

Journal of Security Sector Management

Published by:
Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform
University of Cranfield
Shrivenham, UK

ISSN 1740-2425

Volume 4 Number 2 - April 2006

The Challenges Of Civil Society In The Discourse Of Human Security In Southern Africa

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“Human security is indivisible. A general dynamic of equitable and balanced development is its best cornerstone. The growing interaction of societies on a world scale increasingly demonstrates the overall need for human security, through it is not yet enough to prevent all forms of violence or conflict. The world’s future depends upon a growing need for human security and a better understanding of all the risks and threats that affect population and individuals”¹

Introduction

Following an engagement in Cape Town and enroute Gauteng, I picked up one of my favourite magazine – *The New African*. The edition of the August/September 2005 did not disappoint me. The lead article entitled “What are NGOs really doing in Africa?”² invokes the interrogation of civil society’s (SCOs) participation in human security on the Africa continent. One of the statements in the article made reference to several foreign non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and remarked contemptuously to local ones as mere “local spin-offs” which together with their foreign counterparts, “now hold Africa in the thrall (as) the continent’s new colonisers”.³ If these views were merely the rumblings of a solitary ‘paranoid’

¹ Quotation from the Action of the International SecuriPax network for the Promotion of Human Security and Peace in Moufida Goucha and Jakkie Cilliers (eds), *Peace, Human Security and Conflict Prevention in Africa*, Proceedings of the UNESCO-ISS Expert Meeting held in Pretoria, South Africa 23-24 July 2001, p v.

² Rotimi Sankore, “What are the NGOs Doing?”, *New African*, August/September 2005, p 12-13.

³ *Ibid*, p 12.

writer, it would have been easier to dismiss them as a sheer exercise of democratic ‘gymnastics’. However the seriousness of the issues raised were not at variance with the catchy character of the headings of the articles.

Civil society, defined here as follows: “an **arena of action and interaction**, operating from spaces between the family, the state, and the private sector. It does not normally exist in society as an entity that is recognisable and predictable as much as the state and the private sector”⁴. Yet a SCO is most definitely regarded as an anathema – an institution that is seen as both a power in its own and working in the interest of powers in the North. As shown above, by definition it presupposes an intercourse of views and ideas in an amorphous environment but without it being nebulous in structure and character as would appear to be suggested above. Therefore while being versatile in engagement, civil society is expected to respond to issues of the environment in a structured manner and with due sensitivity to the stakeholders – family, state and private sector stated above.

When South Africa’s President Thabo Mbeki commented that African people are questioning the autonomy of civil society on the continent, his statement is fundamental as it is at the core of the challenges of human security in general and in the Southern African region in particular. On the issue of external sources of funding for civil society, the President posits: “(Does the continent) actually have an independent African civil society, because you have civil society organisations funded by the Americans, Swedes and the Danes, and the Japanese and so on, *who set agenda*”?⁵ I have more or less have had to respond to similar questions many a times and in some cases have had to offer explanations before the questions have even been posed! President Mbeki’s own question: “Do (these organisations) reflect the (views of the) ordinary people they say they represent or do they represent or do they represent other interests?” is unsettling for civil society.⁶ Yet it is both valid and legitimate in a world in which maximisation of influence and not philanthropy has been known to be the major motivation for the funding states and institutions.⁷

Therefore the questions may be poised: should human security issues be left as a preserve of the states given the seemingly massive ‘onslaught’ on civil society on the continent in general and in Southern Africa in particular or indeed shouldn’t non-state actors (in this case civil society) be accorded a conducive environment in which to contribute to the crucial attainment of human security demands?

The paper discusses challenges of human security in Southern Africa with a particular focus on successful civil society experiences. However given the perceptions about civil society outlined earlier, I shall endeavour to examine what I refer to as ‘myths’ and ‘realities’ of civil society. I shall also seek to encapsulate

⁴ German Development Service, Civil Society in Zambia: Study Conducted to inform a Focal Area Strategy Paper “Strengthening Civil Society in Zambia”, Lusaka/Munich February and March, 2003, p 9.

⁵ Jonathan Katzenellenbogen, “Mbeki questions funding of NGOs”, *Business Day*, 29 September 2005. The emphasis are my own intended at the very least to explain that the motivating factor has largely (if not entirely) been civil society own missions and objectives without any input by external factors, However the likelihood of ‘self censorship’ is a factor that may be hard to dismiss out rightly.

⁶ See Rhoda Kadalie, “When presidents go paranoid, NGOs beware”, <http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/topstories.aspx?ID>, 13 October 2005.

