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Managing Conflict
*Lessons From the
South African
Peace Committees*

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Managing Conflict

Lessons From the South African Peace Committees

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Center for Development Information and Evaluation
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Summary

IN 1948, SOUTH AFRICA INSTITUTED A system of racial separation known as apartheid. Apartheid legalized social, economic, and political discrimination favoring the white minority. It governed the allocation of jobs; limited the access of nonwhites to social services such as health, education, and housing; and severely restricted ownership of land.

This system began to unravel in the mid-1980s, with widespread strikes, rioting, and civil disobedience. From 1985 through 1991, an estimated nine thousand people died as a result of politically motivated violence. By the early 1990s, responsible leaders on both sides recognized that political change was inevitable and necessary. They agreed to work for a new constitutional arrangement in which all South Africans would be equal before the law.

Toward that goal, 27 South African organizations committed themselves, on 14 September 1991, to reducing politically motivated violence by signing a document known as the National Peace Accord. Among its mandates was the establishment of national, regional, and local peace committees. These were to be a major vehicle for reducing violence in communities that for generations had been deeply divided along racial lines.

The peace committees received limited external financing, and the U.S. Agency for International Development and other international donors supported efforts to promote a peaceful transition in a variety of other ways

as well, both before and during the 1991–94 transition period. For example, donors channeled to political organizations such as the African National Congress (ANC—the party created in 1911 and once led by Nelson Mandela) and the Inkatha Freedom Party to strengthen their capability to engage in negotiations with the white minority government.

A broad range of nongovernmental and community-based organizations also benefited from external financing. Of particular relevance to the work of the peace committees, many such organizations were engaged in mediating and resolving disputes, promoting tolerance within an ethnically and politically diverse society, and educating citizens in alternatives to violence.

In April 1997, USAID’s Center for Development Information and Evaluation commissioned a study on the role of the South African peace committees as a mechanism for managing conflicts. The study was part of CDIE’s examination of the role of donor organizations in postconflict transition societies. Information was collected primarily through interviews with South Africans who either had been directly involved with the committees or were otherwise highly knowledgeable about their activities. The author, Nicole Ball, of the Overseas Development Council, also consulted documentation from the peace committees and other written materials. She was ably assisted by Chris Spies, then at the Centre for Conflict Resolution in Cape Town.

Structure and Mandate Of the Peace Committees

The National Peace Accord sought “to bring an end to political violence in our country and to set out the codes of conduct, procedures, and mechanisms to achieve this goal.” It established codes of conduct for the political parties and the police force defining how these groups were to operate during the transition to multiparty rule.

The accord also established a network of regional and local peace committees. The network was established because the institutions of state were unable, for a variety of reasons, to find nonviolent solutions to intergroup conflicts. (Indeed, sometimes they *contributed* to violence.) The work of these peace committees was to be overseen by a body called the National Peace Committee.

The National Peace Committee nominated the members of the National Peace Secretariat, whose task was to establish and coordinate the regional and local peace committees. Its members were primarily senior politicians. The secretariat established the boundaries of the 11 regions the regional committees were to serve and worked with regional leaders to establish those committees. In contrast to the National Peace Committee, the Secretariat met relatively often. It also met from time to time with the chairmen of the regional peace committees to review their progress and engage in planning.

Setting up regional peace committees was frequently a contentious process. The various participants jockeyed for position or had to be

persuaded to take the peace accord seriously. Nonetheless, by 30 April 1993, 10 regional committees had been established, and the 11th was on its way. For inclusivity, regional peace committee members were recruited from a wide variety of civil society organizations, local and tribal authorities, and the security forces. Day-to-day administration was overseen by an elected executive council and carried out by a professional staff. An especially important task of the regional committees was to establish and oversee local peace committees.

No limit was placed on the number of local peace committees, and by the time the national election was held in April 1994, just over 260 local committees existed. Staff were appointed by the regional peace committees on a consensus basis. Their brief was to implement the National Peace Accord through a variety of measures including settling disputes potentially leading to violence and generally creating trust and reconciliation at the grass roots. The success of local committees thus depended greatly on the quality and personal characteristics of the staff. Biased or inexperienced staff could, and in some cases reportedly did, jeopardize the effectiveness of the entire enterprise. For the most part, though, the peace committees attracted highly talented and dedicated individuals whose contribution to the peace process was critical.

The Peace Committees In Action

Former staff members and observers of the peace committees tend to agree that the

structural causes of violence and the struggle for power among the major political parties limited the capacity of the committees to significantly reduce violence in South Africa before the 1994 elections. Yet even the accord's severest critics do not believe that the peace committees were a failure. Conversations with South Africans involved in the peace committees at all levels suggested six crucial, interrelated functions the committees fulfilled, to one degree or another, and against which their success can be measured: 1) opening channels of communication; 2) legitimizing the concept of negotiating; 3) creating a safe place to raise issues that could not be addressed in other forums; 4) strengthening accountability; 5) helping equalize the power balance; and 6) helping reduce the incidence of violence.

The ability of any given committee at either the regional or local level to carry out any specific task varied substantially with the environment in which that committee was operating. Whatever the locale, that environment was extremely complex. Some factors eased the work of the committees and others complicated it—sometimes to the point of impossibility. There were significant regional differences in the success of the peace committees. Committees in areas where secret, state-sanctioned paramilitary hit squads known as the “third force” operated with impunity experienced considerably more difficulty in achieving their objectives than committees in areas where third force activity was less pervasive and the police and armed forces generally supported the work of the peace committees.

Overall, the committees had a mixed record, and it is impossible to make a definitive assessment of their success or failure. They

were unable to stop violence completely but often limited its occurrence. Unquestionably, they saved lives. The committees could not end the impunity of the security forces, but they did help equalize the balance of power between those in power and ordinary citizens. They also helped strengthen accountability. Observers valued the committees' capacity to promote communication between individuals and groups where none had existed or had seemed impossible. Though the committees were unable to transform the “struggle” mentality that had evolved within the black community in its efforts to oppose apartheid, they did help South Africans understand the value of political negotiations and how to engage in them constructively.

Learning From South Africa

An examination of the South African peace committee experiment demonstrates that it offers a number of lessons for conflict management elsewhere in the world, in terms of what to emulate, what to avoid, and the limits of peace committees as a conflict management tool. It also provides an indication of the environment in which peace committees will be most successful.

Lesson 1. Peace committees can be valuable conflict management tools. The South African experience demonstrates that peace committees, at the local, regional, and national levels, can help manage conflict in deeply divided societies. The South African peace committees illustrate that *under the appropriate conditions* efforts to engender dialog and bring opposing parties together to solve

mutual problems can help in reducing violence, breaking negative patterns of intergroup and interpersonal interactions, and fostering the constructive relationships that are the building blocks of peaceful societies.

In South Africa, peace committees were employed as a short-term tool to help manage conflict during an interim period while the country's political transition was being negotiated. In other countries, it may be useful to explore the possibility of using peace committees in a preventive mode, before the outbreak of hostilities, and to support political transitions over the medium term.

Lesson 2. Concept should not be confused with structure. The peace committee *concept* is transferable, but the precise form such committees assume should be developed locally. Many former peace committee members and staff interviewed in 1997 stressed that the South African peace committees were highly context-specific and cautioned against blindly transferring the South African peace committee *structure* to other countries with different social, political, and economic conditions.

Lesson 3. Although peace committees can be a valuable conflict management tool, they are not appropriate in every setting. It is important to evaluate the environment into which peace committees are to be introduced to determine if a sufficient number of key enabling factors are in place. The South African experience illustrates that certain environmental factors increase the likelihood that the committees will be able to aid the political transition. *All* these elements do not always have to be present to justify the cre-

ation of peace committees, but the absence of a significant number of them will call into question the viability of peace committees. Fourteen factors were identified, the first two being considered critical: political will among the national actors; the attitude of the security forces and other armed groups; responsible, dynamic leadership; a well-developed civil society; official accountability; relationships of trust among key stakeholders; local ownership of the committees; inclusivity; an evenhanded approach; communicating a message of peace; flexible, quick-disbursing funding mechanisms; organizational flexibility that values contingency planning; appropriate staffing; and international support.

Lesson 4. Build on what exists locally and take local ownership seriously. Although the local peace committees could have been better rooted in the communities they served, the decision to create a peace committee network and its implementation was entirely driven by South Africans. Had the peace committee concept not developed organically from within South African society, the committees would probably have been a good deal less effective than they proved to be.

Lesson 5. Be prepared to make a long-term commitment to conflict management. There are no quick-fix solutions to violent conflicts. Breaking the cycle of violence requires building a complex web of constructive intergroup and interpersonal relationships. These relationships will only be built as trust develops among the different stakeholders, and creating trust is a long-term proposition requiring probably no less than a generation.

This time frame poses a problem for external actors, which have tended to provide intensive support to political transitions for a period of two to three years and consider five years to be “long term.” At a minimum, donors need to explore how to make their support for specific mechanisms in conflict management more sustainable. One way would be

to provide peace committee staff members with skills that will enhance their effectiveness. Another would be to monitor local peace committees during the interim transition period to determine whether any of them should carry forward in the next stage and what sort of support they might need to continue their work.

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Genesis of The Peace Committees

IN 1990 SOUTH AFRICA STOOD AT THE threshold of a historic political transition. Both Frederik de Klerk, leader of the ruling National Party, and Nelson Mandela, the highly respected opposition leader who had been detained by the government for 27 years, understood that political change was inevitable and necessary. Although they disagreed on the scope and content of that change, the two leaders did agree that it should come peacefully. Neither side was able to prevail militarily, and the violence that had been wracking the country since the mid-1980s was causing great harm to society and the economy. De Klerk and Mandela thus agreed to participate in a multiparty process aimed at controlling politically motivated violence. The goal was to create a more peaceful environment in which to conduct the broader negotiations for a new constitutional arrangement. These discussions eventually led to the signing of the National Peace Accord in a highly publicized ceremony in September 1991.

The Apartheid Legacy

The peace committees that operated under the auspices of the National Peace Accord in South Africa from 1991 through 1994 thus came into being as a result of the country's effort to dismantle the system of apartheid. Established in 1948 by the Afrikaner National Party under the leadership of Daniël Malan, apartheid had justified and maintained the economic and political dominance of South Africa's minority white population for more than four decades. It perpetuated the practices of colonialism by legalizing the "classification" of the population into four racial groups—white, Coloured, Indian, and black—and enforcing different standards of treatment for each of these groups through legislation, administrative policies, and sheer coercion.

Apartheid permeated every aspect of life in South Africa, engendering especially grave inequalities between the white and black popu-

lations. Legislation such as the Group Areas Act and the pass law limited the access of nonwhites to basic social services such as health, education, and housing; the enjoyment of political rights; and the pursuit of economic advancement. Schools and universities were restricted in their hiring, admission, curriculum, and language of instruction. Blacks could not vote in the national legislature until 1994. Certain jobs and professions were deemed “white only.” Throughout South Africa, basic political rights were violated because of ineffective criminal justice systems.

Blacks were permitted to own land in only about 13 percent of the country, and many nonwhites were dispossessed of their homes and

evicted from their ancestral property. Blacks older than 16 were also required to carry identification passbooks to restrict immigration into so-called white areas to individuals whose labor was required. Even where racial groups lived in the same geographic area, each group had its own local government structure. The arrangement provided highly unequal access to local resources and to the provincial and national governments.

Apartheid also put a straitjacket on the civilian bureaucracy. Jobs were allocated on the basis of race and gender, rather than strictly on qualifications. White Afrikaans-speaking males, many of whom were closely tied to the National Party, filled more than 90 percent of public

Governance Structures in the Rural Areas Of the Western Cape

“The apartheid ideal sought to divide every town forming a geographical and commercial unit into three racially separate ‘towns,’ one for whites, one for Coloured, and one for blacks, each with its own name, management system, and lines of communication to provincial and national government. . . .

“The typical rural town of the Western Cape provided a confusing picture. It formed one economic and commercial unit with a high level of interdependence in matters of subsistence. Yet highly fragmented and unequal systems of governance existed, with scarcely any joint planning. Three different departments administered the separate educational institutions, yet policing was centralised under one station commander.

“Cultural and religious contacts were almost nonexistent, yet in the labour arena numerous and continuous contacts naturally took place. Because many Coloureds and blacks were labourers in white households, businesses, and farms, they had an intimate knowledge of the conditions of white life. At the same time, whites were extraordinarily ignorant about conditions in the Coloured and black townships.” (Odendaal and Spies 1996, 4–5.)

administration positions.* The result was a legitimacy crisis within government agencies and local governments that grew stronger with every passing year.

Apartheid experienced its first serious challenges in the late 1950s and early 1960s when blacks began to protest the pass-law system. In 1960 nearly 70 protesters against passbook regulations were killed in Sharpeville. This event underscored the difficulty of eliminating apartheid through nonviolent means, and in 1961 the African National Congress (ANC) launched its armed struggle. Despite this early opposition, apartheid further evolved in the 1970s to include forced territorial separation of the black population into four racially based, autonomous “homelands” and six “self-governing regions.” The homeland administrations in effect denationalized nine million South Africans. As frustration with the effects of apartheid grew, schoolchildren in Soweto rose up in 1976 in defiance of laws requiring them to be educated in Afrikaans.

The apartheid system began to unravel in earnest in the 1980s. The weakening was abetted internally by the increased power of organized labor unions and widening support for resistance movements composed of political, youth, women’s, human rights, and other civic organizations. One of the few positive legacies of the apartheid era was the growth of an exten-

United Democratic Front

“UDF affiliates . . . organised a wide variety of ‘mass actions’ including consumer boycotts, rent boycotts, school boycotts, worker stayaways, signature campaigns, and large protests and marches. Their coordinated actions were a source of significant concern for the National Party and the government’s security structures. The inception of the state(s) of emergency, in 1985, and again from 1986, was largely in response to various protest strategies of the UDF, and targeted UDF organisations for repression.” (Douwes–Dekker and others 1995, 65–66.)

sive network of community-based and nongovernmental organizations. Over the years, South Africa developed a rich civil society, based on myriad organizations affiliated with business, labor, the churches, and other groups, to meet the enormous political, economic, and social deficits generated by apartheid. These groups ranged from the very small, grass-roots community-based organizations that grappled with local issues to umbrella organizations such as the South African National Civic Organisation, which were players on the national scene.†

In 1983 the United Democratic Front was established in opposition to the new tricameral

*In contrast, the economy was controlled primarily by English-speaking whites.

†The individual civic organizations, known as “civics,” were created as alternatives to the official governing structures in the townships. They also played an important role in resistance to apartheid through mass actions such as boycotts and strikes. The South African National Civic Organisation was a member of the African National Congress alliance, which also included the ANC, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, and the South African Communist Party.

parliamentary system, which was intended to co-opt Coloureds and Indians and further isolate the black population. The United Democratic Front was an umbrella organization with more than 600 affiliates—the Congress of South African Trade Unions and other workers’ organizations; youth, women’s, and religious associations; and civic organizations were among those represented. The ANC simultaneously escalated its efforts to stigmatize the regime internationally and to wage its own type of guerrilla warfare. Meanwhile, the United States and the United Kingdom had become more outspoken against the regime. International pressure in the form of United Nations embargoes and divestitures by international firms in the early 1980s exerted further pressure on the government to repeal various pieces of the apartheid

legislation. Isolation contributed to economic decline and a growing sentiment that the National Party could not sustain its grip on society.

As social protest grew, maintenance of apartheid required increased violence, brutality, and repression on the part of the security forces. The government declared frequent “states of emergency” from 1985 through 1990, enabling it to exercise extensive powers of entry, seizure, declaration of curfews, and detention without trial. The primary task of South Africa’s security forces (army, navy, air force, and police) was to protect the structures that ensured economic and political privileges for the white minority and to prevent the majority of the population from achieving full political rights.

