

Governing Security Sector Reform in Zimbabwe and the prospects of positive peace in a polarised polity

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Abstract

Beginning early 2000, communities in Zimbabwe witnessed the worst forms of politically motivated violence (violent protests, pre and post-election violence, abductions etc.) by state security agents as well as civilian on civilian clashes at grassroots levels. Efforts to resolve contemporary Zimbabwean politically motivated conflicts are proving difficult if not impossible. The study assessed the role of the security sector in its role in building positive peace in Zimbabwe since independence. It also focused on identifying challenges faced by Zimbabwe security sector in building peace in the country and explored opportunities available to the security sector for building positive peace in the country. The study adopted desk research design given the Covid 19 pandemic environment not conducive to gather primary data. The study found that the Zimbabwe security sector is highly partisan due to the interference of the ruling party. The study recommended security sector transformation to promote the rule of law, voice and accountability and government effectiveness.

Key words: Security, security sector reform, positive peace and peacebuilding

Introduction and Background

The security sector establishment in Zimbabwe cannot be viewed in isolation of the broader internal and regional contexts in which it is located. The nature of the Zimbabwean security sector is defined by the inter-play between the colonial institutional heritage, the liberation legacy that Zimbabwe to its independence in 1980 and the threat perceptions that emerged (Hendricks and Hutton 2009). Fashagba & Oshewolo (2014) recommends deeply rooted governance practices since conflict has become a permanent life threat in Africa. It is in

doing so that Africa can effectively address the peace challenges that confront it. If Africa must be freed from its vulnerabilities to violent conflicts, conscious efforts must be made by national governments improving on the scale of good governance.

In his First Inaugural Address, former American president Ronald Reagan offered these words: “Government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem” (George 2016). If the government performance does not help in improved security of its citizens, then it is a problem. The Institute for Economics and Peace (2013) posits that a poorly governed country can create seed of tension by either under provision of public goods or their inequitable distribution. According to Rose-Ackerman (2004), a poorly governed country risk falling into a dysfunctional government. Ever since year 2000 the Zimbabwe government efforts towards positive peace remains questionable. If the security sector is part of the problem, it has to be recognised that it is also an important element to the solution-peace. The security sector cannot be reluctantly ignored. It plays a central role in conflict, and often security sector personnel are the first to realise that a military solution will not solve the conflict, though they may not know how to bring about an agreed solution. The security sector also has an important impact on the process of rebuilding society to peace (McCartney, Fischer & Wils 2004). Major concerns of people in Zimbabwe are insecurity and a lack of confidence in the service providers of security. Therefore, in order for any solution to the conflict to be effective, the people in the community need to feel personally secure and have confidence in the security services offered by the security sector. To build that sense of confidence and security will normally require restructuring of the security service to ensure greater accountability and openness and, perhaps, transforming the way the security sector into establishing citizen centric service providers.

A well-functioning government is one of the eight pillars of peace; this is according to Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP). The IEP (2013) says that a well-functioning government refers to the government’s effectiveness, accountability, its governance activities and observing the rule of law. Since the government has the access to the country’s resources it has a major impact on the wellbeing of individuals through how well and fairly it is run, that is governance. A well-functioning government has a security sector that upholds the rules of law and citizen centric in their provision of security to the state. Citizens are confident and secure in their own territory.

Moreover, Galtung (2007) defines peace as a political condition that ensures justice and social stability through formal and informal institutions, practices, and norms. Johan Galtung

consequently proposed the important distinction between ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ peace. ‘Positive’ peace denoting the simultaneous presence of many desirable states of mind and society, such as harmony, justice, equity, etc. ‘Negative’ peace has historically denoted the ‘absence of war’. Galtung identifies several conditions that must be met for positive peace to be achieved that include but not limited to valued interdependent relationships and long-term cooperation during periods of agreement, divergence, normality, and calamity. IEP (2013) defines positive peace as the attitudes, institutions and structures which create and sustain peaceful societies. This definition leads to the comprehensive taxonomy based on attitudes, institutions and structures that are broken down to well defined eight pillars that promote positive peace. The eight pillars are: a well-functioning government, a sound business environment, an equitable distribution of resources, an acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbours, and free flow of information, a high level of human capital and low levels of corruption.

The IEP (2013) indicates that the importance of well-functioning government in promoting peace has been reinforced by recent research from the World Bank which has suggested that improved governance strengthens development and improves living standards. Fashagba & Oshewolo (2014) says that weak governance can be easily translated to conflicts and insecurity in a country. That is the reason why The IEP (2013) affirms to the notion that a poorly governed country can create the seeds of tension by either the under provision of public goods or their inequitable distribution. Therefore, they argue that community wellbeing, peace and a well-functioning government are therefore inextricably linked. Consequently, a well-functioning government when combined with the other Pillars is more likely to create peaceful individuals and ultimately peaceful community. It is important to note that The IEP acknowledge the fact that a well-functioning government can be defined in various ways but the definition of IEP is centred around a three-part taxonomy consisting of, government effectiveness, the rule of law, and voice and accountability. Thus, this study will confine itself to the definition of a well-functioning government as defined by the IEP.

Just like the general findings of governance in Africa which has been found to be very weak or poor so is Zimbabwe’s governance found to fall in the same continuum. Way back in the year 2000, twenty years after independence Makumbe (2009) realised that Zimbabwe experienced what could only be termed a major setback in its transition to democracy. The nation had already moved several steps backwards in terms of the democratisation process. Even Chikerema & Chakunda (2014) confirmed that Zimbabwe has been characterised of poor governance, security sector involved with a culture of impunity characterizing electoral

fraud determining a political culture of the system of governance that leaves a lot to be desired.