⁷ Keith Muloongo, former Program Head Human Security at the Institute for Security Studies, 3 October 2005.

the lessons from the civil society with the view of determining the nexus of practice to theory of peace on the African continent. My paper ends with policy recommendations on the peace-building role of civil society in Southern Africa. I nevertheless begin by looking at the genealogy of human security itself. Defining human security and relating it to the region provides it a dimension or dimensions that give the concept a 'home-grown' appearance, if ever there was ever one. Indeed defining human security is itself one of the major challenges in the Southern African region, both from a conceptual and empirical view point as civil society endeavour to meet what state and non-state actors (i.e. CSOs) perceive as human security demands.

Defining Human Security

Human security as a concept has been associated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as have others such as the Kampala Documents and its *security calabash* which stresses the value of "new security" dimensions to bring on board a variety of issues beyond the traditional security ones in which military and state security are dominant.⁸ The UNDP has defined human security as follows: "Human security can be said to have two main aspects. It means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs or in communities. Such threats can exist at all levels of national income and development".⁹ The UN Deputy Secretary-General succinctly put it as follows: "What do we mean by human security? We mean, in its most simple expression, all those things that men and women anywhere in the world cherish most: enough food for the family; adequate shelter; good health; schooling for the children; protection from violence whether inflicted by man or by nature; and a State which does not oppress its citizens but rules with their consent".¹⁰

The common denominator in all these definitions is that human security is a compound term that brings a multiplicity of issues to which Sue Mbaya refers to as "a multi-faceted" concept which the UN report on "Our Shared responsibility" regards as "indivisible".¹¹ Here therefore lies one of the challenges of the concept – a variety of needs which from Frechette's definition not only have the potential of a never-ending multiplicity of needs reflected by differences between people but also difficult to determine what "enough" or "adequate" actually means.

⁸ William Minter (ed.) "The Kampala Document: Towards a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa", *African Problems – African Initiatives*, Africa Policy Information Center. By *security calabash* it is meant a containment of a multiplicity of factors as would a calabash have numerous items such as a variety of fruit and vegetables.

⁹ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report 1994*. New York: Oxford University Press, 23. <<http://www.undp.org/hdro/1994/94.htm>> 08/02/01

¹⁰ Statement by the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Louise Frechette to a high-level panel discussion on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Vienna International Centre (VIC), October 9, 1999. <<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/1999/19991012.dsgsm70.doc.html>> 08/02/01

¹¹ See Sue Mbaya, "Addressing Poverty: Linking HIV/Aids to Human Security", paper for a Human Security and Africa's New Leadership to fight HIV/Aids, 9 – 10 September, 2005, Addis Ababa, p 2; and United Nations, "A more secure world: our shared responsibility: Report of the High Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, 2004, p 9.

Especially significant in the discourse on the definition of human security is the seemingly universality of the concept. The more recent UN definition is as follows:

“We stress the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. We recognize that all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential. To this end, we commit ourselves to discussing and defining the notion of human security in the General Assembly”.¹²

Therefore the concept derives its legitimacy from the apparent consensus it appears to have amongst the states of the world and consequently reflects the actual universality of the term. It would therefore have been unusual if the African Union had deviated from the general understanding of human security in its drive towards addressing the crucial issues that the continent requires to address and which also conform to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).¹³ The MDGs are of course a further unpacking of the needs of the African continent, which can only be yet another dimension of human security.

Africa’s Non-Aggression and Common Defence Pact definition of human security not only provides both the broadness of human security but also presents yet more ‘confusion’ over the inclusion or exclusion of some factors in the discourse of human security. The AU document defines human security as follows:

“Human Security” means the security of the individual in terms of satisfaction of his/her basic needs. It also includes the creation of social, economic, political, (military), environmental and cultural conditions necessary for the survival and dignity of the individual, the protection of and respect for human rights, good governance and the guarantee for each individual of opportunities and choices for his/her full development”.¹⁴

The exclusion of the military from the African Union interpretation of human security matches (most probably purely coincidentally) with that by NGOs contained “In Larger Freedom: Towards Security Development and Human Rights for all” in which national security. Yet it may be argued, as Jakkie Cilliers does, that “without the provisions of effective *national security*, neither citizens nor communities can be personally secure in the broader sense of the term”.¹⁵ The NGO document defined human security in the following manner:

“We propose a redefinition of security in terms of basic human needs, rights and responsibility. Human security, as opposed to *national security*, guarantees access to food, clean water, healthcare, education and employment.

