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## Namibia's 1999 Caprivi conflict and the consequences of a peacebuilding deficit — a first consideration

Job Shipululo Amupanda\*, André du Pisani\*\* and Rui Antonio Tiytende\*\*\*

### *Abstract*

*In August 1999, armed men belonging to the Caprivi Liberation Movement (CLM) launched an attack on government installations in Katima Mulilo, in an attempt to bring about the secession of the then Caprivi region (now Zambezi region) from Namibia. The Namibian Defence Force (NDF) and Namibian Police responded swiftly and contained the insurgency, leading to the arrest of more than 140 people while at least 14 individuals were killed. A state of emergency was declared during this first major internal conflict in independent Namibia. Namibia's independence came as a result of an internationally supported and mediated conflict resolution that provided for peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Given the country's experience with conflict resolution, one is fully justified in assuming that the post-independent state would be inclined to pursue conflict resolution and peacebuilding in relation to the 1999 event and its aftermath. Two decades after the conflict, the major intervention has been of a military nature. The Namibian State failed to engage in any form of meaningful peacebuilding. The secession sentiments remain and have since been acknowledged by key actors in the security system. This state of affairs can only mean that there is a possibility, that given the right context, the conflict may erupt sometime in the future, unless the State engages differently with local actors.*

### Introduction — peace beyond the absence of direct violence

In most of their speeches since independence, the apex Namibian political elite consistently presented the country as peaceful and stable. Sam Nujoma, Namibia's founding president, frequently and repeatedly made reference to Namibia as a peaceful country.<sup>1</sup> In 2005, Nujoma was succeeded by Hifikepunye Pohamba. Pohamba held power until 2015, when Dr. Hage Geingob took office to become the country's third president. Pohamba continued the peace rhetoric of his predecessor presenting

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<sup>1</sup> Sam Nujoma, *Where Others Wavered: The Autobiography of Sam Nujoma. My Life in SWAPO and My Participation in the Liberation Struggle of Namibia*, London, Panaf Books, 2001.

the country, during his inaugural speech, as “peaceful” and “stable” and crediting this to Nujoma.<sup>2</sup> This narrative has been swallowed uncritically by many, including scholars such as Joseph Diescho and Henning Melber.<sup>3</sup> The veneer of peace is ascribed to the enduring dominance and authoritarianism of SWAPO, that in itself, arguably constitutes a form of ‘structural violence’ in his insightful analysis of the 25 years of Nujoma and Pohamba’s presidencies. President Geingob did not depart from the peace and stability rhetoric. During his inaugural address, he had the following to say:

We in independent Namibia have been very fortunate to have had steady hands at the helm for 25 years... The journey ahead will be full of excitement. I am confident that Namibia will continue to pursue its developmental agenda and remain a haven of peace, stability and prosperity in a world full of turmoil.<sup>4</sup>

## The conceptual terrain

On closer analysis, the understanding of peace by these leaders and the master narrative under their watch is based on the mere absence of direct violence. The concept of peace, however, transcends the absence of direct violence. Johan Galtung, the founder of Peace Studies, cautions against this rather simplistic and one dimensional understanding of peace. He argues that peace is not just an absence of direct violence but an absence of violence in all its manifestations. He draws a distinction between ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’ violence. Whereas war or the physical confrontation can be understood as direct violence, indirect violence or structural violence such as limitation of rights and unequal opportunities does exist in many societies.<sup>5</sup> As such, a society can only be regarded as truly peaceful when both direct and indirect violence are absent. Building on the pioneering work of Johan Galtung, Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall assert in order for ‘positive peace’ to be achieved, injustice must be removed.<sup>6</sup> This may include direct state intervention aimed at empowering marginalized segments of society who believe that they have been economically discriminated against by another tribe or ethnic group. For Xuetong Yan, this understanding of peace came from the conceptualization of peace that equates it to security,

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<sup>2</sup> Hifikepunye Pohamba, “Inaugural Address By His Excellency President Hifikepunye Pohamba”, 2005, March 21, [http://www.gov.na/documents/10181/13996/Inaugural\\_Addresses\\_by\\_HE\\_Hifikepunye\\_Pohamba.pdf/bcdf12c5-d31e-4c86-a486-cf6c6cb791bb](http://www.gov.na/documents/10181/13996/Inaugural_Addresses_by_HE_Hifikepunye_Pohamba.pdf/bcdf12c5-d31e-4c86-a486-cf6c6cb791bb)

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Diescho, “Namibia the most peaceful and most stable country in Afrika”, *New Era*, 2014, July 15; Henning Melber, “From Nujoma to Geingob: 25 years of presidential democracy”, *Journal of Namibian Studies*, 18, 2015: 49-65.

<sup>4</sup> Hage Geingob, “Inaugural Address by His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia”, 2015, March 21, p. 7, <http://www.namibiaembassyusa.org/sites/default/files/statements/Inaugural%20Speech%20by%20HE%20Hage%20%20Geingob%201.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Johan Galtung, “Violence, peace, and peace research”, *Journal of Peace Research*, 6 (3), 1969: 167-191.

<sup>6</sup> Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, New York, Wiley, 2017: 14.

as a central tenet of 'war studies' – the conceptualization that substitutes peace for war and vice versa.<sup>7</sup> Other scholars, among them, Roland Bleiker and David Shim, Fabian Wendt and Paul F. Diehl all argue for a need to conceptualize conflict beyond direct violence.<sup>8</sup> Galtung makes a distinction between 'negative peace' and 'positive peace' underpinned by 'direct' and 'indirect' violence.<sup>9</sup> Negative peace is the peace that ensues when something negative, such as war, terminates. Positive peace on the other hand, goes beyond the reach of negative events to include the elimination of indirect violence in general, and structural violence, such as inequality in relation to socio-economic rights and opportunities, in particular. This contribution follows Galtung when it considers peace in Namibia in general, as well as in the case study presented. One of the authors of this article, argued elsewhere on the substance and status of peace in Namibia:

The clear conclusion is that we do not have absolute peace in this country. Listen to Galtung; "peace does not mean the total absence of any conflict. It means the absence of violence in all forms." What we have is Negative Peace (benefiting elites); we lack Positive Peace. While we have no direct violence, we surely have serious structural violence.<sup>10</sup>

Ndumba Kamwanyah imilarly suggests that in terms of Galtung's conceptualization of peace, Namibia hardly qualifies as a peaceful society, notwithstanding consistent pronouncements by the political elite to the contrary. He reasoned as follows:

Politicians, including the first citizen, in this country are fond of saying that Namibians should cherish the peace and stability the country has been enjoying so far... Johan Galtung, the godfather of peace theories, is instructive in providing clarity to help us unpack what we are talking about here. Peace, in the sense of Galtungism, is nothing if the majority of citizens are swimming in a sea of poverty. It is not positive peace if 29% of the citizens are unemployed and can't find decent jobs; if 60% of graduates are roaming our streets with little hopes of putting to use their education. Peace is also of little value when the majority of citizens are living in inhumane conditions in shacks; if they cannot afford decent housing; if they have no access to clean water, and other essential services or amenities. Positive peace can only last and materialise if our country's institutions and structures respond to citizens' needs in addressing the pervasive issues of social inequality, injustice, discrimination, gender-based violence and structural or indirect violence preventing people

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<sup>7</sup> Xuetong Yan, "Defining peace: Peace vs. security", *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, 16 (1), 2004: 201-219.

<sup>8</sup> Roland Bleiker and David Shim, "Can we move beyond conflict?", in: Jenny Edkins and Maja Zehfuss, (eds.), *Global Politics: A New Introduction*, Abington, Routledge, 2014: 564-589; Fabian Wendt, "Peace beyond compromise", *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 16 (4), 2013: 573-593; Paul F. Diehl, "Exploring peace: Looking beyond war and negative peace", *International Studies Quarterly*, 60 (1), 2016: 1-10.

<sup>9</sup> Galtung, "Violence".

<sup>10</sup> Job Shipululo Amupanda, "Peace? Which peace and for whom?", *The Namibian*, 2015, January 30, para. 6, <https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=133029&page=archive-read>

from meeting their basic needs, and accessing their basic human rights such as education, housing and healthcare.<sup>11</sup>

This contribution takes its cue from Galtung in analyzing peace in Namibia in general, and in the Caprivi region (now the Zambezi region), in particular. There are three important interconnected concepts in peace studies. These are: peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, also referred to as 'post-conflict reconstruction'. These concepts can be understood conceptually, but also functionally, as defined by international organizations such as the United Nations (UN). In this latter context, the focus is mainly on the bureaucratic and operational functions as they relate to the actors, their roles and objectives.<sup>12</sup> Constanze Schellhaas and Annette Seegers usefully distinguish these concepts as follows:

'Peacemaking' refers to activity aimed at bringing warring parties to an agreement. 'Peacekeeping' consists of activity to secure compliance with agreements. 'Peacebuilding' refers to efforts intended to avoid a relapse into conflict.<sup>13</sup>

For Eileen F. Babbitt peacemaking involves the actions taken to bring conflicting parties to an agreement, while peacekeeping involves the deployment of troops under different mandates, with the consent of conflicting parties, aimed at maintaining the peace.<sup>14</sup> Babbitt adds that peacebuilding concerns actions taken to support and strengthen structures established to ensure that the conflict does not reoccur. It, therefore, follows that these concepts – peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding (post-conflict reconstruction) – can be understood as referring to a peace process whereby once the peace has been made by mediating between warring parties, efforts are made to keep the peace that has been made and thereafter solidifying the peace by putting in place interventions and permanent structures that will prevent the conflict from reoccurring (post-conflict reconstruction).

