CIIR Report

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Futures for southern Africa

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Report of a symposium held in Windhoek, Namibia, September 2003

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This is the report of a symposium
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About the author

Steve Kibble is CIIR's advocacy coordinator for Africa and the Middle East.

Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CSA	civil society association
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	non-governmental organisation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAP	structural adjustment programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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Introduction

It is almost 10 years since the end of apartheid – a moment that appeared to promise peace and prosperity for the future of southern Africa.[1] It is also about a decade after several other major political events in the region: Namibian independence, Mozambique's first multiparty election, Zambia's first non-liberation movement government, the Lusaka Accord that sought to bring peace in Angola. It seems an appropriate time for an evaluation.

Four organisations based or working in southern Africa (the Catholic Institute for International Relations, the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Nordic Africa Institute and the Institute for Commonwealth Studies) held a symposium to assess developments with a view to the future. Has the promised peace dividend come to the region with the attempts to settle conflicts, first in Angola, and then the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)? How did the region deal with the legacy of major divisions and problems of reconstruction? Have hopes for development and stability in the region come to fruition? If not, why not? And was another path possible? For liberation movements that have become governments, are authoritarian nationalism or neoliberalism the only options? It is impossible to speak of liberation without considering gender, yet here development appears to be stalled and even liable to reverse.

The organisers brought together civil society activists, people from the churches, academics, analysts and journalists for a collective discussion of themes, ideas and problems. In doing so, they aimed to begin a three-fold process:

- to promote greater inter-regional understanding
- to strengthen civil society and non-governmental organisation (NGO) links and activities within southern Africa, and to strengthen North-South links
- to ensure that the voices of southern Africa's people could be heard.

The context of the discussions was the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a 'home grown' African leaders' response to the worsening crises in Africa. But what were southern Africans to make of its neoliberal approach and the lack of consultation and participation in planning? Was it an approach that civil society could use, and if so what kind of engagement should it seek? Allied to this was the creation of the African Union (AU), with its commitments to human rights and its apparent setting of limits to absolute state sovereignty. Did these initiatives bring 'African solutions to African problems' any closer? The participants also had to be aware of the impact on southern Africa of the wider context of globalisation – greater world inequalities, the humanitarian crisis, and an increasingly fractious and unpredictable world political climate since 11 September 2001 and the war in Iraq in 2003.

Two particular concerns exercised the participants. The first was the HIV and AIDS pandemic, which has, tragically, become the context in which development must take place. Second was the political, social and economic crisis in Zimbabwe and the lack of a firm regional response. The participants were keenly aware, too, of the need to engage afresh with the world of ideas, given the rush to neoliberalism, with failed nationalism as its adversarial counterpart. One of the contributors, Jacques Depelchin, helped ground the discussions in a long term perspective that understands Atlantic slave trading as the first manifestation of globalisation with a continuing impact in Africa, the Americas and globally, in inhumanity, exploitation and historical amnesia.

After addressing ideas, and before considering policy in response to the major challenges, it was important to think about possible futures. This seemed to be the most difficult part, although there was consensus on the underlying approach. The participants agreed on the need for emancipatory politics (and for continuing dissent), and that the security of people should be privileged above that of states and state sovereignty. One of the contributors, Janah Ncube, provided an image that became the iconic figure of the symposium: a Zimbabwean unemployed mother leaving a clinic after being told she is HIV positive.[2] A consensus emerged that gender considerations must not only be central to discussion of the future, but relevant to this woman and others like her.

A follow-up conference to the symposium at the Institute for Commonwealth Studies in London on 1-3 April 2004 is aimed more directly at Northern and Southern policy makers as well as civil society actors. (A follow-up event in southern Africa is also under consideration.) The London conference seeks to address a challenge for those involved in development, including donors: to move beyond looking at who to blame, and consider what to change, and how? The first question will identify the key issues, but the real challenge is the second: how to make emancipatory politics practical. Given that most policy responses are either neoliberal or statist, what changes need to be made? Perhaps one step might follow from the recognition by many in North and South that the existing development paradigms have largely failed and that new thinking is required. What vision, what forms of organisation, what forms of communication, what forms of pressure can be used? How does the global-local link occur? What kind of region is possible, at whose behest? How can delinking and alternative strategies be made to work?

Key issues

The organisers identified nine major themes. Issues of the environment and refugees, among others, were not covered. Racism was treated in other contexts rather than as a separate topic.

Understanding the region

Speakers: Chris Landsberg, Andre du Pisani, Peter Vale

Andre du Pisani identified four core problems:

- governance, democratisation and state reconstruction
- the different trajectories of the countries of the region, making for different contexts
- the challenge to the region, not only of managing conflict, but also of managing insecurity
- regional capacities for significant interventions on the environment, food security and redistributive justice.

Professor Peter Vale reminded participants that 'dissent made the region, dissent made liberation and dissent now makes for emancipation'. However the present and past myths of the region need to be demolished, including the 'myth' of the front line states. In part the myths relate to the unrealistic expectations of the immediate post-apartheid period. These included the expectation of a peace dividend; of a new beginning rather than continuities; of a 'human security' focus; and that the new role of South Africa in southern Africa would be a benign one rather than that of a regional gendarme.[3]

Pretoria's policy was based on realist and utilitarian notions and interests. South Africans were in fact reluctant regionalists and quickly saw the region in security terms and threats. They never intended to share sovereignty with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) 'one part at a time'. As a result it is unclear what the SADC should look like or is intended to be. It appears that Europe may have little to offer as a model for the SADC or the AU. There is no sense of common identities. Interests have trumped ideas.

Several participants asked whether apartheid had gone. Firoze Manji cited an interview with a South African activist who had been asked the same question. The answer was that 'apartheid is like the scaffolding of a building: once the building is ready, you no longer need the scaffolding. The apartheid regimes built the building that the ANC is now going to occupy!' The immediate post-apartheid period was about the victory of neoliberalism through globalisation and rational social ordering through the agency of states. A longer historical timeframe would instead see a very short and self-interested peace dividend.

Principle and practice

Chris Landsberg probed the SADC's efforts to transform itself into an effective regional political and security community based on shared norms, values, procedures and institutions. He pointed out that traditional analyses of southern Africa present the SADC's role as helping to end wars, promote peace and security, and defend democratic governance and democratisation. But they do not focus on the crucial issue of its institutions and mechanisms for peace, security, governance and democracy.

Traditional analyses of southern Africa tend to focus on security and the nature of conflicts in the region. They propose remedies such as preventive diplomacy, mediation, and intervention. Yet few bother to probe whether the SADC has the institutional capabilities and political mandates to undertake such ambitious tasks, and whether the political and security mechanisms in place are adequate or workable. It is almost taken for granted that the SADC is capable of promoting peace, security, governance and democracy.

Landsberg concluded that policy and project coordination are not sufficient ingredients to make the region more democratic, peaceful and secure. Effective norms, values, procedures and institutions are crucial. In particular, effective implementation of norms and procedures is vital if subregional institutions are to become capable entities. The SADC has serious capacity problems, including poor coordination, a shortage of trained staff and constant pressure for trade-offs between the priorities of states which often pull in different directions. There is a constant battle to raise funds and account for them, thus distracting the SADC from more strategic work. This capacity shortfall has detracted from the region's ability to maintain peace and security, and promote democratic governance and democratisation.

In brief, the SADC is struggling to become a true community. While the SADC and the AU are good at making impressive policies and adopting grandiose norms and standards, continental and regional multilateral institutions are poor at ensuring that the outcomes and practice of such initiatives match their intent. The norms on democracy, governance, peace and security should indeed be acclaimed, but attempts to put them into practice fall far short of creating effective regional communities. Unless this gap between norms and their effective implementation is closed, the chances of addressing southern Africa's peace and security challenges will remain slim.

The process and ideology of development

Speakers: Neville Gabriel, Firoze Manji, Henning Melber

Firoze Manji, Henning Melber and Peter Vale pointed out that civil and political rights and the notion of dissent were built into the struggle against colonialism and apartheid, only to be dismissed by new post-colonial leaders. The 1960s saw the rise of a multitude of popular movements organising around such basic rights as shelter, land, education and health, freedoms of association, speech and movement, freedom from abuse, and the right to self-determination. This had impacts on Europe, for example the fall of the Portuguese empire.

The period after 1994 brought a rapid disappearance of any sustained regional civil society cooperation of the type seen in the struggle against apartheid and destabilisation. (One might ask, however, whether developments in Zimbabwe and the land crisis, or indeed NEPAD and anti-globalisation, might not be helping to recreate it.) The result has been to demobilise the masses on many issues – from any attempt to attack fundamental causes of poverty, for example. José Manuel Sebastião pointed out that in Angola after the war ended there was little idea of how to mobilise around any demands.

