Strategies for non-violent action to address conflicts: a case of Zimbabwe

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Abstract

This Conceptual paper proposes a framework for non-violent conflict resolution for Zimbabwe. It argues that non-violent action is the only viable option available to address conflict situations. The option has potential to bring better results and success than the violent option. The key source of power of nonviolent action is the local people and the cooperation of different stakeholders. People power and civilian-based resistance help legitimise the change process and the government that emerges out of the process stays in power longer. The assumption is that if people carry out the action long enough and in sufficient numbers it will lead to an oppressive government becoming powerless and receding. The paper argues that nonviolent action is not spontaneous but follows periods of strategic planning. Plans on how to respond to the oppressor's reaction need to be developed. So too should the non-violent movement know its resource base and how it is going to mobilise people to take part. Non-violent action needs to be accompanied with strong strategic thinking and communication skills. It also requires a lot of community mobilisation and training. Ordinary citizens need to be skilled on how to act non-violently when faced up with a violent reaction to their demands.

Key Words: conflict, non-violent action, oppressive government, strategic planning, government.

1. Background on Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a land locked country located in Southern Africa with a population of approximately 13 million people. It is a young country with an estimated 62% of its population aged below 35 years. It is also estimated that at least three million Zimbabweans are located in the Diaspora – a key development linked to the country's conflicts.

Zimbabwe gained her political independence from British colonial rule in 1980. Since then it has adopted a multi-party system. Between 1980 and 1987 there were two main political parties that were historically linked to the liberation struggle, ZANU (PF)[1] and ZAPU[2]. The two parties merged in 1987 into an entity under ZANU (PF). The plan by President Mugabe to have a one-party by 1990 was met with heavy criticism from different stakeholders. Zimbabwe's political landscape has been dominated by ZANU (PF), which has won all the elections that have been held in Zimbabwe since independence. However, the legitimacy of these elections has been questioned by the opposition amidst accusations of electoral fraud, rigging and voter intimidation. Many opposition political parties have been formed since the setting up of the short-lived Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), which contested the 1990 elections. Zimbabwe's main opposition party was the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) that was formed in 1999. The party went on to split into Movement for Democratic Change - Tsvangirai (MDC-T) and Movement for Democratic Change – Ncube (MDC-N) in 2005. There have been incidences of political violence in most of the elections held in Zimbabwe. The worst occurrence took place during the re-run of the Presidential Elections in 2008. The disputed 2008 elections put the Zimbabwean crisis on the limelight and led to the formation of a transitional Government of National Unity (GNU). The GNU was constituted from Zimbabwe's three main political parties, namely ZANU (PF), MDC-T and MDC-N. Zimbabwe's constitution adopted at independence was amended a record 19 times before the adoption of a new one in 2013.

Zimbabwe is an agro-based economy and the country was once dubbed the "Bread basket of Southern Africa". Other major industries that have contributed to the country's economy have been the manufacturing and tourism sectors. Zimbabwe took over a well-structured economy that performed well from independence but took a bad turn on the "Black Friday" of 14 November 1997 when the local currency plunged 72%. Between 1991 and 2000 the country adopted a number of unsuccessful economic adjustment programs which were meant to revive Zimbabwe's failing economy and ensure access multi-lateral loans (Brett 2005; Mlambo and Raftopoulos 2010). However the outcome of these liberalisation programs was industry closures and high job losses. From 1999 Zimbabwe started to default on its loan repayments with multi-lateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The turn of the 21st century witnessed the continued plunge of Zimbabwe's economy standing culminating to record breaking hyper-inflationary period that ended in early 2009 (Kairiza 2009; Jones 2010). The hyper-inflation was not halted as a result of an economic turn-around or astute policy formulation. It was rather a result of the total abandonment of the local currency and the

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[1] Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front)
[2] Zimbabwe African People's Union – Led by Joshua N. Nkomo

adoption of a multi-currency regime. Present day Zimbabwe has an industry that is operating at below 30% capacity, an informal small businesses and high levels of poverty.