The End of Reform And Return to Repression

“On June 12, [1986,] . . . President [P.W.] Botha appeared on TV wagging his authoritarian finger. . . .

“The sinister forces of revolution, Botha charged, had marked the upcoming Soweto Day anniversary as the moment of final and conclusive uprising. ‘There comes a time,’ he continued, ‘when a nation must choose between war and a dishonorable, fearful peace, and we have arrived at that point.’ . . . The state president had actually declared war, and now he was launching his opening offensive; another nationwide state of emergency, effective immediately.

“Even as he spoke, the security forces were moving into the townships in crushing force. They picked up every comrade, activist, and organizer they could lay their hands on, and 24,000 blacks were soon in detention, many of them schoolchildren. The government cracked down brutally on the press, kicking a few foreign correspondents out of the country and forbidding everyone else to film or photograph any ‘security-force action.’ The newspapers were no longer allowed to name detainees, agitate for their release, or even quote court testimony about torture during interrogation. . . .” (Malan 1991, 268–69.)

The police were viewed by black and Coloured South Africans as the instrument of state oppression. The police, however, saw themselves as an apolitical force that was merely enforcing national legislation. In reality, the police formed part of the Joint Management Committee system, which was designed to permeate every layer of society. The system was coordinated by the State Security Council, chaired by the state president. When de Klerk took over the presidency from P.W. Botha in 1989, he abolished the system, but this did not significantly transform community–police relations in the nonwhite communities. In addition, just as the South African government employed the security forces to destabilize neighboring countries that supported the outlawed African National Congress and to attack ANC members in exile, secret state-sanctioned paramilitary hit squads, known collectively as “the third force,” were created to operate within South Africa to split the black opposition and undermine the legitimacy of the ANC.

During the apartheid era, South African society was characterized by a culture of mistrust and violence. Tens of thousands of people, including children, were detained and tortured in South African prisons, and many mysteriously died from “suicide” while in custody. But these acts, as reprehensible as they were, were just the tip of the iceberg. The daily lives of millions of nonwhite South Africans were seriously distorted or destroyed by a system that was based on preventing them from satisfying human needs

such as subsistence, protection, participation, and freedom.* Partly as a response to these structural constraints, partly as a result of the activities of the third force, and partly owing to the ANC–UDF campaign, begun in 1985, to “render South Africa ungovernable,” violence escalated from the mid-1980s onward. The Botha government, which had inaugurated a brief period of reform in the early 1980s, responded with repression.† By 1990, though, it was understood that repression was not a long-term solution and that apartheid had to be completely dismantled.

De Klerk replaced Botha as state president in late 1989, and senior officials of the ruling National Party had come to recognize that apartheid was no longer economically or politically viable. To safeguard the prerogatives enjoyed by the country’s minority white population, a certain degree of political reform was necessary. In common with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, de Klerk had calculated that he could control the reform process. And, just like Gorbachev, de Klerk discovered that once set in motion, a reform process is difficult, if not impossible, to harness.

The Peace Process

On 2 February 1990, State President Frederik de Klerk announced that the African National Congress and other antiapartheid organizations were no longer banned. Soon

*See Max–Neef and others 1989 (33) for a listing of critical human needs and a discussion of the distinction between “human needs” and “satisfiers” of human needs.

†During this period of reform, much of the apartheid-era legislation, including the pass law, which had generated so much protest, was repealed.

after, Nelson Mandela, who, from his prison cell, had begun a dialog with the government, was released from detention along with other anti-apartheid activists. These actions set the stage for significant political reform. In April 1990 the government and the African National Congress began a series of meetings to develop the framework within which this reform would be negotiated. The subsequent discussions between the government and the ANC reflected the fact that both parties viewed these negotiations as a means of achieving an agreement that would preserve their original objectives intact. Not surprisingly, after a very optimistic beginning, the “talks about talks” failed to lead to the anticipated breakthrough. By early 1991 the negotiation process appeared to be headed for breakdown.

This political deadlock had several causes. Chief among them were the unwillingness of either party to be seen to be making compromises—which they believed would have been viewed by their supporters as a sign of weakness—and the ANC’s need to transform itself. The ANC faced the difficult task of making the transition from a political movement into a political party capable, on the one hand, of negotiating with the government and, on the other hand, of meeting the expectations of its supporters at the grass roots. A critical complicating factor, however, was a significant increase in violence following the unbanning of the anti-apartheid groups and the release of the political prisoners. These events severely affected the environment in which the political discussions took place.

Lumped together under the rubric “political violence,” the acts actually had multiple roots. The most significant was the existence of a

political system—apartheid—that both denied the majority of the population any voice in decisions shaping their daily lives and actively fomented violence among different groups. As the apartheid system began to disintegrate, the competition for power among a whole range of groups and organizations (some of which had been allied with each other during the apartheid period) and the lack of a tradition of peaceful political discourse produced an upsurge of violence. That was particularly the case in KwaZulu–Natal and the townships around Johannesburg. It has recently been estimated, for example, that nearly 9,000 people died as a result of politically motivated violence in KwaZulu–Natal alone from 1990 through 1996. The bulk of those deaths occurred during 1990–94 (Jeffery 1997). All together, nearly 15,000 South Africans died as a result of politically motivated violence between the unbanning of the ANC and the all-party elections in April 1994. (See appendix A for a monthly breakdown of deaths associated with politically motivated violence from 1985 through 1995.)

With both the violence and the political deadlock intensifying, the ANC announced, on 5 April 1991, that it would cease to negotiate with the government unless de Klerk took a series of steps—including dismissing the ministers of defense and law and order, banning the public display of weapons, and suspending policemen implicated in shootings in the Johannesburg townships. These demands were based on the ANC’s belief that the government—especially in the form of the state-sanctioned third force—was perpetrating much of the violence and that the government and the ANC’s chief rival, the Inkatha Freedom Party, were allied against the ANC. As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has subsequently shown, many of these allegations were true (for example,

see Kramer 1997). At the time, however, the government sought to sidestep the ANC's demands and refused to comply with the ultimatum. Instead, President de Klerk announced that the government would invite political, church, and community leaders to a two-day conference on violence at the end of May. The ANC and allied organizations declined this invitation.

When press reports in May 1991 revealed that the government had funded several Inkatha activities, de Klerk was forced to make some concessions to the ANC, and he demoted the ministers of defense and law and order. Although the ANC and allied organizations

such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions did not change their minds about boycotting de Klerk's peace meeting, behind-the-scenes mediation by church and business leaders did produce a compromise that allowed that conference to go forward as the first stage in a broader peace process aimed at halting the violence.* A church-business steering committee was set up to facilitate that process.

On 22 June 1991, a multiparty peace conference was held with some 120 delegates representing nearly 30 organizations. Key participants were the National Party, the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party, along with representa-

National Peace Accord

"We, participants in the political process in South Africa, representing the political parties and organisations and governments indicated beneath our signatures, condemn the scourge of political violence which has afflicted our country and all such practices as have contributed to such violence in the past, and commit ourselves and the parties, organisations, and governments we represent to this National Peace Accord.

"The current prevalence of political violence in the country has already caused untold hardship, disruption and loss of life and property in our country. It now jeopardizes the very process of peaceful political transformation and threatens to leave a legacy of insurmountable division and deep bitterness in our country. Many, probably millions, of citizens live in continuous fear as a result of the climate of violence. This dehumanising factor must be eliminated from our society. . . .

"In order to effectively eradicate intimidation and violence, mechanisms need to be created which shall on the one hand deal with the investigation of incidents and the causes of violence and intimidation and on the other hand actively combat the occurrence of violence and intimidation."
(National Peace Accord [NPA] 1991.)

*ANC-allied organizations were not alone in boycotting this meeting. The South African Council of Churches also did not participate because of its policy against supporting unilateral initiatives.

tives of business and church organizations acting as facilitators. At this meeting, the delegates developed the outline of a peace accord and agreed to establish a preparatory committee to flesh out the actual document. Two days later the preparatory committee met for the first time. It created five 11-member working groups, comprising three representatives each from the National Party–government group, the IFP, and the ANC-led alliance, plus one religious leader and one business representative from the preparatory committee. Each group was charged with reaching a consensus on one of five topics: code of conduct for political parties, code of conduct for security forces,* socioeconomic development, implementation and monitoring mechanisms, and process, secretariat, and media. In less than three months, the National Peace Accord was completed (Gastrow 1995, 15–34).

The National Peace Accord

The National Peace Accord was signed in a highly publicized ceremony on 14 September 1991, by the representatives of 27 organizations. Key signatories included the government, the security forces, the major political parties represented in Parliament (such as the National Party, the Democratic Party, and the Labour Party), the ANC, the Inkatha Freedom Party, the Communist Party of South Africa, and the Congress of South African Trade Unions. The Pan Africanist Congress and the Azanian People's Organization did not sign the accord

because of strong noncollaborationist views, but they attended the conference and indicated their support for the spirit and objectives of the accord. Three right-wing parties (the Conservative Party, the Afrikaner Volksfront, and the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging) refused to participate in any aspect of the process, which they viewed as a form of capitulation to the ANC.

The signatories' main objective was "to bring an end to political violence in our country and to set out the codes of conduct, procedures, and mechanisms to achieve this goal." The codes of conduct for the political parties and the police force defined how these groups were to operate during the transition to multiparty rule and provided means of monitoring their behavior. To help consolidate the peace process, guidelines were established for local socioeconomic reconstruction and development efforts.

The accord also established two mechanisms to "deal with the investigation of incidents and the causes of violence and intimidation and...actively combat the occurrence of violence and intimidation." The first was the Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation, known as the Goldstone Commission, after its chairman, Judge Richard Goldstone. The second was a network of regional and local dispute resolution committees, which subsequently became known as "peace committees." Their work was to be overseen by a National Peace Committee and its secretariat.

*In the actual event, only the code of conduct for the police force was completed.

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Defining Success: What Can Peace Committees Achieve?

TO EVALUATE THE LESSONS THAT THE SOUTH African peace committees provide for the development of conflict management tools, it is first necessary to identify their major objectives and assess the degree to which they were able to achieve these goals. The stated goal of the National Peace Accord as a whole was to “bring an end to political violence.” The peace committees were the mechanism through which “the occurrence of violence and intimidation” would be “actively combated.” Viewed from this perspective, the fact that politically related deaths reached new heights in 1992 and 1993 suggested to many South Africans that the peace accord and the peace committees were a failure. This view was particularly widespread before the assassination of Communist Party leader Chris Hani in June 1993. During the memorial events for Hani, the peace committees demonstrated their capacity to forestall violence under extremely challenging conditions. They began to be taken more seriously.

It is also important to understand that the official mandates of the regional and local peace committees extended well beyond “ending violence,” making it inappropriate to judge the committees merely on this one criterion. What is more, a comparison of the official mandates with the functions actually carried out by the committees clearly demonstrates that despite significant differences in the degree of success registered by individual committees, as a group, the regional and local peace committees did manage to perform most tasks specified in the peace accord. Moreover, they took on the additional burden of monitoring public events—a task not called for by the accord but one that emerged as a clear priority because of events on the ground. Even the most ardent critics of the work of the peace committees agree that they did make a difference and that violence would have been still greater had the committees not existed.

Structure and Mandate Of the Peace Committees

The National Peace Accord created the *National Peace Committee* to help “implement the accord and establish the institutions of peace.” Each signatory organization had one or two seats on the committee, with senior politicians predominating. The 60-person committee was chaired by one John Hall. A businessman, Hall had been in contact with the ANC since the early 1980s and also had in mid-1991 cochaired the National Peace Accord preparatory committee with Bishop Desmond Tutu. The vice chairman was Bishop Stanley Magoba, president of the Methodist Church and a former inmate of Robben Island, whose infamous prison had housed scores of political prisoners. Although Hall has characterized the National Peace Committee as a watchdog body, in point of fact it played a marginal role in the subsequent transition, meeting only twice before the April 1994 election.

National Peace Committee

Mandate: “to monitor and to make recommendations on the implementation of the National Peace Accord as a whole and to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Organisations” (NPA 1991).

Membership: representation from each signatory of the peace accord.

National Peace Secretariat

Mandate: “to establish and coordinate Regional Dispute Resolution Committees and thereby Local Dispute Resolution Committees” (NPA 1991).

Membership (as of 4 November 1992) :
Antonie Gildenhuys (chairman), Chris Fisser (National Party), Peter Gastrow (Democratic Party), Senzo Mfayela (Inkatha Freedom Party), Jayendra Naidoo (ANC Alliance), Deon Rudman (Ministry of Justice), Tokyo Sexwale (ANC Alliance), Johan Steenkamp (National Party), Suzanne Vos (Inkatha Freedom Party).

The National Peace Committee nominated the members of the *National Peace Secretariat*, whose main task was to establish and coordinate the peace committees at the regional and local levels (RSA 1992, paragraph 4; NPA 1991). Its members were primarily senior politicians. Created on 8 November 1991, the secretariat accorded high priority to the areas most affected by the violence, the Witswatersrand–Vaal River (Witsvaal) region around Johannesburg and the KwaZulu–Natal region.

The secretariat established the boundaries of the 11 regions the regional committees were to serve and worked with regional leaders to establish those committees.* In contrast to the National Peace Committee, the secretariat met relatively often. It also met from time to time

*These 11 regions covered the entire territory of South Africa with the exception of 3 “independent” states created during the apartheid era that had chosen not to sign the peace accord: Bophuthatswana, the Transkei, and Venda. A fourth exception, Ciskei, had signed the accord but later withdrew from active participation in implementing it.

Regional Peace Committees

Mandate

- Advise the National Peace Committee on causes of violence and intimidation in the region
- Settle disputes leading to violence and intimidation by negotiating with the parties to the dispute and recording agreements reached
- Monitor all peace accords applicable in the region and settle disputes that arise from their implementation
- Consult with regional authorities to limit or prevent violence and intimidation
- Oversee the work of the local peace committees
- Inform the National Peace Secretariat of efforts to prevent violence and intimidation within the region as well as breaches of the peace accord
- Establish reconstruction and development subcommittees
- Address matters referred to the regional peace committees by the national committee

Membership: Each committee consisted of at least 20 members who represented political and religious organizations; business, industry, and trade unions; local and tribal authorities; and the security forces.

Offices: Witswatersrand/Vaal Region (Johannesburg), KwaZulu–Natal Region (Durban), Western Cape Region (Bellville), Orange Free State Region (Bloemfontein), Border/Ciskei Region (East London), Northern Transvaal Region (Pretoria), Western Transvaal Region (Klerksdorp), Eastern Transvaal Region (Witbank), Far Northern Transvaal Region (Pietersburg), Eastern Cape Region (Port Elizabeth), Northern Cape Region (Kimberley).

Local Peace Committees

Mandate

- Create “trust and reconciliation” at the grass roots, including among the members of the security forces
- Eliminate conditions detrimental to peaceful relations generally and the National Peace Accord specifically
- Settle disputes leading to violence and intimidation by negotiating with the parties and recording agreements reached
- Promote compliance with the peace accords
- Reach agreement on rules and conditions for marches, rallies, and other public events
- Liaise with the local police and magistrates regarding the prevention of violence and cooperate with local justices of the peace
- Address issues referred from the National Peace Committee and the regional peace committee
- Report to the regional peace committee, including making recommendations as appropriate

Membership: Local peace committees “will be constituted by drawing representatives reflecting the needs of the relevant community” (NPA 1991).

with the chairmen of the regional peace committees to review their progress and engage in planning for each region.

Although setting up regional peace committees was often contentious as the various participants jockeyed for position or had to be persuaded to take the peace accord seriously, by 30 April 1993, 10 regional committees were established. The 11th and last, in the Northern Cape, was in the process of being set up. The National Peace Accord stated that regional and local committees would “gain their legitimacy by representing the people and the communities they are designed to serve.” In consequence, regional peace committee members were recruited from a wide variety of civil society organizations, local and tribal authorities, and the security forces. Day-to-day administration of the committees was overseen by an elected executive council and carried out by a professional staff. Regional peace committees had a varied mandate, but an especially important task was to establish local peace committees and oversee their functioning.

