



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

An Analysis of State-led Reconciliation Processes: The Case of Zimbabwe

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Year of Submission: 2018

DECLARATION

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of **Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies**, in the Graduate Programme in **Social Sciences**, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

I, **Moses Tofa**, declare that;

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Date: **21 March 2018**

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Signature:



DEDICATION

To my son, Anogonaishe Amity Tofa and my daughter, Akudzweishe Entire Tofa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge that this study would not have been possible without the support which I received from different people and institutions. First and foremost, I would like to thank God for taking me through my academic journey. It surely was not a journey for the faint-hearted. It was a long, hard, and tortuous haul. I have tottered and faltered along the way but God gave me the strength, faith, vision, knowledge, and hope with which I soldiered on despite the odds which were stacked against me. The major lesson which have I learnt from this journey is that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all (Ecclesiastes 9:11). Although I am not yet there, I believe that from where I stand, I can see the mountain top.

Second, my deepest thanks go to my supervisor, Dr Candice Moore for the unwavering effort, attention, support, and commitment which she invested in my studies. I feel so proud and privileged to have been supervised by Dr Moore. Third, I would like to thank my wife, Rejoice Makaudze, and my children, Anogonaishe Amity Tofa and Akudzweishe Entire Tofa. You have been there for me. Your inspiration, love, and support is bottomless. Fourth, I would like to thank my brother, Dr Eliot Tofa, for showing me the way. I would not have gone this far without your inspiration and support. Fifth, I would like to thank my mother, Maria Murimba. You are the pillar and may God give you long life and good health. Sixth, I want to thank my siblings and my in-laws for their kindness, love, and support. Seventh, I want to thank Bishops Gary Skhosana and Bishops Richie and Anyway Chingwete for their prayers, inspiration, and spiritual and material support. I also want to thank Action Chapel International (Cape Town branch) for giving me material and spiritual support during the course of my studies. Eighth, I want to thank the African Leadership Centre for supporting me throughout the course of my studies. In particular, I want to thank Professor Funmi Olonisakin. You are a reservoir of inspiration to me. Ninth, I want to thank my brother, Calvin Bruce, for always making me believe that I will fly. Finally, I want to thank all the people who took their precious time to participate in the interviews and focus group discussions. Your views made this study possible. May God bless **you abundantly!**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	<i>i</i>
Dedication.....	<i>ii</i>
Acknowledgements.....	<i>iii</i>
Table of contents.....	<i>iv</i>
Acronyms.....	<i>viii</i>
Abstract.....	<i>ix</i>
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY.....	1
1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM.....	3
1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	4
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS.....	5
1.5 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	6
1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW	6
1.6.1 Why healing and reconciliation is needed in Zimbabwe?.....	6
1.6.2 Why reconciliation failed?	7
1.6.3 Civil society and reconciliation.....	9
1.6.4 The church and reconciliation.....	12
1.6.5 Traditional leadership and reconciliation	14
1.6.6 The regional and the international community and reconciliation	15
1.6.7 The affected communities and reconciliation	16
1.7 Gaps in the existing literature	17
1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	19
1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	21
1.10 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY	23
1.11 CONCLUSION	25
CHAPTER 2: EXAMINING THE FACES OF RECONCILIATION.....	26
2.1 INTRODUCTION	26
2.2 WHAT IS RECONCILIATION?	27
2.3 RETRIBUTIVE VERSUS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE.....	28
2.4 HEALING, FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION	31
2.5 TRUTH COMMISSIONS.....	32
2.5.1 What are Truth Commissions and what is their mandate?	33
2.5.2 What are the strengths of Truth Commissions?	34
2.5.3 What are the weaknesses of Truth Commissions?	35
2.6 AMNESTY.....	38
2.6.1 Advantages of amnesty.....	38
2.6.2 Disadvantages of amnesty	39
2.7 REPARATIONS.....	40
2.8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, APOLOGY, AND MEMORIALISATION	43
2.9 INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS.....	44

2.10	LOCAL AND TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO RECONCILIATION.....	45
2.11	STATE-LED AND COMMUNITY-CENTRED RECONCILIATION PROCESSES	45
2.12	CONCLUSION	46
CHAPTER 3:	THE ONE-PARTY STATE AGENDA AND CONFLICT	48
3.1	INTRODUCTION	48
3.2	WHAT IS A ONE-PARTY STATE?	48
3.3	BACKGROUND TO THE ONE-PARTY STATE AGENDA	49
3.4	MECHANISMS THROUGH WHICH THE ONE-PARTY STATE AGENDA WAS PURSUED	52
3.4.1	State-party conflation and the use of violence against the opposition	52
3.4.2	The patriotic history narrative	54
3.4.3	The monopolisation of state resources	55
3.4.4	Monopolisation of the public media	55
3.4.5	Manipulation of the election management body	56
3.4.6	The centralisation of power in the office and person of the president	57
3.5	<i>GUKURAHUNDI</i> AND THE ONE-PARTY STATE AGENDA.....	58
3.5.1	The eruption of dissident activities.....	58
3.5.2	Who were the dissidents?.....	59
3.5.3	The dissident problem: an opportunity for the one-party state agenda?	60
3.5.4	The discovery of arms caches and its aftermath.....	61
3.5.5	Interrogating the abuses which were committed during Gukurahundi	62
3.6	THE FALL OF THE ONE-PARTY STATE AGENDA	63
3.7	CONCLUSION	65
CHAPTER 4:	CHAPTER 4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STATE-LED AND COMMUNITY-CENTRED RECONCILIATION PROCESSES IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY OF THE <i>UZUMBA MARAMBA</i> PFUNGWE DISTRICT. 67	
4.1	INTRODUCTION	67
4.2	THE NATURE OF ATROCITIES WHICH WERE COMMITTED IN THE UMP DISTRICT	68
4.2.1	Atrocities which were committed during the independence struggle	68
4.2.2	Atrocities which were committed in the post-2000 period.....	69
4.3	THE HEALING AND RECONCILIATION NEEDS OF THE <i>UZUMBA MARAMBA</i> PFUNGWE DISTRICT ..	71
4.3.1	The need to re-build relations	71
4.3.2	Memorialisation and the Need to “appease the spirits of dead victims”	72
4.3.3	The need for reparations	74
4.3.4	The need to prosecute perpetrators.....	74
4.3.5	The need to de-politicize traditional leadership structures.....	75
4.3.6	The need for truth-telling	76
4.3.7	The need for psychological healing.....	76
4.4	THE UMP DISTRICT’S VIEWS OF THE ACTORS WHO SHOULD DRIVE RECONCILIATION PROCESSES.	77

4.4.1	Individuals and families.....	77
4.4.2	Civil society.....	77
4.4.3	The government.....	79
4.4.4	Other countries/the international community	79
4.4.5	The church and community/traditional leaders	80
4.5	STATE-LED RECONCILIATION PROCESSES AND THE UMP DISTRICT	80
4.5.1	National independence and the policy of reconciliation	80
4.5.2	The ONHRI’s reconciliation processes and the UMP district.	83
4.6	COMMUNITY-BASED RECONCILIATION PROCESSES IN THE UMP DISTRICT	84
4.7	CONCLUSION	86
CHAPTER 5: THE UNITY ACCORD AND RECONCILIATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE <i>MATOBO</i> COMMUNITY		88
5.1	INTRODUCTION	88
5.2	WHAT IS THE UNITY ACCORD?	89
5.3	WHAT WERE THE SUCCESSES OF THE UNITY ACCORD?	93
5.4	WHAT ARE THE FAILURES OF THE UNITY ACCORD?	93
5.4.1	The improper burial of Gukurahundi victims	94
5.4.2	The Unity Accord and silence.....	95
5.4.3	The Unity Accord and a culture of impunity	98
5.4.4	The Unity Accord and the need for reparations	98
5.4.5	The Unity Accord and institutional reforms.....	100
5.5	RESPONSES TO THE FAILURES OF THE UNITY ACCORD	101
5.5.1	The rise of Ndebele Nationalism.....	101
5.5.2	The Unity Accord after the death of Joshua Nkomo.....	103
5.6	CONCLUSION	105
CHAPTER 6: RECONCILIATION UNDER THE ORGAN FOR NATIONAL HEALING, RECONCILIATION AND INTEGRATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE BIKITA EAST AND BIKITA WEST COMMUNITIES		106
6.1	INTRODUCTION	106
6.2	BACKGROUND TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ONHRI	107
6.3	THE NATURE OF VIOLATIONS IN BIKITA EAST AND WEST	109
6.4	THE RECONCILIATION NEEDS IN BIKITA EAST AND WEST	114
6.4.1	Reparations	114
6.4.2	Acknowledgement, apologies, and truth-telling.....	114
6.4.3	De-politicisation of security institutions and traditional leadership structures	114
6.4.4	Prosecution of perpetrators.....	115
6.5	WHY THE ONHRI FAILED	115
6.5.1	Unclear mandate.....	115
6.5.2	Exclusion of the affected communities.....	116
6.5.3	Colliding political interests of GPA parties.....	116

6.5.4	Continuities in the cultures of violence, intolerance, and impunity.....	118
6.5.5	Continuities in the culture of denial.....	119
6.6	CONCLUSION	119
CHAPTER 7: CIVIL SOCIETY AND RECONCILIATION PROCESSES IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY OF THE CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE		
7.1	INTRODUCTION	121
7.2	THE CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE IN ZIMBABWE: A BACKGROUND	122
7.3	INTERVENTIONS BY THE CCJP	124
7.3.1	Interventions during the Liberation Struggle.....	125
7.3.2	Interventions from 1980 to 2000.....	125
7.3.3	Interventions in the post-2000 period.....	127
7.4	A CASE STUDY OF THE CCJP'S MASVINGO DIOCESE INTERVENTIONS IN NYIKA	128
7.4.1	Challenges to CCJP's interventions in the Nyika community.....	130
7.5	CONCLUSION	131
CHAPTER 8: FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION		
8.1	INTRODUCTION	133
8.2	DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	133
8.3	HOW CAN RECONCILIATION BE ACHIEVED IN ZIMBABWE?	139
8.3.1	Prosecutions.....	139
8.3.2	Institutional reforms	141
8.3.3	A Truth Commission?	142
8.3.4	Reparations	144
8.3.5	Memorialisation and reburials.....	145
8.4	WHO SHOULD DRIVE THE RECONCILIATION AGENDA IN ZIMBABWE?.....	146
8.4.1	The government.....	147
8.4.2	Civil society.....	147
8.4.3	Grassroots communities	148
8.4.4	Traditional leaders	148
8.4.5	The international community	148
8.5	CONCLUSION	148

ACRONYMS

AIPPA	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
CAZ	Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe
CCJP	Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe
CIO	Central Intelligence Organisation
EFZ	Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe
FLS	Front Line States
GNU	Government of National Unity
GPA	Global Political Agreement
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NPRC	National Peace and Reconciliation Commission
OAU	Organisation for African Unity
ONHRI	Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration
PF	Patriotic Front
PF-ZAPU	Zimbabwe African Peoples Union
POSA	Public Order and Security Act
RF	Rhodesian Front
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TC	Truth Commission
UANC	United African National Council
UMP	Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZCBC	Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference
ZCC	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement

ABSTRACT

This study uses case studies to critique the strengths and shortcomings of state-led reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe and to examine how state-led and community-based reconciliation processes complement or conflict with each other. Its main research question is that “what is the relationship between state-led and community-led reconciliation processes in the Zimbabwean context?” Sixty one people were interviewed through interviews and focus group discussions. In the case studies, the study establishes the nature and impact of violations which were committed, the healing and reconciliation needs of the communities, the perspectives of the communities in terms of the actors who should be involved in reconciliation processes, and the impact of state-led reconciliation processes. The study also uses the case study of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace to examine the role of civil society in reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. This has enabled it to interrogate reconciliation processes by civil society, not from the perspectives of civil society itself, but of the people who were affected by its interventions. One of the findings is that in the absence of meaningful state-led reconciliation processes, it was civil society which played a major role in promoting reconciliation. However, it was found in the study that civil society was unable to address many of the reconciliation needs of affected societies because in the absence of top-down reconciliation processes, civil society has a very limited capacity to promote reconciliation. It is against this background that the study found that top-down reconciliation processes are indispensable because they may create an environment which enables reconciliation processes to take place at different levels of society and that reconciliation can be achieved through the interaction, engagement and collaboration between different actors such as the state, civil society, affected communities, and the international community. Although bottom-up processes can promote healing and reconciliation at individual levels, they are difficult to conduct in the absence of top-down processes. In a context where the two approaches are implemented simultaneously, they can either complement or conflict with each other.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

State-led reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe have failed to achieve healing and reconciliation because they were characterised by many weaknesses and shortcomings. These include that they took a top-down, elite-focused approach; they focused on promoting reconciliation among political elites without promoting reconciliation at the grassroots level; they were primarily driven by political objectives; they were characterised by the exclusion of actors such as civil society and the affected communities; they were characterised by continuities in the cultures of denial, violence, and impunity; and they were not characterised by the implementation of different mechanisms of reconciliation such as reparations, apologies, truth-telling, acknowledgement, memorialisation, institutional reforms, and the prosecution of alleged perpetrators (Machakanja 2010, International IDEA 2003, Eppel 2006, Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru 2013, Maseko 2011, Mashingaidze 2005/2010, Muzondibaya 2004, Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Benyera 2015). As a result of these shortcomings, state-led reconciliation processes have failed to heal either the nation or the affected individuals and communities. As a result, Zimbabwe has remained a polarised country which is in dire need of healing and reconciliation despite some interventions by the state. According to Moyo (2007: 34), Zimbabwe has been thrust into a process of conflict generation which the independence process and the government's approach to political transformation and development have failed to address.

It is against this background that this study critiques the strengths and shortcomings of state-led reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. It seeks to understand the interaction between state-led and community-led reconciliation processes. The study focuses on the policy of reconciliation which was adopted at independence in 1980 to deal with the atrocities which were committed during the colonial period, especially during the independence struggle; the Unity Accord which was signed in 1987 to bring an end to the *Gukurahundi* atrocities which were committed from 1983 to 1987; and the reconciliation interventions by the Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation, and Integration (ONHRI) which was established by the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2009 to deal with pre and post-independence political conflicts, especially the election-related violence which was perpetrated from 2000 to 2008. The study critiques the factors that inspired and shaped state policy decisions in framing the aforesaid reconciliation processes and how they enhanced or impeded the efficacy of these processes in Zimbabwe.

It examines these conflicts and violations in terms of their root causes, nature, and impact on affected individuals and communities. Using the case studies of the Matobo community, the Bikita East and Bikita West communities, and the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community; the study makes an inquiry into the reconciliation needs of victims of *Gukurahundi* and of politically motivated violence. It examines the strengths and weaknesses of state-led reconciliation processes in addressing the needs of affected communities. It also uses the case study of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJP) to critique the role of civil society in reconciliation processes. It discusses how contextual factors such as entrenched polarisation; the labelling of the opposition and its supporters as “enemies of the state”; continuities in the cultures of violence, denial and impunity; the fusion between the state and the party to form a “party-state”; the militarisation of the state; state patronage; and widespread human rights abuses have undermined reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe.

The study argues that the need for inclusive healing and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe was necessitated by a number of conflicts and violations which took place before and after independence. In respect of the pre-independence period, the colonisation of Zimbabwe was

characterised by the enactment and enforcement of draconian legislation such as the Land Apportionment Act (1930), the Land Husbandry Act (1951), and the Land Tenure Act (1969) through which black people were dispossessed of their land and other essential resources. The dispossession and dehumanization which characterised colonial occupation invoked resistance from the indigenous people and this culminated in the struggle for independence which started in the early 1960s. During the protracted and fierce independence struggle, a myriad atrocities were committed by the settler regime as well as the nationalist parties. These included wholesale massacres, rapes, enforced disappearances, torture, maiming, hanging, burning of homesteads, shootings, and destruction or confiscation of crops and other forms of livelihoods. At least 80 000 black people died during the independence struggle (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru 2012: 85).

As a result, when Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, it was a country with a violent and traumatic past which needed to be dealt with through inclusive, comprehensive, and meaningful healing and reconciliation processes. The government responded to this need by espousing a policy of reconciliation which was predicated on the need to “forgive and forget” the atrocities which were committed by the colonial regime. The policy was acclaimed, especially by the international community, largely because it did not seek retribution; it retained the status quo; and it entrenched the interests of the minority white community in Zimbabwe. The government did not implement even superficial reconciliation processes under this policy. Instead, it promoted the rhetoric that it was essential for the country to forget about the atrocities and focus on national unity and nation building initiatives. Sachikonye (2004: 2) argues that the policy “was never seriously translated into a systematic programme of reconciliation between past foes, between racial groups, and between interest groups”. As a result, the policy failed to address the colonial injustices in a structured, inclusive, and comprehensive way (Machakanja 2010).

Apart from pre-independence atrocities, Zimbabwe experienced many conflicts and violations after independence. First, the country witnessed the outbreak of dissident activities in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands province soon after independence. Some of the dissidents were former cadres of the Zimbabwe People’s Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), which was a military wing of the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) who were disgruntled with the way they were treated in the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) following the integration process (Alao 1994, Alao 2012). The government believed that the dissident activities were instigated and aided by the opposition ZAPU. The Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) believed that ZAPU instigated the dissident activities because it was dissatisfied by the former’s refusal to jointly contest the 1980 elections with the latter as well as the outcome of these elections. In 1983, the government deployed the notorious North Korean trained Fifth Brigade¹ and other state security forces in an operation which resulted in the death of at least 20 000 people in what came to be known as the *Gukurahundi* massacres (CCJP and LRF 1997). The massacres ended following the signing of the Unity Accord through which ZANU and ZAPU merged into the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) in December 1987.

