprepared for the demands of policing.

- environmental dangers; and
- national disasters.

At a workshop on Trauma in Police Work in the Western Cape, police officers emphasised that shooting someone, being shot, or seeing someone being shot are particularly traumatic events.

Shooting incidents constitute a major source of trauma in the SAPS, and *The Citizen* reported that almost every police officer on the Witwatersrand has fired his/her firearm more than twice in the execution of their duties. Nel (1994) claims these figures are grossly exaggerated, and cannot be verified.

## Shooting incidents

Incidents involving shooting must be considered in the context of crime statistics in the Witwatersrand area which has about 25 000 police officials. In the first eight months of this year:

- 6 048 motorists were robbed of their vehicles under life threatening conditions, averaging 28 vehicles per day during May and July, the worst affected months;
- 28 040 burglaries took place;
- 22 112 vehicles were reported stolen;
- 19 942 people were robbed of their possessions;
- 4 181 armed robberies were executed;
- 3 159 people were murdered;
- 803 people were attacked in their homes;
- 3 685 incidents of rape were reported to the police.

In sharp contrast, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police experience only two or three shootings a year (Nel, 1994). These shocking statistics reflect not only the state of policing but also that of society, if one considers how often the police must use violent means to perform their duties in this country.

Continuous and excessive exposure to CIS without counselling can eventually lead to PTSD. However, even when help is available

*The boarding of 904 police officials in the first six months of 1994 cost the taxpayer R250 million*

*The high turnover in SAPS personnel and medical boardings means the young, new recruits are often unprepared for the demands of policing*

In 1987 a study was undertaken among Riot policemen in Cape Town and the Eastern Cape and in 1988 among black policemen in Soweto and Pretoria, to determine the extent of PTSD in the SAP. The results indicated that 36% of the Riot policemen and 41% of the black policemen suffered from PTSD.

These statistics are significant because they indicate that levels of PTSD was already high six years ago when the SAP was still in "control". This was ascribed, in the case of the black policemen, to the pressure which they experienced in that particular political climate.

### Symptoms of PTSD

In South Africa the government mortuary falls under the jurisdiction of the SAPS. Given the amount of violent deaths, e.g. 10 142 motor vehicle deaths in 1992 and over 3 000 murders from January to August 1994 in the Witwatersrand alone, the possibility of overexposure is great. Exposure to human remains specifically, increases symptoms of intrusion (dreams and flashbacks) and avoidance.

For some policemen one of the most difficult situations they may face is shooting a suspect to protect their own life or that of another. Psychological reactions such as time distortion, sleep difficulties, fear of legal consequences and emotional reactions like anger or crying, have been described after such incidents.

An increase in alcohol and drug abuse, extra marital affairs and suicide thoughts have been reported among emergency workers who are often exposed to intense trauma. According to Levy, PTSD often "shows up as disruptions to the body's biological cycle: loss of sleep, loss of appetite or over eating and loss of sex drive" (Gordon, 1993).

Other symptoms often reported by police psychologists and social workers are: alcohol abuse, lack of patience, tension, aggression, moodiness, depression, emotional numbness, loss of motivation and loss of interest in the outside world. The ability to function in the family, social and professional worlds is also adversely affected.

Symptoms are most intense for the first 48 to 72 hours following the event. The first reactions are emotional numbing, followed by feelings of intense isolation with a tendency to deny that there is any difficulty in dealing with the post-shooting stress.

In relating to family and friends the officer may show emotional unresponsiveness and a

**Table 2: Medical Boarding of Police Officials**

YEAR	TOTAL BOARDED	PSYCHOLOGICAL REASONS	% OF TOTAL BOARDED
1991	517	37	7%
1992	788	236	30%
1993	1 166	379	33%
Jan- Jun 1994	887	335	38%
Total	2358	987	29%

Source: Nel, 1994.

sense of preoccupation. Behavioural changes become noticeable with the onset of intrusive thoughts or flashbacks. Family members often do not suspect the traumatic event is responsible for changes in behaviour.

### Police culture

The expression of personal feelings is extremely limited in police culture. As professionals trained to serve and protect, police are expected to maintain a poised presence even under the most dreadful circumstances. In the face of human tragedy, they must maintain their composure and distance themselves from intense emotional reactions.

Brogden and Shearing (1993) believe the SAPS culture embodies the attributes of rank and file police: a sense of mission; a combination of suspicion and paranoia; the isolation of the police as a community-within-a-community; conservatism; a gender based chauvinism where masculine force is the main problem solving device; and stereotypical assumptions about race and about qualities of realism, which suggest that policing practice requires bending the rules.

It is easy to understand the strong sense of cohesion and the propensity to oppose any outside influences that might disturb this "togetherness". This is also why police officers do not easily complain about psychological issues or discuss emotional reactions and feelings.

Police officials have developed their own methods to deal with trauma, such as the use of alcohol, denial, joking, humour, etc. These methods have been criticised and may astound mental health practitioners. According to Nel (1994) however, not all these methods have proven dysfunctional.

### Assistance

Research has shown that police officials do not always need substantial emotional debriefing or support following traumatic

*The expression of personal feelings is extremely limited in police culture*

*Police officials' methods for dealing with trauma, such as the use of alcohol, denial and humour are not all dysfunctional*

*South Africans should collectively take responsibility for the mental health of police officials*

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incidents. Mitchell and Bray (1990) point out that only 3-4% of emergency personnel develop continued lifelong problems and PTSD after exposure to critical incident stressors.

Retrieving 105 bodies from the Piper Alpha oil platform disaster in the North Sea in 1988 led to an increase in self esteem, building of team cohesiveness and learning new coping skills to assist in routine police duties (Alexander, 1993). Good staff management and organisational practices also serve as effective antidotes to PTSD.

Even though some police officials can manage the effects of psychological trauma, practice shows that many cannot cope very well. PTSD can manifest years after the incident, and to assume that a police official is coping well can be dangerous and shortsighted.

Levy's research in Israel found that leaving potential sufferers to apply for help was inadequate because very often they failed to do so. Instead, treatment must be initiated, although it should not be imposed (Gordon, 1993).

The SAPS provides therapeutic interventions on three levels:

- Psychological Support Services by psychologists from the Institute of Behavioural Sciences.
- Support by Social Work Services.
- The Chaplain Services.

These services are provided on a proactive and reactive basis. Proactive action is taken on entry to the SAPS, when the Institute for Behavioural Sciences selects applicants with an above average stress tolerance. Members are also trained in the skills for handling stress in their daily working lives.

Training to prevent suicide is provided at the various colleges, and junior and senior management courses. Lectures are also delivered on a daily basis by the Institute at station level, and at sergeant and warrant-officer training courses.

Reactive support includes counselling and crisis intervention. A suicide follow-up questionnaire helps identify those prone to suicide and this process also helps the family and colleagues cope. In 1991 an anonymous crisis line was installed which operates like

"Life-line" and is staffed daily by trained personnel.

A standing order regarding the handling and treatment of all members who have been traumatised has been issued. This compels all commanders and managers to refer traumatised members for psychological stress debriefing.

The hostage negotiation team also provides an important service. Members are trained by the Institute for Behavioural Sciences to deal with suicide attempts by members of the public and the SAPS.

Psychotherapy is provided by psychologists on a continuous basis. Members are referred by psychologists to psychiatrists for medication and/or hospitalisation due to trauma. A lack of staff often forces Psychological Support Services to refer a number of its patients to psychologists in private practice.

## Conclusion

Police officials often envisage themselves as "political pawns" when describing the dire situation they are in. Political changes in South Africa forced police into new roles, and within three years the SAPS has had to convert from an apartheid police force to the idea of community policing. The transformation has been turbulent and traumatic.

All South Africa's ills cannot however, be blamed on apartheid indefinitely and problems must instead be acknowledged and attended to. As long as vast socio-economic deficiencies remain, violence will be a threat and the police will be at the receiving end.

Dealing with PTSD among police is not just the task of the SAPS. South Africans should collectively take responsibility for the mental health of police officials. The Reconstruction and Development Programme and the Truth Commission are attempts to heal the country from the wounds of apartheid, but these measures will succeed with difficulty if the police force is not part of the healing process.

This article is an extract from a paper presented at the CSIR Africa Now: The Mental Health of Families Conference in Pretoria on October 26 1994.

# Crossing the Divide

**Melanie Lue**  
*Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation*

*Community policing is recognised as one of the mechanisms essential for reducing crime and violence and ensuring stability. However, the draft Police Bill does not provide an adequate framework for community policing or the powers allowing residents to make a meaningful contribution.*

**R**ebuilding South Africa requires more than just dismantling the institutions of apartheid. New forms of governance promoting human rights are essential for sustaining democracy. The police are central to this process as their law enforcement functions regulate the freedoms essential for democracy.

The history of the South African Police Services (SAPS) and other "homeland" agencies complicates efforts to convert the police force into an open and accountable service. Unlike other state institutions, the transformation of the police is an internal process and there is no viable alternative to the existing structure.

Policing requires a total transformation rather than piece-meal reform. The legal parameters and internal management structure need alteration, but a new ethos must also be created. The philosophy behind this process should not only facilitate a changed mind set, but should necessitate it.

Community policing is such a philosophy. The term is used in a variety of contexts, which has created different perceptions about its meaning. Community policing is not a ready made strategy or theory. It also does not suggest that a community is a homogeneous entity as the term connotes.

Rather, it is a strategy which civil society must develop to ensure that the police render a more humane and effective service. Community policing is a set of procedures which facilitate participation by ordinary people so that the actual needs of each community determine the nature of policing in that area.

Clear functions and powers are central to the success of community policing which will only be effective if people have the knowledge, resources and skills to participate meaningfully in the process. Legislation is therefore a vital determinant in enabling this process.