No limit was imposed on the number of local peace committees that could be established, and by the time the national election was held in April 1994, just over 260 such committees existed. The staff of local peace committees were appointed by the regional peace committees on a consensus basis. Their brief was to establish the local committees and implement the National Peace Accord. Thus the success of the local committees depended greatly on the quality and personal characteristics of the staff. Although the capacity and dedication of both local peace committees and regional peace committee staff was generally high, biased or inexperienced staff could—and in some cases

reportedly did—jeopardize the effectiveness of the entire enterprise.

Efforts to establish local peace committees often ran up against a Catch-22 situation. Where tensions existed but violence was latent, communities often questioned the need for the committees. Once violence flared, however, community leaders were often more willing to have committees established, but the polarization resulting from the violence greatly increased the difficulty in doing so. In addition, the creation of local peace committees was often disrupted by individuals and organizations who believed that the existence of mechanisms to resolve disputes would run counter to their personal or institutional interests. Although such problems existed throughout South Africa, the most serious problems in this regard occurred in the regions of Witsvaal and KwaZulu–Natal (Shaw 1993).

Peace Committee Resources

Under the terms of the National Peace Accord, the financial resources of the peace committees were to be provided and administered by the Department of Justice. In 1994 responsibility was transferred to the Home Ministry. The government never specified the amount it planned to allocate to the peace committees. Rather, it stated its intention to provide all necessary resources. Although the government provided the bulk of the financial resources for the committees, two other sources of funding existed: private enterprise in South Africa and foreign governments through their aid agencies. Money was channeled through the National Peace Secretariat.

According to the South African Auditor General, expenditures by the National Peace Secretariat amounted to 65 million rand (around \$20 million in 1997 dollars) from fiscal year 1993 through fiscal 1996. (Details are found in appendix 3.) Since the peace committee network began to be established in fiscal year 1992 and the expenditures registered for fiscal year 1993 are extremely modest (less than 48,000 rand), it is clear that the 65 million rand figure is an understatement. A group called the Consultative Business Movement seconded staff to the peace committees in 1992 and may have assumed other expenditures as well. (The CBM was a voluntary association of senior business leaders. It supported a constructive transformation of the South African political system so as to create a stable foundation for economic growth and development.)

Five “donation funds” were established during fiscal years 1994–96. These were the National Peace Secretariat Training Fund, the Party Political Secondees Fund, the National Peace Secretariat Marketing Fund, the Capital Fund, and the Overseas Development Agency Fund. The latter two were financed by the British government. They provided resources to acquire communications equipment and train peace monitors, respectively. The Danish government contributed to the Secondees Fund and, perhaps, to the Training Fund. The five funds appear to have accounted for some 10 million rand (just over \$3 million) additional expendi-

tures. Foreign donors provided the bulk of this additional financing.

The Peace Committees In Action

Agreement is widespread among former staff members and observers of the South African peace committees that the structural causes of violence and the struggle for power among the major political parties limited the capacity of the committees to significantly reduce violence before the 1994 elections. Yet even the peace accord’s severest critics do not believe that the committees were a complete failure. Conversations with South Africans who were involved in the committees at all levels suggested six crucial and interrelated functions the committees fulfilled, to one degree or another, and against which their success can be measured: 1) opening channels of communication, 2) legitimizing the concept of negotiations, 3) creating a safe space to raise issues that could not be addressed in other forums, 4) strengthening accountability, 5) helping equalize the power balance, and 6) helping reduce the incidence of violence.*

These functions are closely related to the specific tasks the regional and local peace committees were mandated to carry out. Virtually every component of the committees’ mandates can be classified as contributing to at least three

*South African conflict management experts divide peace-related activities into three categories: peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peace-building. In order not to overburden the reader with multiple classifications, this report will limit itself to the assessment of the peace committees on the basis of their original mandate compared with these six functions. Readers interested in this classification should consult, among others, Andries Odendaal and Chris Spies 1996 (6–9).

or four of these functions. In general, the peace committees succeeded in carrying out both their accord-mandated tasks and the broader functions identified by former peace workers. Nonetheless, the ability of any given committee at either the regional or local level to carry out any one of these tasks varied substantially according to a variety of factors that will be discussed in the following chapter.

The purpose of considering the peace committees' activities in terms of these critical functions is to provide a comprehensive, reality-based view of the potential capacity of such committees to limit violence in deeply divided societies. Zeroing in on functions rather than accord-mandated tasks also helps transcend the specifics of the South African experience by identifying generic categories of activities that peace committees anywhere might undertake.

Function 1: Opening Channels Of Communication

In highly polarized societies, it is very difficult to engage in intergroup dialog. Stereotypes and fear of the consequences of interacting with "the others" help keep people apart and allow tensions to grow and eventually spiral out of

control. A first step in controlling violence is consequently a willingness to engage on a personal level with one's antagonists.

Among former peace workers and observers of the peace process, agreement is widespread that the process as a whole helped open channels of communication among different groups in South Africa and that the peace committees in particular helped achieve this end. By providing a forum for discussion and in many cases trained facilitators, peace committees helped engender dialog where none had existed or seemed possible before. Even the severest critics acknowledge that the peace committees did make a contribution in this respect.

Attacks against individuals who sought to enter into dialog with opposing groups—attacks including murder and forced exile from their communities—indicate just how important maintaining barriers is to perpetuating a culture of violence. Stories of peace committee workers are replete with the opportunities they themselves had for overcoming impediments to interactions between racial groups, between authorities and community members, and between political parties, but their success in this area is difficult to quantify.

Engendering Dialog

"Tentative findings . . . suggest that many [local peace committees] have made a substantial difference to local politics. LPCs have for the first time gathered together local parties of conflicting political affiliations. Even some Conservative Party town councils have participated, despite the hostility of the party's national leadership to the [National Peace Accord], since they hope that local cooperation may foster growth and development in ailing rural towns." (Shaw 1992, 8.)

In the Western Cape, A Growing Acceptance of Mediation

“Mediation became a widely used technique in South African labour disputes during the previous decade and as such it received some publicity, but it was still foreign to the culture and practice of rural towns in the Western Cape. Both the Afrikaner and African people were accustomed to authoritative styles of decision-making. In addition, the struggle of the 1980s introduced political concepts like ‘non-collaboration’ on the part of the liberation movements and ‘no talks with terrorists’ on the side of the government and its supporters. Nevertheless, within two years mediation became accepted as a method of conflict management.” (Odendaal and Spies 1996, 8.)

Among the specific tasks mandated by the peace accord that support the objective of enhancing communication are 1) consulting with regional authorities; 2) liaising with local police, magistrates, and justices of the peace; 3) creating “trust and reconciliation” at the grass roots, including among members of the security forces; 4) settling disputes and monitoring the implementation of local and regional peace agreements; and 5) reaching agreement on rules and conditions for marches, rallies, and other public events.

Function 2: Legitimizing The Concept of Negotiations

During the 1980s the terms “negotiations” and “compromise” came to be equated with “sellout.” Negotiating with one’s opponents was considered a sign of weakness. But the willingness and ability to engage in the give-and-take of genuine negotiations is a fundamental precondition for the peaceful resolution of conflict. Both local and regional peace committees were mandated to negotiate disputes that had the potential to lead to violence and to monitor the implementation of agreements reached among

the parties. As peace committees were able to demonstrate that negotiations could lead to positive outcomes, acceptance grew of sitting around a table with one’s opponents and trying to find a way to resolve differences by peaceful means.

Disputes covered a wide range of issues. Local governments and their citizens disagreed over access to services, housing, and payment of taxes. Township associations wrangled with security forces over their behavior within town limits. Rival taxi associations clashed over routes. There were also industrial disputes that had the potential to lead to violence, conflicts arising out of consumer boycotts, and disagreements about the freedom of political activity in a specific area (the establishment of “no go” areas limiting access to members of one of the political parties). Local and regional peace committees were often able to reach agreements through negotiations with the parties that succeeded in diffusing tensions and forestalling violence. (The Katorus peace agreement, which follows, is one example.) However, there were limits to what could be achieved through negotiation in the absence of thoroughgoing structural reform.

Peace Agreement in the Katorus Area

At a joint meeting of the Vosloorus, Katlehong, and Thokoza peace committees, all the parties present agreed on the following steps to overcome the present [transportation] crisis. These were the parties represented: Inkatha Freedom Party, COSATU, NACTU, African National Congress, Chamber of Business, KAPTA, TATA, Railway Commuter, TELCOM, South Africa Police Service, South African Defence Forces.

1. The South African Defence Forces will mount guards at . . . intersections identified by the taxi associations.
2. The taxi associations will meet and brief all taxi drivers on the decisions reached.
3. The taxi associations will meet and brief the civic associations to elicit their cooperation to bring peace to the communities. Designated representatives from the peace committee will join the taxi association delegation.
4. Four main arteries to and from the two townships will be secured for taxi traffic. These are Railway, Muphike, Khumalo, and Letshogo streets. The modus operandi will involve the community, the political organisations, the South African Defence Force, South African Police Service, the regional peace committee, and local peace committees.
5. The South African Defence Force will remove all barricades and secure flashpoints on these routes. Community organisations will inform their supporters about this plan of action. Peace Accord structures will provide monitors.
6. An urgent request was made to the Rail Commuter Corporation to open the railway lines. This will be done as soon as it is practicable with the full and immediate cooperation of the South Africa Police Service and the community leaders.
7. The railway line to Kwesina Station will be inspected immediately by the SARCC. Should there be no damage, a diesel locomotive will be availed immediately to service this line. Any broken or damaged cable will be replaced within 24 hours.
8. The South African Defence Force patrols will provide perimeter security. Internal security will be provided by a joint force of SpoorNet security / Railguard / South Africa Police Service.
9. A strong feeling emerged at the meeting that the police should be actively engaged in policing the area and restoring peace to the communities. The South Africa Police Service, Wits, and ISU will operate jointly from a centralised operations room in NatalSpruit—telephone number 909–7780. Members of the public can call this number should they need to report any incidents. Alternatively the peaceline number is 0800–116–555. The South African Defence Force steunpunt [contact] number in Thokoza is 905–0326.
10. Relief work will be coordinated through the Regional Peace Secretariat.

Limitations on Negotiating An End to the Taxi Wars

Despite significant efforts to negotiate an end to the “taxi wars,” agreements were constantly broken because the mediators could not create the necessary structural conditions for peace among the taxi associations. As long as state institutions were corrupt and declined to enforce basic regulations and the general level of tension between the political groups remained high, agreements to “end” the taxi wars could not be fully implemented or enforced. (Authors’ interviews with former peace workers, April–May 1997.)

In addition to themselves facilitating discussions among groups or identifying outside mediators, peace committee staff members were sometimes able to train the representatives of various groups in negotiating skills. For example, negotiations over permission to hold marches and the routes of such marches proceeded more smoothly when representatives of local government and the groups seeking to march understood *how* to negotiate with each other.* All things being equal, peace committee

staff reported they would have devoted considerable time to such training activities, but the demands generated by immediate problems were so intense that comparatively little time could be allocated to capacity building within communities.

Function 3: Creating a Safe Space

If various mutually hostile groups are to engage in dialog and negotiations, they need a place they feel is safe for such discussions to occur. This can involve creating psychological space so that antagonists are able to come together to address contentious issues, as well as finding a physical space that is safe for all parties to enter. One former peace worker from the Western Cape noted that people were frequently willing to enter into negotiations to resolve disagreements. A critical factor was the ability of the peace committees to create an environment in which mediation and facilitation could occur. It was sometimes less important to meet on “neutral” territory than to find a trusted third party who could move the discussion forward. In addition, peace committees were often willing to address issues not specifically part of their mandate (such as the cutoff of water to a squatter area because its inhabitants had not paid

*Of course, peace committees were not the only organizations that provided mediation services during the transition to majority rule. South Africa has a rich civil society, and a number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in existence at the time the peace accord was signed were providing mediation services to communities. Some believed they were in competition with the peace committees for funding and that the peace committees did not sufficiently integrate NGOs into their work. Others believed there had been productive collaboration between existing NGOs and the peace committees. It was not possible in the course of this study to assess the relative merits of these differing perceptions. Both appear to have had some degree of validity. It does seem clear, though, that given the needs of South African society, there should have been room for a variety of mediators and that future peace processes would benefit from forging linkages with ongoing mediation–negotiation programs. For a description of a conflict management effort that existed independent of the peace accord process in the Meadowlands section of Soweto, outside Johannesburg, see Bremner 1997, 241–48.

Providing a Forum for Dialog

“[B]ecause violence has multicausal roots and there is currently an administrative vacuum in many townships, a wide range of issues have been raised at local peace committee meetings. The Grahamstown local peace committee, for example, has dealt with problems such as inadequate policing, service provision, opposition to rates increases, the poor quality of municipal water, church and taxi disputes, grazing cattle on municipal commonage, and forced removals. That a range of parties are tackling these issues may itself be an advance, since it lays the foundation for increased cooperation between the ‘twin towns’ of apartheid planning.” (Shaw 1997, 8.)

their rates), since these actions had considerable potential for inducing violence.

To some extent, therefore, the peace committees became a place where people felt safe raising difficult and contentious issues. They contributed to reducing tensions and frustrations that led to violence in highly polarized communities. Still, a number of former peace workers stressed that the immediate demands of containing violence left comparatively little time for many peace committees to fulfill this function, particularly those in KwaZulu–Natal and the Johannesburg-area townships. To the extent peace committees did create such safe spaces, they were also fulfilling specific accord-mandated tasks such as creating “trust and reconciliation” at the grass-roots level.

Function 4: Strengthening Accountability

Through their operations, the peace structures were able to demonstrate to many South Africans for the first time in their lives what it means to hold public officials accountable. In the past, officials did not have to explain their actions, and there were no codes of conduct against which to measure their performance. To the best of their ability, the peace committees monitored the activities of the police and sought to ensure that the police code of conduct contained in the National Peace Accord was adhered to. Similarly, they sought to hold political parties accountable for their actions and to see that they adhered to the accord’s code of conduct for political parties. The accord mandated that local officials, among other tasks, consult with magistrates, local police, regional authorities, and justices of the peace to limit or prevent violence. Such requirements placed the activities of local officials, including those in the townships and squatter camps, under the spotlight.

Enhancing Police Accountability

“Initially it was difficult for us to monitor the activities of the police around the clock, but once a business enterprise donated three armored vehicles, we were able to monitor police activity during the nighttime as well as the day. The police understood then that they had to be accountable at all times, and the level of violence declined during the night hours.” (Authors’ interview with former local peace committee staff member, May 1997.)

The results of these efforts were mixed. Clearly the peace committees themselves could not change the culture of nonaccountability that pervaded the country. Nonetheless, they did help create a political environment more conducive to accountability and raise the expectations of ordinary citizens that their leaders—at whatever level—would be accountable. They also gave those in positions of power, such as elected officials and members of the security forces, a sense of what would be expected of them in the “new” South Africa.

Function 5: Equalizing The Power Balance

Important to accountability is that the balance of power between groups in society be roughly equivalent. When groups are so powerful that they can operate with impunity, there can be no accountability. Before the signing of the National Peace Accord, power resided disproportionately in government institutions. Although many civil society organizations existed, nongovernmental and community-based organizations were relatively powerless in influencing national policies. Community members did not sit around tables with government ministers, representatives of provincial governments, or members of the various security forces. The peace accord acknowledged this basic inequality by mandating that the peace committees liaise with government and security force officials in pursuit of solutions to disputes that could lead to violent conflict as well as by developing codes of conduct for the police and political parties.