The second form of violence and conflict experienced was politically motivated, particularly during the 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008 elections. The worst form of politically motivated violence took place towards the 27 June 2008 presidential run-off elections (Linnington 2008, Masunungure 2008, Badza 2008). The cyclone of violence which engulfed the country forced Morgan Tsvangirai of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) to withdraw his candidature from the run-off elections. In a letter to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) which was dated 25 June 2008, Tsvangirai justified his decision based on the following reasons: the partiality of ZEC, the disfranchisement of MDC supporters, the party’s inability to campaign in rural areas because of violence, (the MDC

¹ In this study, the Fifth Brigade is also referred to as 5 Brigade.

claimed that at least 86 of its supporters had been killed; 10, 000 homes had been destroyed; 200, 000 people had been displaced and 10, 000 had sustained injuries) the threats of war which were made by Mugabe and ZANU-PF, the involvement of state security forces in the campaign of terror, the MDC's lack of access to the media, and the banning and disruption of its rallies across the country (Tsvangirai 2008). Other cases of state-sanctioned violence include Operation *Murambatsvina*, Operation *Chikorokoza Chapera*, Operation *Hakudzokwi*, and the land reform programme which started in 2000².

The GNU recognised the need for national healing and reconciliation. Article 7.1 (c) of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) underscored the need to “achieve national healing, cohesion and unity in respect of victims of pre- and post-independence political conflicts”. With a view to address this, the GPA established the now defunct Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) in 2009. However, the organ faced many challenges, resulting in its failure to implement inclusive reconciliation processes (This is discussed in detail in chapter 6). The ONHRI was dissolved in 2013 following the end of the GNU. The new (2013) constitution provides for the establishment of an institution whose task is to drive national healing and reconciliation processes. In accordance with this constitutional provision, the government established the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) which is currently driving the reconciliation agenda. However, the NPRC has also been criticised for taking a top-down approach just like previous reconciliation efforts. It is against this background that this study examines state-led reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. This chapter discusses the background and context of the study, research problem and the significance of the research, the objectives of the research, research questions and hypothesis, limitations of the study, the literature review, research design, methodology of the study, and structure of the study.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

This section highlights the nature and magnitude of the problem and some factors which possibly influenced the problem. The main problem which this study highlights is that healing and reconciliation interventions in Zimbabwe have failed to achieve their goals. As a result, Zimbabwe is a country which is in need of healing and reconciliation despite the efforts which were taken at different turning points. Interviewee 14M1 stated that Zimbabwe is a “wounded nation” and that previous efforts at “healing the wounds” have been characterised by insincerity³. While the government has generally tended to recognise the impact which different conflicts had on the Zimbabwean society and the need for healing and reconciliation interventions, it has been reluctant to take a comprehensive, structured, concerted, and inclusive approach. This reluctance has been

² Operation *Murambatsvina* was a “crash operation” which was conducted by the government in 2005 which resulted in the destruction of homes, business premises, and vending sites. During the operation, about 700 000 people lost their homes or sources of livelihoods or both. A further 2.4 million people were affected to different degrees (Tibaijuka 2005: 7). Operation *Chikorokoza Chapera* and Operation *Hakudzokwi* were jointly launched by the police, the Central Intelligence Organisation, and the army in 2008 against legal and illegal gold and diamond panners. The latter was launched in the Chiadzwa diamond fields in Marange and it resulted in the death of more than 300 people and the maiming and displacement of scores of civilians (Chitiyo, 2009: 6). The land reform programme was initiated in 2000 with a view to address historical and entrenched inequalities between blacks and whites by dispossessing white commercial farmers of their farms. The programme was characterised by violence and intimidation. It was led by belligerent war veterans and the ZANU-PF youth militia (Chung 2006, Raftopoulos 2013, Bond and Manyanya 2002).

³ The interview was conducted in Bikita East, Masvingo.

largely based on fears that such an approach would expose the government's brutality and that it may be characterised by calls for truth-telling and for holding the perpetrators accountable, especially through criminal prosecutions and lustration⁴.

In all of its reconciliation efforts, the government has failed to seek consensus from different stakeholders (especially civil society and the affected communities) with regard to the preferred mechanisms for promoting inclusive healing and reconciliation. In some cases, this has caused conflict between the state's approach to reconciliation and the reconciliation needs and aspirations of the affected communities. For example, while speaking during the launch of a national identity programme in Tsholotsho in July 2017, former Vice President, Phelekezela Mphoko (who was also the Minister for Reconciliation) stated that government will not rebury the victims of *Gukurahundi* who were buried in mass graves. He stated that instead, it will identify mass graves and build tombstones with a full list of the names of people who were buried in each grave (*The Herald*, July 2017). This approach has been resisted by the affected communities because they want the government to exhume the victims, conduct forensic tests to identify each victim and have each victim properly buried by family members at locations which are deemed proper by each family⁵.

The government has also refused to acknowledge the truth about the violent past. For example, in respect of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities, former Vice President, Phelekezela Mphoko, stated that "the disturbances that happened after independence were not because of President, Robert Mugabe's problem, it was a Western conspiracy to destabilise the newly-independent state of Zimbabwe" (*The Herald*, July 2017). Instead of truth-telling, the government has adopted the narrative of "healing the nation" through "forgiving and forgetting" the violent past. This approach supports elite-focused, exclusionary, and politically-inspired and driven macro-level reconciliation mechanisms which marginalize the needs of affected individuals and communities. The major weakness of this approach is that it conflates individual reconciliation with national or political reconciliation. It does not understand that these forms of reconciliation are different and that they can either complement or contradict each other.

Reconciliation interventions have been made more difficult by the entrenched polarisation of Zimbabwean society which has continued to be a major driver of intolerance, violence, and impunity. The opposition and its supporters have continued to be regarded by the ruling party as "traitors" and "enemies of the state" (Raftopoulos 2008, Makumbe 2007, Tendi 2008). Those actors who tend to have the capacity and willingness to promote inclusive healing and reconciliation processes such as civil society have been criticised by government and the ruling party for "promoting a regime change agenda". This has caused a backlash and resistance from ZANU-PF supporters (Ncube, 2015: 17). Zimbabwe's experience tends to demonstrate that it is difficult for a regime which is responsible for grave human rights violations to embark on inclusive healing and reconciliation processes because the need to protect itself always precedes and disregards the need for inclusive reconciliation.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- To explain the need for inclusive and comprehensive reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe;

⁴ This view was expressed by many of the interviewees, especially in the Matobo community.

⁵ This view was strongly expressed by the interviewees. Some interviewees stated that the affected families want the victims to be exhumed and buried close to their homesteads so that they can conduct rituals.

- To critique the successes and challenges of reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe;
- To interrogate the needs of individuals and communities in reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe;
- To explore the limitations of elite-focused, top-down, and politically-driven reconciliation processes;
- To inquire into the interface between state-led and community-based reconciliation processes in the quest for a comprehensive, inclusive, concerted, and consultative reconciliation project;
- To examine the role of different actors such as civil society, the international community, traditional and community leaders, and the church in reconciliation processes; and
- To examine the mechanisms through which inclusive national healing and reconciliation might be achieved in the Zimbabwe context.

Apart from the aforesaid problems and objectives, this study also seeks to understand how the failure of reconciliation processes has affected people at individual, family, community, and national levels. It also seeks to delve into how individuals and communities have attempted to cope with the violent past in the absence of inclusive state-led reconciliation process and critique the successes and challenges of such efforts.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

Based on the research problem stated above, the research questions which this study seeks to answer are: what explains the failure of reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe and which mechanisms should be adopted in order to ensure that reconciliation processes achieve their objectives? In order to answer these questions, the study uses primary and secondary data to critique reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe, to examine the reconciliation needs of affected individuals and communities, and to establish the mechanisms which might assist in the implementation of inclusive reconciliation processes. Reconciliation processes which were implemented in other African contexts will be interrogated in order to explore the lessons which might be important for the Zimbabwean context. The hypothesis of this study is that reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe have failed to address the needs and aspirations of affected individuals and communities because they remained elite-based, politically-inspired, and characterised by the culture of denial and impunity. The study is premised on the following assumptions:

- That the government's approach to reconciliation has mainly focused on the narrative of "forgiving and forgetting the wrongs of the past", in line with the reconciliation rhetoric which it adopted at independence;
- That reconciliation interventions were primarily influenced and shaped by ZANU-PF's long-standing desire to establish a one-party state in Zimbabwe which was couched in the language of national unity and nation building;
- That the most serious conflicts and human rights violations in Zimbabwe were occasioned by ZANU-PF's intolerance of opposition politics;

- That the fears of being punished and of losing legitimacy have been the major disincentives for the government to implement inclusive national healing and reconciliation processes; and that
- The use of violence and intimidation has made it difficult for citizens to openly speak about their experiences during different forms of conflict. It is this “state-imposed silence” which has made it difficult for individuals and communities to transform their relationships and reconcile.

1.5 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although this study acknowledges the seriousness of atrocities which were committed during the independence struggle and the need for truth and reconciliation in relation to these, its analysis focuses on post-independence conflicts and reconciliation processes. However, the study will not exhaust the different forms of conflict in post-independence Zimbabwe. It focuses on reconciliation processes in relation to the *Gukurahundi* atrocities and politically motivated violence which was committed during election times, particularly in 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008. The focus is based on the view that these conflicts were characterised by the most heinous violations of human rights. It is also based on the reason that since the study uses case studies, it is hardly feasible to use this approach in respect of all the violations which took place after independence.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review section critiques some of the key texts which examine reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. It situates this study in the broad context of existing knowledge which is related to it and ensures that it is built on the foundation of the existing knowledge base. It provides the evidence that will help to explain the findings of this study and how the study is linked and adds to the existing body of knowledge. It highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the existing literature and analyse the existing knowledge gaps in the area under study. It also highlights areas which need further research and explain how this study will address such areas. The section critiques what existing literature says about the need for healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe, why reconciliation efforts in Zimbabwe have failed, the role which was played and could be played by actors such as civil society, the church, traditional leadership, affected communities and the regional and international community in the search for healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe.

1.6.1 Why healing and reconciliation is needed in Zimbabwe?

Following the end of a violent conflict, it is important for affected societies to deal with the violence which was committed and to heal the wounds and divisions which were caused by the violence (Machakanja 2010). The imperative to implement healing and reconciliation processes in post-conflict societies has gained considerable attention on the international policy agenda. Scholars have invested a lot of effort in examining how societies can cope with a history of violence, war, vengeance, and egregious human rights violations (International IDEA 2003, Braithwaite 2002, Campbell 2000, Charbonneau and Parent 2012, De Waal 1990, Dwyer 1999).

It is important to explain why healing and reconciliation is needed in the Zimbabwean context. Scholars agree that there is need for healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe in respect of the violations which were committed during the pre and post-independence periods. There is general consensus among scholars that Zimbabwe went through different forms of conflict and violence which have made the implementation of people-centered healing and reconciliation processes a

necessity in order to heal the nation and transform relations (Machakanja 2010, Eppel and Raftopoulos 2008, CCJP and LRF 1997).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Benyera (2015) believe that Zimbabwe's healing and reconciliation question should take into consideration the conflicts and violence which characterised the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial interludes such as inter-communal raiding, colonial conquest, the *Chimurengas*, *Gukurahundi*, and politically motivated violence. They argue that the violent land reform programme which was initiated in 2000 was caused by "incomplete decolonisation", that *Gukurahundi* was provoked by ethnicity and power struggles between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU and that power struggles between the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and the ruling ZANU-PF caused the post-2000 political violence. According to Machakanja (2010: 6), "the history of Zimbabwe is characterised by a series of challenges which, at different turning points, manifested themselves through violent conflicts". Refer to chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of the path of conflict and violence in Zimbabwe.

1.6.2 Why reconciliation failed

The majority view among scholars is that state-led healing and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe have thus far failed. For example, Eppel (2004: 43) states that Zimbabwe is a country with more than a century of conflicts which have remained unresolved. The Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) and Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) (2006: 48) argue that "several issues have left the nation torn apart and must be attended to in order to reconcile the nation and to achieve consensus on the fundamental developmental issues that concern our nation". Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Benyera (2015) interrogates the framework which might be useful in resolving the justice and reconciliation question in Zimbabwe. They explore the major issues and challenges which characterised the healing and reconciliation question in Zimbabwe. In their explanation of why reconciliation has failed, they argue that in Zimbabwe, "the very constitution of 'the political' has been underpinned by a perennial 'paradigm of war' that is articulated in terms of a series of *Zvimurenga*" (First *Chimurenga*, Second *Chimurenga*, and Third *Chimurenga*) and is therefore refusing to die" and that:

This paradigm of war has inscribed conflicts and violence. It has created unending cycles for perpetrators and victims in which victims become perpetrators in one episode of violence and perpetrators become victims in the next... Under these circumstances, ordinary Zimbabweans continue to cry out for a new paradigm of peace, justice and reconciliation.

They further argue that there is a wrong conception, constitution, and configuration of "the political" and that this is "confusing the definition of the national question which is the guiding vehicle for healing and reconciliation endeavors in Zimbabwe". This view can be used to explain why Zimbabwe has failed to define a national healing and reconciliation vision and framework which is based on consensus. On the one hand, government has focused on the need to use the "forgive and forget" and "let bygones be bygones" approach to healing and reconciliation. This approach is primarily based on the fears that healing and reconciliation processes may "open closed chapters" and that they may be characterised by retribution. On the other hand, some citizens and actors such as opposition political parties, civil society and human rights activists have emphasised the need for inclusive healing and reconciliation processes which are characterised by truth-telling, memorialisation, reparations, acknowledgement, apology, and the prosecution of alleged perpetrators. However, these actors have tended to politicise and manipulate the healing and reconciliation agenda and this has invoked a backlash from ZANU-PF.

It is against this background that Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Benyera (2015) expressed the view that in order for healing and reconciliation efforts to be successful in Zimbabwe, the country needs “the reconstitution of the political” (political reform) because “a ‘paradigm of war’ exists as a central Leitmotif of political practice”. In their view, African post-conflict societies should move away from “the traditional post-1945 Nuremberg-criminal justice” because it has a “propensity to fragment a people emerging from mass violence into perpetrators and victims”. They argue that these societies should move towards what Mahmood Mamdani calls “survivors’ justice” in which “people emerging from conflict are collectively understood as survivors who are crying out for a new society, underpinned by a new ‘political’ capable of producing a new humanity”. Other scholars use various reasons to explain the failure of reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. These include that:

- They focused on political and elite-level processes rather than on community-owned and driven processes, resulting in their failure to have an impact at individual and community levels (Murambadoro and Wielenga 2015, Cliffe and Stoneman 1989, Auret 1992, Mbire 2011, Du Plessis and Ford 2009, Eppel 2006, Sachikonye 2011, Mashingaidze 2010, De Waal 1990, Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003);
- They focused on protecting the interests of the ruling party in the name of protecting the independence and the territorial integrity of the state at the expense of making instigators and perpetrators of violence accountable (Raftopoulos and Savage 2004, Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007);
- They were characterised by the cultures of denial and impunity instead of acknowledgement, recognition, reparations, and truth-seeking and -telling (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru 2013, Eppel and Raftopoulos 2008, Eppel 2004, International IDEA 2003, Mashingaidze 2009, Makumbe and Compagnon 2000, Mair and Sithole 2002, Kriger 2003, Compagnon 2011);
- They were “couched in reconciliatory amnesty measures” (Machakanja 2010: 10);
- They focused on the narrative of “forgetting and forgiving” rather than dealing with the violent past (Ndlovu and Dube 2013, Gova and Ndlovu 2013, Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009, 2012, Msindo 2012);
- They were “based on the subordination and control both of other political parties and of civil society” (Raftopoulos 2004: xi) through the rhetoric and narratives of “national unity” and “patriotic history” (Ranger 2004, Moyo 1992);
- They were affected by the lack of resources;
- The government has never sought consensus with regard to “who” should be reconciled, with respect to “which” conflict/violations, and the mechanisms for achieving reconciliation (Machakanja 2010);
- They focused on promoting reconciliation without justice (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru 2012); and that
- The ZANU-PF regime has been “more concerned with keeping its hold on power than on any meaningful peacebuilding projects” (Mashingaidze 2005: 91).

1.6.3 Civil society and reconciliation

This section discusses existing literature in respect of the role which was played and could be played by civil society in the search for healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. Walzer (1995: 7) defines civil society as “the space of uncoerced human associations and also the set of networks---formed for the sake of family, faith, interests and ideology—that fill this space”. A vibrant and autonomous civil society is regarded as a necessary condition for the deepening and consolidation of democracy (Hayes 1996: 30, Walzer 1995: 7, Sachikonye 1996: 37, Cheater 1998: 67, Gaidzanwa 1999: 34). Koonings (2007: 26) asserts that the roles of civil society include holding government accountable for its actions of omission and commission, promoting and protecting public interests, nurturing the behavior of citizens, community building, meditating between citizens and state actors, and delivering services for the proper functioning and wellbeing of society. The role of civil society in reconciliation processes is generally believed to be important because of a number of reasons. First, unlike the state, civil society has the ability and willingness to promote the bottom-up approach to reconciliation (Ncube, 2014: 267). This gives it the ability to consult and involve the people who were affected by the conflict and to ensure that reconciliation interventions are sensitive to the needs of these people (Machakanja 2010: 13).

Second, civil society is able to conduct evidence-based research and document essential factors such as the nature and trajectory of the conflict, the abuses which were suffered by the victims, the reconciliation needs of the affected communities, and reconciliation processes at grassroots level. Such information can be used to establish the truth about a violent past, to inform reconciliation policy and interventions, to provide evidence which can be used to identify victims and perpetrators, and to monitor and evaluate reconciliation processes (Machakanja 2010: 13, Baxter 2005: 125).

Third, reconciliation processes which are led by politicians/political parties without involving civil society tend to be viewed with suspicion by local communities because of their tendency to promote political agendas (Machakanja 2010: 16). Engaging civil society in reconciliation processes therefore tends to enhance the legitimacy of reconciliation processes in the view of affected communities. Legitimacy is important because it encourages the active participation of the affected communities in reconciliation processes. The United Nations (2012: 3) states that civil society “provides an intermediary role between the national and the community levels”, that it plays an important role in defining an inclusive policy framework for a reconciliation agenda, that it plays an important role in conducting public outreaches and in victim support, and that it ensures that “the gender dimension is mainstreamed throughout the entire process”. Orjuela (2003: 34) argues that local civil society has an important role to play in promoting healing and reconciliation because of factors such as its proximity to the sociopolitical context attendant to a conflict, its ability to mobilise voluntary collective action for change, its potential as a creator and promoter of social capital, and its ability to be representative and to be rooted in communities.