Development diverted

Firoze Manji offered a critique of 'actually existing development' in the context of the end of the Cold War as a defining moment in regional history. The end of apartheid saw hopes dashed as states, not people, remained the reference point of politics in southern Africa; such states were modelled on South Africa with its sovereign status. The global picture is that the rich get richer, the poor get poorer. In 1960 the income of the richest 20 per cent of the world's population was 30 times that of the poorest 20 per cent. By 1997 it was 74 times more. By the late 1990s, 20 per cent of the world's people had 86 per cent of world gross domestic product; the bottom 20 per cent had one per cent. The 200 richest people in the world are worth more than US$1 trillion, whereas the interest on the debts of the heavily indebted poor countries[4] was US$1.1 billion. One billion people live below the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) poverty line. According to the UNDP, the assets of the top three billionaires are more than the combined gross national product (GNP) of all 'least developed' countries and their 600 million people.

In practical terms development has failed to improve the living conditions of millions of people, and the victim, rather than those who cause impoverishment, has become the problem. The task of development has been diverted towards turning citizens into consumers. But those who have no capacity to consume become effectively disenfranchised, said Manji: 'Life looks different from under the wheels of a Mercedes to riding in the back.'

The agenda of development, increasingly determined externally by the interests of international capital, has been poverty alleviation rather than rights, and basic needs rather than basic rights. The nationalist promise was that basic rights could be obtained through political independence. Claims for rights, however, did not emerge because nationalists first developed such ideas, but rather from struggle over important issues. A right, therefore, is not a standard granted as charity from above, but a standard around which people rally for the struggle from below.

As the post-colonial state became the sole developer and 'unifier of the nation', so civil and political rights became a luxury, although there were some great achievements, such as the increase in life expectancy and decrease in child mortality. Yet African GNP increased only from US$222 to US$280 between 1960 and 1978. The post-independence period saw popular organisations disbanded and political associations banned or repressed. Development was directed by experts, a poverty focus trumped a focus on rights and charity replaced emancipation. The emancipation agenda was replaced by the 'development' agenda. As Peter Vale said, 'Politics became the search for constitutional answers, and economics became a set of technical questions settled by the market.'

An agenda for conflict

This model of development has now become the source of conflict in the region. The stark polarity was seen in two critical moments of the 1990s. The rise of the popular movement that led to the downfall of apartheid was followed by the catastrophe of genocide in Rwanda, with a million people massacred in the space of a few months, on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. According to Firoze Manji: 'If the one was achieved through the mobilisation of the majority fuelled by the desire for emancipation from all forms of oppression, the other was a logical consequence of the failure of development as a model for social emancipation'.

Crises such as those in Rwanda, Burundi, the DRC and Zimbabwe are potential future mirrors for the region and are products of a particular socio-political agenda known as 'development'. In future, politics must be about people, not states. The way forward must be an agenda for emancipation from social, economic and political oppression.

The colonial legacy

To sum up, the principal trends are that external interests (international capital) increasingly determine the goals of social and economic policy, while the rich get richer and the poor poorer, and the dominant model of development has become the source of conflict. These trends will be exacerbated in the era of growing globalisation of capital.

Manji put this in the historical context of anti-colonialism and post-colonialism. In response to the rise of anti-colonial struggles and the subsequent crises in empire, imperialism made preparations for future

compliant states. Education and social welfare were provided for a selected elite, to nurture a new class to take the reins of power.

The legacy of indirect colonial rule was a bifurcated state, with both civic and ethnic identities. The former was governed by civil law and the latter by customary law. Racial discrimination in the civic sphere reproduced race as a political identity, whereas ethnic discrimination in the customary sphere translated ethnicity from a cultural to a political identity. This in turn created the context for political violence. De-racialisation without de-ethnicisation continued to reproduce a bifurcated citizenship. To quote Mahmoud Mamdani:

> By politicising indigeneity, the colonial state set in motion a process with the potential of endlessly spawning identities animated by the distinctions indigenous and non-indigenous, and polarising them. This indeed set the context in which political violence unfolded in Africa, colonial as well as post-colonial.[5]

Structural adjustment

The debt crisis and structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) provided an ideological framework in which only the freedom of capitalists to amass wealth in the marketplace guarantees development and the state is deemed 'inefficient' and 'ineffective'. SAPs redirected social expenditure from the public to the private sector, which caused a decline in real incomes. But profits increased and trade was liberalised, with the removal of tariff barriers and subsidies for national production. The effects of SAPs were a growth in the gap between rich and poor, blurring of the distinctions between social organisation for criminal, economic and political purposes, and the collapse of indigenous industry in the face of international competition. The state grew more repressive as it confronted the resulting social opposition.

In social policy, SAPs discouraged social provision by the state. Education, health, and social welfare were no longer rights, but commodities. SAPs 'with a human face' meant that NGOs – 'the new subcontractors' – received money to provide services to the poor as charity, not right. 'Development' took on a new character. It became a competition for access to wealth and a means to improve the infrastructure for exploitation and the accumulation of private wealth. In turn, the state became a primary source of accumulation: the 'honey pot', a mechanism oiled by patronage, favour and corruption.

SAPs ultimately led to dissatisfaction and disenchantment with the ruling party, and a loss of credibility for state and government. Development aid and projects were used to buy favour with 'ethnic' groups. In sum, the post-colonial period saw a large-scale demobilisation of the popular movement and the fragmentation of society.

If development has become a way to determine who gets access to what, then civil war is but a continuation of that process, albeit by more destructive means, as seen in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Angola, Somalia, Sudan, Burundi, the DRC and Kenya.

The Northern conquest

Manji sees SAPs as the precondition for the currrent phase of globalisation. To expand markets, they forced open national borders to trade, capital and information, and then extended trade liberalisation to services, trade related investments and intellectual property rights. Just as previous phases of globalisation of capital led to destruction, enslavement and the colonisation of Africa, so SAPs were the means of gelding the state, rendering it pliable to the needs of international capital. To quote Jacobo Schatan: 'In a political dimension [this has meant] a true territorial conquest of the South by the North, without any apparent military conflict ... but in the name of the sacrosanct concepts of "development" and "interdependence".'[6]

The chosen instrument was the World Trade Organisation with its supposedly multilateral agreements, strong enforcement mechanisms that are binding on national governments, and a drastic reduction in scope for policy making, where only the rich countries have influence. The basic philosophy is that open markets, non-discrimination (against international capital) and global competition in international trade are conducive to national welfare. Social policies, meanwhile, are best served by the enhancement of economic liberalisation. Social policy may be made, as long as it does not interfere with private accumulation.

The consequences of globalisation were increased inequality between and within countries, greater impoverishment, increased vulnerability, the globalisation of criminal activities and the exclusion of vast sections of humanity. The impact on national policy was determined by speculative capital flows, the undermining of taxation capabilities, the curtailment of local industrialisation, lack of accountability of multinational investments, competition to lower the social cost of reproducing labour power and the sale of national assets. As the UNDP put it:

> when the market goes too far in dominating social and political outcomes, the opportunities and rewards of globalisation are spread unequally and inequitably – concentrating power and wealth in a select group of people, nations and corporations, marginalising the others … When the profit motives of market players get out of hand, they challenge people's ethics – and sacrifice respect for justice and human rights.[7]

From globalisation to genocide

The logical end of this failure of development to achieve social emancipation was the genocide in Rwanda.

The collapse of the International Coffee Agreement had a devastating effect on more than 70 per cent of households in the country, and Rwandan farmers expressed their anger and frustration in 1992 by cutting down some 3,000 coffee trees. This exacerbated the tensions fuelled earlier by the attempted invasion by the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF).

The government read the political mood and understood that its legitimacy was being challenged. In desperation it became more repressive, disseminating

hate propaganda against the supposed 'enemy', the Tutsi, and encouraging systematic killings and violations against anyone they defined as being Tutsi or allies of the Tutsi. The defence component of the government's already over-stretched budget increased substantially. The army increased from 5,000 soldiers to more than 40,000.

That was the context in which the World Bank insisted on the implementation of its standard policy package of public expenditure cuts, privatisation, retrenchment, and making people pay more for health and education. The effect was to increase the burden on the majority of Rwandese, 85 per cent of whom were living below the poverty line. With the disintegration of fragile political institutions and the political impasse within the government over the Arusha Accords that proposed power sharing with the RPF, anything could have triggered the conflict. And that was what happened when the presidential plane was shot down in April 1994.