Because the peace committees included representatives of the political parties and the

security forces among their members, they were able to bring citizens and government officials into contact in a problem-solving mode such as had rarely, if ever, occurred before. Once again, the outcomes were mixed. Although it is true the peace committees’ scope for changing the behavior and attitudes of government officials and security force officers was limited, former peace workers have contended that it would be wrong to underestimate the value of equalizing the power balance in this somewhat ad hoc manner. In addition, they point to instances in

Leveling the Playing Field

A policeman killed a man in a small town in the Western Cape. Community members were particularly upset because the same policeman had killed someone a year earlier in the same town. The African National Congress led a campaign against the police called “the police are the enemy.” In an effort to forestall violence, the Western Cape regional peace committee persuaded the second highest ranking policeman in the Western Cape to participate in a mass meeting. A former regional committee staff person observed:

“This was an example of accountability and equalizing the power balance: a high official actually faced ordinary people and had to explain his position. This happened continually. Mayors and town clerks were brought face to face with township inhabitants, and so on. There was one occasion in the Karoo where a top education official had to travel a very long distance to meet angry parents and teachers at a remote town.” (Authors’ interviews with peace committee staff, 1997.)

which government officials asked peace committee staff to organize a meeting that the officials themselves could very well have called because they recognized that the chances of conflict were reduced when peace workers were in the chair. At the same time, some former peace committee staff members suggested that the relative absence of nongovernmental and community-based organization representatives on local peace committees meant that positive, equalizing interactions between officialdom and civil society were more limited than if civil society had played a more direct role in the peace committees.

Function 6: Reducing The Incidence of Violence

All the activities undertaken by the peace committees were aimed, in one way or another, at reducing the incidence of violence in South Africa. To a large degree, the peace committees

A Costly Failure

In Thokoza township, south of Johannesburg, the African National Congress planned a march. Its original route would have taken the demonstrators past hostels housing members of the Inkatha Freedom Party. The local peace committee worked with the ANC to modify the route. When the march was held, however, the police failed to block off the relevant street entirely. ANC members diverted from the agreed-on route and marched past the hostels. The ensuing violence claimed 19 lives. (Authors' interviews with former peace committee staff member, May 1997.)

succeeded. It is impossible to quantify how much greater the violence would have been and how many more deaths would have occurred if the committees had not existed. Still, virtually every former peace worker interviewed maintained that the activities of the regional and local peace committees "saved lives."

Former peace workers stressed the importance of transparency in helping to reduce violence. In highly polarized societies, information is constantly manipulated, and half-truths and outright lies frequently contribute to the decision to engage in violent behavior. Former peace committee staff described how they investigated allegations of misbehavior by one or another of the parties immediately upon learning of them and made known the results expeditiously. When allegations could be proven false, violence would be forestalled. And the longer violence could be forestalled, the greater the opportunity for establishing a positive dynamic within a community.

In addition, regional and local peace committee staff members underscored the importance of minimizing the opportunities for violent interactions at public events. The committees were mandated by the National Peace Accord to reach agreement on "rules and conditions for marches, rallies, and gatherings." This involved, for example, working with march organizers to plan routes that would avoid particularly sensitive areas or that would prevent opposing groups planning marches or demonstrations on the same day from coming into physical contact. It also involved working with the security forces to ensure an adequate but nonthreatening presence. Although it was often difficult for peace committee staff to put a figure on the number of lives saved by such activi-

ties, where arrangements broke down and violence ensued, the cost in lives lost was all too easily quantifiable.

These activities, mandated by the National Peace Accord, were critical in reducing tensions, preventing violence, and saving lives. At the same time, to the extent violence was averted and lives saved (particularly in the most violence-ridden areas of South Africa) it was in no small measure because the peace committees

exceeded their mandate and took on a function that was not foreseen in the accord—namely, the proactive monitoring of public events.

Proactive monitoring went beyond merely observing and recording what took place. To prevent formal and impromptu events such as funerals, demonstrations, and public meetings from degenerating into violence, peace workers often had to physically position themselves between disputing parties and opposing groups.

In Crossroads, Development and Conflict

In March 1993, violence erupted in Crossroads, a township outside Cape Town. The local warlord, Jeffrey Nongwe, who served as the chairman of the Crossroads branch of the ANC and also ran the local squatters' association, tried to force residents to move from certain sections of Crossroads to areas where no services were available. The ostensible cause of the move was to enable the areas they would be vacating to be upgraded through a project established by the Cape Provincial Administration.

Previous experience with removals for the purpose of upgrading had taught Crossroads residents to be wary of Nongwe's promises. Residents who had moved in 1991 "for several months" while houses were constructed for them were still waiting two years later to return to their original plots. Not surprisingly, Crossroads residents refused to displace themselves. "Third force" elements exploited the resultant tensions, and over the next several months violence claimed the lives of, on average, two people each day.

In June 1993, the Western Cape regional peace committee arranged a meeting that was attended by all relevant players, including the police and the army and nongovernmental organizations working in Crossroads. As an observer at that meeting noted in early 1994,

"Crossroads is a classic case of development gone wrong. Not just development, but the entire development framework: apartheid's denial of land, housing, community, and family life. . . .

"It was clear . . . that development was exacerbating the violence in Crossroads—by most accounts it was piecemeal, noninclusive, not truly consultative, not transparent, and not nearly enough. The meeting resolved that a moratorium on development in Crossroads be effected immediately; it was . . . and significantly reduced the violence." (Baumann 1994, 20.)

In this they were aided by thousands of unpaid peace monitors whose contribution to the peace process was made at great personal risk.* Had there been, for example, no nationwide capability to monitor marches and demonstrations at the time Chris Hani, the highly popular Communist Party leader, was assassinated, the death toll from politically related violence for 1993 would certainly have been much higher. How much higher, however, cannot be estimated.

Limits of the Mandate

One area in which the peace committees generally did not succeed was giving life to the socioeconomic reconstruction and development subcommittees that were to be attached to the national and regional peace committees. While there were significant regional variations in the ability of the peace committees to accomplish the entire range of tasks mandated by the peace accord, the socioeconomic reconstruction and development initiative never really got off the ground in any part of South Africa. This was undoubtedly because attention was focused on the *political* aspects of the transition. Once the immediate demands of the peace process were addressed, very little time or energy was available for reconstruction or development activities. Moreover, it has been suggested that better established vehicles existed for channeling resources to socioeconomic activities than the

newly created peace committees and their reconstruction and development subcommittees.

More fundamentally, the program suffered from a major conceptual weakness, manifested by the issues that the National Peace Accord specified should be addressed to facilitate reconstruction and development in violence-ridden communities (NPA 1991, para 5.13). To take just one example, the accord recognized the need for an equitable division of state resources and access to land to promote socioeconomic development. But South Africa's political system had for years been based on a highly *inequitable* distribution of state resources, and an individual's ethnic classification had been the central factor in determining whether or where he or she could own or otherwise use land. In short, with very limited financial and human resources and no ability to effect fundamental political and security-sector reforms, the socioeconomic reconstruction and development structure was being asked to repair the inequities perpetrated by decades of apartheid. Indeed, in view of the perversion of development that occurred in South Africa prior to the transition to majority rule, the desirability of pursuing development until fundamental structural changes could be effected was open to question. As the preceding box indicates, at least one community—Crossroads, a township outside Cape Town—decided to suspend certain “development” activities because of their contribution to violence.

*The peace accord did not foresee monitoring activities, and no budgetary provisions were made. Nonetheless, in-kind support was often provided in the form of transportation and food. Occasionally, for example during the week-long marches and demonstrations that took place after Chris Hani was assassinated in June 1993, monitors were also provided with accommodations so that they did not have to return to their homes every night. Funding for this in-kind support was sometimes raised from external sources, such as local businesses.

3



Factors Influencing The Effectiveness Of the Peace Committees

THE COMPLEXITY OF POLITICAL TRANSITIONS significantly constrains the effectiveness of conflict management mechanisms. Consequently, a realistic assessment of what peace committees can achieve in any particular setting requires a fairly detailed understanding of the environment in which these committees are to operate.

Many factors influenced the relative degree of success the peace committees experienced in fulfilling their mandate and carrying out the six major functions discussed in the preceding chapter. Some of these factors eased their work; others complicated it. The interaction of these positive and negative factors determined what the peace committees were able to achieve. There were wide variations in the way each factor influenced the work of individual peace committees, and there were significant regional differences as well.

Viewed as a whole, the peace committees had a mixed record, and a definitive assessment of their “success” or “failure” is impossible.

Peace committees were unable to stop violence completely but often limited its occurrence. They were unable to end impunity on the part of the security forces, but they were able to help equalize the balance of power between those in power and ordinary citizens and to strengthen accountability. Their ability to address the underlying causes of conflict was circumscribed, but even in the most violence-ridden areas peace committee staff were able to mediate conflicts and create a safe space within which problems could be discussed. And although unable to transform the “struggle” mentality, they were able to help South Africans take their first steps toward understanding the value of negotiations and how to engage in them constructively.

This chapter examines eight factors that appear to have had the greatest impact on the ability of the committees to constrain violence and begin to create the capacity to resolve differences by peaceful means. These are 1) political will at the national level to see the peace process through; 2) the attitude adopted by the security forces to the work of the peace com-

mittees; 3) the development of constructive relationships among key actors; 4) the capacity of civil society to make a constructive contribution; 5) the perceived legitimacy of the peace committees; 6) the ability to communicate the objectives of the peace process and provide an objective view of events; 7) the financial and structural flexibility of the peace committees; and 8) the role of two international actors: international monitors and development cooperation agencies.

An understanding of the ways in which these factors shaped the effectiveness of the South African peace committees is critical to determining whether peace committees should be supported in other environments.

Factor 1: Political Will

The existence of sufficient political will at the national level for the parties to commit to the peace process *and* sufficient capacity to translate this commitment into action at all levels were critical to the effective functioning of local and regional peace committees.

The mandate provided by the peace accord and the commitment of the national political leadership to their work greatly facilitated the establishment and operations of the peace committees. First of all, it conferred a degree of legitimacy on the committees. Although a few peace committee-type structures existed at the time the accord was signed, it would have been impossible to create such an extensive network of regional and local committees in the absence of the accord. Second, that an organization's senior leadership had signed the accord provided peace committee staff with some leverage over

that organization's members at the regional and local level. Many regional and local peace committee staff members interviewed for this study explained how they used the accord to persuade the representatives of signatory organizations to discuss certain issues, accept compromises, or moderate their behavior.

Nonetheless, a signature on the peace accord was frequently insufficient to compel adherence to the terms of the accord or serious participation in the work of the local and regional peace committees. Commitment at the national level had to be translated into commitment at the regional and local levels. In some areas, especially the Western Cape, peace committee staff were generally able to rely on national organizations to persuade their regional and local representatives to collaborate. Elsewhere, especially in the KwaZulu-Natal and Witsvaal regions, the political parties either decided it was not in their interest to try to compel compliance or were unable to change their followers' behavior.

Electoral calculations played a big role in guiding decisions over how closely political parties would expect their followers to adhere to the National Peace Accord. In the Cape, politicians understood that they risked losing votes if they were seen to be working against the letter and spirit of the accord. In KwaZulu-Natal and Witsvaal, by contrast, political parties were reluctant to forego any avenue for gaining electoral advantage. They frequently refused to press for compliance even when their members blatantly overstepped the boundary between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. As a result, local and regional politicians exploited the antagonism between the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party to cre-

ate “no go” zones—areas in effect controlled by one party to the total exclusion of the other. Violence played a central role in creating and maintaining these zones, through both intimidation and the forced movement of populations.

The culture of violence that had grown up in South Africa during apartheid also influenced the attitude of the political parties to the peace committees. Speaking of the ANC, one former peace worker explained, “People *wanted* guns, and the top leadership was seen as gravely out of step when they preached nonviolent solutions.”

What is more, violence was the way in which some community leaders—who were also representatives of the ANC or the IFP—gained and maintained their personal power and wealth. These individuals demanded tight discipline from their supporters, who viewed these leaders as bringing strength to their constituency.

For such people, a reduction in violence would have threatened their very livelihood, and they had no interest in effective peace committees. In some cases, that livelihood depended on gun-running, which further undermined efforts by the peace committees and others to reduce violence. For many peace committee staff at the local level, particularly those in the most violence-ridden areas, the peace accord appeared to be what one former peace worker termed “a gentlemen’s agreement at the national level to take an initiative that would look good to the world,” without the political will to implement it.

Peace accords require constant attention during implementation, yet senior political leaders did not make the necessary effort to sustain and expand the political will to control violence. To a large extent this was because these leaders viewed the accord as just one step on the road to a transformation of South Africa’s political

Building Democracy, Slowly

“When the signatories of the National Peace Accords committed themselves to uphold fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, and association, they must have realized that they were aiming very high, considering the realities on the ground. It would take a lot to change the undemocratic, intolerant, and oppressive political culture of the day to one in which political tolerance was practiced. South Africa had a long way to go before political pluralism was embraced by ordinary people.

“A countrywide survey conducted during February 1993, 18 months after the signing of the [accord], still found considerable resistance to democratic procedures and principles among all races in South Africa. Among black, Asian, and Coloured future voters, there was a relatively widespread acceptance that other parties should not contest areas in which one party was dominant. Protest against other parties holding meetings was considered justified. The survey showed that 5 out of 10 blacks rejected the right of formerly white parties to operate in black areas. . . .” (Gastrow 1995, 60.)

system. On 20 December 1991, just three months after the accord had been signed, the Convention for a Democratic South Africa was convened. Political negotiations over constitutional reform fully occupied the top leadership for the next two years.

Still, political leaders were not completely unaware of their responsibilities, and by mid-1993 a recognition emerged that the peace accord needed to be revitalized. Violence had increased substantially in mid-1992, and opinion polls conducted around the time of the first anniversary of the signing indicated virtually no public confidence in the power of the accord or the ability of the peace committees to curb violence. By early 1993 the media had declared the accord “comatose.” Violence, which had declined slightly around the turn of the year, began to climb significantly. In June, Nelson Mandela called for the signatories to meet to discuss means of strengthening the peace accord. The move found strong support among most regional ANC leaders and the leaders of ANC alliance groups. The government began to examine methods of strengthening the peace accord. The House of Assembly, a whites-only body, began to debate the issue. Moreover, the National Peace Committee and the Goldstone Commission (which was leading the inquiry into prevention of public violence and intimidation) urged a rededication to the principles underlying the peace accord. In the end, though,

Political Will: Main Points

- The work of local and regional peace committees is greatly aided by sufficient political will at the national level to commit to the peace process and sufficient political will and capacity at the national level to make good on this commitment.
- A concrete manifestation of such political will is a conscientious effort on the part of the major political actors to sustain and, where feasible, increase support for the peace process.
- The desire to maximize political advantage that accompanies electoral periods can reduce the willingness of political parties to cooperate with peace committees and seriously undermine the effectiveness of these committees.

what gave the accord and the peace committees new stature around the country were the events surrounding the killing of Communist Party leader Chris Hani in June 1993. The peace committees played a crucial role in helping to contain violence following the assassination, and public perception of the committees began to change (Shaw 1997, 268–69).*

*Ironically, the security forces also contributed to this change in public perception around Johannesburg. “A massive security operation by the army and the police in February 1994 forced a calm on the region which allowed the peace process to take root. Rather than just being poorly attended talk-shops where blame could be laid, the local peace committee meetings became forums where political parties could air their problems and work out solutions—with their ‘enemies’” (Stober circa 1995).

Factor 2: The Role Of the Security Forces

In 1991 at the time the National Peace Accord was signed, the South African security forces were responsible—either directly or indirectly—for much of the violence the accord sought to combat. The state-sanctioned paramilitary units known collectively as the third force were instrumental in fomenting violence, particularly between supporters of the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party. At the same time, the police and judiciary were by and large incapable of apprehending and prosecuting the perpetrators.

In consequence, two chapters of the peace accord were devoted to principles governing the activities of the police, clandestine or covert operations, and self-protection units. The clauses pertaining to the police were by far the most numerous. No specific provisions relating to the armed forces were ever agreed on. The accord described in some detail what the principles governing police activities implied, and they laid out a code of conduct for police officers.

