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Enhancing South Africa's post-conflict development role in the African Union

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Summary

As the continent increasingly looks to address the root causes of violence through peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD) strategies, there is an opportunity for South Africa to engage with the African Union (AU) through its forthcoming aid agency – the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA). This paper argues that South Africa should do more to drive PCRD on the continent through the AU's PCRD framework, as well as the African Solidarity Initiative, which aims to promote 'in-kind technical assistance' on the continent. The paper draws on field research carried out by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in Ethiopia in March 2014.

AGAINST THE BACKGROUND of an increasing number of conflicts and peace operations, greater attention is being given to addressing the root causes of conflict through PCRD and peacebuilding strategies. It was in recognition that multidisciplinary, sustainable approaches to peace are necessary that the AU adopted a framework on PCRD in 2006.

South Africa is often expected to be a major player in driving the peace and security agenda in Africa, and its economy, geographical location and history provide it with influence at AU level. In addition, South Africa is an emerging power and one that has already demonstrated its global significance through its two terms as a non-permanent member on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC); its membership as the only African country in the G20; and its role in the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) grouping and the India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum. South Africa has also played a role in the United Nations Peacebuilding Council and as such, has the opportunity to place peace and security concerns, including PCRD issues, on the world stage.

While South Africa's engagement in African peace operations is well known, particularly given its recent intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), the extent of its peacebuilding and PCRD activities has been less extensively detailed. South Africa has carried out a number of peacebuilding and PCRD activities throughout the continent in the last two decades. However, research carried out on behalf of the ISS revealed that South Africa's interventions in Burundi, the DRC and South Sudan – countries in which South Africa has had protracted engagement – have occurred predominantly bilaterally/trilaterally and that the activities undertaken have been largely uncoordinated and ad hoc[1].

South Africa is setting up SADPA, which is expected to gain momentum later this year, following the appointment of a new director[2]. The agency will replace the African Renaissance Fund (ARF) and will act as a mechanism to coordinate South Africa's diverse development partnerships, including its peacebuilding and PCRD

activities. The expectation for South Africa is to do something different to northern donors[3], but as suggested by earlier ISS research, South Africa first needs to ascertain how to use its comparative advantage for the future direction of SADPA. In addition, it will need to clarify how to engage with multilateral institutions to maximise its strengths and its impact. One of these multilateral institutions, and of primary importance to South Africa, is the AU. However, to date there is a dearth of knowledge in terms of South Africa's current engagement in the institution, particularly in terms of PCRD.

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This paper examines South Africa's engagement in the AU, both broadly and more specifically in terms of PCRD and peacebuilding. It draws on desktop and field research to make observations about South Africa's engagements to date. During March 2014, ISS carried out field research in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to gain insights into South Africa's engagements in the AU. Interviews were held with various AU officials, several embassies as well as donors of peace and security activities (e.g. the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, or GIZ, and the Department for International Development, or DFID), who were identified as possible stakeholders through earlier desktop research. More than 20 interviews were conducted.

This paper starts by addressing what South Africa sets out to do in terms of its White Paper on Foreign Policy on PCRD and peacebuilding in the AU. It gives an overview of South Africa's engagements in the AU from 1994 to date.

It then considers the AU's policy on PCRD and reviews the status of implementation of this framework. Finally, the paper examines the perceptions of the stakeholders mentioned above of South Africa's engagements in the AU, both generally and more specifically in terms of South Africa's current and potential role in PCRD. The paper then makes recommendations for the future.

South Africa's foreign policy on the AU

South Africa's White Paper on Foreign Policy stresses Pan Africanism and south-south solidarity as central principles for the country's international engagements[4]. Furthermore, the primacy of the African continent and the South African Development Community (SADC) is cited as an integral element of its policy[5]. On South Africa's engagements with the AU, the White Paper commits to a) intensifying its engagements with the AU, b) advocating for the role of the AU as the primary organisation for coordinating continental positions with development partners and c) advancing common African positions through bilateral activities and other international fora[6]. Moreover, the White Paper states that South Africa 'will continue to play a leading role in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction'.[7] It specifically mentions strengthening the role of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security and the AU Peace and Security Council (AU PSC), and its linkage to UNSC. It also acknowledges the importance of the African Standby Force (ASF) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

UN RESOLUTION 2033

SOUTH AFRICA HAS CHAMPIONED THIS RESOLUTION, WHICH AIMS TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE AU AND THE UN

In terms of longer-term initiatives to promote peace and security, the White Paper focuses on regional integration and economic development, and specifically points to the role of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in promoting socioeconomic development.[8] It cites the importance of sustainable bilateral partnerships for development, including the promotion of trade and investment, joint projects for infrastructure development and the provision of technical assistance, but also commits to pursuing a closer synergy between bilateral and multilateral engagements in the region.[9] However, while it makes mention of the terms PCRD and peacebuilding, it does not define either term, nor does it seek to clearly delineate which activities fall under these concepts. The White Paper reflects the importance placed on peace operations but does not provide a clear direction for South Africa's intended PCRD strategies. It states that SADPA will promote more effective development cooperation bilaterally and trilaterally without further specification.[10]

