



Democratic Consolidation in Search of Peace: A Tempered Assessment of the Mozambican Post-War Experience

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Abstract

This article considers Mozambique's contemporary peace and security environment through a treatment of the country's developmental trajectory, in pursuit of democratic consolidation, since the signing of the Rome General Peace Accords in October 1992. Through an examination of the country's early negotiation processes and compromises, in order to secure peace, as well as the political and economic dispensation which followed as a result, it is argued that many current challenges concerning security and stability find meaning and content in the unique set of external and internal factors that informed its nascent democratic transition. In so doing, the paper considers, inter alia, the development of divergent political cultures between the country's two largest political parties, the nature of its civil society, and a number of external, international, factors which give shape to the pillars upon which peace currently rests in Mozambique. The rising potential for longer-term instability in the country is then illustrated, whilst dually underscoring what aspects of the country's post-war experience provide reason for optimism, with particular regard to the country's 2014 general elections.

Introduction

Since the signing of the Rome General Peace Accords on the 4th of October 1992, Mozambique has featured as one of the most prominent examples often cited by a host of international actors as a definitive 'success story' in terms of the country's transition out of a protracted period of civil strife¹ and toward a sustainable and robust peace. For just over two decades, the country has well rid itself of the spectre of its past by actively pursuing widespread democratic consolidation, whilst achieving sustained economic growth, considerable levels of poverty reduction and a growing international profile based on the country's renewed geo-strategic significance (particularly in terms of transnational energy interests). While there have been significant

¹ Note that conflict in this context refers to both the civil war that ensued on the eve of the country's independence as well as the armed struggle that directly preceded it.

challenges that the country has had to grapple with throughout its transition, the developments during the period immediately prior- and post- the 2014 general elections², do however, provide considerable reason to pause and reexamine some of the fundamental dimensions of the Mozambican post-war experience that has come to define the overarching political economy of peace throughout the country. This article thus seeks to re-examine and offer a critical appraisal of the foundations of peace in Mozambique in light of the aforementioned period. It also seeks to provide a set of recommendations that aim to allow for a more tempered understanding of the many dimensions upon which this peace has come to rest.

A democratic compromise: ending the war

One of the most critical junctures in Mozambique's recent history, and the basis for reexamination of the pillars of peace in the country, has been the annulment of the Rome General Peace Accords (hereafter referred to as the general peace accords - GPA) that ended the country's 16-year long civil strife between the ruling Mozambique Liberation Front (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* or *Frelimo*) and the Mozambican National Resistance (*Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* or *Renamo*) in October 2013. The declaration, made by Renamo, that led to this followed a government crackdown on the Satunjira base camp of Renamo, in response to numerous military attacks against the government, primarily concentrated in the central regions of the Sofala province (Dzinesa 2014). Consequently, Renamo leader, Afonso Dhlakama, removed himself from the public sphere and went into hiding for the greater part of an ensuing low-level insurgency. Nearly two years after the initial skirmishes that ultimately led to the annulment of the GPA, a new peace deal was reached between the government and Renamo on the 25th of August 2014 (BBC News 2014).

Whilst the initial skirmishes, and subsequent - relatively short-lived - insurgency, did not escalate to considerable levels of violence comparable to the country's pre-1992 situation, this recent phase of armed contestation belies a far more significant indication of the country's ability to manage and ensure security and stability, as well as a gauge of its relative level of democratic consolidation since 1992. Indeed, based on the development path of the country in the post-war period, democratic consolidation - in the broadest sense of the concept - is, arguably, one of the greatest variables upon which the sustainability of the country's peace is dependent.

With reference to former United Nations (UN) Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali's seminal Report "An Agenda for Democratization", the dominant theory and global discourse on democracy in the period surrounding Mozambique's transition was firmly based on a growing international acknowledgment that "a culture of democracy is fundamentally a culture of peace" (Boutros-Ghali 1996: 6). In recognition of the wave of democratisation that followed in the wake

² At the time of writing the article, the opposition Renamo Party had pronounced its decision not to participate in the country's parliamentary processes due to its rejection of the outcomes of the elections which they allege were fraudulent. In spite of this threat, and despite Renamo having already boycotted the Provincial government level processes to swear-in new members, the ruling Frelimo party had indicated that government business would continue as planned.