The Third Way

Neville Gabriel introduced a lively debate on 'Neoliberalism, NEPAD and nationalism'. NEPAD, he said, is a Blairite 'Third Way' approach which assumes that the state cannot do everything, and that there is a need to mobilise the private sector for social goals. The current NEPAD orthodoxy suggests that Africa is failing to do this. NEPAD's long term objective is to reduce poverty, first by ending violent conflict, and then by addressing issues of governance and mobilising private resources. NEPAD hopes the latter would be spurred by improved terms of trade and various forms of financing, including the provision of debt relief.

NEPAD addresses power relations only indirectly, stressing 'partnership' as the way forward. Partnership is accompanied by an emphasis on voluntary participation, with an African peer review mechanism to assess economic and good governance criteria. There will be no coercion of backsliders, but rather encouragement for exemplary states.

But will it work? The answer may depend on whether wealth trickles down to the poor, but also on the size of the country in question. Some countries – for example Nigeria, Egypt, Algeria – expect to become engines of growth in 'their' region or hinterland. The plan will undoubtedly create winners and losers, leading to new African divides.

There are major problems with the NEPAD proposals. HIV and AIDS, and gender, do not figure prominently in them. There has been a lack of consultation and transparency: few people know about them. They are aimed largely at the West or North, rather than African populations, but they may provide entry points for advocacy.

On a more theoretical level, the charge was that NEPAD shows its class origins: it emanates from African elites and reflects their interests in 'genuflect[ing] towards the West', in Manji's phrase. In this sense, politics is being determined by economics, rather than the other way around.

Seeking a more nuanced view, other contributors pointed out that some of the African elites opposing NEPAD had poor human rights records and some were involved in the dubious military pact for the war in the DRC. Does civil society want to be associated with them in rejecting NEPAD in similar language, and as categorically, while remaining silent on the despotic African leaders and their kleptocracies? Is it not necessary to adopt an explicitly critical position towards such regimes, whose failure to comply with standards of democracy and human rights is at least as great as that of NEPAD advocates?

In terms of engaging, if not with NEPAD, at least with the problems that it outlines, civil society activists should understand that Africa is not a homogenous entity. Also, capitalism is no longer merely a Western phenomenon. Malaysian and Chinese-based business have been accused of using severely exploitative practices in Africa. They are under no domestic pressure to adopt better practices, unlike Western corporations; for example, west European and Nordic interests pulled out of southern Sudan because of pressure at home.

The symposium rejected NEPAD as a starting point for discussions, while recognising the importance of engaging with the ideas contained within NEPAD (even if it is engagement in order to reject, as Firoze Manji put it). Rights should not be theorised as legal rights in the sense of an entitlement or claim, implying a static and absolutist paradigm, but as a means of struggle. The commitment will be to emancipatory politics, to bring security and development back to all people(s) in the region.

Workers and land

Speakers: Herbert Jauch, Lloyd Sachikonye

Land reform is key to addressing rural poverty. Although not in itself a guarantee of economic development, land reform is a necessary condition for a more secure and balanced society. Providing poor people with access to land and improving their ability to make effective use of the land they occupy are central to reducing poverty and empowering poor people and communities.

In southern Africa, land reform takes on a special resonance because of the history of expropriation and liberation. There are variations in the histories of different countries in the region: some experienced white settler colonialism while others did not. The former experienced massive expropriation of indigenous peoples' land, forcing peasant communities into the labour market; the latter largely did not. Therefore one of the major items of unfinished business in the post-colonial, post-apartheid era is the land question, particularly in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa – all former white settler states. How the land question is addressed (or not addressed) will impinge heavily on the range of 'futures' open to the region.

At independence, out of a total of about 39 million hectares in Zimababwe, white commercial farmers owned an estimated 15.5 million hectares, while communal farmers had access to 16.4 million. In Namibia, the white commercial farming area was about 36.2 million hectares

at independence and the communal areas extended over about 33.5 million hectares. In South Africa, 87 per cent of the land was owned by an estimated 50,000 white commercial farmers. However, most expropriation of land took place in the last 100 years. Understandably, vivid memories remain of this forcible expropriation and form the basis of deeply felt grievances among the indigenous peoples who lost their land.

Land reform is a complicated and heavily contested process, and different countries in the region have taken different approaches to it. In all instances, however, they have had to grapple with their various historical legacies: some experienced more land expropriation than others. In some instances, post-independence land reform has been gradual and incomplete. Yet in one case, at least, it became comprehensive and chaotic. Because of the different 'pasts' in land policy and differences in current approaches, there is nothing to suggest a homogeneous 'future' for land reform in the region.

What are the possible futures for social groups who derive their livelihoods from owning and working the land? These groups comprise large and small farmers, and farm workers.

Commercial farmers

While the number of large-scale farmers is likely to remain considerable in South Africa (about 50,000) and in Namibia (about 4,000) in the foreseeable future, the numbers in Zimbabwe have shrunk drastically. Between 600 and 900 white commercial farmers remain, where previously there were 4,500; a number have joined the diaspora in commercial agriculture in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia while others are inquiring about investment in Australia, Angola and Uganda. White commercial agriculture has suffered from the mass evictions of 2000-02, evictions that had not entirely stopped in 2003. This highly skilled and experienced group of commercial farmers was a major national asset. Even if political change comes to Zimbabwe in the near future, it is uncertain that a majority of these farmers would return to active farming. The future of commercial agriculture in Zimbabwe thus hangs in the balance.

The future of land reform and agriculture will depend partly on the performance of the emerging black commercial farmers, not only in Zimbabwe but also in Namibia and South Africa. It has become an implicit policy to encourage the creation of a black agrarian bourgeoisie in these countries. This policy is more explicit in the Zimbabwean case, with 28,000 medium- and large-scale black farmers allocated formerly white-owned commercial land. It remains to be established how many of these are full-time rather than 'telephone' farmers. It takes many years, if not a generation, to perfect farming skills, and it is significant that most black farmers have no previous farming experience. Serious shortages of inputs and services reduced output in 2002-03 and threaten the same in 2003-04.

Small farmers

By far the largest number of beneficiaries of land reform have been and will be small farmers: the landless or those subsisting in congested homelands or communal lands. In Zimbabwe some 129,000 people received land under the 'fast-track' programme. In Namibia and South Africa, the clamour for land from this social group can be expected to grow. The hopes pinned on land reform as an avenue to poverty reduction in this social group have become part of conventional wisdom. However, such hopes will depend on the criteria for selecting small farmer beneficiaries, and on the existence of an adequate support system (infrastructure, credit, services, marketing, etc) for producers. Such a system will be expensive; given the financial constraints faced by most governments in the region, international backing will be indispensable. A land reform programme must have broad credibility if it is to gain national and international support. In addition, small farmers must grapple with the HIV and AIDS epidemic, which is already reducing the supply of labour.

In the foreseeable future, the small farmer sector will continue to be the largest sub-sector of the population in most countries in the region. The transformation of subsistence agriculture will be a protracted process. Even in countries where land reform includes tenure, transformation will not be automatic. Both the communal areas or homelands and small farmer settlement schemes will require considerable investment in infrastructure (including irrigation) and services. Land is not an infinite resource, as the congestion in communal areas amply demonstrates, nor will there be more land to expropriate after current reforms are completed. As the 2003 informal 'think tank' on land reform in southern Africa argued:

> If people were to be given a choice between a job and a house in a town or a piece of land for farming, complete with tools and inputs, what would they choose? … If the answer is that some but not all wish to move to towns, it has implications for land policy and the way overall inequality is addressed. And again, the question is especially important if an equally high priority is providing a secure food supply to poor urban and peri-urban residents, even if this food is produced by (white) commercial farmers.[8]

In retrospect, among the flaws in Zimbabwe's land reform was the assumption that everyone who was short of land needed new land, and that everyone who needed land could use it productively. It comes as little surprise that large areas of commercial farmland remain fallow several years later.

Farm workers

Commercial farm workers were profoundly affected by land reform, but were largely excluded as beneficiaries and left to fend for themselves. Before land reform, there were about 320,000 farm workers in Zimbabwe. There are currently about 950,000 in South Africa, and 35,000 in Namibia. In Zimbabwe their numbers have declined by more than two-thirds, while the trend in South Africa appears to be towards mechanisation and a decline in the number of permanent workers. The fate of displaced farm

workers in Zimbabwe remains unclear. A growing humanitarian crisis exists, and both national and international efforts will be needed to alleviate it. Migrant farm workers are particularly vulnerable, not only in Zimbabwe but also in Namibia and South Africa. Farm workers in the region need jobs, land rights and alternative sources of livelihood if they are not to become a new *lumpenproletariat* and rural squatter group.