¹² UN General Assembly, Draft resolution referred to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly by the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, A/60L.1, 15 September 2005.

¹³ Indeed MDGs have been regarded as “an ambitious agenda”. These include the reduction of child mortality, ensuring environment sustainability, achieving gender equality, eradication of poverty, develop global partnership for development and combat such diseases as HIV/AIDS.

¹⁴ The African Non-Aggression and Common Defence Pact, Abuja, 31 January 2005, p 6. The Draft version of this pact had ‘military’ as one of the elements of the definition of human security. Whether its exclusion from the final document was a conscious decision is matter of interpretation. Mine would be that the exclusion was probably not deliberate because of the positive role the military plays in the entire security debate and practice. See also Jakkie Cilliers, *Human Security in Africa: A Conceptual Framework for Review*, African Human Security Initiative, 2004, p 8.

¹⁵ Jakkie Cilliers, *ibid* p 9. The italics emphasis is my own.

It recognises the right of people to participate in important decisions that affect their lives and respects the integrity of creation. Human security would emerge from a ‘globalization of solidarity’ that promotes international cooperation to pre-emptively manage conflicts before they turn violent”.¹⁶

Other critical factors in the NGOs definition are democratic ethos and a call for solidarity beyond the confines of state boundaries as an effort to forestall violence or manage conflicts. It may therefore be justifiable to question how human security can guarantee all these important aspects of human existence without due consideration national security concerns as Cilliers argues. What is nevertheless evident is that human security is definitely broad, as it virtually appears to cover a multiplicity aspect of life.

Mohammed Ayoob cautions against “adopting unduly elastic definitions of security” lest the lack of pinpointedness “confuses the issue by wrapping these problems in the security blanket”.¹⁷ Daniel Deudney in concurring with Ayoob refers to the creation of “a conceptual muddle ... a *de-definition* rather than a *re-definition* of security”.¹⁸ In this regard, a valid point has been made that “redefinitions of security do not displace or replace state-based security. Rather, human security has emerged as an additional agenda on the security discourse, and premised on the recognition that national security is insufficient to guarantee human security”.¹⁹

However a comprehensive critique of the definition of human security (useful as this may be) is not the major preoccupation of this paper but rather its nexus to civil society. What the discourse on human security as a concept has shown is that one of its early challenges is how it is understood conceptually first and only later how it relates on the ground.

The extent to which civil society is postured to making a significant contribution to the resolution of the challenges posed by human security depends on its make-up – howsoever capable or perceived it is. In life perceptions are as important as the ‘real thing’. This is particularly the case in a region such Southern Africa which only recently evolved from decades of often violent colonial and illegal rule; traumatic post-independence era characterised by civil wars at one extreme and localised insurgency at another under the shadow of the Cold war. The region has also been experiencing general instability in a number of states as they battle the challenges of governance with some of them on the verge of plummeting into a failed state dimension. In such situations, states have often found themselves not only engulfed by these sever challenges but also have had to contend with other non-state actors in providing services to their constituency and inevitably resulting in some tension between the two. Here therefore lies some of the basis of the relationship between states and civil society and also the need to demystify the nature of the latter.

¹⁶ Compilation of NGO Comments on: “In Larger Freedom: Towards Security, Development and Human Rights for all” (A/59/2005) Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The italics emphasis is my own.

¹⁷ Mohammed Ayoob, “Defining Security: A Subaltern Realist Perspective”, Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (eds) *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*, UCL Press Limited, London, 1997, p 125.

¹⁸ Daniel Deudney, “The Case against Linking Environmental Degradation and national Security”, *Millennium* 19: 3 (Winter 1990), p 465.

¹⁹ *The AU/NEPAD and Africa’s Evolving Governance and Security Architecture: A policy advisory group meeting* by The centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town, and The Centre for Policy Studies, Johannesburg, Misty Hills, Johannesburg, South Africa 11 – 12 December 2004, p 17.

The Myths or Realities of Civil-Society

*What are they really doing in Africa...A tainted history...Pseudo governments or surrogates of Western powers?*²⁰

The problematic relationship between civil society and governments in Africa is well known. When Patrick Molutsi made the point towards the end of 1990's that "peace and security are matters that not to be left to the state alone"²¹, it may have been an acknowledgement of the need to make everybody aware about the vital importance of stability. It may also have been an indictment against the state. However when he wrote of the "state bec(oming) the enemy of its own people",²² it became apparent that it was towards the latter that his comments were biased. Security is indeed a concern of a wider segment of society, if not the entire society itself. However while the post-colonial state has been confronted by many challenges, the same can be said of the colonial state. Seemingly, Molutsi in his specific focus on the former appears to suggest a qualitative difference between the states, with the insinuation that the colonial state was more sensitive to its people.