It should be noted that in the academic literature, the definitions of peacebuilding and PCRD continue to be contested. In some cases, the term peacebuilding is used to include post-conflict reconstruction.[11] The notion of PCRD is inherently political and may explain South Africa's reluctance to define it anywhere in its official documents. Yet, as Hudson writes: 'Conceptual flaws tend to exacerbate problems related to implementation', meaning that presenting the problem in a depoliticised manner can have harmful consequences.[12]

Moreover, the framework used to observe PCRD and peacebuilding can dictate the kinds of activities carried out.[13] It is not the scope of this paper to define these concepts. For this purpose it chooses to use the definition of PCRD as defined by the AU and detailed below, noting that often the concepts of peacebuilding and PCRD are interlinked and used interchangeably.

> The White Paper states that South Africa 'will continue to play a leading role in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction'

A brief overview of South Africa in the AU

South Africa joined the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which was superseded by the AU, on 23 May 1994.[14] Since it became the 53rd member, South Africa has become increasingly active in peace and security. In its 20-year review of democracy, the South African government notes that it has played an integral role in the formation of the AU's institutions, policies and procedures, such as the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the AU PSC. The 20-year review also states that its approach has been to promote the AU as a continental institution and strengthen the commission by implementing decisions of the AU assembly and council. It adds that it has hosted the PAP, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) agency and the APRM secretariat, has been engaged with the African Commission on Nuclear Energy and has contributed to the establishment of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council. Moreover, it was involved in the establishment of the AU PSC and contributed to the deployment of the first AU peace support operation (PSO) in Burundi.[15] South Africa was re-elected to the AU PSC, where it has served several times before, on 1 April 2014, along with Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Libya, Namibia, Gambia, Guinea and Niger.[16] South Africa has also championed Resolution 2033, which aims to strengthen relations between the AU and the UN, building on the South African-sponsored Resolution 1809 of 2008.[17]

In addition, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, the former South African Minister of Home Affairs, was elected chairperson of the AU on 15 July 2012 and began her term in office on 15 October 2013. The South African government justified the appointment by stating that it believed 'Africa needs a stronger and more efficient AU. We went to Addis Ababa with a solid candidate who could steer the AU in this direction; a firm candidate, someone to personify the ideal AU'.[18]

South Africa has taken the lead in the set-up of an African peacekeeping force, the African Capacity for the Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC), as a temporary measure to bridge the gap for the proposed ASF, the rapid deployment force aiming to address crises on the continent. The notion of an African force, as a means of enabling African solutions to African problems, has long been discussed but has yet to come into being. While the AU has previously deployed peace operations, these have been reliant on foreign funding and foreign political agendas. To drive greater responsiveness by the AU, South Africa pushed for ACIRC as 'a coalition of the willing',[19] a temporary measure while the AU works out the intricate details of the ASF.

Specifically in terms of PCRD, South Africa previously chaired the AU's Ministerial Committee for Post-Conflict

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Reconstruction and Development in the Sudan. This committee was founded in Maputo in 2003 with a mandate to develop a strategy and implementation mechanisms to guide the AU's contribution to post-conflict reconstruction efforts in the Sudan.[20] The South African government subsequently partnered with the South Sudanese government and the University of South Africa (UNISA) in capacity- and institution-building projects for South Sudan.[21] However, as noted by a number of stakeholders in Addis, the committee is not functional at present and needs to be revitalised and amended to focus on South Sudan in its current context.

As is detailed later in this paper, South Africa has also been engaged in terms of PCRD, namely the African Solidarity Initiative (ASI). President Jacob Zuma gave the opening speech at the recent ASI conference and reaffirmed South Africa's commitment to PCRD. However, South Africa's operational engagements in PCRD at the AU have been limited. As in the case of South Sudan mentioned above, most of South Africa's PCRD activities to date have occurred on a bilateral and trilateral basis and have lacked coordination and coherence. The activities have not been strategically linked to the AU PCRD framework or been done in conjunction with AU structures and activities. South Africa has carried out a number of activities, including capacity building, implementation support, economic development and information sharing, but these activities have lacked sustainability, monitoring and evaluation, and their impact has been hard to determine.[22]

This paper now examines the AU PCRD framework, which should guide South Africa's engagements in the future.

The PCRD framework is underpinned by five core principles:

1. African leadership
2. The promotion of national and local ownership, inclusiveness
3. Equity and non-discrimination
4. Cooperation and cohesion
5. Capacity building for sustainability

It comprises six pillars on which PCRD efforts should be concentrated:

1. Security
2. Political governance and transition
3. Human rights
4. Justice and reconciliation
5. Humanitarian assistance reconstruction
6. Socio-economic development and gender

AU PCRD framework

The AU's involvement in PCRD dates back to the establishment of the AU PSC in December 2003.[23] The PSC protocol places PCRD and peacebuilding at the core of its activities, which include the restoration of the rule of law, establishment and development of democratic institutions, and the preparation, organisation and supervision of elections in the member states. For countries affected by violent conflict, the mandate is extended and includes activities such as the consolidation of peace agreements and establishing conditions of political, social and economic reconstruction of society and government institutions.[24] The PCRD framework was adopted to satisfy this mandate.