A changing landscape

Finally, although the depth and tempo of regional land reform will vary, general trends are destined to continue. For example, the nature of rural livelihoods has changed over the past 20 years. There is no longer an exclusive reliance on agriculture or livestock, but a simultaneous pursuit of diverse economic activities. Some surveys suggest that rural households derive up to 40 per cent of their income from sources other than farming. The individualisation of economic activity and the increasing tendency to engage in non-agricultural activities have dissolved long-standing agrarian divisions of labour, as well as economic rights and responsibilities within rural households. Second, as non-farm earnings can constitute up to 80 per cent of a rural household's income in southern Africa, diversification may be less a means of providing a sustainable rural livelihood than a process of 'depeasantisation'. This would mean that livelihood diversification is part of the erosion of an agrarian way of life that combines subsistence and commodity production with an internal social organisation based on family labour and community settlement. Such a change would make the sustainability of rural livelihoods questionable, even under land reform.

Those who plan land reform programmes should take into account these changes in production and income diversification. Conditions are not static. The growing population of youth and its different material aspirations should also be taken into account. Planners must also bear in mind that the land question is different in those countries (such as Botswana) that are experiencing rapid urbanisation. Clearly, there is no single 'future' for social groups that derive their livelihoods from the land. The least that planners and leaders can do is recognise the complexity of land reform and strive to design programmes that ensure fairness, equity, justice, transparency and sustainability.

Workers in southern Africa

Southern Africa has one of the highest levels of inequality in the world. Poverty is widespread even in countries with relatively high per capita incomes, such as South Africa, Namibia and Botswana. Statistics about per capita incomes hide the poverty of the majority behind the wealth of a small elite. It is therefore hardly surprising that starvation wages, poverty, inequality and high levels of unemployment are among the key issues that trade unions in the SADC region confront.

After independence, many unions had to redefine their roles. Most have recognised the need to become politically and organisationally independent. African trade unions are often the most organised section of civil society and the most outspoken critics of failed government policies. Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Zambia, for example, now have serious conflicts between government and labour. Southern Africa's trade unions must often articulate the aspirations not only of industrial workers, but also of the poor in general. Only one out of 10 people in southern Africa is employed in the formal sector. The rest are either unemployed or engaged in informal sector activities, subsistence farming or unpaid family labour. As a result, the responsibility of the few in formal sector jobs is immense. They must support extended families on wages that are often below the poverty line. Domestic and agricultural workers are extremely exploited and very difficult to organise.

Industrial workers in some countries (eg South Africa) have achieved reasonable wages in some sectors through militant action on the shopfloor. However, these achievements are now under threat from industrial 'restructuring' and 'global competitiveness' which strive for lower labour costs. A particular threat to labour standards has been the introduction of export processing zones in the region.

Labour as a social movement

Unions need to define clearly their role beyond the workplace. While it is essential that trade unions can negotiate effectively and assist their members with all work-related problems, they must also articulate workers' interests on broader socio-economic issues. As representatives of a specific social class, they need to articulate not only the interests of formal sector workers, but also those of other (unorganised) groups such as the unemployed, casual workers, and workers in the small business sector.

Representing such broader interests effectively requires a vision of a different society based on equality and social justice, and a strategy for achieving this. Labour will certainly not be alone in this endeavour and a key to success will be the unions' ability to form strategic alliances with other organisations representing marginalised groups. Trade unions will have to revive their tradition as a social movement if they want to regain the support and respect they enjoyed when they were a key component of liberation movements. The choices made by the labour movement now will determine the role unions can play in the years to come. They can either become the driving force behind a process of mobilisation for more fundamental socio-economic changes, or be further marginalised, with a dwindling membership base and unable to significantly influence future developments in the region. It will be essential for the labour movement to give a different direction to the process of regional integration. Otherwise, that process will continue to be shaped by the interests of business, assisted by the competing national governments of southern Africa.

Unions and government

Given the huge imbalances in economic power between capital and labour, the state's chosen role as 'neutral referee' and creator of an enabling environment for collective bargaining effectively benefited business

interests. Business representatives routinely described worker militancy as an obstacle to job creation and economic development. In Namibia some government officials and politicians echoed these sentiments, providing just one indication that the close political ties between labour and the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) did not prevent the entrenchment of a pro-capitalist state after independence. This process was also assisted by trade unions' lack of political clarity about the development of a different social order after independence. Notions of worker democracy, worker control and social transformation had just emerged in the late 1980s, but had not been developed into a coherent concept in the labour movement at the time of independence.

The biggest challenge facing labour then was to define an effective strategy for influencing broader socio-economic policies in favour of its working class base. This task proved to be extremely difficult in the face of an ideological onslaught that portrayed neoliberalism as the only practical policy for Namibia and other countries in the region.

The Namibian government increasingly slides towards neoliberal policies as manifested, for example, in the introduction of export processing zones and privatisation programmes. Opposition to such policies by the labour movement is often countered by accusations that trade unions are still living in the (ideological) past and that they are obstacles to economic growth. Lacking a comprehensive alternative development strategy, trade unions were forced on the defensive on several occasions and found themselves sidelined from economic policy formulation. This indicates that the labour movement is currently too weak to challenge conservative policies systematically and develop coherent policy alternatives.

The regional umbrella

Similar challenges confront the labour movement at SADC level, where national trade union federations come together under the umbrella of the Southern Africa Trade Union Coordination Council (SATUCC). Since the 1990s, SATUCC's main aim has been to influence policies at regional level in favour of workers. SATUCC's proposed social charter demanded a guarantee of workers' rights and upward harmonisation of working conditions throughout the region; social, economic and political roles for trade unions; and obligations on businesses to disclose information nationally and regionally to the labour movement.

The social charter aimed to remove disparities in the region, to eliminate the basis for divisive and exploitative business operations. However, this task has been difficult, because many governments in the region show little sympathy for labour's concerns. Driven by the perception that foreign investment is the solution to economic development, several governments in southern Africa regard strong unions as an obstacle to their neoliberal development strategies. Structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) have swept the region since the 1980s and even some of the 'voluntary' adjustment policies of countries such as Namibia and South Africa leave little room for labour-friendly practices.

The labour movement in the region has also been affected by mass retrenchments following mine closures, privatisation and SAPs.

Patriarchy

Speakers: Alice Mogwe, Janah Ncube

In a seminal contribution Janah Ncube provided the emancipatory and iconic figure of the unemployed mother emerging from positive testing for HIV:

> Imagine – in walking on a dust road, you see a female walking towards you, a two-year-old male child on her back, four-year-old female in her hand. Firewood on head, come from clinic, just found out HIV positive. What do you think is on her mind? What would you say as she walks by? These are the female questions we are talking about.

Without commitment to this woman, development and democracy will be meaningless, Ncube said, and others repeated throughout the symposium. The commitment will be to emancipatory politics through this iconic figure.

Structures of oppression

Alice Mogwe and Dianne Hubbard laid out key elements in understanding and fighting patriarchy. The liberation struggle was not only an era of hope: it saw the mobilisation of women into battle (albeit on very unequal terms). But after independence women were sent back to their families to resurrect traditional roles. Moreover, governments were male-led and failed to address the violations that females endured during the anti-colonial struggles. Today, those same males lead the state, replicating patriarchal patterns from colonial and pre-colonial times. They are reluctant to deal with sexual and domestic violence, which is often linked to male disempowerment. Gender remains a secondary or minor theme in post-colonial political discourse.

The power of the state is reinforced by collusion with the church (described as the most patriarchal institution ever) and the media. Women in rural communities have significant influence and economic power. How can this power be made to work with the expertise available in female focused NGOs?

Oppressive institutions such as the church and state are visible, but there are also hidden forms of oppression relating to tradition, culture, history and religion. They reveal themselves in position, location, policies, languages and powerful symbols such as the black cook. The real battle will come over family law and customary law, with males wanting to retain customary law and reject 'Western' laws. Male interests will continue to dominate at political level. Attempts to address domestic violence can provoke a backlash. In a recent Namibian parliamentary debate, 'bewitchment of the male' and 'refusal to have sex' were put forward as defences of male violence. Proper analysis of violence in the region is

needed to combat an increase in unthinkable forms of violence, and hence an extreme sense of disempowerment. Do trade unions reflect gender sensitive polices? How do gender activists engage with capital and its link with the sex trade?

The presence of NGO gender desks means that female issues are not mainstreamed. NEPAD has no meaningful commitment to eradication of gender inequalities. The AU, which has a male chair, advances policies of equality (such as the AU protocol on the rights of women in Africa of July 2003) but there is no sign of movement on the ground.

Unfortunately, the women's movement remains weak and is disintegrating in Namibia and regionally.

Gender and rights

Human rights principles are contained in a set of instruments which have emerged from international bodies such as the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, the AU and the SADC, as well as in the legislation of individual states.