of the Cold War, Boutros-Ghali confidently affirmed the view that democracy serves as an essential underpinning of the preservation of peace and security in the international system, as well as an arguable guarantor of basic human rights and justice, and should thus be considered as a necessary prerequisite for the realisation of any meaningful economic and social development (Ibid: 5). With particular regard to peace and security, democratic institutions and processes were further argued as inherently beneficial in the way in which they channeled competing interests into arenas of discourse and debate that allowed for compromise, such that outcomes could be regarded as legitimate and thus respected by all disputants. Moreover, the regular conduct of elections based on universal suffrage was underscored as a particularly effective means of ensuring accountability and transparency, insofar that this leads to an evolution of the social contract between the elected and the citizenry - upon which any robust peace could be built (Ibid: 5-6). What followed, in essence, was an outline of an emergent global consensus that placed considerable hope in the transformative dimensions of democracy as a panacea to the pent-up ills of the Cold War period, which had, *inter alia*, contributed to what were then perceived to be totalitarian states.

From peace and security to economic and social development, democracy - at the time - was packaged and sold as the antithesis to the full gamut of challenges that confronted transitional and post-conflict states. Of particular interest, however, was the emerging consensus' initial rider that definitions of democracy remained, largely open to debate, and that, at a normative level, there was no one model of democratisation or democracy that is suitable to all societies (Ibid: 1). What had therefore emerged were the contours of a loaded conceptual roadmap to serve as the basis for all transitional and post-conflict states, and with significant provisions made for this to be infused with case-specific peculiarities and considerations.

Mozambique's democratisation must therefore be understood within this context, and by further remaining cognisant that this process was not initiated through a long, purposeful struggle for the underlying core tenets of the concept, but rather as a necessary political compromise that sought to ensure a sustainable peace following a protracted armed conflict. Indeed, it is necessary - in any contemporary understanding of the country's political development - to remain critically aware that prior to the negotiations that led to the GPA, neither Frelimo nor Renamo were fighting for the establishment of a representative democracy. In essence, democratic consolidation only began - in earnest - upon the signing of the 1992 general peace accords, prior to which virtually no democratic or pluralist tradition had existed in the country at all (AfriMap 2009: 68). It must be underscored, however, that the armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism was framed by Frelimo as a necessary struggle to advance certain universal principles, such as self-determination - which were inherently the basic ingredients of a strong and functioning democracy.

Mozambican democratic consolidation is therefore an overriding variable in the determination of the country's general peace and security climate, and is one which is intimately intertwined with the sustainability of its development since 1992. The annulment of the country's general peace accords in October 2013 is thus an important juncture in the country's recent

history in which to reexamine the foundations of peace in the country, by specifically considering the path of democratic consolidation since the early 1990s.

A cursory observation - based solely on the dynamics of the most recent instability - of the country's political and security environment could present a certain view that emphasises the increasing dominance of the ruling Frelimo party, and the detrimental effect that this has on strengthening democracy and a culture of pluralism. Based on this, it could be further argued that democratic consolidation in Mozambique has become synonymous with the consolidation of the ruling party in terms of its enhanced internal democratic practices and the consolidation of its power, more broadly, in parallel with that of the state. Moreover, it could be further argued that a lack of disassociation between party and state apparatuses has led to an increasingly apparent marginalisation of other political actors - most notably, Renamo - and that the country's recent return to armed political contestation is but one manifestation of such underlying concerns, surrounding the country's often overlooked democratic malaise. Proponents of such a line of reasoning would, however, be confronted with an alternative view that emphasises the transformative role played by the ruling party in remaining responsive to the country's most pressing needs, in terms of economic growth and development and the maintenance of peace and security; in contrast to the arguably belligerent practices of the leading opposition, in their failure to effectively 'step up to the plate' and play a constructive role in the country's democratisation³.

In light of the country's 2014 general elections, the issues raised by both arguments become all the more critical in seeking to ensure that the considerable progress made since 1992 does not unravel, and that a robust peace can be maintained - and improved upon - by better understanding the key local conditions and peculiarities that have come to shape its democratisation process. To this effect, it is important to consider the particular nature of the post-1992 democratic project in Mozambique by remaining cognisant of the unique set of circumstances that initially informed the contours of this process and sent the country down relatively unknown territory. Through such an exercise, the pillars upon which peace has come to rest in the country may be better understood and examined in relation to recent events which sharply call into question many of the major assumptions and observations made over the years with regard to the country's general level of progress on a range of political, social and economic indicators and benchmarks.