Holding the Police Accountable

The peace committees' mandate to reduce violence and settle disputes depended in no small

Joint Operations Communications Centers

The joint operations communication centers were a useful tool to enhance police accountability and build confidence among the different actors. Military representatives on the regional peace committees were responsible for setting up the centers. They were manned by a committee staff member, representatives of political parties and other committee member organizations, the South African Police, and, where appropriate, the army and traffic police. The centers coordinated all information, feedback, action, and evaluation during an operation. They had maps, aerial photographs, computers, and dedicated toll-free telephone lines. Cars used by peace committee field workers were also equipped with radios. In addition to operating as a crisis center, the communication centers became the main radio headquarters of the regional peace committees.

All movements were monitored from the joint operations communications centers, and all new information was transmitted to the relevant organizational representatives. The South Africa Police Service would be expected to provide the centers with regularly updated information on its activities—for example, the deployment of police officers and vehicles (including registration numbers), major security-force operations (roadblocks, search-and-cordon actions), arrests, shooting incidents involving security forces, and attacks on security forces. In turn, the political parties would provide the communications centers with regularly updated information on public events such as dates, times, location, and routes of marches. (Authors' interviews with former peace committee staff members, 1997.)

way on the committees' ability to engage the police constructively in their work and to hold the police accountable for actions on *their* part. To achieve these objectives, the committees monitored police activities, fostered better relations between police and communities (for example, by mediating disputes), and provided a forum for the police to express their views and concerns about the peace process.

Specific mechanisms employed included police liaison with local peace committees, police representation on regional peace committees, establishment of joint operations communications centers, and appointment of a police reporting officer in each region to investigate complaints against the police and recommend disciplinary action. Accountability was further strengthened by the requirement that police vehicles be clearly marked and that police officers wear an identification badge on their uniforms. Former peace committee staff members have underscored the importance of these simple measures in facilitating the monitoring of police activities.

The ability of the peace committees to hold the police accountable for their actions varied considerably from region to region. It also depended much on the attitude of individual police officers. For example, in the Western Cape the police reporting officer was not at all proactive. His counterpart in Gauteng, by contrast, sometimes went to the media with his findings. These variations underscore the weakness of the rule of law in South Africa. Transparency and accountability were not institutionalized in police structures, and compliance with the provisions of the peace accord was, to a large extent, an individual matter.

In both the Eastern and Western Cape, relations with the police were generally positive. In the more violence-ridden regions of South Africa, the relations between the peace structures and the police were more tenuous, but it was nonetheless possible for peace committee staff members to develop reasonable working relations with the police.

One complicating factor to the development of solid community-police relations was a tendency to transfer police officers frequently—particularly, it has been suggested, police officers who had developed good relations with the community. For example, the officer heading the internal security unit (riot police) at the time the Eastern Cape regional peace committee was operating explicitly stated that his job as a policeman was to protect the rights of *all* South African citizens. In consequence, he worked closely and productively with the committee to contain situations that could have led to violence. He was subsequently replaced by an officer who had been involved in torturing ANC members. The switch complicated, but did not completely undermine, the ability of the Eastern Cape peace committees to do their job effectively.

One factor that promoted constructive engagement was that the committees provided the police with a forum in which they could present their side of an issue and receive a fair hearing. The committees also offered an outlet for police concerns and frustrations with the peace process. Police often perceived that process as being directed against them, rather than as being an attempt to “level the playing field.” In addition, police officers involved with the peace committees found that in delivering unpopular

messages to their colleagues, it was helpful to be able to have the backing of the peace committee.

Even in the areas where violence was most intense, the peace committees did make some headway in monitoring the activities of the police, in pressing them to become more transparent and accountable, and in helping them improve their relations with communities experiencing violence. The mandate provided in the National Peace Accord was critical in achieving this degree of oversight and behavioral change. At the same time, though, the accord and the peace committees were essentially powerless in the face of one of the major perpetrators of violence in South Africa since the early 1980s: the third force.

The Third Force as Spoiler

Antipartheid activists had long suspected that death squads linked to the security forces were operating in South Africa. In particular, a close tie between this third force and Inkatha, later the Inkatha Freedom Party, was presumed. The National Party government had consistently denied the existence of these death squads. But as Judge Richard Goldstone, who oversaw the work of the Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation, noted: “My Commission has never told South Africans anything they did not really know; they knew the causes of violence—political rivalries, inadequate policing, secret funding of a political party, and now evidence of the involvement of elements in the police force in promoting violence” (Shaw 1993, 275–76).

Although the Goldstone Commission was heavily criticized during its tenure for failing to prove unequivocally that a “third force” did exist, the commission did provide progressively more concrete evidence of the actions of some members of the security forces. In its March 1994 report, the commission published evidence that three senior police generals either commanded or knew about police units involved in, among other things, orchestrating train and hostel violence. Moreover, detailed evidence surfaced through the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 1996–97 demonstrating beyond doubt that state-sanctioned hit squads did exist and were responsible for a significant proportion of the violence that plagued South Africa during the 1980s and 1990s.

It was thus no accident that the most severe violence during the transition to multi-party rule occurred in KwaZulu–Natal and the townships around Johannesburg. Although vio-

Police and the NPA In the Western Cape

“It was critical to the success of the process in the Western Cape that the South African Police accepted the authority of the peace structures. Although there sometimes was a discrepancy between what was said by police at peace committee meetings and their behavior on the ground, the police basically complied with the peace accord. High-ranking police and army officials participated in the peace structures, which was very important.”
(Authors’ interview with former peace committee staff member, April 1997.)

Security Forces: Main Points

- The attitude of the security forces is critical to the success of peace committees. To the extent that the security forces are able to operate with impunity, the ability of peace committees to meet their objectives will be severely compromised.
- The accountability of security forces can increase when peace committees have a clear mandate to monitor security force activities.
- Accountability can also be strengthened by the participation of security force representatives in the work of local and regional peace committees.

lence in South Africa has multiple roots, it is clear that the scope and intensity of the violence in those two areas derived to a large extent from the activities of the third force, which had specially targeted communities where ANC–Inkatha rivalries were strong. Although under the terms of the National Peace Accord the government was forbidden to allow the security forces “to undermine, promote, or influence any political party or political organisation at the expense of another” (NPA 1991, 3.5.2), the death squads continued their activities through the entire transition period essentially unhindered, severely jeopardizing the ability of the peace committees to carry out their mandated tasks.

Factor 3: Developing Relationships Among Key Participants In the Peace Process

Relationships in deeply divided societies are characterized in three ways. One is fear of and intense animosity toward those who do not belong to one’s group. A second is a history of

intergroup enmity that may be based on generations of conflict and trauma. And a third is profound stereotyping arising out of ignorance or the manipulation of the truth for political ends. To build an enduring peace, this negative relationship must be transformed.

“Relationship is the basis of both the conflict and its long-term solution.”
(Lederach 1997.)

Transforming relationships is a long-term process. It is unrealistic to expect that individuals and groups in highly polarized societies will, in a matter of weeks or months, be able to alter perceptions and shed fears that may have taken decades to develop. It is therefore necessary to be modest about the advances that can be anticipated in the short to medium term. “Relationship is the basis of both the conflict and its long-term solution” (Lederach 1997). The experience with the South African peace committees underlines both the importance of the transformation of relationships in building a foundation for enduring peace and the length of time such a transformation can be expected to take.

Building Positive Relationships

The local and regional peace committees owed their existence to the National Peace Accord. This agreement, in turn, owed its existence in no small measure to a period of relationship building that began in the mid-1980s among businessmen, church leaders, and senior members of the African National Congress, the National Party, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, and the Pan-Africanist Congress, both in South Africa and abroad.* Initial contacts did not always go smoothly. An attendee at one of the earliest meetings between representatives of the ANC and the Consultative Business Movement characterized participants as “poles apart,” with the ANC expressing extremely antibusiness sentiments. As a result, the first plenary session degenerated into, as the participant put it, “quite a bun fight.” But participants persevered, and relationships slowly began to develop. Frequent weekend retreats over a period of several years fostered the process.

These evolving personal relationships were critical in helping to move the peace process forward in 1990–91. They enabled key church and business leaders to act as intermediaries between the political parties when the peace process was in danger of collapsing and to promote compromises that enabled the major political parties to begin drafting the National Peace Accord. Without these prior interactions, peace committees would never have been established to the extent they were during 1991–94. Nor would they have benefited from the degree of national-level commitment that existed

Seeing With New Eyes

“The peace committees were extremely important at the personal level. People from different groups met for the first time as equals. This enabled them to see each other in a different light and to build relationships based on mutual respect and trust.” (Authors’ interview with former peace committee member, May 1997.)

during that period. (See also the discussion on the role of key facilitators below.)

Relationships continued to be built and strengthened as provisions of the accord were hammered out. The earlier interactions made it relatively easier for the ANC and the National Party to work together during the drafting process. And these drafting sessions, along with the subsequent experience of the multiparty constitutional negotiating process in 1992 and 1993, cemented relationships that have influenced the first few years of majority rule in ways that are simply unimaginable in other divided societies. This has been evident not only in that individuals who participated in the drafting of the National Peace Accord and in the constitutional talks continue to interact informally when issues of mutual interest arise. It is also evident in the nature of the political discourse in South Africa as compared with other war-torn countries such as Cambodia or Nicaragua. In South Africa, politicians have confronted problems and sought solutions. In Cambodia and Nicaragua, the politicians have been consumed by political gamesmanship.

*Significantly, it was extremely difficult to engage members of the Inkatha Freedom Party in this process.

At the local and regional levels, however, relationships were, for the most part, not as well established as they were at the national level by the time the accord was signed. This significantly affected the functioning of the peace committees. Local and regional peace committees were expected to engender cooperation among groups of individuals who, in most cases, had not benefited from four or five years of relationship building. There were, of course, exceptions. In the Eastern Cape, for example, a number of individuals who became involved in the work of the peace committees had learned to work together in the 1980s to resolve industrial labor disputes and consumer boycotts. In one instance, the leader of consumer boycotts in the Port Elizabeth area during the early 1980s befriended the head of the local chamber of commerce who had played a role in negotiations to end the boycotts. Such relationships provided the foundation upon which the Eastern Cape regional peace committee was created. And the ability of some local leaders to work closely together provided a degree of credibility to the peace accord that encouraged others to make a commitment to the peace process.*

Similar examples of the importance of relationships that predated the National Peace Accord can be found in other parts of the country as well. However, they did not exist everywhere. Nor could preestablished relationships overcome factors such as third-force destabilization or the unwillingness of political leaders to allow local peace initiatives to develop. Furthermore, since so many local peace committees were established in the immediate aftermath of significant episodes of violence, building positive relationships in a highly polarized environment was a particular challenge. Many of the former peace workers and individuals engaged at the grass-roots level have expressed the opinion that it is possible to build relationships under fire, but that the relative success of such efforts depends to a large degree on the attitudes and capacity of the people involved.†

The Role of 'Exceptional Personalities'

A number of South Africans have made such important and unique contributions to the peace process that they have come to be viewed

*It has also been suggested that in the rural areas of the Western Cape, there was a greater understanding of the interdependence of different groups and a greater willingness to give priority to issues affecting the community rather than to individual concerns. At the same time, the relative absence of rivalry between the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party in the region and the relatively low level of violence may also have influenced this outcome in the Western Cape.

†Davin Bremner (1997, 243) describes a relationship-building process that occurred outside the peace committee framework in the Meadowlands section of Soweto. It was difficult for peace committees to take root in some communities because "the [National Peace] Accord had been discredited in communities where people regularly suffered from violence, and thus leaders risked appearing weak if they did nothing to defend their communities. Thus, people would commonly agree to attend meetings, events, or workshops, and simply never appear." Following several months of relationship- and trust-building, the protagonists in Meadowlands negotiated the Taxi Safety Agreement and established the Joint Monitoring Committee to oversee that agreement. These measures significantly reduced violence in the area.

as “exceptional personalities” by many of the peace workers interviewed for this study. One of the key contributions that these people have made is to encourage the growth of positive, constructive relationships among groups involved in the peace process.

The people most frequently cited as exceptional personalities are Nelson Mandela, Frederik de Klerk, and Bishop Desmond Tutu. The personal commitment of both de Klerk and Mandela to a peaceful transition underpinned the success of the entire peace process. Both demonstrated time and again by their actions the importance of developing constructive relationships with individuals whose goals and beliefs are very different from one’s own. Through his position as cochairman of the National Peace Accord preparatory committee, Bishop Tutu played a central role in forging those constructive relationships.

All the major political players in the peace process had enormous respect for Tutu. One of the rules he enforced when chairing meetings was that the discussions would be oriented toward solving problems. If participants sought to score political points rather than engage in a serious discussion of the issue at hand, Tutu would threaten to end the meeting and leave. The threat invariably brought people back into line. Not only did this approach help create and maintain a certain momentum to the negotiations, it also made a critical contribution to

Building Peace Locally

“While it was relatively easy for the parties to reach an accommodation at the national level, it was a very different matter at the local level. It is hard to support the peace process when you are being [physically] attacked by the opposition.” (Authors’ interview with former local peace committee staff member, May 1997.)

improving relationships among the participants. When forced to deal with substance rather than take refuge in political rhetoric people find themselves involved in activities crucial to building positive relationships. These include clarifying one’s own core interests, comparing those with the core interests of others, understanding what has caused other groups to hold the positions they do, and determining how to reach mutually acceptable compromises.*

John Hall, the bishop’s cochairman on the committee, also played an important role in keeping the negotiations on track. As a senior business executive and president of the South African Chamber of Business, Hall has had many opportunities to hone his negotiating and facilitating skills. Because of Tutu’s schedule, Hall frequently chaired meetings and constantly worked to maintain an environment conducive to achieving an agreement acceptable to all par-

*Saunders (1993) offers perspectives on developing positive relationships between highly antagonistic groups.

ties. Again, without the contribution of these persons to the peace process, no network of peace committees would have been established.

Important as the contribution of these and others were nationally, other players made significant contributions at the regional and local levels once the peace committees were established. Perhaps most impressive are the stories of grass-roots leaders who stood against the tide of violence to try to bring peace to their small part of South Africa. Interviews conducted for this study brought to light the activities, for example, of a hostel leader in Vosloorus and a traditional leader in the Port Shepstone area. Both worked closely with their local peace committees to halt violence in the face of strong opposition from regional political leaders and members of the security force.

Factor 4: The Role of Civil Society: Key Facilitators And Qualified Staff

Although the National Peace Accord was an agreement among the major political parties, its very existence and the degree of success subsequently achieved by the peace committees depended to a significant degree on inputs from civil society. South Africa's civil society is strong, and it supported the peace committees in many important respects. Two contributions stand out: the role of key facilitators and the quality of peace committee staff.

The key role Bishop Tutu and John Hall played in negotiating the peace accord underscores the capacity of South African civil society to facilitate the peace process. The peace process might have been a good deal less suc-

Relationship Building: Main Points

- Building positive relationships among former adversaries is key to a successful peace process. But relationships develop over time. Peace committees are most effective when participants have had the opportunity to cultivate working relationships over a period of several years.
- Forging relationships under fire is possible but more difficult than under peaceful conditions.
- The building of positive relationships is greatly assisted when key leaders assume the responsibility of acting as role models. Mandela's willingness to reach out and forgive and de Klerk's willingness to relinquish power for the sake of the country played an immeasurably important role.
- Relationship building is also aided by the involvement of exceptional personalities at all levels and in all phases of a peace process. A major challenge for peace committees is to identify exceptional personalities at the local or regional level and to support them to the greatest extent possible.

cessful, and certainly more contentious, had not the South African Council of Churches and the Consultative Business Movement become directly involved in bringing the parties to the table (Gastrow 1995, 15–29). In view of the importance of the national mandate for the success of local and regional peace committees, the role of the key facilitators at the national level cannot be overestimated.

