

CHAPTER 4 CHALLENGES TO PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN ZIMBABWE

In the 30 years since independence Zimbabwe moved from being perceived as a model of racial reconciliation in a post-guerrilla-war context to receiving widespread condemnation as a result of the ruling party's repudiation of this reconciliatory politics. This period was characterised by different phases, the problems and challenges that have confronted the Zimbabwean polity in attempting to build a politics of reconciliation in the context of gross inequalities inherited from settler colonial rule, and within the constraints of particular international pressures. A configuration of political and economic processes that has engulfed the country and concentrated the attention of the region since 1980 has affected the process of reconciliation in Zimbabwe.

Against the background of the emergence of an authoritarian nationalist state confronted with increasing internal dissent, the ruling party has since 2000 carried out a series of political and economic interventions, marked by the widespread use of violence (Redress Trust 2004) but conducted through the tropes of anti-colonial redress and an anti-imperialist critique that have found widespread resonance in the region and on the African continent (Hammar *et al.*, 2003; Phimister and Raftopoulos 2004).

The outcome of this revived nationalist assault by the Zimbabwean ruling party has been a repudiation of the national policy of reconciliation that was enunciated by the newly independent state in 1980. This was a policy born of a compromise between the liberation movement, the former colonial power and the settler elite, and constructed within a particular set of international pressures. Confronted in 2000 with the first real challenge to its rule, Zanu PF, led by Robert Mugabe, radically restructured the terrain of Zimbabwean politics towards a politics of frontal assault that had as its major targets

the former colonial power, Britain, the local white population, the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, the civic movement and in general the farm workers and urban populations, among whom the opposition had developed its major support. Against this broad array of 'enemies' and 'traitors', Mugabe and his party declared political war, in a confrontation whose contours have definitively changed the political landscape in Zimbabwe.

To understand the limits of the politics of reconciliation that was attempted in Zimbabwe for most of the 32 years, the years of Zimbabwe's independence. The chapter tracks the political responses emerged in a situation where a combination of unresolved long-term historical grievances and undemocratic post-colonial state practices produces a particular strain of authoritarian politics through the modality of a heightened racialised discourse.

The legacy of this form of politics would be a new set of problems, not only those issues of economic redress that the Zimbabwean ruling party has purported to address, but also the continued deployment of ruling party violence to subdue the voices of dissent and the broadly constructed 'enemies of the people'. As a result of the particular forms of land occupation, the economic interventions based on a contested process of state patronage, the damage to the judiciary, the politicisation of the military and a virulent media campaign aimed at the demonisation of several 'others', enormous challenges await the development of new democratic structures and spaces in Zimbabwe.

Different models of reconciliation seem to be at play on the African continent. Referring to the Great Lakes region Rene Lemarchand (1998:3) notes that "There cannot be reconciliation between Hutu and Tutsi without justice, and no justice without truth." such a claim raises the important question, what is the relation between the key concepts here? In other words, just what is the relation between reconciliation and

justice, justice and truth, truth and reconciliation? Is it possible to have one of these things without the other two? Can there be reconciliation without justice and truth? Assuming that these processes are not inter-linked and co-determining, meaning that they are independent of each other, which of them is most important? Whilst these are obviously important questions I cannot fully address them all. The question of primary interest here is the relation between justice and reconciliation. Before attempting to address the question of how justice and reconciliation are interrelated it is important to make the point that justice is a contested concept. That means there are different interpretations of what it is and what it requires. People with different ideological orientations understand it differently and those with different interests to protect will tend to have conflicting conceptions of what it entails. For that reason justice is going to be largely treated as righting the wrongs of the past and paying reparations to those, who as a result of those past injustices, find themselves disadvantaged in the present.

Justice may amongst many other senses be defined as giving to each his/her due. The basis of what is due to an individual may vary. It can be need, work, equal consideration etc. Central to this understanding is the presupposition that in some way people's dues can be determined. Theories of private property, such as Locke's are in their own way attempts to address this issue. As noted at the beginning, a deep sense of injustice is what motivated the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. The colonial process and the massive dispossession of land cited earlier robbed the people of Zimbabwe of what they considered their legitimate birthright. Part of the reason why the colonial system was unjust was that it was founded on a violation of the indigenous people's claim to ownership of the land and other resources.