At the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna 1993) the United Nations for the first time recognised women's rights as human rights. Before that, it was assumed that both women and men were equal and treated equally before the law. It was the start of a recognition that equal treatment of men and women masked inequality rooted in the unequal power relationship between them.

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1986) does not refer specifically to discrimination against women. The SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (1997) and its Addendum on The Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Children (1998) focus on gender. Gender activists in southern Africa have done an enormous amount of work, both conceptually and politically. But there are limitations. A major one is that the declarations are not legally binding. The Addendum nevertheless includes a resolution by states that laws be enacted to address violence against women and children.

A fundamental question is, can gender issues be addressed satisfactorily in the human rights framework? Do human rights instruments adequately engage the unequal power relationships which result in gender inequality? How does one ensure that equal rights means equal outcomes? How do formal rights become substantive rights?

Gender challenges

Traditional perceptions were challenged in Botswana recently by the appointment of Chief Banika of the San as the first woman chief, and Chief Mosadi as the first Motswana woman paramount chief. Both are members of the House of Chiefs. This break with tradition reflects some of the changes visible in southern Africa. However, inequality of power and its concomitants of domination and exploitation continue in the region.

Alice Mogwe outlined 10 major areas of concern for gender equality and the strategies most commonly used to address them. Nearly all of them figure in the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development, and some are also addressed by other international and regional conventions or declarations.

- **Power and decision-making.** The SADC Declaration on Gender and Development set a target of at least 30 per cent for women's presence in political and decision-making structures by 2005. By October 2002, 17 per cent of parliamentarians in the SADC region were women, although there was considerable variation between countries, from 31.3 per cent in South Africa and 31.2 per cent in Mozambique to 8.3 per cent in Malawi and 5.9 per cent in Mauritius. The election systems of both South Africa and Mozambique are based on proportional representation, which enables a focus on the party and its policies rather than on personalities. Systems based on a single candidate winning a plurality of votes more easily reflect perceptions and biases of individual candidates. On average, 17.4 per cent of cabinet posts were held by women.

  Strategies to increase women's participation in decision-making include training in lobbying and assertiveness, political education, and domestic implementation of the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

- **Poverty and the economy.** The 'feminisation of poverty' has long been identified as an impediment to ensuring equal access to development. Women have limited access to land and credit, and in some countries laws prevent married women from entering into contracts without their husband's consent. A large proportion of those not in formal employment are women. Strategies to address women's poverty include economic empowerment of women and creation of development opportunities in rural areas.

- **Agriculture and food security.** Although women are the main food producers in the region, their access to land is limited and in countries such as Angola and Mozambique, they are at particular risk from landmines, which have rendered large tracts of land inaccessible. Current strategies to address these problems include awareness-raising about land law reform and an increase in access to resources and land ownership.

- **Women and the environment.** Women are directly and severely affected by inadequate supplies of food, clean water and firewood (the main source of cooking fuel, light and heat in rural areas). Strategies to address this include finding alternative water and energy sources.

- **Women, law and violence against women.** Culture, lack of awareness of their rights, and the negative attitudes of law enforcement officers deter women from acting to protect their rights. The socio-cultural context helps enforce the public/private divide: the 'public' is subject to formal law, whereas

the 'private' is dealt with by custom. Traditionally, within patrilineal societies, women were subject to male dominance. Men were the heads of households, controlled all property and their decision was final. The 'marital power' concept granted the husband control over all property in the marriage. This was the case in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in 2000. South Africa and Zimbabwe removed the marital power by statute. In Namibia, the Married Persons Equality Bill of 1996 removed the marital power, which made the husband the head of the household. It also enabled women who are married in community of property[9] to have equal access to loans and ownership of property. In terms of inheritance, widows are excluded from their husband's family if their husband dies. In Zambia, however, the right of a male relative to inherit from and succeed the deceased has a corresponding duty attached to take care of the widow and her children. Too often the rights discourse ignores the responsibilities that accompany rights.

A multi-pronged strategy is needed to tackle these issues effectively. Legal reform must be accompanied by appropriate implementation mechanisms, and political mobilisation is often needed before laws are amended.

- **Women with disabilities.** The SADC Declaration on Gender and Development is silent on this issue and the mainstream women's movement in southern Africa has rarely addressed it. Women with disabilities are more likely to be poor, to receive less food, to be illiterate, to be without family or community support, and are less likely to be believed when reporting abuse or harassment. Strategies to address these issues include employment quotas (in Namibia and South Africa); training women with disabilities in management skills; public awareness work; incorporation of the rights of people with disabilities in national constitutions; and the ratification and domestication of the UN Convention on People with Disabilities.

- **The girl child.** The girl child could be said to be the most endangered species in Africa. The sex of a child tends to determine the opportunities of the child. The girl child learns that she is somehow a lesser person than her brothers. She may be denied an education. The nurturing role for which girls are groomed means that increasingly, girls are taking care of their siblings if both parents die of AIDS-related illnesses. This has implications for employment. Cultural attitudes to sexuality make girls vulnerable to exploitation. Violence against girls includes rape and female genital mutilation (in Tanzania and Namibia). Strategies to address the issues include affirmative action on science education for girls, gender sensitivity training for teachers and awareness-raising in society at large.

- **Women and health.** The HIV and AIDS epidemic has had far-reaching consequences for women. Women are 41 per cent of the HIV positive population, yet 70 per cent of deaths from AIDS-related illnesses are of females and children. States see home-based care as the solution, which means in effect female-based care, often provided by grandmothers and young girls.

- **Women and education.** In most countries in the region, more boys than girls are enrolled in school, although the reverse is true for Botswana, Lesotho and Namibia. Many girls drop out of school early. Strategies to address gender inequity in education include gender awareness-raising for policy makers and technocrats.

- **The media and information.** The media play a significant role in reflecting and shaping public opinion. It has often been said that the voices and experiences of women are not heard or read about. When there is coverage of women, it is often insensitive to gender. Strategies to address this could include training women in information technology.

It appears that the establishment of the SADC Gender Unit has opened up a space in which the voices, perspectives and experiences of both civil society organisations and state actors may find a common forum. It is due largely to the efforts of NGOs that governments in the region have begun to address gender. This important step should be only the beginning of a journey to ensure that international, regional and national commitments are implemented.

There was a discussion about quota systems and whether they were discriminatory. The symposium participants felt that quotas could ensure representation in certain circumstances. A gender power analysis is needed of the region, as a basis for defining agendas and changing policies. Conventions are state instruments, but they can be useful tools for changing policies.

The post-colonial state

Speakers: Amin Kamete, Henning Melber

The nature of the liberation project turned out to be a switch from controlled change to changed control, according to Henning Melber. After colonialism different people were in power, but the old colonial structure remained. In its last days, the colonial state tried to retain control by changing the nature of rule and attitudes to development.

Lloyd Sachikonye pointed to the continuities of violence used by state leaders in the immediate post-colonial period. Subsequently, according to Henning Melber, the modernising 'nation building' project ground down under external inequality, economic restructuring and internal corruption, human rights abuses, and the determination to stay in power. The neocolonial state became a vehicle for competition for primary accumulation. Development is a competition for access, fuelled by and creating patronage, favours and corruption. In consequence, states lose legitimacy and credibility.

A new post-colonial political elite has emerged which employs selective narratives, memories of liberation wars, and the invention of history and tradition to justify its right to rule. The process can be traced to the commandist notions that operated during the days of the liberation struggle in exile. The elites have developed notions of inclusion or exclusion as key factors in shaping post-colonial identities, which they claim to be collective in the sense of 'national'. Early post-independence notions of reconciliation and slogans such as 'unity in diversity' have narrowed to 'we-they' or 'with us or against us'. The term 'national interest' has been appropriated and now means solely what the ruling elite decides it means.

Simultaneously, the boundaries between party and government have been blurred and replaced by a growing equation of party with government. Opposition or dissent is increasingly considered hostile and the dissenter is sometimes branded as an 'enemy of the people', in a mental framework stemming from colonialism. Autocratic rule and the subordination of the state to the party initiated a reward system of social and material favours in return for loyalty.

Liberation in the post-colonial era

Critical voices have emerged, including some former militants or supporters of the liberation struggle. The much-celebrated attainment of formal independence is no longer unreservedly equated with liberation, or with the creation of lasting democracy. A new debate deals with the post-colonial content of liberation. It questions the validity of the concept of solidarity based on a shared past, and calls for an end to the cultivation of 'heroic narratives'. It pays closer scrutiny to both the inherited and self-developed structural legacies that have restricted the possibilities for real political, cultural, social and economic alternatives in the post-colonial era. This process is necessarily conscious, but results from specific socialisation processes.