In most post-conflict contexts, civil society has played an important role in the promotion of healing and reconciliation. In Chile, there is a shared view among scholars that civil society played an important role in the search for healing and reconciliation after seventeen years of authoritarian rule under General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte. With a specific focus on Villa Grimaldi, Baxter (2005) critiques the role which was played by civil society in promoting truth, justice and reconciliation. Villa Grimaldi was used by the regime as a notorious detention and torture centre. According to Baxter, in May 1974, the National Directorate of Intelligence took control of Villa Grimaldi and made it its main interrogation, detention, and torture center. During the course of the conflict, the regime brought 5,000 individuals to the site for torture and interrogation and least 226 people were tortured to death, murdered, or disappeared there. Meade (2001: 54) argues that during the transition, civil society groups took decisive steps to speak about the violent past and to promote

truth, justice, healing and reconciliation. Civil society documented the violations and mobilised the citizens to remember the past, especially through the creation of public parks and museums which were dedicated to victims (Matta 2001). Baxter (2005: 127) states that ““Villa Grimaldi represents an interesting case because of the high level of involvement by the NGO community to infuse the site with historical memory”. In 1996, as a result of sustained pressure from civil society, government formally opened a public park on the grounds of Villa Grimaldi and renamed it “Peace Park” in honour of the victims (Baxter 2005: 126).

In Sierra Leone, civil society also played an essential role. The country went through a protracted and brutal civil war which started in 1991 when an insurgency force, the Revolutionary Patriotic Front, invaded the country. Civil society played an important role in the peace processes during and after the conflict. It was involved in the negotiations which led to the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement of 1999. Civil society also complemented the work of the Truth Commission and the Special Court. Alie (2003: 142) states that the role which was played by civil society (especially by the Inter-Religious Council) in reconciliation processes in Sierra Leone was “commendable”. In Zimbabwe, civil society has a track record of promoting healing and reconciliation before and after independence. However, in the early 1980s, civil society focused on development related issues and sought to closely partner with government with a view to play a complementary role in the nation-building agenda. During this period, ZANU-PF faced little or no criticism from civil society. The party used different methods to dominate and to co-opt civil society. According to Moyo (1993: 7):

ZANU-PF took maximum advantage of an under-developed civil society by claiming that it was the sole legitimate representative of the people. Under the guise of this claim, the party declared itself to be the umbrella organisation of all social movements and went about destroying civil society associations in the name of “the revolution”. All “legitimate” organisations were challenged by ZANU-PF to join the ruling party as a way of proving their revolutionary and patriotic commitment.

However, from the late 1980s, civil society progressively liberated itself from the clutches of the state. By the 1990s, it had become a “hotbed” of dissent. Civil society mobilised against issues such as corruption, the one-party state agenda, human rights abuses, mismanagement of resources, deepening poverty, and rising unemployment. The government responded by using draconian legislations to suppress civil society. For example, in response to massive protests against corruption and the one-party state by the student movement, the government enacted the University of Zimbabwe Act of 1982 and the University of Zimbabwe Amendment Act (No 21 of 1990) which outlawed student protests, both on and off campus. This consolidated the state’s control of the university such that it was reduced to a “parastatal institution” (Bond 199, Cheater 1991). Under the Act, the university faced frequent closures and members of the Student Representative Council (SRC) were subjected to harassment, beatings, suspensions, arbitrary arrests and detention, and the frequent withdrawal of their grants (Mutambara 1991, Cheater 1991, Ncube 1991).

In response to strikes and demonstrations which were spearheaded by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), government used the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act to ban strikes and demonstrations. Morgan Tsvangirai, who was the leader of the ZCTU, was beaten by war veterans and the ZCTU’s offices in Bulawayo were razed by arsonists (Bond and Manyanya, 2003: 88). The government also used inherited Rhodesian legislations such as the Law and Order Maintenance Act (1960) and the Emergence Powers Act (1960) to repress civil society and democratic freedoms under the guise of national security (Hatchard 1993: 76).

However, scholars argue that despite the oppressive political environment, civil society played an important role in the search for healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. Ncube (2014: 288) states

that in the post-2000 period, civil society played the role of socialisation and community building which was aimed to address grievances that emanated from the violence and human rights abuses that occurred during the 2008 elections, to build cultures of peace, to eliminate or shift conflict attitudes, to transform structural causes and consequences of conflict, to build social cohesion, and to mediate and facilitate state–society relations that have been strained since 2000. Arguing in relation to the work of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC), Ndlovu and Benyera (2015: 25) state that the role of civil society to complement the efforts of the state:

Could take various forms, such as raising awareness, disseminating information, establishing education programmes around the work of the Commission, producing and distributing publicity materials, funding debates and outreach campaigns, translating key materials such as constitutions and Commission mandates, and funding radio and television programmes and advertisements that focus on publicising the work of the Commission.

Ncube (2014: 283) states that “the trajectories of peacebuilding in Zimbabwe, and the role of civil society within these, date back to the 1980s”. Since 1980, civil society has promoted healing and reconciliation through advocacy and mobilisation campaigns, conducting policy dialogues and research projects, monitoring and documenting human rights abuses, mobilising the regional and the international community to assist healing and reconciliation efforts in Zimbabwe, meditMbire (2011: 29) holds that:

Due to frustrations with government’s failure to implement and sustain efforts on transitional justice (broadly), CSOs (Civil Society Organisations) in Zimbabwe have grasped opportunities for promoting transitional justice... The CSOs have intervened in communities with programmes ranging from psycho-social support, medical assistance, memorialisation projects, livelihoods projects, creating awareness on transitional justice and legal assistance.

Some scholars argue that there are civil society organisations which have played a remarkable role in promoting healing and reconciliation at the grassroots level. For example, according to Zambara (Ed, 2015: 22):

...Heal Zimbabwe Trust launched a memorialisation and ritualisation programme in 2009 as a way of according dignity both to the survivors of and political activists who were murdered during the 2008 presidential run-off election. The programme sought to at least give the affected families and communities moments to bury and mourn their loved ones with decency.

However, this study notes that reconciliation interventions by civil society were undermined by internal and contextual factors such as limited resources, poor coordination, the repression of democratic freedoms by government, government’s hostility towards civil society activities and the real or perceived “alliance” between some civil society organisations and opposition party politics. This study notes that there is a shortage of literature which problematises healing and reconciliation interventions by civil society. The majority of the scholars, with the exception of scholars such as Ncube, have tended to focus on “praising” healing and reconciliation interventions by civil society. In his problematisation of civil society led reconciliation processes, Ncube (2014: 290) argues that “civil society is not socially and economically embedded into rural constituencies” and that:

Zimbabwean civil society has an urban bias that reflects its domination by the middle class. Civil society is not socially and economically embedded into rural constituencies. Instead, it makes sporadic ventures into rural constituencies depending on the availability of funding

and a conducive political environment. As a result, there is no sustained engagement with rural communities on peacebuilding activities.

Ncube also notes that there are a number of contextual problems which have made it difficult for civil society to promote healing and reconciliation, especially in ZANU-PF strongholds which have been “no go areas” for the opposition. Ncube (2014: 290-291) says that:

...civil society continued to be harassed and intimidated, their offices raided by the police over allegations of working with Western governments to effect an illegal ‘regime change’ in Zimbabwe. The constrained political space for civil society is compounded by its embeddedness in opposition politics, especially that of the MDC-T. This fuels anti-civil society sentiments in traditional ZANU-PF political stronghold provinces. In those provinces, either the police refused to issue clearance permission for civil society peacebuilding work, or ZANU-PF-aligned community leaders argued that there was no need for peacebuilding in Zimbabwe and refused to cooperate. As a result, a number of planned peacebuilding activities were postponed or cancelled.

Civil society interventions can be problematic, especially when they are perceived as a smokescreen behind which to mobilise citizens against the government and to promote opposition party politics. In such cases, they can cause tensions instead of promoting healing and reconciliation. In Kenya, the Kenyan Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (2013: 61) states that civil society played an important role in advocating for peace, justice and reconciliation before, during and after the 2007 post-election violence but it also noted that most of the efforts “have been reactive rather than proactive, short term rather than long term, and uncoordinated and unsustainable”.

1.6.4 The church and reconciliation

Scholars generally agree that the church has played and could play an important role in the search for healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. Chitando and Manyonganise (2011: 83) state that “it was only individuals and groups aligned to Christianity that have sought to empower their members to face the difficult situation”. Christianity is the dominant religion in Zimbabwe and the church is an institution which is found across communities. It has played an important role in influencing societal issues, including in the area of healing and reconciliation. Togarasei and Chitando (2011: 218) states that “we are convinced that the church has a theological mandate to seek the truth, as the truth sets people free”.

Scholars believe that the church has a track record of promoting healing, peace and reconciliation in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe. During the liberation struggle, the church spiritually and socially supported the liberation parties. Church leaders such as Reverend Canaan Banana, Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole and Abel Muzorewa contributed to the struggle for independence. Churches such as the Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, African Initiated Churches, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church promoted peace and reconciliation through mediation, promoting dialogue, seeking a peaceful resolution of the liberation struggle and urging restraint in the use of force, especially against civilians (Daneel 1998, Bhebe 1999, Linden 1980, Hallencreutz and Moyo 1988).

However, following the attainment of independence, the church largely avoided to involve itself in politics and chose to focus on spiritual and development-related activities (Muchena 2004). Relations between the church and the state were cordial, especially considering that Reverend

Canaan Banana was appointed ceremonial President at independence in 1980. However, the relations began to change in the 1990s as the church criticised government in relation to governance issues such as the adoption of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), corruption, the land question, and constitutionalism. The church criticised SAPs for being “anti-poor”. The church also called on government to implement constitutional reforms and to address inequalities in respect of the land question (Chitando 2014).

In the post-2000 period, churches mainly engaged the state and society through four umbrella bodies which are the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) which embodies Pentecostal and Evangelical churches, the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) of the Catholic Church, and the Union for the Development of African Churches in Zimbabwe Africa (UDACIZA). As the country’s political and economic situation worsened in the post-2000 period, the church responded through many ways as it sought to contribute to a peaceful and sustainable resolution of the crisis.

Church leaders such as Pius Ncube, then Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church, became outspoken in their calls for peace and for making perpetrators of violence accountable. The church also made extensive use of pastoral letters to highlight the nature, causes, and consequences of the Zimbabwean crisis. Chitando (2011: 45) maintains that the pastoral letters from different church bodies “were hard-hitting and exposed the falsehoods that were being peddled by the official media”. Church affiliated organisations such as the CCJP provided refuge and spiritual, medical, psychosocial and material support to victims of political violence. Through reports such as *Crises of Governance: A Report on Political Violence in Zimbabwe* (2000) and *Graveyard Governance* (2008), the CCJP highlighted the atrocities which were committed mainly against opposition supporters and proposed ways of promoting healing and reconciliation (CCJP 2013: 3).

Church leaders also took steps to promote dialogue between political leaders and encouraged them to call on their supporters to refrain from committing political violence. The church is renowned for conducting the historic “Zimbabwe we want” campaign in which it critiqued the Zimbabwean crisis, its causes and impact, and proposed a national vision which would promote unity, peace and development. The church also initiated and led the Save Zimbabwe Campaign, a coalition of political parties and civil society organisations whose agenda was to pray for Zimbabwe and to promote dialogue between ZANU-PF and the opposition. It was this campaign which brought Zimbabwe’s crisis to the attention of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), resulting in the mediation process which was led by the former South African President, Thabo Mbeki. According to Ncube (2013: 14), through the Church and Civil Society Forum (CCSF), the church partnered with civil society and conducted various peacebuilding and reconciliation interventions at both elite and grassroots levels.

However, scholars argue that despite its noteworthy contributions to peace and reconciliation, the church has faced some challenges which are internal and contextual. Contextually, government used the state media and state security forces to intimidate, harass, demonise and assassinate the character and integrity of those church leaders who criticised it. For example, the state used the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) to silence Archbishop Pius Ncube by exposing his sexual scandals. Ncube’s life as an Archbishop was never the same again after the exposure. Such actions by government intimidated many church leaders. Chitando (2011: 44) states that ZANU-PF politicians “have sought to limit the church to prayers and offering guidance on moral issues” but a significant constituency of church leaders “have refused to subscribe to such a narrow interpretation of the mission of the church and have endeavored to make a difference in a heavily polarised political environment”. It is against such background that Muchena (2004: 258) argues that reconciliation efforts by the church in Zimbabwe appears to be a “mission impossible” because it

requires the church leadership to be fearless and to have the “influence, capacity and experience in dealing with complex political situations”.

On the other hand, government rewarded those church leaders who openly supported ZANU-PF. For example, the *Johane Masowe WeChishanu* received constant state coverage because its founder, *Madzibaba* Nzira, claimed that then Zimbabwean president, Robert Mugabe, was ordained by God to “take Zimbabwe to the Promised Land” (Chitando 2002). Other churches which supported government were allocated land and other resources. As a result, some church leaders decided to support government so that they could access resources. Muchena (2004: 267) suggests that some church leaders such as Reverend Obadiah Musindo of the Destiny Ministries decided to “see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil” in return for resources from government. However, it is argued in this study that some church leaders supported government not because they wanted resources from it, but because they believe in its policies and programmes of empowering black Zimbabweans and they also believe that leaders are ordained by God.

1.6.5 Traditional leadership and reconciliation

In Zimbabwe, the traditional leadership structure is composed of *sabhuku* (village head), *sadunhu* (headmen) and *ishe/mambo* (chief). Chiefs are the traditional head of the community under their jurisdiction and they are responsible for many duties, including promoting and upholding cultural values among members of the community under their Jurisdiction (Section 5 of the *Chiefs and Headmen Act* of 1982). Chiefs are also responsible for allocating agricultural and residential land to local residents and for settling disputes which are mainly of civil nature (Makumbe 2010: 89). The duties of headmen include assisting chiefs in carrying out their duties, reporting to the police the commission of any crime or offence in their area, the suspicious disappearance of any person, and any actual or threatened public unrest likely to disturb the public peace of the area under their jurisdiction (Section 9 of the *Chiefs and Headmen Act* of 1982).

The duties of village heads include assisting chiefs and headmen in the performance of their duties, carrying out all lawful and reasonable orders from chiefs or headmen, and leading their village in all traditional, customary, and cultural matters (Section 12 of the *Chiefs and Headmen Act* of 1982). The power and authority of traditional leaders derive not only from the constitution, but primarily from embedded customary practices and institutions which are inherently illiberal. They often command respect and unquestioned loyalty within their areas of jurisdiction and beyond. Constitutionally, traditional leaders are obliged to subject themselves to the rule of law.

On the one hand, scholars question the capacity of traditional leaders to promote healing and reconciliation in their communities and the nation at large because of some reasons. First, they argue that since independence, government politicised traditional leadership structures through incentives such as cars, allowances, preferential access to government services, mobile phones, and the power to allocate resources and to supervise the distribution of food aid and community development projects. For example, Makumbe (2010: 88) argues that:

Traditional leaders are generally accepted as the custodians of customary law and practice... Realising the general acceptance of traditional leaders by the majority of the citizens, the Mugabe regime decided to harness this component of customary governance for its political ends. Various schemes were devised to ensure that traditional leaders would not only support ZANU-PF and Mugabe, but would also ensure that their people in the rural communities would also do the same.

Second, traditional leaders have been criticised for playing the role of ZANU-PF “watchdogs” by politically monitoring their subjects, declaring that they do not accept opposition supporters in their areas, refusing known and suspected opposition supporters access to food aid and development projects, and even supporting the establishment of “torture camps” in their communities (Machakanja 2010, Benyera 2014). ZANU-PF has been criticised for introducing the “*sabhuku nevanhu vake kumusana*” (each village head should “carry his subjects on his back”) intimidation campaign in rural areas. Under the campaign, every village head is instructed to police the voting behaviour of his or her subjects and to take them to polling stations and make sure that they all vote ZANU-PF. Those who refuse to “vote right” should be reported to the ZANU-PF youth militia or punished by the village head. The use of violence and enforced disappearances has been used to force villagers to comply.

Magaisa (2016) argues that villagers believe that they are constantly being watched by traditional authorities and that in their eyes, the authorities know what every villager does, the political meetings they attend, how they cast their vote, and even what they are thinking. This is how rural residents have been forced to self-police their voter choice in order to avoid trouble from ZANU-PF leaders and supporters. On the other hand, scholars believe that traditional leaders could play an important role in the search for healing and reconciliation. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Benyera (2015: 27) state that traditional leaders “create those cultural spaces needed for the facilitation of the victim-perpetrator acknowledgement”. Machakanja believes that traditional leaders play an important role in the use of cultural mechanisms of promoting reconciliation. Benyera (2014) believe that traditional leaders mobilise and lead their communities in “cleansing” them through the performance of rites, ceremonies and rituals. Zambara Ed (2015: 24) argues that “cleansing ceremonies are intended to appease the ancestors and to ‘cleanse’ the land of bad omens and evil spirits that are brought on by violent actions like murder”.

1.6.6 The regional and the international community and reconciliation

Huyse (2003: 23) argues that “the international community can be very useful in supporting and monitoring local reconciliation programmes, giving advice and training, and providing material resources”. However, Huyse states that although the international community plays an important role, it should ensure that post-conflict societies “own” their own reconciliation projects because “lasting reconciliation must be home-grown because in the end, it is the survivors who assign meaning to the term and the process”. Kritz (2008: 23) also argues that “the best scenario would be for the international community to provide appropriate assistance to enable a society emerging from mass abuses to deal with the issues of justice and accountability itself”. The United Nations (2012: 04) holds that “while reconciliation must be nationally driven, the international community could play a supportive role by creating a favorable environment, advocating for international norms and standards, introducing lessons learnt and good practices from other countries and ensuring sustained international attention”.