Is the State the Enemy of its Citizens?

The claim that some states in the region are not sensitive to their people is rather prevalent in some media and by largely states in the North. The Zimbabwe government has been mentioned as one such state. However, the validity of such a claim is both questionable and out focus of this paper. What is nevertheless pertinent is that CSOs have often been placed rather visibly in such debates and as a consequence been left 'bruised', if not mortally 'wounded', as they have been either ostracised or legislated out as 'enemies of the state'.

To tag a state as an enemy of its citizen in the absence of unchallengeable evidence for the mere reason of scoring on a propaganda war or for political expediency is not constructive and therefore likely to invite negative responses from states. Not only has there not been a single government in the Southern African region guilty of such a hideous crime – even in the aftermath of the UN report on Operation Murambatsvina – the regional mechanism supported by bilateral state mechanism have tended to mitigate against such excesses. Therefore while states can indeed be guilty of crimes against their own citizens, as the case was in Rwanda in 1994, it is crucial that mere internal political and economic upheavals are not magnified in order to serve a hidden agenda domiciled either within a local political space or some other strategic dynamics.²³

However, much as CSOs can be used, or more accurately, abused to malign states by demonising them as the tag of "enemy of its citizens" implies, so can the CSOs as they undertake the onerous task of meeting the challenges of human security.

²⁰ Rotimi Sankore, "What are the NGOs doing?", *New African*, August/September, 2005, pp 12-15;

²¹ Patrick Molutsi "The Interaction between State and Civil Society in Southern Africa: Prospects for Peace and Security", in Lennart Wohlgemuth, Samantha Gibson, Staphan Klasen and Emma Rothschild (eds.), *Common Security and Civil Society in Africa*, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999, p 180

²² Ibid

²³ See Martin Rupiya, "Zimbabwe: Governance Through Military Operations", *African Security Review*, Volume 14, Number 3, 2005, pp117-118 for a brief account of operations by the Zimbabwe government which have had some negative effect on some people but nevertheless fall severely short in the government being referred to as "an enemy of its citizens".

'Guilty' by Association

Association with Western powers (i.e. governments and other institutions and individuals who have the capacity [and in most cases use that capacity] to meet their foreign policy objectives or interests, has been one of the major sticking points. Faced with suspect capacities of the states and existence of regimes they consider as 'unfriendly' to their interests (putting it mildly), CSOs have often appeared the more attractive. The first 'port of call' has often been the international NGOs for reasons of relatively poor capacity by their local counterparts. Therefore the existing situation has been one of general suspicion against civil society be them international or local. This is partially the premise President Mbeki's statement should be viewed. Whether in fact such an association with the West necessarily implies a relationship that is injurious to the African state is a point that needs to be carefully analysed.

While indeed they may be some merits in the belief that some international NGOs may desire to perpetuate conflict for reasons of sustainable benefits – "ambulance chasing" being a case in point - is surely not true for all organisations. For instance local ones whose own integrity lies in meeting the goals they would have initially have set for themselves and publicised to make themselves visible. Therefore just as the ISS which goes under the banner "Human Security in Africa" and will strive to live up to it; the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) will too endeavour to live up to its "pan-African vision". I therefore argue that being associated to some foreign governments or institutions does not necessarily entail adopting their missions unless they comply with those of the local NGOs, or does it?

He who pays the Piper...

Related to the matter of association is that of funding by Western institutions. The infamous dictum: "He who pays the piper, plays the tune" has been associated to CSOs in the region and governments as well as other institutions outside the region – particularly those in the northern hemisphere. Although the dictum sounds 'pregnant' with 'Solomonic' wisdom, in reality it may describe preciously little of the actual reality. I argue that linkage between the provider of funds and its recipient exists but in the manner 'prophesied' by the 'Solomonic' wisdom. Although there will be CSOs that will consciously seek to project what they perceive to be what the funder wants, the same decision may also be arrived at unconsciously. 'Self-censorship' may be another way of putting it. This is the "piper and the tune" model. It is also the model that is unlikely to survive for long. Firstly the COSs would be seen for the 'spineless' institutions they are and consequently loose legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Secondly (and more importantly) the CSOs would fail to obtain the crucial engagement with the state. Inevitably even the funder would both reduce on the support and ultimately cease to support the CSOs altogether because of their failure to remain relevant to its constituency.