## Powers

The draft Police Bill provides for the establishment of Community Police Forums (CPF's) whose functions include: the promotion, monitoring, advising and evaluating of a variety of aspects surrounding police accountability. According to the Bill, the powers of these forums are advisory and no avenue for making decisions exists.

It is recognised that the police need operational autonomy to avoid the distortions of the past and to encourage more responsible policing. However, police accountability is a complex process which should extend to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the community. The powers presently allocated to the CPF's are inadequate in this regard.

This shortfall can be addressed by placing a greater onus on the police to guarantee a partnership with the community. The Bill should commit the police to consider recommendations and advice from the CPF's and should enforce minimum standards on the SAPS via the provincial Commissioner of Police.

## Composition

The Bill is vague on the composition of the forums. The difficulty of defining "community representativeness" and the diversity of South African society make it impossible to develop an ideal model of who should be represented on the forums.

Local dynamics will determine priorities and relevant role players. While a taxi association may be a key participant in Soweto, this may not apply in a rural community. It is however, essential that minimum criteria are stipulated to ensure that there is sufficient involvement to constitute a forum.

Some existing CPF's have opted for organisational representation while others

*Community policing necessitates a changed mind set in the South African Police Services*

*Community policing means the actual needs of each community determine the nature of policing in that area*

*The Police Bill allocates only advisory powers and not decision making powers to the Community Police Forums*

*Local government and groups from social, economic, health and other sectors must participate in Community Police Forums*

have kept CPF meetings open to the public and decisions are made on the basis of consensus rather than voting.

Representativeness also depends on the interpretation of community policing. Policing is part of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and the impact of socio-economic conditions on stability necessitates attendance by different sectors. The participation of local government and groups from social, economic, health and other sectors is crucial.

The provision for the establishment of sub-forums is welcomed. This accommodates the many satellite police stations in townships and informal settlements. These units do not have the status of recognised stations but address the need for more accessible policing.

However, unless clearly specified in the Bill, the provision for forming sub-forums may be exploited by some communities wishing to perpetuate apartheid policies by having white and black residents sitting in separate forums.

The Bill also provides for Provincial Boards. Ideally, boards should be established at local, provincial and national levels to ensure a workable size with democratically elected structures.

The Bill does not specify the board's functions but it is envisaged that they will convene meetings with the police at local, district and national level and with the provincial and national Ministers. Boards will also ensure uniformity and coordinate the allocation of resources as well as advise both the Ministries of Police.

### **Constitution**

The Bill does not specify how the forums will function in terms of taking minutes, the frequency of meetings, etc. This is important for evaluating the performance of the forums. Criteria for meeting procedures, quorum, appointment of chairpersons and holding of portfolios by civilians need to be specified.

There should also be a minimum criteria for the establishment of a forum. Given the diversity of the provinces and communities, each forum should be required to provide the Ministry with progress reports. A mechanism could be established to evaluate the representativeness of the forums.

Some forums for example, have taken the initiative and have drafted constitutions governing their conduct. These could be submitted to the provincial Minister of Police

or the sub-provincial Community Policing Board for ratification and approval.

Mechanisms to ensure the forums function effectively have not been specified in the Police Bill. These include setting up channels for communication, processing of requests by the community, feedback to the community, access to police stations, lay visitors schemes, etc.

Forums cannot be given the powers to evaluate and process complaints without the means to facilitate this assessment. The Bill states that one of the CPF's functions is to promote accountability, but there is no indication of how this will be achieved or even what this means.

According to the Bill, another function of the forums is "to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of the service". This is equally meaningless and unhelpful for the forum members who will be trying to fulfill these functions.

The relationship of the CPF's to the provincial Minister must also be defined. Who should take responsibility for the forums' functioning needs clarity. A liaison mechanism between the forums and the Ministry must be set up to coordinate the functioning of the CPF's and to sustain their activities.

### **Funding**

The sustainability of the forums is inextricably linked to the allocation of funds in the Police Budget. However, certain decisions need to be taken which relate to the establishment and functioning of the forums and to their sustainability.

It is meaningless to provide accountable and transparent structures in a community without equipping its residents with the tools to engage and operate these mechanisms.

In order to realise the community policing vision, the process must be a joint one in which the community has equal status to the police. This means being equipped for the responsibility, and the question of resources therefore remains central to the success of these forums.

Historical circumstances and the nature of policing restrain the community in realising these objectives. Unlike the police, many people do not have access to information, neither do they have any control, knowledge or insight into how the institution which serves them, operates.

*Forums cannot evaluate and process complaints without the means to facilitate this assessment*

*Community policing must be a joint process in which the community has equal status to the police*

The capacity of the community to engage with the police over these issues is limited and unequal. In addition, the lack of knowledge about rights with regard to police conduct further limits the extent to which people are able to challenge the police.

Inevitably the police, who have access to logistical support, resources and time, take the initiative and direct the process. This is unsatisfactory and inconsistent with the concept of an equal partnership. No one party should be in a position of control to the detriment of the other.

## Obstacles

There are two broad obstacles facing disadvantaged communities:

### □ Education and training

This impacts on peoples' capacity to participate in forums, engage with the police and attend meetings. The ability to manage meetings is also limited and requires organisational skills like chairing, and logistical support like typing minutes, having access to telephones, arranging venues, meals, etc.

### □ Practical running costs

Participation means paying for transport and food, as well as logistical support and access to office space, equipment, a telephone, fax machine, type writer, etc. There are also costs of employing civilian personnel for organisational functions and the related logistical costs.

The CPF's success is important not only for the Interim Constitutional objectives but also for the broader democratisation and reconstruction process. The extent to which these forums can ensure continued community participation and thereby sustain themselves, is crucial.

The limitations on current government expenditure need to be investigated along with the possibility of utilising existing resources from police or other government departments. The coordination and distribution of such resources should be handled by the provincial Ministry.

## SAPS units

The Bill refers only to the CPF's involvement with the "visible policing services". Given the problems with public order policing and other units, such as detectives in the community, it is crucial that the ambit of the forums' intervention is not limited to visible policing.

The SAPS as a whole must be accountable. The new structure of the SAPS means specialised units located at national level will be directly accountable to the national rather than provincial Commissioner, except in very select cases. If the CPF's interaction is limited to "visible policing" units only, the special units will have no links with the forums.

## Police commitment

All aspects of the Police Bill need to be examined to ensure an entrenched commitment to the process. The involvement of senior personnel in the forums is crucial as well as a commitment by the police to consultation with the forums.

Community policing requires that people understand their rights and are equipped to exercise these rights effectively. Successful community policing also presupposes a democracy which enforces State accountability. In South Africa neither democratic principles nor the equal distribution of resources can be presumed.

Plans are underway nationally to set up CPF's and many already exist. Several of these were initiated by the police. The forums vary between provinces and communities, some incorporating different sectors like welfare, health, the RDP, and education into CPF's. Others are more limited, confining forum issues strictly to policing.

Some structures are known as anti-crime forums, others as community safety forums and still others as community policing forums. The diversity of approaches is not only the result of different local conditions, but also due to the absence of clear guidelines from the national Ministry regarding the exact parameters and functions of the forums.

There is nevertheless recognition of the need for more community involvement in policing and greater police accountability to communities. While there is enthusiasm for establishing forums, many obstacles limit their development and sustainability.

Community policing is a mammoth task which is not restricted to changing perceptions or rendering the police accountable. This initiative could serve as a catalyst for broader transformation. Unfortunately, neither the Interim Constitution nor the draft Police Bill provides adequate powers or the framework to achieve real community policing. ~~UPA~~

*The police have access to logistical support, resources and time, and inevitably take the initiative and direct the process*

*The forums must be able to ensure continued community participation in order to sustain themselves*

*Community policing requires a democracy in which people understand their rights and can exercise these effectively*

# Conflict Trends in KwaZulu-Natal

Compiled by Antoinette Louw  
 Researcher, Centre for Social and  
 Development Studies  
 University of Natal

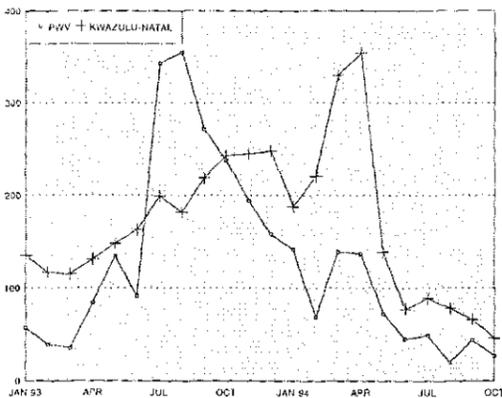


Figure 1: Number of deaths in KwaZulu-Natal and the PWV: Jan 1993 - August 1994

Violence levels in KwaZulu-Natal, like those in the PWV region, have continued their decline since the elections (Figures 1 and 2). The majority of conflict still occurs in the Durban and Zululand regions of the province (Figure 3). The most significant increase in the proportion of events in the sub-regions since July occurred in the Midlands (Figure 4).

In August, violence around Durban was characterised by criminal and gang activity with political overtones. In Murchison on the South Coast also, two ANC-aligned gangs continued to clash. In October, 17 people died in two attacks in this area in continuing political violence between the ANC and IFP.