Viewed from the conception of justice as giving to each his/her due it becomes apparent that if reconciliation is to be a reality such

dispossession ought to be addressed. What is paramount on this view is that justice seeks to restore balance. In this sense restorative justice becomes a necessary precondition for reconciliation. This implies that we have at least to attempt to approximate the situation that would have evolved if the dispossession had not taken place. Such an exercise is obviously difficult, but this should not be used as an excuse to maintain the present situation.

It is important to appreciate the fact that for restorative justice to be fully effected there is need to do two things. Firstly, it is important that those who violated the rights of others should admit that such violations took place. We have already come across this point when we made reference to the examples of how recognition of past wrongs has helped mend relations in some countries or between them. The important lesson that these examples teach us is that, unless there is acknowledgement of wrong doing, forgiveness does not make any sense at all. The second thing that seems indispensable to the process of restorative justice is that both sides of the story must be told. In other words, unless there is a genuine effort to know who did what to whom it is impossible to know who benefits from the restoration and from whom the restored dues are to be taken.

If the preceding reflections are accepted it becomes clear that there is an inextricable relation between restorative justice and truth. There cannot be restorative justice unless the truth is known. From this it can be concluded that truth is a necessary condition for restorative justice. If therefore restorative justice is a necessary pre-condition for reconciliation we are led to the conclusion that truth is by implication also logically necessary to reconciliation.

From the reflections above it becomes clear that the Zimbabwean model of reconciliation falls short of the line of thinking developed up to this point. The insistence on justice without truth is also unlikely to produce

genuine reconciliation. Rene Lemarchand is perfectly right to argue that “unless the truth about the history of genocide is uncovered what might appear as justice may actually be revenge”. The cycles of violence of one group against the other ought to be revealed and then people can realize the futility of telling half the story. Crucial to the process is the fact that there has to be mutual face-to-face exchange, something that is indispensable to reconciliation.

In the Zimbabwean instance there have been no attempt to tell the story of who did what to whom, and there was no attempt to redress the injustices of the past. That means there was neither truth nor restorative justice. What is more we did not even have a situation where the victims of the colonial dispossession and the beneficiaries discussed their differences. Those who benefited from colonial dispossession seem to believe that their good fortune is due to the virtues of their race or to their hard work. For this reason they have not seen fit to offer any apologies for the humiliation and impoverishment of blacks in the country. The effects of that past injustice are still being felt to this day. It is one of the characteristics of great injustice that its effects continue to affect people long after the injustice has been legally removed. Some people still suffer from an inferiority complex. It is essential to know that all reconciliation attempts did not fulfill the requirements of restorative justice perpetrators of violence whether during colonialism and post-colonial are still rewarded and victims wallow in poverty no attempt was made bring to justice those who bombed innocent civilians during the war yet the families still have memories of that and even the unity accord failed to provide compensation let alone justice to the murderers. Fundamental to this sense of justice is how goods, services and burdens should be shared by people belonging to the same community. Viewing justice in this particular way is important for reconciliation because it recognizes the fact that even though segments of the community might have clashed in the past they have to live together. This is what reconciliation is ultimately concerned with, that is, how to make people

who shared hostilities are able to transcend these hostilities and live together in harmony. Hope that former adversaries can share the same living space and resources, is the backbone of any meaningful reconciliation process.

Land in our situation is the basis for the majority's livelihood, and it is obviously a limited resource. For that reason, apart from the injustice of colonial acts of dispossession, it must be noted that vast inequalities in access to land under such circumstances is in itself unjust. It is unjust for the reason that it denies the poor the means to meet their basic needs, like food and shelter whilst those who possess it allow the land to lay underutilized or unutilized as has been the case in Zimbabwe.

Recognizing the existence of past injustice and its effects on the present raises the question of what should be done about it. How to achieve a just society from the ashes of an unjust colonial system remains one of the struggles that Zimbabwe must face. Such a society must seek ways to transcend the conflicting claims to resources and to create a sense of common citizenship between former foes. By excluding the majority's demands for land whilst protecting white possession of that land, the Zimbabwean independence constitution was thus unjust. It did not treat blacks and whites equally.