Hendricks and Hutton (2009) posit that post-colonial states inherited repressive state security apparatus geared towards the protection of the colonial regime. Many post-colonial governments' security agencies display a notable degree of continuity with that of their predecessor, so Zimbabwe could be no exception. In Zimbabwe this translated into the development of security structures at the core of state power that were assigned excessive powers and were subject to little or no oversight or accountability. This could be the weakest point in a governance system of a state and is overly resulting into problems that destabilises it.

Theoretical framework

The study is grounded and shaped by the theories of positive peace, realism and idealism. The theory of peace is relevant in this study as it is important to understand the role played by the security sector in promoting positive peace. Realism and idealism theories can best help explain how the security sector is perceived in Zimbabwe as well as in the international system.

Positive peace theory

In his seminal work Johan Galtung proposed the positive peace theory in 1964 in the Journal of Peace Research, where he confronted the historical view and understanding of peace and conflict as a discourse of physical or direct violence. This is also when he made a clear distinction between negative peace and positive peace. He identified negative peace as lack of direct violence whilst a society might still be dominated by injustices; incompetent governments, hunger and diseases hence the welfare and freedom of the people will be limited. He further defined positive peace as the simultaneous presence of many desirable states of mind in societies, which include justice, harmony, equity, enjoyment of basic needs etc (Webel, 2010:6). From the preceding examination of peace, it can be argued that the conditions in Zimbabwe and in most countries are consistent with negative peace.

Thus positive peace is a collection of things that allow people to be free and encourage them to develop and it ensures the achievement of happiness and independence. With the understanding of this theory one can be able to relate with the involvement of the security sector in the politics of the country resulting in having an impact on existence of positive peace in Zimbabwe. Makuvaza (2013) posits that it can be surmised that situations and

conditions in most countries internationally and Zimbabwe in particular, seem consistent with negative peace.

Idealism and realist theories

Any adequate analysis of security sector requires a fundamental understanding of the paradigms underlying the views expressed with respect to the nature of this sector. The two broad contrasting theories of realism and idealism can best help explain how the security sector is perceived in the international system as well as in Zimbabwe. The research discusses these two divergent perspectives with respect to security, military leadership and governance.

Idealism allegedly dominated the study of international relations from the end of the First World War until the late 1930s. Sometimes referred to as utopianism, idealism is in fact a variant of liberal internationalism. Notable liberal idealists are Immanuel Kant, Richard Cobden, John Hobson, Norman Angell, Alfred Zimmern, and Woodrow Wilson (Viotti & Kauppi: 2000). The feeling of fear is the centre point for the definition of security, while the lack of threat has been emphasized as the factor that causes the elimination of feeling of fear. But the lack of fear has been interpreted variously in main approaches of international relations. Realists believe that the security got its meaning according to anarchical self-help system in which no states trust the others in security matters. Accordingly, values and beliefs have least influence on interpretation of security among states. In contrast, reflectivity theories argue that values matter. In other words, states interpret their security according to their own values and interest (Soltani and Yusof 2012).

According to the idealist school of thinking, the military embraces leadership and governance roles entrenched on democratic principles which are driven by strong relations between the military and civil society. Idealism is therefore based on the idea that politics, that is the struggle for power can be made to conform to an ethical standard. Idealists have always stressed the need for international legal rights and obligations, the natural harmony of international rights as a regulator for the preservation of international peace and a heavy reliance upon reason in human affairs. One of the followers of idealism, Woodrow Wilson, placed the blame for war on power politics, the scheming of secret diplomacy, and the sinister interests of undemocratic leaders. Immanuel Kant another idealist scholar saw war as a source of evil and moral corruption. Realism on the other hand, is a political theory that traces its intellectual roots to the ancient Greek Historian Thucydides and his account of the Peloponnesian wars between Athens and Sparta (431-404 BC), and especially the sixteenth – century political thoughts of the Italian theorist Nicollo Machiavelli as well as the seventeenth century English historian, Thomas Hobbes (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff: 1980).

Realists view the state as the most important actor on the world stage since it answers to no higher authority. At the extreme, realism appears to accept war as being rational and normal. On the basis of realism, the international system is an anarchical system in which states do not trust each other. Under mistrusting condition, states behave according to the principle of self-help. In other words, states are the sole actors that can play influential role in providing security without relying on other states. In fact, states do not rely on other states because in the security issue, they do not trust each other.

With such a prevailing situation, no state is willing to reform its security sector bearing the anarchic nature of the international system whereby the strong or military preponderant states in typical Thucididesian fashion, do whatever they can and the weak suffer what they must. Realists value national security above all other things and that military preponderance makes them safe. Most realists see a strong security sector as inevitable and any reforms that are not in line with security sector autonomy and efficacy as very unlikely. Their assumptions are entrenched on the nature of the international anarchic system which they argue does not enable unjustified security reforms and they accept a preponderant security system. Realists believe that the abolition of weapons is not practical.

Zimbabwe security sector organisations

Hanson (2008) specified that Zimbabwe's security sector consists of the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), which is the most powerful arm of the security apparatus, deeply feared by Zimbabweans. Some analysts think the CIO's ability to generate fear among Zimbabweans might exceed its true power. "The extent to which they are actually predators is debatable," Chitiyo says. The military has been ZANU PF's bedrock of support. ZANU PF has made a major effort to maintain the military's loyalty, distributing rewards to military officials. The police, who execute the orders of the Joint Operations Command and are viewed by the public as untrustworthy, militias are made up of war veterans and youths. Ahead of elections they are charged with distributing food aid and intimidating voters.

According DCAF (2020) the formal security sector of Zimbabwe consists of several actors, including: Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF), Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) Zimbabwe Prison Service (ZPS) Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), an agency directly underneath the Office of the President, and currently still outside the legislative framework. In addition to the above, Zimbabwe has active Private security companies Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) ZANU-PF Youth League.