The relationship between power, discourse, and political institutions and practices helps to explain post-colonial politics. The conventional approach, which sees domination and resistance as an oppositional pair, is misleading. Resistance cannot be idealised as pure opposition to the order it opposes. Instead, it operates inside a structure of power that it both challenges and helps to sustain. Hence, the seizure of state power and control over the means of production do not secure a solution on their own, because a change of economic and political structures of domination and inequality requires a parallel and profound change of their nature and effects. This applies not only to the political process but also to the understanding of the dynamics of that process. The recognition that the model of liberation democracy as developed in Namibia and Zimbabwe is inherently elitist and potentially authoritarian is a significant step forward in the debate.

Nationalism in Zimbabwe

Amin Kamete applied these insights in his analysis of Zimbabwean nationalism, its changing nature as it came to serve the new post-colonial elite, and its attempt to define the identity and exclusion of others. After 1987, once the Zimbabwe African National Union – Popular Front (ZANU-PF) had dragged the Patriotic Front – Zimbabwe African People's Union (PF-ZAPU) into a forced marriage, it felt it had conquered the local political terrain. Until the crisis in the 1990s, it then had little use for nationalism and instead turned to the world stage to satisfy the leadership's thirst for international posturing and recognition. Urban areas, in the meantime, experienced economic decline, increased poverty and falling living standards. When the resulting anger and resentment exploded onto the national political scene, the ruling party scurried for cover under a reconstituted nationalism. Then rival interpretations of nationalism appeared.

According to the ruling party, people who did not fight in the liberation war had no moral right to speak out. In this sense, ZANU-PF returned to its old nationalism, when it alone was the party that had the best interest of the nation at heart. As journalist David Blair noted during the campaign in 2000 on the constitutional referendum, 'voting Yes was equated to patriotism and loyalty to Zimbabwe'.[10] It was during this campaign that the ruling party's strategy and pattern in subsequent political contests emerged. It was a complicated brand of propaganda, racism, oratory, intimidation and violence. Despite its complicated and multifaceted form, content and approach, three years on the new nationalism has failed to win back the disgruntled urban population. This is not least because people can see beyond the simple mantra that 'anyone who oppresses us is a puppet of imperialist powers' and that anything wrong (even drought) is 'the handiwork of our enemies'.

The nature of conflict

Speakers: Jacques Depelchin, Vasu Gounden, José Manuel Sebastião

Jacques Depelchin traced the history of globalisation to the Atlantic slave trade:

> If an African, born in Africa, kidnapped, in the 17th century, shackled and shipped to America, were to be alive today, s/he would be forgiven for wondering which globalisation is being talked about. Wasn't s/he the first looted resource in the setting up of what we witness today, accompanied by endemic conflicts (some, like Atlantic slavery, massacres in Namibia, the DRC, Burundi, Rwanda, on a genocidal level)?

This is the context for collective historical and moral responsibility in which globalisation began with slavery, and the suffering it caused is still there. Slavery touched people in the North and the South. We have a common past.

Depelchin went on to discuss the similarities between Haiti and the DRC. Colonial power never intended Haitian independence in 1804 and made every effort, by

a systematic application of punishment, to ensure that it would not be repeated. Haiti was prevented from being successful. In the United States, it took 100 years before black people could exercise their right to vote.

The DRC was born out of violence. As Frantz Fanon observed, if Africa is shaped like a gun, then the Congo is the trigger. General Eisenhower, in his campaign for the US presidency in 1952, remarked that who controlled the Congo controlled Africa.

War and peace in Angola

José Manuel Sebastião said the Angolan conflict should be understood in terms of four dimensions:

- the importance of the historical-social construction of the conflict
- periodisation of the conflict and examination of its critical moments
- the critical moment in 1998 when erosion of state legitimacy led to civil society initiatives for peace
- the sources of conflict, such as personalised power, non-accommodative and predatory elites, a culture where violence (including patriarchal violence) determined politics, and an absence of common ground or vision.

In 1998 the Angolan war-makers lost legitimacy as the public realisation grew that the government was fighting only to maintain its position of power, not to make life better for the people. The government had enough power to deal with the UNITA (National Union for Total Independence for Angola) rebel movement, but it lacked the will to do so. Only when it felt its legitimacy was threatened did it put 'public needs' further up its agenda. The peace process started when civil society members realised they had nothing to lose: they were being killed by the war or being killed by their struggle to change things. From the beginning of the 1990s, peace had been promoted mainly by the Catholic church. From 1998 Protestants, media and NGOs started to challenge the war-makers.

Even now that hostilities have ceased (except in Cabinda), many problems remain in moving from formal peace to social peace. The main problem is that people feel lost. They see no long term vision or perspective. A search for hope is needed to overcome the absence of a common vision: there is a need to re-imagine the community in Angola and bring reconciliation with truth. Such reconciliation at all levels of society would require something quite prophetic. But where would this come from? So far the only group to gain real benefit from the peace has been the private sector, not the common people. There is a big gap between the leadership and the population. Other major challenges are investment in the countryside, consolidation of the peace and the low-intensity war in the DRC.

In discussion it was observed that peace-making so far in the region has failed to address fundamental issues, including justice and redistribution. Who shapes the transformation process? Where are the experiences of using peace-making at community level? There is a need to re-imagine the community.

Conflict resolution

Vasu Gounden drew on the experience of the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) to outline a context for major problems in conflict resolution.

There is a need to establish good governance and to consolidate democratisation, but ACCORD's mediation work concerns mediation of interests, not ideas, to reach a political deal. Often this is because political parties are weak: they are based on interests, not values. HIV and AIDS, and the land crisis and food shortages, clearly accentuate conflict and its causes.

Religion and ethics

Speakers: Jonah Gokova, Lucy Steinitz

Jonah Gokova said there was no excuse for the church to support the status quo in southern Africa. Rather, there was a need to rediscover political theologies in the region. This process should be informed by the historic act of God, the solidarity with humanity of Jesus. Drawing on St Mark's gospel as a guide for radical thought, contact with the outcast is an essential element of Christian theology. There is a need to re-read the scriptures, uncover their original meanings and reveal their universal message of rejecting all forms of domination.

Church leaders, however, have stood by the status quo more often than not. The established church has been unable to confront domination in the region, any more than it opposed colonialism. Instead it played the role of pacifying the people. After all, churches are institutions run and managed by bishops. Religious movements, on the other hand, are part of the church but trying to express the meaning of faith in different ways. Radical action, where it occurred, was taken by individuals, not institutions.

In the apartheid era there was a good deal of critical radical thinking, influenced by liberation theology. The Kairos document of 1986 was a theological critique of the state ideology, arguing for clear defiance of apartheid laws. Similarly, the Zimbabwe Kairos document of 1998 dealt with domination and exclusion in the post-apartheid era.

A theology of emancipation

Today, people of faith must find ways to address globalisation, which is a process of domination and exclusion. Market forces know no values and are accountable to no one. Equally, the project of authoritarian nationalism in Zimbabwe compromises human dignity and is therefore a sin against people created in the image of God.

The answer is a theology of reconstruction and emancipation.

How will such a theology deal with HIV and AIDS, which are creating a nation of orphans and vulnerable children? What is the role of the church in this? A 15-year-old today has a 50 per cent chance of dying before her next birthday. Soon one in three children under 18

will be orphaned. Orphans will move from family to family never building attachments. As people of faith, we need to develop an understanding of how religious organisations – local and congregational – have responded to HIV and AIDS, orphans and vulnerable children, on the basis of wanting to help their neighbour in the belief that Jesus called them to do so. They are also aware that they may need this help themselves one day. Groups work through volunteers at congregational level. Early childhood development schemes with local congregations are best placed to identify those most in need at that level. Although the role of church in advocacy on HIV and AIDS is difficult and delicate, churches can set the agenda at grassroots level, especially in speaking out against discrimination against people living with AIDS. Religious organisations should increase their collaboration with each other, and funds should be channelled through them.

Civil society

Speaker: Phil ya Nangoloh

Namibian human rights activist Phil ya Nangoloh drew a distinction between *transitionist* states, which saw a non-violent shift from dictatorship to multiparty democracy, and *self-determinationist* states where the move from colonialism to independence came about partly through violence and bloodshed. The way civil society associations (CSAs) came into existence and operate in transitionist countries, such as Zambia and Malawi and, to a certain extent, in 'soft core' self-determinationist states such as Mozambique and South Africa, differs somewhat from the way CSAs came into existence and operate in 'hard core' self-determinationist states, such as Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

In transitionist states CSAs, such as trade unions, human rights organisations and ecumenical bodies, worked with opposition political parties as equal partners. In the self-determinationist countries, CSAs were part and parcel of armed opposition forces or liberation movements. The relationship was vertical, with the liberation movement assuming the leadership role.