Justice as the resolution of conflicting demands and reconciliation seem to have something in common. They both require that all the demands be given a fair hearing. None of the demands or parties to the conflict should be taken as superior. Justice properly understood and reconciliation seems to lie in the ability to transcend the particularistic demands of the contending parties. Whilst the solution may not be absolutist or even universally accepted, all parties must accept it as fair.

The notion of land rights are extremely important. As Lerato Mbele, Research Co-ordinator for The South African Institute of International Affairs wrote in her article “The Land Question, Myth or Reality?”

Land rights are human rights! Not because Robert Mugabe says so, but because our history and identity are embedded in the soil. Observe any ritual for the rights of passage and you will see offerings being poured out onto the ground. Not just in Africa, by the way. Even in biblical history, people were ordered to present the first fruits of their labour to God... In real terms, land is the mainstay of human survival (whether or not you buy genetically modified foods). This is especially true in Africa where about 80% of the population is agrarian, and approximately 70% of economies rely on agricultural exports. The expansion of African trade therefore depends on the productivity of the land and the profits accrued in the agricultural sector.

Land has always been, and continues to be a significant issue on the African continent. Zimbabwe’s internal politics created the land problem in the country, but since its independence, its foreign policy too has been tied to the land crisis. Prior to independence in 1980, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe’s former name) was a British colony. Also, the initial phases of Zimbabwe’s land redistribution were funded in part by the British government as agreed in the Lancaster House Conference, which created an independent Zimbabwe.

A deep sense of injustice caused by the inequalities and deliberate dispossession of Africans by the White settler regimes was amongst the fundamental causes of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. Top amongst the list of grievances was the massive alienation of the African people from the land, which formed the basis for their livelihood. The process of dispossession was legitimated by a series of pieces of legislation, which sought to entrench white privileges and to bring the Africans under colonial control.

In this process Africans were denied rights to own land in the most agriculturally productive parts of the country. In addition to this, Africans were also denied training for skilled labour. The cumulative

effect of these pieces of legislation was to make Africans serve the settlers by providing manual labour on white commercial farms, in industry, in the mines and in the domestic realm. Due to the fact that Africans were denied political rights the colonial system reduced them to subjects in a country they considered their own. Those Africans, who were previously in power in the different African polities, were considered outsiders to the newly established white dominated power structures unless they paid tribute to it.

The fact that the land question was the root cause of Zimbabwe's war of liberation is widely acknowledged. Josiah Tungamirai, one of the top leaders of Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) makes this point when he says "The unequal distribution of land was the main reason why the African people fought the settler regime." (1995:37). Africans felt that the land was rightly theirs and it was a matter of justice that they fought to regain their lost heritage. Invoking John Locke's argument that conquest does not found any property rights may vindicate indeed such a view. The fact that Locke holds such a view is particularly important because of his defense of private property.

The foregoing considerations help to highlight the fact that the struggle for independence was not just about political freedom and the right to vote, as the popularized slogan "one man one vote" may seem to have suggested. The struggle for independence must be seen as an exercise of the right of the descendants of those whose rights had been violated by conquest. Such descendants, Locke argues, have a right to revolt and regain title to their heritage.

In the case of Zimbabwe colonial rule was essentially based on conquest. The 1893 and 1896-1897 wars in Zimbabwe bear testimony to African resistance to colonial rule. However, it should be noted that Locke, the acclaimed founder of liberalism had argued that..."conquest is as far

from setting up any Government, as demolishing a House is from building a new one in the place." (1994:385).

Politically, the act of conquest and the setting up of the colonial administration deprived Africans of the right to set up their own government. The colonial government reduced them to subjects. Economically, Africans were made manual labourers dependent on subsistence wages. The colonial set up was thus characterised by black labour on white owned farms, firms, and mines. This reality has not changed that much since independence and this is why it is crucial to question the efficacy of the reconciliation policy in bringing justice and peace to Zimbabwe. Is it possible for there to be genuine reconciliation when the fundamental injustices of the colonial past have not been addressed?