However, in Zimbabwe, scholars argue that the international community failed to play a meaningful role in supporting healing and reconciliation processes because of the breaking down of relations between the country and the international community. Countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia and the United State of America and regional organisations such as the European Union imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe on allegations of human rights abuses following the adoption of the land reform programme. Under the banner of state sovereignty and territorial integrity, ZANU-PF called on the international community not to interfere with the political affairs of the country. According to Chitando (2011: 45), with reference to America, Britain, Australia and “their cousins”, Mugabe reasoned that “we do not interfere in their internal affairs, why should they interfere in

ours? Relations between the international community and Zimbabwe caused the former to support healing and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe through civil society (Ncube 2015).

In terms of the regional community, SADC's major response to the Zimbabwean crisis took place in 2007 when the police brutalised opposition leaders, supporters, human rights activists and members of civil society who had gathered for a meeting. The regional body responded by convening an extra-ordinary summit on 28 March 2007 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (Human Rights Watch, 2008). The summit resolved to appoint former South African President, Thabo Mbeki, as mediator between the opposition and the ruling party. It was SADC's mediation processes which led to the conduct of peaceful and comparatively free and fair elections in 2008 as well as the formation of the Government of National Unity in 2009.

On the one hand, there are scholars who believe that SADC failed to promote meaningful healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe because it sided with ZANU-PF and entrenched the regime instead of condemning human rights abuses, advocating for institutional reforms and demanding the conduct of elections in accordance with its principles and guidelines on democratic elections. They also criticise SADC for endorsing elections which were widely believed to have been rigged. Cawthra (2010: 30) states that SADC has largely "presented a united front which most observers have interpreted as being in support of the incumbent regime" and that it has been widely criticised "for failing to take a public stand against human rights violations, breaches of the rule of law and repression". On the other hand, there are scholars who believe that SADC "played its part" in the search for peace and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. For example, Mudzengi (2013) states that SADC did not "fail Zimbabwe" but the regional body assisted Zimbabwe, resulting in the opening of possibilities and opportunities which the people of Zimbabwe failed to utilise and "help themselves".

1.6.7 Affected communities and reconciliation

Pickering (2007: 165) believes that in most post-conflict societies, ordinary people soldier on and rebuild their lives despite situations of polarised elites, weak institutions, and the absence or failure of top-down approaches to healing and reconciliation. Affected communities often use mechanisms of reconciliation which are rooted in their cultural, moral, religious and social beliefs and practices. In rural areas, traditional leaders may play an important role in mobilising and leading communities to promote healing and reconciliation. Scholars have noted that in Zimbabwe, in the absence of meaningful state-led reconciliation processes, some affected communities took the initiative to promote healing and reconciliation, in some cases, with the support of actors such as civil society. Machakanja (2010: 8) argues that in Zimbabwe:

in certain rural communities, victims and perpetrators have been coming together—sometimes at the behest of perpetrators feeling the need to confess and pay their dues—through the rebuilding of destroyed homes, returning of stolen goods, and conduction of healing ceremonies.

In some communities, these healing and reconciliation processes have reduced tensions, transformed relations, healed the affected individuals and families and created an atmosphere of peace and tolerance (Machakanja 2010, Benyera 2014, Chitando 2012). However, some scholars argue that such reconciliation processes have been characterised by shortcomings such as patriarchal beliefs and practices which exclude or violate marginalised populations such as women, young girls, and people with disabilities, their incapacity to use frameworks of reconciliation which are based on consensus and on democratic values, unsustainability and the use of cultural practices which are harmful (Tirivangani 2011, Zambara 2014). The Kenya Human Rights Commission, the Kenyan

Section of the International Commission of Jurists and the International Centre for Policy and Conflict (2010: 24) state that affected communities tend to use informal and localised approaches of attaining justice and these such approaches are often culture and community specific. These institutions argue that the main challenges which are encountered are that the systems are subject to corruption and abuse, they are mainly dominated by men and they are not sensitive to gender, they are not well equipped to deal with disputes which are inter-communal, they are unable to deal with sophisticated crimes and violations, and that societies have abandoned some of their traditional or informal justice approaches. Benyera (2014) critiques traditional institutions which are used by Zimbabwean communities for truth-seeking, healing and community-based peacebuilding and he argues that some of them are harmful.

For example, Benyera states that the way through which many Zimbabwean communities deal with *Ngozi* (avenging spirit) violates the rights of young girls. This occurs when the family of the deceased victim (who could have been killed as a result of a violent conflict) demand that the family of the perpetrator give their child in marriage to the deceased's relative as a way of appeasing the spirit of the dead. Benyera defines *Ngozi* as "a metaphysical phenomenon, cultural practice and a belief system stemming from a particular cosmology in which those who die unnaturally are believed to return in spirit form to force those responsible for their death to compensate and reconcile with the deceased's family".

1.6.8 Gaps in the existing literature

The study agrees with the arguments which have been made by various scholars in respect to healing and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. However, existing studies (such as Muzondidya 2004, Muponde 2004, Eppel 2004, Machakanja 2010, and Barnes 2004) have tended to take a state-centric approach by focusing their analysis on state-initiated and led reconciliation process without examining how these have interacted with and reinforced or conflicted with community-based processes. It is against this background that this study makes an original contribution to the existing knowledge base by taking a two-pronged approach in its analysis. This approach makes an examination into both state-led and community-based reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. It critiques reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe from the perspectives of different categories of actors, especially from the "insider's perspectives", viz. those individuals and societies which were affected by different forms of violent conflicts.

In chapters four and six, the thesis notes that in the absence of meaningful state-led reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe, some societies have taken the initiative to embark on community-based reconciliation processes. The study provides a unique perspective because it examines the challenges and prospects of community-based reconciliation processes in a polarised political environment. It argues that the reforming of institutions and the promotion of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law creates an environment which is germane to the implementation of bottom-up reconciliation processes. Conversely, the argument made in this study is that the Zimbabwean experience has demonstrated that in a political environment which is characterised by violence, impunity, polarisation, and politicisation of state institutions; the implementation of bottom-up reconciliation processes is a difficult task.

Much of the existing literature does not examine the role of different actors such as civil society, the international community, traditional leaders, and community leaders in reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe; especially from the perspectives of the individuals and communities which were affected by violence. Where existing studies have attempted to do so, they have tended to focus on

the role of these actors in promoting reconciliation at elite-level and not at the grassroots level. For example, Muchena (2004) examines the role of the church in reconciliation efforts in Zimbabwe with a focus on the period between 2000 and 2004. Muchena argues that from 2000 to 2004, the church became more involved in the political and socio-economic aspects of the country because of the violence and intolerance which had characterised state politics and society. However, Muchena focuses on the church's efforts in promoting dialogue between ZANU-PF and the MDC formations (primarily between the leaders of these political parties) and not in promoting reconciliation at grassroots level.

The existing literature has tended to propose the different mechanisms which could be used to successfully promote healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe without having established the reconciliation needs of the affected communities from the perspectives of such communities; especially in respect of politically motivated violence. Such studies have tended to rely on the liberal peacebuilding template to make conclusions about such mechanisms. It is argued in this study that this is problematic because some affected individuals prefer to use mechanisms of reconciliation which are rooted in their cultural and religious conflict resolution mechanisms.

It is against this background that this study notes that it is important to first establish the healing and reconciliation needs and priorities of the affected communities from the perspectives of such communities. This is important because such information can be used to examine the mechanisms which (affected communities believe) might be useful in promoting healing and reconciliation. Reconciliation interventions should be informed by and sensitive to the violations which were suffered by the affected communities and the needs and aspirations of such communities. It is against this background that this study examines the reconciliation needs and aspirations of the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe district (chapter four), the Matobo district (chapter five), and the Bikita East and West communities (chapter six).

In chapter seven, this study uses the case study of the CCJP to critique the role of civil society in healing and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. In this chapter, the study adds value to the existing knowledge base because it examines the successes, strengths, and shortcomings of civil society-led reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe; not from the perspective of civil society or other actors, but of the community in which the CCJP has implemented its interventions. In chapter four, the study gives a detailed analysis of the role of actors such as individuals and families, the government, community leaders, the international community, the church, and civil society in reconciliation processes from the perspectives of the people of the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community. The "insider's perspective" of mechanisms for healing and reconciliation and that of the actors who should take a role in these initiatives is largely missing in the existing literature.

The existing studies have tended to analyse reconciliation processes without analysing how they were influenced and impacted upon by the political context in which they were implemented. It is argued in this study that this approach is incomplete and superficial because reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe have been largely influenced and impeded by the political context. The study addresses this gap by examining the political environment, especially in respect of ZANU-PF's entrenched one-party state culture. Since the advent of independence in 1980, the environment has been characterised by entrenched violence and impunity, especially during election periods. This has made elections synonymous with violence and polarisation instead of them being an important peacebuilding mechanism. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012: 7) "elections have never been happy moments for Zimbabwe because, since the country's first elections in 1980, election campaigns and post-election politics have gone hand in glove with violence and death". Kriger (2005: 2) also argues that in every election, ZANU-PF has used a two-pronged strategy of organised violence and intimidation against the opposition.

Apart from violence and intimidation, the political environment has been characterised by state patronage and the passing and selective application of draconian legislation such as the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) of 2002 and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) of 2003. Such legislation has made it difficult for citizens to speak about political matters, especially related to political violence and the need for healing and reconciliation. This has been compounded by the repression of the private media, the partiality of the state media and the judiciary, and the pervasive role of state institutions; especially the police, the army and the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) in the use of terror against ZANU-PF opponents.

As argued in chapter seven, these institutions, along with other actors such as war veterans, the youth militia, and traditional leaders; have resisted, sometimes violently; community-based and civil society led reconciliation processes; especially in ZANU-PF strongholds. As discussed in chapter six, the political environment made it difficult for the ONHRI to conduct its work. For example, there were many cases in which ZANU-PF supporters disrupted its meetings, including a case in which they did so in the presence of the late Vice President John Nkomo, who was the co-chair of the ONHRI. Moses Mzila-Ndlovu, who was also one of the co-Ministers of the ONHRI, was arrested, detained, and harassed by the police for calling on the government to compensate the victims of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru 2013, Murambadoro and Wielenga 2015).

This study therefore argues that it is impossible to promote inclusive healing and reconciliation in a society where democratic structures and spaces are “closed”, and especially where citizens cannot exercise freedom of expression. Machakanja (2010: 15) states that a climate of fear and human insecurity “creates obstacles to the envisaged goal of reconciliation, national healing, social cohesion and nation building”. It is difficult to promote reconciliation in a society where citizens do not have trust in institutions of governance and public service. Effective reconciliation processes renew public trust in such institutions. Reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe have never been characterised by the reforming of governance, public service, administrative, and judicial structures. However, counter arguments have been made that the very idea of neo-liberal democracy as it is practiced in post-colonial African contexts is at the heart of the problem when it comes to issues of reconciliation and healing. Some scholars are starting to ask whether reconciliation in post-conflict or post-authoritarian African states can be achieved without having completely decolonised these countries. The study also argues that the desperate and mangled socio-economic situation in Zimbabwe, especially after 2000, has tended to make reconciliation interventions a “non-priority” in government decisions and policies.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is premised on qualitative data gathering and analysis. It is informed by the social constructivist world view as enunciated by Berger and Luckmann in *The Social Construction of Reality* (1976), and Lincoln and Guba in *Naturalistic Inquiry* (1985). This approach is important for this study because it enables an attempt at understanding the phenomenon under examination through the views, experiences, and needs of the individuals and communities who were affected by conflict and violence. Social constructivism assumes that individuals and communities seek to understand the world in which they live and that meanings are constructed by human beings in the process of engaging with the world they are interpreting because “realities are wholes that cannot be understood in isolation from their context” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 39). Under constructivism, researchers attempt to understand the phenomenon in a holistic way and from the point of views of the participants (Guba and Lincoln, 1998).

In constructivist research, “the investigator and the object of investigation are...interactively linked so that the ‘findings’ are literally created as the investigation proceeds” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The study is also informed by grounded theory, especially Charmaz’s constructivist view of grounded theory which is “squarely in the interpretive tradition” (2006: 330). Charmaz’s conception of grounded theory is related to constructivist ontology and epistemology because of its approach of “placing priority on the phenomena of study and seeing both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationships with participants and other sources” (Charmaz, 2006: 330). According to Schwandt (1994), constructivism is historically synonymous with the interpretivist paradigm which is mainly anchored on Max Weber’s concept of “*verstehen*” which means “understanding something in its context” (Holloway 1997: 2). The interpretivist paradigm believes that “people create and associate their own subjective and intersubjective meanings as they interact with the world around them” and this explains why it “attempts to understand phenomena through accessing the meanings participants assign to them” (Orlikowski Baroudi, 1991: 5).

Holloway (1997) states that interpretive research should be reflexive and researchers need to know the ways in and through which their views and assumptions can affect the research process. Levy (2003: 94) argues that this should not be done “in order to suspend subjectivity, but to use the researcher’s personal interpretive framework consciously as the basis for developing new understandings”. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) reflexivity addresses the hermeneutics of research. Levy (2003: 94) states that “being reflexive in doing research is part of being honest and ethically mature in research practice”. Ruby (1980: 153) states that researchers should “stop being ‘shamans’ of objectivity”. Scholars argue that reflexivity plays an important role in dealing with the real or perceived imbalance of power between the interviewer and the interviewee. For example, Alex and Hammarstrom (2008: 171) state that “despite the best intentions, the interview situation may be experienced as, and may in fact be, a form of abuse. Practicing reflexivity can be one way of minimising such experiences in interview situations”.

Glaser (1978: 2) defines grounded theory as a “systematic generating of theory from data that itself is systematically obtained from social research”. Strauss and Corbin (1990: 24) also define it as “a qualitative research method that uses a systematised set of procedures to develop and inductively derive grounded theory about a phenomenon”. Grounded theory is therefore a research method which is “grounded” in the data which was systematically collated (Strauss and Corbin 1994) and it is usually used to inquire into social processes (Crooks 2001). Grounded theory allows the researcher to use multiple stages of data collection and the refinement and interrelationship of categories of information. It also allows constant comparison of data with emerging categories and sampling of different population categories with a view to maximise the similarities and differences of views (Neuman 2000). Glaser (1978: 45) states that grounded theory “get though and beyond conjecture and preconception to exactly the underlying processes of what is going on so that professionals can intervene with confidence to help resolve the participant’s main concerns”.

Charmaz (2006) states that the theory holds that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that these things have for them. Both interpretivist and grounded theory emphasise the need for researchers to be credible, especially by familiarising themselves with the topic and setting so that they can become “oriented to the situation” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 23). There are a number of advantages of using grounded theory. First, the theory is not limited to a particular discipline or type of data (Glaser, 1992) because it has a wide range of applicability (Morse, 2009). According to Myers (2009), grounded theory has demonstrated that it has an “intuitive appeal” and that it allows researchers to be “immersed” in the data. Charmaz (2006: 3) states that while other qualitative research tools do not give researchers clear guidelines, grounded theory provides “explicit guidelines” and that it provides researchers with “heuristic devices” to “get started, stay involved, and finish the project”. Second, the theory uses evidence-based data to develop concepts

and theories (Glaser, 1978). Strauss and Corbin (1994: 274) note that “the major difference between this methodology (grounded theory) and other approaches to qualitative research was its emphasis on theory development”.

Researchers can avoid “preconceived theoretical data” (Myers, 2009: 107) and this can enhance their creativity and capability to generate new ideas. This study has generated a number of new ideas in respect of issues such as the relationship or conflict between state-led and community-led reconciliation processes, the reconciliation needs of affected societies, the perspectives of affected societies in terms of the actors which are supposed to play a role in the quest for healing and reconciliation, and the affected societies’ evaluation of reconciliation interventions by civil society. For example, while many of the existing studies on reconciliation in Zimbabwe have tended to “applaud” reconciliation interventions by civil society, this study found that these interventions are problematic in many ways. While existing studies have also emphasised the importance of bottom-up approaches to reconciliation, this study found that these processes tend to have little or no meaning in a context where top-down approaches to reconciliation are absent or meaningless, especially if the political environment is characterised by entrenched violence, polarisation, corruption, inequality and “captured” state institutions”.

Third, Glaser (1978: 6) states that “the generative nature of grounded theory constantly opens up the mind of the analyst to a myriad new possibilities”. It also enable researchers to extract meaning from the data using creative and inductive processes which allow the emergence of original findings from the data (Jones, *et al*, 2005). Fourth, grounded theory is unique in that it is able to generate concepts because of “the continuous interplay between data collection and data analysis” (Myers, 1997: 29). Glaser (1998: 133) states that “by far the most exciting use of grounded theory over the last ten years is its legitimization of concept generation”. Fifth, the approach of systematically generating theory from data is essential in judging, comparing and generalising the results of grounded theory generated data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This ensures the scientific rigour and trustworthiness of the theory and it provides researchers with evidence to support their findings (Myers, 2009). Charmaz (2006: 2) state that “by adopting grounded theory methods, you can direct, manage, and streamline your data collection and, moreover, construct an original analysis of your data”. Sixth, grounded theory enables researchers to gather rich data which “reveal what lies beneath the surface” and make the world “to appear new” (Charmaz, 2006: 14). The use social constructivism and grounded theory approaches have contributed to the depth and richness of this study in many ways.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a two-pronged research methodology. It is based on both primary and secondary data. Secondary data includes existing literature such as books, journal articles, reports by Truth Commissions (TCs), government departments, and international, regional, and national organisations; and texts which include visual arts such as photography, painting, sculpture, and architecture; performances such as dance and theater; and writings such as memoirs. The research also makes use of previously published testimonies, primarily those published by the CCJP. Primary data was collated through interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher interviewed a total of 61 people. This total consisted of 21 participants of focus group discussions and 40 individual interviewees.