In the 1980s the conflict in Zimbabwe was mainly political, punctuated by human rights violations and suspicions of treason and assassination attempts. The Entumbane uprisings of 1981 and the discovery of arms caches in 1982 triggered a series of conflicts. These included the unleashing of the Fifth Brigade, under an operation named Gukurahundi, in the predominantly Ndebele regions and the dissident killings that took place in the Midlands and Matabeleland Provinces (Ngwenya 2014). Political violence reared its ugly head prior to the 1985 elections and there have been politically related killings since then. The deadliest experience was during the 2008 elections where there are more than 167 documented deaths and thousands of abductions. Violent and deadly land grabs took place in 2000 after a referendum rejected a draft constitution that would have legalised the compulsory uncompensated acquisition of white owned farms. This was also coupled with forced take-overs of a number of white owned businesses and industries.

2. Unpacking the social and economic injustice in Zimbabwe

Strategizing for a non-violent action entails the application of integrative thinking, which enables the strategist to see the conflict in totality, embrace its multi-varied nature and understand the complexity of its causal relationships (Johnson, 2007). We will apply a systems approach for us to unpack Zimbabwe's social and economic injustice conflict. Systems thinking allows us to make sense of the messy world we live in (Williams and Hummelbrunner, 2010a). Human behaviour is not linear but is explained by intertwined action. Thus by applying casual loop modelling we can explore non-linear interrelationships and understand dynamic interlinked situations (Williams and Hummelbrunner, 2010b). Figure 1, below, is a casual loop diagram that helps us unpack the Zimbabwean conflict and identify key variables that can possibly be transformed through nonviolent action.

We were able to single out three key variables that characterise the ongoing social and economic injustice prevailing in the country at the moment. These are:

(i) dictatorship;
(ii) rights abuse which is linked to the rule of law; and
(iii) economic performance which is linked to corruption and policy inconsistency.

It is important to point out that for an increase in the application of this alternative, in Zimbabwe's context, the first step will be to ensure that the civilians' economic livelihoods are well supported. The civilians should have a reliable and independent source of income that makes it easy for them to boycott certain businesses or services when called upon to do so. They should be put in a position where giving up a day or a week of their daily activities becomes an easy and worthy option to pursue. If people are fixated on how to make it through a day their chances of voluntarily taking part in any form of resistance become less and less.

3. Designing strategies for key contributors to the conflict

Strategic planning is very central in the implementation of nonviolent strategies. There has to be a proper understanding of underlying factors before calls for crucial reforms like these ones are initiated. A great deal of time should be spent on this crucial exercise. Key partners need to be identified well ahead of time. Those involved in the exercise should be well versed in the subject they will be dealing with, rather than exposing themselves and the initiative. Due to the complexities associated with the Zimbabwean issue, emphasis should be highlighted on these given nonviolent actions.