The more relevant CSOs are those that engage funders on a genuine partnership level. This is one characterised by comprehensive project proposals premised on thorough analysis of the environment and buy in by the funder. This is true and honest partnership that will last because of its ability to remain relevant to the issues as well as ability by the CSO to present transparency, and accountable and efficient management. It is these qualities in CSOs that will make both friends and foes submit to their relevancy. The Southern African region has a number of such CSOs. However, whether or not CSOs are independent from their funders, a

perception exists that they cannot truly be unaffected by their benefactors' orientation and that projecting the assumed funders' ideology may translate in the continued flow of funding or any other undetermined motivation. Only production of objective deliverables may eventually reduce this view.

Conceding that the expectation by a donor – foreign or for that matter local – is largely in order to acquire the proverbial influence, not merely for philanthropically reasons, Keith Muloongo has argued that this presumed manipulation is as true for civil society as it is for governments.²⁴ I must nevertheless hasten to state that while governments will have resources of the state at its disposal and therefore in an advantageous position to 'weave and turn' in the murky world of global machinations, civil society may not. In this regard, governments have a legitimate concern about the possibility that civil society may unconsciously acquiesce into something that may not be in national or regional interest. However civil society would be correct to insist on its democratic right of autonomy. This does not or should not mean that CSO and governments are on equal footing. Governments have or should have the mandate by the public through elections and CSOs are not. However since governments are accountable to the public, CSOs ought to play both an oversight and complimentary role. Nevertheless the absence of homogeneity reflected in part by the divisive categorisations literature calls donor-driven NGOs (DONGOS) and government-driven NGOs (GONGOs) make the CSO environment a very contested area. Making the situation even more complex is the intense general rivalry amongst NGOs working in the same area and thereby making the only major casualty the human security agenda. The critical nature of this agenda is such that it entails more actors and consequently makes such destructive competition unnecessary.

However if there is one lesson from the discourse of myths and realities is that they can both have a telling effect on the effectiveness of a civil society organisation. For instance the refusal or withdrawal from a project activity by state controlled participants may not only lead to the failure by CSOs to achieve projected human security goals but may even be detrimental to future programmes. Imagine therefore that such intended goals were to be the search for a reduction of HIV/AIDS in a vulnerable but critical public sector, enhancing the capacity of a conflict prone region to mediate in conflicts or combating such vices as corruption; the failure to fulfil the programs would only inhibit the achievement of the intended human security goals. Although CSOs in the Southern African region have been experiencing a number challenges, failing to acknowledge some successes they have had in the human security area would a travesty.

A focus on Civil Society Experiences

(S)ecurity of the individual is no longer defined exclusively within the realm of states and as a consequence of national security. As a result individuals and communities are not only bystanders and collateral victims of conflicts, but core participants in protection strategies and post-conflict peace building...²⁵

²⁴ Interview with Keith Muloongo is a former Program Head of Southern African Civil Society Program at the ISS. Until recently, he was also the Deputy Director of the ISS.

²⁵ Jakkie Cilliers, *Human Security in Africa: A Conceptual Framework for Review*, African Human Security Initiative, 2004

The nature of Southern African invites a broad assortment of types of CSOs include those that dedicate themselves to policy related issues; those that participate in peacekeeping processes; and those that focus on building capacities of both governmental and non-governmental institutions. Other important considerations include undertaking advocacy positions on some issues while others combine such positions with those of purely research agenda. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) is one such organisation with a policy research mission while the Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD) and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (IGD) [all based in South Africa but doing work on the continent] would tend to have an upper hand on peacekeeping issues. The Public Affairs and Parliamentary Support Trust (PAPST) of Zimbabwe, as well as Africa Centre for Peace and Development (ACPD) of Tanzania, engage in capacity building and policy research with legislative institutions and political parties.

To determine successful civil society experiences demands arriving at the measures of success that imply determination of impact. Measuring success is not easy. The broadness of human security makes it even more difficult. Further on, given the multiplicity of CSOs of varying capacity, the measurement of impact becomes even more difficult. A variable that serves well as a measure of success is the *perception* of the CSOs. Its value lies in the flexibility of its use regardless of the size and capacity of the CSO. Therefore the civil society's perception of success is on its own a critical measure of success. Another measure of success is the CSOs tangible *contribution* towards an attainment of human security goals. Other measures of success include *participation by government functionaries* and *government consultancies* and any form of contribution in *policy formulation*. Evidently these measures take the form of quantitative and qualitative dimensions. The issue that remains to be shown is the extent to which CSOs in the Southern African region are partners in tackling human security challenges. I begin the discourse by showing the massive contribution CSOs have contributed towards the attainment of human security in the region.