Experts say the most powerful arm of Zimbabwe's security apparatus is the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO). It is the "brains behind the regime," and deeply feared by Zimbabweans inside and outside the country. There is no public record of the CIO's size, but it is thought to have thousands of operatives. Many Zimbabweans think the organization has a network of informers that extends into the Zimbabwean diaspora. Within Zimbabwe, CIO agents have infiltrated the MDC many a times (Chitiyo 2009).

The study is based on Werner and Chitiyo (2011)'s description of Zimbabwe's security sector as composed of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF), which is comprised of the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA), the Air Force of Zimbabwe (AFZ), the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), and the Zimbabwe Prison Service (ZPS), are the managers of hard security in Zimbabwe. Since 2000, the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) and ZANU-PF Youth League have been incorporated into a de facto tripartite alliance with the ZDF and ZANU-PF.

Militias of war veterans and youth also have been implicated in violence against the general population. The youth militia, also known as the Green Bombers, is part of Zimbabwe's National Youth Service, a program started in 2000. They loot land owned by white farmers, beat opposition members, and rape women and girls linked to opposition groups (New York Times 2020). Human Rights Watch have documented systematic acts of violence and intimidation committed by the CIO and the police against opposition members or individuals suspected of allegiance to the opposition.

Factors contributing to political conflicts in Zimbabwe since year 2000

Mukhuhlane (2014) says that Zimbabwe since 2000 has been dominated by violence, political intolerance and intimidation, economic implosion, food insecurity and general uncertainty at the hands of the security sector. The crisis has been dominated by ZANU-PF's often ruthless struggle to retain power. Chikerema & Chakunda (2014) concurs with Mukhuhlane that the violence that engulfed Zimbabwe from 1999-2008 led to killing and displacements of MDC and ZANU PF supporters. They also go on to say that MDC claims that about 300 of its supporters were killed by ZANUPF militia and 100000 were displaced in both rural and urban areas after it dislodging ZANUPF dominance in Zimbabwe's political landscape. Ever since the turn of the millennium the Zimbabwean government under both

leaders Mugabe and Mnangagwa the involvement of the security sector in national politics has been a bone of contention.

Zimbabwe politics has been plainly polarized in the recent years. Currently, the extreme polarisation has been ingrained in violent hostilities, mutual mistrust, political contestation, fear and outright aggression between the seemingly unbridgeable gap between two main political parties, ZANU PF and MDCA. The Zimbabwean public is divided in various spheres that range from economic policy, social policy, foreign policy, and national security, and many others. A host of factors, influenced by partisan exclusionary tendencies, are driving citizens further apart threatening national socio, economic and political stability. The efforts by one are undermined by the other. The polarised political environment has led to deepened mistrust, economic collapse, rendering international re-engagement processes ineffective, declining credibility to national state security institutions and the three arms of the state. It is therefore in the interest of this study to highlight the major contributors to dysfunctionality of Zimbabwean government. According to Chikerema & Chakunda (2014) Zimbabwe's past general elections have been problematic and have contributed much to the toxic political polarisation in the country.

Moreover, Cain (2016) argues that the main sociological problem in Zimbabwe is poor governance. The main pointers to poor governance especially under former President Mugabe's reign as argued by Cain are gross violations of human and property rights by the security sector, corruption, restrictive business regulations, and abysmal monetary policies. This is a clear pointer as to why Zimbabwe scored a low 4.01 on Global Peace Index (GPI). The lack of peace gives room a volatile society. IEP (2018) in their report says that positive peace not only reduces violence and the level of grievances, it also provides a framework for robust human development.

Additionally, (GKKE 2019) summed up the situation in Zimbabwe saying that the constitution states that the task of the police and the armed forces is to protect the country and its people. However, they are the precise forces that are at present threatening, oppressing and robbing the people of their freedom. Democracy is only working superficially. There is no transparency and no real separation of powers in the country. The executive has so much influence and is using the judiciary, the police and the armed forces for serving its own interests. Corruption is omnipresent in the government and distrust is rife in society. The culture of violence perpetrated by the state security is still visible today and certainly this is a legacy of the colonial days. The fight for liberation was marked by massive violence. The situation seems to have continued unchanged to this day.

In 2016 the then Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) commander General Constantine Chiwenga's threatened to unleash the military on opposition parties and Zanu PF officials with an agenda to destroy the party from within. This re-ignited calls for security sector reforms to once again turn the security forces into a professional and non-partisan institution (Moyo 2016). This scenario painted the unrelenting role of the military in national politics disturbing the existence of positive peace in the country.

Observations are that holding regular general elections in Zimbabwe has been in the affirmative, questions have been raised on the quality of elections as they have been labelled controversial as they have been normally punctuated with violence. Elections refers to a process of choosing national leaders, a method that each country uses for elections is referred to as an electoral system. Chikerema & Chakunda (2014) says that Zimbabwe uses the First Past the Post (FPTP) that is more exclusionary and entrenches the hegemony of either one or two dominant parties while marginalizing smaller parties and this has affected constructive management of electoral conflicts in the disputed 2008 elections that lead to the formation of a coalition government in Zimbabwe between ZANUPF and the two MDC factions. IEP (2018) argues that the level of honesty and transparency in elections measures voice and accountability and co related to peace. If the citizens have confidence in a well-functioning government they will trust the electoral process and the results are abounding to be peaceful. A country with good governance systems is more likely to instil confidence to its citizens.

Evidence is available that countries that adopted and applied good governance practices have flourished in terms of socio-economic development. For example, Botswana is presently regarded as the shining example regarding governance and stable economic development in Africa. The study therefore argues that in this regard, good governance practices can only prosper if there is a functional government with functional institutions and agencies. Some scholars argue that leadership that is committed to serve the needs and aspirations of the people is the nucleus of good governance.