The first step to success in any nonviolent campaign is clearly articulated goals/objectives (Helvey 2004). These goals must be unanimous, achievable and must consider the strengths and weaknesses of the opponents. The goals help streamline, guide and secure the activities and interest of the supporters. Once the goal(s) have been set, we must proceed to select the appropriate strategies however, it is important to consider the context in which it would be applied. Strategies are very important to nonviolent struggles because it involves a detailed articulation of the actions that would be executed in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the struggle. Nonviolent methods must be evaluated in terms of goals, effectiveness, legitimacy and appropriateness in order to achieve success. In this light, a prospective nonviolent Zimbabwe should be designed and implemented along the theme of installing a true democratic leadership in the country.
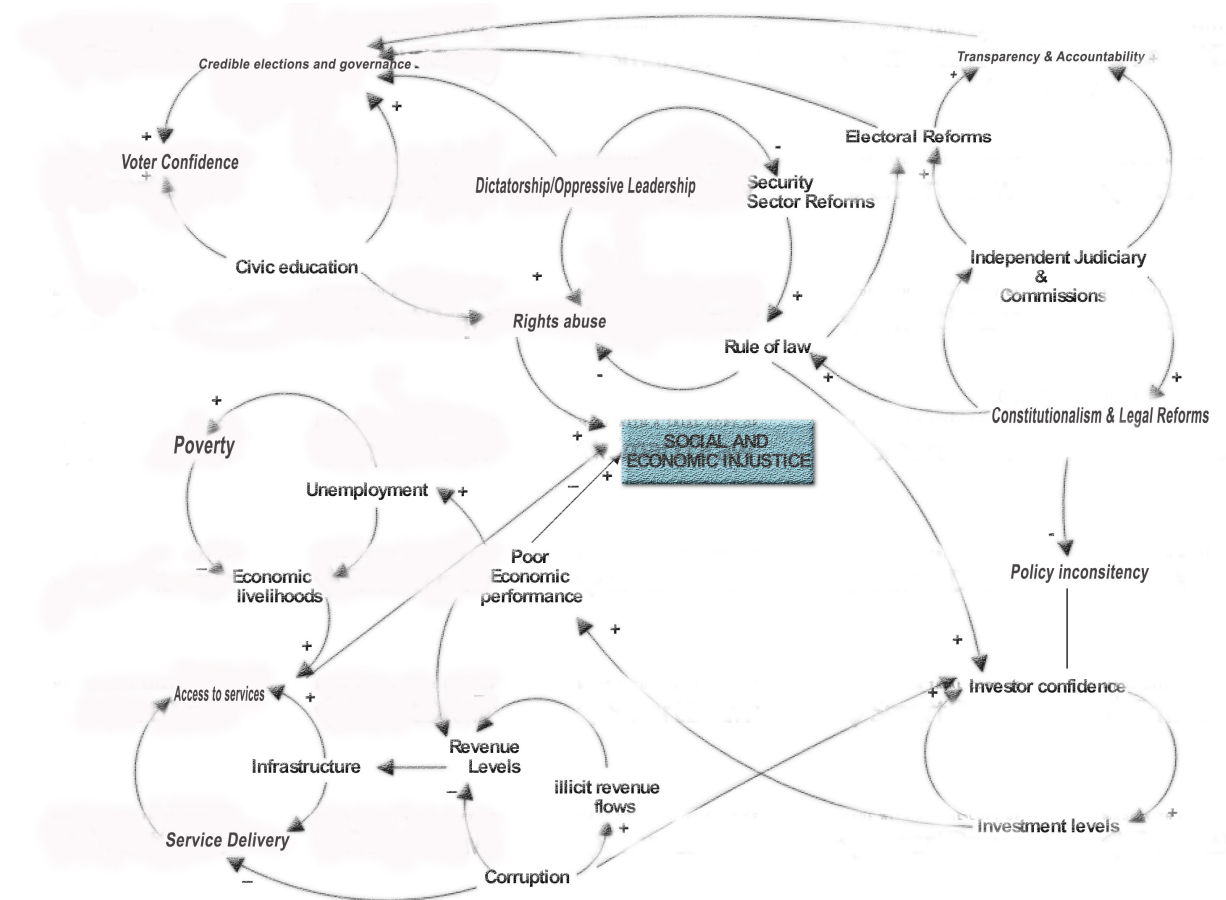
Figure 1 Causal Loop Diagram of Zimbabwe's conflict

4. Totalitarianism and electoral reforms

Summarily, a strategic nonviolent approach to reverse the Zimbabwe situation would involve the following objectives:

(i) To get rid of oppressive systems of governance and replace it with a more inclusive kind where structural inequalities and injustices are reduced to the nearest minimal Strategy: To sensitize the populace on their electoral rights and monitor electoral procedures. Tactics: To place representatives at every polling unit to monitor elections.