The AU PCRD framework sets out a structure within which South Africa can engage. Developed in consultation with a number of actors, including South African stakeholders, the policy was adopted at the 2006 AU Summit in Banjul, Gambia. It serves as a guide to develop country-specific policies and strategies and moves away from ad-hoc, uncoordinated and short-term stabilisation measures. Its objectives include consolidating peace and preventing a relapse into violence; helping to address the root causes of conflict; encouraging fast-track planning and implementation of reconstruction activities, and enhancing complementarities and coordination between and among diverse actors engaged in PCRD processes.[25]

The AU PCRD framework defines PCRD as 'a comprehensive set of measures that seek to: address the needs of countries emerging from conflict, including the needs of affected populations; prevent escalation of disputes; avoid relapse into violence; address the root causes of conflict, and consolidate sustainable peace. PCRD is conceived within the African vision of renewal and sustainable development and, while its activities are integrated and many must be pursued simultaneously, they are envisaged in emergency (short-term), transition (medium-term) and development (long-term) phases'.

The PCRD framework is underpinned by five core principles, namely African leadership, the promotion of national and local ownership, inclusiveness, equity and non-discrimination, cooperation and cohesion, and capacity building for sustainability. It comprises six pillars on which PCRD efforts should be concentrated, namely security, political governance and transition, human rights, justice and reconciliation, humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and socioeconomic development, and gender.[26] Earlier ISS research[27] showed that South Africa has previously engaged on the continent in terms of all of these pillars, but not through AU mechanisms.

The PCRD policy aims to establish comprehensive and coherent strategies that can be translated into actions and to improve coordination among all stakeholders. It also seeks to encourage

consistency among policies and programmes.[28] However, organisational capacity at the AU is not sufficient to implement the processes, and some actors believe that the institution does not have the capacity to engage in all areas set out by the framework, arguing that the AU lacks not only financial muscle, but also operational experience and the comparative advantage of specialised agencies. It, therefore, runs the risk of over-committing and under-delivering.[29]

The AU PCRD framework sets out to safeguard its activities through the following mechanisms:

- A PSC standing committee on PCRD to monitor the activities of all actors, provide support to affected countries, and review regularly the state of reconstruction on the continent;
- A ministerial committee on the reconstruction of each post-conflict country;
- An AU Commission inter-departmental taskforce to effectively coordinate PCRD activities of the commission, AU liaison and regional offices, as well as specialised AU agencies, and
- A multidimensional AU committee on PCRD to interact continuously with international actors, including the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and ensure that Africa's vision and priorities are reflected in these structures.[30]

As noted by GIZ in a stock-taking report of PCRD activities of the AU, none of these structures exists currently.[31] A PCRD unit comprising one permanent staff member was set up at the AU Commission following the inception of the PCRD framework, and a temporary AU Ministerial Committee for the Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development of the Sudan was established in 2005. Besides these, no permanent institutional structures have been created since 2006, although the AU Defence and Security Division (DSD) has been working on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) issues, and is looking to develop frameworks in cooperation with the UN and the African Security Sector Network. Egypt and Uganda have offered to host an AU centre for PCRD, but recent developments make this unlikely in the former.[32] The AU has a presence in a number of post-conflict countries through its liaison offices (AULOs), which could implement the PCRD framework depending on capacity. While these offices have made some headway with quick impact projects, they have a number of shortcomings. The AULOs' mandates have been reviewed to include provision for direct support for PCRD. These revised mandates have been submitted to the AU PSC but there has not yet been any response.[34] They also remain understaffed and undercapacitated.

A number of PCRD assessment missions were conducted following the adoption of the AU PCRD framework, although the criteria by which these countries were chosen is not clear. Such missions have taken place in the Central African Republic – CAR (2006), Liberia and Sierra Leone (2009), the DRC and Burundi (2010), Sudan (2011) and Côte d'Ivoire (2012).[35] Assessments submitted following the missions varied extensively in methodology, but many called for support to national DDR and SSR programmes, employment schemes, development of the private sector, and technical assistance with reconciliation and judicial reform. Although these recommendations are in line with the AU policy framework, they were too broad and failed to make specific implementable recommendations for the mobilisation of required resources and the essential political follow-up.[36]

In June 2011, a special technical meeting was held in Addis Ababa that included heads of previous missions and representatives from the AU Commission and regional economic communities (RECs), to address the implications of earlier mission reports. The meeting reached consensus on an action plan for PCRD in mission countries and called for an ASI as well as an annual PCRD meeting. However, the action plan was inefficient and lacked specific direction on a way forward.[37] GIZ noted that it was unclear as to 'whether the relevant decision-making bodies acted upon the findings of all of these assessments and to what extent these findings remain relevant'.[38] However, as discussed below, the ASI has since been established and, despite challenges, has made some headway in its development.