Prospects for Zimbabwe Security Sector Transformation

Compared to the security institutions of other countries, Zimbabwe has a relatively conservative view of what the security sector should do and what it should not. It is still hard to find voices in the Zimbabwean security sector who believe that the sector should embrace the security transformation being called for by the civil groups. Below is a speech made by the late politician and ZNA Commander Vitalis Zvinavashe who is believed to have represented certain political positions concerning the security sector?

In reference to the 2002 elections the late General Vitalis Zvinavashe pointed out that:

“The office of the Head of State of Zimbabwe should be held by individuals who pursue Zimbabwean values, traditions (and) the beliefs for which thousands of lives were lost in pursuit of Zimbabwe’s hard won independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and national interests”. (A Guide to the Heroes Acre August 2011)

This statement received a myriad of reactions from the MDC formations, civil society groups and western countries mainly because of its apparent ambiguous nature. Some interpreted it to mean the security sector was now dabbling in politics whilst others felt it was driven by nationalistic consciousness. Rupiya (2006), Nyakudya (2009) Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2003) and Sachikonye (2011) also see such utterances made by the security sector as the military meddling in politics. Realists have always stressed that states should never entrust the task of self-protection to international security organisations or international law, and should resist efforts to regulate international behaviour through global governance. However, scholars like Sachikonye (2011), Makumbe (2002) and Chitiyo (2011) view such statements as patronizing the military in order for the President to remain in power.

Mutanda (2019) agrees with (Hove 2017) who argues that it is necessary to have security sector reform in Zimbabwe because of the security sector’s history of disregarding the rule of law before, during and after all elections ever since year 2000. They are found wanting to attempt to influence the electoral procedure; interference in ZANU PF’s factional fights and the militarisation of civilian institutions and the politicisation of military institutions. The military dabbling in ZANU PF fights came to being in the 2017 dethroning of the then president of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe where the military was heavily involved.

Zimbabwe’s security sector institutions as pointed out by Chitiyo (2011), Nyakudya (2008), Rupiya (2012) and Gatsheni-Ndlovu (2010) need urgent reforms due to their partisanship to the elites in ZANU PF. However, Mahoso(2011), Jonathan Moyo (2012), Stephen Mpofo (2012) and Tawanda Moyo strongly believe that calls for SSR in Zimbabwe are not grounded on the genuine need to meet democratic principles and practices, but are instigated by Western countries’ fear of a strong Zimbabwean security sector which will fend off any state security threat.

Moreover, Muchabaiwa (2011) is of the view that SSR is a comprehensive reform process with the aim of making the institutions that are responsible for protecting society more accountable to individual citizens and communities and more responsible to their security needs, while ensuring that they become or remain effective and efficient in the provision of security. According to this school of thought, the military should embrace leadership and

governance roles entrenched on the organisational model which is driven by strong relations between the military and civil society. It is important to note that every reform will produce winners and losers. In countries with authoritarian governments, reform threatens elites with examination of their repressive activities and therefore also with potentially grave personal repercussions. Here external actors have room to offer reassurance or apply pressure where appropriate (Eckhard 2016).

However, Janowitz (2003) argues that despite the convergence of the military and the civilians, the military would still retain certain essential differences from the civilian and that it would remain recognizably military in nature. Edmunds (2002) notes that security sector actors are often politicized, and used to play or being used to play a key partisan role in domestic politics. He further posits that the security sector is likely to have been a key instrument of authoritarian control, and as a result turns to be tied to the old regime in relation to both ideology and its own interests. If a society is emerging from conflict, then the security sector will have to undergo a fundamental role change from one structured around the demands of conflict in which it is likely to have played a central role to one more suited to a peace time environment. This is the major argument being propounded by scholars like Rupiya, Chitiyo, Hendricks, Musavengana and a plethora of civil society groups in Zimbabwe on the nature and composition of the security sector. However, it should be noted that the politicisation of Zimbabwe's security sector is a natural and predictable outcome of that process as these individual were first political cadres before being freedom fighters.

Given the distinct security sector involvement in Zimbabwean politics one can ignore it at his own peril. Evidence is abounding that the security sector interferes in national elections and politics, the militarisation of civilian institutions is quite clear. November 2017 interference by the military is true testimony that the security sector is a major player in Zimbabwean politics and this has compromised peace in the country. The security sector has been found to be partisan, politicised, violent on civilians and divisive with the support of the ZANU PF amid the militarisation of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC). Chitiyo (2009) argues that Zimbabwe has never had a participatory national dialogue on security, and this is long overdue as the physical and psychological security of Zimbabwe citizenry needs to be safeguarded.

Methodological Prima

The approach followed in this study is qualitative descriptive research methodology as it enabled the narration and interpretation of nature/extent of the role of the security sector in promoting positive peace in Zimbabwe so as to examine its efficacy in conflict transformation. The research was largely desktop research due to the limitations caused by the covid 19 pandemic. Purposive sampling was used to select key informants for in-depth interviews. This approach was appropriate to this study as it enabled to establish the nature and even the extent of the role of security sector in enhancing positive peace in Zimbabwe through studying the context/setting in which people talk and also the voices of the participants as emotions can be observed through peeped voices to show anger which cannot be heard in quantitative descriptive research methodology, (Creswell, 2014). The population of interest in this study is the security sector which is composed of Zimbabwe National Army, Zimbabwe Republic Police, Judiciary, Central Intelligence Office and war veterans. The sources of data that were used are political journals, newspapers articles, published books, internet and the Zimbabwe constitution. However, recent data has been quite scarce from organisations' websites.

Results and discussions

Challenges faced by security sector in building peace in Zimbabwe

Over the past twenty years, the Zimbabwean security sector has increasingly come into the spotlight as unduly politicised, non-partisan, and as infringing on the human rights of the Zimbabwean citizens. The security sector is currently exhibiting characteristics of no meaningful space for national debate on security sector governance, modernization or transformation. By formal security sector of Zimbabwe, it means several actors that include Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF), Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), Zimbabwe Prison Service (ZPS), and Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO). Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) and ZANU-PF Youth League have been found encroaching taking up roles in the security sector of the country.