In the context of this article, the focus is mainly on peacebuilding. As stated earlier, peacebuilding concerns measures meant to prevent the conflict from reoccurring. It is, however, not limited to a conflict that has occurred. It can also refer to conflict that is about to erupt or to preventing a conflict from escalating. As Michael Barnett et al. posit, peacebuilding concerns the "the elimination of the root causes of conflict so that actors no longer have the motive to use violence to settle their differences."<sup>15</sup> Cedric De Coning similarly argues that peacebuilding is defined

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<sup>11</sup> Ndumba Kamwanyah, "What would Johan Galtung say about Namibia's peace?", *The Namibian*, 2018, May 18, para. 1, <https://www.namibian.com.na/177532/archive-read/What-Would-Johan-Galtung-Say-About-Namibias-Peace>

<sup>12</sup> A.B. Fetherston, *Towards a Theory of United Nations Peacekeeping*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 1994.

<sup>13</sup> Constanze Schellhaas and Annette Seegers, "Peacebuilding: Imperialism's new disguise?", *African Security Studies*, 18 (2), 2009: 1-15 (3).

<sup>14</sup> Eileen F. Babbitt, "The evolution of international conflict resolution: From Cold War to Peacebuilding", *Negotiation Journal*, 25 (4), 2009: 539-549.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Barnett, Hunjoon Kim, Madalene O'Donnell and Laura Sitea, "Peacebuilding: What is in a name?", *Global Governance. A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, 13, 2007: 35-58 (42).

as a post-conflict intervention that provides for parallel, concurrent and interlinked short-, medium- and long term activities that work to prevent disputes from escalating, or avoid a relapse into violent conflict by addressing both the immediate consequences and the root causes of a conflict system.<sup>16</sup>

The United Nations, which carries the responsibility of maintaining world peace and is often involved in peacebuilding, defines peacebuilding as follows:

Peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding is a complex, long-term process of creating the necessary conditions for sustainable peace. It works by addressing the deep-rooted, structural causes of violent conflict in a comprehensive manner. Peacebuilding measures address core issues that affect the functioning of society and the State, and seek to enhance the capacity of the State to effectively and legitimately carry out its core functions.<sup>17</sup>

Most of the studies on the Caprivi conflict, such as those by Maria Fisch, Henning Melber, Bennett Kangumu, Wolfgang Zeller and Bennett Kangumu, Sidney L. Harring and Willem Odendaal, Jan-Bart Gewalt, offer descriptive historical accounts of the Caprivi (now called Zambezi) and the formation of its identity constructs.<sup>18</sup> There has been very little post-conflict research, particularly in Namibia. This contribution on the Caprivi conflict, from a conflict resolution perspective in general and peacebuilding in particular, seeks to contribute to local political science literature in general and peace and conflict studies in particular. In the subsequent pages, a discussion on the origin of the conflict, how it culminated in the proclamation of a National State of Emergency and discussion of subsequent events to date, will hopefully advance a case of a conflict that has not been dealt with in terms of more traditional conflict management strategies. As a result, the risk of this conflict reoccurring, due to an absence of peacebuilding, remains.

## Understanding the 1999 Caprivi conflict

The Caprivi region, renamed the Zambezi region in 2013, was one of Namibia's then 13 political regions and lies in the northern-eastern part of the country bordering Angola

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<sup>16</sup> Cedric De Coning, "The coherence dilemma in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction systems", *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 8 (3), 2008: 85-109 (89).

<sup>17</sup> United Nations, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines*, New York, United Nations, 2008: 18.

<sup>18</sup> Maria Fisch, *The Caprivi Strip during the German Colonial Period 1890 to 1914*, Windhoek, Out of Africa, 1999; idem, *The Secessionist Movement in the Caprivi: A Historical Perspective*, Windhoek, Kuiseb, 1999; Henning Melber, "One Namibia, one Nation? The Caprivi as contested territory", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 27 (4), 2009: 463-481; Bennett Kangumu, *Contestation over Caprivi Identities: From Pre-colonial Times to the Present*, PhD dissertation, Cape Town, University of Cape Town, 2008; Wolfgang Zeller and Bennett Kangumu, "Caprivi under old and new indirect rule falling off the map or a 19<sup>th</sup> century dream come true?", in: Henning Melber, (ed.), *Transitions in Namibia. Which Changes for Whom?*, Uppsala, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2007: 190-208; Sidney L. Harring and Willem Odendaal, "God stopped making land!" *Land Rights, Conflict and Law in Namibia's Caprivi Region*, Windhoek, Legal Assistance Center, 2012; Jan-Bart Gewalt, "Caprivi identities", *The Journal of African History*, 52 (3), 2011: 433-434.

and Zambia to the North and Zimbabwe and Botswana to the East and South, respectively. The region is about 20,000 km<sup>2</sup> in size.<sup>19</sup> Historically, the area formed part of the Lozi Kingdom.<sup>20</sup> The complex geopolitics of the region – with no fewer than ten islands, one of which (Kasikili/Sidudu) became the source of a legal dispute and international ruling by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) between Botswana and Namibia – and numerous boundary agreements and disputes over an extended period, such as the eastern boundary in the main channel of the Zambezi River, the south-eastern boundary in the main channel of the Chobe River and the south-western boundary between 21° East longitude and the Chobe River, have had a significant impact on the identities and local political practices of the different communities right up to the present. Struggles to construct and maintain geographic and shifting social boundaries, shaped notions of belonging and difference.

The term 'boundaries' is used here to convey more than simple borders, lines dividing spaces as represented on maps; boundaries signify the point at which something becomes something else, at which the way things are done changes, at which 'we' and 'they' begin, at which certain rules for behaviour no longer obtain and others kick in. Following Joel S. Migdal,

boundaries include symbolic and social dimensions associated with the border divisions that appear on maps or, for that matter, other dividing lines that cannot be found on any map. Because boundaries connote the site at which things are done differently or the limits to where things are done in one way, they are social constructions.<sup>21</sup>

Since the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the area of the Caprivi east of the Mashi River had been under the control of the Lozi; punctuated only by a thirty-five-year interval when the Kololo ethnic group was in power.<sup>22</sup> With its ethnically diverse population, this area was part of an extensive region conquered by the Lozi, much of which is today Zambia. The region is inhabited by several African communities such as the Kwe and !Kung San, the Mambukushu, Bekuhane (BaSubiya), Mayeyi, Mafwe, MaTotela, Makwengo, Malwizi (Lozi) and Mambalangwe.<sup>23</sup> In 1909, the German colonial state recognised only two ethnic groups; the Masubiya and the Mafwe – with all other groups that were non-Subiya

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<sup>19</sup> John Mendelsohn and Carole Roberts, *An Environmental Profile and Atlas of Caprivi*, Windhoek, Gamsberg Macmillan, 1998: 1.

<sup>20</sup> Lazarus Hangula, *The International Boundary of Namibia*, Windhoek, Gamsberg, 1993; Fisch, *Caprivi Strip*: 51 ff., E.L.P. Stals, *Kurt Streitwolf. Sy werk in Suidwes-Afrika 1899-1914*, Johannesburg, Perskor, 1979.

<sup>21</sup> Joel S. Migdal, (ed.), *Boundaries and Belonging – States and Societies in the Struggle to Shape Identities and Local Practices*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004: 5 f.

<sup>22</sup> The Kololo were a branch of the Sotho and had fled -like the Ndebele- to the north as a result of the reign of terror of the Zulus under Shaka. Later the Kololo established their headquarters at Linyanti (now Sangwali) in the Eastern Caprivi where their large herds of cattle were well protected by the swampy boundary rivers. In 1864 the Lozi attacked the Kololo who were weakened by illness and succession battles, and annihilated them.