(ii) To employ appropriate acts of civil resistance like; protest and marches if the election results are compromised to favour the oppressor.

A prospective nonviolent strategy for the Zimbabwe crisis could be focused on the forth-coming elections in 2018. This period was selected because it provides the right political situation and popular mood required to topple this administration. Furthermore, Elections period good platforms for oppositions to set out clear achievable objectives within the timeline of the election period. Nonviolent overthrow of dictatorial administrations through election as displayed in the Philippines and Serbia are typical demonstration of the strength of electoral processes in nonviolent struggles. The United States Institute of Peace (2002) notes two areas that must be put into consideration by the opposition in order to attain democratic freedom through elections this include; the ability to press for free and fair elections and the involvement of external factors in pressuring incumbent to respect the decisions of the electorates'. This was confirmed in the Ukrainian Orange revolution where the presence of external observers aided the transparency of the final election results which invariably led to the disposition of the incumbent.

The preparatory stage is a crucial component of a nonviolent strategy that must not be overlooked in order to achieve successful democratic revolution especially in a country like Zimbabwe where years of political repression have had devastating effects on the political climate of the country with evidential effects on the reluctance of people to participate in political activities. In this light, an important element of the change process

would be for the leaders of opposition groups and other parties desiring change to come together to form a formidable force that can challenge the oppressor. The parties must be unified to form a strong and credible coalition that would garner massive support from internal and external parties. They must be bound by a common theme or goal and should resolve to exclude the use of violence in their activities. Lowenthal and Bitar (2015) further explain that political leaders must build the capacity of their coalitions by reconciling or obliterating groups with divergent agendas that may pose a risk to the attainment of set goals and objectives.

This coalition should also be extended to include social movement groups and professionals like Human rights groups, students, labour unions, religious groups amongst others. Specific attention should be given to including religious leaders into the coalition because of the crucial role religious figures have played in the transition to inclusive governments in other parts of the world.

Similarly, the cultivation of core democratic knowledge and skills crucial to the achievement of a successful transition must be encouraged at all levels. This is important because of the debilitating structures inherent in the educational system of Zimbabwe which Matereke (2012: 196) says is responsible for the political polarisation existing in the country. According to him, the lack of a pluralistic education in Zimbabwe has permitted the growth of blind patriotism which is inimical to the development of true democracy thereby underscoring the importance of aggressive citizenship education in Zimbabwe. The citizens must be sensitized on the dynamics of the nonviolent action particularly the nature and need for the strategies and the agenda of the oppressor. Ettang (2014: 416) notes:

> Training the public on the nature, impact and value of nonviolence is also important in preparing them for nonviolent action. Members of nonviolent movements or individuals taking part in a specific nonviolent action must understand the issues and the reasons for which they are embarking on this struggle.

Training of leaders for nonviolent transitions in governance should be decentralised and modelled after the trainings that took place during the Serbian revolution of 2000. In Zimbabwe, this is relevant because of the existing climate of political oppression which has made overt training of nonviolent leaders difficult. Hence the need to adopt a grassroots training approach which would help groom a large population of leaders and also utilise information technologies like internet, mobile phones amongst others.

Clear communication is also an important feature of successful revolutions, there must be a clear and consistent pattern of disseminating information between the supporters and also between the supporters and the oppressors. Supporters of the revolution must have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of their struggles and must be able to articulate it to other people especially external parties. In the case of Zimbabwe, activist must be in close contact with external parties especially non-state pro-democratic actors. This would enable them mobilise human and material resources for their course.

It is well known that a deep knowledge of the opposition's weaknesses is crucial to the success of nonviolent resistance. In Zimbabwe, the consequences of poor economic policies are evident in the underdevelopment and poverty levels of the country thereby leading to gross dissatisfaction with the present administration as Moore (2012) confirmed that over half of the population of Zimbabweans have lost faith in the ruling party. In light of this fact, the opposition should project these weaknesses and push for a change of government. Consequently, enlightenments and campaigns should be structured in way that articulates the objectives of the struggle which is to eliminate every form of structural injustices and inequalities in the society.