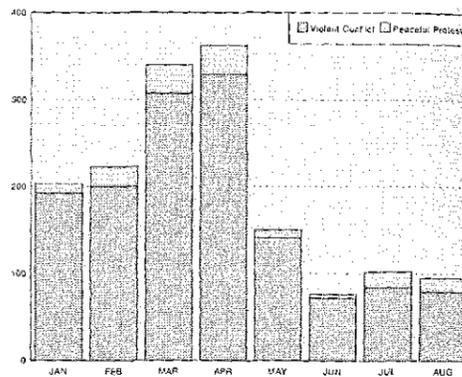


Figure 2: Number of peaceful events and violent events in KwaZulu-Natal in 1994

inciting ANC-IFP violence, and harassment and partiality by the police continue. Gang violence, internal conflict within the ANC and IFP and allegations of KwaZulu Police bias are pervasive in Umlazi.

While conflict levels have decreased in KwaZulu-Natal, the dynamics of the violence remain unchanged from pre-election days. The need for peace facilitators has not diminished along with violence levels, as disputes in many areas remain unresolved. **IPSA**

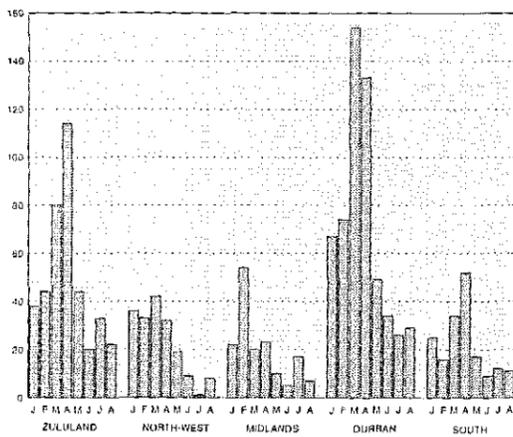


Figure 3: Number of deaths in the sub-regions of KwaZulu-Natal in 1994 by month

Conflict between taxi and bus operators over routes escalated in Newcastle, while similar clashes occurred in the Greytown and Maphumulo districts in the Midlands. In Nongoma in Zululand, taxi violence also continued.

In the Zululand and Durban regions conflict is mostly still the result of clashes between the ANC and IFP. Reports of warlord activity aimed at

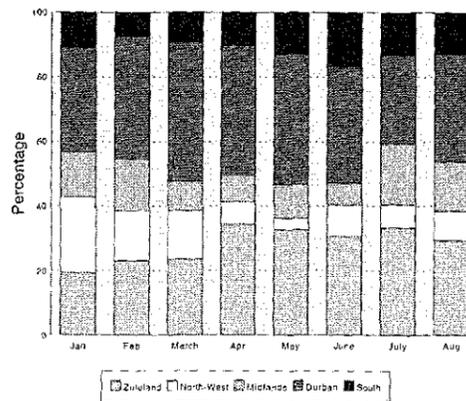


Figure 4: Proportion of conflict events in sub-regions of KwaZulu-Natal in 1994

SOURCE: Conflict Trends in Natal Project and Human Rights Committee

# Planning ahead for peace

**Dr Paul Lusaka**

**Conflict Relations Facilitator, National Peace Secretariat  
Seconded by the Commonwealth Secretariat**

*Although the National Peace Accord structures have strengthened negotiation skills and a culture of consultation, they will shortly be closed down. With rigorous cutbacks and careful redirection they could be vital to development, local government elections and reconciliation.*

**T**he National Peace Accord was signed in September 1991 when violence was sweeping the country. Legitimate authority structures and communication channels between political groups were absent and 26 organisations and political parties committed themselves to "peace, harmony, and prosperity in violence-stricken communities".

The Accord was not a cease fire agreement but a document reflecting the roleplayers' commitment to codes of conduct for political parties and the security forces. The signatories agreed on the basic democratic principles of freedom of movement, peaceful assembly and political activity.

The National Peace Committee, the National Peace Secretariat (NPS) and the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry were formed by the Accord. The NPS is the "engine room" of the Accord and three of its functions are:

- to establish and coordinate Regional and Local Peace Committees to curb violence and intimidation;
- to enable socio-economic reconstruction and development through facilitation; and
- to provide the mechanisms whereby South Africans can themselves become builders of peace.

The NPS has functioned for nearly three years and its structures brought together many political actors and interest groups who otherwise would have been enemies. The peace structures have confronted several problems at the local level like boycotts, non-attendance and apathy.

While some obstacles remain, an opportunity was provided to break down the barriers between people. The peace structures have been crucial in building a culture of consultation, strengthening negotiation skills and encouraging problem solving around the table rather than through violence. As a

result, the Government of National Unity is now in place.

The debate about the peace structures' future began during the "honeymoon" period after the elections. Despite the multiparty character of the Peace Accord, there is a perception that the structures were created as a "stop gap" measure by a government facing a legitimacy crisis.

Some argue that, like other transitional mechanisms, such as the Transitional Executive Council and Independent Electoral Commission, the peace structures have outlived their usefulness.

Violence subsided after the election, but peace is not only about curbing violence. Peace also means providing food, health facilities, education, infrastructure, security and the adherence to fundamental human rights. The April election did not bring complete peace or end conflict.

Peace structures were also not meant to curb violence only during the election period. In his address to the National Assembly in May 1994, President Mandela supported the continuation of the peace structures in a different form, in line with the changed circumstances in the country. What are these changed circumstances?

## □ *Conflict levels*

Political violence has dropped since the elections but conflict continues. There are problems of displacees, taxi disputes, deaths arising from traditional healing, faction fighting, and clashes between self defense and self protection units. The litany is too long to recite in full.

Conflict has become endemic, but the implications for the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) are equally important. If violence remains unmanaged, the consequences for the

*The peace structures have confronted several problems at local level like boycotts, non-attendance and apathy*

*There is a perception that the peace structures were created as a "stop gap" measure by a government facing a legitimacy crisis*

*Without the skills to manage and resolve development related conflicts, communities may never receive the well intended programmes*

*The Peace Accord's top structures should be kept to an absolute minimum*

*The peace structures must redefine their focus to target people at local level*

This article was presented as a paper at a conference on Rethinking South African Security Architecture, hosted jointly by The Institute for Defence Policy and the Centre for Policy Studies on July 28, 1994.

RDP could be severe. The peace structures, needless to say, have been dealing with these very problems.

#### □ *Development*

Experience shows that development programmes may cause conflict and violence. Developing a community inevitably means that some needs are met while others are overlooked. The peace structures have learned that development must include the community, no matter how slow and painful the process might be.

In building capacity, it is crucial that the community prioritises development targets which it understands. Residents should also be prepared to regulate conflicts which might arise. Without the skills to manage and resolve development related conflicts, communities may never receive the well intended programmes.

Consultations between representatives of the State, civil society and the private sector can also lead to conflict. One group could prioritise particular programmes which conflict with those of another.

If the potential for conflict is high during any of these development phases, mediation and coordination are of utmost importance. The Peace Accord structures are relatively new to development, but their expertise in conflict resolution may be of value to the RDP.

#### □ *Local elections*

Local government elections will probably not be held within the next year and the establishment of local administrations is even further away. During this time, the Local Peace structures could play a valuable bridging and facilitating function until an elected local authority is in place.

Field workers could facilitate the merging of the voluntary Community Development Forums (CDF's). These would be broadly inclusive and representative of the State, civil society and the private sector. The CDF's could begin their planning, prioritising and project implementation functions.

Members of the CDF's should be provided with training in conflict resolution techniques, mediation, facilitation and basic administrative skills including financial accountability. The Peace Accord structures are in a position to provide this service.

#### □ *Reconciliation*

The April elections assisted in the healing and reconciliation of strained relations in

South Africa. However, communities which have been separated by decades of apartheid cannot suddenly become reconciled around common values of trust, equality, dignity, respect, tolerance and honesty.

Experience in resolving conflict suggests that distrust, secrecy, suspicion and intolerance have become embedded in the daily lives and relationships of South African society.

Without a common value base, many communities will remain unreconciled and unable to plan for the future without hidden agendas. Discussions on the RDP and its implementation will be riddled with "underlying" interests resulting, at best, in technocratic development schemes and at worst, in power struggles over scarce resources.

The mediation and facilitation techniques of the peace structures should be further advanced especially in bringing communities to share common values and a vision and mission for the future.

Workshops and seminars could be conducted by peace structures at grassroots level in selected areas. The success of such workshops will assist in determining further action to be taken particularly in the areas of reconciliation, reconstruction and development.

## **Recommendations**

To be relevant in the new South Africa, the peace structures' focus should be defined carefully, targeting local people. To secure funding the structures will need to demonstrate cost effectiveness, no duplication of functions, and objectives which complement those of Government.

The Peace Accord's top structures should be kept to an absolute minimum with an accent on a bottom-up approach. This will ensure inclusivity and transparency, two ingredients vital for national reconciliation and reconstruction.

The peace structures have been operating in a difficult but unique way, considering the diversity of South African society. Had many other countries in Africa and beyond, established similar structures from the start, the continuing conflicts and civil wars may have abated.

The country started well by creating peace structures which, on the whole, have been successful. But a moment of pause is not a moment of peace. Along with stability, these are the catalysts for development. 

# Lessons from the East Rand

**Elijah Sekgobela**  
*Sub-coordinator of the SERD Committee,  
Wits Vaal Regional Peace Secretariat*

*In the East Rand violence has destroyed community support systems, and the distrust and tension between residents frustrates peace initiatives. The short but effective lifespan of the local Peace Accord structures shows that under these circumstances they are best equipped to facilitate peace and reconstruction.*

**A**lexandra, Johannesburg, Soweto, the Vaal, the West Rand and East Rand fall under the Wits Vaal Regional Peace Secretariat. Of these regions, the East Rand accounted for 89% of violent incidents and deaths from July to December 1993 (Table 1). In "Katorus", the new name for the East Rand townships of Katlehong, Thokoza and Vosloorus, violence soared during this period.