The results from a survey by Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2019:12) indicated that it is evident that the major actors of violence are civilians contributing 39.6% and members of ZANU-PF contributing 22.9%. The analysis dealt with reports from 1998 to 2019, over 20 years with the involvement of civilians in violent acts is a feature of recent history, mostly the period following the coup in November 2017. The police and the military were mentioned over the 21 years, jointly accounting for 33% of the reported violence, but the police were

mentioned with greater frequency. Given this scenario the research reviewed the challenges related to the security sector in the country that are liberation war legacy, politicisation of security sector and institutions, fragile political field, lack of public trust, limited political will and democratic governance.

In assessing and understanding post-colonial transformation prospects and realities in the security sector in Zimbabwe it is essential that we take account of the dichotomous specific legacies and capacities that are of the colonial state and that of the liberation movement itself. With regard to the former, the foundation of security sector governance in the then Rhodesia was built on the forceful military subjugation of the indigenous population and the establishment of an oppressive and discriminatory system of abuse, which was maintained by various degrees of coercion and force as required. The security system was designed to ensure colonial occupation and to sustain the safety, interests and security of only a small (white) minority of the inhabitants of the country (Brickhill 2018).

The legacy of the armed struggle was a socio-psychology of death, terror, fear and intolerance. This was part of Zimbabwe's political inheritance and it had a bearing on post-independence governance once the victorious militants got into power (Chikwanha-Dzenga, Masunungure & Madzingira 1999). According to Brickhill (2018) the colonial legacy has an effect on the conduct of the security sector. He goes on further to say that the colonial legacy left behind a culture of coercive security, culture of secrecy, impunity, human rights violations, and protection of elites and lack of democratic governance which has had a wide impact in peacefulness of the country. This was the security sector governance system and machinery we inherited in 1980 at independence

The security sector has been a dominant feature of the country's political economy ever since the days of the Rhodesia Front. The current military-political alliance between ZANU-PF and the security sector has its roots in the liberation struggle, when the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), the military wings of ZANU and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) respectively, formed close bonds with their respective parties. Following majority rule, ZANLA, ZIPRA and former Rhodesian forces merged to create the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA), the land-force component of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) (Chitiyo & Kibble 2014).

The attributes mentioned above are also related to the liberation legacy and that has resulted in continued acceptance of the use of violence to achieve political goals in Zimbabwe. The liberation legacy in Africa sees the political and military elites who dedicated their lives to

the armed struggle against racist regimes, have developed a sense of entitlement to power and privilege. This tendency has been most pronounced in Zimbabwe, where the regime of the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) has always equated loss of power with recolonization of the country, and where the military leadership has justified its coup as an operation to restore the legacy of the liberation struggle (Aeby 2018). So the security sector has remained in the equation of the political field in the country and also being a relevant determinant of peacefulness of the country.

Politics of security sectors and institutions

The main problem facing peacebuilding in Zimbabwe is the complexity of politicisation and militarisation of many of Zimbabwe's sectors and state institutions which have encroached civilian space. Moyo (2016) reported in the Zimbabwe Independent that the then Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) commander General Constantino Guvheya Chiwenga's threats to unleash the military on opposition parties and ZANU PF officials with an agenda to destroy the party from within and in 2017 November it so happened that the military was unleashed on the then president Robert Gabriel Mugabe. Politicisation of security sector has gone further to politicisation of government institutions such as Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission, Grain Marketing Board, National Railways of Zimbabwe, Ministry of Youth only to name but a few.

One view is that this movement of the top securocrats from the security sector to civilian government represents the militarisation of government. If this view is correct, it is certainly not a new one. Military historians have long chronicled and explained the phenomenon of militarisation of the state and government since even before independence. In a 2009 paper on security sector reform, Knox Chitiyo explained how these processes of politicisation of the military and militarisation of the state have taken place in phases since end of the liberation struggle. To the extent that the argument on militarisation of state institutions is true, it is not new. If anything, it is the culmination of a process that has been going on for quite some time and will probably continue well into the future. Part of this is a result of specific history in which the political parties that became the governing authorities after independence had armed wings which had their own command structures which were heavily politicised and never really shed off these characteristics after 1980.

Another view is that the movements are a reward to the military for its role in dislodging Mugabe in November 2017. It was the military that rescued the Mnangagwa bid for the presidency after he had been sacked by Mugabe on 6 November. On 15 November, the

military moved in to control the state and this set off a chain of events that led to Mugabe's resignation and the consequent installation of Mnangagwa as his replacement. A big picture analysis of these events shows that while there are many claimants for credit for Mugabe's departure, the real game changer was the role of the military. This is therefore their thing and it is hardly surprising that they are now moving in to occupy important positions within government institutions. Rather than see it as a reward therefore, another view is to look at these movements and promotions as the military merely asserting its authority within the state. Ultimately, the military state tag is easily pinned to the Zimbabwean politics. In other words, the generals who have joined government have not been moved but they will remain with military influence on government's governance system. They have moved because that is what they want to achieve. This view reflects the growing power of the military within the state (Mutanda 2019).

Furthermore, Mahere (2019) notes that retired officers from the uniformed forces are assigned new positions in the cabinet, party and state positions, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the national Parks. Rwodzi (2019) also confirms to the intricate ZANU-PF-Security Sector marriage that the army serves as a guarantor of ZANU-PF's power. As highlighted by Moyo the military personnel are deployed to strategic positions in the various state institutions responsible for governance such as Grain Marketing Board (GMB), National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) and the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM).