The perpetuation of the pre-independence property ownership structures and their protection by the law amount to recognition of and protection of the very injustices the liberation struggle sought to defeat. These are important questions, and any meaningful understanding of justice and reconciliation in this context must be able to deal with these issues.

The best way to bring peace and reconciliation in communities is through truth telling and a shared willingness to reconcile by all the major actors in a war. Civil wars and systematic repression need to end and the keyword in post-conflict reconstruction is 'reconciliation'. The government, social organisations, the churches, and the entire population have to come to terms with the past in one way or the other. All cultural and religious traditions have forms of reconciliation. Each of these traditions also puts forward certain requirements regarding reconciliation.

For example, the truth is to be established 'officially', damages are to be paid, the guilty are to be recognised publicly, the victims are to be restored their honour, or the guilty persons are to be submitted to real or symbolic punishment (Gatsheni-Ndlovu 2003). These are also manifest in international law. The preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, 'that it is of utmost importance that the human rights are protected by the supremacy of law'. A government is, therefore, obliged to investigate all accusations of violations of human rights, and report the violations from the past (Gatsheni-Ndlovu 2003).

In Rwanda, the government built memorials to remember victims of the genocide and revived the traditional *gacaca* system of justice as a way of healing the nation in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide. Helen Vesperini (2002: 20) noted that:

The Rwandan government has revamped a traditional style of community justice known as the *gacaca* court system. The dual aim of the courts is to deal with the backlog of genocide suspects crammed into the country's prison, and heal the deep scars left by the 1994 genocide that killed at least half a million Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

The 1987 Unity Accord ended the war but did not bring peace and reconciliation. It was elitist and embodied a top-down approach to governance.

Nkomo and Mugabe signed the Accord and then sold it to the people. The grassroots were never consulted in the peace-making process and no reconciliation efforts were made. It was an imposed peace settlement without the input of the affected people. The government could not accept responsibility and own up, to now no government official has come up to openly condemn and ask for reconciliation. Some government officials refer to the atrocities as a closed 'chapter' and the president has only admitted to the period being the moment of madness yet there is need for truth telling. Since the death of Joshua Nkomo,

ZANU PF has failed to gain any seats from Matebeleland because of the Gukurahundi atrocities.

According to Gatsheni-Ndlovu (2003),

“the foundation of reconciliation is the recognition of suffering. This distinguishes reconciliation from a process which does not go beyond political negotiations and compromises. Recognition of individual suffering may be shaped by extensive official reports great deal of attention to individual cases or by measures of compensation and redress which benefit the victims, by remembering the names of the victims, as in religious celebrations, on memorial stones, in literature, etc., or by lasting public recognition of the pain and grief the victims and dependents have to live with”.

Reconciliation is the first step towards a society which can give a lasting guarantee for dignity and justice. The 1987 Accord resulted in the cessation of hostilities but brought no peace and unity. Victims of the violence have not been compensated. Neither have those who perpetrated the violence been tried nor have they sought the forgiveness of their victims, at least through acknowledging their roles in the crisis.

The Zimbabwean Unity Accord is viewed, perceived and analysed in personality terms rather than as a communal and national undertaking. Many saw the passing away of Nkomo, in July 1999, as the death knell of the Accord. Bulawayo Human Rights Lawyer David Coltart (2000) noted that

Just as the President Robert Mugabe is the cement that holds ZANU (PF) together, Nkomo was the cement that held PF ZAPU together and those former (PF) ZAPU members who are now ZANU PF. I think there is a possibility that his death will unleash some political battle to get his mantle. It could speed up the disintegration of the party in the region but much will depend on the public who respected him because of history.

Former ZANU-PF Central Committee member, Norman Mabhena, noted that after Nkomo the ruling party had no chance of dominating the Matabeleland region echoed the above sentiments by observing that

'there is no way ZANU-PF can rise again in Matabeleland. It won in the last elections (1995/6) because people respected Nkomo' (*Sunday Mail*, 2 July 2000 and also the *Financial Gazette*, 13 March 2002).