Frelimo, Renamo and the international community: the early years

A necessary starting to point, in gauging the state of Mozambican democracy today, refers to the unique set of circumstances that ushered in the country's independence. Being one of the last

³ In this regard, it could also be argued that the key dividing line between these two main political formations in Mozambique is also the fact that Frelimo has, among other things, been able to transform itself into an effective political party operating in a democratic-post-war situation. This being symbolized, for instance, by the party having had different individuals elected to lead the party as compared to Renamo which is to date, still being led by one and the same leadership. This, on its own, may be understood as something which undermines the 'democratic credentials' of Renamo.

states on the continent to achieve independence, following staunch Portuguese resistance in the abandonment of its colonial policies, the country's leading liberation movement - Frelimo - was one of the only organisations able to survive and remain active after years of armed resistance. Following Portugal's own bout of domestic instability in the mid-1970s, Frelimo was able to effectively capitalise on the diminishing legitimacy of Portuguese rule as well as the subsequent uncertainty that followed amongst the ranks of its bureaucrats and military structures within Mozambique (Ibid: 23-25).

Toward the end of the liberation struggle, Frelimo was thus seen as the "natural representative of Mozambicans in the transition to an independent... [country, and was thus]... supported by an important swathe of the international community" (Ibid: 23). Ultimately, the negotiated independence of Mozambique - following a decade's long war of liberation - resulted in the establishment of a transitional government on the 20th of June 1975, with Frelimo solely at the helm of the country (Ibid: 24). Five days later, the country's first constitution was promulgated, and with it the effective basis for a single-party state.

On the other hand, the country's largest opposition group, Renamo, lacked the historical legitimacy and cohesion enjoyed by Frelimo. This was mainly the case because Renamo had been formed through the funding and scheming of the country's unsettled minority-ruled neighbours, namely the then Rhodesian government and subsequently the apartheid South African state (LeFanu 2012: 221). Renamo nonetheless managed to overtime develop a considerable following primarily amongst sections of the population of Mozambique who disagreed with the policy prescriptions of Frelimo as well as its ideological, Marxist-Leninist, underpinnings (AfriMap 2009: 24-25). Through tactics that often involved coercion and the distribution of benefits, Renamo gradually expanded its hold on power over the country's northern and central regions (LeFanu 2012: 221-222). Subsequently, the Mozambican state under the control of Frelimo weakened to the point that the prevailing political, economic and security environment could neither be sustained nor salvaged. Coupled with significant natural disasters, ineffectual economic policies and the constant interference of, and destructive military actions by the then apartheid South African government, Frelimo and Renamo were ultimately driven to the negotiating table to seek a new political outcome that both sides could agree to and lay down their arms.

What transpired, through considerable intervention by a plethora of intergovernmental and non-governmental actors, was the unveiling of a new constitution that welcomed the rules of a liberal multi-party democratic system of governance, a revised and restructured liberal economic system, charted-out under the aegis of the international financial institutions, and - ultimately - agreement on the various clauses and components of what is now referred to as the general peace accords.

The immediate post-war period, with its emphasis on national reconciliation, further received extensive support from the international community, with the UN playing a central role vis-à-vis the maintenance and building of peace across the country, specifically in terms of the disarmament and demobilisation of combatants, and supporting the first electoral process

through ample funding (AfriMap 2009: 17). Consequently, Renamo was able to consolidate itself into a legitimate political party that was able to contest the elections, and the country was able to enjoy a relatively peaceful outcome with the majority of former combatants now demobilised.

The present challenges of old

Based on this formative democratic experience, it is unsurprising that many of the country's present challenges can be understood in terms of the national fault lines, defining features and seeds of discontent which were sowed during the early 1990s. Firstly, the Mozambican citizenry had been fractured, for many years, along the lines of the two leading political formations, namely Frelimo and Renamo. Whereas the former had established itself during a long and hard-won liberation struggle, and had managed to achieve a significant degree of internal, structural, cohesion, the latter had to quickly make a structural transition from an armed group to a legitimate political party in a relatively short space of time. Whereas Frelimo had managed to consolidate itself as a political entity in the post-independence one-party state, Renamo maintained its military-based hierarchical internal structure and had to consolidate itself independently of the state.