According to Chitiyo (2009) Zimbabwe faces the challenge that includes the security sector that remains highly politicised and partisan. As a result, the sector and government institutions retain a high capability and inclination to partisanship or use of politically motivated violence against civilians. Since year 2000, the security sector contributed to hostile political landscape and to the insecurity of citizens especially during, pre-elections and post-election stages. The partisanship of the security sector permeates to the use of violence against those in opposition of ZANU PF. The Joint Operation Committee which includes the ZDF, CIO, ZPS and high ranking ZANU PF officials have been known to lead violent campaigns to suppress opposition and CSO voices so as to "guarantee ZANU-PF success". Impunity for crimes committed by members of the security forces is common and there is no accountability thereof DCAF 2(020). On the contrary Zimbabwe's police forces have a high reputation locally and regionally in anti-crime operations, border policing and police training programmes, but not for political impartiality. The military's role in the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission since 2000 has been a particular bone of contention for

civil society and the opposition. Elections and the spectre of electoral violence have been a traditional fault line between the military and opposition parties and civil society; and there is every reason to substantiate the post 2018 elections violence based on previous security sector's role previously (Chitiyo & Kibble 2014). Afro barometer (2018) reported that in the days following the 2018 election, disgruntled citizens in Harare took to the streets to protest the skewed parliamentary result and the slow pace of the presidential count. In return the regime's response was vicious; soldiers opened fire on unarmed protesters, killing at least six. Moreover, according to Afro barometer (2018:14) survey the trend of growing militarization of political institutions is growing and accelerated after the November 2017 coup. Seven out of 10 Zimbabweans (71%) disapprove of a situation where "the army comes in to govern the country." An even larger majority (78%) believe that the armed forces should limit themselves to their constitutional role of providing national security and "not be involved at all in the country's politics" (emphasis added). For this reason, and following a clean-out of political deadwood across the public service, all government and parastatal appointees should be qualified civilians selected strictly on merit.

Contested political terrain in Zimbabwe

In a recent political event showing the fragility of the political field in Zimbabwe the Zimbabwe's Working National Security Council dismissed as "unfounded" rumours of a military coup in the making. The Council said that the nation's security forces remained "loyal, professional and dedicated to their constitutional mandate" The nation's Home Affairs Minister, issued a statement at Munhumutapa building in Harare with military chiefs in attendance (Mbewa 2020). See photo below.



Photo 4.1: Zimbabwe's Home Affairs Minister reads a statement on behalf of the Working National Security Council addressing rumours of an imminent coup in the country. Source of photo: twitter/Farai Mwakutuya

Furthermore, Rwodzi (2019:201) quoted Londregan and Poole that each successful coup increases the odds of a further coup. This suggests that each military government carries with it the seeds of its own removal. The Herald dated 11 June 2020 under a title "Security Service Chiefs dismiss coup rumours" reported that security service chiefs dismissed rumours that were being peddled of an imminent coup. These could be seeds carried by the 2017 military coup that put President Mnangagwa in power and will always determine the trends of political field in Zimbabwe. Activists have always tried to denounce the shrinking democratic space, and been with police brutality or threats from state security. Zim Rights, a human rights lobby groups, pointed out that, there is fear that the situation in Zimbabwe will escalate into civil war if the responsible authorities do not act since the political field remains delicate (Mutongwiza 2019). The MDC-A called for a mass protest in Bulawayo to express their opinion on country's governance system and was met with brutal response from the state security. The Aljazeera of 19 August 2019 reported that troops and police were deployed in Bulawayo in a bid to deter an unsanctioned march after the violent dispersal of another banned protest in the capital, Harare. The soldiers and armed police on horseback and in

trucks patrolled Bulawayo's central business district and other highly-populated parts of the city.

The Zimbabwean security forces responded to the January protests by deploying the military, the police and intelligence agents. Security forces used excessive and lethal force to disperse protesters with teargas, batons, water cannons and live ammunition. The crackdown also resulted in mass arbitrary arrests and beatings of protesters. Security forces conducted door-to-door searches and arrested those they suspected of organizing the stay-away. Between 600 and 700 people, including activists and civil society leaders, have been arbitrarily detained, many of them on trumped-up charges (Amnesty International 2019:8). The current political setting in Zimbabwe is quite fragile and polarised between ZANU PF and MDC-A. Such a fragile and contested terrain can disrupt any peace building discourse implementation. The Zimbabwe political scene is now consistently recognized into one or the other of two principal political parties-the ruling party Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF), or the main opposition Movement for Democratic Alliance MDC-A. Whenever the ruling party is confronted by the opposition and feel threatened the ruling party uses its institutional powers derived from controlling the security sector to reprimand the opposition. In retaliation, the opposition make several counter attacks in various forms. According to Report of the Commission of Inquiry into The 1st Of August 2018 Post-Election Violence (2018) the Zimbabwe politics was said to be highly politicised with much involvement of security sector. In an interview with the then MDC-T National Spokesperson Mr D. Mwonzora chronicled how violence erupted in 2008, *“The electoral process was taken over by the Military Junta, results took more than four weeks to be announced after that the use of brute force and violence was state sponsored. Soldiers were deployed to establish camps throughout the country and central intelligence as well. Violence was de facto condoned by the state as long as it was directed to the MDC it was by and large legalised”* (Mwonzora 2014:33)

Security sector's lack of political will to transform

For the New Dispensation to be taken seriously and for it to turn the leaf, 'there has to be political will to reform institutions that have a mandate to protect human rights such as the police, or strengthen existing institutions such as the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) rather than having a multiplicity of weak institutions without adequate resources as will happen if the amendment bill passes, which will add the Public Protector to the list of institutions that require resource (Mutongwiza 2019). It should be acknowledged that the security sector is a highly handle with care sector. Therefore, for the powers that be, it is

important that there is political interest in reforms to ensure progress and positive peace. DFID (2013) plainly says that security sector transformation (SST) will not work without strong commitment at the highest levels of government, the military and other influential security and intelligence actors. Moreover, it may take time to build up commitment, interest and a constituency for the much desired change in the security sector of Zimbabwe.