Moreover, in transitionist states, movement from one-party rule to multiparty democracy was greatly influenced or even led by CSAs with little or no assistance from the international community. In self-determinationist countries, on the other hand, there has been a great deal of interaction characterised by financial, moral and material assistance from the international community.

Regardless of their field of competence, CSAs tend to operate at their best in a democratic environment. Hence they take the view that the common good is most effectively promoted and protected in a democratic society, where government is accountable to freely elected representatives of the people and operates under a sovereign constitution with a free and independent judiciary. The biggest threat to both democracy and CSA survival in the SADC region is the dominance of the executive power over the judiciary and the legislature. This dominance is evident in the powerful executive presidencies that diminish the powers of the legislature and the independence of the judiciary.

In countries run by former liberation movements, governments make little distinction between the critic or opponent and the enemy. In such countries there is wholesale demonisation or stigmatisation of both the political opposition and CSAs, who are often branded the 'enemy of Africa' or 'reactionary forces' and treated accordingly.

Absence of solidarity

In a multi-ethnic self-determinationist country with a single dominant party, where a single ethnic group outnumbers all the others put together and no other ethnic, racial, national, linguistic or religious grouping accounts for more than 10 per cent of the population, CSAs tend to be fragmented along ethnic or racial lines. This is the case in Namibia. Political parties are themselves also organised along ethnic, racial or regional lines. When the boundary between ethnicity and political support is blurred, there are few or no solidarity ties among CSAs.

The absence of solidarity enables dictatorial governments to divide and rule, weaken, or even destroy CSAs. When the government or the state is the largest employer and therefore the largest provider of welfare, it is difficult for CSAs to operate for two main reasons. First, fearing loss of their sole source of income and welfare, citizens are reluctant to support, or be seen to support, CSAs, which are often viewed as anti-government, subversive or even a threat to national security and political independence. This is especially the case in self-determinationist countries where former liberation movements have become governments. Second, as the largest employer, the state is also the largest source of business contracts for private companies. These companies are often unwilling or even afraid to support CSAs financially or materially, in particular to support those branded anti-government, lest they lose government contracts.

One of the most obvious characteristics of an intolerant and dictatorial regime is the manner in which it handles public criticism, and critical media reports in particular. When such a regime assumes control of the public media, it becomes difficult for CSAs to gain access to those media.

After self-determination was achieved, the balance between support for liberation movements that had become governments-cum-ruling parties, on the one hand, and institutional independence from them, on the other, remained a serious challenge for many CSAs in southern Africa. Clear instances of this can be seen in the political affiliation of, for example, trade union federations to ruling parties, such as the National Union of Namibian Workers to the South West Africa People's Organisation and the Congress of South African Trade Unions to the African National Congress. Further examples are the virtual demise of the United Democratic Front in South Africa and the serious problems faced by the Namibia National Students' Organisation.

Rights and health

Speaker: Michaela Clayton

As civil society activists, we must assert the right to the highest attainable standard of health, including the right to anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs). The relationship between poverty and HIV goes in two directions: poverty leads to vulnerability and exacerbates HIV conditions, and HIV leads to poverty.

In July 2002, 230,000 people of the six million in developing countries had access to ARVs, and half of those were in Brazil. Elsewhere these drugs are not available owing to cost, the international agreement on trade-related intellectual property rights, and lack of political will. ARVs are more expensive in developing countries than they are in Europe.

We must promote a human rights-based response to HIV and AIDS. To do so we must engage with the underlying social inequalities. We must address the vulnerabilities and the global constructs that increase vulnerability, and deal with trade and debt relief. We need to make treatment and training accessible. Uganda's success shows that the epidemic reaches a plateau when there is political will in the state leadership

Next steps

A basic question came from an NGO representative: what is the next step? In other words, how to translate academic theories into the community and its practices? Who shapes the transformation process? Where is the relevant experience? What needs to happen? What values would underpin all this?

Debates and ideas

In the process of moving from a focus on the state to a focus on the people – and *all* people, not only males – there is a need to change definitions of development and emancipation. States have allowed the loss of the economic, social and political gains of independence. They have become less accountable and are subject to the ideology of the marketplace. External and internal violence continues. As promoters of emancipatory politics in southern Africa, we need to reassert the primacy of politics and the citizen in our vision and values.

Should the region be considered as a region, or as a set of states trying to control the region? There is a need to reaffirm the diversities and pluralities in the region. What is common to southern Africa? Who has, or can take, the initiative? How are we to engage with the peoples of the region? Whose politics are we actually talking about, and whose security? Could we be on the brink of a paradigm shift, facing and overcoming the deficits present at independence in terms of values, political practice and democracy? Are we as civil society activists the ones to bring the poor back into the political arena or will they seize the initiative themselves?

One important question was whether to work with governments in the region. Would our engagement give governments legitimacy? Even if it does not, we need to define standards of accountability for any discussions – although many governments in the region are extremely thin-skinned and unwilling to engage with civil society. At least one contributor believed that civil society should attempt to engage ruling parties in southern Africa. First they were 'not as strong as we think' and second, the younger members were often alienated and looking for new directions. But as José Manuel Sebastião said, how do we break the cycle of liberators (including some religious leaders) becoming authoritarians like the colonialists?

Regional solidarity

There was an obvious need for greater regional solidarity in actions, strategies and mechanisms. What kind of work and research would this require? We need to emphasise both South-South and North-South dialogue on issues affecting the region. Opportunities for such activity and commitment were missed in relation to Angola and the DRC, the third term debate in Zambia, the fourth term debate in Namibia and, of course, in Zimbabwe.

The crisis in Zimbabwe is not only a national crisis, but a regional one, so the people in the region have a role to play. What is that active role? Related to this is the need to engage seriously and soberly with the land issue, with agrarian reform and transformation. Civil society has yet to develop real policies on these.

Civil society activists should not forget the role of ideas and the importance of history and academic work. The broad and long term framework provided by Jacques Depelchin takes history and culture seriously and draws the links from late 18th century Haiti to the present-day DRC. In addition, there has been an assumption that Christianity is the only religion in the region. Firoze Manji pointed out that scholars and activists should also seek to engage with Islam. In many cases Islamic activists were politically progressive, in that they were anti-imperialist, but socially regressive. Our failure to engage that movement left the field open to the right-wing 'mullahs'.

One major debate was whether 'development' can ever be emancipatory given that, in one powerfully expressed view, it was about social control, in particular by the North over the South (as a coincidence of ideologies, not a conspiracy). Janah Ncube offered an alternative perspective: development has the potential to deliver, but development models, structures and mechanisms should have inclusiveness built in, and this requires political will. This would affect our view of initiatives such as NEPAD. It would also break the stale polarity of the discourse on globalisation, which the left sees as an alien imposition and the right as inevitable. Participants spoke of the need for a different discourse stressing genuine self-determination.

Over the past five years the discourse and redefinition of security by states and Northern powers has become entrenched. The discussion has gone beyond national and international security, helping certain powerful NGOs to position themselves within the new security frameworks. Indeed, because of 11 September 2001, civil society itself has become a battleground. How do we rethink security, or the 'demilitarisation of politics' in Jacques Depelchin's words, given that the recent war in the DRC was the 11th since independence? A break is needed from the old positivist discourses in which new elites used the threat of foreign domination as a security blanket and labelled internal criticism as subversion. We need to understand how elites use the notion of security as a means of control and to avoid debate.

Civil society activists may have a good understanding

of conflicts, and some of the dynamics of conflict, but we need a sense of how to respond. What can and should be done? How far are SADC mechanisms useful and accessible for civil society? The same goes for non-state interventions and traditional methods of conflict resolution. What potential exists for them to play a role? One threat to stability in southern Africa raised by Vasu Gounden is the increasing 'redistribution' of wealth towards (white) South African capital and the possible backlash.

Further work

The questions raised were about power, language, redefinitions and practical matters.

- **Gender.** There is a need to investigate notions of masculinity and manhood in southern Africa. Practical questions were raised here. What do females suffer from, and why? What kind of males are there in southern Africa? What are the patriarchal institutions and how are they (re)produced?

- **NEPAD.** Participants felt that analysis was paralysed. Future discussion should include study of the NEPAD documents and what lessons can be learnt from the experience of trying to promote or introduce the initiative. How far does it fit into the overall framework of governments becoming less accountable to their citizens, while the ideology of the marketplace increasingly intervenes in day to day lives? Analysis of NEPAD needs to make gender questions central, given that who gets access to what is determined by violence. Women are among those paying the highest price in a region dominated by the view that neoliberal economics is the only way forward.

