Peacebuilding in Southern Africa: Framing the Agenda

George Abel Mhango
Mzuzu University

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Outline of Presentation

- Context of peace and security in southern Africa

- Peacebuilding as an evolving concept

- Peacebuilding approaches in the region

- Harnessing peacebuilding in southern Africa

- Concluding thoughts

Context of Peace and Security in Southern Africa

- Weak state apparatus (in some cases failing states)
- Fledgling democracies (weak governance institutions)
- Unstable economic base (most countries with weak economies)
- Most countries locked up in state/regime security
- Extractive states sustained by patronage politics
- Region with weakest security architecture (Buzan, 2003)

The State of the Region

Country	GDP (2010) $	GDP Rank	HDI Rank	HSI Rank
Seychelles	19,536	63	90	97
Botswana	13,624	90	162	106
South Africa	10,078	109	177	168
Angola	6,254	135	198	207
Namibia	6,181	137	175	134
Swaziland	4,994	145	195	175
Lesotho	1,588	201	202	169
Zambia	1,450	203	212	216
Tanzania	1,338	208	205	183
Zimbabwe	1,000	218	203	227
Madagascar	972	221	195	211
Mozambique	863	223	221	198
Malawi	824	225	213	206
DR Congo	305	232	222	230

Peacebuilding: An Evolving Concept

"Peacebuilding seeks to prevent, reduce, transform, and help people recover from violence in all forms, even structural violence that has not yet led to massive civil unrest. [...] Strategic peacebuilding recognizes the complexity of the tasks required to build peace. Peacebuilding is strategic when resources, actors, and approaches are coordinated to accomplish multiple goals and address multiple issues for the long term." *(Lisa Schirch, Strategic Peacebuilding)*

Peacebuilding: An Evolving Concept (Cont'd)

"Peacebuilding involves a full range of approaches, processes and stages needed for transformation toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships and governance modes and structures. Peacebuilding includes building legal and human rights institutions as well as fair and effective governance and dispute resolution processes and systems. To be effective, peacebuilding activities require careful and participatory planning, coordination among various efforts, and sustained commitments by both local and donor partners." (*Catherine Morris, IDR*)

Peacebuilding: An Evolving Concept (Cont'd)

- Conflict Management:
  - ending violent conflicts through mediation.
  - State centric and lengthy
- Conflict resolution:
  - Dealing with the underlying causes of conflict by rebuilding relationships
- Conflict transformation:
  - Building long term infrastructure for peacebuilding by recognizing the reconciliation potential of society.
  - Can apply at macro-, meso- and micro- levels.

Peacebuilding Approaches in southern Africa

- Militarist vs non-militarist (diplomatic approaches)
  - DRC an example of 'How not to build peace.' Locked in between peacekeeping and peace enforcement.

- Mostly elitist constructions implemented at the level of states with little involvement of NSAs.

- Located within the frame of conflict management as opposed to resolution or transformation.

- Very minimal involvement by extra-regional actors (DRC and Angola an exception)

Harnessing Peacebuilding Research/Studies in Southern Africa

- Unpack the 'Stabilization thesis'

- Need to appreciate the link between statebuilding and peacebuilding
  - Revisit the human security – human development nexus

- Understand the salience of the liberation discourse in the peace and security architecture of the sub-region

- Explore the role of grassroots initiatives

- Explore the role of civil society – especially religious movements

Harnessing Peacebuilding Research/Studies in Southern Africa (Cont'd)

- Consider the role of aid (external actors) in peacebuilding / statebuilding
  - Can also be a blessing or a curse.
  - Also has implications on scope and duration

- Also explore alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in use in the region
  - Who are the actors, what are their interests, what works/does not work?

- Need to consider the place of social conflicts in the peacebuilding agenda of the region
  - Social conflicts are becoming a source of violent/armed conflicts (eg the Arab Spring)

Concluding Thoughts

- Peacebuilding agenda in the southern Africa remains to be critically examined.

- While a focus on SADC is primary, NSAs will be instrumental in providing the horizontal and meso-level approaches that the sub region can tap on to inform the development of a robust peacebuilding capacity.

- Understanding and addressing social conflicts will provide a crucial launch pad in building peaceful communities in the region.