The ASI is currently lauded as the AU's flagship enterprise and one that aims to give renewed impetus to PCRD

The African Solidarity Initiative

The ASI is currently lauded as the AU's flagship enterprise and one that aims to give renewed impetus to PCRD. It was launched at the 19th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2012.[39] Its main purpose is to mobilise financial and in-kind resources from Africa to support PCRD efforts to move away from African dependency on funding and aid from outside Africa. Its objectives are as follows:

- Instituting a platform aimed at increasing African contributions for PCRD activities in Africa;
- Mobilising both financial and, most importantly, in-kind contributions from African countries, para-statals, private sector and other potential contributors;

- Instituting and expanding processes for intra-African sharing of technical expertise and capacity training;
- Increasing the level of intra-African mutual assistance and self-reliance;
- Creating conditions for further support from international partners.

According to the ASI concept note, the initiative will be implemented for an initial period of three years. Whereas regular reporting on progress in the implementation of activities will take place twice per year, a mid-term evaluation will be conducted, with a final evaluation taking place at the end of the three years, providing recommendations for the way forward.[41]

As previously mentioned, multi-disciplinary assessment missions were carried out as part of the ASI, and priority areas for PCRD in these countries were identified.[42] To implement the ASI, a meeting to formulate an ASI roadmap was held in South Africa in October 2012. The meeting set out to formulate a joint strategy inclusive of member states, RECs and all relevant stakeholders on how the ASI would be implemented; decide on key activities to be carried out in the following three years, and to determine mechanisms for monitoring pledges.[43] Outcomes of this meeting have not been disseminated to the public and there is no evidence of implementation resulting from it.

In January 2013, the AU issued a communiqué that took note of the first progress report of the Chairperson of the Commission on PCRD and commended the commission on its PCRD efforts this far. It called on member states to fully appropriate and support the ASI. Furthermore, it stressed its uniqueness and called for greater cooperation in the commission – and among member states, RECs, and partners, including those in south-south cooperation – on the implementation of the ASI. It emphasised the need to outline areas of competence of all stakeholders and the importance of building synergy. It also stressed the importance of 'promoting champions on the continent with the capacity necessary for taking initiatives towards implementation of PCRD', urged member states to support the African Solidarity Conference (ASC) and called for a regular review of PCRD implementation to identify lessons learnt. It also requested that the commission submit regular reports on the implementation of PCRD.[44]

> The ASC aimed to promote a paradigm shift that centre-stages African self-reliance driven by the 'Africa helping Africa' motto

On 1 February 2014, the first ASC took place in Addis Ababa to mobilise both in-kind (such as experience sharing, best practices, capacity building) and funding support for PCRD efforts identified during the missions. It aimed to 'promote a paradigm shift which centre-stages African self-reliance driven by the "Africa helping Africa" motto and strengthen engagement among stakeholders, being the private sector, civil society, academia, the media etc'.[45] The ASC was held on the outskirts of the meeting of the AU's 22nd Ordinary Session. During the ASI conference, Nigeria pledged US$2 million, Algeria pledged US$1 million and the Gambia pledged US$50 000 towards the ASI; and various countries pledged other 'in-kind assistance'. South African President Jacob Zuma, as the only head of state at the conference, reaffirmed South Africa's commitment to PCRD and

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US$50 THOUSAND
PLEDGED BY GAMBIA TOWARDS THE ASI

peacebuilding and pledged his political support, but did not pledge money. He noted that South Africa will continue to offer technical support to sister countries but gave no further details.[46]

ASI follow-up is to be ensured by the AU Commission through the Peace and Security Department (PSD), which will work with other departments, the AULOs and other AU structures, including regional offices, NEPAD and specialised institutions. The commission will also work with the beneficiary countries, as well as with relevant UN agencies, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and other stakeholders.

Currently the principal facilitator[47] of the ASI is based in Johannesburg, South Africa, and works for an organisation unrelated to the AU. Three junior-level employees liaise with the facilitator from the AU. Consequently, what is supposed to be a leading AU PCRD initiative is currently outsourced. To retain ownership of the process and implement objectives effectively, the AU should consider centralising all ASI work to Addis Ababa and have a team focused solely on its implementation.

There is now a lack of clarity over how the US$3 million raised at the ASC will be used. Member states at the conference had been asked to identify their priorities and where they wished their assistance to be directed, but this process must be detailed and agreed on by AU member states so that resources are used in an accountable manner.

Budgets were not always included in previous assessments, meaning that it is harder to establish the needs in terms of distribution of financial resources. Thus, a standardised methodology will be vital in future.