The people of Matabeleland and the Midlands have survived two terrible civil wars in as many decades, and they have received no guarantee that it will not happen again. In spite of apparent state and dissident atrocities there has been no official apology. In fact, the war episode is spoken of in muffled voices by officialdom. The Ndebele ethnic communities in Matabeleland and the Midlands are still hostile towards the ruling ZANU-PF party and its government (Gatsheni-Ndlovu 2003:2).

Some of the weaknesses of the Unity Accord are that it was crafted in a minimalist way that did not go beyond a power-sharing formula between the leading political elites in ZAPU-PF and ZANU-PF. The dominant post-Unity Accord politics in Matabeleland and the Midlands regions revolved around the issues of marginalisation, state accountability, and quest for an apology, as well as compensation for the victims of the state sanctioned violence of the 1980s.

These demands proved that the Unity Accord had a poor post conflict peace-building framework that encompassed the aspirations and demands of the grassroots (Gatsheni-Ndlovu 2003:2). The post-Unity Accord scenario in Zimbabwe did not embrace prerequisites for reconciliation and durable peace. Lasting peace can be established through a number of mechanisms which include the establishment of all-embracing political system through power-sharing arrangements between erstwhile protagonists. This was partly achieved in Zimbabwe because (PF) ZAPU assumed posts in government and Joshua Nkomo became one of the country's two Vice-Presidents, a post that he held until his death in July 1999. Democratic rebuilding involving eradication

of fear among citizens, and enhancing accountability, transparency, legitimacy, human security, and social peace is also necessary.

There was no psychological rebuilding to communities that have survived the ravages of violence. The CCJP report noted that part of the process of psychological healing for any victim of abuse is being given the opportunity to recount that suffering to a supportive, non-judgmental audience. There was no process of opening up which involves not just the victims but also the perpetrators of violence. There was need for an atmosphere of truth telling in order to purge themselves of their memories of events. National exorcism is imperative. In African cultures those who do injustice to others need to compensate their victims in order to avoid the wrath of avenging spirits. It is in this spirit that Truth Commissions have been set up in many parts of the world, notably South Africa and Rwanda.

The establishment of effective and impartial systems of justice is crucial to reconciliation. The state should also regard court verdicts in order to establish citizen confidence in the judicial system. In the context of the 1982-1987 crises the government showed a pathetic disregard of the verdicts of the courts. In 1982, Zipra commanders Lookout Masuku, Dumiso Dabengwa and others were arraigned before the courts for treason and the evidence against them failed to convince a high court judge, but they remained in jail until 1986 (Alexander *et al.*, 2000:188).

Reconciliation also entails reconstruction and economic development. Victims have a right to material compensation. Post-colonial Zimbabwe's development paradigm was rural-oriented, and Matabeleland and some parts of the Midlands Provinces did not benefit due to the ongoing disturbances. In this context, after the Unity Accord massive, infrastructural development and rehabilitation should have been undertaken. Unfortunately, not much was done and the people feel alienated from national development processes. This was confirmed in

the 2000 Parliamentary elections in which the ruling ZANU-PF was trounced in all but two of the Matabeleland constituencies.

One of the ex-Zipra luminaries, Dumiso Dabengwa, a losing ruling party candidate in the elections, observed that:

The people have rejected us not only as candidates, but also as ruling party ZANU-PF now. The reason is that since the signing of the Unity Accord in December 1987, the people of Bulawayo feel they have not gained anything. The people have been saying what is the use of supporting ZANUPF and its candidates and that is their message (*Sunday Mail*, 2 July 2000).

The Zimbabwean Unity Accord glossed over truth telling, an integral component of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, thereby downplaying its relevance to reconciliation (Gatsheni-Ndlovu 2003:2). The Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice (1997:3) noted that:

One of the most painful aspects of the 1980s conflict for its victims is their perception that their plight is unacknowledged. Officially, the state continues to deny any serious culpability for events during that year, and refuses to allow open dialogue on the issue. In effect, there is a significant chunk of Zimbabwean history, which is largely unknown, except to those who experienced it first hand. All Zimbabweans, both present and future, should be allowed access to history.