The researcher conducted three focus group discussions, with each consisting of 7 participants. A focus group discussion was conducted on Monday 22 May and 10 individual interviews were conducted from 23 to 26 May 2017 in the Matobo community which is located south of Bulawayo. The case study of the Matobo community examines the interface between the Unity Accord and

reconciliation. It critiques the strengths and shortcomings of the Unity Accord in the search for healing and reconciliation after the *Gukurahundi* atrocities. A focus group discussion was conducted on Saturday 06 May and 10 individual interviews were conducted from 07 to 14 May 2017 in Bikita East and Bikita West communities in Masvingo province. The Bikita East and West case study examines the strengths and weaknesses of the ONHRI in the quest for healing and reconciliation during the GNU from 2009 to 2013. A focus group discussion was conducted on Friday 21 April 2017 and 10 individual interviews were conducted from 22 to 30 April 2017 in the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community in Mashonaland East province.

Finally, 10 interviews were conducted from 28 to 31 May 2017 in the Nyika community, Bikita West, where the CCJP implemented its peacebuilding interventions through the diocese of Masvingo. Using the case study of the CCJP, these interviews sought to establish the role which has been played by civil society in the quest for healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. The major variable which was used to select the case studies for this study was the degree and nature of conflict and violence which was experienced by these societies. The details about these are found in chapters four, five, and six. In terms of the CCJP, the organisation was chosen because it has a long and honorable history of advocating for inclusive reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. It was founded in 1972 during the national Catholic Bishop's Conference (CCJP and LRF 1997). Its founding objectives are to propagate human rights education; to conduct research on institutionalised violence; to monitor, report and document human rights violations; to promote a culture of tolerance for diversity; and to defend victims of human rights violations (CCJP 2009).

Given the sensitivity of this research, the researcher avoided accessing the participants directly, especially in the Matobo community. The researcher engaged the services of a professional counsellor to assist, especially in cases where interviewees shared traumatic experiences. The researcher also conducted basic research about organisations and institutions which provide counselling services in order to refer participants in cases where this was necessary. In Matobo, the researcher made use of the CCJP to access this community because it has worked with this and other communities for a long time. This has enabled the organisation to have a detailed understanding of this community as well as the ability to access the community sensitively and easily. In Mutoko and Bikita East and West communities, the researcher primarily worked with community leaders (especially village heads and headmen, from which he sought consent to conduct interviews in their area of jurisdiction), the church, and a professional facilitator to prepare a list of households whose members had expressed interest in participating in the focus group discussion or interviews.

The researcher proceeded to use simple random sampling to select the households from which members were selected for participation in the interviews. He prepared a list of members of the selected households who were eligible for the study and used the simple random sampling technique to select final participants. This ensured that each person had a known non-zero probability of being sampled. In a couple of cases, the researcher made use of expert sampling which is a technique where respondents are chosen in a non-random manner based on their expertise/knowledge of the phenomenon being studied. Throughout the course of the research process, the study abided by the ethics of research as required by the University of Kwazulu Natal. All participants were fully informed about the nature and objectives of the study. They were also informed that participation was voluntary and entirely based on their informed consent. They were requested to complete an informed consent form which details the objectives of the study and research ethics. The form was translated into Shona (see annexes). Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw or alter their consent without suffering any negative consequences. The fundamental rights of participants were protected and respected throughout the course of the research process, including the rights of confidentiality and anonymity.

The researcher also ensured that all participants were protected from physical, psychological, and any other forms of harm which could arise as a consequence of their participation in the research project. Safety measures which were taken included the choice of secure interview sites; proper timing of interviews; the conduct of risk assessment where and when necessary; the use of contact persons; the use of the CCJP, the church, and traditional leadership structures to access participants; the use of a professional facilitator; relaxing the interview schedule in order to make the researcher more alert to potential risks; setting a budget for contingency; informing relevant local actors such as the local government, community organisations, and traditional leaders; notifying the local police about the research, and keeping emergency contact numbers. The interview questions were framed in a way that they would not cause emotional or psychological harm to participants.

In order to ensure the proper referencing of interviewees, to preserve their anonymity, and to make them easily distinguishable for the reader, the author has developed interview codes which shows the date on which the interview was conducted, the month in which it was conducted, and the sequence in which the interviews were conducted for a particular date, that is, first, second, third, etc. For example, interviewee 28M2: '28' represents the date on which the interview was conducted; 'M' represents the month in which the interview was conducted (in this case it is 'May') and '2' shows that the interviewee was the 2nd person to be interviewed on that particular day. This is the referencing which is used throughout the study. Individual interviewees and focus group participants are distinguished throughout the study. Focus group participants are coded in terms of the date on which the focus group was conducted, the month in which the focus group discussion was conducted, and the number of a particular focus group participant. For example, in focus group participant 21A1, '21' represents the date on which the focus group was conducted, 'A' represents the month (in this case it is 'April'), and '1' represents the number of a particular focus group participant. Because each focus group discussion consisted of 7 participants, participants of each focus group discussion are numbered from 1 to 7.

1.9 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

This section discusses the chapters in this study, how they address its objectives, and their major arguments. The thesis has eight chapters. Chapter one discusses the background and context of the study, the research problem and the significance of the research, the objectives of the research, research questions and hypothesis, delimitations of the study, the literature review, research design, methodology of the study, and structure of the study. Using the experiences of countries such as South Africa, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Chile, and Rwanda, chapter two examines the strengths and shortcomings of different mechanisms of reconciliation as applied to post-conflict societies. These are Truth Commissions; amnesty; reparations; acknowledgement, apology, and memorialisation; institutional reforms; and local and traditional approaches to reconciliation.

Chapter three examines the intersection between the one-party state agenda and conflicts such as *Gukurahundi* and politically motivated violence which was committed between 1980 and 1987. The chapter discusses different mechanisms through which ZANU-PF sought to establish a constitutional one-party state. This chapter discusses in detail the political environment within which reconciliation processes were to take place. An understanding of this environment is important because it enables a discussion of how the political environment influenced, shaped, and affected the politics of reconciliation in Zimbabwe. The major argument which is made in this chapter is that the one-party state agenda caused entrenched intolerance for opposition party politics. This intolerance manifested in different ways which include violence, intimidation, politicisation of the state, monopolisation of the state media and resources, centralisation of power in the office of

the president, the use of draconian legislation to suppress dissent, and the cooptation or repression of civil society.

The study has four case study chapters whose main objective is to critique reconciliation processes using the information which was collated from the communities which were affected by conflict. Using the case study of the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe (UMP) community, chapter four examines the shortcomings of state-led reconciliation processes and how these relate to or conflict with community-led processes. The chapter speaks to the core objective of the study. It establishes the nature of violations which were suffered in this district during the independence struggle and after independence. It also establishes the healing and reconciliation needs of the district from the perspectives of the residents themselves. This background is used in order to critique the successes and failures of state-led (focusing on the policy of reconciliation which was adopted in 1980 and the Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration) and community-based reconciliation processes. The major finding in this chapter is that state-led reconciliation processes failed to address the needs of the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community because they focused on promoting reconciliation at elite and political levels without doing so at grassroots level. Another finding is that if not supported by top-down approaches as well as institutional reforms to promote democracy and a human rights culture, bottom-up approaches to reconciliation may be largely uncoordinated, controversial, resisted, and characterised by human rights abuses and the exclusion of populations such as women, children, and people with disabilities. The chapter concludes that a mixture of the two approaches tends to achieve the best results in the quest for healing and reconciliation.

Using the case study of the Matobo community, chapter five examines the successes and shortcomings of the Unity Accord in the search for national healing and reconciliation after the *Gukurahundi* atrocities. It also discusses how the affected communities have responded to the real and perceived failures of the Unity Accord, particularly the rise of 'Ndebele nationalism'. The major argument which is made in this chapter is that the only success of the Unity Accord was that it marked the cessation of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities and the return of peace and security to affected communities. However, in terms of reconciliation, the Unity Accord failed primarily because it was motivated by ZANU-PF's desire to establish a one-party state rather than the desire to promote healing and reconciliation in affected communities. The chapter found out that strictly speaking, the Unity Accord was not a reconciliation project. It was not characterised by essential reconciliation interventions such as truth-recovery, acknowledgement, apologies, reparations, inclusive development, relationship building, memorialisation, institutional reforms, and proper mourning and burial of victims. As a result, the affected communities are still struggling to close the dark chapter of *Gukurahundi*.

Using the case studies of the Bikita East and Bikita West communities, chapter six examines the successes and shortcomings of the ONHRI in the search for healing and reconciliation during the GNU. It discusses the forms of violations which were suffered by these communities from 2000 to 2008. It also discusses the healing and reconciliation needs of these communities. The reason is to ensure that reconciliation interventions by the ONHRI are critiqued in view of the violations which were suffered, their impact on the affected community, and the healing and reconciliation needs and aspirations of the affected community. One of the findings in this chapter is that the ONHRI failed to promote healing and reconciliation because of factors which were internal and external to it. These include that the polarised political environment in which it operated was inimical to the implementation of reconciliation processes; it was shaped and driven by antagonistic political interests; it took a top-down, elite-focused approach; its mandate was amorphous; it lacked the necessary resources; and it failed to break the cultures of violence, denial, and impunity.

Using the case study of the CCJP, chapter seven examines the role of civil society in peace, healing, and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. It examines reconciliation by the CCJP during the independence struggle, from 1980 to 2000, and the post-2000 period. It also uses the case study of the Nyika community in Masvingo to critique the reconciliation interventions by the CCJP's Masvingo diocese. This enables the study to interrogate reconciliation processes by civil society not from the perspective of civil society itself, but of the people who were affected by its interventions. The chapter found out that in the absence of meaningful state-led reconciliation processes, civil society has promoted community-based reconciliation processes. It also found out that community-based reconciliation processes tend to be inclusive and to be sensitive to the needs of affected communities. However, the study argues that these processes have been undermined by the politicisation of civil society which has tended to cause a backlash from ZANU-PF supporters; the lack of resources; and because of their tendency to be devoid of a coordinated and systematic approach. Based on the discussions and findings in other sections of this study, chapter eight examines the insights from Zimbabwe's reconciliation processes and the processes and mechanisms which need to be implemented in order to ensure that healing and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe achieve their objectives.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This study examines the strengths and shortcomings of state-led reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe which include the policy of reconciliation which was adopted in 1980, the Unity Accord of 1987, and the ONHRI which operated during the GNU from 2009 to 2013. It examines the conflicts and violence (in terms of their causes and impact) which necessitated the implementation of national healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. These include the *Gukurahundi* atrocities and election-related violence which was perpetrated from 2000 to 2008. The study argues that state-led reconciliation processes have failed to achieve healing and reconciliation. It is against the background of this problem that the study primarily seeks to answer two research questions which are: what explains the failure of reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe, and which mechanisms should be adopted in order to ensure that reconciliation processes achieve their objectives?

The argument is made that although the existing literature provides insights into the travails of reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe, there are number of gaps which it intends to fill. These include the need to examine the roles of different actors in promoting the politics of reconciliation in Zimbabwe, especially from a bottom-up point of view; the need to examine how the political environment has affected the implementation of inclusive reconciliation processes; and the need to examine state-led and community-based reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe, especially in respect of how they have interacted with, affected, and/or reinforced each other. The study makes use of secondary and primary data which was collated through interviews and focus group discussions. It is based on the case studies of the Matobo community, the Bikita East and Bikita West communities, the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community, and the CCJP. It is informed by the social constructivist world view, the grounded theory, and the theory and practice of reconciliation. This study notes that there are many mechanisms through which healing and reconciliation can be achieved and that each post-conflict society has to find the mechanisms which are suitable for its context. The next chapter examines the various faces of healing and reconciliation. This chapter establishes the theoretical context within which reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe are critiqued in this study.

CHAPTER 2: EXAMINING THE FACES OF RECONCILIATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Reconciliation is a complex, intricate, and multi-faceted process which is characterised by different sorts of interventions. Post-conflict societies tend to take different approaches to reconciliation because of factors such as their unique cultural and religious values; their social, political, and economic circumstances; the circumstances of the conflict and its impact; and individual and collective demands from actors such as victims, communities, political parties, and civil society. It is important to note that reconciliation takes place at different levels of society such as personal, inter-personal, societal, and national. These levels of reconciliation respond differently to different reconciliation processes. This shows that they require different approaches. As a result, interventions which promote reconciliation at one level may not be able to do so at another level. This explains why Bloomfield (2006: 29) emphasises the importance of distinguishing between the processes which are needed to promote reconciliation at personal and interpersonal level from those at the socio-political level.

This shows that it is important to implement reconciliation interventions which are able to promote reconciliation at different levels of society and that in order to achieve this, different actors should be involved in the reconciliation agenda. Bloomfield (2006: 10) states that inter-personal reconciliation “is a powerful and significant process” such that “it is at the inter-personal level that reconciliation as an end-state takes on real significance”. Kriesberg (2002: 48) states that when reconciliation takes place at different levels, co-existence can take place. Kriesberg defines co-existence as “an accommodation between members of different communities...who live together without one collectivity trying to destroy or severely harm the other”. However, it should be noted that although different approaches should be used to address different reconciliation needs, the approaches should “speak to each other” instead of conflicting or undermining each other.

It is important to note that there is a difference between state-led and community-led reconciliation processes. On the one hand, state-led processes are high profile, top-down approaches such as Truth Commissions, institutional reforms, public acknowledgement and apology, reparations, prosecution of alleged perpetrators, amnesties and memorialisation. These processes tend to be effective in promoting healing at the national level and less effective at personal level because they tend to take a political and legalistic rather than a clinical or psychological approach. However, they can create an environment in which healing at person, interpersonal and community levels could take place. Danieli (1992: 757) states that it is important “to heal the socio-political context for the full healing of the individuals and their families”. Lederach (1997, 2001) states that micro grassroots and macro political level peacebuilding processes can interdependently promote sustainable peace. On the other hand, community-led processes “are bottom-up and can occur outside, or in the absence of such state-wide legitimacy (Bloomfield 2006: 26). These processes are initiated and conducted by communities with a view to deal with a violent past. They include the use of informal, context-specific mechanisms of reconciliation which are based on religious, cultural, and moral traditions. They are more placed to address reconciliation needs at personal, inter-personal and community levels.

However, it is noted in this study that reconciliation processes can be community-based but not necessarily community-led. The fact that reconciliation processes are based on local traditions and that they are implemented at the community level does not necessarily make them community-led. For example, the *Gacaca* courts of Rwanda were based in Rwandan traditions but were state-led. They became distorted when coopted by the state, and distorted again under pressure to conform to

international legal norms. It is also possible for reconciliation processes which could have started as community-led to be “hijacked” or “distorted” by other actors such as the state and civil society. Civil society led reconciliation processes take place at different levels. For example, civil society can lead reconciliation processes at the community level with a view to assist communities to cope with a violent past. Civil society can also lead reconciliation processes at the political level through mediation, advocacy, awareness campaigns, and mobilisation activities.

It is against this background that this chapter examines the strengths and shortcomings of different faces of reconciliation as applied to post-conflict societies. The chapter forms the foundation upon which the study critiques reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. The chapter starts with discussing the distinction and interface between retributive and restorative justice, and the strengths and weaknesses of these forms of justice in the quest for healing and reconciliation. The chapter proceeds to discuss the various faces of reconciliation, which are Truth Commissions; amnesty; reparations; acknowledgement; apology; memorialisation; institutional reforms; and local and traditional approaches to reconciliation. Using the cases of South Africa, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, and Chile; the chapter discusses the strengths and shortcomings of these various faces of reconciliation in the search for healing and reconciliation. It also examines the role of civil society in reconciliation processes. It concludes by examining the relationship between state-led and community-centered reconciliation processes.

2.2 WHAT IS RECONCILIATION?

According to Brouneus (2003: 20), reconciliation is a “societal process that involves the mutual acknowledgement of past sufferings and the changing of destructive attitudes and behavior into constructive relationships towards sustainable peace”. Galtung (2001:4) asserts that “reconciliation = closure + healing, closure in the sense of not reopening hostilities, healing in the sense of being rehabilitated”. This study notes that reconciliation is a long-term process which should take place at different levels of society such as individual, family, community, and nation. According to Lederach (1997), reconciliation should take a four-pronged approach which involves the promotion of peace, justice, truth-telling, and mercy. Kriesberg (2007) argues that there are four dimensions of reconciliation which are essential in post-conflict societies which are shared truth, justice, regard, and security.

According to Mashingaidze (2010), reconciliation involves official recognition of the violent past, truth-telling, justice, addressing the needs of the victims and allowing affected communities the right to express themselves and memorialise the violent past. Assefa (2006) suggests that reconciliation enables communities to create a social and spiritual space in which they acknowledge the violent past and exercise the freedom to express their loss and grief caused by injustice with a view to deal with the past and transform relationships. According to the Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2004: 236) “reconciliation is based on a common determination not to repeat the past and to allow both victims and perpetrators to live side by side in a spirit of tolerance and respect”. Ivorgba (2005: 3) argues that “when we are reconciled, our interest goes beyond just trying to live together, but we are more concerned with the wellbeing of the other person”. Successful reconciliation prevents past abuses from recurring because it breaks the cycle of violence, rebuilds non-violent relationships, and strengthens democratic institutions (The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance 2003).

For reconciliation to take place, it is important to transform relationships at individual and collective levels from hatred, suspicion, prejudice, anger, vengeance, alienation, and indifference to empathy,

tolerance, understanding, trust, cooperation and above all, a common vision for the future. Lederach (2002: 195) argues that:

In my estimation the starting point for understanding and supporting reconciliation process is a reorientation toward the centrality of relationships. It is in the ebb and flow, the quality of interdependence of relationships that we find the birthplace and home of reconciliation. This is quite different than a focus on 'issues', the shaping of substantive agreements, or cognitive and rational analytic-based approaches to conflict resolution. In these latter approaches attention is placed on the external, often symptomatic expressions of how the relationship is negotiated. But they often remain just that, external and symptomatic. To enter reconciliation process is to enter the domain of the internal world, the inner understandings, fears and hopes, perceptions and interpretations of the relationship itself.