Over 500 houses were damaged or abandoned and hundreds of families were displaced. Many children and adults from the township took refuge in the hostels of Katlehong and Thokoza. Scores of other displaced fled the Katorus area for other townships in the PWV region and outlying areas.

The chaotic situation in Katorus demanded three types of assistance: helping victims of violence; restoring stability; and providing infrastructure. The Wits Vaal Secretariat (referred to simply as Wits Vaal) based its programme on these areas of need.

Reconstruction means restoring a chaotic situation to normality by rehabilitating victims of violence and repairing or rebuilding damaged infrastructure. Foundations for future development must simultaneously be laid, which will improve the quality of life in affected communities.

## Assisting victims

Wits Vaal defines victims of violence as "families and individuals who, as a result of community violence caused by political and ethnic rivalries, are traumatised, physically disabled, displaced, have lost dwellings and breadwinners and have not received any form of compensation related to their plight".

Invariably these victims of violence are women, children and unemployed persons who often require assistance to meet basic needs such as:

- \* immediate and continued accommodation;
- \* immediate and continued food supplies;
- \* immediate and continued medical attention;
- \* clothing;
- \* trauma counselling;
- \* assistance to return home or be relocated to new areas;
- \* burial assistance;
- \* education for children displaced or confined to hostels.

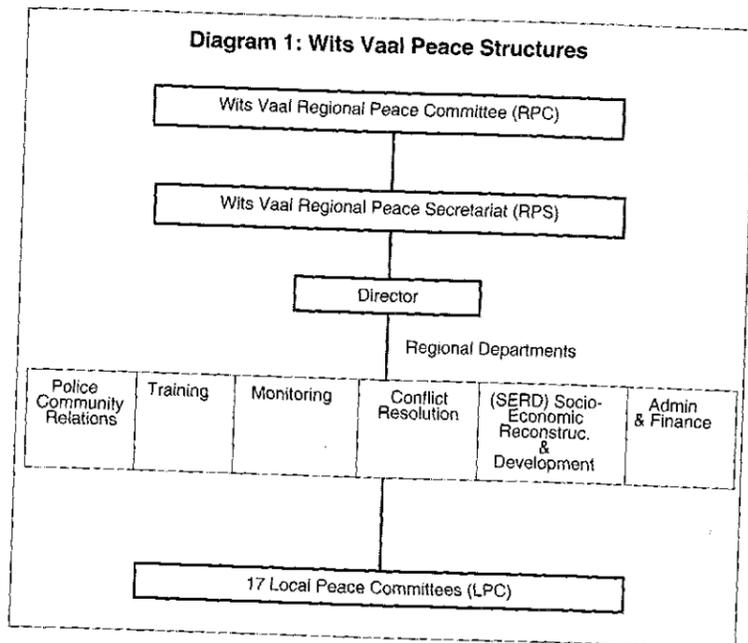
Under normal circumstances community support structures assist their members to cope with most of these needs. In Katlehong and Thokoza however, violence has destroyed these structures. Distrust prevails among residents making it difficult to promote community initiatives.

Wits Vaal's assistance to victims of violence is constrained by: a lack of immediate funds and sources of funds; a lack of places for shelter and rehabilitation; and poor coordination of relief agencies, which often leads to duplication and over provision. Coordinating relief agencies is fraught with problems for the following reasons:

- \* They are independent bodies that resent outside interference.
- \* Their association with the peace structures may compromise their fund raising activities.

*The Secretariat's programme included assisting victims, restoring stability and providing infrastructure*

*A lack of funding and places for shelter and rehabilitation are major constraints on Wits Vaal's capacity to assist*



## Restoring stability

Stability refers to safety and security, primarily the responsibility of the security forces. In Katorus however, the security forces lacked legitimacy and Wits Vaal had to play a major role in restoring stability.

The peace structure has intervened in conflicts involving township residents and hostel inmates, as well as clashes between security forces and the people of Katorus. This task has been complicated by several factors:

- Intense violence between the African National Congress (ANC) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) which assumed ethnic dimensions when Zulus residing in the hostels were labelled "imbeleki" or uncultured persons.
- The security forces' inability to guarantee the safety of all residents and the consequent general lack of security. This also affected developers, contractors and staff of the TPA and local town councils.
- Crime and vandalism which are aggravated by the proliferation of weapons.
- "No-go" areas which act as buffer zones between township residents and hostel inmates. Those venturing into these areas risk being shot on sight.
- The deployment of the Internal Stability Unit, the South African Defence Force (SADF) and the National Peace Keeping Force (NPKF) was resisted by residents.

To deal with these problems Wits Vaal facilitated a peace conference in June 1994. A safety and security committee was subsequently formed to assist in stabilizing Katorus by: preventing crime and attacks on innocent people; disarming self defence and self protection units; organising road blocks and searches; and encouraging effective policing mechanisms.

Securing stability in Katorus was an important precondition for restoring infrastructure in the area. The success of the safety and security committee was therefore vital and Wits Vaal has had to address these issues concurrently in its attempts to normalise the region.

## Rebuilding

Restoring infrastructure means repairing damaged houses, sewerage systems, roads, electricity networks, hostels, schools and railway lines. Wits Vaal's guiding principles are to avoid duplication to maximize effective use of resources, and to avoid

duplication with other role players to ensure consistency.

Restoring Katorus has not been an easy task. Major obstacles encountered relate to community structures and resources.

## Community structures

The lack of inclusive, neutral organisations formed by both hostel and township residents is a problem. Wits Vaal emerged as the structure best suited to these criteria. In July 1993, through the Katorus Reconstruction and Development Process, Wits Vaal began consulting with several community organisations.

The community organisations included political parties, civics, KwaZulu Natal Independent representatives in Katorus, the Union of the Needy, and others concerned with rebuilding the townships.

This culminated in a conference in March 1994 when the Katorus Peace, Reconstruction and Development Forum was formed. Of the 40 delegates three smaller working groups were formed to deal with the issues of transport (taxis and trains), reconstruction and development, and "no-go" areas.

Subsequently, education and safety and security working groups were also formed. After facilitating the formation of community structures, Wits Vaal had the formidable task of undertaking repairs and rebuilding damaged infrastructure with the limited resources available.

## Resources

The town councils of Katlehong, Thokoza and Vosloorus did not have the capacity, both in terms of equipment and funds, to carry out reconstruction due to rent boycotts in the Katorus area. To ensure delivery, Wits Vaal consulted business situated around Katorus.

Business was requested to assist with "quick-fix" projects like filling in ditches with bulldozers and clearing fields around the hostels. The intention was to show the Katorus communities that reconstruction had begun and to allay the skepticism of the civics that Wits Vaal did not have the capacity to deliver.

Wits Vaal also liaised with the Katorus Coordinating Work Group formed by the TPA. The group comprised various TPA departments, town councils in the East Rand and some Government departments which aimed to coordinate all available resources to ensure efficient and effective delivery.

**Table 1: Political Violence in the Wits Vaal Region July - December 1993**

Month	Incidents of Violence		No. of persons killed		No. of persons injured	
	East Rand	Alex etc.	East Rand	Alex etc.	East Rand	Alex etc.
July	158	21	290	34	80	24
August	218	26	297	33	65	28
September	231	20	233	24	114	80
October	220	20	206	15	32	34
November	167	21	164	19	48	29
December	90	10	122	16	11	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1084</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>1312</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Human Rights Commission, 1993

The peace structure informed the community working groups of available resources and ensured that delivery took place in consultation, and with the participation of the residents. In August 1993, the Transitional Executive Council appointed the Katorus Task Group which on inception in January 1994, assumed responsibility for stability and reconstruction in Katorus.

At this juncture Wits Vaal linked the community working groups directly with the Katorus Task Group through its membership in this body. The Katorus Task Group is still grappling with problems associated with victims of violence, stability, reconstruction and development.

The major role of Wits Vaal in the violence-torn communities of Katorus has been networking and facilitation with an emphasis on linking peacemaking, reconstruction and development. This role is vital because communities do not remain coherent entities after intense incidents of violence.

Residents do not trust each other, especially when people are misconstrued as the enemy on the basis of their language or political affiliation. Displacees cannot return home for fear that their houses have become either ANC or IFP domain. Also, indicators of normal community life like stokvels, burial societies, church services, sporting activities and street markets are hard to find.

Through networking with relief agencies and regional administration, Wits Vaal coordinated relief aid for most violence victims in Katorus

Destitute people will not accept referrals and most victims regard Wits Vaal as the panacea for violence related problems

- Some agencies limit their assistance to persons who are often registered as beneficiaries at a church while other needy unregistered cases are excluded.
- Most relief agencies do not provide aid beyond the emergency phase of three months.
- Township residents allege that certain people appropriate the deliveries of relief agencies to sell in or to spaza shops.

The credibility of Wits Vaal in Katorus means residents rely on the organisation to alleviate their problems. Through networking with relief agencies like the Red Cross, O'Connor Foundation, South African Council of Churches and Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA), Wits Vaal has coordinated relief aid for most violence victims in Katorus.

To ensure this assistance continues, Wits Vaal facilitated the formation of the Katorus Relief Aid Forum in July 1993. The members of the forum included 22 major political parties, civic associations, church organisations, women's groups, provincial and local government and welfare.

The peace structure's role is intended to be facilitatory, but Wits Vaal discovered that destitute people will not accept referrals to relevant service providers. Most victims regard Wits Vaal as the panacea for violence related problems and often the perceived inability to deliver impacts negatively on Wits Vaal's credibility.