At the same time, individual church and business leaders at the regional and local levels played important roles in establishing peace committees and making them work. Many peace workers had backgrounds in one or the other of the South African churches. Up to mid-1992, the peace process relied heavily on resources provided by the business community. In both KwaZulu–Natal and the Western Cape, for example, personnel were seconded by Consultative Business Movement to staff the regional peace committees. Once government financing was approved, reliance on the business community decreased. Nonetheless, former peace workers have described how in-kind and financial contributions from the business community assisted the work of their peace committees throughout their existence.

The ability of the peace committees to attract and maintain qualified staff was critical to their ability to build relationships at the local and regional levels that supported the peace process. A major factor in the effectiveness of any organization is quite simply ensuring that the right people are in the right places. Finding individuals who have the skills and personality to handle the positions they are assigned by no means elimi-

nates all impediments, but qualified people are more likely to overcome barriers.

In view of the speed with which peace committees were established and staff hired, as well as the conditions of employment the staffs faced, the peace structures at the regional and local levels appear to have succeeded extremely well in matching individuals with jobs.* At the same time, several former peace committee staff

Church Groups as Facilitators Of the Peace Process

“Church groups have played an important role as impartial third-party facilitator. . . . Church-related groups have been particularly well placed to engage in mediation and facilitation activities because church structures exist in every community. Ecumenical organizations are welcomed, and there is great respect for people who enter the community in the name of the church, irrespective of which church that might be. . . .

“Even in apparently secular civil society, the influence of the churches has been important. [The Institute for Democracy in South Africa] was established by Alex Boraine, an ordained Methodist minister. Thus, a ‘secular’ organization operates under the aura of the church. This has enhanced IDASA’s credibility and enabled them to bring different groups together, including the National Party and the ANC.” (Authors’ interview with peace worker, April 1997.)

*Peace committee employees received a modest salary and no pension, medical, or other benefits. They could be dismissed with a month’s notice.

Civil Society: Main Points

- Civil society organizations that are well organized and sufficiently capacitated can make a constructive contribution to the peace process by acting as facilitators of the process as a whole and by supporting organizations implementing peace agreements, such as the South African peace committees.
- The more attention given to hiring staff with the appropriate skills and personality for the positions they will hold, the more effective peace committees are likely to be. The existence of a strong civil society increases the likelihood that peace committees will be able to attract qualified staff.
- The selection of the peace committee chairman is critical; he or she should be capable of working in a collaborative, evenhanded manner with all parties.
- Irrespective of the strength of civil society, it is likely that peace committee staff will require ongoing training to be fully effective.

members stressed that they and their colleagues could have been even more effective if they had had access to appropriate training. Although the National Peace Secretariat did provide some training, sentiment was strong that more ongoing training could and should have been provided.

Some of those interviewed also stressed the importance of the chairman of the local or regional peace committee in determining the relative success that committee experienced. The chairman set the tone. If he or she was evenhanded, then the credibility of the peace committee was increased. If the chairman was able to bring members together in a problem-solving mode, then they would begin to establish positive, peace-reinforcing relationships.

Despite the importance of the chairman, the capacity of the entire peace committee staff—including monitors—was critical to the effectiveness of the committees. South Africa's

rich civil society no doubt played an important role in the ability of the committees to field such a large number of highly competent and dedicated personnel. Perhaps one of the most impressive aspects of the operation of the committees was that thousands of ordinary South Africans worked with them as unpaid volunteers. Many of these people served as peace monitors, putting their lives on the "thin red line" between hostile armed groups. Without their commitment, the peace committees would have been considerably less effective. A number of former peace committee staff members stressed the importance of relying on unpaid volunteers. As one staffer put it, when payment is offered, "the wrong people come out."

Factor 5: Legitimacy Of the Peace Structures

The degree of legitimacy enjoyed by the local and regional peace committees influenced

the degree to which individuals and groups within communities participated seriously in their efforts. Five factors seem most important in determining the degree of legitimacy: existence of a national mandate, ownership by key stakeholders, credibility with key stakeholders, inclusivity, and relationship with the government.

National Mandate

The existence of a national mandate such as that expressed in the National Peace Accord was cited by many interviewed for this study as a necessary but not sufficient condition for local and regional peace committees to function effectively. As noted earlier, this mandate strengthened the hand of peace workers when they entered a community to set up local peace committees and sought the cooperation of the political parties, the security forces, and other actors. The national mandate only opened the door to legitimacy, however; it did not ensure that the major stakeholders would accept the committee.

Ownership

Ownership is a particularly important component of legitimacy for organizations such as the local and regional peace committees. Measured against this yardstick, many peace committees had a rather low level of legitimacy,

especially at the outset. Few were adequately grounded in the community. One consistent criticism leveled against the peace committees, particularly the local committees, is that they were imposed from above. A regional peace committee staff person, who almost certainly did not live in the community, would appear and encourage local residents to set up a local committee. Because of the urgency of the situation, it was often not possible to spend much time building public support for the peace committee.

Regional committee staffers did, of course, attempt to create peace committees in communities with latent disputes where a more extended process of institution- and relationship-building could have occurred. As was noted in chapter 2, however, before the outbreak of violence, many communities did not see the importance of creating peace structures. Furthermore, in highly polarized communities, it was often impossible to find individuals perceived by all sides to be impartial to act as chairman of the local committee. Outsiders frequently had to be brought in—which only heightened the perception of “imposition.” One analyst noted in 1993 that “a common perception . . . that local structures, created at the national level, have been thrust onto unwilling local actors” produced “charges that local peace committees are ‘top down’ structures out of touch with community values and needs” (Shaw 1993, 16).^{*} An additional impediment was that political parties

^{*}A major criticism of the institutions established by the National Peace Accord was the large number of white males in senior positions. Jayendra Naidoo, a member of the National Peace Secretariat, has characterized this imbalance as a “largely unavoidable phenomenon. . . . When the [National Peace Accord] started forming regional and local peace committees in 1992, most black people were committed to one or another organisation. We were looking for nonaligned people to play the role of chairpersons, and one didn’t easily find a black person who was not aligned.” (Garson circa 1995, 6.)

often failed to communicate the content and spirit of the peace accord to members at the grass-roots level. Such failure complicated efforts to build ownership and legitimacy within communities.

Credibility

In principle, the credibility of organizations such as the local and regional peace committees depends to a large degree on their ability to be evenhanded in all their dealings. Several peace workers in the Witsvaal region stressed, for example, that *all* allegations of misconduct had to be investigated so that no group appeared to be in a favored position. In highly polarized societies, however, the value of impartiality is not readily evident to many stakeholders. People often do not want an evenhanded approach. They want their position to be vindicated.

In these instances, the atmosphere is one of “If you are not with me, you are against me.”

The ability of peace committees to be evenhanded was affected by the fact that their members represented particular groups (such as political parties) that expected their interests to be promoted. In addition, committee members were often engaged in internal power struggles that affected the way in which community members perceived the committees. Although their membership in peace committees nominally made them “peacemakers,” these individuals were often heavily involved in conflicts that led to violence in their communities. One former local committee chairman recounted sitting around a table with the members of his committee the morning after a massacre had taken 17 lives in the community. He was certain that some of those members had taken part in the killings.

Local Staff: A Conundrum

One former staff member of a regional peace committee in a particularly contentious area explained that the leadership of the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party regularly berated the regional peace committee in public because it employed no mediators from the community. For their part, though, committee staff found it impossible to find local mediators who would be viewed within the community as impartial.

If a person was not of Zulu origin, chances were 95 percent that the IFP would veto that person. If the person did not have a history of activism in the 1980s, he or she would be rejected by the ANC. Every black South African was assumed to have ties to one or the other of the political organizations and was therefore not acceptable as a mediator. The regional peace committee ended up employing black citizens from Lesotho and other African countries, or white males. The latter actually had a significant advantage in dealings with the police force. (Authors' interviews, May 1997.)

It is difficult to find staff who are perceived to be politically evenhanded in divided communities. Even the smallest action is burdened by political overtones, real or imagined. Many peace committees dealt with this problem by assigning two members to a task in order to produce a rough political balance. This practice ran the gamut of positions in peace committees—from the chairman to part-time monitors. In the Western Cape, most local committees had two cochairmen, one black or Coloured and one white. It was impossible to find a lone individual who enjoyed sufficient trust across the political spectrum (Odendaal and Spies n.d., 6). In the

“What credibility can I have if one board member is arrested for killing another board member?” (Authors’ interview with former local peace committee chairman, April 1997.)

townships around Johannesburg, the most capable staff monitors were aligned with the ANC. It was not possible, however, to use monitors with close affiliations to only one party, so teams of monitors were established, two each from the ANC and IFP.

Despite all this, efforts by peace committees to take a balanced approach to all stakeholders were often appreciated. A former peace worker in one of the most violent parts of the country observed that in most cases people in divided communities will accept outsiders as facilitators. They understand that everyone—down to the local minister—has a history that will eventually set its stamp on negotiations

between opposing groups and run the risk of derailing the entire process. Similarly, efforts to be evenhanded were often appreciated by peace committee members associated with the old order, such as representatives of the National Party and the security forces. While some of these individuals have expressed the view that peace committee staff were more sympathetic to the position of the ANC, they also recognized that peace workers were making a genuine attempt at evenhandedness in their dealings with the various stakeholders.

Some former peace workers have argued that the perception of bias toward the ANC derived from the fact that they were required, for various reasons, to spend a disproportionate amount of time dealing with organizations in the ANC alliance. In the Western Cape,

Some of the local branches of these organisations were deeply entrenched in the spirit of noncollaboration, and on most occasions of social upheaval members of these organisations were active. If the Peace Accord was to be successful in its most urgent objective—the prevention of loss of life and damage to property—then the continued cooperation of these organisations was vital. (Odendaal and Spies n.d., 12.)

Former peace workers stressed that an evenhanded approach does not require that time or other resources be divided equally among the stakeholders. Rather, it is inherent in the attitude of committee staffers toward the individuals and organizations with which they are in contact.

Inclusivity

Former peace workers from all parts of the country stressed the importance of including all relevant stakeholders in the peace process, particularly locally. Failure to do so severely undermines the peace committees' capability to address adequately the problems leading to violence in communities. But the peace committees had a problem. Because the entire peace process was controlled by politicians and the committees' main actors were political parties, important stakeholders were routinely ignored—in particular, youth, women, and the internally displaced.

Lack of participation by youth groups was especially problematic. Their members were among the most confrontational, involved as they were in many of the acts of violence that occurred. They were completely without experience in or respect for collaborative modes of interaction. Not only were youth groups involved in intergenerational conflicts with traditional leaders (conflicts that frequently assumed the veneer of an ANC–IFP confrontation) or violent interactions with youth groups affiliated with other political parties; they also participated in *intraorganizational* conflicts that frequently led to violence. That was especially the case in KwaZulu–Natal. For example, in

Legitimacy: Main Points

- The more legitimate peace committees are perceived to be at the grass roots, the more effective they are likely to be.
- A national mandate opens the door to legitimacy but does not guarantee it.
- The credibility of peace committees depends to a great degree on their ability to be even-handed. The value of evenhandedness, however, is often not self-evident in highly polarized societies. Peace committees should accordingly place special emphasis on educating by example.
- Ownership of peace committees can be strengthened by building on existing community organizations where possible and by involving the local population in their work. In highly polarized societies, however, the need for evenhandedness and the desirability of ownership may be in contradiction.
- Legitimacy will be enhanced by the inclusion of all stakeholders, not merely the major official actors. Special efforts must be made to include women, youth, the internally displaced, and other marginalized groups.
- Funding for peace committees provided by governments whose legitimacy is contested should be managed in a way that eliminates the appearance of bias.

one periurban community near Pinetown, conflict between different groups of pro-ANC youth went on for more than two years in the early 1990s, while in Wembezi, conflicts among pro-IPF youth became increasingly common in 1992–93 (Shaw 1993, 13).

One key stakeholder group—the white community—frequently voluntarily absented itself from participation in the peace committees. Whereas individual white South Africans participated at all levels and in a wide variety of capacities in the activities of the peace committees, white *communities* tended to adopt the view that conflict was something that primarily affected the nonwhite community and that they did not need additional channels for negotiation or consultation. It is true that the victims of violence were overwhelmingly within the black community, but this attitude ignored the structural nature of the violence and its roots in the apartheid system, a system that made even the poorest whites relatively privileged citizens of South Africa. Many white South Africans were profoundly ignorant of conditions in nonwhite communities, and involvement with the local peace committees was the first intimate contact that nonactivists had with the townships.

Peace Committee–Government Links

The government was assigned responsibility for providing and administering the financial resources allocated to the peace committees. An ensured financial base was crucial in developing a presence and enhancing the legitimacy of the peace committees. Local offices were able to rent facilities and acquire fax machines and other communications equipment.

This provided means of communicating outside the community that simply had not existed previously. It was a positive contribution to accountability.

At the same time, the initial choice of bureaucratic home for the peace committees had extremely negative connotations, as the Department of Justice was seen as an instrument of the apartheid government. That financing was channeled through the government at all made some peace activists wary of becoming involved with the peace committees; that it came from the Department of Justice was extremely problematic. Eventually, in 1994, the Home Ministry assumed responsibility for funding and administering the peace structures. That change alleviated some, but not all, of these concerns.

Factor 6: Enhancing Communication: The Role of Information

Having access to accurate information in a timely fashion is critical to breaking cycles of violence and promoting reconciliation and healing. One characteristic of divided societies is that the warring parties control information and that, as a result, noncombatants often have only a partial, biased view of reality. In recognition of this problem, the National Peace Accord specified that “all citizens must . . . be informed and aware that political parties and the media must be free to impart information and opinions” (NPA 1991, para 1.3). However, neither the peace accord nor the National Peace Secretariat addressed in a satisfactory manner the issue of access to information.

Although the accord included a code of conduct for political parties, no formal code of conduct for the media was developed. Several people interviewed for this study remarked that such a code would have been extremely helpful in improving the quality of information provided to the public. The press tended, for example, to present as fact “information” that was really a rumor circulated by one or the other parties. But it was also recognized that a code of conduct alone is insufficient to induce necessary changes in the mentality and operating procedures of the media.

When the peace accord was signed, most members of the media had not yet adjusted to the lifting of the state-of-emergency regulations in 1990. Except for a handful of alternative newspapers, the print and broadcast media tended to follow the government line more or less uncritically. As violence escalated during 1992 and 1993 and the peace committees appeared to be incapable of halting the killing, the media, which had announced the signing of the accord with great fanfare (as they were meant to do), adopted a negative attitude toward it.

This meant that the peace committees needed to be proactive in communicating both their objectives and a realistic assessment of how those objectives could be achieved. The National Peace Secretariat did engage in a media campaign to inform South Africans about the content and intent of the peace accord, but many observers have described the campaign as ineffective. There were several reasons. One was that the chosen forms of communication—newspapers and television—reached only a small minority of the population. The secretariat gave insufficient attention to radio and to videos, which could be used in community educa-

tion efforts. A second problem was that the accord existed only in English, Afrikaans, and Zulu, and the Zulu-language translation was not published in a timely fashion. This meant that the accord was inaccessible to many people who needed it the most.

A third problem was that the peace accord was “sold” by the secretariat as a product rather than a process. People did not simply need to know that the accord existed, and they certainly did not need to be given the impression that it would somehow magically end the violence. Rather, people needed to know how to make the accord work for them. They needed information about accessing local peace committees and the services the peace committees could provide them. They also needed to know that political organizations with which they were affiliated had signed the accord and therefore were required to comply with its provisions, including cooperating with the peace committees.