The restoration of relationships enables parties to the conflict to demonstrate concern for each other's needs and welfare. Forgiveness can drive the process and state of reconciliation because it cultivates mutual trust, empathy and understanding between victims and perpetrators and creates an atmosphere which "settles the past and opens possibilities for the future" (Digeser 2001: 20-21). This study uses the definition of reconciliation which was put forward by Mashingaidze (2010: 34) which states that reconciliation is the transformation of relationships through the official recognition of the violent past, truth-telling, justice, addressing the needs of victims and perpetrators, and allowing affected communities the right to express themselves and to memorialise the violent past. The study notes that forgiveness is necessary but not sufficient in promoting reconciliation because there are many mechanisms which should be used to promote reconciliation. It also notes that different actors such as the state, civil society, affected communities, traditional leaders, community leaders, and the regional and the international community have a role to play in reconciliation processes and that top-down and bottom-up approaches can either compliment or conflict with each other.

However, this study notes that the concepts and theories of reconciliation are problematic, especially when they are applied in the African context. This is because most of them have emerged from the global North. It is against this background that there is emerging reconciliation and transitional justice theory, including from the global South, and especially within the de-colonial school of thought, which argues that the theories of reconciliation which emerged from the global North do not always resonate in African contexts. For example, some scholars argue that from the perspective of African justice theory, the terms "restorative" and "retributive" justice are problematic in the sense that African traditional justice practices involved punishments such as beatings and expulsions but with the aim of restoring the community. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Benyera (2015: 26) argue that "the traditional post-1945 Nuremburg-criminal justice" system is problematic, especially when it is applied to post-conflict African contexts because of its propensity to dichotomise a people emerging from mass violence into perpetrators and victims. Some scholars are beginning to argue that it is difficult for justice and reconciliation processes in Africa to be successful when "colonial" theories and concepts of justice and reconciliation are applied.

2.3 RECONCILIATION AND JUSTICE

This section examines the relationship between reconciliation and justice, focusing on restorative and retributive justice mechanisms. Post-conflict states have to find appropriate ways of dealing with past violations if they are to heal and reconcile. Hamber (1995: 36) argues that "when countries are attempting to overcome a violent past, it is better to deal with the past through investigations, truth recovery, justice, and support for victims and survivors of violence than to ignore it". Whatever mechanisms may be used, the majority view is that justice must be done in order for post-

conflict societies to promote peace, co-existence, trust, empathy, healing, and reconciliation (Kritz 1995, Alexander 1998, Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008, Assefa 2000, Auret 1992, Bar-On 2007, International IDEA 2003). Justice may be achieved primarily through either retributive or restorative means. Retribution seeks to punish perpetrators through mechanisms such as criminal prosecutions (Braithwaite 2002) which can be conducted by national, regional, or international tribunals such as the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Prosecutions can also be conducted by international *ad hoc* tribunals such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTFY) which was mandated to prosecute individuals allegedly responsible for violations of international humanitarian law during the armed conflict in the former Yugoslavia, and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) which was responsible for prosecuting individuals who perpetrated genocide and crimes against humanity committed in Rwanda between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (Huyse 2003: 100). International jurisprudence has also moved to introduce hybrid courts which consist of international and national judges such as the Special Court for Sierra Leone which was tasked with prosecuting those people who bore the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law since 30 November 1996 (Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Volume. 1, 2004: 17). Aukerman (2002: 70) argues that there is a strong preference for prosecution of perpetrators in the international legal community.

Huyse (2003: 97) argues that retributive justice is predicated on the view that “perpetrators should not go unpunished - that they should pay a price” and that “there is no peace and no reconciliation without punitive justice”. Proponents of retributive justice argue that the failure to prosecute perpetrators promotes a culture of impunity. If prosecutions are not conducted, victims may also suspect that the leaders of the new government collaborated with the former regime to perpetrate abuses. Advocates of retributive justice also argue that criminal prosecutions heal the wounds and restore the dignity of victims, foster democratic reforms and consolidation, break the vicious cycle of violence and impunity, and deter future violations of human rights. Retributive justice suits the needs of those who regard revenge and punishment as a form of closure. Hamber and Wilson (2002: 38) argue that “the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission has, in the interests of national reconciliation, muted feelings of vengeance and replaced them with what it calls a more restorative model. As a result of national imperatives, survivors have generally felt inhibited in expressing their legitimate rage and anger, and demanding just retribution”.

However, retributive justice has been criticised on grounds that it may not be possible because of the prevailing political circumstances; that it is perpetrator-focused and tends to frustrate victims by marginalising their needs and aspirations; that it focusses on the guilt and punishment of individuals and overlooks the collective dimension of conflict; that post-conflict societies are often characterised by a compromised criminal justice system and resource constraints which may undermine their capacity to uphold justice, human rights, and the rule of law; that it may be counterproductive to reconciliation; that threats of prosecution may break fragile peace agreements; and that it tends to be costly, cumbersome, and time-consuming (Huyse 2003: 97).

On the other hand, restorative justice focuses on building relationships rather than on taking criminal measures and instituting punitive justice mechanisms against perpetrators (Mark 2007; Braithwaite 2002; Rama 2002). According to Huyse (2003: 111) restorative justice “works with the full participation of the victim and of the relevant communities in discussing the facts, identifying the causes of misconduct and the defining sanctions. The ultimate aim is to restore relations as far as possible, both between victim and offender and within the broader community to which they belong”. Umbreit (2001: xxviii–xxix) argues that restorative justice:

- Is concerned far more with restoration of the victim and the victimised community than with the increasingly costly punishment of the offender;
- Elevates the importance of the victim in the criminal justice process through increased involvement, input, and services;
- Requires that offenders be held directly accountable to the person or community they have victimised;
- Encourages the entire community to be involved in holding the offender accountable and promoting a healing response to the needs of victims and offenders;
- Places greater emphasis on getting offenders to accept responsibility for their behaviour and make amendments, whenever possible, than on the severity of punishment; and that
- Recognises a community responsibility for the social conditions that contribute to offender behaviour.

Restorative justice takes a three-pronged approach to reconciliation, that is, addressing the needs of victims (including the need to reconcile with the affected community), addressing the needs of perpetrators (which include reintegrative and reconciliatory measures, and addressing the root causes), and the need to restore the community (Johnstone 2002: 392). Proponents of restorative justice acknowledge the essence of making perpetrators accountable but they believe that healing goes beyond punishment (Mertus 2000). Clark (2007: 8) asserts that the “punishment of criminals is necessary but should be facilitated in ways which enable perpetrators and victims to rebuild relationships”. Restorative justice seeks to avoid the stigmatisation of offenders as criminals and unfit for living in society. It encourages victims, offenders, and the community to be directly involved in resolving the conflict, with the state and legal professionals acting as facilitators (Report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, Volume. 1, 1998: 126).

However, it is important to note that retributive and restorative justice are not mutually exclusive processes. It is possible for post-conflict societies to use interventions which include retributive and restorative measures. Minow (1998: 135) argues in favour of using both retributive and restorative justice interventions because of what she regards as “the incompleteness and inescapable inadequacy of each possible response to collective atrocities”. However, whether a post-conflict society adopts retributive or restorative justice or both; in order to be successful, a diversity of actors should be actively involved in reconciliation processes (Machakanja 2010, International IDEA 2003, Ncube 2015). Actors such as civil society, the state, the religious community, local communities, the business community, community leaders, traditional leadership structures, human rights activists, and the international community play different roles.

There is a general agreement among scholars that civil society plays a critical role in both retributive and restorative justice processes because it has many strengths (Baxter 2005; The World Bank 2006; Toure 2002). Baxter (2005: 125) argues that “any truth commissions face constraints to exploring fully the past because the nature of the political transition limits their ability to look at certain categories of abuses. Civil society groups can go beyond the mandate to explore the full range of abuses and to follow through on the recommendations made by the commissions to promote truth,

justice, and reconciliation in the society”. Some scholars argue that the international community should assist reconciliation processes in post-conflict societies especially because such societies are often characterised by decimated or compromised judiciary and other structures and that the assistance should be limited to helping post-conflict societies to help themselves (Graybill and Lanegran 2004, Stanley 2010).

2.4 HEALING, FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

Violent conflicts are characterised by very traumatic experiences, some of which may leave victims and societies dehumanised and hardly able to move on. Healing and forgiveness are regarded by scholars as important in the process of reconciliation. In terms of healing, Staub *et al* (2005: 302) state that healing and reconciliation “need to go together”, especially in those contexts in which victims and perpetrators continue to live in the same community. Bloomfield *et al* (2003: 77) defines healing as “any strategy, process or activity that improves the psychological health of individuals following extensive violent conflict”. Healing applies to the victims, the perpetrators, and those who were neither victims nor perpetrators. It applies to different levels of society which includes the individual, the family, groups, the community and the broad socio-political context. The political context can facilitate or hinder healing.

Some scholars believe that there is a relationship between healing and forgiveness. For example, Porter (2015: 22) argues that forgiveness has “healing power”. Montiel (2000: 97) asserts that the purpose of forgiveness is to heal human beings at intrapersonal, interpersonal and socio-political levels. The Sierra Leone Truth Commission (2004; 123) maintains that forgiveness was the first step which victims of the civil war needed to take towards national healing. Staub *et al* (2005: 76) state that forgiveness “involves letting go of anger and the desire for revenge” and that it helps victims to heal and to move away from identifying themselves as victims. Scholars also believe that forgiveness is very important in the process of reconciliation. Montiel (2002: 9) states that “forgiveness involves a combination of thinking and feeling processes. It entails remembering, not forgetting the unjust act. But the remembrance is experienced without bitterness, and in order to restore justice”. Montiel further states that when forgiveness takes place at a collective level, “atmospheres of revenge and bitterness gradually give way to increased trust and acceptance of differences”. People such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu believe that forgiveness is central to reconciliation such that “there is no future without forgiveness”. Montiel (2000: 97) states that:

Forgiveness takes on different meanings on the intra-personal, interpersonal, and socio-political levels. Intrapersonally, forgiveness exists when a victim ceases resentment and negative judgement against the aggressor. When this psychological state is communicated to the offender, then forgiveness becomes part of an interpersonal relationship. When considering sociopolitical forgiveness, we deal with large pluralities of individuals, not human isolates nor dyads. Sociopolitical forgiveness occurs when a whole group of offended people cease their collective resentment and condemnation of another group that is perceived to have caused the social offence. Because sociopolitical forgiveness encompasses large groups of individuals, its nature is qualitatively different from intrapersonal and interpersonal forgiveness.

However, scholars such as Dwyer (2003: 23) and Bloomfield (2006: 56) argue that reconciliation can take place without forgiveness because the two are independent of each other. For Bloomfield, it is important to have a minimalist understanding of reconciliation in which a post-conflict society builds minimal relations which enables it to move towards a stable, peaceful, shared and sustainable future. Bloomfield believes that such relations may be built in the absence of forgiveness and that forgiveness is not synonymous with reconciliation because it is possible for individuals and

communities to forgive each other without necessarily reconciling with each other or to reconcile with each other without having forgiven each other. There are also scholars who argue that forgiveness can either be constructive or destructive. For example, they argue that forgiveness which takes place in the absence of acknowledgement and expression of regret by perpetrators may promote impunity (Staub *et al*, 2005; Montiel 2000).

There is a shared view among scholars that there are factors which may assist victims to forgive. These include truth-telling, reparations, acknowledgement of the harm which was caused, and asking for forgiveness. It is also important for victims to be allowed to “pour out their hearts” so that they can express their views, emotions and feelings in respect of the conflict and the reconciliation processes. The South African TC (1998: 116) states that it is unrealistic to expect forgiveness “without providing victims with the necessary space to air their grievances and give voice to previously denied feelings”. The ZCBC, EFZ and ZCC (2006: 48) argue that reconciliation is a process of “restoring broken relationships through forgiveness, it is about healing the spiritual and physical wounds” and that “genuine reconciliation is possible only when the truth has been told, confession made and forgiveness received”. Reparations can also promote forgiveness. In his testimony before the Sierra Leone TC, Tamba Finnoh, stated that for the victims who were maimed during the conflict to be able to forgive, they must be provided with resources which can sustain them and their children for the rest of their lives because many of them were no longer able to work (Sierra Leone TC, 2004).

However, forgiveness is not something which can be forced on victims and it should be noted that victims have the “right” to withhold it (Crocker 2007: 43). Bloomfield (2006: 23) states that during the first stages of reconciliation processes, many victims find it difficult to forgive and that forgiveness “remains in the power of victims to give or to withhold”. According to Joinet (1997 34), “as a factor in reconciliation, forgiveness, a private act, implies that the victim must know the perpetrator of the violations and that the latter has been able to show repentance. If forgiveness is to be granted, it must first have been sought”. Scheid (2012: 1) states that African theological anthropology shows the congruence among interpersonal and social expressions of forgiveness and reconciliation which are based in the community’s commitment to the common good. The next sections critiques the faces of reconciliation. Forgiveness can contribute to conflict resolution when parties to the conflict acknowledge that they have a role to play in reconstructing their relationship and identities (Hicks 2002).

2.5 TRUTH COMMISSIONS

This section examines the strengths and shortcomings of Truth Commissions (TCs) in reconciliation processes. The establishment of TCs in post-conflict societies or societies transitioning from authoritarian to democratic rule has become popular in recent decades because “telling the truth” is regarded as the cornerstone of reconciliation processes (Hayner 2002, International IDEA 2003, Hamber and Wilson 1998). Scholars generally argue that official and public acknowledgement and exposure of the truth (as opposed to denial) creates an atmosphere which is conducive to individual and collective healing and reconciliation (Hayner 1994, 2001; Mendeloff 2004). Huyse (2003: 23) argues that “silence and amnesia are the enemies of justice” because they:

- Deny victims of conflict the public acknowledgement of their grief;
- Encourage offenders to follow the route of denial of their culpability; and that they

- Rob future generations of the opportunity to draw lessons from the past that would enable them to engage in reconstructing lasting reconciliation.

TCs have been established in countries such as Chile, Argentina, El Salvador, South Africa, Guatemala, Liberia, and Sierra Leone (Graybill and Lanegran 2004; Freeman and Hayner 2003; Stanley 2001; Baxter 2005).

2.5.1 *What are Truth Commissions and what is their mandate?*

The “right to know” the truth is central to the work of TCs. Joinet (1997: 27) argues that “every people have the inalienable right to know the truth about past events and about the circumstances and reasons which led, through the consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights, to the perpetration of aberrant crimes. Full and effective exercise of the right to the truth is essential to avoid any recurrence of such acts in the future”. In authoritarian contexts, the narratives about a violent past are often deliberately distorted, misrepresented, and repressed by the state media, the judiciary, and other public institutions in order to protect the legitimacy and integrity of the incumbent regime.

In the case of Zimbabwe, the narrative of the *Gukurahundi* massacres remains controversial in terms of issues such as the perpetrators, the purpose, the nature and degree of the abuses, and their impact on affected communities and the nation at large. The government continues to use formal and informal strategies to deny responsibility and to repress discussions regarding the massacres. It is therefore not surprising that in most post-conflict societies, different actors such as individuals and communities, the government, opposition parties, and civil society may have differing and sometimes conflicting narratives regarding past abuses. TCs consist of the following characteristics:

- They are temporary bodies, usually in operation from one to two years;
- They are officially sanctioned, authorised, or empowered by the state and, in some cases, by the armed opposition as well as in a peace accord;
- They are non-judicial bodies that enjoy a measure of *de jure* independence. They do not have the power to impose a prison sentence on anyone and they may not be able to compel people to come forward and respond to questions;
- They are usually created at a point of political transition, either from war to peace or from authoritarian rule to democracy;
- They focus on the past;
- They investigate patterns of abuses and specific violations committed over a period of time, not just a single specific event; and complete their work with the submission of a final report that contains conclusions and recommendations. However, they cannot enforce their recommendations; and

- They focus on violations of human rights and sometimes of humanitarian norms as well (Freeman and Hayner 2003: 125).

The mandate of TCs is basically to make investigations into the root causes, the nature, course, and extent of abuses and violations which were committed over a specific time period (Rotberg and Thompson 2000). For example, the Sierra Leonean TC was established “to create an impartial historical record of violations and abuses” related to the armed conflict from 1991 to 1999 through investigating and recording the abuses, including their antecedents, their internal and external context, and whether they were a result of deliberate planning, policy, or authorisation by any government, individual, or group (Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Volume 1. 2004: 7). The South African TC, which has been regarded by many scholars as Africa’s best account of restorative justice, was established in 1994 with a view to establish as complete as possible an accounting of the gross human rights violations which took place between 1960 and 1994 (Graybill and Lanegran 2004: 5-6). The Liberian TC was mandated to, *inter alia*, establish the root causes of the conflict, identify victims and perpetrators, and make recommendations for prosecution, reparation, amnesty, reconciliation, and institutional reforms (Consolidated Final Report of the Republic of Liberia’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2009).

2.5.2 What are the strengths of Truth Commissions?

TCs can generate many positive outcomes in the reconciliation process (Michael 1998). First, they can establish the historical truth of the conflict. They can achieve this through private interviews, public hearings, research, and investigations. They also engage different stakeholders such as civil society, grassroots organisations, state institutions, and the media (Freeman and Hayner 2003: 125). In the case of South Africa, the TC process “ensured that those who refused to believe the full extent of South Africa’s crimes and who had dismissed the stories as ANC “communist” lies would be forced to hear the truth, and not from the ANC, but from the perpetrators themselves. No longer could anyone in South Africa pretend that the abuses perpetrated under apartheid did not happen or were not as bad as many of its victims had been alleging” (Campbell 2000: 49). The Sierra Leone TC argues that TCs have “become well-recognised as valuable and effective mechanisms in societies emerging from conflict. They help to ensure accountability for human rights violations, they clarify the historical record and put myths and lies about the past to rest, and they assist in giving a vision for the future” (Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Volume. 1, 2004: 77).

Second, the findings of TCs can be used for initiating the prosecution of alleged perpetrators. Evenson (2004: 735) argues that “truth commissions can augment the work of prosecutions in establishing accountability for widespread human rights abuses”. For example, in its report, the Kenyan Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission (2013: 128-161) included an appendix with names of alleged perpetrators of violence and recommended the Director of Public Prosecutions for either further investigations or prosecution. For some of the alleged perpetrators, it recommended that they should be regarded as unfit to hold public office.