In this regard, and in the context of the overall foci of the paper, an argument could be proffered that Renamo's failure to transform itself into a political party organisation and introduce a culture of internal party democracy is what has contributed to the party's diminishing influence in the country's political life post-1992. For example, unlike Frelimo, one and the same leadership remains at the helm of the organisation, and this could very well mean that a democratic culture within this formation is yet to take root. It must therefore be admitted that perhaps one of the post-1992 programmes that could have been initiated, in support of the nascent democracy in Mozambique would have been to work towards contributing to the transformation of the main political entities, such as Renamo into a political formation able to play its part in a post-war society. In the same vein, an argument could be made that were such programmes or efforts initiated, some of the pitfalls of the latter day democratic project in Mozambique - with reference to what appears to be a trend within Renamo - namely the threat of boycotting government processes due to dissatisfaction with electoral outcomes, could have been avoided. As a political entity in a post-war democratic state, its tactical approach could have been to remain engaged in parliamentary processes, especially considering that the party enjoyed increased electoral support in October 2014. The tendency, however, to adopt what could be seen as obstructionist politics, could very well be a reflection of a deficit in terms of building a broad democratic culture within some of the party's political formations.

Moreover, in the post-independence period, and prior to the general peace accords, Frelimo was able to consolidate its power in parallel with that of the state. *Internal* democratic practices thus became more greatly entrenched within the party, and a notable margin of inter-linkage with state institutions, mechanisms and organs were developed independently of any meaningful opposition. What opposition and dissidence did exist, however, was largely dismissed and swept under the structural umbrella of Renamo. Without the consolidation, let alone recognition of the

value, of multi-partyism - specifically in terms of consensus-building, Renamo naturally provided a necessary alternative forum for the expression of ideas and values that questioned and challenged the dominant socialist state doctrine of the time (Ibid: 100). Within such a context, devoid of any meaningful platform for open debate and criticism of policies and procedures, contestation and opposition naturally came to be associated with notions surrounding legitimacy and illegitimacy. In essence, the seeds of exclusion had begun to bear fruit, where disagreeable views were dismissed to the periphery of the one-party state, and where such views naturally tended to coalesce around any significant opposition structure.

Consequently, fragmentation of the country's citizenry formed squarely amongst these lines, which were largely identified in terms of region, as opposed to any other key distinguishing characteristic such as ethnicity, religion or even linguistic differences. The implications of the subsequent post-1992 polarisation primarily entailed accounting for the challenges that emanated from the need to enmesh the interests and aspirations of the country's citizenry, across party lines, through the depoliticisation of state institutions, promoting the independence of these institutions and creating the necessary platforms for legitimate contestations to take place. As noted, however, in a review by Afrimap in 2006, despite the country's political reforms throughout the 1990s, wherein Frelimo sought to adapt its organisational structure toward a greater distinction between its own structures and the state, "the party still benefits... from its close ties with state bodies, and the fact that it has never left power nationally" (Ibid: 100). Consequently, the rift between supporters of either side remains significantly informed by the lingering fragmentation of the state - between the effective camps of either political party.

Compounding this issue, is the fact that in recent years, Frelimo has managed to considerably expand upon its domination of the political space in the country, largely to the detriment of Renamo which has struggled to adapt its historical organisational culture and structure to the demands of the post-1992 political dispensation. Frelimo, has, however, also managed to better consolidate its power with specific regard to the fact that it is the only party that is able to draw upon substantial resources, through party contributions, from its members (Ibid: 111). Additionally, given the questionable degree of inter-linkage between party and state organs, it is the sole entity with significant access to private and international investors, dually through the power of the state in granting licences, subsidies and credit, and the fact that international actors remain cognisant of the ruling party's influence on the success or failure of their investments (Ibid: 111).