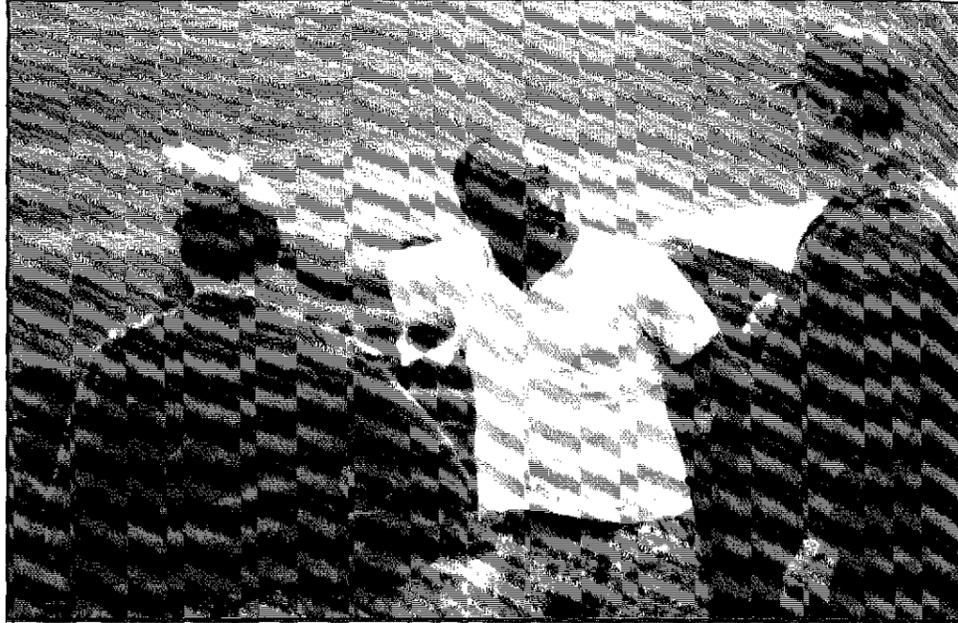
The major obstacles to rebuilding Katorus relate to community structures and resources

Wits Vaal emerged as the most inclusive and neutral organisation in the area

Only credible, neutral bodies can initiate reconstruction in violence-torn communities

Wits Vaal emphasised 'process' in its approach, which is more time consuming, rather than just definitive results

The success of Wits Vaal in reducing violence in Katorus before elections is phenomenal given its short lifespan



Picture courtesy of Natal Newspapers

## Opposition

The opposition in government to the peace structures' involvement in reconstruction and development centres around three issues:

❑ **Existing structures, like civics, can effectively deal with reconstruction and development.**

This discussion has shown that in reconstructing violence-torn communities, and even communities where tensions are high due to ethnic sentiments or political affiliations, only credible and neutral bodies can initiate the processes. Civics tend to be politically aligned which precludes them from this task.

❑ **Peace structures have not delivered reconstruction and development.**

This is certainly not the case. This argument depicts reconstruction and development in terms of definitive results and fails to distinguish between processes and products in the rebuilding of communities. Wits Vaal emphasised 'process' in its approach, which is time consuming and requires tolerance and patience.

This position also ignores the short lifespan of the peace structures. Wits Vaal is a relatively new organisation that opened its offices on March 1, 1993 and by May 31 had eight staff members. The Regional Socio-Economic Reconstruction and Development (SERD) department has been operating for only 11 months.

The success of Wits Vaal in reducing violence in Katorus before elections and

reorienting local structures away from violence, is phenomenal given its lifespan. The uneasy calm before the election was almost upset by the replacement of the SADF by the National Peacekeeping Force (NPKF). With the insistence of Wits Vaal and the Katorus Task Group, the NPKF was removed.

❑ **Development should be undertaken by new structures envisaged by the RDP.**

The Peace Accord structures seek to avoid competition, and the Local Peace Committee's (LPC) never envisaged becoming the Local Development Forums (LDF) planned by the PWV provincial Government.

This was decided even though some LPC's are the most inclusive structures in their communities. Instead, certain LPC's contacted regional RDP officers and extended their resources and skills to assist with the implementation of the RDP.

LPC's perceive their role as facilitating the establishment of LDF's, as tensions between political parties have not been resolved and "initiators" are needed in matters relating to development. Political parties could wage struggles over development projects in attempts to claim the successes of the RDP and thereby gain support.

The LPC's realise that development encourages conflict and their services will therefore be needed for some time to come. LPC members have developed a common identity distinct from the diverse political, economic and church organisations which they support, which is vital if these initiatives are to succeed. IDPA

# The politics of policing

*Linda Mclean, Human Rights Committee*

*Members of the KwaZulu Police, like other security force members, have faced inquiries, criminal charges and allegations of misconduct. But the very legitimacy and origins of this police force are controversial and could hamper their successful integration into the South African Police Services.*

**I**n September this year, six KwaZulu Police (KZP) members, including the Acting Commissioner, Major General Siphon Mathe, were given 14 days to state why they should not be suspended from the KZP. This followed preliminary investigations by the Independent Task Unit, recently appointed by the Minister of Safety and Security, Sydney Mufamadi.

The Unit's main task was to investigate allegations of misconduct in the KZP. Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) President and former KwaZulu Minister of Police, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, called this inquiry "a continuation of the ANC propaganda war against me, the IFP and KwaZulu" and threatened to withdraw from the Government of National Unity if it proceeded.

This inquiry follows a history of controversy, intrigue and allegations which shrouded the KZP since its inception in 1981. The force has been faced with numerous court interdicts, criminal charges, calls from organisations around the world for its disbandment, and a number of government appointed inquiries.

## Formation

The passing of the KwaZulu Police Act 14 of 1980 concluded two years of negotiations between the KwaZulu and South African Governments. The Act paved the way for KwaZulu to become the only non-independent homeland permitted to have its own police force.

Although the content of the negotiations is not public knowledge, central Government clearly intended to maintain some degree of control over the KZP. The police force received its budget from central Government who also appointed the Commissioner of the KZP.

Several senior KZP positions were also occupied by seconded former South African Police (SAP) members. The transfer of policing functions and stations in KwaZulu areas from the SAP to the KZP was slow, particularly in the townships around Durban and Pietermaritzburg.

Three years after the Act was passed, the United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed and violence began in the region. For the next decade Natal and especially KwaZulu were ravaged by a low intensity civil war between supporters of the UDF (and later the African National Congress) and Inkatha.

At least 10 000 people were killed and thousands were wounded, orphaned, rendered homeless, impoverished and traumatised. As the rest of the world looked on, the South African Government absolved itself of the violence in KwaZulu, claiming the area was out of its jurisdiction.

The KwaZulu Government's motivation for establishing the police force was that it would be a "small unit to look after our property" and that "Ever since we (the Zulu people) were conquered we have become regarded as women because we became disarmed" (*Natal Mercury, Daily News 7/5/94*).

## Expansion

The vision of a small, symbolic force did not endure. The KZP swelled from its initial 400 members to the present 5 000 members. The KwaZulu Government campaigned for more resources, funding and power for the KZP, even requesting that its jurisdiction be extended beyond the borders of the homeland.

In defense of allegations of indifference and incompetence the KZP repeatedly referred to its lack of manpower and funds. This

*The KwaZulu Police Act 14 of 1980 meant this was the only non-independent homeland permitted to have its own police force*

*The South African Government absolved itself of the violence in KwaZulu, claiming the area was out of its jurisdiction*

*The KZP was hostile towards assistance from the SAP, who in turn tended to stay out of areas policed by the KZP*

*The problem of bias has allegedly been identified at all levels of the KZP*

*A senior KZP officer testified that any order given to KZP members by an Inkatha official was obeyed*

argument is unconvincing. The KZP did not have exclusive jurisdiction in KwaZulu, as the SAP's powers extended throughout the country, including the former non-independent homelands.

The KZP was however, hostile towards outside assistance from the SAP. In 1993 former KZP Commissioner Major General During stated: "We are an autonomous statutory body, so we cannot have other organisations interfering with our internal affairs" (*New Nation* 19/2/93).

The SAP in turn tended to stay out of areas policed by the KZP, claiming either they lacked jurisdiction or they were unwelcome by the KZP. The South African Government's abdication of responsibility for ensuring the safety of residents of KwaZulu, who were nevertheless South African citizens, is nothing less than criminal.

### **Bias**

The principal allegation levelled against the KZP is that it has been biased towards Inkatha. This problem has allegedly been identified at all levels of the KZP, and the only serving Minister of Police for KwaZulu, Chief Buthelezi, was also President of the IFP.

General Sipho Mathe, twice appointed Acting Commissioner and a long serving Deputy Commissioner, was until 1990 the head of the IFP Security establishment. Mathe was also head of the intelligence wing of the KZP, the Bureau for Special Investigation (BSI).

Evidence was heard in the 1989 murder trial of a former KwaZulu policeman that KZP recruits undergoing training at the Amatikulu camp were specifically instructed to join Inkatha. The accused said that as a result he put his allegiance to Inkatha above his duties as a policeman.

In the same trial a senior KZP officer said that any order given to KZP members by an Inkatha official was obeyed, unless it conflicted with the interests of the KwaZulu Government. In 1990 the KZP officially declared that no member may belong to any political party. In practice this has not been apparent.

Former Commissioner of the KZP, General Jac Buchner once said, "We (the KZP) support the lawful authorities, which is the KwaZulu government. To the extent that Inkatha is part of the government I suppose you could say we support Inkatha" (*Daily News* 17/5/94). The General later conceded

that "to a certain extent" KZP members were biased towards the IFP (*Daily News* 6/7/94).

### **Conduct**

The KwaZulu Police have been charged and in some cases found guilty of perpetrating unlawful acts against persons perceived to be opponents of Inkatha. Examples include murder, assault, abduction, intimidation, collusion with IFP attackers, failure to investigate cases, indifference to ANC complaints, and disrupting ANC gatherings.