Placing the case for Optimism

Civil society contributed extensively to the reintroduction of plural political dispensation in the post-Cold War era. With the trade union in the lead, Zambia was the first country in the region in 1991 to return to multiparty democratic governance. President Frederick Chiluba, a long serving leader of the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) became the Head of State. The contribution of civil society to the events leading to political emancipation in South Africa that culminated in a majority rule government in 1994 and after has been well documented. Civil society continues to play a leading role in pro democracy drive in Zimbabwe, Swaziland and even in the DRC – a country at the verge of having its first democratic elections since 1960 in a territory part of which is in a post conflict environment while other parts continue to be afflicted by destructive civil war. There is therefore firm evidence showing strong civil society participation in creating an environment conducive to the attainment of human security goals.

The International Crisis Group (ICG) on civil society in Southern Africa has declared that CSOs have experienced more successes than failures.²⁶ Peter Kangwanja's review is premised on the existence of a variety of CSOs operating in the region and the ability by such institutions as the IGD to engage with high profile actors in seeking solutions to some Africa's conflicts. The active and high

²⁶ Interview on 29th September 2005 with Peter Kangwanja, Head of ICG in the Southern Africa region.

profile engagement by the ICG on the Zimbabwe political and economic quagmire resonates with reasonable successful civil society engagements.

Track two work by IGD in support of the South African government in the Cote D'Ivoire, the DRC roundtable discussions in Johannesburg and its part in the reconstituting confidence in Lesotho complements well the equally valuable work in Burundi by ACCORD. The relatively quite manner NGOs like Safer Africa, IGD and ACCORD have had with the South African state and other states has enabled them to transcend the general insecurity and a culture of non-cooperation which has generally characterised CSOs relationship with states on the continent in general and the Southern African region in particular. Indeed the establishment of ISS offices in Nairobi and Addis Ababa could not have been achieved without the cooperation of public structures. The ISS is not alone in such achievement. The work being done by the Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) of South Africa in conjunction with *Associação nacional dos deficientes* (ANDA) of Angola and Angola 2000 on reintegration of ex-combatants in Angola and enhancing local level conflict management practitioners contributes towards stability in the region. JUSTAPAZ of Mozambique in its similar work with a bias towards community leadership; and with Zimbabwe Civil Education Trust (ZCET) on Peace Committees also work towards a stable region. The peace building work in Angola which focuses on imparting mediation skills, building a culture of mediation and providing skills of analysis to the local leadership are comprehensive efforts of sustaining the gains of cessation of hostilities and consequently the enhancement of human security issues.²⁷ In Richard Smith's words: "If people are better informed about what is happening, it adds to a secure community".²⁸ Particularly gratifying is that the work with the ex-combatants, some of whom are disabled, is well supported by the Angola government. With the formation of twenty-three peace committees involving two hundred fifty-one *animators* and focusing on local conflicts across political party lines and henceforth creating *zones of peace*, the collaboration between CSVR and ZCET, is expected to have a wider impact in Zimbabwe's Bulawayo, Matebele North and Midlands and possibly beyond. The communications skills and exchange visits of mostly youths from South Africa and Zimbabwe, which are a component of the initiative, can only contribute positively towards human security goals. However the work being done in Mozambique through JUSTAPAZ has had modest impact largely due to the initiative's focus on human rights, democracy and governance and the ever-increasing strength of CSOs now regrettably viewed as a potential political threat to the Mozambique government.²⁹

Further complementing the seemingly successful civil society engagements is at the capacity building level. Kangwanja views efforts by the ICG in partnering with South African government in enhancing communication skills as progressive. Similarly are the deployment of several Zambian and some Malawian and other participants from the SADC region in UN Missions in the capacities they were trained for in UNPOC run by the ISS's Training for Peace Program (TfP). The TfP work is but one other example of capacity building by CSOs.³⁰ The work by

²⁷ Similar work is being done by the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, a Pan-African CSO based in Zambia in what is called a "Messengers of Peace" program. Graduates of this program include refugees from conflict and post conflict regions as well as non-conflict regions

²⁸ Interview on 27 September 2005 with Richard Smith the Peace building Manager at CSVR.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ See The Institute for Security Studies Training for Peace Program March 2003 to June 2004 Annual report and 2005 mid-term Report.