Third, TCs provide a public forum for victims and perpetrators of violence and abuses to openly articulate their individual and collective narratives/trauma of the conflict in a sympathetic and safe environment. Many of the victims would be speaking about their experiences to a national audience for the very first time. This can help build empathy and deter acts of vengeance and to counter the rivalries and hatreds arising from past violations (Freeman and Hayner 2003: 126). Fourth, TCs engage the public and stimulate public debate and discussions about political, moral, cultural, social,

psychological, and spiritual issues which should be addressed during the reconciliation process. This is important because the views of different sections of society should be taken into consideration in the making of decisions about how to cope with a violent past (Thoms *et al*, 2008; Freeman and Hayner 2003).

Fifth, investigations by TCs are able to identify the root causes of the conflict and the individuals and institutions which failed to uphold human rights (Campbell 2000, Freeman and Hayner 2003). Such evidence is very important for institutional and legal reforms which will enable the society to deal with past violations. In their final reports, TCs document their findings and recommendations on what should be done to prevent the occurrence of abuses and violations which were suffered, to address impunity, to respond to the needs of victims, and to promote healing and reconciliation. Thus TCs can establish a firm foundation which enables post-conflict societies to move on.

2.5.3 *What are the weaknesses of Truth Commissions?*

Although TCs are regarded as important in facilitating reconciliation, they are characterised by a number of shortcomings. Governments are often unwilling/unable to (comprehensively) implement recommendations from TCs (Kritz 2009; Fletcher and Weinstein 2009). Stanley (2001) argues that in the case of South Africa, there was lack of will from government, the business community, and the judiciary to implement the recommendations of the TC and that this disappointed many victims who would have wanted to see the elimination of the apartheid conditions of gross inequality and oppression. Freeman and Hayner (2003: 141) argue that in South Africa, “the government made no commitment to implementing the TC’s many recommendations, including the recommendations on victim reparation”. TCs may therefore raise expectations which government might be unable to meet due to the shortage of resources and/or lack of commitment.

Some scholars argue that it is important not to conflate individual reconciliation and national reconciliation and that TCs are largely incapable of facilitating the former. For example, Stanley (2001: 46) states that it is important to distinguish between individual reconciliation and national or political reconciliation and that the former is difficult to achieve through truth commissions. Hamber and Wilson (2002: 37) maintain that national healing is a metaphor because “nations do not have collective psyches which can be healed, nor do whole nations suffer post-traumatic stress disorder and to assert otherwise is to psychologise an abstract entity which exists primarily in the minds of nation-building politicians”. Hamber (1995) and Hamber and Wilson (2002) argue that TCs are not able to address the psychological needs of individuals because they tend to offer a very simplistic narrative of transitioning from a violent past and that this may achieve partial closure for scores of victims.

Ignatieff (1998: 169) states that one of the main challenges faced by TCs is that they are hardly able to heal individual trauma and that “we tend to vest our nations with conscience, identities and memories as if they were individuals. It is problematic enough to vest an individual with a single identity: our inner lives are like battlegrounds over which uneasy truces reign; the identity of a nation is additionally fissured by religion, ethnicity, class, and education”. According to Wessells and Monteiro (2004), community healing can occur through cultural reclamation and strengthening social structures and practices.

Truth commissions focus on seeking the truth but it should be noted that the truth in and of itself may not enable a society to reconcile. Hayes (1898: 83) argues that “just revealing, is not just healing. It depends on how we reveal, the context of the revealing, and what it is that we are revealing”. Landman (2001: 3) suggests that “establishing the truth may not necessarily forge

reconciliation as old and perhaps repressed memories are reinvigorated through testimony”. Truth-telling and -seeking processes need to be supported by other interventions such as addressing the needs of the affected societies, addressing impunity, structural violence and inequalities, introducing an effective reparations programme, and rebuilding relationships between formerly antagonistic parties.

The capacity of TCs to “excavate the truth” and to recommend measures which transform society may be influenced and sometimes undermined by historical factors as well as by their institutional design. Some societies have no resources and strong and effective institutional structures to support an open, inclusive, and effective truth-seeking process. Baxter (2005: 125) argues that “commissions suffer from a chronic lack of resources and time to document fully the past human rights abuses” and that “many truth commissions face constraints to exploring fully the past because the nature of the political transition limits their ability to look at certain categories of abuses”. The Sierra Leonean TC states that given their limited life span and the resources which are usually made available to them (especially in terms of professional researchers and investigators) “it may be illusory to think that bodies like truth commissions can establish a complete historical record” but they can “discredit and debunk certain lies about conflicts” (Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2004: 32).

Mamdani (2000: 167) maintains that the South African TC yielded “an institutionally produced truth, as the outcome of a process of truth-seeking, one whose boundaries were so narrowly defined by power and whose search was so committed to reinforcing the new power, that it turned the political boundaries of a compromise into analytical boundaries of truth-seeking”. In Chile, the mandate of the TC “limited the commission to addressing only the individual cases that resulted in death and enforced disappearances. This effectively ignored all of the survivors of torture and arbitrary detention, who were considered beyond the mandate” (Baxter 2005: 345).

Access to information is essential in the truth seeking process. However, TCs often battle with the challenge of accessing information regarding abuses which were perpetrated by an authoritarian regime. For example, during the *Gukurahundi* massacres in Zimbabwe, the government imposed a curfew on the affected areas so as to commit the atrocities “under the cover of darkness”. According to the CCJP and the LRF (1997: xii), “while the suffering caused by colonial rule is widely documented and internationally recognised, the suffering in Matabeleland and Midlands in the 1980s is a history that is unknown except to those who experienced it first-hand”. In South Africa, Stanley (2001) argues that the TC faced the challenge of accessing the truth of apartheid and that some sections of society such as women were underrepresented in the data collection process.

The South African TC itself acknowledged that “swathes of official documentary memory, particularly around the inner workings of the apartheid state’s security apparatus, have been obliterated” and that “numerous investigations of gross human rights violations were hampered by the absence of documentation” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report, Volume.1 1998: 236). Stanley (2001: 526) argues that the South African TC provided “a partial truth” because thousands of victims and thousands of perpetrators did not come forward to share their stories and the commission focused principally on “gross violations” of human rights, resulting in a large scale of non-participation. The Sierra Leone TC opines that “a partial truth is not truth at all” but it is “merely the distorted version of events tailored to suit one of the parties” (Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2004: 32).

TCs may not recommend a radical transformation of the society. As a result, they may be perceived as instruments through which former regimes perpetuate marginalisation and inequalities. Lanegran (2015: 63) argues that truth commissions focus on civil and political rights at the expense of socio-

economic rights violations and that “in recent years, people have become more aware of the hollowness of transitional justice and reconciliation measures that are blind to social and economic injustices”. Laplante (2008: 333) argues that seeking truth and justice for victims of economic violations is important because “even with trials and reparations, if economic and social inequality go unaddressed and the grievances of the poor and marginalised go unheard, we are left with only uncertain guarantees of non-repetition”.

In South Africa, the Commission did not recommend radical structural reforms because it was influenced by the nature of the transition from apartheid to democratic rule (Humphrey 2000, Boraine *et al* 1994, Krog 1999, Dugard 1999). During the transition, the outgoing apartheid regime wanted absolute, unconditional amnesty but the African National Congress (ANC) regarded this as unacceptable. A compromise was made for conditional amnesty. Stanley (2001: 33) states that “rather than pursuing truth and justice as an integrated feature of social transformation, the Commissioners and, to a greater extent, the government of South Africa, maintained an agenda that avoided a challenge to the status quo”. Hamber (1998: 98) maintains that the issues which the South African TC focused on such as human rights violations, reparations, rehabilitation, and amnesty were not “coupled with some form of social transformation”.

Mamdani (2000: 183) opines that by failing to address historical economic injustices, the South African TC “wrote the vast majority of apartheid’s victims out of its version of history”. Stanley (2001: 527) states that when factors such as the state’s unwillingness to provide reparations to victims, the judiciary’s failure to prosecute non-participating perpetrators, the dismissal by beneficiaries of their responsibility for apartheid, and the limited developmental change at the societal level are “balanced against problems such as crime, violence, unresolved land issues, and impoverished communities in South Africa, the TC could be said to have failed its objectives”. Those who perpetrated violence and benefited from the infrastructure of apartheid were not made accountable (Zehr 1997). The contemporary South African society continues to struggle with issues such as structural violence, pervasive inequalities, and racism.

Some victims find it unacceptable for perpetrators, especially those who could have committed serious human rights abuses, not to be prosecuted (Stanley 2001). However, TCs tend to challenge prosecution and focus on satisfying the right to know and understand the past rather than retribution (Bond 1999). As a result, TCs may be perceived by victims and human rights defenders as supporting impunity instead of breaking it. According to the African Union Panel of the Wise (2013), where TCs are empowered to grant amnesties, they risk being institutions which support impunity. Using evidence from the 15 Commissions which she studied comparatively, Hayner (1994) notes that after the release of reports by TCs, prosecutions are very rare, even in cases where the perpetrators are known. She further argues that in many cases, perpetrators have been granted “*de facto* amnesty”.

Some scholars hold the view that TCs are unable to comprehensively address the needs of societies. For example, Hamber and Wilson (2002: 35) hold that truth commissions have a tendency to hold an over-simplistic view of how to transition from the violent past. In the case of Sierra Leone, some victims were disappointed by the failure of the TC to offer them any material support to mitigate their suffering resulting from the war (International IDEA 2005: 12). Hamber and Wilson (2002: 6) state that “public acknowledgement of social truths and monetary compensation are valuable contributions, but they can never wholly meet all the psychological needs of the survivors as these are disparate, inchoate and contradictory” and that TCs “are at best only the beginning of a set of linked processes which may lead to symbolic closure for some individuals”.

Rabid critics of TCs argue that these bodies can hardly achieve anything beyond establishing the historical record of the conflict. For example, Ignatieff (1996: 113) argues that “all a Truth Commission can achieve is to reduce the number of lies that can be circulated unchallenged in public discourse. In Argentina, its work has made it impossible to claim, for example, that the military did not throw half-dead victims in the sea from helicopters. In Chile, it is no longer permissible to assert in public that the Pinochet regime did not dispatch thousands of entirely innocent people”. It can be concluded that while TCs are generally regarded as necessary, their capacity to address the reconciliation needs of divided societies remains largely controversial.

2.6 AMNESTY

The granting of amnesty can be dated back to ancient times. Amnesties are regarded by some scholars as important in the reconciliation process because of the need to accommodate “spoilers” in post-conflict societies. Amnesty can be granted through an amnesty legislation which is “an officially declared and imposed forgiving and forgetting” (Huyse 2003: 109). For example, in Uganda, the Parliament enacted the Amnesty Act of 2000 which sought to break the cycle of violence in Northern Uganda by giving an opportunity to members of different rebel groups to cease their violent activities without the fear of being prosecuted. The beneficiaries of the Act were to receive “a pardon, forgiveness, exemption or discharge from criminal prosecution or any other form of punishment by the state” (Rose 2008: 353).

The nature and scope of amnesty differs. For example, amnesty may be granted for crimes which were committed during a specific period of time, may be granted after the perpetrator has fully disclosed his/her crimes (conditional amnesty), may be granted for particular categories of crimes/perpetrators, or may be blanket. Amnesty can be characterised by truth-seeking and reparations. In South Africa, amnesty was granted to perpetrators in return for giving the TC a full account of the crimes which they committed. In its report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, (Volume 1.1998: 118) argues that “amnesty in return for public and full disclosure suggests a restorative understanding of justice, focusing on the healing of victims and perpetrators and on communal restoration”. However, Graybill and Lanegran (2004: 6) argue that the granting of amnesty “was part of a political compromise between the African National Congress and the outgoing apartheid government led by the National Party that was deemed necessary for a peaceful transition to democracy”.

However, amnesties may not be granted to perpetrators of gross human rights abuses such as genocide. For example, section G of Liberia’s TC Act stated that the TC shall recommend amnesty “under terms and conditions established by the TC upon application of individual persons making full disclosures of their wrongs and thereby expressing remorse for their acts and/or omissions, whether as an accomplice or a perpetrator, provided that amnesty or exoneration shall not apply to violations of international law and crimes against humanity in conformity with international law and standards” (Consolidated Final Report of the Republic of Liberia’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2009: 245).

2.6.1 Advantages of amnesty

In situations of protracted conflict, the granting of amnesty can promote a negotiated end to the conflict. Huyse (2003: 110) argues that in some conflict situations, the granting of blanket and unconditional amnesty is the price to be paid for negotiating a peace deal with a view to bringing about an end to a protracted and devastating conflict. For example, in Mozambique, belligerent parties signed an agreement in 1992 which granted amnesty for crimes which were committed

between 1979 and 1992. Thereafter, informal mechanisms were used to achieve reconciliation, with civil society playing a crucial role.

In Sierra Leone, about 200 civil society representatives approved the amnesty provision in the Lomé Peace Agreement of 1999 which granted an “absolute and free pardon” to the Revolutionary United Front leader, Foday Sankoh and to “all combatants and collaborators” for “anything done by them in pursuit of their objectives, up to the time of the signing of the present agreement” (Dougherty 2004: 40). The blanket amnesty was supported on grounds that it gave the RUF the incentive to sign the agreement. However, it caused heated controversy, especially in respect of pardoning perpetrators of international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. Conditional amnesty can assist in truth recovery and in building relations. Campbell (2000: 43) argues that minimalists believe that amnesty is the best way of dealing with a violent past because “focusing on the past will only dredge up unpleasant and painful memories and will not allow the society as a whole to focus its energy on building a new society in which abuses of the past will be just that”.

2.6.2 *Disadvantages of amnesty*

Amnesty is criticised for a number of reasons. First, it may facilitate reconciliation at national level but individuals, families, and communities which were affected by violence may struggle to heal. Second, the granting of amnesty may make it difficult for the truth to be told and for the state to officially acknowledge wrongdoing. Eppel (2004: 50) argues that in Zimbabwe “amnesties have played a role in muzzling the truth of atrocities at a national level” and that “if crimes are not prosecuted but are rather pardoned, their details do not reach the official public forum”.

Third, amnesty can be regarded as a violation of the rights of victims. Mosier (2003: 2) argues that “blanket amnesty and pardons are inconsistent with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights because they create a climate of impunity and deny victims their right to a remedy.” Joinet (1997: 34) argues that “amnesty cannot be accorded to perpetrators before the victims have obtained justice by means of an effective remedy”. Dugard (1999: 1001) argues that “amnesty is no longer accepted as the natural price to be paid for transition from repression to democracy”.

Fourth, amnesty has been criticised on grounds that it has the potential to promote a culture of impunity, especially in a context in which the government refuses to acknowledge past human rights violations. The granting of amnesties for perpetrators of gross human rights violations and abuses in Zimbabwe has received widespread criticism from citizens because it has tended to promote the breakdown of the rule of law. Makumbe and Compagnon (2000: 55) argue that the use of presidential powers to pardon people who were convicted of violence has been the major driver of impunity in Zimbabwe. Amnesty may be regarded as a demonstration of the government’s insensitivity to the abuses which were suffered by victims.

In the case of South Africa, Stanley (2001) states that one of the most difficult things to accept in the country’s reconciliation efforts was the provision of amnesty to those who perpetrated the gravest of abuses during apartheid. The amnesties enabled many of the perpetrators to maintain their power, influential public positions, and status in South African society regardless of their involvement in iniquitous violations of human rights. While scholars such as Markel (1999) and Llewellyn & Howse (1999) argue that the South African TC was able to achieve restorative and retributive justice, scholars such as Simpson (1997) and Stanley (2001) argue that the violent criminality which characterises contemporary South Africa is intrinsically linked to the dehumanisation of groups during apartheid and the impact of the “politically motivated” amnesties on the credibility of the criminal justice architecture. Scholars such as Hayner (2009) therefore

argue that because of their potential to promote impunity, the application of amnesties should be strictly partial and conditional.

Fifth, amnesty can be used by a regime which was responsible for human rights abuses with a view to protect its officials or supporters who perpetrated violence. For example, in Chile, the TC “had to contend with sweeping amnesty laws installed by Pinochet before he left office that limited the ability of the commission to ‘name names’ of perpetrators or to pursue formal prosecutions” (Baxter 2005: 123).

2.7 REPARATIONS

During a conflict, victims suffer many forms of abuses such as the loss of lives and livelihood; the destruction/confiscation of property/infrastructure; rape; torture, and physical, mental, and emotional harm. In a post-conflict context, many of the victims may be in need of different forms of assistance in order for them to be able to carry on with their lives. For example, during the reconciliation processes by the TC in Sierra Leone, “witnesses turned to the Commissioners with numerous requests for material support, sometimes for themselves and sometimes for their community. Many of the witnesses were in great need of medical assistance as a consequence of the violations they had suffered, others could not make a decent living because of their physical and material losses during the conflict and were in great need of material assistance” (International IDEA 2005: 12).

Joinet (1997: 234) argues that the “right to reparation” consists of restitution (seeking to restore the victim to his or her status before the violations), compensation (for physical or mental injury, including lost opportunities, physical damage, defamation, and legal aid costs), and rehabilitation (medical care, including psychological and psychiatric treatment). The United Nations General Assembly enunciated five branches of the “right to reparation” which are:

- Restitution: restores the victim to the original situation before the violation occurred. It includes restoration of liberty, enjoyment of identity and citizenship;
- Compensation: provides money for damage suffered;
- Rehabilitation: involves medical treatment and social assistance;
- Satisfaction: includes official declarations restoring dignity and reputation, public apology, commemoration, and tributes; and
- Guarantees of non-repetition: includes structural measures that will prevent re-occurrence of the violations (cited by the Report of the Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission, Kenya 2013: 98).

According to the Report of the Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission, Kenya (2013: 98), “the key objective of reparations is to restore the dignity of victims through acknowledging the wrongdoing, the harm suffered, and the state responsibility to promote, protect, and fulfil human rights. In that way, reparations are a means to contribute to a rebalancing of society and a healing process”. Hamber and Wilson (2002: 5, 33) argue that “reparations are one of the main means by which truth commissions and similar processes seek to achieve national and individual

reconciliation” and that they “can mark the point of moving onto a new phase and represent an individual mastery over the past”. Reparations enable the society to function again and they help transform relations between victims and perpetrators. The African Union Panel of the Wise (2013: 22) states that reparations “form a critical transitional justice mechanism for repairing relations between national actors and victims”. Martin-Boro (1995: 571) argues that:

Those who clamour for social reparation are not asking for vengeance. Nor are they blindly adding difficulties to a historical process that is already by no means easy. On the contrary, they are promoting the personal and social viability of a new society, truly democratic.