Mounting evidence in the last four years has shown the involvement of certain KZP members in hit squad activities. The following examples illustrate these allegations.

#### **□ KwaMakhutha**

KwaZulu policemen here have faced many charges and legal action, including two court interdicts restraining them from attacking township residents. In his affidavit to the Supreme Court in 1990, SAP Detective Sergeant Joseph Kabanyane stated the KZP was a "completely partial force" which failed to maintain security.

He described the KZP as "highly reckless and a real danger to the livelihood and well-being of local residents." A member of the SAP for 32 years and a resident of KwaMakhutha, Kabanyane was twice assaulted by KZP members when he tried to intervene in attacks carried out by them on ANC supporting residents.

#### **□ KwaMashu**

The KwaZulu Police took over policing from the SAP here on June 1 1987. Barely three weeks later, more than 20 affidavits were made to the Legal Resources Centre and the Progressive Federal Party by residents claiming they had been assaulted by the KZP.

Of these residents, 18 reported incidents of assault in KwaMashu on June 19, alleging that they had been assaulted prior to June 16 (Sharpeville Day), and on the day itself. Victims reported severe assaults with sjamboks, sticks and batons, and that they were threatened with firearms.

#### **□ Sundumbili**

The KZP in Sundumbili, near Mandini on the North Coast, are particularly notorious for perpetrating unprovoked attacks on ANC and Cosatu members. One such attack occurred after a rally in the local sports stadium in September 1993. It was the first South

African Communist Party (SACP) rally ever permitted in the township.

A group of IFP supporters attacked vehicles before attempting to break down the stadium's gate. Those inside stoned the IFP group who then shot at the enclosed crowd. Six people were injured in the attack and others were trampled as they tried to escape. Some were injured when a concrete wall collapsed under the weight of the fleeing people.

Efforts by six SAP members to disperse the attackers failed and although the stadium is less than 1km from the police station, the KZP only arrived later. They responded to requests by the SAP for teargas and rubber bullets saying they had no supplies with them.

The KZP members at the scene took no action to stop the attacks and the SAP eventually drove the attackers back from the gate. Afterwards the KZP refused to provide medical and emergency assistance to the wounded.

KZP members, under the instructions of the Station Commander, then allegedly followed fleeing SACP supporters and attacked them. The KZP denied that they fired any shots: "No KwaZulu policemen were involved at all...in fact the KZP were the only people maintaining law and order."

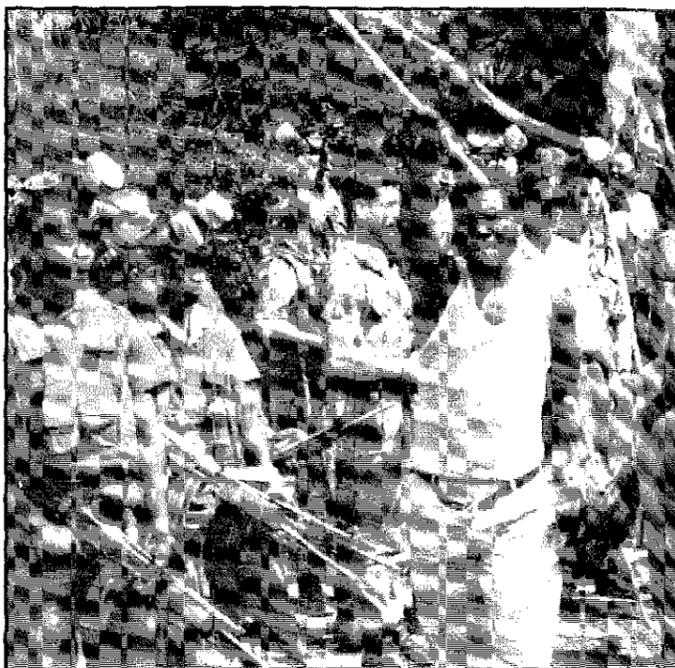
Sundumbili Station Commander, Major Owen Zama, was suspended from the force in July 1994 by the Minister of Safety and Security for defeating the ends of justice. Zama won a Supreme Court application to have his suspension declared unconstitutional and is still on duty.

#### □ *Nqutu*

Senior KZP officers have been accused of covering up cases which implicate high ranking IFP or KZP members. This occurred with the massacre of 11 ANC members, all but one of whom were scholars, at the Nqutu home of ANC supporting Chief Molefe, in November 1993. Seven others were injured in the attack.

The assault occurred on the morning that an ANC rally was planned at the nearby stadium. The rally had been cancelled two days previously after the ANC received information that the IFP were stockpiling weapons and intended to occupy the stadium.

The KZP investigating officer, Lt Westleigh Mbatha, arrested two men in connection with the incident who allegedly confessed to the killings and named five other men who were



members of a hit squad operating from hostels in the East Rand. IFP leaders in that area, Themba Khoza and Humphrey Ndlovu, were also allegedly involved in planning the massacre.

Mbatha took the information to his commanding officer and district commissioner, Brigadier Ndlovu. He asked for a vehicle to travel to Johannesburg to arrest the suspects but the Brigadier refused. Mbatha was then removed from the case and booked off sick with high blood pressure.

After subsequent revelations in the Press Brigadier Ndlovu and Major Nyasula, officer in charge of investigations at Nqutu, attempted to cover up their involvement. Both the Brigadier and the Major denied that Mbatha had been involved in the case, although the Brigadier later admitted he had lied.

#### □ *Esikhawini*

Evidence of hit squad activity in the KZP first surfaced in Esikhawini, outside Empangeni. In December 1993 the Goldstone Commission reported that a hit squad was probably responsible for murdering at least nine people, including ANC leaders and members. Three KZP members and an IFP member were arrested, two others were suspended and another dismissed.

During 1993 at least 39 Esikhawini residents were killed and 22 were injured in at least 40 incidents of political violence. Of these, the KZP were allegedly involved in at least eight incidents which led to the deaths of as many people.

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*Evidence of hit squad activity in the KZP first surfaced in Esikhawini, outside Empangeni*

*Some Inkatha supporters were incorporated into the KZP after receiving paramilitary training in 1986 at a SADF base on the Namibian Caprivi Strip*

*A Caprivi trainee and KZP Constable said he and fellow recruits were told to return to the townships and kill non Inkatha supporters*

*The KZP also participated in paramilitary training in KwaZulu although this was outlawed in self governing homelands*

A remarkable indictment of the KZP's role in perpetuating violence in Esikhawini was that for three months after the Goldstone arrests and suspensions, only one incident of political violence was reported in the township.

## Training

The KZP has also been linked to clandestine military training of IFP supporters. This training included the covert involvement of the former South African Defence Force (SADF) as well as central Government. Training took place both within KwaZulu as well as outside the borders of South Africa.

A number of Inkatha supporters were incorporated into the KZP after receiving paramilitary training in 1986 at a SADF base on the Namibian Caprivi strip. In subsequent hearings and trials, it emerged that this training was part of a Military Intelligence strategy to form a vigilante force for attacking and eliminating UDF supporters.

A Caprivi trainee and KZP Constable, Geina Mkhize, said he and fellow recruits were told to return to the townships and kill non Inkatha supporters. At the related Goldstone Commission inquiry in 1993, the then Deputy Commissioner, General Sipho Mathe said of the 200 trainees, 150 were issued with KZP appointment cards in 1987.

Some of these recruits only received training two and a half years after their appointment to the force. The three KZP members and one IFP member arrested in Esikhawini after the Goldstone Commission investigation were Caprivi trainees. Other trainees were assigned to protect KwaZulu Government ministers.

The KZP also participated in paramilitary training in KwaZulu although this was outlawed in self governing homelands. In 1990 it emerged that 150 IFP members were being trained at a KwaZulu Government owned camp at Mkuze to eliminate supporters of the UDF, or any opponents of Inkatha. The camp was allegedly funded by the SAP.

According to Buthelezi, the Mkuze trainees were integrated into the KZP and then assigned to protect KwaZulu ministers (*Natal Mercury* 13/8/94). Some trainees were allegedly integrated into the Bureau for Special Investigation (BSI). The camp was also allegedly a base from which IFP hit squads infiltrated other areas of KwaZulu-Natal.

In late 1993, the KwaZulu Government again embarked on unlawful paramilitary training of IFP supporters at the Mlaba camp in Umfolozi. In all, 5 000 IFP supporters, recruited through IFP youth structures, were trained as Self Protection Unit (SPU) members. Unlike the Mkuze camp, Mlaba was not an official KZP camp.

A Transitional Executive Committee (TEC) report found that some camp instructors were KwaZulu policemen, including at least one Caprivi trainee. Instruction allegedly involved the handling of a variety of illegal weapons, how to conduct ambushes, construct homemade bombs and set a bus alight in a manner which would prevent most passengers from escaping.

In March 1994, about 1 000 Mlaba graduates began KZP special constable training at the camp. The KwaZulu Government intended to incorporate these graduates into the KZP as Special or Assistant Constables. They were to be sent in batches of 200 to Umlazi, Esikhawini, Nqutu, KwaMashu and Madadeni (*New Nation* 17/4/94).

The training was however, never completed. Forewarned that the TEC were to conduct a raid on the camp on April 25, the instructors paid off all the trainees and sent them home early.

## Conclusion

KZP members and their families have been victims of violence. In 1993 the Human Rights Committee recorded the deaths of 25 KZP members (31 SAP members were killed during the same year). Many KZP members have also performed their duties impartially and efficiently which should be recognised when the two forces are amalgamated.

Cogent evidence has shown that much of the conflict in KwaZulu-Natal in the last decade was fuelled by elements within both the central and KwaZulu Governments. The involvement of all security force elements in violence must be condemned.