<sup>23</sup> Fisch, *Caprivi Strip*.



being seen as part of the Mafwe. As a result, these were the only chieftaincies that existed during the colonial period (1909–1914).<sup>24</sup>

Early in its history, tribal identities were forged by the former colonisers. This culminated into a long-standing conflict between Masubia and Mafwe. The potential threat of a further eruption of this conflict led to the former South African colonial administration appointing in 1982 a Commission of Inquiry into the boundary dispute between the two groupings.<sup>25</sup>

Subsequently, the post-colonial Namibian State recognized the Mayeyi and Muyuni chieftaincies to the detriment of other local groups.<sup>26</sup> The division of the Mafwe into two or three separate traditional authorities was allowed, thus weakening the Mafwe khuta. This overlapped with the SWAPO/Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) political divide. The Caprivi nomenclature is said to have originated from the Anglo-German Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty of 1 July 1890 that made the territory part of German South West Africa.<sup>27</sup> Due to its remoteness from the colonial administrative capital Windhoek and lack of minerals such as diamonds, the colonial authorities, both Germans and South African, did not establish a firm presence in the area until the 1960s when the nationalist war of liberation intensified and the area became of strategic importance for the liberation movements of the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), the Caprivi African National Union (CANU) and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) in neighbouring Zambia, as well as for the South African colonial regime.<sup>28</sup> The region has a unique history compared with the rest of the former South West Africa (SWA) and Namibia. In presenting Caprivi's unique history Sidney L. Harring and Willem Odendaal comment:

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<sup>24</sup> Count Georg Leo von Caprivi was the successor of Prince Otto von Bismarck as imperial chancellor of Germany. In 1890, he was chancellor when Great Britain conceded to Germany in a treaty the land until recently (2013) called the Caprivi Region. The Zambezi Region, as it is now called, is the north-eastern extension of Namibia. Great Britain received territorial compensation in the North Sea as part of the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty. The former German Colonial State deepened its brief presence in the Caprivi Strip (Zipfel) when Captain Kurt Streitwolf, became the first imperial resident of the Caprivi at the end of 1908. He was succeeded by Lieutenant H. Kaufmann as acting Resident in 1910 and based at Schuckmannsburg – a small village named after Governor Bruno von Schuckmann. Kaufmann had a second term of office from 1911 to 1913 and was succeeded by Lieutenant Viktor von Frankenberg, from 1911 to 1913. The end of German colonial rule over Caprivi and the territory was witnessed when police units of the Allies occupied Schuckmannsburg in 1914.

<sup>25</sup> C. E. Kruger, *A History of the Caprivi*, unpubl. manuscript, 1984, National Archive of Namibia, A472.

<sup>26</sup> Bennett Kangumu and Gilbert N. Likando, "Mission education in the eastern Caprivi Strip during the colonial times, c1920s – ca1964", *Journal for Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 4 (1), 2015: 205-215.

<sup>27</sup> The then Caprivi Strip was actually the result of an Anglo-German agreement of 1 July 1890 that involved territory in Africa and Heligoland. Graf Georg L. von Caprivi was the German chancellor at the time. Great Britain conceded it so that Germany would have access to the Zambezi River and thus perhaps to the Indian Ocean.

<sup>28</sup> Bennett Kangumu, "The Caprivi African National Union (CANU): Forms of resistance", in: Jeremy Silvester, (ed.), *Re-Viewing Resistance in Namibian History*, Windhoek, UNAM Press, 2015: 148-159.

Caprivi's peoples are descendants of Zambian kingdoms, and their languages are unrelated to the other languages of Namibia. Being remote from the rest of the country, Caprivi's traditional social and political structures are stronger, and loom larger in modern development and planning. By the same token, the Namibian State and its institutions are weaker in Caprivi than in the rest of the country. While apartheid-era economies moved many Namibians to jobs in mining or commercial agriculture, a larger proportion of Caprivians remained on their own land, hence they are less dispersed around other regions of the country, and have interacted less with other Namibian peoples. East Caprivi was a remote homeland under the infamous Odendaal Plan. In the war fought for Namibia's independence, Caprivi initially had its own movement for independence, which ultimately merged with the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO). Caprivi was the poorest region of Namibia, with its average household income levels being about half of those in the rest of the country. While there are large disparities in the distribution of wealth throughout Namibia, in Caprivi region, though not everyone is poor, poverty is more widespread than it is in the rest of the country.<sup>29</sup>

Historian Bennett Kangumu conducted a comprehensive study on the contestation over Caprivian identities from pre-colonial times to the present.<sup>30</sup> He argues that the 'Caprivi identity' existed/exists and was primarily constructed by the former colonial state. During the colonial period, the colonial state treated the area differently from the rest of South West Africa (SWA). Education and health services, for example, were left to the missionaries. He further outlines how the Odendaal Commission of 1966, that established ethnic homelands for the natives in South West Africa (SWA), cemented the 'Caprivi identity' by giving the Caprivi:

A legislative council, and a government with symbols of state such as a flag, coat of arms, anthem and constitution. The study argued that this marks the fruition of Caprivi identity and the concept 'Caprivian' was coined and entered official use.<sup>31</sup>

Kangumu identifies two responses from the inhabitants of Caprivi to the 'Caprivi identity' in the colonial and post-colonial era. The first response was in the form of the rise of nationalism which saw the inhabitants partaking in the fight for independence through the formation of the Caprivi African National Union (CANU). CANU later merged with SWAPO to fight for the liberation of Namibia – a move seen by Kangumu as a rejection of isolation and irridentism. The second response, according to Kangumu, was

calls for secession from Namibia by certain 'Caprivians' in the present... [These] ...secession [calls] is a product of the South African construction of Caprivi identities that emphasized localized notions of identity formation.<sup>32</sup>

It, therefore, follows that the Caprivi always had a unique and somewhat exceptional history from the rest of South West Africa (SWA) and Namibia.

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<sup>29</sup> Harring and Odendaal, *Land Rights*: 1-3.

<sup>30</sup> Kangumu. *Contestation*.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*: iv.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*: v.

While Kangumu's reasoning has historical resonance, it has to be remembered that more recently, both the Caprivi Alliance Party-United Democratic Front alliance that participated in the independence elections of November 1989 and the then Caprivi Liberation Movement (variant Caprivi Liberation Army (CLA)), led by former Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) leader, Mishake Muyongo, politicised and re-invented older 'colonial' history and identities to serve and justify their secessionist ambitions.

Harring and Odendaal argue that it is this somewhat historical and post-independence 'exceptionalism' that underpinned the unsuccessful secession attempt of 2 August 1999, when armed insurgents attacked government institutions in an attempt to separate Caprivi from the rest of Namibia and create their own independent state.<sup>33</sup> Henning Melber makes similar Caprivi exceptionalism claims, albeit also highlighting other reasons for the attempt at secession, such as cultivation of specific identities and political agendas necessitated by the insensitivities of the central state, as additional contributing factors to the 1999 insurgency.<sup>34</sup> He particularly highlights that at the time, the local time in Caprivi was different from the rest of Namibia (the residents being one hour ahead of other parts of the country) and that such an anomaly seemingly did not concern the political elite. Melber highlights these reasons as he narrates how the uprising played out and the response of the Namibian state:

This indifference somehow changed after 2 August 1999. In the late night and early morning of the following day, organised violence against institutions of the state and its representatives caused panic and disorientation, which paralysed Namibia for a short moment. Confusion reigned when a group of armed insurgents tried to take over relevant parts of the infrastructure in Katima Mulilo in a surprise attack. As the biggest town in the eastern Caprivi region, situated close to the borders with Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana, it was an obvious strategic target. Armed people in civilian clothes stormed the police station. Fighting also erupted over the local radio station of the Namibian Broadcasting Company and for control over the Mpacha airport some 20 kilometres outside town. Armed special police units and the Namibian Defence Force responded swiftly. So did the highest representatives of the state. President Sam Nujoma declared an indefinite state of emergency in a televised speech, while the regional police commander in the Caprivi announced a curfew of between eight to 16 hours for residents of Katima Mulilo. At least 14 people, among them five policemen and three soldiers, and some insurgents and civilians caught in the fire, were killed.<sup>35</sup>

## Implications

The events of August 1999 had a wider regional geo-political context. At the time of the attack, reports circulated of Lozi in Zambia's Western Province, crossing into the former Caprivi in support of separatists who wanted to declare the region independent from

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<sup>33</sup> Harring and Odendaal, *Land Rights*.

<sup>34</sup> Melber, "One Namibia".

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.: 465. For a report on what happened at around 02h30 on 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 1999, see: Special Report by Christof Maletsky and Tangeni Amupadhi, published in *The Namibian*, August 3, 1999: 1-3.

Namibia. The leader of the Barotse Patriotic Front (BPF), Imasiku Mutangelwa, supported the separatists from his base in Lusaka, Zambia. Zambia's Western Province, also referred to as Barotseland, borders the then Caprivi region (now the Zambezi Region). Mutangelwa was thus quoted in the Post newspaper in Zambia: "The Caprivi secessionists have started a beautiful journey in the right direction because their plea for autonomy had fallen on deaf ears in the past."<sup>36</sup> A local newspaper, *New Era*, reported that three of the rebels arrested by Namibian security forces, belonged to UNITA. It was not clear whether they fought voluntarily on the side of the Caprivi Liberation Army (CLA) or under the instructions of UNITA.<sup>37</sup>

Apart from notions of a separate history and a sense of belonging alluded to above, part of the secessionist arguments centred around an agreement between CANU and SWAPO – that led to the merger between the two liberation movements – which the separatists under Muyongo asserted had, in 1964, included the agreement that after independence, Caprivi would attain separate state status.<sup>38</sup> The leaders of the separatists/dissidents fled into exile, notably the former SWAPO Vice President and DTA President Mishake Muyongo and Mafwe Chief Bonifatius Mamili who were considered to be influential leaders of both the Caprivi Liberation Movement (CLM) and the Caprivi Liberation Army (CLA).<sup>39</sup> The two leaders received political asylum first in Botswana, and later in Denmark, where they still reside. Some 2,500 inhabitants fled to neighbouring Botswana<sup>40</sup> while 143 persons were arrested with initially 115 charged with high treason and other offences. Subsequently, this number increased to 132.<sup>41</sup>

Of the initial 115 persons, 69 were charged with high treason, while 40 were charged with high treason, murder, public violence and illegal possession of fire arms and ammunition (this group included a Zambian citizen). Six were charged with high treason and sedition.<sup>42</sup> Of the 69 charged with high treason, the oldest at the time was 62 years old and the youngest 18 years old. Two of the 69 persons were granted bail of N\$ 1,000 each. The case did not come to trial until 2004.