A fourth problem lay in the fact that the National Peace Secretariat did not appear to have made a significant effort to work with media executives to obtain a more accurate and balanced reporting of events on the ground or to bring them into peace forums. Not surprisingly, the media zeroed in on incidents of violence. They frequently portrayed these as the result of conflicts between the major political parties, particularly the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party. The roots of these conflicts were often much more complex, but the media were not experienced in looking below the surface. Nor were many reporters inclined to report on the day-to-day activities of local peace committees, reportage that would have provided a more balanced view of the

actual situation. That the media can be used to promote a positive attitude toward a peace process is not in doubt. In the Western Cape, for example, local radio provided a forum for discussion and one of the local papers, the *Argus*, gave a “peacemaker of the week” award.

In addition to using the traditional media, however, it is important to find innovative methods of communicating at the grass-roots level. Various methods of promoting transparency were employed to increase the accuracy of information available in violence-prone areas. One peace worker noted that the meetings of his local committee were open to everyone in the community. Community meetings and joint peace rallies were also cited as useful tools for transmitting information. The IFP, for example,

tended to portray everything it did as consistent with the peace accord. Absent other methods of obtaining information, IFP supporters would accept what they were told by their leaders. Combating rumor by investigating allegations of misbehavior by one or another of the parties was also an important tool employed by some of the peace committees. When allegations could be proven false, violence would be forestalled, and the longer violence could be forestalled, the more space there was for bridging the differences between stakeholders.

Videos offered another means of communicating. An interesting use of video occurred in Crossroads, a township outside Cape Town. In mid-1993, Crossroads was wracked by violence created by the demand of a local squatter

Combating Rumor in the Witsvaal Region

Migrant workers, ethnically classified as “Zulus” and politically defined as “Inkatha supporters,” lived in hostels adjacent to huge, informal townships that surrounded Johannesburg. These townships were populated by “Xhosa,” who were “ANC supporters.” Tensions were high and in constant danger of spilling over into open warfare, frequently as a result of third force provocations that exploited the differences between these two groups. In this environment, containing rumor was a high priority for peace committee staff.

As many allegations were investigated as possible, and their findings made known immediately. If, for example, ANC supporters alleged that adherents of the IFP had kidnapped three women and taken them to a particular hostel, peace committee staff would pose a series of questions to those making the allegation: How many men were involved? What were they wearing? What color car were they driving? What were the women wearing? Which hostel building did they enter? The peace committee staff would then approach the hostel leader, indicating that an allegation had been made, that they were certain the allegation was false, and that they needed his assistance in disproving it. The hostel leader would then accompany the peace workers to the hostel and would either find the women—or the guns, or the contraband, or whatever the allegation concerned—or they would not. The outcome of this investigation would then be made widely known. (Authors’ interviews with former peace workers, May 1997.)

leader that a large number of people move to make way for “improvements” to their plots. (See chapter 2 for a description of this dispute.) The intensity of the violence eventually caused the factions involved to call for a cooling-off period. In June, the Western Cape regional peace committee facilitated a meeting among representatives of the major groups in Crossroads: the police, the army, the Cape Provincial Administration, the ANC, and nongovernmental organizations active in the community. This meeting led to an agreement to halt “development” activities in the township, because these activities were clearly heightening tensions in the community.

Following this meeting, a team of filmmakers began to tape interviews with a cross section of individuals involved in the conflict. The interview process itself enabled community

members to obtain more information on how decisions were made, who was involved, and what options they might have for influencing those decisions. The resultant film was shown in October 1993 to 600 Crossroads residents. This viewing pushed the conflict management process forward another step, with community members signing a peace declaration and agreeing, in principle, to form development committees to identify community needs.

Factor 7: Financial and Structural Flexibility

One hallmark of successful peace operations is their flexibility in areas such as disbursing financial resources, responding to local conditions, and planning for and responding to unforeseen events. The South African experi-

Enhancing Communication: Main Points

- Accurate information provided in a timely fashion is critical to the success of a peace process.
- It is particularly important to break the monopoly over information that the parties to the conflict hold and to find effective means of communicating to the largest number of citizens how the peace committees can affect their lives.
- Involving themselves as active participants in peace committees, members of the media could enhance their understanding of the committees’ work and their ability to communicate this to the public.
- A code of conduct for the media should be considered as a means of fostering collaboration between peace committees and the media.
- Investigating allegations of misconduct is key to containing rumor and forestalling violence.

ence underscores yet again the importance of these factors.

Financial Flexibility

Financial flexibility is key to efficient and effective operation of organizations such as local and regional peace committees. Failure to deliver timely and appropriate financial resources can jeopardize an entire peace process. One of the most frequently heard complaints from former regional and local peace committee staff was that unsatisfactory financial management led to difficulties in accessing financial resources.

The lack of defined budgets for peace committees was particularly problematic. It arose out of the government's decision not to establish fixed budgets for the regional peace committees but rather to provide all necessary resources to them. The National Peace Secretariat did little to clarify the matter for local and regional peace committees. Although this policy probably derived in part from the uncertainty about how much the committees might cost, it made planning and acquiring materials in a timely fashion problematic. Senior peace committee staff spent many unnecessary and frustrating hours attempting to obtain spending authorization.

Officials in the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Home Affairs who oversaw the budget had legitimate concerns about accountability. But there did not seem to be any significant effort to find ways of combining a high standard of accountability with greater local control over resources. This was due in no small measure to the fact that, at the best of times, South Africa's bureaucracy is slow and rigid in its

approach. With regard to oversight of the peace committee network, the bureaucracy did not appear to have been given any incentive to innovate, or perhaps any indication that innovation was desirable. Several former peace committee staff members observed that they had no proof of willful obstruction but that some of the decisions made by the officials who liaised with the peace committees were so clearly counter-productive that they had to conclude that there had been an intent to obstruct.

An additional problem faced by peace committee staff is that they sometimes had to raise their own money for vehicles, activities such as training, and expenses for monitors (food and transportation). While success in fundraising did increase the committees' ability to fulfill their mandates, the absence of an agreed-on budget meant that it was not possible to plan for such additional fundraising needs.

Structural Flexibility

In a country as diverse as South Africa, it stands to reason that a mechanism such as the local and regional peace committees needs to have the flexibility to respond according to the needs on the ground. One structure, one mode

Bureaucratic Constraints

"You could not just go out and rent an office and then get the approval of the Department of Justice. There were many bureaucratic hoops to jump through." (Authors' interview with former local peace committee staff member, May 1997.)

of operation does not fit every case, and it is critical to ask “What if?” at every step of the process. In addition, the skills and personality of committee staff are important factors in determining the ability of the committees to respond flexibly and rapidly to changing situations.

The verdict of former peace workers on the committees’ ability to respond to local conditions was mixed. Some argued that a strength of the committee structure was its decentralization, which enabled committees to act autonomously. Mechanisms to deal with local conflicts were often developed locally. The approach, it

Lack of an Adequate Budgeting Process

“If there were budgets for the peace committees, these were not communicated to either regional peace committee or local peace committee staff. We had tremendous difficulty in accessing resources. The national secretariat should have indicated how much would be spent in priority areas and then within that, how much could be spent at the local level. Then indicative budgeting could have been done. Staff could have been authorized to spend against this budget. However, the National Peace Secretariat staff lacked proper project managers.” (Authors’ interview with former peace committee staff member, May 1997.)

The Need for Regional Variation

“There should have been sufficient flexibility within the National Peace Accord to allow a completely different approach to creating peace structures in KwaZulu–Natal. The National Peace Accord was drawn up by urban slickers, and while it recognized the traditional leadership, the structures it prescribed were designed with urban needs in mind. This shows that a rigid, prescriptive approach to designing peace structures within the ‘same’ society is not desirable.” (Authors’ interview with former peace committee member, May 1997.)

was felt, should be one of ensuring consistency of objectives and principles, rather than duplication of particular structures.

An observer of the work of the committees has noted that the strategies employed for organizing protest marches in the Witsvaal region were quite different from those used in the West Rand, and that both approaches appeared to have worked well (Shaw 1993, 26).^{*} Additionally, a committee of the National Peace Secretariat that examined monitoring activities conducted by the local and regional peace committees concluded in October 1992 that regional differences were sufficiently large to warrant a regional approach. That committee accordingly recommended that broad national guidelines be developed that would assist the regional peace committees in planning and organizing moni-

^{*}Shaw expressed the concern, however, that there was too much autonomy and that valuable insights were being lost for lack of a mechanism to enable local peace committee staff to learn from each other’s experiences.

Flexibility of the Peace Committees: Main Points

Peace committees function most efficiently when there is

- Accountable local control over resources
- An ability to tailor responses to local needs
- An organizational ethos that values contingency planning and the ability to hire staff capable of operating in a constantly changing environment

toring activities but not predetermine the form they take (NPS 1993, 5).

Others have argued that the peace committee framework was insufficiently supple to allow for important regional and local variations. One critical difference was the gap between the culture of traditional leadership and a more participatory form of governance that was emerging from the antiapartheid movement. This split was particularly problematic in KwaZulu-Natal, but it existed elsewhere and was often manifested in disputes between youth and traditional leaders and between urban and rural areas.

A major illustration of the capacity to respond to the situation on the ground is the

importance that monitoring activities came to assume for the peace committees. Although monitoring was not foreseen in the National Peace Accord, it became clear to peace committee staff that monitoring activities were vital in helping to reduce the incidence of violence and save lives. Monitoring was also a concrete manifestation of the peace accord at the community level. It provided an opportunity for the opposing sides to work together, and to the extent it succeeded in reducing the death rate, it gave the peace committees a positive profile. For these reasons, the peace committees recognized the value of monitoring and made it a centerpiece of their activities (Shaw 1997, 277).*

Factor 8: The Role Of International Actors

The transition from minority to majority rule was essentially a home-grown process, of which South Africans are justifiably proud. External support, however, was provided from time to time. Two types of external support are of particular interest: 1) direct financial assistance to the peace committees provided by aid donors and 2) the international observer missions sent by the United Nations, the European Union, the Organization of African States, and the British Commonwealth.

*Shaw has suggested that monitoring was prioritized in part to “demonstrate concrete and highly visible attempts to end the violence.” The result, Shaw posits, was “to shift attention away from local level peace initiatives, which sought to resolve complex and varying local conflicts, to regional monitoring exercises which focused on high profile political gatherings.” Although it is impossible to say that such calculations were never made, former peace workers interviewed for this report consistently contended that they had no option but to engage in monitoring activities in view of the threat to human life posed by unmonitored events.

Financial Support From Aid Donors

Most peace committee financing was provided by the South African government and local business organizations. Foreign donors contributed only a small amount of resources directly to the work of the peace committees. The grants were targeted on two areas (training, and facilitating communications within the peace committee network) and were cited by former peace committee staff members as extremely helpful. The peace committee budget had no provision for training, and insufficient training was often cited as hampering the effectiveness of the committees. As for support for communications, the ability to transmit information rapidly and reliably was key to the effective functioning of the committees, particularly in their monitoring activities. The equipment purchased with donor funding was highly regarded.

Although direct external funding for the peace committees was modest, the international donor community also contributed *indirectly* to the committees' effectiveness—namely, through the support it had provided for civil society organizations during the apartheid era and continued to provide during the transition. To the extent that civil society organizations financed by external actors played an important role in the work of the peace committees, external financing can be said to have made a contribution to the functioning of the peace committees.

International Observers

International observers were initially deployed as a result of UN Security Council

“There is tremendous symbolism in the blue flag.” (Authors' interview with former peace committee staff members, April–May 1997.)

resolution 772 of 17 August 1992. It authorized the UN secretary general to deploy “as a matter of urgency, United Nations observers in South Africa, in such a manner and in such numbers as he determines necessary to address effectively the areas of concern. . . .”

This resolution was a response to the June 1992 Boipatong massacre, which had resulted from an attack by hostel dwellers on a black settlement south of Johannesburg. Forty-eight people, mostly women and children, were killed. Because of this blatant act of violence, the African National Congress suspended participation in the constitutional talks, and Nelson Mandela asked the UN to “find ways and means to normalize the deteriorating situation in South Africa and so try to resume the negotiations which have broken down” (Gastrow 1995).

UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali dispatched Cyrus Vance, a former U.S. secretary of state, on a fact-finding mission. From his wide-ranging discussions while in South Africa, Vance suggested the deployment of international observers. Before this time, the government had rejected the notion that outside observers could contribute to the peace process, at least in part as a reaction to the UN sanctions against South Africa then in effect. In view of the seriousness of the situation following the Boipatong massacre, however, the government accepted Vance's recommendation.

Four organizations ultimately provided observer teams: the United Nations (61 observers), the European Union (15), the Organization of African Unity (13) and the British Commonwealth (9). Observers were present in all 11 regions in which the peace committees operated, although the teams were concentrated in the regions most affected by violence, KwaZulu–Natal and Witsvaal. The UN, for example, posted 22 observers in the Witsvaal region and 12 observers in KwaZulu–Natal. The observers were mandated to coordinate their activities with those of the regional and local peace committees. They attended peace committee meetings, participated in monitoring activities, facilitated conflict resolution, and generally kept in touch with the relevant players.

The attitude toward the observers among peace committee staff varied widely, depending on the quality of the individual observers with which the staff person in question interacted. The UN, which was by far the largest team, came in for the most criticism. One peace worker in the Witsvaal region stated bluntly, “The UN monitors were next to useless. They were administrators from New York who thought they were tourists. We had to keep taking their cameras away from them.” Another Witsvaal peace worker noted that he and his colleagues had to give some of the UN monitors lessons in mediation skills. For example, they had to teach one group of observers the importance of dealing with the parties simultaneously in the same room, not one by one, to avoid divide-and-conquer strategies. A third worker, this one in KwaZulu–Natal, reported that the UN observers would attend meetings but refuse to go out on missions. A fourth peace worker, also from KwaZulu–Natal, felt that

many UN observers were passive, of poor quality, and interested primarily in the money and a vacation. By contrast, the Commonwealth observers in KwaZulu–Natal were rated highly, as were European Union observers in the Western Cape and Witsvaal regions. UN observers in the Eastern and Western Cape also got high marks.

Despite the shortcomings of some observers, many of the former peace committee members and staff interviewed in the course of this study stressed that the mere presence of the international observers enhanced the legitimacy of their efforts. One former peace committee member noted that citizens (including well-educated police officers) who would reject an idea or criticism from a South African source would

“The monitors put the entire process on a different plane.” (Authors’ interview with former peace committee staff member, April–May 1997.)

quickly accept the same idea or criticism from an international observer. Observers would sometimes escort peace committee fieldworkers to meetings in order to underline the importance of collaborating with the peace committees. One former peace worker noted that they would send observers to crisis spots because their presence often had a calming effect, since no one wanted to look bad before the eyes of the international community. Simply by their presence they enhanced accountability; they also made it known to the police that they would report inappropriate behavior. Observers also often gave practical advice. All the European Union observers, for example, were police officers.

They helped peace committees set up communication systems and were helpful in dealing with community anger against the police.

The most successful observers were proactive. They did not sit in offices behind closed doors. They went to meetings, escorted fieldworkers, participated in monitoring, encouraged people to speak with them, reported inappropriate police behavior to relevant authorities. One particularly proactive team was the Commonwealth observer group in Port Shepstone, near Durban. This team collaborated with the local peace committee to broker a peace agreement for a tribal area near Port Shepstone that had suffered extensive violence. Jockeying for power between the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party had produced a substantial number of internally displaced persons. Working with the local traditional leader, the Commonwealth observers and local peace committee staff created an environment in which the internally displaced were allowed to return, homes that had been burned were reconstructed, and acts of violence ceased.*

International Actors: Main Points

- Well-targeted external financial assistance can enhance the effectiveness of peace committees.
- International observers can make a significant contribution to the outcome of a peace process and facilitate the work of mechanisms such as the local and regional peace committees.
- To maximize the effectiveness of international observer teams, it is important that the organizations supplying the observers second committed, experienced personnel.
- Mandates of international observer missions should allow the observers to go beyond merely observing to actively assisting local staff in carrying out specific tasks such as monitoring and conflict resolution.