Perceptions and observations from Addis Ababa

The paper has so far detailed how South Africa has engaged with the AU in the past and examined the frameworks for engagement with the AU on PCRD. It now analyses the perceptions of stakeholders garnered during the field research carried out by the ISS in Ethiopia, focusing first on general perceptions relating to South African engagement and then looking at PCRD. The chairmanship of the AU Commission and South Africa's engagements with ACIRC, while not the focus of this paper, are often interlinked with perceptions of South Africa in general and the potential role for South Africa in PCRD, since they represent South Africa's most well known activities at the AU to date.

While perceptions may not reflect all the facts and may oversimplify issues, they are still important because they illustrate the ways South Africa's actions are viewed and may, therefore, influence operational behaviour by both South Africa and relevant stakeholders. This section makes a number of observations based on the field research.

Articulating South Africa's objectives

Given the country's economic, political and historical status, South Africa is often asked to take the lead in initiatives on the continent. At the same time it is accused of dominating decision-making processes at the AU, leaving South Africa hesitant to speak out. This could explain why many participants interviewed during the field research felt that South Africa's foreign policy on the AU is inconsistent, badly articulated and lacking clear direction. Some stakeholders believed South Africa's foreign policy is being driven by a few elite members of the executive, rather than the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) or Parliament. Other interviewees noted that South Africa has failed to delineate between Dlamini-Zuma's position at the AU and South African foreign policy, therefore creating further perceptions of South Africa's hegemonic behaviour.

In general, stakeholders felt that South Africa had overstepped its boundaries and that it should concentrate on its engagements with the SADC region before getting involved in conflicts in other African regions. Such was the case when South Africa sent a ship to Côte d'Ivoire during the 2011 post-election crisis in that country without consulting the AU or other regional blocks. In similar vein, South Africa's position on the establishment of an African peace support force has been described as domineering and hegemonic. South Africa was accused of setting a dangerous precedent for other countries and creating a 'cascade effect'. However, DIRCO[48] employees explained that they are often asked by member states to intervene, despite these member states being bound by agreements with other countries and regional organisations. This creates a dilemma between heeding the call to help or seeking permission from the 'big brothers' assigned to these conflicts.

South Africa frequently has to decide whether it should take the lead on issues or ensure a consensus is first reached, to the detriment of rapid and efficient implementation. Given the political nature of PCRD and the possibility of engagements being interpreted as political interference, it would not be surprising if

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South Africa was hesitant to take the lead. Nonetheless, research shows that criticisms over South African hegemony were more to do with the way it acted than the decisions it took.

In the future, it will be important for South Africa to articulate its policy clearly and consistently, to prevent misinterpretation and to distance these policies from Dlamini-Zuma's position in the AU to alleviate fears that she is driving a South African, rather than a continental agenda. Additionally, it will also be important to communicate clearly the decisions made during engagements with SADC and explain how these tie into AU decisions.

As argued by Bohler Muller, South Africa's focus on the African philosophy of ubuntu, which suggests an inclusive, 'people-centred' philosophy that focuses on a common humanity, should 'inform South Africa's actions within multilateral forums, including the UN, AU and BRICS, by presumably ensuring a more collaborative environment that emphasises participation and collaboration'.[49]

While some perceptions are that South Africa acts unilaterally, embracing the principle of African leadership in its own PCRD policy (as described in the five core principles of the AU PCRD policy) could address some of these fears.

The principle on African leadership dictates that the priorities, implementation and oversight of PCRD activities remain the responsibility of African governments, while the AU provides strategic leadership.[50]

South Africa could also drive the formulation of an implementation plan for PCRD in SADC, while promoting cooperation and coherence, efficiency and transparency.

Promoting an African agenda

According to a DIRCO official interviewed, South Africa has made a conscientious effort to enhance its human resource capacity at the AU, rather than simply making financial contributions. To exercise commitment and ownership, South Africa has chosen to drive debates and has campaigned vigorously to have Dlamini-Zuma as chair of the organisation, despite accusations of it breaking a tacit agreement not to put a powerful country in control of the AU.[51] Dlamini-Zuma's appointment as chair has resulted in additional staff members, paid for and employed by DIRCO and sent from South Africa, situated outside of the approved AU structure.

Even so, research revealed that South Africa has filled only two of its 18 allocated permanent AU positions. While there was a call for South Africa to do more, it was accused of not operating in line with established AU processes and structures. South African diplomats were also accused of lacking tact. The absence of technically qualified South African staff and a primary focus on strategic level interventions also fuelled perceptions of South Africa's hegemonic aspirations and lack of commitment to the AU. By ensuring that permanent secondment positions are filled as per its secondment policy,[52] South Africa could demonstrate a long-term commitment to capacitating the AU. Some of these experts could be used in the AU PCRD unit.

Several people who were interviewed alluded to South Africa's moral obligation to the African continent in return for the assistance provided during apartheid, and most people felt that South Africa could do much more for Africa. The criticism was, therefore, not that South Africa did things, but the way it acted. On the whole, it was felt that South Africa was more interested in self-promotion than in aiding other African countries.