The KZP's role differs however, in that its creation and behaviour have been little more than an extension of the armed wing of the IFP. With the KZP so inextricably linked to IFP party politics and structures, it was perceived as an active player rather than a neutral referee in political violence. IDA

**Acknowledgement**  
Sarah Kearney for assistance.

# The suffering of Africa

**Phillipe Leymarie**  
**Journalist for Radio France International**

*Rwanda was an horrific reminder of the violent cycles which have become Africa's legacy. Most countries on the continent have the potential for similar explosions and unless preventative mechanisms are devised and underdevelopment is controlled, new conflicts will fuel this suffering.*

**T**he last four decades has seen 35 major conflicts and almost 10 million deaths in Africa south of the Sahara. In Rwanda alone, the intensity and speed of the genocide and epidemics claimed nearly a million lives. Africa's 20 million refugees, haggard processions fleeing wars, droughts and diseases, absorb half of the world's allotted emergency food aid.

More accustomed to civil wars than border conflicts, the continent is experiencing a new wave of violence which has aroused only modest reactions from both African organisations and the entire international community.

## Decolonisation

The legacy of the great battles for Africa's independence persists: the rebellion in Madagascar, the Algerian war, the Mau-Mau uprising in Kenya, the liberation struggles in Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies, and the fight for independence in the former Belgian Congo. In Biafra the war of secession cost the lives of two million Nigerians between 1967 and 1970.

After the Portuguese decolonisation in Mozambique, the struggle between the "armed bandits" of the national Mozambiquan resistance (RENAMO) and the Mozambiquan Liberation Front (FRELIMO) lasted for 17 years, leaving one million victims, two million refugees and six million displaced people.

In the Horn of Africa, the Eritreans' battle for independence was the longest conflict in the modern history of the continent. After one million deaths, the struggle gave birth to Eritrea in 1993, the fifty second African state. And in southern Sudan the war has claimed more than a million victims since 1983.

## Conflict in the 1990s

Even after independence, this deadly legacy has continued. In 1990, 13 open conflicts were recorded including major civil wars in Ethiopia, Angola, Liberia, Mozambique, Somalia, and Chad. Armed struggles of minorities occurred in Uganda, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, the Western Sahara, Sudan, and Rwanda. The disguised civil war in South Africa is another example.

The situation in the Western Sahara remains unsolved, owing largely to a quarrel about the composition of the electoral corps. The corps was to participate in the referendum organised by the United Nations in 1991, but fighting in this region thwarted these plans.

In Mozambique the army and the rebels are demobilizing, albeit with delay and human suffering. The former guerillas prepared for the first plural elections which have recently taken place.

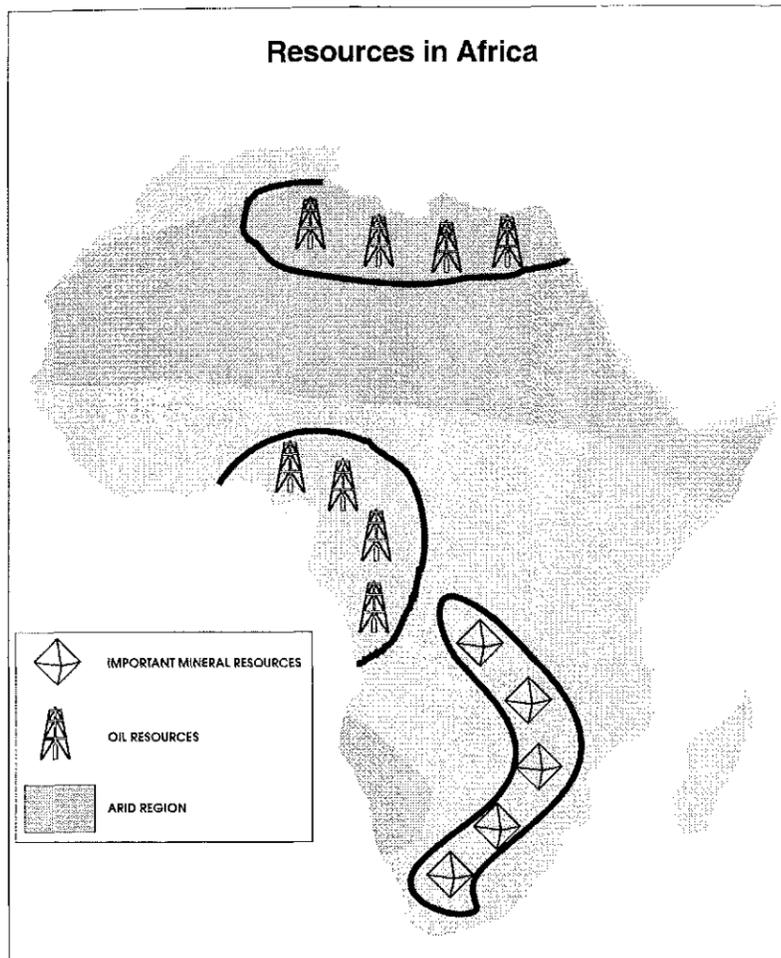
In South Africa a violent outburst was avoided thanks to the first multiracial elections last April, followed by the appointment of the historic leader, Mr Nelson Mandela, as head of State. A transitional Government of National Unity has been formed and the amalgamation of the security forces is beginning.

Chad suffered a "war of leaders" for over 20 years and a conflict between the Arab north and black African south, as have Sudan and Mauritania. A fairer division of power was negotiated after a settlement with Liberia, which abandoned its claims to the territorial belt of Azouzou. Uganda also crushed the guerillas in the north, except those belonging to the Resistance army of Seigneur (See map).

Other conflicts have developed in the last few months. Territories rich in oil reserves have become disputed. The Halaib zone on the banks of the Red Sea is the subject of a

*Africa's 20 million refugees absorb half of the world's allotted emergency food aid*

*The new wave of civil violence has aroused only modest reactions from both within Africa and the international community*



*African leaders themselves link the upsurge of trouble to the degree of under-development*

dispute between Egypt and Sudan. The Bakasso peninsula also, in the Gulf of Guinea, is being claimed by both Nigeria and Cameroon (See maps).

Ethnic conflicts are also rife in various African countries like northern Cameroon; northern Ghana; northwestern Kenya; Shaba and Kivu, two of Zaire's principal provinces; and, above all, in Burundi and Rwanda, two small twin states in the Great Lake district of Africa.

### Internal crises

General disorder in Africa is more deadly than its open wars. In 1990, Jacques Delors, Chairman of the European Committee, predicted that the decade would be one of political explosion in Africa. In 1993, 18 of the 23 states which depend on the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) in western and central Africa, had suffered "political instability, important social tensions or ethnic violence".

Save for a few exceptions, such as the islands of Mauritius and Cape Verde, Namibia,

Botswana, Tunisia and Uganda which are the subject of international attention, plagues, divisions, tensions and fears still characterise the continent.

National conferences and elections have been widespread, along with a rebalancing of institutions and the general acceptance of multiparty politics by the new urban strata (often imposed by Western partners). But dissatisfaction remains and disillusionment is setting in. New quarrels now loom and previously contentious issues are being revived.

Weakened by a decade of structural adjustment (the International Monetary Fund's terminology), most of the states are rarely able to satisfy democratic criteria. According to the United States however, this was the precondition for freeing up productive forces to enable participation in the profitable world markets.

The great continental upheaval has exhausted countries like Zaire, Togo and Kenya. Democratic disputes have shattered the relations of the military forces, and ethnic cleavages have forced these countries to join the ranks of surrounding states which have been destroyed by major civil wars, lawlessness, anarchy and misery.

In still other cases, young pluralist regimes are confronting disputes surrounding an idle youth, "demoted" officials, divided politicians or regions urged to break free from the guardianship of the capitals, as in the cases of Nigeria, Mali or Benin.