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<sup>36</sup> Tabby Moyo, "Claims on Barotse support surface", *The Namibian*, 1999, August 4, pp. 1-2, citing a report in *The Post* newspaper, published in Lusaka, Zambia. One Zambian citizen was among those arrested and charged with high treason.

<sup>37</sup> Natasha Tibinyane, writing in *New Era*, 1999, 9-12 August, p. 1-2.

<sup>38</sup> Gretchen Bauer and Scott D. Taylor, *Politics in Southern Africa: Transition and Transformation*, London, Lynne Rienner, 2011.

<sup>39</sup> Graham Hopwood, *Guide to Namibian Politics*, Windhoek, Namibia Institute for Democracy, 2008.

<sup>40</sup> Marion Wallace with John Kinahan, *A History of Namibia*, Johannesburg, Jacana, 2011: 310.

<sup>41</sup> Melber, "One Namibia"; Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2015/16: The State of the World's Human Rights*, London, Amnesty International, 2016; Government of the Republic of Namibia and Others v Mwilima and Others, 2002 NR 235, Supreme Court of the Republic of Namibia June 07, 2002; unattributed report in *The Namibian*, Wednesday, January 26, 2000, p. 5.

<sup>42</sup> Werner Menges, "Separatist accused in court", *The Namibian*, 2000, January 25, pp. 1-2, <https://www.namibian.com.na/archive19982004/2000/January/News/accused.html>; idem, "Caprivi treason trial may face delay of up to a year", *The Namibian*, 2000, January 21, p. 5, <https://www.namibian.com.na/archive19982004/2000/January/News/may.html>

The attack on Katima Mulilo had wider political ramifications. At the time, there were reports of human rights abuses, mostly by members of the Namibian Police Force.<sup>43</sup> Twenty-five detainees brought claims amounting to more than N\$ 12 million against members of the Namibian Police Force. In their claims and affidavits, they named Sergeant Patrick Liswani, 'Oupa', 'Haipa', Regional Commander Hieronymus Goraseb and Inspector Kashawa, as being involved in the torture. It was reported that the Ministry of Defence, under whose command the Namibian Police fell during the State of Emergency, refused to hand over to the Prosecutor General the findings of a probe into allegations that police tortured suspects in the Caprivi.<sup>44</sup> The NDF regarded the matter as 'internal' and promised that the members of the police implicated in torture would face disciplinary hearings. It is not clear if such hearings actually took place or if any action was taken against the perpetrators.

It was reported in a local newspaper, that the then Minister of Defence, Erkki Nghimtina, his Home Affairs counterpart Jerry Ekandjo and Major-General Martin Shalli (Chief of Staff of the NDF) and senior police officers visited Caprivi where they met with commanders of the security forces. According to this report, the Minister of Defence admitted abuses, in the words of the minister, "We've made mistakes".<sup>45</sup> Former DTA Member of Parliament, Geoffrey Malima and another detainee were admitted to the Katima Mulilo State Hospital.<sup>46</sup>

In a related development, the then Police Inspector General Lucas Hangula, instructed the Complaints and Discipline Unit to investigate the reports of torture. Deputy Commissioner Marius Visser headed the probe. Subsequently, Visser's findings were sent to the office of the Prosecutor General for a decision. Colonel Veiko Kavungo, from the Defence Ministry's legal office, had claimed that the dockets (case documents) had been handed over to the Defence Ministry by the Police. Kavungo added:

Defence has its own jurisdiction, its own type of courts and its own way of handling disciplinary matters. We don't need to send our cases to the Prosecutor General.<sup>47</sup>

The legal advisor in the Defence Ministry, when asked to provide further details about the disciplinary process, was reported to have said: "The law does not make it mandatory to divulge such information."<sup>48</sup> Approached for comment, Clinton Light, at the

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<sup>43</sup> Chrispin Inambao, "Mwilima 'assaulted' Allegations of abuses mounting", *The Namibian*, 1999, August 10, pp. 1-2; see also Tangeni Amupadhi, "Katima nightmare Human right's abuses widespread", *The Namibian*, 1999, August 11, pp. 1-2.

<sup>44</sup> Chrispin Inambao, "Caprivi findings between Police, PG", *The Namibian*, 1999, December 15, pp. 1-2; see also idem, "Caprivi tortures 'internal matter'", *The Namibian*, 2000, March 29, pp. 1-2.

<sup>45</sup> Tangeni Amupadhi, "Govt admits abuses We've made mistakes, says Minister", *The Namibian*, 1999, August 12, pp. 1-2.

<sup>46</sup> Rajah Munamava, "Mwilima Admitted" *New Era*, 1999, August 9-12, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> Chrispin Inambao, "Caprivi tortures 'internal matter'", *The Namibian*, 2000, March 29, pp. 1-2 (2).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. It is not clear if such disciplinary hearings actually took place.

time a legal practitioner at the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) in Windhoek, said “it is for civil courts to determine the guilt or innocence of people and not court martials”.<sup>49</sup>

These violations of human rights, to which some of the suspects were subjected, including former DTA Member of Parliament, Geoffrey Mwilima, featured in a March 2000 report released by Amnesty International. In that report, Amnesty International recommended that the members of the Police implicated in the torture should be suspended pending the results of an investigation.<sup>50</sup> Again, we could not establish if Amnesty International’s recommendations were followed.

For Botswana, the threat posed to the country’s stability by the arrival of people who had fled the former Caprivi Region became evident when on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 1999 fighting broke out between the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) and Caprivi Liberation Movement (CLM) fighters inside the Dukwi refugee camp. The reported source of the conflict was the refusal by ‘hardliners’ to allow Namibians at the camp to voluntarily return to Caprivi and register for repatriation under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).<sup>51</sup>

## Response of the Namibian government

Before discussing the protracted legal issues pertaining to the August 1999 events, it should be mentioned that President Sam Nujoma visited Katima Mulilo a few days after the rebellion. Police and army units swept through the streets of Katima Mulilo prior to the president’s arrival. The President addressed a rally at the sports complex there, where he pleaded for unity, and assured those present that he had come to join them in their fight against terrorism and secessionism. He was reported as having said that the rebels not only attacked the Caprivi but the entire country. He added that Namibians believed in democracy, which also entailed freedom to organize and freedom of speech for all, including Mishake Muyongo. Nujoma reiterated the importance of national unity.<sup>52</sup> During his visit, he was briefed by among others, traditional leaders, the Governor of Caprivi, Bernhard Sibalatani, and local members of the security system.

Seen from a post-conflict perspective, the response of the Namibian state to the uprising, was not comprehensive enough. As stated earlier, the military response was swift and the insurgency was quickly suppressed during the State of Emergency. Beyond the judicial processes that followed, there was nothing else that kept the discourse on the conflict alive.

The first treason trial in the High Court in Windhoek ran from 2005 to 2007. That trial ended with 10 of the alleged conspirators being convicted of high treason and

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Denis Barnett, “Amnesty probes abuses in Nam First time since independence”, *The Namibian*, 2000, January 31, pp. 1-2.

<sup>51</sup> Unattributed report published in *New Era*, 1999, 21-24 June, p. 1-2.

<sup>52</sup> Rajah Munamava, “Mwilima Admitted”, *New Era*, 1999, August 9-12, p. 1 f.

sentenced to prison terms of either 30 or 32 years each in August 2007. The Supreme Court set aside their convictions and sent their case back to the High Court for a retrial in July 2013 after finding that the judge who presided over their first trial in the High Court should have recused himself from the matter when he was asked to do so. On the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015, the Caprivi detainees trial concluded in the Windhoek High Court. Of the 65 accused, 33 were convicted of high treason and other charges while 32 were acquitted and released.<sup>53</sup> In October 2018, acting judge Petrus Unengu, ruled that the alleged confessions made by two of the accused, who were prosecuted in the second Caprivi high treason trial, were admissible as evidence in court.<sup>54</sup> So, the treason trial continues for some of the accused some 21 years after the initial attack.

Another aspect of interest is the refusal by the state to grant legal aid to the accused. The 126 accused, were all accused of high treason launched an application in the High Court and the court eventually ordered the second appellant, the Director of Legal Aid, to appoint legal counsel for the respondents. The key legal question focussed on the enforceability of Article 95 (h) of the Constitution. Unlike the first generation of civil and political rights, social, economic and cultural rights are not entrenched in the Bill of Rights (Chapter 3). They are part of Article 95 under the Principles of State Policy (Chapter 11).