- **Leadership.** Another matter for investigation is the 'serious crisis of leadership', including that of civil society. How far are *we* responsible for the loss of the gains of independence? As members of civil society, we 'have to own up to our past in our problems' to gain a clear understanding of nationalism and its current purposes (and indeed of racism and anti-racism). Where do we locate ourselves? Who are we, the actors: part of the solution or part of the problem?

- **Alternatives.** This is the big question that must be addressed in future discussions. How does one reconstruct reality with a language that makes sense in the region, remembering that popular movements did not arise because of nationalists, but because of demands for rights? Lloyd Sachikonye stressed the need to remember, too, that this is an agrarian-based region but ruling cultures, and perhaps opposition cultures too, are run by the urban, educated and literate. What kind of pluralism does this demand? What kind of new emancipatory politics are we ready to promote? Until now, the prize for right and left alike has been the capture of 'the state'. What do we want the world to look like, what values underpin this vision and whom do we want to engage? How do we make the civil society project regional and ensure inclusivity? We need to consider how to harmonise different views within the region. One big question that emerged but was never properly addressed was how to merge anti-war and anti-globalisation cultures. What would this mean in southern Africa?

- **Security.** Can the concept of security exist outside the state? Is the state when it acts in the interest of security automatically also generating insecurity?

- **Terminology.** It is necessary to contest the meanings of such terms as development, democracy and conflict resolution as used by states. Conflict resolution should consider ideas, rather than seeking to reconcile the interests of individuals and nations, including (in Vasu Gounden's words) 'the interests of crooks'. If not, the notion of democracy becomes devalued.

- **Study.** In the academic sphere there is a need to recognise the primacy of politics and history: political ecology and social history. This includes discussion of methodologies as well as content.

- **Refugees.** One matter the symposium left untouched was refugees. It is important to integrate refugee issues into the discussion, not least, as Jacques Depelchin said, because in locating regional identity, xenophobia must be addressed. There are of course profound gender questions here on such matters as where males and females wish to go and the kind of support available.

- **DRC.** Understanding is needed of how the DRC, ignored by the rest of southern Africa, fits into the picture. The future of southern African depends on water, and probably on water from the Congo. Natural resources and their relationship to the other issues related to emancipatory politics need more serious investigation.

Action and solidarity

Autonomous initiatives are vital. The organisers welcome information on any such initiatives to feed into continuing discussions. The purpose is not necessarily to start new networks, but to inform those interested about activities and plans.

The initiatives called for include:

- **Academic liaison.** Discussions are needed on links between certain Southern and Northern institutions. Suggestions included day schools on the region, the establishment of a southern African fellowship to connect theory to practice, and re-establishing the idea of southern Africa studies.

- **Angola and comparative peace work.**

- **Civil society.**

- **Debt cancellation.**

- **DRC.** There is a need to understand how peace and reconciliation processes worked elsewhere.

- **Faith based organisations and African indigenous groups.**

- **Land and agrarian reform, and farmworkers.**

- **Patriarchy.** A regional network was proposed, to focus on the need to shift from the patriarchal model of government to an inclusive model. More female participation and a female focus are needed in politics and decision-making.

- **Security problem campaign.**

- **Zimbabwe as a regional issue.** There is a need to liaise with the independent voices inside Zimbabwe.

A way forward?

An agenda for social emancipation

- Political independence did not bring emancipation: that agenda faces us. The social, economic and political gains of independence are rapidly being lost.
- There is a need to engage citizens in setting a vision, values and an action programme based on their priorities, including transparency.
- Alliances are needed between those who have a vested material interest in social emancipation for the majority.
- A global movement is needed to consider the rights of children.
- Children's rights should be a central part of emancipation, to confront the political and economic reasons why children are recruited as soldiers.
- The NEPAD document should be used to hold governments to account and position civil society.
- A programme is needed to tackle land issues (especially land reform) and the resolution of inequities.
- It must be recognised that 'development' has produced conflict at several levels: war, instability, 'low grade' persistent violence (especially against women).
- Conditions for debt cancellation should be placed by citizens not donors.
- There is a need for resolution of the bifurcated state, with citizenship based on residence. Rural society should be brought into civil society.
- A challenge is, how to link a cosmopolitan future to emancipation? Where is the next language for us as civil society members to empower ourselves, as was previously attempted within Marxism? One step forward would be for the intelligentsia to listen.
- NEPAD offers entry points for advocacy.
- Debt cancellation should shift from its focus on poverty reduction.
- Trade and food security need to be analysed and understood at regional level.
- The Millennium Development Goals must be tackled from the bottom up. This is the key to understanding that they cannot work in a neoliberal framework.

Notes

[1] The southern Africa region consists of: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

[2] This image is not that of a victim: voluntary counselling and testing is intended as an empowering process and is geared to providing practical support. Rather, the use of the image aims to ensure that 'specialists' in development, human rights, and so on, speak to – and more importantly listen to – the concerns of the poor and marginalised.

[3] See Vale, P (2004) *Whatever happened to the post-apartheid moment? – Past hopes and possible futures for southern Africa*, CIIR, London.

[4] Six of the 42 heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) in the World Bank and International Monetary Fund HIPC Initiative are in southern Africa: Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia.

[5] Mamdani, M (1996) *Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism*, James Currey, London.

[6] Schatan, J (1987) *World debt: Who is to pay?* Zed Books, London.

[7] United Nations Development Programme (2001) *Human development report 2001: Making new technologies work for human development*, UNDP, Oxford.

[8] *Seeking ways out of the impasse on land reform in southern Africa: Notes from an informal think tank meeting*, Pretoria, South Africa, 1-2 March 2003, posted on the Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa website at: www.hsrc.ac.za/research/npa/IRRD/news/200303FinalimpasseLand.pdf (accessed March 2004).

[9] Where the husband and wife jointly own their combined assets and property.

[10] Blair, D (2002) *Degrees in violence: Robert Mugabe and the struggle for power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, New York.

List of papers

Whatever happened to post-apartheid? Ideas from his concept paper, Peter Vale, Nelson Mandela Professor of Politics, Rhodes University, South Africa.

Regional overview of conflict, peace and reconstruction, Vasu Gounden, Director, African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, Durban.

Conflict, peace and reconstruction: Perspectives from the church and civil society in Angola, Friar José Manuel Sebastião, Mosaiko Cultural Centre, Angola.

Conflict, resources and reconstruction: Perspectives from the DRC, Jacques Depelchin, Executuve Director, Ota Benga International Alliance for Peace in Congo.

Human rights, gender and power: A regional overview, Alice Mogwe, Director, Ditshwanelo, Botswana.

Women of the region: Power, patriarchy and conflict, Janah Ncube, Women in Politics Support Unit, Zimbabwe.

Rediscovering political theologies in the region, Jonah Gokova, Methodist Church of Zimbabwe and Ecumenical Support Services.

The social and economic role of the church in the region, Lucy Steinitz, National Coordinator, Catholic Aids Action, Namibia.

Land, reform and farm workers' rights, Lloyd Sachikonye, Professor at the Institute for Development Studies, University of Zimbabwe.

Workers in the region, Herbert Jauch, Director, Labour Resource and Research Institute, Namibia.

NGOs: Part of the problem or part of the solution? Firoze Manji, Director of Fahamu and Editor of *Pambazuka News*.

NEPAD in the context of globalisation, Henning Melber, Research Director, Nordic Africa Institute.

NEPAD: Pan-African idealism and/or post structural adjustment neoliberalism? Neville Gabriel, Justice and Peace Commission, Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, Pretoria.

SADC and its restructuring, Chris Landsberg, Centre for Policy Studies, Johannesburg.

Liberation movements as governments, Henning Melber, Nordic Africa Institute.

Politics of liberation and legitimisation of state authoritarianism in southern Africa: The case of Zimbabwe, Amin Kamete, Nordic Africa Institute.

Whence civil society? Phil ya Nangoloh, Director, Namibian Society for Human Rights.

HIV/AIDS and conflict: The implications for development and regional integration, Michaela Clayton, Coordinator of the AIDS Law Unit, Legal Assistance Centre, Windhoek.

Note: some of the symposium papers and a list of participants are posted on the CIIR website, www.ciir.org.

Futures for southern Africa

The end of apartheid appeared to promise peace and prosperity for the future of southern Africa – yet 10 years on, the region faces growing problems and challenges, from the HIV and AIDS pandemic to the political, social and economic crisis in Zimbabwe.

In September 2003, a symposium was held in Windhoek, Namibia, to consider the issues facing the region, and to think about possible futures. The symposium brought together speakers and participants with a range of expertise and perspectives on the region – and a common passion for its future. This report provides an overview of their thinking about southern Africa, and their ideas for the way forward for this still troubled region.

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