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THE NUMBER OF ITS 18 ALLOCATED PERMANENT AU POSITIONS THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAS FILLED

It was accused of using the AU to promote itself globally, and particularly of trying to obtain a permanent seat on the UNSC. As mentioned previously, respondents spoke of the need for South Africa to strengthen regional ties before focusing on the rest of the continent. Despite these criticisms, South Africa has been a driver of Resolution 2033 as mentioned, demonstrating that it is trying to push the African agenda in international circles.[53] According to DIRCO,[54] it has also been an active member in SADC, but again, South Africa would do well do publicise and articulate its policies further to reflect this. It should ensure that it fills its quota at the AU with technically competent operational staff and strengthen linkages between the AU and other multilateral organisations (e.g. BRICS, IBSA, G20), with which it engages.

> South Africa should ensure that it fills its quota at the AU with technically competent operational staff, and strengthen linkages between the AU and other multi-lateral organisations

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Respondents were probed about how South Africa can be the driver of an African agenda, and over the meaning of an 'African agenda'. Some referred to an African agenda as Agenda 2063. One referred to Dlamini-Zuma's 'Agenda 2063: an email from the future', which talks of regional integration and unity, and specifically 'the free movement of people, harmonisation of education and professional qualifications, with the Pan-African University and indeed the university sector and intelligentsia playing an instrumental role'. The email also talks of economic integration, coupled with infrastructure development, and mentions Pan-African countries in mining, finance, food and beverages, hospitality and tourism, pharmaceuticals, fashion, fisheries and information and communications technology (ICT).[55] An African agenda was also referred to in terms of the ASI, namely promoting principles of solidarity and self-reliance and empowering Africans by using African resources. Others referred to an African agenda as 'Africans controlling their own peace and security'. While the concept of an African agenda remains somewhat elusive, the general opinion was that South Africa can play an integral role in conveying African concerns and issues. It would do well to consider how it can promote these concerns and issues in global organisations and feed this back to the AU.

South Africa could promote an African agenda linked to the AU's PCRD pillars. For example, the AU pillar on socio-economic reconstruction and development includes formulating policies that 'build a technology base to support reconstruction and development' or 'develop physical infrastructure, including transport, communication, energy, water, health and sanitation'.[56] South Africa must consider its true strengths and weaknesses (distinct from stakeholders' stated aspirations) and use the AU PCRD framework to promote an African agenda.

Looking through the PCRD lens

While the establishment of a comprehensive AU PCRD framework in 2006 initially suggested a growing prioritisation of PCRD and peacebuilding at the AU, little has been done to strengthen PCRD operationally. The PCRD unit at the AU lacks human, financial and technical resources and its activities have not generated nearly as much interest as peace support activities. Even when funders have demonstrated an interest in promoting PCRD at the AU, they have been limited by the unit's lack of capacity. There is still only one permanent staff member in the PCRD unit, with another temporary position paid for by donors, compared to a much larger Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD).

Despite the lack of capacity, it may be worth questioning why donors have not provided funds to capacitate the unit. Is it because the process must be driven by the AU? Because it lacks vision? Or because there are no implementable guidelines? While the framework itself is comprehensive, there is a lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities. Stakeholders interviewed noted that the RECs perceive their role to be implementation, but that how this is done is unclear.

As one (but rare) positive example of RECs implementing PCRD activities, stakeholders cited the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Trade for Peace Programme. This programme allows for small-scale economic and administrative infrastructure and capacity building to be carried out at border posts between the DRC, Uganda and Rwanda.[57] In addition to confusion over the RECs, the AULO's have not been further capacitated to implement or oversee PCRD activities. Furthermore, the linkages to the UN Peacebuilding Commission (UNPBC) need to be strengthened and pursued, with follow-up meetings on Resolution 2033 to strengthen the complementarity of UN and AU processes.

The lack of resources for PCRD compared to the amount dedicated to PSOs at the AU shows a skewed emphasis on the

latter. This suggests that rather than looking at long-term solutions and more holistic approaches, the AU continues to be limited to addressing crises as they arise. Indeed, in terms of peace and security at the AU, the focus remains on the militaristic aspects (despite efforts to expand the civilian components of PSOs) rather than the softer elements of peacebuilding. This provides an opportunity for countries such as South Africa to take the lead on peacebuilding and PCRD initiatives.

While the South African government has shown a shift in thinking towards a broader vision of peacebuilding (the South African Defence Review 2014, for example, has begun to encompass these concepts),[60] South Africa's actions at the AU continue to be framed by a narrow conceptualisation of peace and security. Its commitment in terms of PCRD is restricted to offering technical support (carried out bilaterally and trilaterally) to the ASI without specifying ways and means in which to link this to regional policies and frameworks. South Africa now has the opportunity to define its own PCRD and peacebuilding frameworks in a way that is aligned to regional frameworks, and to push for longer-term solutions to conflict.