The government argued that Article 95 (h) – the right to free legal representation – unlike the basic legal right to representation in Article 12 (e), are limited to defined cases and by the resources available to the State.<sup>55</sup> The respondents argued that since the State refused to or was unable to provide legal representation in terms of Article 95 (h), the court should make a ruling in terms of Article 12 (e) – the right to legal representation to ensure a fair trial.

The Supreme Court in a highly technical ruling, eventually ruled that the State was bound by the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and its optional protocols, for it forms part of Namibian law in terms of Article 144 of the Constitution. Consequently, two of the three judges that heard the matter, ruled that the Court can instruct the State to provide legal aid, irrespective of the availability of a specific budget for such purposes.<sup>56</sup>

Looking at the attitude and the sentiments of the separatists, it becomes clear that the military crackdown and the judicial process would have little material impact in resolving the conflict. Mishake Muyongo, the leader of the separatists was quoted as saying at the height of the conflict:

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<sup>53</sup> Amnesty International, *Report 2015/16*.

<sup>54</sup> Werner Menges, “Statements ruled admissible in treason trial”, *The Namibian*, 2020, March 20, p. 6.

<sup>55</sup> *Government of the Republic of Namibia and Others v Mwilima and Others*, 2002 NR 235, Supreme Court of the Republic of Namibia June 07, 2002; see also Nico Horn, *Interpreting the Interpreters – The Namibian Constitution in the Courts*, Windhoek, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2017: 253.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*: 255.

the people in the Namibian Government should go back to school and learn about the history of the Caprivi...we are Caprivians... nobody will make Namibians out of us – not even by force.<sup>57</sup>

In retrospect, it has to be said that Muyongo did not hesitate to politicise ethnicity, culture, history and language, as a means of serving his political objectives. The same sentiments were echoed by his supporters who were on trial and questioned the jurisdiction of the Namibian courts to try them, submitting that they are not Namibians but 'Caprivians'.<sup>58</sup> One of the accused, for example, in his plea,

objected to the lack of lawful and competent title and authority of the Prosecutor-General of the Republic of Namibia, and added that the Republic of Namibia does not have majestas, law making and law enforcement authority and territorial jurisdiction in respect of the ECZ [Eastern Caprivi Zipfel].<sup>59</sup>

Thus, it becomes evident that the crux of the conflict is not merely criminal activities, the response to which was the deployment of the security apparatus to apprehend the perpetrators and hand them over to the criminal justice system. At the core of this conflict are also belonging, identity, politicised ethnicity, memory, history and contested claims to sovereignty. It is for this reason that secession sentiments still smoulder to date as will be discussed in the subsequent sections. There were, however, some interventions by the state, beyond security and judicial processes, which are worth discussing as will be done below.

Apart from the protracted judicial process, it is worth recalling that the State reinforced tribal identities when seeking prospective recruits for the Special Field Force (SFF), a police formation, in June 2000. According to a local newspaper report, about 200 prospective recruits were required to drop their application papers into boxes which were marked according to the different tribes in Caprivi, such as Mafwe, Masubia, Totela, Mayeyi, Barakwena, Mbukushu and Mbalangwe. When approached for comment about this unusual practice, Police Chief Inspector, Hophni Hamufungu, said “the the arrangement had been necessitated by tribal politics in the Caprivi”. He added, that the recruitment officers had introduced the classification of applications on tribal lines “in order to avoid problems” he did not elaborate.<sup>60</sup>

Some of the recruits were apparently unhappy with the recruitment process. One of them was quoted in the above newspaper report as having said: “This is the first time in the Caprivi that we see people being recruited on tribal lines in the police force or any other jobs for that matter.” The then Governor, Bernard Sibalatani, did not comment on the practice.

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<sup>57</sup> Brigitte Weidlich, “Muyongo hits out at Govt”, *The Namibian*, 2006, September 11, <https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28314&page=archive-read>

<sup>58</sup> Kangumu, *Contestation*.

<sup>59</sup> Plea by one of the Caprivi accused, 2014, Mimeo. Made available by the Defence Attorney (unpublished), pp. 1-3.

<sup>60</sup> Albert Sitali, reporting in *New Era*, 2000, June 2-4, pp. 1-2.



## Renaming Caprivi and standardising the time – a good beginning abandoned?

Although there have been several interventions worth mentioning since the 1999 insurgency, it is doubtful whether these interventions can be considered peacebuilding responses to the conflict. One of the notable interventions was the renaming of the region. The name Caprivi was changed in 2013, as is provided for in the constitution following the report of the 4<sup>th</sup> Delimitation Commission submitted to former President Hifikepunye Pohamba. Although the renaming of the region took place in a post-conflict era, the official justification for the renaming had nothing to do with post-conflict intervention. The key reasons advanced were decolonial interventions, that the name Caprivi is that of a German coloniser. Some in the region opposed this intervention and preferred the name to remain.<sup>61</sup> Three years before the decision was made public, discussions on a possible name change gave rise to opposition among those who favoured post-conflict reconstruction interventions as expressed by Mulife Muchali, a native from the region, who lamented:

people must stop concentrating on petty cases that only create political/tribal tension in the region. Instead, let Namibians from the Caprivi region call for ... the release of all Namibian political prisoners from the Caprivi region.<sup>62</sup>

It is important to note that, ever since, individuals such as Mulife Muchali, publicly known to be a fierce government critic, have taken a pro-government, pro-SWAPO and pro-Geingob stance on a plethora of social and political issues afflicting the country in general and the Zambezi region in particular. The region was named after a German general, Count Georg Leo von Caprivi, who served as German Chancellor between 1890 and 1894. The region was renamed with other two constituencies; Schuckmannsburg constituency (named after former governor of the then German South West Africa) was renamed to Lehonono, while Lüderitz constituency (named after German mercant Adolf Lüderitz) was renamed !Nami≠Nüs.<sup>63</sup> While this can be seen as a thoughtful contribution to forging a new identity and a social engineering attempt aimed at encouraging the inhabitants to see themselves as part of Namibia, the key basis of the discontent and secession attempts had historical and socioeconomic roots and is less grounded in decolonial sentiments. It is thus doubtful if this intervention, not unique to the Caprivi region, would have any material impact in altering the minds of the separatists and causing them to abandon their longstanding convictions. Extending on this logic, Francis Fukuyama, in his latest text titled *Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of*

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<sup>61</sup> Likando Sanyambe, "Shocked by the name change to Zambezi", *New Era*, 2013, August 30; George Sanzila, "Don't be misled by concerned Caprivians – Samupwa", *New Era*, 2013, September 17; Mulife Muchali, "Academics are victims of ignorance", *Namibian Sun*, 2013, May 6, <https://www.namibiansun.com/news/academics-are-victims-of-ignorance>

<sup>62</sup> Mulife Muchali, "Focus on issues and not Caprivi name change", *The Namibian*, 2010, January 22, <https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=61995&page=archive-read>

<sup>63</sup> Shinovene Immanuel, "Nami≠Nüs name legality challenged", *The Namibian*, 2013, August 21, <https://www.namibian.com.na/print.php?id=113193&type=2>

*Resentment* contends that protracted conflicts will continue unless we address the fact that the universal understanding of human dignity as the rise of identity politics poses a significant threat to democratic states. Furthermore, he asserts that:

Thymos is the part of the soul that craves recognition of dignity; isothymia is the demand to be respected on an equal basis with other people; while megalothymia is the desire to be recognized as superior. Modern liberal democracies promise and largely deliver a minimal degree of equal respect, embodied in individual rights, the rule of law, and the franchise. What this does not guarantee is that people in a democracy will be equally respected in practice, particularly members of groups with a history of marginalization.<sup>64</sup>

Between December 2015 and February 2016, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration held consultative meetings all over Namibia on the amendments of the Namibian Time Act of 1994 to maintain the standard time two hours in advance of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).<sup>65</sup> This law provides that during the summer period the time is set two hours ahead of GMT and again shifted one hour ahead for the winter time. As stated earlier, the Caprivi region enjoyed some historic specificity in that it did not change the time as the rest of the country was obliged to do. Pendukeni Ivala-lthana, the then Minister of Home Affairs and Immigration, stated the following on the matter in the National Assembly:

the Zambezi region gets completely cut off when the rest of the country shifts to winter time. This fact has been used by those with secessionist motives to propagate that the region belongs somewhere else than to Namibia.<sup>66</sup>

Although this appears to be a post-conflict reconstruction intervention, the minister indicated that the result of the consultation, reflects a 97% response countrywide, citing inconvenience and economic considerations, particularly as these related to the country's largest trading partner, South Africa, whose time would now be similar to Namibia with the new Namibian Time Act of 2017.<sup>67</sup> There is, therefore, sufficient evidence to suggest that 22 years since the 1999 insurgency, the state did not go significantly beyond military intervention as a response to the conflict. Despite the admission by both former Prime Minister Hage Geingob (the current President) and the then Defence Minister Erkki Nghimtina, that 'mistakes' were made and human rights violations were committed in containing the rebellion, the state limited its intervention to military action.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, the acquittal and release of 32 accused, who spent 16 years in detention, did not prompt the state to see the need to go beyond the initial military intervention in the aftermath of the conflict.