Other, smaller, political entities do exist and have previously contested in the country's national elections. These parties, however, barring the Movement for Democratic Change (MDM)⁴ which has performed surprisingly well at the local level in recent years, are largely seen as opportunistic, unstable in their organisation and mobilisation, and have, at best, a marginal influence on the politics of the country. A key indictment of this argument is the considerable

⁴ It is important to note that the MDM formed as a factional offshoot of Renamo, and its breakaway has contributed, arguably, to the further weakening of the latter.

weakness of the country's parliament, and the ineffectual actions of individual parliamentarians - let alone extra-parliamentary entities and their leaders, vis-à-vis executive structures (Ibid: 10). Thus, the inherent weaknesses of the country's opposition coupled with arguably hegemonic and growing political character of the leading party has, in many ways, build upon the fault-lines of the state's initial fragmentation; whereby voices of dissent and opposition have generally found a lack of sufficient legitimate space for expression - and have thus strayed to the periphery.

The second key consideration, based upon the initial conditions of the country's democratisation process, is the significant degree of international interest that the country has garnered since the general peace accords. In light of the broad, macro-level, dynamics at play in the international system during the early 1990s, it is unsurprising - at a normative level, at least - to argue that Mozambique provided an early litmus test for the effectiveness, sustainability and practicability of the of dominant ideas surrounding liberal political and economic transformation. As the international financial institutions attended to the structural adjustment of the country's economy, a multi-party democracy was presented, by a host of international actors as the panacea to the country's ongoing civil conflict. Developments and progress in the country since then have thus enthusiastically been interpreted by those initial international stakeholders as a key success story that, with the aid of hindsight, dually validates and champions the liberal political-economic models then employed to bring about an end to the country's conflict, and usher in a new era of sustained peace, economic growth and development.

The centrepiece of such observations and assessments is the fact that all successive general and local elections conducted since have indeed been largely devoid of any significant violence and relapse into conflict along the lines of the country's civil war. Moreover, the recent 2014 electoral processes, despite certain criticisms and challenges to the legitimacy of the processes, have been concluded by a host of international observers to have largely been peaceful, free and fair (Mashabane 2014: 5-6). Secondly, the country has enjoyed tremendous economic growth (in terms of its gross domestic product) over the last decade, whilst achieving considerable levels of poverty reduction. While developmental challenges are still significant, the country has enjoyed a sustained positive economic, and - to a lesser degree - political outlook for a period of time that does indeed warrant praise. Deeper political and economic transformation, with regard to the expansion of civil liberties, the safeguarding of fundamental rights, and a growing civil society, while more difficult to qualitatively assess, have a more mixed record, but, overall can be said to have made positive strides in the post-GPA period.

While the government has undoubtedly played a central and critical role in this regard, the lingering, and arguably exaggerated, international presence in the country - which has dually played a key role in facilitating development in the post-GPA period - is concerning for a number of reasons. The most pressing of these refers to the considerable aid-dependency of the state, with foreign grants and loans constantly featuring as one the greatest sources of government revenue (AfriMap 2009: 17). Given the fact that the country's formative democratic experience, and nascent democratic structures, were fundamentally informed by a wide array of international actors, the country's political-economy has since developed along the lines of

extended foreign grants, credit and investment mechanisms which are, in many instances, tied to specific quid pro quo understandings. Worryingly, the considerable proportion of state revenues stemming from international and private actors, coupled with the substantial links between the state and ruling party, have served to undermine the development of a taxable middle class, and thus the necessary social contract of the state with regard to transparency and accountability.

Apart from the magnitude of foreign development aid - and investment - as a proportion of the general state budget, the emergent complexity surrounding the multiplicity of donors in the country is further cause for concern in terms of transparency, coordination and the duplication of efforts. As these processes have become more entrenched and standardised over time, the social contract between the government and the citizenry becomes increasingly strained due to the nodes of foreign power and channels of influence and accountability that service such international interests. As articulated in the 'Dead Aid' hypothesis, Dambisa Moyo, refers precisely to this effective hollowing-out of the necessary social contract between governments and the governed, by specifically highlighting the contentious relationship between development aid, rent-seeking and corruption - and the overall effects of this upon long-term economic development and - to a lesser extent - political stability (Moyo 2010). Importantly, Moyo speaks directly to the fact that in scenarios whereby foreign aid receipts generally supplant the position normally reserved for a sizeable local tax base, the interests of policy-makers and bureaucrats naturally tend, over time, to support and prioritise the former to the detriment of the latter (Moyo 2010: 66). This scenario, even if some could argue is unintended, lends itself in a situation where the very same democratic principles contained in the UN Report to which the article has referred, is subverted.