The Government of National Unity is associated with a lot of physical (torture, killings, intimidation and disappearances) and emotional pains, let alone the economic difficulties and the moral decadence among the community in particular due to unemployment versus the law of survival through criminal acts such as robbery, and prostitution. The greatest aftermath is that how do we transform and rebuild the bad relationships that existed before between the perpetrators, victims and the community without forgetting the structures that were used to cause these pains without compromising the procedural judicial accountability.

Surprisingly, the GPA of September, 2008 in itself is an exclusionary document that focuses basically on power sharing, sovereignty, governance and the micro and macroeconomic way out to improving the economy. Article VII of the GPA (Government promotion of Equality, National Healing, Cohesion and Unity), does not bring about on board national healing, it's silent. For example, the provision does not stipulate the type of national healing, a time frame to institutionalize the aspect of national healing (be informed though that there is a ministry of national healing), the provision is not exhaustive on the injuries people have suffered such as the gukurahundi and impecunious state of the people are not particularized and thus this will restrict the scope of healing to limited aspects.

Meanwhile, the success of the healing process is largely dependent on the community demand and the readiness of the local structures to offer support. Consequently, as long as power politics and the political elites create negativity in this process by abusing the social systems and structures, national healing shall remain a myth than reality. However the past cannot be forgotten as long as history, time and memory inform our consciousness. Therefore, it becomes strategically imperative not to only focus at a resolution aspect of healing but transformational approaches with focus on building sustainable relationship.

A particularly damaging feature of the ruling party's response to the crisis in Zimbabwe has been the state's overarching articulation of an intolerant, selective and racialised nationalist discourse. Through the deployment of what Ranger (2004) has called 'patriotic history' the ruling party has conducted a saturated ideological attack on a range of internal 'enemies' as part of a sustained project of delegitimizing opposition politics (Raftopoulos 2003). The outcome has been a narrowing of a usable national past and the further loss of democratic space in which to conduct a critical national dialogue about both the colonial past and the post-colonial present. Instead, Zanu PF has set out

to expunge any complex viewing of the past, preferring a monologue around the centrality of the ruling party itself, and the inherent 'outsider' status of any historical interventions which have not fed into this one-dimensional discourse.

Barnes demonstrates that in the teaching of history in schools since 1980, the emphasis has been more on racial unity among the formerly oppressed groups than on racial reconciliation between the major racial groupings. As Barnes summarises her argument:

... in Zimbabwean nationalism and nationalist educational historiography, the concept of a bifurcated racial unity, although at times bitterly contested, has been more successful than that of racial reconciliation ... The success of unity was no accident, ... it was achieved at the direct expense of reconciliation.

Raftopoulos' stated that

Authoritarian nationalism that has dominated the official nationalism of the state throughout the present crisis. The proscriptions on a more critical reading of the past and the essentialised constructions of race have created new blockages to the deepening of a politics of national reconciliation. It is true that there are many sources in the past for the construction of fixed and seemingly naturalised notions of racial identity, and that this remains a key reservoir for nationalist mobilisation in former settler states.

While the revived nationalism of the ruling party has been constructing a series of exclusions, the racial minorities in the country have faced severe difficulties in attempting to negotiate a place in the post-independence dispensation. These difficulties stem both from the legacies of identity construction under colonial rule and also from the limits and increasingly intolerant protocols of nation-building in the post-colonial period.

Alexander attempts to understand the constituent elements of white identity in Zimbabwe, both by tracing some of the major contours of its historical lineage, and by unraveling its post-colonial features. Alexander traces what she views as:

... the formation of a white community unified by race, over and above ethnicity or class, whose national identity was founded on racialism and an idea of nation that excluded the majority of its inhabitants.

However, it is important to note that notwithstanding the seeming unity of race in definitive periods of Zimbabwe's history, the white history, the white community also affected the reconciliation process.