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<sup>64</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment*, London, Profile Books, 2018: 9 f.

<sup>65</sup> Esme Konstantinus, "Namibia's winter time might be repealed", *New Era*, 2017, February 23.

<sup>66</sup> Shinovene Immanuel, "Time change divides lawmakers", *The Namibian*, 2017, February 23, <https://www.namibian.com.na/161621/archive-read/Time-change-divides-lawmakers%20->

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.; Konstantinus, "Namibia's winter time".

<sup>68</sup> Melber, "One Namibia".

## Representation

The Zambezi Region had a total population of approximately 102,264.<sup>69</sup> Under the provisions of the Namibian Constitution (as amended in 2014), the 42 National Council members – the upper chamber of the country's bicameral Parliament – are chosen by regional councils, which are indirectly elected for a period of five years. Each of the 14 regional councils chooses three of its members to serve on the National Council. The last regional council elections were held on 25 November 2020.

The National Assembly is the upper chamber of the country's bicameral Parliament. Since the last constitutional amendment in 2014, it has a total of 104 members. Ninety-six (96) members are directly elected through a system of closed list proportional representation and serve five-year terms. Eight additional members, without voting rights, are appointed by the President. At the time of writing, the Zambezi region is represented by 8 members.

Following the National Assembly and Presidential elections in November 2019, there are two ministers from the Zambezi Region, one holding the portfolio for Fisheries and Marine Resources and the other for Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare. The current Director-General of the Namibia Central Intelligence Services, Benedictus Likando, hails from the Zambezi Region. For a region that constitutes four percent of the Namibian population,<sup>70</sup> it is worth noting that people from the Zambezi region occupy quite a number of strategic positions within the structures of government institutions. In addition to the above-mentioned portfolios, the following positions are occupied by individuals from the Zambezi region (predominantly male and from the Masubia tribe), Secretary to Cabinet, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Namibia, the Executive Director in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the Executive Director in the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Environmental Investment Fund. Furthermore, there is representation from the region in other key state institutions such as the Meat Corporation of Namibia (CEO), the Namibian Agronomic Board (CEO), the National Youth Service (Commissioner), and the Namibia Financial Institutions Supervisory Authority (CEO) amongst other prominent appointments. For its population of approximately 2,5 million (2018), Namibia has an Executive (cabinet) comprising of 40 members. Of these, 17 are deputy ministers. The Zambezi Region is well represented within the primary public institutions of the country.

It is also important to point out, that since 2005, regional governors have been appointed by the president. This move detracted from the policy of decentralisation (and initially violated a provision in the constitution). While there is legal recognition of the customary in contemporary Namibia, regional councils and especially, governors, are expected to follow the policy directives of the Executive. While limited forms of meaningful decentralisation have to a degree territorialized conceptions of belonging,

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<sup>69</sup> Government of the Republic of Namibia, *Namibia National Population Census*, Windhoek, National Statistics Agency, 2018: 4.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

regions are heavily dependent on the central state for their resources and political direction. As a unitary state, firmly under the grip of an executive president and a dominant party, the political space for regional councils is rather confined. For all intents and purposes, it is the politics of the centre that counts.

In the domain of infrastructure, the Zambezi Region has benefited in two key respects: First, the opening of the Trans-Caprivi Highway in 1999, and secondly, the completion of the Sesheke Bridge over the Zambezi River in 2004. Both of these developments have benefited the people of the Region and made their access to the rest of Namibia and to Zambia much easier. The Walvis Bay-Ndola-Lubumbashi Development Road (previously Trans-Caprivi Corridor and until 2004 Trans-Caprivi Highway) opened in 1999 and runs from Rundu in the Eastern Kavango, along the former Caprivi Strip (now Zambezi) as the B8 road to Katima Mulilo on the banks of the Zambezi River, which forms the border between Namibia and Zambia. The Katima Mulilo Bridge spans the river to the Zambian town of Sesheke from where the recently upgraded paved road runs to Livingston, joining the main north-south highway to Lusaka.

The upgrading of the former Trans-Caprivi Highway, was funded by the African Development Bank (ADB) to the tune of US\$ 974,277 under the ADBs Project Funding regime. The objectives of the project were to reduce vehicle operating costs, and also stimulate agricultural production and exports from Zambezi.<sup>71</sup> The proximity of a transnational road transport corridor, supermarkets full of unaffordable products and luxury lodges are hardly going to make the majority population of Caprivi feel included in the Namibian nation-building project. Social unrest along the corridor route, recurring natural disasters and a powder keg mixture of epidemic disease and illegal cross-border migration – these are all plausible scenarios for Caprivi's future with precedents in the recent past.

In terms of the social and spatial economy of the region, research published by the National Planning Commission in 2011, a decade after the 1999 uprising, shows that Zambezi in common with six other regions (Otjozondjupa, Oshikoto, Omusati, Ohangwena, Kunene and Kavango) had poverty incidences that were above the national rate of 26.9 percent.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, in both 2001 and 2011, the spatial distribution of poverty indicates that in certain parts of the Region, the upper bound poverty line was 39.3 per cent.<sup>73</sup> The Zambezi Region recorded an increase of 7.2 percent in the incidence of poverty over the 2001 to 2011 period. Indeed by 2011, the incidence of poverty in Zambezi was comparable to the reported poverty incidence in the Ohangwena and Oshikoto regions.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Zeller and Kangumu, "Caprivi".

<sup>72</sup> Government of the Republic of Namibia, *Namibia Poverty Mapping*, Windhoek, National Planning Commission, 2011: 12.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*: 13.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*: 15.

In 2011, when the research by the National Planning Commission (NPC) was conducted, poverty was the highest in Kongola and Sibbinda constituencies at 58 and 55 percent, respectively and lowest in Katima Mulilo Urban constituency at 17 percent.<sup>75</sup> Notwithstanding, significant development and social investment since then, Zambezi continues to have constituencies with higher than the national average of severe poverty of 16 percent (2019).

The socio-economic status and land claims of the Khwe San community, mostly in the western part of the (West Caprivi) Zambezi Region, is another dimension within the socio-economic realm. The admirable and carefully-contextualized study by Taylor, published in 2012, shed light on the relations between the Khwe San, the Mbukushu Traditional Authority, NGOs and the State.<sup>76</sup> The study showed how the West Caprivi became part of Namibia's influential Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme in the area.

Taylor's research showed how the NGO interventions that brought CBNRM and notion of 'indigenous rights' to West Caprivi often differentiated between Khwe and Mbukushu, and privileged the former, even if inadvertently. Khwe interests in forming a conservancy in the mid-1990s, supported by NGOs and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), created explicit contestations, notably between Khwe leaders, Khwe involved with NGOs and the Mbukushu Chief Mbambo. These later escalated as a result of Chief Mbambo's attempts to exercise authority over prime land on the Kavango River in the late 1990s, and Khwe endeavours to have their chief recognised by the government.<sup>77</sup>

The policy of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) has brought some real benefits to the people of Zambezi. The region has a number of conservancies, among these, Balyerwa, Bamunu, Dzoti, Impalila, Kabulabula, Kasika, Mashi and Mayuni. The Impalila and Sikunga Conservancies (the latter on the Zambezi River) are Marine Protected Areas (MPA) or as they are locally called, Fish Protection Areas (FPA) that form part of the larger KAZA protected area. At Sikunga, each of the protected river channels is over 12 km long and together they represent a major commitment to protecting the fish breeding stocks.<sup>78</sup> Overfishing, however, remains a real problem, also at Impalila Island.

The Zambezi Region also has a number a registered community forests, such as Bukalo, Kwandu, Lubuta, Masida and Sikanjabuka. Collectively, these community forests create local employment and contribute significantly towards protecting the biodiversity of the

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.: 18.

<sup>76</sup> Julie J. Taylor, *Naming the Land. San Identity and Community Conservation in Namibia's West Caprivi*, Basel, Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 2012.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.: 193; see also: Ina Orth, "Identity as dissociation: The Khwe's struggle for land in West Caprivi", in Thekla Hohmann, (ed.), *San and the State: Contesting Land, Development, Identity and Representation*, Köln, Köppe, 2003: 121-160.

<sup>78</sup> Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisation, *The State of Community Conservation in Namibia. A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and other CBNRM Initiatives. Annual Report 2013*, Windhoek, Meinert, 2013: 15.

region.<sup>79</sup> Meaningful post-conflict reconstruction would require that the land rights and culture of the Khwe San, mostly in the western part of Zambezi, be meaningfully addressed.