Consequently, the necessary checks and balances on the exercise of state power by the citizenry do not become sufficiently developed in terms of the independence and autonomy of state institutions and civil society organisations, which is - in fact - a defining feature of the post-GPA Mozambican state. Despite substantial efforts on the part of the government to define and support the role of civil society in the country, many such organisations focus primarily on issues surrounding service delivery and are themselves highly dependent on foreign assistance for funding their operations (AfriMap 2009: 66-67).

Apart from challenges concerning coordination, lack of human and financial resources, and the subsequently limited social impact of certain programmes, of key concern is the fact that very few civil society organizations serve as effective public pressure groups to specifically monitor the exercise of state power and apply measures to either condemn or encourage the policies and behaviour of state organs. As noted in their 2009 assessment, Afrimap underscored the fact that, in terms of the structure and governance of civil society, there is a "great permeability in terms of leading figures between the public/political sphere and the associations... [and that]... a significant part of the leadership of the associations came from (or still belongs to) the civil service and Frelimo" (Ibid: 67). Thus while civil society has grown, and is playing a more meaningful role in influencing government decisions, this is generally confined to a consultative status, with a focus on issues that do not directly challenge and call to account the more

pervasive aspects of government policy and behaviour.

The rising potential for long-term instability

The emergent character of peace in the country is therefore informed by the predominant issues that accompanied the country's formative democratic experience. Remaining cognisant of the laudable fact that, barring the most recent low-level insurgency, the country has never relapsed into a state of open civil war of the scale prior to the GPA, there is a considerable margin for concern that a long-term peace remains fragile. Whereas this argument considers the grievances and actions of Renamo that led to the most recent wave of instability, this is, however, not the most pressing factor upon which the long-term peace of the country rests. Surprisingly, the annulment of the GPA and subsequent signing of a new peace agreement actually provides considerable reason for optimism. Concomitant to such optimism, it must also be underscored that the process leading up to the signing of an understanding between the different political formations ahead of the 2014 elections was managed and facilitated internally, speak volumes about Mozambique's progress to date since 1992. Whereas in 1992 the parties to the conflict in the country needed to have international actors being the active drivers and facilitators of the agreement, twenty-two years later, it was possible for these processes to be managed internally, and with the involvement of local non-state and non-political party actors. This then, in the lexicon of peace and conflict studies confirms the existence of a national infrastructure for peace in Mozambique, something that could be tapped into as long-term stability efforts are still required.

As a result of the government's responsiveness to the issue, not only was the scale and scope of the fighting contained and a negotiated settlement arrived at, but Renamo was dually placated to the extent that the party leader was registered with the country's national electoral commission in time for it to legitimately contest the 15 October 2014 elections. Moreover, the electoral process was conducted in a generally free, fair and credible manner as noted by, for instance, observers from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) (Mashabane 2014: 5-6). Thus, what is evident is that the Frelimo-led government is certainly capable of accounting for, containing, and addressing factors which could lead to potential wide-spread conflict which are based on the dominant political fault lines, as previously highlighted in this article, across the state. Indeed, the government's responsiveness, internal processes and strengthening democratic culture, in many ways, provides for a sufficiently robust approach to such issues in safeguarding peace and stability across the country.

What is the most pressing concern, however, is related to the longer-term stability of Mozambique vis-à-vis the growing dominance of the ruling party in the context of weak political opposition, uncoordinated civic actors, and a political-economy still largely defined by the receipt of foreign aid. The long-term implications of this trend finds expression in the analysis of Phiri and Macheve, who argue that the country has effectively become a 'managed democracy', characterised by a strong executive, weak institutions, state control of the media, and control over elections with "visible short-term effectiveness and long-term efficiency" (Phiri and

Macheve 2014: 43). By alluding to the central thesis of Acemoglu and Robinson (2012), they contend that the post-GPA Mozambican experience is reflective of the development of extractive political and economic institutions that accompany the monopolisation of state power, and which ultimately (unintended or not) “debilitate the intrinsic values of freedom that work toward inclusive governance and democratic polities” (Phiri and Macheve 2014: 43-44).