In preparation for the elections, plans must be made to ensure that the electoral processes are monitored closely to eradicate all forms of irregularities and trends that have been observed in previous elections where the incumbent manipulated electoral processes to secure their access to power. Helvey (2004: 31) recalled the conduct of the Mugabe-led Government during the 2002 elections where it used state resources and power to intimidate opposition party members and thwart election procedures and results. He therefore called for a well thought out Plan B by the opposition party in order to achieve full democratic transition.

The lesson here is that elections are too important to the regime to lose since that defeat would mean the loss of legitimacy both at home and in the international community. For the same reasons, elections are also too important for the democratic opposition to lose. Preparations should be made to insure that the public is prepared to validate their votes at the ballot box with carefully planned measures to thwart the regime's efforts to rig the results

5. Human rights abuse and security sector reforms

Security Sector Reform is a concept that gained consideration as a development agenda in the aftermath of the cold war (Muller 2014). It refers to a host of reform interventions related to the reform of sections of the public sector engaged in the provision of both internal and external security (Nyakudya 2014: 1). These include the defence forces, intelligence services, police, the judiciary and the prison service. These reforms aim at providing operative state and human security through democratic governance, respect for the rule of law and

human rights. It is unfortunate that the Zimbabwean government have labelled the reforms as an orchestrated Western manoeuvre aimed at effecting regime change in the country. As such, the attempt will be prone to resistance from all government corners.

The call for these reforms has been associated with the regime change agenda in this country. Any attempt to transform the security sector in Zimbabwe is perceived as a cover for regime change since the regime change was the overtly stated policy objective of several western governments with regard to Zimbabwe. Any efforts by anyone, even Zimbabweans to address the issues of governance or modernization in the security sector legitimately are denounced as collaboration with the hostile Western agenda aimed at undermining the independence and sovereignty of Zimbabwe (Muller 2014). The other misconception was that politicians across the divide and some elements in the donor community were complicating the situation by publicly stating that security reforms were only, and all, about reforming state security provision (Zimbabwe Peace and Security Programme 2015: 3). So these unguided misconceptions, speak of the need to first educate the people, politicians, and even the donor community that the security sector reforms are more encompassing and broad in their approach to the subject in question. Zimbabwe's security minister also joined the president of the country in openly rejecting out of hand any reforms of the security apparatus; in one of his addresses to the media, he stated that "security sector reform is a project by the country's enemies who want to weaken the state… This is a mere project to destabilize the country and it is not acceptable" (Muller 2014: 3).

The dynamics of the security sector in Zimbabwe are complex. As Hendricks and Hutton (2009) put it, there is the interplay between the inherited 'colonial institutional heritage' and 'the liberation culture that gave birth to Zimbabwe'. The evolution of Zimbabwe as a nation has been punctuated by epochs of inter-related violent conflict as different groups sought to exert their power and dominance on the others from the pre-colonial times to the present.

The President of Zimbabwe will not allow the reforms which will bring professionalism in the force but at the same time take away his control and authority from the security forces. As purported by (Sharp 2012: 9), dictators are not in the business of allowing elections or reforms that could remove them from their thrones. The delay in implementing such reforms works to the advantage of the incumbent president.