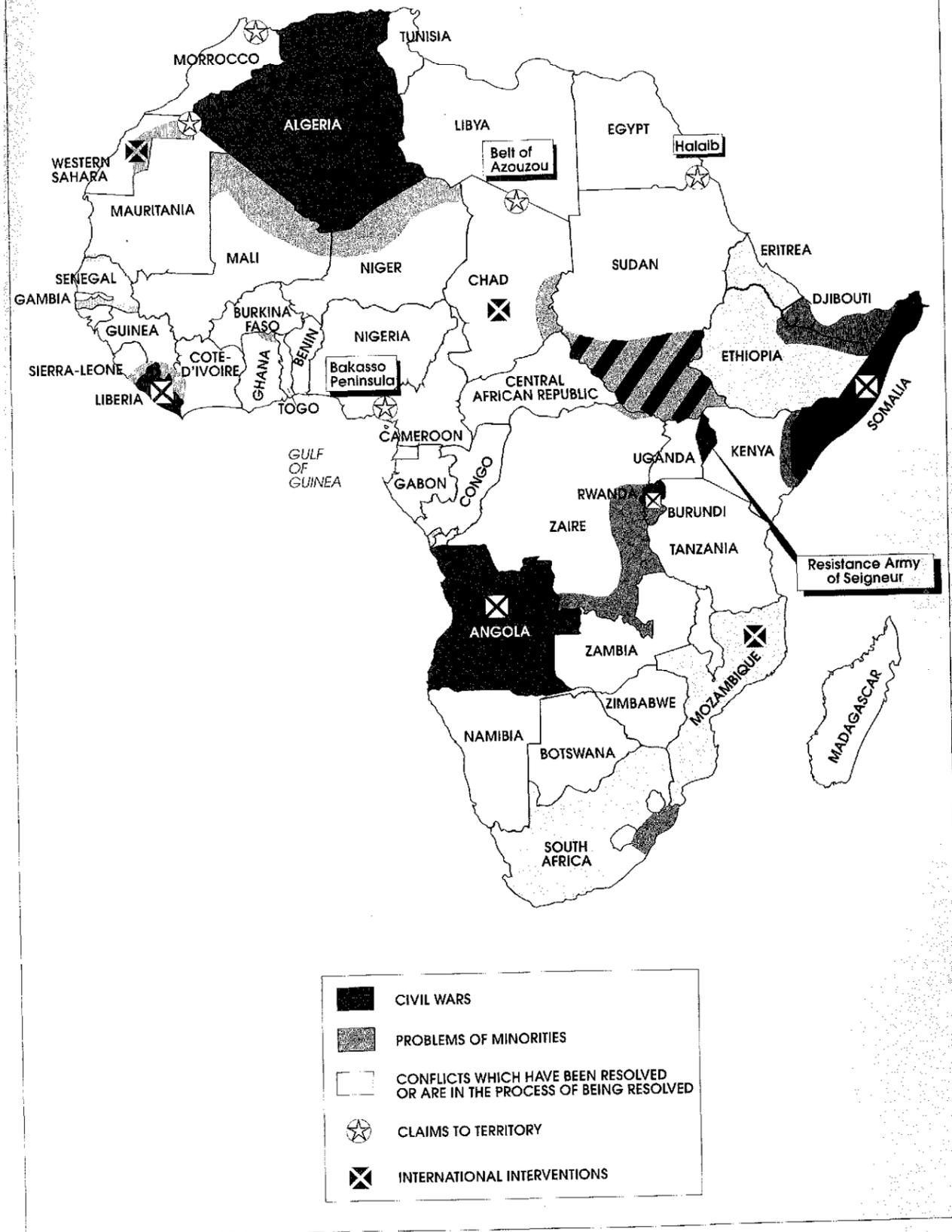
### Economic factors

In its 1994 report, the United Nations Programme for Development (UNPD) asserts that "of the 82 conflicts that caused at least 1 000 deaths in the past three years, 79 are internal crises, often linked to economic reasons". African leaders themselves link the upsurge of trouble to the degree of underdevelopment.

A recent World Bank report on adjustment in Africa estimated that at the present rate, it will take 40 years before the poor states south of the Sahara regain the level of income per capita of the mid 1970's. The first decade of adjustment politics advocated by the Bretton-Woods institutions has generally not succeeded in restarting Africa's economies.

The continent has lost some of its traditional markets like tropical products and raw materials, which have benefited more dynamic Third World regions. The West meanwhile has turned increasingly to Eastern

## Disputes in Africa



*Estimates are that civil wars rather than drought, might spread famine once again among some 34 million Africans south of the Sahara*

*The perpetual food crisis in Africa most affects those countries destroyed by open conflict, and their neighbouring countries*

*Refugees, whether the result of famine or war, can also be the seeds of crisis*

Europe and Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union, leaving Africa to its fate.

## **Drought and famine**

Drought and famine have transformed conflicts into major disasters. The United Nations Organisation for Food and Agriculture estimates that civil wars rather than drought, are threatening to spread famine once again among some 34 million Africans south of the Sahara. The remote open spaces hamper transport, trade, and the supply of essential provisions.

The perpetual food crisis engulfing the continent most affects those countries destroyed by open conflict, like Liberia, Angola, Sudan, Somalia, Mozambique and Rwanda. Neighbouring countries whose fragile agricultural economies cannot feed the millions of refugees, also suffer, and their stability is in turn, threatened.

Since the Rwandan crisis, the number of displaced people and refugees in Africa has increased to over 20 million. During the past few years, civil wars more than famine, have provoked the largest migrations.

These include the expulsion of several hundreds of thousands of Kasayens of Shaba, in Zaire, the exile of hundreds of thousands of Burundis in 1993, and the flight of millions of Rwandans in 1994.

New struggles could arise when famine again threatens the Horn of Africa. By the end of 1994, 15 million people will be confronted by a "grave shortage of food" if two million tons of food are not urgently sent to this region (UNICEF). The United States Agency for Development (USAID) estimates that 20 million people could die of hunger in Eastern Africa.

Ethiopia, still recovering from civil war, is the most threatened. The demobilisation of half a million soldiers could also provoke an explosion of AIDS. Eritrea, southern Sudan and parts of Kenya and Somalia are also experiencing a crippling drought. Somalia's dependence on international food aid has been reinforced by a deliberate policy to destroy the traditional pastoral economy.

According to international financial institutions, this has been responsible for accelerated damage to the environment. But the policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, whose measures aim to weaken the administration and the State, have also contributed to violence and civil war in certain countries, such as Somalia.

## **Refugees**

The problems caused by concentrations of refugees and successive strata of exiles, whether the result of famine or war, can also be the seeds of crisis. The victorious offensive of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, who emerged suddenly after more than 20 years of forced exile in Uganda, showed how a refugee community can change the course of history.

Refugees regrouping in neighbouring countries risk involving these host countries in their conflicts. This has been the case in Zaire and Uganda, Rwanda's neighbours, and in the Ivory Coast, Guinea and Sierra-Leone, which are close to Liberia.

The human diversity of the continent is another source of conflict. The balkanisation of Africa, whereby 52 states govern 700 million people, and the arbitrary delimitation of boundaries during the colonial era, also caused clashes.

To avoid an epidemic of violence and disputes, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) selected the ambiguity of the colonial borders and a policy of non-interference as its founding dogma.

These multinational states which are usually neither representative nor legitimate, have failed for several reasons. One is the failure of the unitary and centralised model imported from the nation-state. This model conflicts with the particularity and communal order which is the very substance of Africa, and which persists into the nineties.

The Sudanese government is presently accusing the West of trying to divide its country, by encouraging the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) to be inflexible in its demand for self-determination for the south of the country.

This heightens the risk of repeating the Rwandan tragedy. During negotiations with the guerilla forces the Khartoum regime delegation declared, "It is a conspiracy to divide Africa up on the basis of race".

## **Military regimes**

The lack of democracy in most of the post-colonial states has had military consequences. The armies which were formed on independence in the 1960's and originated from the colonial units, are being used to control the "domestic enemy", and help maintain political or ethnic minority power.

At the end of the 1980's, before the great wave of democracy, more than two thirds of the governments south of the Sahara were still ruled by the military, and practically all the others had been confronted by the activism of their armed forces.

During the past few years, military dictatorships have been challenged and there has been a spectacular "return to barracks", symbolised by the voluntary surrender of power by General Toumani Toure in Mali in 1992.

Former military men still in position in Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria, Mauritania, Guinea, Ghana, Togo, Zaire, Chad, and Burkina-Faso were set on "civilising" their regimes. They sought legitimacy by organising multiparty systems, referenda and elections. The exceptions are the coup d'etat military leaders, like the young officers who seized power in Gambia in July.

But depoliticising the national armies has usually been followed by a weakening of the military apparatus. The new powers are not as well armed as their predecessors, who faced social upheavals, political disputes, regional discords, ethnic particularities and border disputes that have proliferated since the 1990's.

According to the United Nations Programme for Development (UNPD), the military expenditure of Third World countries is provoking conflict and diverting financial resources necessary for economic, health and social development, to other purposes.

According to the UNPD three quarters of the world arms trade is conducted with poor countries, and the five permanent members of the Security Council supply nearly all their conventional arms to the Third World. While the entire world military expenditure has tended to decrease since 1990, the purchase of light weapons, used mostly by poor countries, has increased.

## Solutions

At the world summit on social development in Copenhagen in March 1995, the UNPD will propose that wealthy countries bind themselves to a code of conduct which encourages a reduction of aid to countries with rising military budgets, and a suppression of credit to Third World countries who favour a growth of the arms industry as an export. States reducing the credit of their armed forces will be given a bonus.

Achieving these ambitious objectives will take time, but there are several ways to settle

conflicts. Concerted efforts must be made to share political power. National conferences, a pluralist constitution, elections monitored by observers, and fairer regional and ethnic representation are necessary for defusing crises.

But these mechanisms must be introduced prudently. A poor appreciation of the desired pace of change or the relations between the forces involved, can elicit disappointments for the elites and dramatic consequences for minorities. Events in Togo, Zaire, Madagascar and Kenya are testimony to this.

On the other hand, in South Africa, the constitutional agreement which was reached at the beginning of this year between the African National Congress, the Inkatha Freedom Party, the National Party and certain factions of the white right, has meant a sudden decrease of 60% in political violence fatalities.

The OAU has, during its 30 year existence, never successfully managed a serious dispute between two states. But with the Rwandan tragedy and the incorporation of the new South Africa into its bosom, the OAU decided in June 1994 to develop its "prevention, administration and conflict resolution mechanism".

The importance of obtaining preliminary agreement of all parties to a conflict, and a scarcity of financial and logistical resources, limit the OAU's capacity to operationalise these decisions. The OAU will however, benefit for the first time from a massive American aid programme.

In 1994 this aid totalled \$3.5 million for peacekeeping and conflict preventing operations, along with the \$3 million donated by the UNPD for conflict resolution. For 1995 the American government predicts a supplementary \$5 million and a credit of \$10 million which is reserved, within the framework of bilateral aid, to enable certain African countries to take part in peacekeeping operations.

If this "public takeover bid" by the OAU meets its goals, it will begin to replace the French military apparatus which has been used 18 times since 1960, including in Rwanda from 1990-1993 and since last June, in operation "Turquoise". This apparatus has often made France the "policeman of Africa" but the continuation of these activities seems increasingly threatened. **IPDA**

This article is a translation of "L'Afrique appauvrie dans la spirale des conflits" published in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, September 1994.

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