Comprehensive and fundamental reform within the security sector in Zimbabwe at this point in time lacks political quality. The changes that can be implemented in the current context will be based on negotiation and concession and may be more reflective of strategic accommodation of political pressures than wide spread democratic reform. Long-term behavioural change and the institutionalisation of accountability, transparency and participation are premised on political commitment and will occur only when it becomes politically necessary to implement such reforms (Hendricks & Hutton 2009). More so, Chitiyo (2009) noted that, the Zimbabweans see no need for the change this presents a challenge that they are not to engage yet. This brings to a situation that calls for the security sector to be an active participant in SST as this will go a long way in changing the mind-set from state security to human security. Given the controversial change of power from the former president Mugabe to President Mnangagwa through military intervention, the security sector has become more involved in Zimbabwe politics. This scenario of politicization of the security sector requires forms of reforms of the security sector although it is bound to create political winners and losers, so there will always be factions in a country that do not support an SSR process or even move to actively sabotage it (Eckhard 2016).

Security sector's threat to democratic governance in Zimbabwe

The research indicated that, having an improved governance system has been always a challenge in Zimbabwe since independence. In 2018, Zimbabwe was rated 44.7 out of 100 in the Ibrahim Index of African Governance showing a slow move to good governance. The country also ranked 160th of 180 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index in 2018 down from DCAF 2(020). Rwodzi (2019) notes that a military government cannot be trusted to promote good governance that govern democratically as exhibited by Zimbabwe's political situation. The prospects for political reconstruction depend on the willingness of the political establishment to genuinely open up political space for credible elections. It concludes that there is need for a paradigm shift in the government's modus operandi from the culture of violence and impunity to the politics of tolerance, reconciliation and accountable governance for a peaceful Zimbabwe to exist. Democracy in Africa is still threatened by the military.

The role of the security sector in peace building in Zimbabwe

In peace support operations other than peace enforcement, the main task of the military component is to assure a stable atmosphere in which substantial agreements and long-standing peace can be reached or maintained through diplomatic efforts and political processes. Within this framework, the military component's role will vary according to the overall human security situation. Dube and Makwerere (2012) posit that the word peace has been on the minds and tongues of many a Zimbabwean for a long time. Politicians, religious leaders and traditional leaders have all voiced the desire to steer the country towards the attainment of positive peace. These calls cannot be falling on deaf ears for many years. It is commendable to note that, the security sector in Zimbabwe has managed to maintain negative peace in the country. Intra and inter conflicts in Zimbabwe has not been rampant like in other Southern African countries like Mozambique, Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo.

The research findings are that there is serious lack of trust between the civilian population and the security sector. Actually the security sector is viewed as the enemy of the people until it transforms and build back the confidence in it. Until the security sector has transformed, positive peace that comes with observance of rule of law and government effectiveness seem elusive in Zimbabwe.

The role of security sector to bring about and consolidate positive peace is a delicate issue. The lack of public trust of the security sector to stop violence, suppress the resurgence of violence, and perhaps even transform destructive, violent interaction into non-violent or show constructive behaviour is a cause for concern as evidence through research shows it being perpetrator. However, security sector remains an integral part of a process to a more productive and peaceful society in the country.

History and the current Zimbabwean scenario have shown that the deployment of the military has drastic results on a country's political and socio-economic status. Under militarised regimes; serious human rights violations, a decline in economic growth and lack of government trust by citizens and international community become an eminent culture. It is therefore, crucial for the government and key players in state development to note that positive peace and real development does not come from military deployment but it comes from viable economic and political reforms.

State Security forces should conduct themselves in a professional manner and discharge their mandate in accordance with the Zimbabwe Constitution. An immediate stop to the use of excessive force by the security agents for crowd control is a call that required urgent

attention. More humane and dignified mechanisms should be the standard as opposed to the use of live ammunition or the tendency by soldiers of moving around carrying guns. Soldiers, whose mandate is clearly defined by the constitution and other enabling legislation, should be withdrawn from the public and returned to the barracks. Positive peace is achieved through civil liberties and rights enshrined in the Constitution, including the rights to assembly, protest and association, being respected by the security sector who are found wanting in most of the instances.

Given the symbiotic relationship between security sector, ZANU-PF and the wider Zimbabwean government, reforming the security sector will be a key entry for improving governance, human rights compliance and peacebuilding in Zimbabwe. The National Security Act of 2009 provides an oversight for national policies on security, defence and law and order but it lacks implementation DCAF 2(020). The long-term involvement of the military in politics in Zimbabwe severely depletes the capacity of civilian organisations to govern effectively and keep the military off the civilian space into the barracks. Below is a picture of the military in the streets captured during the August 2019 protests.



Photo 4.2: Calls for the New Dispensation to reform the security sector (Lovejoy Mutongwiza/August 2019)

Furthermore, Chidza (2018) reported in the Newsday 12 December 2018 and Gagare (2019) reported in the Zimbabwe Independent of 17th of May that human rights groups and western countries reignited debate around security sector reforms and want it concluded in the wake of the August 1 post-election violence and subsequent use of force by the army that left at least six people dead. The security sector reforms that were called for would ensure the security forces operate within the parameters of the constitution and in terms of the law in an apolitical and professional manner. Mungwari (2019) proposes that a point of departure for

SST could be genuine national dialogue between ZANU PF and MDC Alliance despite the fact that efforts to engage each other appear elusive. As highlighted earlier on Zimbabwe is polarised between these two parties hence there is need to reconcile and heal the gap between the two poles.