Preference for ZANU-PF among the security services has often translated into public declarations of support. However, security officials have also often gone well beyond mere public rhetoric by being repeatedly implicated in electoral intimidation and manipulation, arbitrary arrest, torture, and the extra-judicial killing of regime opponents, especially following the 2008 elections (Muller 2014). The security forces have openly been expressing their allegiance to the ruling party. The security forces are now openly involved in campaigning for the incumbent president and the ruling party. They directed the operation "Wakavhoterara papi" - meaning where did you put your vote in the previous election (Masunungure, Dulani and Braton 2016) (Masunungure 2014). The qualification criterion to assume senior government and military positions is that one has to have liberation credentials and thus become fit to wield power. As a result, many generals in Zimbabwe continue to support the sitting president and ZANU-PF and view security sector reform as a rear guard action by imperialists and other enemies of the revolution, such as the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, civil society groups, and a variety of international observers. The Zimbabwe Defence Forces commander once made the point very clear, in reference to the notion of working with any other political entity by stating that: "We are different. Just like oil and water, we cannot mix. As the defence forces we will not respect or entertain people who do not value the ideals of the liberation struggle…anyone can make us turn our back on the ideals of the liberation struggle"(Muller 2014: 4).

One other Major-General from the Zimbabwe Defence forces also declared openly that; "Society must understand that the land reform and the indigenisation programs are part of our revolutionary history. As the military, we do not only believe, but act in defence of these values, and we will not respect any leader who does not respect the revolution. We will not even allow them to go into the office because they do not represent the ideology we fought for. As the military establishment, we have an ideology that is represented in the mission of ZANU-PF (Muller 2014: 3). This scenario justifies the need for training among the security forces themselves to understand their professional responsibilities.

Zimbabwe has a complex security sector that emerged from a fusion of former militants in the war of liberation, namely the Rhodesia security forces, Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army and Zimbabwe National Liberation Army. Security Sector Reform in Zimbabwe is therefore largely influenced not just by the dynamics of the post-Cold War politics but also by the legacy of the armed liberation struggle and that makes the whole issue very multifaceted (Hendricks and Hutton 2009).

The need for Security Sector Reforms became especially manifest following ZANU-PF's loss of a constitutional referendum in 2000, after which the security services have all come to overtly align themselves with President Mugabe and his political party. The leadership of the military, police and Central Intelligence Organization was all appointed by the president of the country and made little effort to hide their preference for or support of him as president. In December 2012, for example, leaders of Zimbabwe's security forces, including

the army and air force commanders, the police commissioner, and head of prisons, all attended a ZANU-PF party conference, an act which compromised the professional integrity of the security sector as a whole.

The prospects of reforming the country's security sector now appear very desolate. The best time for security sector reform was the post-2008 election violence, in which the security services were heavily caught up. There was a lot of discontentment in the sector and as such, reforms could have been met with very little resistance. However, the power-sharing Government of National Unity that resulted from the post-election political deadlock allowed the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front to retain control of all security assortments and as such derail all the possibilities of reforms in the security sector (Nyakudya 2014: 1). After the hastily called elections in August of 2013, President Mugabe and ZANU-PF were able to regain absolute control of the government, pushing the opposition parties out of the GNU. As stated by (Muller 2014), the talks of reform have all but disappeared behind a series of deeply entrenched interests, ideology, and a general sense of political dissatisfaction.

The phase of Zimbabwean history from the pre-colonial era was characterized by series of violent acts. The advent of colonialism brought in a colonial state that was to enjoy 90 years of domination built on superior military might. The colonial state perpetrated violent deprivations of livestock and land, relocation of the dispossessed people to marginalized lands, brutal exploitation of African labour and entrenched racial discrimination.

The truth of the matter is that the security sector reforms that are being referred to are aimed at the transformation of the security services that will eliminate bias, unprofessionalism, and partisanship. That scenario would entail reorientation and re-education on their constitutional obligations and such reforms would ensure the military is not used as "a private militia" by ZANU-PF or any other party in future. That is why these reforms are crucial and must be implemented as a matter of urgency.

The security services are determined to ensure their centrality to Zimbabwe's political and economic life and have entangled themselves in a symbiotic relationship with the ruling party. For now, ZANU-PF needs the military to maintain political pre-eminence and repress the opposition, while the military needs ZANU-PF to ensure its place of economic privilege and protect it from prosecution. So long as this synergy remains in effect, the security sector reform project in Zimbabwe will likely remain stalled (Nyakudya 2014).