*This local peace agreement was still in force at the time the authors visited Port Shepstone in April 1997 but was under threat following the murder of the traditional chief by his son, allegedly in self-defense, in a family dispute.

4



Lessons

THE GROWING NUMBER OF COMPLEX POLITICAL emergencies and major political transitions around the world has led to considerable interest in mechanisms to minimize violent conflict. Because the peace committees that operated in South Africa during 1991–94 to assist the transition to majority rule had a limited but still important positive effect on the peace process, the question has arisen if this mechanism might not be replicable in other transition countries. The South African experience with peace committees demonstrates that it does offer a number of lessons for conflict management elsewhere in the world, regarding what to emulate, what to avoid, and what are the limits of peace committees as a conflict management tool. It also provides an indication of the environment in which peace committees will be most successful.

Lesson 1. Peace committees can be valuable conflict management tools in countries undergoing major political transitions.

The South African experience demonstrates that peace committees, at the local, regional, and national levels, can help manage conflict in deeply

divided societies. The South African peace committees illustrate that *under the appropriate conditions* efforts to engender dialog and bring opposing parties together to solve mutual problems can contribute to reducing violence, breaking negative patterns of intergroup and interpersonal interactions, and fostering the constructive relationships that are the building blocks of peaceful societies.

In South Africa, peace committees were employed as a short-term tool to help manage conflict during an interim period while the country's political transition was being negotiated. In other countries it may be useful to explore the possibility of using peace committees in a preventive mode, before the outbreak of hostilities, and to support political transitions over the medium term. The South African government elected in April 1994 ceased funding the peace committees because it believed the institutions of state would be able to represent the interests of all citizens once multiparty rule was in place. In point of fact, the legacies of apartheid cannot be overcome that rapidly. It is clear a continuing need exists for building trust and strengthening relationships, particularly at

the local level. This same need exists in other countries engaged in significant political transitions. Until adequate mechanisms of governance are in place, and the history of state dominance and repression can be overcome, innovative methods of building trust among the different groups within society will be required.

Lesson 2. Concept should not be confused with structure.

The peace committee *concept* is transferable, but the precise form such committees assume should be developed locally. Many former peace committee members and staff interviewed in 1997 stressed that the South African committees were highly context-specific. They cautioned against blindly transferring the South African peace committee *structure* to other countries with different social, political, and economic conditions.

Indeed, the South African experience demonstrates that cultural and historical variations may require different approaches even within the same country. Many of those interviewed argued that different structures were required in different parts of the country to take into account different patterns of authority. Others noted that the way in which peace committees dealt with the same problems varied according to local needs. The objective, they stressed, should be to ensure consistency of goals and principles, rather than to duplicate specific structures.

Lesson 3. Although peace committees can be a valuable conflict management tool, they are not appropriate in every setting. It is important to evaluate the environment into

which peace committees are to be introduced to determine if a sufficient number of key enabling factors are in place.

The South African experience with peace committees illustrates that certain environmental factors increase the likelihood that the committees will be able to make a positive contribution to a political transition. These elements do not always have to be present to justify the creation of peace committees. However, the absence of a significant number of them will call into question the viability of the committees.

It is difficult to say how many of these factors need to be present to justify an investment in peace committees. The South African experience suggests that the first two factors discussed below—political will and the attitude of the security forces and other armed groups—are critical. No matter how talented the staff, how inclusive the committees, or how rooted in local communities, efforts by peace committees to find community-based solutions to problems generating violence will not succeed if the major players do not accept the need for a fundamental transition and if armed groups can operate with impunity.

Some South Africans have gone so far as to suggest that no attempt should be made to develop peace committees in the absence of a formal mandate at the national level. This is probably true for the establishment of a national network of peace committees. But if there is sufficient capacity and will at the local level, it may make sense to invest resources in supporting individual groups. Several participants in the South African process argued that *preexisting*

community-based mechanisms that help empower the local population, support reconstruction efforts, and preserve stability and extend peace locally should *always* be supported, even if the national climate is not conducive to a broader peace process. In these instances, it is critical that donors understand that the progress made by such groups is constantly in danger of being thwarted from above. Donors should moderate their expectations of what individual community-based groups can achieve.

The 14 most important environmental factors influencing the relative degree of success experienced by South African peace committees were as follows.

Political Will

The work of peace committees at the local and regional levels will be greatly facilitated if the parties to the conflict have sufficient political will to commit to a major political transition and sufficient capacity to convince their members at all levels that their actions should be consistent with the goals of that transition. A major stumbling block that confronted the South African peace committees and is likely to be repeated in other transition countries is that the desire to maximize political advantage during electoral periods can reduce the willingness of political parties to cooperate with peace committees and seriously undermine their effectiveness.

Attitude of the Security Forces And Other Armed Groups

An end to impunity on the part of the security forces and all other armed groups, formal

and informal, state and nonstate, is critical to the effective functioning of peace committees. In South Africa, the ability of “third force” death squads to continue their activities, essentially unhindered, through the entire transition period severely jeopardized the ability of the peace committees to carry out their mandated tasks, particularly those in KwaZulu-Natal and the Witsvaal region. At the same time, the South African experience demonstrated that the existence of a code of conduct for security forces and a mechanism to monitor that code can enhance accountability and contribute to a lowering of the level of violence, even if the security forces fail to comply with the code consistently.

Responsible, Dynamic Leadership

The work of peace committees is aided by the support of people in leadership positions who are highly respected in their own communities and who are able through the force of their personality and convictions to keep the political transition moving forward.

Civil Society

Without a civil society that is sufficiently well developed to make a constructive contribution to the political transition, it is unlikely that peace committees will take root.

Accountability

For peace committees to function effectively, official actors must be held accountable for their actions. This process can be facilitated if peace committees are mandated to monitor

the activities of major actors such as political parties, the security forces, local government structures, and the media.

Developing Relationships of Trust

Where stakeholders have had the opportunity to develop relationships of trust with one another over an extended period of time, the work of peace committees is facilitated. Relationships can be built under fire, but it is more difficult.

Local Ownership

The greater the sense of ownership of the peace committees within the communities they are meant to serve, the more effective they will be. The ability to draw on community members to supplement the efforts of the salaried staff will help build ownership of the committees' work.

Inclusivity

Peace committees benefit from the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders in their work, particularly groups that are often marginalized such as women, youth, and the displaced.

Evenhanded Approach

Peace committees will be successful to the extent they are able to be evenhanded in all their undertakings and to inculcate the value of evenhandedness among all participants in the political transition. Evenhandedness may at times be misinterpreted as support for the "other" side,

but it is critical to the process of bringing opposing groups together and building relationships of trust.

Communicating Peace

Peace committees need to break the warring parties' monopoly over information. They need to be proactive in informing the largest possible number of citizens about the nature of the committees and how the committees can benefit them. Radio, video, and theater presentations are important components of effective communications strategies in countries where illiteracy is high and where television and the print media do not reach beyond urban areas. Innovative methods of combating rumor and providing accurate information on events in a community are also important.

Financing

It is important to develop methods of delivering financial support to peace committees in a timely and effective manner. The support should be based on the principle of local control over resources with a high standard of accountability.

Organizational Flexibility

Successful peace committees are able to respond according to needs on the ground and have an organizational ethos that values contingency planning. One of the most important innovations among the South African peace committees—which saved an unknown but not insignificant number of lives—was the decision

to extend their mandate and engage in proactive monitoring of public events. The objective was to prevent funerals, demonstrations, public meetings, and other formal and impromptu events from degenerating into violence. This often required peace committee staff and unpaid peace monitors to position themselves between armed disputing parties.

Staffing

The ability to identify staff with the appropriate mix of skills and personality to operate effectively in an uncertain, high-tension, constantly changing environment enhances the success of peace committees. A particularly high value should be placed on qualities such as political astuteness, local knowledge, ability to experience passion and compassion, and mental toughness. The choice of chairman is critical to the success of the committee.

International Support

An international observer force with a proactive mandate can enhance the legitimacy of peace committees and provide essential technical support. Donors can fill critical gaps in the resources available to peace committees by providing financial, material, and technical support. In this regard, donors should consult closely with the committees to ensure that the appropriate resources are being provided.

Lesson 4. Build on what exists locally, and take local ownership seriously.

Although the local peace committees could have been better rooted in the communities they

served, the decision to create a peace committee network and its implementation were entirely driven by South Africans. Furthermore, large numbers of highly committed citizens participated in the work of the committees in the belief their involvement could lead to a more peaceful political transition. Had the concept of peace committees not developed organically from within South African society, it is highly likely that the committees would have been a good deal less effective than they in fact were.

When contemplating the applicability of peace committees to other societies, it is important to recognize that the concept almost certainly will not be viable without significant pre-existing local commitment. Efforts to develop civil society institutions in South Africa and other countries have demonstrated that although nongovernmental organizations and committees arise like mushrooms when funding is available, they are frequently not rooted in society and have little capacity to work at the community level.

It is not easy for outside actors such as development assistance agencies to identify appropriate local partners. It requires time and the commitment to devote resources to getting to know the relevant actors, identifying those that should be supported, and determining how external resources can most usefully support their efforts. The process will be most effective when it is field driven, so that the context within which support is provided is understood. Headquarters can determine the broad boundaries within which assistance can be offered, but the determination of who receives resources and the way in which these resources are used should be made on the ground following a careful examination of the options.

Equally important, the assistance provided must respond to needs on the ground *as expressed by the individuals and organizations receiving the assistance*. As one participant in the peace committee process stressed, “True peace is the peace that begins at the community level.” Thus donors should make every effort to enter into a genuine dialog with local stakeholders about their needs and to base funding decisions on the results. Resentment arises when local ownership is given lip service but actual funding decisions are based primarily on donors’ agendas. The level of resentment in South Africa is particularly high in view of the strength and maturity of civil society organizations there.

Lesson 5. Be prepared to make a long-term commitment to conflict management.

There are no quick-fix solutions to violent conflicts. Breaking the cycle of violence requires building a complex web of constructive intergroup and interpersonal relationships. These will grow only when trust has developed among the different stakeholders, and creating trust is a long-term proposition. Enduring change probably cannot be achieved in less than a generation. The South African experience points to the need for some type of continuing forum to promote intergroup and interpersonal dialog and problem-solving at all levels of society. It is likely, though, that different peace committee structures will be required during different phases of the transition.

This time frame poses a problem for external actors, who have tended to provide inten-

sive support to political transitions for a period of two to three years and consider five years to be “long term.” The international community as a whole and the development assistance community in particular are slowly coming to the realization that postconflict environments require lengthy commitments. It is uncertain, however, whether they will be able to act on this realization in any meaningful way, such as moving to a 10-year rolling planning cycle for postconflict countries.

At a minimum, donors need to explore how to make their support for specific conflict management mechanisms such as peace committees more sustainable. One way to increase sustainability would be to provide committee staff members with skills that will enhance their effectiveness. Intensive political transitions may not be the optimal environment for providing training in areas such as mediation, administration, and financial management, but the South African experience shows that there is a demand for such assistance. Indeed, many younger peace committee staff members were reportedly frustrated and angered by the failure of more senior staff to arrange such training for them. Another avenue would be to monitor the activities of peace committees locally during the interim transition period with a view to determining whether any of them should continue to exist in the next stage of the transition and what sort of support they might need to continue their work. One local peace committee outside Cape Town was able, with considerable difficulty, to transform itself into a community-based organization. Most local peace committees, however, did not survive the termination of government funding in 1994.

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Conclusion

THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE DEMONSTRATES that peace committees have the potential to make a significant contribution to conflict management. It also shows the importance of achieving agreement on the goals and principles the committees should further and on how these committees will interact with the institutions of state, rather than trying to duplicate specific structures. Indeed, the South African experience strongly suggests that even within a single country structural flexibility is a must.

South Africa also shows that the potential contribution of peace committees will be realized only if an enabling environment exists. Extensive interviews with South Africans involved in the work of the committees have identified the central features of that enabling environment. The most critical of these are the political will to engage in a fundamental political transformation and the capacity to translate that will into action. Also important is the ability to prevent the security forces and other armed groups from acting with impunity. Additionally, there is good reason to believe, on the

basis of the South African experience, that the peace committee concept will not be viable in a society that lacks significant local commitment within civil society to working constructively to support the political transition.

Finally, South Africa underscores the fact that while external actors, including donor organizations, can play a constructive role in fostering local initiatives, these initiatives must develop organically and not merely in response to the offer of external financial assistance. What is more, assistance should respond to local needs as expressed by those who receive the assistance. Donors should naturally not fund initiatives that are not in harmony with their broad objectives. They should, however, remember that in providing assistance they are offering local stakeholders *support* in achieving a particular objective. They are not defining *how* that goal is to be achieved. Conflict management mechanisms can take many forms. Donors need to satisfy themselves that the initiative proposed by their local partners is reasonably viable given local conditions; they should not attempt to dictate the form the initiative will take.

Appendix A.

Political Fatalities

In South Africa, 1985–95

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
January	4	105	40	211	126	210	187	139	135	239	131
February	35	112	22	107	95	283	129	238	148	259	87
March	76	179	40	62	89	458	351	348	143	537	79
April	46	145	40	48	99	283	270	300	212	436	138
May	66	221	33	58	89	208	318	230	339	207	100
June	45	212	36	76	38	150	150	324	309	119	82
July	96	122	39	94	96	247	164	278	547	136	92
August	163	76	35	112	104	698	184	361	451	106	61
September	69	40	73	108	135	417	282	339	425	109	69
October	86	16	93	90	116	162	218	332	398	106	49
November	101	37	89	85	129	316	283	299	370	94	54
December	92	33	121	98	287	267	170	159	317	128	102
Total	879	1,298	661	1,149	1,403	3,699	2,706	3,347	3,794	2,476	1,044

Overall total, January 1985–December 1995: 22,456

Sources: South African Institute of Race Relations, *Fast Facts March 1996*; Report of the Auditor General on the National Peace Secretariat for 1993–94, 1994–95, and 1995–96.

Appendix B.
National Peace Secretariat
Expenditures, 1993–96

All figures are in South African rand.

	1993	1994	1995	1996	Total 1993 96
Personnel					
Medical and health services	—	31,417	7,068	—	38,485
Remuneration of committee members	—	590,805	337,466	—	928,271
Staff salaries	—	8,077,335	13,134,421	9,095	21,220,851
					22,187,607
Services/Consulting					
Advertising	—	395,577	465,683	—	861,260
Audit fees	472	9,509	216,094	46,380	272,455
Legal advice	—	616	53,700	69	54,385
Professional services	17,430	2,671,428	3,003,511	—	5,692,369
Repairs and maintenance	—	111,094	46,663	—	157,757
					7,038,226
Operating Expenses					
Accommodation, conference facilities	27,565	1,250,648	4,851,914	—	6,130,127
Consumables	—	689,902	687,781	—	1,377,683
Entertainment	—	56,118	79,246	13	135,377
Equipment rental	—	793,609	1,518,378	99,176	2,411,163
Membership and registration	—	6,212	46,729	7,560	60,501
Postage	—	4,816	16,659	20	21,495
Regional services levies	—	18,251	41,809	—	60,060
Stationery and printing	—	1,995,535	1,292,360	—	3,287,895
Telephone/communication	—	892,720	1,427,448	7,285	2,327,453
Training	—	107,603	462,757	—	570,360
Transport	1,674	3,918,580	12,832,183	297,922	17,050,359
					33,432,473
Land and Buildings					
Building rental fees	—	28,479	141,247	1,850	171,576
Depreciation	—	512,750	1,299,196	—	1,811,946
					1,983,522
Miscellaneous					
Bad debts	—	—	169,526	398	169,924
Bank charges	87	9,988	32,441	958	43,474
Exgratia payments	—	—	9,000	—	9,000
Sundry expenses	438	25,500	67,301	500	93,739
Theft and losses	—	40,612	160,736	—	201,348
					517,485
Totals	47,666	22,239,104	42,401,317	471,226	65,159,313

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