> South Africa pledged more than US$1 million to CAR, contributing to a total of US$30 million

South Africa's actions at the AU, for example, its financial contributions towards CAR compared with the ASI, show that to date it has also prioritised PSOs rather than PCRD. The ASI conference was grossly under-attended, in stark contrast to the Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA) donors' conference on the same day, which was attended by 76 heads of state. At the latter conference, South Africa pledged more than US$1 million to CAR, contributing to a total of US$30 million, compared with its earlier non-specific commitment of in-kind assistance.[58]

South Africa has a comparative advantage over many African countries in terms of PSOs, with a relatively well-regarded military and equipment and previous experience of operating in such missions. South Africa, therefore, is often expected to become involved in PSOs at the AU. However, some have described South African capability in supporting PSOs as inadequate.[59] Given the country's abundance of experts (inside and outside of government) who could potentially be involved in PCRD and peacebuilding, engagement in PCRD may provide an opportunity for South Africa to have a bigger and more lasting impact on peace on the continent.

As described in SADPA's vision, the expectation for South Africa, as an emerging power in the south, is to innovate.[61] It would, therefore, do well to take a stand on its framework for PCRD as one that embraces not only the ideals of South African foreign policy, but also the principles of local ownership and inclusiveness as cited in the AU's PCRD framework.

The notion of local ownership as described in the framework is aimed at aligning activities to local needs and aspirations, a shared vision and engagement of the population.

The concept of inclusiveness addresses exclusion and inequitable distribution of conflict. Championing such principles for PCRD could set an example for the rest of Africa to follow, by ensuring a focus is adopted that addresses the root causes of conflict.

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HEADS OF STATE ATTEND MISSION TO THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC DONORS' CONFERENCE

1

HEAD OF STATE ATTENDS AFRICAN SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE

South Africa as a confidence builder and enabler in PCRD

Despite criticisms about South Africa's approach to peace and security in the AU, field research showed that there are still calls for South Africa to become more engaged. Moreover, South Africa was described as an enabler and a confidence builder, as a country that could drive new initiatives. This terminology was used particularly in reference to the PCRD framework and the ASI. South Africa has already played a significant role, but can do more to drive the operational process forward and could be one of the 'champions' on the continent that the AU calls for.[62] To achieve this it must strategically align with other big players on the continent. It should also take the lead in establishing standard methodologies of assessment that can be used for the ASI, and consensus-based frameworks for implementation of resources for the initiative. This would go a long way to reaffirming South Africa's commitment to African issues and rebuilding trust. However, internal challenges such as corruption and xenophobia remain a concern for many stakeholders interviewed and must be addressed urgently.

of PCRD and develop a database of AU experts for deployment. It was also suggested that South Africa take the lead on civil society engagement and the 'Livingstone Formula', which states that 'Civil society organisations (CSOs) may provide technical support to the AU by undertaking early warning reporting, and situation analysis, which feeds information into the decision-making process of the PSC'.[63] South Africa would do well to examine prospects for civil society engagement not only in terms of early warning, but also within the ASI. How could civil society be used to ensure PCRD activities meet not only government priorities, but also those of the population? In terms of humanitarian assistance, interviewees requested that South Africa focus on longer-term resilience as a coping mechanism, with a focus on early warning systems, for example, rather than throwing money at the problem.

The majority of stakeholders noted that South Africa should use its private sector for PCRD initiatives, either by investing in Africa, engaging businesses in the ASI and through their corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects, or through philanthropists. Such initiatives would have to be clearly articulated to prevent the impression South Africa was acting out of selfish interests rather than on the principles of solidarity. Some suggested that the AU could act as guarantors for businesses doing economic rehabilitation. Stakeholders also lamented Chinese investment and infrastructure, saying that South Africa had over steered in its economic policy and should offer an alternative. Although DIRCO has previously suggested that SADPA will not prioritise economic engagements,[64]

> Moreover, South Africa was described as an enabler and a confidence builder

South Africa has a number of resources that it can contribute in 'in-kind assistance' requested by the ASI. Stakeholders specified that it could share its experience in reconciliation, infrastructure, health (including the production, support and supply of medication), SSR, gender, telecommunications and economic rehabilitation through investment. It was also proposed that South Africa 'fill the gap when donors moved out'. Furthermore, it could do an annual review

The AU defines PCRD as a comprehensive set of measures that seek to:

- Address the needs of countries emerging from conflict, including the needs of affected populations
- Prevent escalation of disputes
- Avoid relapse into violence
- Address the root causes of conflict, and consolidate sustainable peace.

PCRD is conceived within the African vision of renewal and sustainable development and, while its activities are integrated and many must be pursued simultaneously, they are envisaged in emergency (short-term), transition (medium-term) and development (long-term) phases.

this strategy seems somewhat naïve and at odds with demands. However, good infrastructure and investment frameworks need to be developed in post-conflict countries to attract investment.