It is unclear what the security services would do if the sitting president died in office or tried to hand power to a successor, especially one they didn't believe would safeguard their interests? Until the security sector is reformed and an appropriate relationship with the civilian government is made, the future of security governance in Zimbabwe will remain under a dark shadow (Muller 2014: 2). The other disturbing feature is that the regime is not paying heed to constitutional, legal barriers, judicial decisions, and even the public opinion and this leaves the populace more hopeless than before.

6. Strategic Plan on the nonviolent action to security sector reforms

There is the need to train and educate both the security personnel and the ordinary citizens in issues of governance, security sector reforms and the dangers of authoritarian rule (Sharp 2013). The importance of such training is that it eradicates the fear which the ordinary people have to the military and other security agents. Education will inculcate integration among the civilians and the security personnel to have a different perception of whether they view each other in the democratic arena equal partners. All the issues of misconception discussed in this paper will be demystified through proper training and education in this regard. This kind of training might also enlighten both parties to see whether they are properly carrying out their duties or being used to full fill leadership's selfish and continuous grip on power. So instead of hurriedly pushing for security sector reform, there is the need for aggressive training and education which clearly articulates the importance of this global initiative (Sharp 2012). The training must clarify on the continuous significance between the liberation struggle and the security sector reform. It has to come out clean that it will not eradicate that part of the history.

People tend to value their cultures and this has remained in their mind-sets and the practice is passed on to the next generations. In order for security forces to change the way they view themselves and the nexus between them and the ruling party, demonstrates the need to transform their mind-sets through intensive training or education on sector reform. This kind of training will eradicate the wrong misconceptions that they have about this noble cause of security sector reforms. Though this initiate sounds long-term, it will in dealing with this delicate group without endangering anyone's life. Therefore, there is a need for transformative peacebuilding initiatives among the security personnel which will empower them to be able to distinguish facts from fallacies and thus in the process allow the democratic process to unfold without any impediments.

There is a strong call for partnership with the media in promoting the concept of security sector reforms (Sharp 2003). The current situation would need legal statutory instruments like AIPA to be revisited first before any call on security reforms could be made. The media plays a very crucial role in aiding the success of any nonviolent campaign. The social media platforms should be used to mobilize people to embrace this noble initiative. The issues of governance and the rule of law which are key to the implementation of Security sector

reforms should be openly highlighted. As long as this space is polarized and used as a propaganda tool by the ruling party and government, it will be very difficult to make a breakthrough in the implementation of such desired reforms.

7. Economic performance

Whilst Zimbabwe might need a political solution to dislodge President Robert Mugabe from power there is need for contingency planning on the economic front to ensure sustainable peace and economic recovery. The key contributors to Zimbabwe's failing economy are mainly corruption, unfriendly policies and legislation as well as policy inconsistency. Zimbabwe's situation is peculiar is that unlike in most cases where countries experience an economic collapse during wartime there is no war in the country. The economy has shrunk by more than two thirds, which is worse than the levels attained in wartime Cambodia.

The government of Zimbabwe enacted policies and legislation that have contributed to the demise of the economy instead of reviving it. Chief amongst them are the Land Acquisition Act Chapter 20:10 enacted in 1992 and the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act Chapter 14:33 Act 14/2007 enacted in 2008. The former enabled land redistribution to take place and this, unfortunately, was done in ways that led to the destruction of the agricultural sector. The latter advocated for businesses valued at a certain threshold to relinquish 51% of their company shares to indigenous people. This resulted in capital flight and failure by the country to attract meaningful foreign direct investment.