PAPST in at least sixty constituencies in which the organisation embarks on leadership training of members of parliament and traditional management is reported to have received such overwhelming support that at least a hundred constituencies have been targeted by 2007.³¹ The inadequate institutional capacity by PAPST seems to be the major problem as the demand for the training continues to grow.

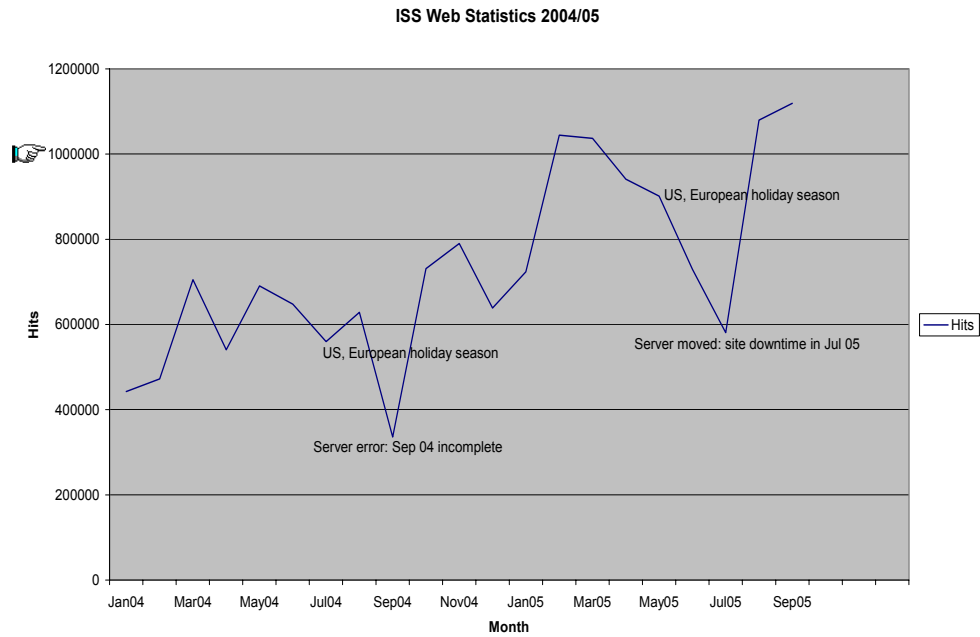
Other critical work in the arena of human security whose impact has been significant is that on small arms and anti-personnel land mines. With the former creating a general sense of insecurity and the latter inhibiting agriculture and movement of people, the collaborative work by CSOs in the region in particular and Africa in general, has contributed enormously towards enhancing security. The CSOs such as the ISS (through the Arms Management Programme [AMP]) and Safer Africa, have worked closely with SADC Secretariat and other SADC structures such as the Southern African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (SARPCCO) in producing and implementing the SADC Protocol on the Control of Fire arms and Ammunition and other Related Materials adopted in September 2004. The CSOs have also contributed to the Bamako Declaration on an African Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons of 1 December 2000³² as well as on the Common African Position on Anti-Personnel landmines.³³ Significant is the robust participation by the CSOs in formulation of policies in these areas.

Indeed work in the criminal justice area through provision of essential statistics on crime trends as well as on the efficiency and effectiveness of criminal justice systems in countries in the SADC region has been well documented by such CSOs as the ISS (Crime and Justice Program) and the Inter-Africa network for Human Rights and Development (AFRONET). For instance the ISS has from 1992 up to 30 September 2005 published 346 books, monographs and papers in both hard and soft copies to public and non-public officials. The table below indicates the web statistics for the 2004/2005 periods showing the number of readership. The current hits per month are over a million.

³¹ An interview with Michael Mataure, Head of PAPST on 29 September 2005.

³² Interview with Noel Stott, Acting Head Of program AMP, ISS.

³³ African Union, Common African Position on Anti-Personnel Landmines Adopted at the 2nd Continental Conference of Africa's Experts on Landmines, Kempton Park – Seven Years After, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 17 September 2004.