It is apparent not only that there is a demand for South Africa's skills and expertise, but that it also has an abundance of resources (human, technical and, to a more limited extent, financial) that could be used to further a PCRD agenda at the AU. These skills are in line with the AU PCRD pillars, and also relate to Agenda 2063. South Africa needs to document its unique strengths and comparative advantages so that initiatives such as the ASI are aware of its capacities and that they could be used efficiently if required. SADPA could play a vital role in developing a database of state and non-state actors, including the business sector, for use on request from the AU and post-conflict countries. This could also serve as an example to other African countries and renew the impetus of PCRD at the AU. A fund could be established and used for the secondment of experts on PCRD managed by SADPA.

At the same time, the AU must reach out to South Africa and recognise its unique advantages. Furthermore, if the ASI is to move ahead before interest wanes, it should be reformulated and AU-managed rather than outsourced. It should also develop a standardised methodology for assessments for post-conflict countries and a procedure for use of resources gathered, based on a decision-making (consensus based) process. At present, it is proposed that the US$3 million raised for the ASI is used for further sensitisation missions rather than to fund the development of further processes for expenditure, or to carry out quick impact projects to promote the initiative. South Africa could push for frameworks and procedures relating to the ASI.

Conclusion

South Africa is an important regional and continental actor. Since its adoption into the AU, it has become increasingly involved in peace and security matters on the continent. However, as with the rest of the AU, it remains more focused on PSOs than on more wide-ranging areas such as PCRD and peacebuilding. South Africa's foreign policy does not clearly delineate the activities that it should be undertaking, leaving room for conceptual confusion. Although PCRD yields less immediate results and is less tangible than are peace agreements and PSOs, South Africa now has the opportunity to develop its own innovative, implementable and sustainable PCRD framework. The framework should embrace the AU's five core principles of African leadership, ownership, inclusiveness, equity and non-discrimination, cooperation and cohesion, and capacity building. It should also identify the areas of South African comparative advantage, in line with the AU's six pillars on which PCRD efforts should be focused.

South Africa has the added advantage that it has already engaged in PCRD and peacebuilding throughout the continent, but with limited engagement in PCRD at the AU. In the future, it will be vital to strengthen links between the bilateral/trilateral initiatives of SADPA and AU processes, as well as to build linkages

> South Africa now has the opportunity to develop its own innovative, implementable and sustainable PCRD framework

US$3 MILLION

IT IS PROPOSED THAT THIS MONEY, RAISED FOR THE ASI, IS USED FOR FURTHER SENSITISATION MISSIONS RATHER THAN TO CARRY OUT QUICK IMPACT PROJECTS TO PROMOTE THE INITIATIVE

between the AU, the RECs, SADPA and other multilateral organisations. South Africa can also promote African peace and security issues in its pioneering engagements with emerging international groupings.

The country can promote and advocate for the development and implementation of PCRD strategies. Previously, it headed the Ministerial Committee for PCRD in Sudan, but is no longer driving such initiatives.

Described as a 'confidence builder' and 'locomotive', South Africa should ensure that the ASI continues to gather momentum. At the same time, it can ensure that the process is seen as legitimate and transparent and that resources for the peace and security agenda are used efficiently.

While Jacob Zuma can be commended for being the only head of state present at the ASC, South Africa can do much more to drive the process and ensure its success. In assisting the establishment of ASI operational guidelines, it can also drive frameworks for PCRD activities in SADC.

By developing a database of PCRD experts, it would be poised to assist the continent when asked to do so. Only when the root causes of violence are addressed can the continent begin to counter the many atrocities that continue daily.

Recommendations

1 South Africa should take a leading role on PCRD by placing it firmly on the AU PSC agenda, and by developing a clear vision and strategy aligned to the AU's strategic plan, the AU PCRD framework (paying particular attention to the five core principles) and with SADC priorities. This policy should be articulated *and* followed through in South African actions.

2 Examine ways of strengthening PCRD operationalisation through RECS and SADC in particular.

3 Consider South Africa's comparative advantage in the six AU PCRD pillars and focus on these areas. Given limited resources, South Africa cannot engage in all.

4 Push for civil society engagement in priority setting and implementation of PCRD activities.

5 Push for a clear methodology for assessment and operational plan for use of resources in the ASI. Advocate and provide resources for the ASI's primary location at the AU.

6 Develop a database of organisations and departments in South Africa that can offer technical assistance at the AU's request. This could include non-state actors such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and businesses with CSR schemes.

7 Develop a fund for seconding PCRD and peacebuilding experts to the region.

8 Provide technical assistance at the AU by filling required quota positions in line with procedural requirements.

9 Consider ways of promoting African concerns through South Africa's avant-garde contact with multilateral organisations such as BRICS, IBSA and G20 and push for implementation of Resolution 2033 to further strengthen links between the AU and the UN. Establish ways of strengthening AU PCRD through linkages to these institutions.

Notes

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