Given such historical constraints, the policy of reconciliation remained merely a formal political hope, especially given the continuing legacy of structural inequality in the sphere of the economy. One consequence of this limited vision has been the eagerness of the ruling party to celebrate the exceptional in white achievements while at the same time carrying out a more general denigration of this particular minority

Although Zimbabwe has not been at war since 1979, the country "...suffered from war-like trauma to its polity and economy" (Moss and Patrick, 2005, 2006) and being a fragile state, the country is also currently experiencing a host of horrific consequences of state fragility. Among the diverse definitions of fragility, OECD consider fragile states as "those where the state power is unable and/or unwilling to deliver core functions to the majority of its people: security, protection of property rights, basic public services and essential infrastructure" while UN-WIDER (2008) define fragility as a situation "wherein government cannot or will not provide an environment for households to reduce, mitigate or cope with poverty and other risks to well-being". Crisis States Research Centre's (CSRC) short, though elaborated definition, regards fragile state as "a state significantly susceptible to crisis in one or more of its sub-systems"³. Mirroring any of these and other definitions on Zimbabwe since 20004 to today, the country is with no doubt a fragile state. Also all the four instruments and indexes that claim to measure different dimensions and indicators of state fragility indicates Zimbabwe as a fragile state and one of the worst performing country since the beginning of the new millennium.

The problems faced by Zimbabwe included, among other things, hyperinflation with last official figure putting the monthly inflation rate at 231.2 million percent as of July 2008. On the other hand, IMF (2009) estimates the hyperinflation rate to be 489 billion percent as of September 2008, and independent analysts, for instance, Hanke (2008) put this inflation rate at 6.5 quinquicillion percent.

Zimbabwe's political environment has been typified by severe restrictions on political and civil liberties. The intensification of political instability and macroeconomic instability following the coming into fore of resilience opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999, the controversial land reform since 1999 and most importantly, the fact that the country been increasingly isolated from the international community, have resulted in political factors being some of the major determinants of state fragility in the country. That is, because of this dictatorial, repressive and undemocratic regime, the then government was not willing to create an environment whereby the majority citizens can endeavour to mitigate poverty, neither was the government willing and able to

In 2000, forcible seizures of white-owned land by ZANU-PF "war veterans" (often party thugs too young to have fought in the wars of independence) began to seriously destabilize Zimbabwe's economy. The 2000 Parliamentary elections saw a ZANU-PF victory over the newly formed opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), led by trade unionist Morgan Tsvangirai, but Mugabe's party lost its margin to change the constitution.

This explains President Mugabe's refusal to have the security sector reformed, declaring, "May I state this clearly and categorically, as ZANU (PF) the defence of our sovereignty rests with us and with no other. Any manoeuvres to tamper with the forces will never be entertained by us" (Raftopoulos 2008:16).

Leaders of the security forces themselves have made it abundantly clear that they would not salute any political leader without liberation war credentials. They thus shunned the swearing in of the leader of the MDC as Prime Minister at the launch of the GNU. Thus even in the government of national unity reconciliation is and remains a pipedream as important sectors of the country do not recognize the Prime Minister. While the GNU was ushered in to promote reconciliation and national healing major players in the 2008 violence have not reconciled and usurping civilian authority for personal gain and political power.

Then there is the critical question of civil-military relations, in particular, the highly militarised nature of the country's institutions. Rupiya (2003:251-64). succinctly shows how the executive has since the 1990s militarised civilian posts, denting the 'institutional inter-relationships' that had hitherto evolved in the country.

This concentrates power in the executive and entrenches state control over the affected institutions since the military appointees to civilian posts are answerable to the executive rather than the institutions. Inevitably, the military has become heavily involved in law enforcement in times of protests and demonstrations (Hendricks and Hutton, 2009b:4). For this and other reasons, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2003: 33) concludes that "Until Zimbabweans are delivered from the pervasive fear of their police; their army, their government and their leaders, there will never be cordial civil-military relations in the country."

It has been noted that victims of great injustices tend to remember and re-live these injustices for a long time. They seem to remember their suffering much longer than the perpetrators of the injustice. For this reason in many societies unresolved hatred and the desire for revenge tends to lie underneath the façade of peace and harmony. From time to time these pent up emotions burst out in violent conflict which may in turn create new scars.