Source: <http://www.issafrica.org/>

The more service oriented NGOs in the region appear to have been performing rather well, however not in terms of being able to meet all the challenges of human security such as poverty alleviation, but more in terms of working with minimum interruption, if any. This is not withstanding the recent negative report on the performance of aid agencies during aftermath of the Asian tsunami disaster in terms of duplication and rivalries.³⁴

As would be expected the international NGOs such as the World Vision, the World Lutheran Church and CARE International have been leading in the area of poverty alleviation. This is particularly the case in Zambia.³⁵ Together with the Civil Society for Poverty reduction (CSPR), the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR), the international NGOs have been particularly significant. The advocacy work on poor policy by the CSPR (an umbrella network with over a hundred NGOs and the JCTR with its “Basic Needs Basket”, a monthly bulletin on the cost of living in Lusaka, have not only proved valuable to trade unions in their dialogue on minimum wage but also for government policy. The work by the Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace (CCJDP) has also been valuable in projecting pro-poor policies through its “State of the Nation Report” on social and political conditions. With the point of political dimension, ends the relatively cordial relationship between the states in Southern Africa and civil society.

The Contrary view Point

³⁴ BBC World News, 4 September 2005. See also <http://edition.cnn.com/2005/world/europe/10/05/tsunami.report.ap/index.html> “Report: Much tsunami aid wasted”.

³⁵ Interview with Dr Oliver Mutesa of Department of Development Studies at the University of Zambia and member of the Southern African Peace and Security Network (SAPSnet).

Keith Muloongo has described the challenges facing civil society in the region in the following manner: “There are problems with CSOs working in development areas but only those which are ‘advocacy’ and security based”.³⁶ Muloongo states that governments view advocacy, political and security work as tantamounting to an opposition to government because by focusing in those areas, civil society is essential “unsettling the powers base of government and championing ideas opposed to it”.³⁷ Mulongo contends civil society in the region has hardly had an effective engagement on those issues of a political and security nature. He argues that instead what has occurred is “civil society talking about security but not engaging with government”.³⁸ This point is supported by Mataure who argues that on balance CSOs in the region have not adequately achieved their intended objectives of tackling human challenges because the general failure to cultivate a working relationship with governments in the region. He places the blame for the poor relationship on what he considers as the CSOs rather confrontational attitude and lack of trust, confidence and rapport with governments in the region through modification of language and continuous negotiation. Mataure further contends that entering the terrain with pre-set agendas and viewing adoption and adaptation as weakness, has largely left the majority of NGOs “out of the loop” of governments’ confidence and therefore has been detrimental to their achievements of human security challenges in the region.

Government consultancies are regarded as the clearest indication of effective engagement with government. While the latter point has some merit, participation by government functionaries in conferences, workshops and seminars including special briefings, as has been the case at the ISS, even without ‘government consultancies’ is nevertheless an indication of successful engagement. Nevertheless as mentioned earlier, some NGOs (preciously few as they may be) do nevertheless undertake ‘government consultancies’. Therefore as NGO coalitions like the Oasis Forum in Zambia (generally credited for stopping President Chiluba’s attempt to go for an unconstitutional third term of office and the current constitutional process designed to bring about a new constitution) ‘puddle against a strong political tide’ and others such as Southern African Centre for Conflict Resolution of Disputes (SACCORD) – are threatened with ‘extinction’ under the unrelenting government pressure, the role civil society in governance and security areas in the region is as relevant today as it was when civil society through trade unions and other groups undertake the mantle of fighting for the political emancipation of the countries in the region. Civil society therefore has both the moral and legitimate right to participate more robustly in matters of governance and security.

Policy Recommendations

The challenges of human security are complex. The Southern African region whose memories of inter-state and intra-state conflicts are still fresh, the challenges are even more complex. The policy recommendation I hereby propose to take a conceptual dimension with the view of attempting to minimise the practical challenges that arise from the rather diverse definitions of human security. The other recommendations arise from the perceptions of civil society and on their experiences – both successful and the not so successful.

³⁶ Keith Muloongo, *Opcit.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

The Conceptual Dimension

1. Human security issues are dynamic arising from the dynamism of humanity itself. Therefore the defining what is human security ought to take cognisance of the basics as articulated by the UNDP definition of 1994 but be continuously informed by time as the UN General Assembly definition arising from the High-level Plenary Meeting of September 2005.
2. Dimensions of human security are wide but must at all times recognise the vital role of national security. In this regard, the definition of human security as given by Africa's Non-Aggression and Common Defence Pact (draft version) is more comprehensive and accurate in its inclusion of the military as one of the needs on the continent.

Perceptions of civil society

1. CSOs have a vital role in the attainment of human security in states but do not have the mandates governments have. Therefore they should assume oversight and complementary roles and not behave as if they are governments in waiting;
2. CSOs umbrella networks' should protect legitimate NGOs from abuse by states and play an advisory role to NGOs;
3. CSOs should negotiate participation in regional governance issues through already existing regional policy frameworks.