From state-centric to people-centric CR initiatives in SADC

The Case of Zimbabwe
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Introduction

- Global rebellion against status quo – those excluded from power
- Occupy movement
- Anti-austerity protests in Europe
- Arab Spring
- Marikana, De Doorns
- Consciousness of developments across world
- Technology helps this not only in terms of information but also a form of organizational base
- State predatory- African state (elite) sovereignty purchased at the human security of ordinary citizens

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SADC

- African inter-governmental structures like SADC and the AU reflect this state bias – state defends elites from the consequences of their rapacious actions against citizens – e.g. Bozize in CAR now
- SADC worse than AU with its absolutist notion of sovereignty – AU qualifies sovereignty
- SADC talks about human rights, but they have dismantled one of their own structures – the SADC Tribunal when it upholds the rule of law against a predatory state as we saw in the case of Zimbabwe
- Much has been written about SA's policy of Quiet Diplomacy or that of Zimbabwe re the unfolding tragedy there – much less on Track 2 CR initiatives – this is what I will focus on in this paper

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Citizen diplomacy

- CD represents one strand of multi-track diplomacy
- CD refers to the involvement of local people from different sectors of society in the process of PD – can occur at every stage of the conflict
- CD powerful because it is citizens who bear the brunt of a conflict – long term – citizens have a vested interest in sustainable peace
- Because of their small size, independence and flexibility, NGOs are in a position to react quickly to dangers and opportunities when larger organizations may have to follow bureaucratic procedures (e.g. Oslo)
- There are limitations -.e.g. Needing political and material support from other players – hence "multi-track"

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National Constitutional assembly -NCA

- NCA founded in 1997 by youth, women, church, business, human rights groups in the face of ZANU-PF's growing violent repression and who sole purpose was to realize a new, democratic and people-driven constitution
- NCA critiqued existing Lancaster House Constitution and the machinations of the ruling party
- Had various seminars, debates and publications to educate Zimbabweans on issues of constitutionalism
- Pushed for a constitutionalism from below – involving grassroots organizations
- Constituted severe challenge to state

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ZLHR

- ZLHR conducted on-site monitoring and documented human rights abuses and instances of violence
- On basis of this released press statements to publicize abuses
- Lobbied regional and international bodies to bring an end to abuse
- Engaged judicial mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes by representing human rights defenders in court
- Provided free legal services to thousands of families
- 2005 ZLHR granted observer status with tin the ACHPR, affiliate status within the International Commission of Jurists and was confirmed as secretariat of the SADC Assoc. Human Rights Committee

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SACD in response to ZIM crisis

- SA civil society took a keen interest in the Zimbabwean crisis and more importantly to monitor its own government's commitment to a peaceful and democratic Zimbabwe in line with SA's own FP goals
- 14 April 2008 – Chinese vessel docks in Durban, awaiting permission to unload weapons shipment to the ZDF
- SATAWU, later COSATU and Church groups prevent the weapons transfer
- Inside SA cabinet – Mbeki vs Manuel
- SA Litigation Centre takes legal action – saying weapons used to perpetuate illegitimate ZANU-PF rule – court agrees – Chinese vessel moves to Mozambique, Namibia and Angola but civil society also prevents off-loading of weapons – Chinese vessel return to China with arms intact

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Ecumenical diplomacy - ed

- Churches, trusted, politicians not
- Churches operate in local village to international level
- Churches = moral compass of society
- Zimbabwean Council of Churches (ZCC), Zimbabwean Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) linked to SACBC and the Zimbabwean Evangelical Fellowship (ZEF)
- Lessening polarization between protagonists, getting them to talk – helped to develop shared vision – called on leaders to reflect on their faith and civic duties – embarked on fact-finding missions, highlighting transgressions to human dignity in a clinical (non-emotive way) – move away from zero-sum politics, emphasis on inclusiveness (Malawi and Mozambique)

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Conclusion

- Scholars and students need to play greater attention Track 2 initiatives in the SADC region – note developments in Swaziland (COSATU and SFTU)
- Greater attention to how Track 1 and Track 2 initiatives can work in a mutually reinforcing way towards human security as opposed to elite security (Rupesinghe)
- Track 1 initiatives failing in SADC and Africa generally privileging state sovereignty (elite security) over human security over citizens – Gaddafi, CAR, Mali
- While this continues little common ground between Track 1 and Track 2 so Multi-Track Diplomacy is a non-starter
- Under circumstances need to look at how international community can bolster Track 2 initiatives (Solidarity, Poland, Syrian opposition now)

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