In the field of agriculture, beyond forestry, there have been a number of significant developments. These include: Mahangu, also known as pearl millet, is the staple food crop produced by the majority of the population in the Zambezi region. The grading standards for Mahangu grain were gazetted in June 2000 and serve as a guideline for buyers and sellers of Mahangu and Mahangu products. These standards conform to international standards. Under the Integrated Strategic Storage facilities for grain a sizeable silo has been constructed at Katima Mulilo with a capacity of 5,400 tons. In 1991 the government established the Namibia Early Warning and Food Information Unit (NEWU). Every year it conducts a preliminary household food security assessment during January/February and during April/May to establish cereal crop production forecasts. Zambezi is included in such annual assessments.<sup>80</sup>

The government also controls migratory pests like locusts and army worms in all 14 regions. This year, locusts destroyed approximately 500 ha of crops in Zambezi. Moreover, the government provides fertilizers in the seven crop growing regions of the country, of which Zambezi is one. The government also provides ploughing and weeding services on a limited scale. In Zambezi, the Conservation Agriculture Technology was piloted from 2006 to 2009. A total of 1,500 farmers received training, with about 20% of the trained farmers having adopted the conservation technology. With conservation agriculture practices, farmers, on average, were able to increase their maize yield from 0.6 mt/ha to 4.5 mt/ha and cowpeas yield from 0.8 mt/ha to 2.1 mt/ha.<sup>81</sup>

In late September 2020, the former MEATCO abattoir at Katima Mulilo, reopened under new management. This facility slaughters 1,200 cattle per month and employs 30 people. The region has a cattle population of some 130,000. Elsewhere, states have addressed and approached the aftermath of similar conflicts by engaging in several post-conflict peacebuilding mechanisms. In the north-eastern region of India that has experienced conflict with several armed movements demanding secession or limited autonomy, the Indian government did not limit its intervention to actions by security forces and judicial processes. The government engaged in several peacebuilding initiatives such as 'Surrender and Rehabilitation' packages for individual members of the armed groups to be reintegrated into society; creating autonomous tribal governance institutions within regional structures and other measures such as the inclusion of local civil society organizations in peacebuilding efforts. These measures were seen as successful in not only reducing direct violence but also in preventing conflict escalation

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid.: 82 f.

<sup>80</sup> Government of the Republic of Namibia, *A Visionary Nation of the Move towards 2030*, Windhoek, Office of the Prime Minister, 2010: 169.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.: 173.

and reoccurrence.<sup>82</sup> Similar peacbuilding initiatives, beyond military and judicial processes, have also been applied to the violent conflict related to succession in the pacific Island of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea where local capacities were developed to solve local problems that fuelled the conflict.<sup>83</sup> The same peacbuilding approach was also implemented in the Niger Delta region, including amnesty programmes, where the secession sentiments took hold because of the disproportionate share of oil rents and corruption.<sup>84</sup>

On the African continent, the case of Tanzania (the incorporation/co-existence of Tanganyika and Zanzibar) remains a noble case in studying conflict resolution relating to territoriality.<sup>85</sup> Namibia did not follow these peacbuilding paths. Instead, it chose the same path as taken during the Biafra conflict in Nigeria where military intervention was the only response and as a result, the secession sentiments still remain today.<sup>86</sup> It is, therefore, understandable that secession sentiments and simmering conflict in Caprivi (Zambezi) still remain, and may be reignited in future. Illuminating on the above, Stephen Walt postulates that

nations have incentives to obtain their own state and states have incentives to foster a common national identity in their populations. Taken together, these twin dynamics create a long-term trend in the direction of more and more independent nation-states.<sup>87</sup>

The political mantra of 'One Namibia, One Nation' continues to resonate amongst the political elite as they continue to manufacture an artificial national identity predicated on the belief that the country's various ethnic and racial groups are united and committed towards fostering cultural diversity and national unity.

## Discontent, tribalism and lingering secession sentiments

Political allegiance in Caprivi/Zambezi has changed over the years, making it difficult to make generalizations that used to hold in the past; historically, the Caprivi secession

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<sup>82</sup> Samrat Sinha, "The strategic use of peace: Non-state armed groups and subnational peacbuilding mechanisms in northeastern India", *Democracy and Security*, 13 (4), 2017: 273-303.

<sup>83</sup> Volker Boege, "How to maintain peace and security in a post-conflict hybrid political order – The case of Bougainville", *Journal of International Peacekeeping*, 14 (3), 2010: 330-352.

<sup>84</sup> Daniel Egiegba Agbiboa and Benjamin Maiangwa, "Corruption in the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta in Nigeria", *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 5 (8), 2012: 108-132; Adediran Daniel Ikuomola, "Initiatives of oil producing communities and the dynamics of conflict and peace building in the Niger Delta", *Journal of Conflictology*, 4 (1), 2013: 34-43.

<sup>85</sup> Issa G. Shivji, *Pan-Africanism or Pragmatism: Lessons of Tanganyika-Zanzibar Union*, Dar es Salaam, Mkuki na Nyota, 2008.

<sup>86</sup> Chinua Achebe, *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*, New York, Penguin Press, 2012; V. Mudimbe, "Reading there was a country: A personal history of Biafra", *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 48 (6), 2013: 671-682; Kevin O'Sullivan, "Back to BIAFRA", *History Ireland*, 25 (3), 2017: 16-17.

<sup>87</sup> Stephen M. Walt, "Nationalism Rules", *Foreign Policy*, 2011, July 15, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/07/15/nationalism-rules/>

movement was linked to the opposition party, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) (now the Popular Democratic Movement [PDM]) and the Mafwe tribe. This understanding is given credibility by the involvement, and the subsequent flight of the Mafwe Chief Boniface Mamili with the former leader of the secession movement Mishake Muyongo.<sup>88</sup> The Masubia tribe has been generally linked to the ruling party, SWAPO. Harring and Odendaal elaborate:

The uprising was instigated by members of the Mafwe ethnic group, which generally supports the opposition party, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA). The other major ethnic group in Caprivi, the Masubia, generally supports SWAPO. This ethnic rivalry has a political impact across Caprivi as the government is seen to be more supportive of Masubia interests than of Mafwe interests. To this day there are deep feelings of enmity between these two peoples.<sup>89</sup>

These observations are not limited to outsiders such as Harring and Odendaal. In 2012, Charles Siyauya, then a youth leader from Caprivi, passionately wrote in a national newspaper calling for an Anti-Tribalism Movement (ATM) that would unite the two tribes. His passionate plea fell on deaf ears:

Let us go back into history and copy the good / hard times when Mr Mishake Muyongo (Mafwe) and Cde Brendan Simbwaye (Subia) could [sit] together and plan about CANU, the golden days when our Traditional Chief were able to visit each other as one people. This is our time and the future is ours. We need to change the minds of some of our elders who are highly intoxicated with tribalism. The growing line of animosity between Mafwes and Masubias must be solved by Mafwes and Masubias themselves. As such I propose a Joint Regional Conference to talk about tribalism, its manifestation and how best we can expose hostile elements who brew tribalism within our community. The regional conference resolutions could mount a more ATM concrete programme of action for a better Caprivi for a better future. Let us decide on the date, time and venue of the proposed Anti-Tribalism Movement Regional Conference in Caprivi.<sup>90</sup>

Three years after Siyauya's expression of concern at the extent of tribal animosity in Caprivi/Zambezi, the conflict escalated leading when one of the local authority councillors from the Mafwe tribe was reported, in a widely distributed audio recording that was also reported in mainstream media, to have convened a meeting with the Mafwe youth, laying out the strategy for taking over SWAPO in the region and discouraging the youth from entering into 'romantic relationships' with the Masubia.<sup>91</sup> Despite Siyauya's unheeded calls, the voices from the Caprivi/Zambezi for intervention in the latent discontent and tribalism did not end. George Mayumbelo, also from Caprivi/Zambezi, made similar calls. He was responding to remarks attributed to Martin

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<sup>88</sup> Hopwood, *Guide*; Bauer and Taylor, *Politics*.

<sup>89</sup> Harring and Odendaal, *Land Rights*: 3 f.

<sup>90</sup> Charles Siyauya, "Let us fight tribalism", SWAPO Party, 2012, May 16, para. 12, [http://www.swapoparty.org/let\\_us\\_fight\\_tribalism.html](http://www.swapoparty.org/let_us_fight_tribalism.html)

<sup>91</sup> Unattributed article, "Pro-secessionist group consults sangoma", *New Era*, 2016, April 29.



Limbo, then Chief Executive Officer of Bukalo, the headquarters of the Masubuiya, against the Mafwe tribe. Mayumbelo asked:

It is unacceptable that an individual is given so much time and space to freely and repeatedly insult, provoke and threaten with violence a whole tribe and ethnic group, as the chief executive officer of Bukalo Village Council has repeatedly done. To expect that the Mafwe tribe, who were grossly insulted must be the ones that must now lay criminal charges, take revenge, or retributive action against the culprit is to be uncaring, unconcerned and an affirmation that we do not share in the value of a united Namibian nation, in which no one feels left behind. Apathy and inaction is [sic] a gift to tribal playmakers and, therefore, not an option. Equally there is no time to massage tribalists and racists – we must deal with them resolutely! Our nation will thrive if we sincerely promote dialogue and conflict resolution. A civic education that changes the mindset and that inculcates our values of solidarity, justice, freedom, love and loyalty to our country and people is imperative in our education system.<sup>92</sup>

As was the case with Siyauya in 2012, whose peacebuilding plea fell on deaf ears, Mayumbelo's 2016 calls against "apathy", "inaction" and for the promotion of "dialogue and conflict resolution" and also for "civic education that changes the mindset" did not attract any local or official response, or practical intervention, from the authorities. While these aspects may be confused with mere conflicts that characterise any society, it must be emphasized that the political environment and the circumstances are not dramatically different from those that preceded the secession attempt. If these cases hold little value in furthering the argument that failure to intervene with a peacebuilding approach in the Caprivi conflict has led to the core sentiments and the tensions remaining unresolved, perhaps other interventions need to be explored. Whatever intervention is sought, it is prudent to acknowledge the pivotal value of peacebuilding as part of the overarching conflict resolution field and that there must be ethical considerations which are responsive to the needs of those communities that are earmarked for peacebuilding projects.<sup>93</sup> Put differently, any peacebuilding initiatives should reflect a hybrid discourse that is based on "people to people, peacebuilding from below, and civil society-led discourses".<sup>94</sup> Any form of elite-driven peacebuilding projects will have a detrimental impact as a consequence of the asymmetrical nature of the conflict. The Namibian state, via the various organs of the state, will be unable to develop cultures of peace aimed at fostering genuine peace as the affected communities perceive them to be instruments of oppression which they have explicitly denounced and refused to recognize.