Specifically, this has been argued to have contributed to the development of a political structure that favours the party in power, and has allowed the Frelimo-led government to act in a manner that is increasingly informed by internal party processes and decisions without the requisite consideration of the views and concerns stemming from opposition parties and civil actors. The primary grievances of Renamo, for example, that informed the annulment of the GPA, credits this view in terms of their claims that the Frelimo-led government has continuously violated the terms of the GPA, with particular regard to the electoral system and the composition of the country’s armed forces - in which they claim to have been short-changed (ISS 2014). The ongoing concerns raised at the politicisation of the country’s key electoral and military institutions and organs further provides some measure of how the country’s political structure has come to be associated with the ‘managed democracy’ archetype provided by Phiri and Macheve.

It may thus be argued that the long-term peace of the country has become paradoxically burdened by the developments of the same political entity that has thus far provided a relatively secure and stable environment. Without the necessary space or platforms for the legitimate expression of dissent, grievances could well fester along the periphery of ruling-party and state control, and manifest in ways that could well undermine the sustainability of the country’s peace. Thus, while the role of Renamo or any other up-and-coming opposition party may spark short-term flashes of instability and potential conflict if not appropriately addressed by the government, these - based on recent events - can be assumed to be effectively contained due to the responsiveness and internal cohesion of Frelimo. The real danger, however, lies in accounting for the growth of Frelimo in parallel with the state, and the subsequent potential for rising instability and conflict vis-à-vis the entrenchment of extractive economic and political institutions.

Toward long-term stability

The recent rejection of the 15 October election results by Renamo, despite their recently concluded peace agreement with the ruling party is a telling indicator of what could be done to enhance the long-term prospects for stability and peace in Mozambique. On the one hand, the fact that a deal - led by the government - was brokered, that not only contained the fighting and arrested Renamo’s immediate grievances, but dually allowed the party to legitimately contest the elections, indicates the extent of the Frelimo-led government’s responsiveness and political savvy in addressing emergent threats to the country’s stability. On the other hand, however, the fact that Renamo annulled the GPA and subsequently conducted a low-level insurgency in the first place, is indicative of some of the structural and systemic ailments of the country’s current

political-economic system.

Following the most recent elections, the government would thus do well in more greatly committing itself to an ongoing dialogue with the country's key opposition and extra-parliamentary political entities. Specific attention should also be paid in better resourcing and supporting the national parliament in order to reinforce the mandate of this critically important arm of government. This should be approached as part of a greater drive to reign in a growing sentiment of exclusion and apathy in state institutions - and hence legitimate opportunities for the expression of grievance and dissent - by also revisiting the central role of civil society in the country, with a view to enhance social impact and create nodes of public pressure that have a direct influence over government planning and policy.

With regard to increasing international energy interests surrounding the country's proven and potential reserves of oil and natural gas, there is also all the more need to specifically examine the impact of aid dependency and the receipt of foreign direct investment, as a considerable part of the state budget, vis-à-vis the health of the social contract between the government and the citizenry. The impact of this issue in terms of the lines of accountability, and how this may come to inform the propensity for conflict, also needs to be more greatly considered in light of existing structural deficiencies within state organs and institutions. Lastly, it would also be vital to ensure an ongoing focus on the de-politicisation of state institutions and organs with particular regard to the parallel development and consolidation of Frelimo and that of the state. Specifically, the contentious relationship between the two that has increasingly come to inform the country's political-economy, and the long-term prospects for a robust peace, should be approached with the requisite tact and understanding that accounts for the country's significant progress thus far and the unintended consequences of this progress over the longer-term.

Conclusion

This article has attempted to succinctly reflect on the path that Mozambique has traversed towards nurturing, and eventually consolidating, its democratic culture since the end of the 1992 civil war. In tracing this path, one of the clear observations is that despite certain positive developments - for which the country should be commended, there still does exist, however, the residue of a protracted social conflict - as reflected by a need for continued engagements between the main opposing parties. These engagements should, amongst other things - as already experienced immediately prior to the 2014 elections, seek to avert incidences of violent conflict, strengthen a political commitment to dialogue as the only viable option to address opposing views, and place the country on a more secure path towards socio-economic development. With time, the existing infrastructures for peace in the country should then be able to assist and effectively work with the main protagonists in order to ensure that future electoral outcomes are deemed to be legitimate by all concerned actors, and that this does not result in diminishing the role that state institutions should play towards a better future for the people of Mozambique.

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