Rebuilding of the relationship between security sector and the civilians through a transformation will abide by the Mohlante commission recommendation of 2018 that the army's actions on civilians were not justified so they need to stop from confronting civilians and domestic interventions. Although the violence has diminished since 4th February, reports indicate that this continues at a lower level since then, with the army being implicated in 20% of the reports (Zimbabwe Human Rights Forum 2019).

It is a well-known fact that a democratically elected government can help guarantee that security agencies refrain from exploiting their power for particular interests or become involved in repression against their own citizens. In many developing and conflict-affected countries, however, democracy and effective security forces are often found wanting. Experts emphasise that only a democratically controlled security sector can ensure the protection of the population in the long term SST. Without democratic transformation, it is a recipe for the next autocracy (Eckhard 2016).

Conclusion and recommendations

From the preceding examination of peace, it can be argued that the conditions in Zimbabwe are consistent with negative peace'. In other words, the nature of peace currently and for quite some time in the past can best be described as 'negative peace'. In spite of that it is the view of this work that Zimbabwe needs 'positive peace'. By 'positive' peace is meant the conscious efforts aimed at eliminating the root causes of war, violence, and injustice and the conscious effort to build a society that reflects these commitments. 'Positive' peace is proactive unlike negative peace which is retroactive. Consequently, in order to realize 'practical positive peace' in Zimbabwe, together with other possible measures to realize this end, this paper is accordingly arguing for security sector transformation to be implemented in Zimbabwe, as a short-term as well as a long - term measure to achieving positive peace.

It is clear that reform of the security sector in Zimbabwe should be an urgent holistic national agenda item to achieve a practical solution to positive peace. However, while there are some important factors working in favour of that agenda, the challenges are quite debilitating, notably the legacy of the armed struggle that left the military with heavy political influence. It is therefore imperative that, as Hendricks and Hutton (2009b:11) suggest, a delicate balancing

of the critical question of amnesty and retribution be worked out in a participatory manner. Trends emerging from the findings are that the Zimbabwe security sector is interweaved with the ruling party the ZANU-PF and any efforts to peacebuilding should be focused on interwoven “fabric”. As such the symbiotic relationship between the security sector and ZANU-PF government is compromising the delivery of good governance. The findings are that with the dominance of the “fabric” in the political field ever since year 2000 period under research the country has never known positive peace from a government failing to meet the qualities of well-functioning government. Whichever interpretation of recent developments proves to be correct; the militarization of Zimbabwean politics is a major cause for concern. Although the creeping influence of the military within both the party and the state is not a new phenomenon, the period since the 2017 President Munangagwa’s rise appears to have seen the intensification of this process. In addition to increasing the risk of the kind of violent repression witnessed in January 2019, the greater control of military leaders over civilian processes has important implications for positive peace prevalence in the country. The military’s influence extends throughout the country’s political and economic institutions, and it is nominally responsible for running the security sector.

Considerable political, practical, conceptual and strategic work still needs to be done to find positive peace in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe government would not, at present, qualify as a good governance or a well-functioning government in most political scientists’ calculations given the turmoil of conflicts that have been experienced in the country that entangle the security sector. It has been found out through the research that the security sector has been politicised and found its way into the state institutions such that it dances to the whims of ZANU-PF. As such it is not surprising that none in ZANU-PF has ever come in the open to castigate or acknowledge the militarisation of institutions such as Zimbabwe, Electoral Commission (ZEC), Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC), Grain Marketing Board (GMB) etc. One of the key findings of the Motlanthe Commission which was set up after the 2018 elections was that six civilians had been shot and killed by members of the military or police. These were serious human rights violations, but not a single soldier or police officer has been held accountable to his or her actions. None of the commanders has been held to account.

Recommendations

That positive and sustainable peace and not negative peace is desired in Zimbabwe is indisputable, what is contestable and indeed a challenge is the issue of commitment in those, it is their responsibility to bring this about. As a prerequisite for 'positive peace', efforts must

be made especially by those in authority to create conditions necessary for cultivating a 'culture of peace' to thrive at both macro and micro levels in our society especially as we move towards yet another potentially conflict - prone harmonised election in year 2023. Below are recommendations from this study which might help in curtailing challenges with the security sector and how it can contribute to positive peace building in the country?

- The security sector should carry their duties as prescribed and acknowledged in the country's constitution.
- The armed forces should be fully conversant with the democratic features of the system which they serve and they should also interact with any of the elected civil authorities around a range of issues critical to their national mandate.
- There is need for restoring judicial independence, there is need to create an independent and impartial judicial commission to investigate infringements of judicial independence and provide public recommendations for judicial reform and examination in particular reforms that prevent the distribution of unlawful payments or gifts to judges. Enforce the principle of equality under law. Convene an independent body to examine past practices of the Office of the Prosecutor to devise measures to ensure that the office operates in a non-partisan fashion. Revise or abrogate section 121 of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act, which permits prosecutorial appeals of bail rulings, to limit the possibility of abuse.
- The high levels of uncertainty for citizens in the country results in them have serious challenges in amicable engagement with security sector institutions. Programming that focuses on reducing this uncertainty provides entry points for broader security sector transformation initiatives and helps the public to see tangible results in a short period of time.
- The conduct of security policy and the management of security matters should be handled in a consultative and transparent manner, and should encourage a high level of parliamentary and public participation without endangering the lives of personnel and without prejudicing the ability of the security forces to conduct legal and legitimate operations.
- It is essential to deconstruct all erroneous political conceptualizations of security sector reform, to discard the faulty rationalizations and deceitful expositions of security sector reform which are so myopic as to limit the idea to mere balancing of political power or to settling political scores.
- National security should be sought primarily through efforts to meet the political, economic, social, and cultural rights of the country's people; and the activities of the

security sector should be subordinate to and supportive of these efforts. A culture of accountability and democratic process needs to be created to replace a police culture of impunity and violence then positive peace can be realised.

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