The revenue starved government, which is failing to pay its civil service on time, has also enacted revenue collection policies and mechanisms that are heavily taxing its citizens. These revenue collection mechanisms are not only being used as the government's source of income but they are also propping up the regime through illicit revenue flows. For example, the Zimbabwe Republic Police collects spot fines but does not retire the money to Treasury (Nemukuyu 2015). Resultantly there are high levels of corruption as people try to pay their way around paying the high taxes, tariffs or fines imposed on them. There have been shocking revelations of illicit revenue flows with the government losing more than US$13billion from illegal diamond trading (Bwititi 2016).

Zimbabwe has been under targeted sanctions since 2003 (Grebe 2010; Chipanga and Mude 2015). Whilst these sanctions were meant to force the hand of the ruling party and its leadership to undertake reforms in the democratic space and on human rights preservation they have not succeeded completely. Instead the sanctions discourse has been used by the government as part of the reasons for the protracted economic failure (Chingono 2010; Masaka 2012). The government has failed to acknowledge the failure of its policies and custodianship over the economy.

8. Strategic Plan on the nonviolent action to economic performance

In order to address the social and economic injustice the nonviolent action should be targeted at rebuilding investor confidence whilst halting the illicit flow of revenue as well as tackling the source that is financing the oppressive government. Out of the 38 possible economic related non-violent actions proposed by Sharp (2003) the following are applicable in Zimbabwe's context: consumers' boycott; non-consumption of boycotted goods; rent withholding; refusal to rent; national consumers' boycott; suppliers' and handlers' boycott; traders' boycott; refusal to let or sell property; lockout; withdrawal of bank deposits; refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments; revenue refusal; selective patronage; alternative markets and market places; alternative transportation systems; and alternative economic institutions.

Whatever action that Zimbabwean movements decide to adopt these should directly fight corruption and rebuild investor confidence; resist oppressive fines, tariffs and price hikes to public services like electricity; resist the payment of taxes and levies; and boycott services and products of businesses run by ZANU (PF) supporters or activists.

The following is the strategic plan for economic related nonviolent action. The goal of this action will be to fight corruption and rebuild investor confidence. The same plan can be used for other goals such as haemorrhaging the regime's financial supply line:

Goal: To reduce corruption and rebuild investor confidences whilst cutting off the oppressive government's financial supply line.

The activities that will be carried out in order to achieve the set goal can include any of the following actions; (i) community mobilisation and anti-corruption awareness campaigns, (ii) non-payment of taxes or tariffs, (iii) naming and shaming of corrupt officials and ministers and (iv) messages sensitising people on what public service any generated revenue could have been used for.

The following are the means through which the above activities will be undertaken: billboards; pamphlets; social media; road shows; marches and pickets outside parastatal offices; and work with law enforcement in disguise.

A movement will need to have access to the following resources in order to successfully implement the

strategy: the people's cultural values that promote non-violence; communication skills and equipment; training and workshops facilitators; hidden cameras; money to cover transportation and billboard rentals; printed material; bail money; legal representation; and safe havens.

For non-violent action to succeed the movement undertaking it needs to clearly assess its opponent's weak points. The following are the vulnerabilities of Zimbabwe's ruling party which can be exploited to a movement's advantage: factionalism; vulnerability to civilian resistance; discontent and overtaxed citizens; and irregularly paid civil servants

9.   Conclusion

We conclude that Zimbabwe finds itself at a crossroad where critical choices need to be made. One where the government is performing at its worst and the ruling party is rocked with infighting and factionalism. People have to decide on what action they need to take so as to end the injustices they have become so accustomed to. A very plausible option is to embark on the civilian-based resistance route. Nonviolent action has, in some countries, brought an end to repressive governments and it could be the realistic alternative to Zimbabwe's conflict. However, non-violent action needs to be accompanied with strong strategic thinking and communication skills. It will also require a lot of community mobilisation and training. Ordinary citizens need to be skilled on how to act non-violently when faced up with a violent reaction to their demands. Organisers will need to set up contingency plans and funds in case arrests and abductions take place.

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