In 2016, the state-owned newspaper, *New Era*, reported to have been in possession of an audio-recording by a pro-secessionist group expressing the same sentiments as those that seemingly justified the 1999 separatist movement. The paper quoted the

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<sup>92</sup> George Mayumbelo, "Tribalism in Namibia: a vice to be fought", *New Era*, 2016, June 10, para. 9.

<sup>93</sup> Timothy Murithi and Nigel Dower, *The Ethics of Peacebuilding*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2008.

<sup>94</sup> Ramsbotham et al., *Conflict*: 273.

Inspector General of the Namibian Police, Lt. General Sebastian Ndeitunga, confirming his knowledge of the group by stating the following:

We have been working hard to make sure that if they continue with the idea of Caprivi secession, to dismember the Republic of Namibia, they will face the same fate like those ones who were in court or are now behind bars.<sup>95</sup>

In 2018, the Namibian Police in the Zambezi region arrested five leaders of the Caprivi Concerned Group (CCG) – a group affiliated to the separatists and said to be in contact with Mishake Muyongo in Denmark. They were charged with sedition.<sup>96</sup> What emerges clearly is that while the state successfully suppressed the insurgency in 1999, it has not successfully dealt with the key concerns that led to the insurgency. It is for this reason that the irredentist sentiments and latent conflict continue in the region to date. There has been no meaningful attempt at peacebuilding beyond renaming the region and standardising the time – measures which were in any case a result of other national economic and political considerations. This is despite the repeated calls by concerned residents for dialogue and other local peace-building efforts.

## Conclusion

At the time of writing, Henning Melber was bemoaning the fact that despite the Caprivi conflict having been the first domestic military challenge to the integrity and sovereignty of the newly-independent state, necessitating the first state of emergency in an independent Namibia, there was precious little research on the case.<sup>97</sup> Melber argued that most studies either avoided the subject or touched on it only in passing. This article, while affirming Melber's key concerns, seeks not only to make a contribution to the limited literature on this conflict but attempts to go beyond the descriptive historical narratives of the conflict.

Boundaries, states and societies are mutually constitutive. Such boundaries are not impervious, and while the state itself, through its judicial system, presented itself as the final arbiter of which rules of conduct should take precedence, courts rarely appreciate the social formations and notions of belonging that have been punctuated by a long history of boundary disputes. This goes to the very heart of citizenship and the construction of national identity and given the cultural, linguistic and historic affinity between the region and neighbouring Botswana and Zambia, citizenship has in the minds of some citizens a transnational dimension, especially if a region, like Zambezi, shares borders with other countries with sizeable populations that share a common culture, language and history. Formal peace and formal citizenship are indeed necessary conditions for stability and unity in the region and the country, but may not be sufficient conditions for achieving social peace and social citizenship.

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<sup>95</sup> New Era, "Ndeitunga yet to study pro-secessionist video", *New Era*, 2016, May 9, para. 17.

<sup>96</sup> NAMPA, "Caprivi 'agitators' arrested", *Namibian Sun*, 2018, July 10.

<sup>97</sup> Melber, "One Namibia".

Notwithstanding that the majority of the 102,264 citizens in the Zambezi region voted for the SWAPO Party of Namibia in the November 2019 elections, it does not follow that state borders hold the same meaning for every citizen residing in the region. Various questions need to be asked and answered. Among these: to what degree do state borders encase the mechanisms that make the decisive rules governing citizens' lives and to what extent do they give way to other local rule makers? To what extent does the Namibian State circumscribe the communities to which citizens feel attached and to what extent does it intersect with other communities of belonging?

The very construct and construction of national identity in the country needs to be examined in the context and aftermath of the 1999 conflict. In essence, the Namibian path to nationhood was to proclaim borders to fit existing linguistic and cultural populations and to embody that in the constitution. Historically and politically this has been attempted through the politics of national reconciliation and an emphasis on unity. The mantras of 'unity in diversity' and of 'One Namibia, one Nation' provided the language of justification. Contrary to the views of some nationalists in the governing party, 'nations' are not biological entities that have existed since time immemorial; they are socially constructed and 'deconstructed' from the bottom up and from the top down. Those doing the construction can deliberately shape identities to suit people's characteristics and habits. Perhaps more pointedly is Benedict Anderson's assertion that 'nations' are 'imagined communities' where complete strangers recognize and acknowledge each other because they share a common language, culture, norms, beliefs, territory and perhaps a common historical narrative.<sup>98</sup> Viewed in this way, the distinct ethnic morphology (the form and structure of the various ethnic groups) of the Zambezi region provides an environment that makes it difficult for peacebuilding projects to be initiated. However, approaches were developed representing what A.B. Fetherston called anti-hegemonic, counter-hegemonic and post-hegemonic peacebuilding projects, and what Nordstrom referred to as "counter lifeworld constructs" that challenge the "cultures of violence".<sup>99</sup> Complementary to this is what the above author conceptualises as a 'transformative and cosmopolitan' model offering a reconstructed variant of peace building.

In concrete terms, the Namibian government should grant amnesty to all the persons, including Mishake Muyongo, who were involved in the 1999 uprising. Based on the notion of reasonableness, the protracted trial should be concluded as a matter of urgency. Furthermore, the policy of decentralisation should be embellished and implemented to allow for meaningful autonomy of the region. The regional governor ought to be directly elected by the voters of the region.

The nexus between decentralisation and regional development is an important one. The admirable study by Joshua Bernard Forrest notes that:

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<sup>98</sup> Stephen M. Walt, "You can't defeat nationalism, so stop trying", *Foreign Policy*, 2019, June 4, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/04/you-cant-defeat-nationalism-so-stop-trying/>

<sup>99</sup> Fetherston, *Theory*; Carolyn Nordstrom, *The Paths to Domination, Resistance, and Terror*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1992: 270; Ramsbotham et al, *Conflict*: 275.

As a consequence of the history of apartheid in Namibia, the notion of a regional division of power or regional political structures carries a negative, pro-apartheid connotation for most post-independence government officials and for most Namibian citizens.<sup>100</sup>

Joshua Bernard Forrest comes to the conclusion that it was unclear whether any kind of meaningful decentralisation was intended:

The policy outputs regarding the creation of regional institutions in Namibia during the 1989-90 Constituent Assembly do not make clear whether the government had in fact adopted a policy of decentralisation.<sup>101</sup>

In a seminal study on decentralisation in Namibia, Graham Hopwood argued, that:

Despite the progress made in the five years since the Decentralisation Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2000) came before parliament, significant impediments remain in the way of decentralisation. One of the main problems, which is referred to in almost all the official literature about decentralisation, is the lack of cooperation from ministries.<sup>102</sup>

Hopwood also wrote about the political considerations that limit the power of regional councils, that limit regional councillors working for improvement in their constituencies and regions and the problems relating to governance at regional level.<sup>103</sup>

Based on the poverty profile of the region, significantly more social investment in youth empowerment, education and the agro-industry, among others, must be made by government and other local and foreign investors.

The key and almost unique contribution of this article is its emphasis on revisiting the state's responsibility and questioning its approach to the conflict, to citizenship, nation-building and to the spatial logics of the region. The Namibian state is aware that secession sentiments and some of the issues that fueled the conflict remain. That the state has done little, if anything of substance, in preventing the conflict from reoccurring or escalating is worrying. In this article, the publicised concerns of younger leaders from the region calling for peacebuilding and post-conflict transformation, are echoed. These voices have unfortunately gone unheeded, if not unnoticed, having been heard in mainstream media. The consequences of the peacebuilding deficit in Caprivi/Zambezi have fueled inter-tribal tensions in the region. The country in general and the region in particular, therefore, remain vulnerable to the enduring legacies of the 1999 insurgency.

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<sup>100</sup> Joshua Bernard Forrest, *Namibia's Post-Apartheid Regional Institutions: The Founding Year*, Rochester, University of Rochester Press, 1998: 4.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*: 8.

<sup>102</sup> Graham Hopwood, "Regional development and decentralisation" in: Henning Melber, (ed.), *Transitions in Namibia Which Changes for Whom?*, Uppsala, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2007: 173-189 (183).

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

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