Reparations are the responsibility of the government, but the government needs support from actors such as the donor community and civil society. They can be made available to particular individuals (individual reparations) or to a group of people or a community (collective reparations). Reparations to individuals and groups are usually based on the nature and degree of violations which were suffered with first priority being paid to those who suffered the most heinous of violations. Reparations can be made in symbolic and material forms. The Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission, Kenya (2013: 99) states that:

Material reparations measures imply a tangible benefit (such as monetary pension, provision of health services, and socio-economic measures). Non-material reparations do not involve any provision of any monetary payments or free service provision, but instead address the harms suffered in ways that may not have any economic component. The latter are critical in restoring the dignity of victims and survivors, through the restoration of rights (expunging criminal records, granting citizenship), the provision of critical documents (identity cards) or honouring the memory of those who have suffered violations (through monuments, naming ceremonies or days of remembrance).

However, Hamber and Wilson (2002: 38) argue that genuine reparation and the process of healing “does not occur through the delivery of the object (for example, a pension, a monument and so on) but through the process that takes place around the object”. In Kenya, the Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission used a Statement Taking Form which included a section where statement givers were asked to recommend the reparations which they preferred to be made for individuals, communities, and the nation. With regard to individual reparations, statement givers mentioned financial compensation; prosecutions; identification of perpetrators; exhumations and (re)burials; apologies; memorials; support for children; counselling; provision of tangible goods; traditional justice; and resettlement of victims. With regard to community reparations, they mentioned the promotion of peace; building schools and hospitals; repairing or building of roads, water facilities and houses; improved security; identification of perpetrators; introduction of annual religious services; recovery of stolen properties; and community service. With regard to reparations to the nation, statement givers mentioned monuments; recovery of stolen funds; prosecutions; apologies; legal and institutional reforms; introduction of a national day of remembrance; and the enhancement of peace and security (Report by the Kenyan Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission 2013: 100-101).

In Chile, the TC recommended the establishment of the National Commission on Reparation and Reconciliation whose mandate was to deal with the delivery of reparations (Baxter 2005: 122). However, it is important to note that affected communities themselves should play a crucial role in reparations. For example, perpetrators can ask for forgiveness and return stolen/confiscated properties (Machakanja 2010: 34). Communities can also conduct traditional rituals and ceremonies in relation to dead victims. In many cultural settings in Africa, and specifically in Zimbabwe, proper

burial of the dead is regarded as a very important rite. It is believed that the spirit of a dead person cannot “rest” until he/she is properly buried and that the living will be tormented by such a spirit.

Reparations can be regarded as a way of showing remorse and respect for dead victims. Hamber and Wilson (2002: 33) argue that “when the living receive payment for offences against the dead (and forsake revenge), this can, in some cases, solidify and resolve the dead, who were previously seen as wandering like undead ghosts. Reparations (and processes of remembering and commemoration) stabilise the ghosts, they domesticate and tame them by representing the compensation for their death”. However, Hamber and Wilson (2002: 38) argue that reparations have a “darker side” because survivors of families of victims may regard them as “blood money” and that “if the desire for vengeance grips the survivor, then accepting paltry reparations can also be experienced by the survivor as a disrespectful act that betrays the loss they have endured or the memory of those killed”. Mauss (1998: 58) also states that “the gift is something that must be recognised and that is, at the same time, dangerous to accept”.

It is important to note that due to resource limitations and the constrained capacity of TCs to reach out to all victims, not all victims can benefit from a reparations programme. In Sierra Leone, the commission acknowledged that due to logistical limitations and its limited time span to take statements and conduct hearings, it was not able to reach out to all the victims who wanted to tell their stories (Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2004). TCs often recommend a diversity of reparation interventions. In Sierra Leone, the Commission recommended measures to deal with the needs of victims in the areas of health, skills training, education, micro-credit, pensions, community reparations, and symbolic reparations rather than cash handouts. With regard to specific categories of victims such as amputees, war wounded, victims of sexual violence, orphans of war, and children of amputees, the commission recommended free physical and mental health care, free education, and the disbursement of a monthly pension (Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2004).

In Liberia, the TC recommended the provision of psychological, physical therapeutic, counselling, medical and other services to all individuals who were physically incapacitated as a result of the conflict. It also recommended community development projects such as roads, schools and health facilities as well as personal cash or material assistance for individuals and communities which were worst affected by the conflict (Ojielo 2010; Consolidated Final Report of the Republic of Liberia Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2009: 20). It is important to note that the exclusion of some victims may cause dissatisfaction and undermine the potential of reparations to promote reconciliation.

The major challenge characterised by reparations is the incapacity, especially in resource scarce settings, of governments to implement them comprehensively and sustainably. According to the African Union Panel of the Wise (2013), South Africa failed to implement comprehensive reparations and redress measures. In Sierra Leone, the TC noted that not all victims could benefit from a reparations programme because of resource limitations. It had to determine who would benefit from the programme taking into consideration the vulnerability and harm suffered by victims as a result of the conflict (Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2004).

International IDEA (2005: 12) states that “the hearings in the eastern district of Koidu confirmed that many Sierra Leoneans came to the TC motivated by the prospect of some kind of concrete reparation” but they were disappointed not only because “to grant individual material support to all the victims of the Sierra Leone conflict was clearly impossible” but also because “the TC had neither a mandate nor a budget to address reparations issues”. Reparations are a long-term process

and require on-going funding and political commitment and support. Scholars such as Hamber and Wilson (2002) argue that reparations need to be supported by other efforts such as documentation and acknowledgement of the truth, without which they may be interpreted as insincere.

A Report by the Kenyan Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission (2013: 98) concluded that “the Commission recognizes that realistically implementable reparations measures cannot satisfy individual victims or respond adequately to individual suffering and harm”. However, it should be noted that while reparations are insufficient to fully address the harm suffered by victims, they provide recognition of victims’ experiences, restore their dignity and reputation, and demonstrate the state’s acknowledgement of responsibility for violations and its resolve to ensure non-recurrence (Report of the Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission, Kenya 2013: 114).

2.8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, APOLOGY, AND MEMORIALISATION

Public apologies, commemorations, and memorialisation are symbolic forms of reparations which “entail recognition of wrongdoing, acceptance of historical injustices and recognition of the suffering and experiences of victims rather than material compensation. Symbolic reparations are aimed at fostering recognition, at restoring the dignity of victims and at making the suffering and experiences of victims part of the public domain, thus transferring the burden of keeping the memory alive from victims and their families to society as a whole” (Report by the Kenyan Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission 2013: 115). Symbolic representations of the violent past are used to acknowledge and recognise the harm that was suffered by individuals and groups during a conflict.

They facilitate healing and reconciliation by collectively preserving the memory of what happened, how it impacted upon society, and by sending a message to society that never again should such violations be allowed to happen. Memorialisation can be achieved through the creation of museums, statues, and memorials; the erection of tombstones; the transformation of sites of notorious detention, torture, and massacres into memorial sites; artistic exhibitions and contributions; the naming of public institutions, buildings, streets, and highways after dead victims; the conducting of religious and cultural ceremonies; and the introduction of days of remembrance and public holidays (see Hamber and Wilson 2002: 39). Civil society, individuals, families, grassroots organisations, traditional leadership structures, and affected communities should be actively involved in making decisions about these interventions. Memorialisation fosters reconciliation because:

- Memorial sites can serve as spaces to foster public dialogue and discussions on past abuses and a common vision for the future;
- Memorialisation processes can assist in correcting distorted versions of the past and enabling societies to build consensus on a common historical narrative;
- Memorials can help keep social and political issues on the agenda and can be used for advocacy and pedagogical purposes; and
- Memorialisation can serve as a reminder of the futility of violence and a pledge for the non-repetition of the past (Report by the Kenyan Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission 2013: 117).

Public apologies, reparations, and memorialisation play an important role in healing individuals, families and communities (Bloomfield *et al* 2003). However, although memorialisation facilitates healing and reconciliation, it is important to note that the manner in which post-conflict societies remember the violent past may either contribute to healing and reconciliation or to the outbreak of further violence (Minow 1999: 430, Volf 2006: 74). Wielenga (2012: 209) holds that “how we remember is more important than what we remember, if the process of remembering is to contribute positively to the post-conflict recovery process”. Hamber and Wilson (2002: 35) argue that “remembering, in itself, is not necessarily a directly redemptive and liberating practice”. Public apologies also play a crucial role in the reconciliation process. They show that the perpetrator is penitent. States have the constitutional obligation to protect their citizens. However, the state may be the perpetrator of violations or it may exercise complicity in the face of human rights violations by other actors.

Whatever the case, the state would have failed its responsibility to protect citizens. Public apologies take place when the government acknowledges wrongdoing by its agents and/or other actors. They should be characterised by features such as acceptance of the violations which took place; specification of the violations and abuses covered by the apology; recognition of the suffering which victims went through; condemnation of the abuses; the intention to restore the dignity of victims and to foster equality and inclusion in the political, social and economic spheres of life; and guarantee of non-repetition of the violations (Erin and Jeremy 2006: 162).

2.9 INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

Any reconciliation process should consider that gross violations and abuses are often a result of institutional and structural deficiencies which would have allowed them to take place, or at least failed to stop them. It is therefore important to reform institutions with a view to establish and deepen democratic freedoms, human rights, the rule of law, transparency, and accountable governance. Institutions such as the judiciary, the security sector, and the civil service may need to be reformed (for example through vetting or lustration) in order to ensure impartiality in carrying out their functions. Machakanja (2010) maintains that inclusive reconciliation processes help to prevent the resurgence of violence by strengthening democratic institutions and processes. Institutional reforms are helpful in rebuilding fractured societies, addressing the root causes of conflicts, and preventing recurrence.

The Liberian TC states that “reform of public institutions and certain policies will promote peace, security, national reconciliation, good governance and human rights, reduce poverty and alleviate illiteracy, create opportunities for all, as well as guarantee that the experiences and horror of the conflict will not be repeated” (Consolidated Final Report of the Liberian TC, 2009: 20). It was on the basis of this observation that the Commission recommended that the Liberian government should, among other things, implement reforms to strengthen the judiciary; promote good governance and the rule of law; establish a Police Code of Discipline; outlaw the partisan use of democratic institutions and the political control of the military; depoliticise the civil service, military, and paramilitary bodies; and decentralise economic and political power to enhance public participation (Liberian TC, 2009: 21).

In Kenya, during the reconciliation forums which sought to gather public opinion, the TJRC found that with regard to reparation to the nation, the implementation of “legal and institutional reforms” received the highest recommendations at 23.2% (Report of the Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission, Kenya (2013: 102). In Chile, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommended a series of changes in the legal institutions, judiciary, and armed forces to instill a greater

observance of human rights norms and standards after seven years of brutality under the regime of General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte (Baxter 2005: 122).

2.10 LOCAL AND TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO RECONCILIATION

The failure to take local and traditional approaches to reconciliation into account can undermine the efficacy of reconciliation processes, especially at the grassroots level. Traditional approaches enable the reconciliation agenda to address a diversity of needs, including social, cultural and religious ones. This helps individuals and communities to transform relationships and cope with a violent past. Traditional or local approaches are context-specific and they are often rooted in ancient cultural, religious, and moral beliefs and practices which are used by societies to promote healing and reconciliation. In his critique of the relationship between the *Fambul Tok* and reconciliation in Sierra Leone, Graybill (2015: 42) states that “the decision not to rely on tradition was regrettable, since most of the 14 ethnic groups in Sierra Leone have established cultural practices in place to deal with conflict”.

Fambul Tok is designed to deal with conflict at the local level through truth-telling, dialogue and sharing. It includes cleansing ceremonies which are accompanied by the pouring of libation in order to appease “angry” spirits and ancestors (Graybill 2015: 34). Zambara (Ed, 2015: 15) states that *Fambul Tok* is Sierra Leone’s “family talk” tradition of discussing and resolving conflict at the local level and that it is based on old-age traditions of confession, apology and forgiveness. Probably the most acclaimed case of the use of traditional structures in the reconciliation process is the case of Rwanda after the 1994 genocide. According to Rettig (2008: 34), the *Gacaca* courts assisted in establishing the record of what happened during the genocide, including matters such as who were the victims, who were the perpetrators and what was destroyed. Community leaders spoke to community members in order to gather this information. This enabled communities to participate in the reconciliation agenda, to express their needs and aspirations, and to have a sense of ownership of the process (Vesperini 2002: 56). The role which civil society can play in the use of traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution is to assist communities in making sure that they comply with national and international legal norms and standards in order to avoid violations of human rights. However, it is important for civil society to avoid “hijacking” or distorting these mechanisms.

2.11 STATE-LED AND COMMUNITY-CENTRED RECONCILIATION PROCESSES

The major difference between state-led and community-centred reconciliation processes is that the former tends to take a top-down approach while the latter tends to take a bottom-up approach (Bloomfield 2006: 25, Charbonneau and Parent 2012: 1, Campbell 2011: 42). The top-down approach focuses on promoting reconciliation at the national level (and the effects are expected to filter to the grassroots level) while the bottom-up approach focuses on addressing the needs of individual perpetrators and victims at the grassroots level (Van der Merwe 2009: 323). The top-down approach is characterised by interventions such as Truth Commissions, public apologies and acknowledgement, peace accords, reparations, amnesties, and legal and institutional reforms while community-centred reconciliation processes tend to be inter-personal and to take place outside, simultaneously, or in the absence of state wide legitimacy initiatives (Bloomfield 2006: 25, Charbonneau and Parent 2012: 1).

Chapman (2002: 4) states that without top-down interventions, “none of these bottom-up processes are likely to be effective and sustainable”. Van der Merwe (1998: 45) shares the same view, arguing that “the top-down approach is characterised by a perception that ... for local dynamics to change, national intervention must first take place. This will then filter down, or create the conditions (and incentives) within which local actors can pursue reconciliation processes”. The bottom-up approach

focuses on addressing the social, psychological, emotional, and economic needs and experiences of individuals because it values the health of individuals and communities and the rebuilding of interpersonal relations at the grassroots level (Van der Merwe 2009: 323, Huyse 2003: 25, Bloomfield 2006: 27). It acknowledges that individuals who were affected by a violent conflict have unique needs and experiences which have to be addressed and that these individuals should be supported to voice their own diagnoses and advance their own mechanisms of dealing with a violent past (Curle 1994: 65, Lederach 1995: 67, Campbell 2011: 42).

The healing of individual and collective trauma is a key element of the bottom-up approach to reconciliation (Puljek-Shank and Puljek-Shank 2008: 160). Reconciliation processes in Rwanda after the 1994 genocide have demonstrated the need for community-led reconciliation processes. According to Rettig (2008), the *Gacaca* courts assisted in establishing the record of what happened during the genocide, including aspects such as who were the victims, who were the perpetrators, and what was destroyed. Community leaders spoke to community members in order to gather this information and to agree on the mechanisms of promoting healing and reconciliation. However, although reconciliation processes may begin at the political or grassroots level, for them to be effective, they should be characterised by a mixture of top-down and bottom-up interventions so that they proceed top-down and bottom-up simultaneously (Bar-Tal and Bennink 2004: 27, Bar-ON 2007: 81, Huyse 2003: 75, Bloomfield 2006: 25). This interaction enhances the strength of both (Fischer (1999)). It is therefore important not to emphasise healing and reconciliation at the individual level at the expense of national and political processes because these approaches are complementary and mutually related and supporting (Charbonneau and Parent 2012: 5, Bloomfield 1997: 234).

From this discussion, it has emerged that several authors are in agreement that both types of reconciliation initiatives (top-down and bottom-up) need to be pursued in tandem (Fischer 1999, Bloomfield 1997, and Danieli 1992). The top-down approach creates a broader climate within the national political arena which promotes and legitimise reconciliation processes at the grassroots level (Van der Merwe 2009: 323). The bottom-up approach ensures local ownership of the processes. The bottom-up approach also tends to be context-specific and therefore sensitive to the needs of the communities which were affected by the conflict. The more these processes interact with each other, the more they enhance and strengthen each other. However, it is important to note that the interface between these approaches is intricate and may result in the two approaches colliding with each other.

2.12 CONCLUSION

It is clear from this study that there are different levels of reconciliation, that is, intra-personal, inter-personal, communal, and national. These reconciliation needs respond differently to different interventions. This explains why there has to be different approaches to reconciliation. State-led reconciliation processes are more able to promote reconciliation at the political level while community-led reconciliation processes are more placed to promote healing and reconciliation at intra-personal, inter-personal, and communal levels. Reconciliation interventions by civil society are placed to promote healing and reconciliation across the levels. However, although different reconciliation approaches should be used in order to address reconciliation needs at different levels of society, they are and should not be mutually exclusive. Each of the approaches which are discussed in this chapter has its strengths and shortcomings. With regards to TCs, their main strength is that they are vehicles through which the truth about the violent past can be established. Their work enables the affected society to know many aspects of the conflict such as the root causes, the perpetrators, victims, and the nature and impact of the abuses which were suffered. The findings of TCs are important in informing the different ways through which healing and reconciliation can

be achieved. However, TCs have many shortcomings. They may only establish “partial truth” because of limitations such as resource constraints, adverse political circumstances, limited mandate, limited access to vital information, and inadequate time to conduct their activities. TCs are not able to enforce their recommendations. As a result, whether their recommendations are implemented or not depends on the political will of the incumbent regime. As discussed in the study, none of the countries which established TCs was able to comprehensively implement the recommendations by their TCs.

In terms of amnesty, the study has established that these can play an important role, especially in those conflicts which are protracted because neither of the parties is able to achieve victory through military means. The granting of amnesty can make it possible for the antagonistic parties to reach a peace agreement and begin to work towards the restoration of peace and security. However, the major shortcoming of amnesty is that societies tend to regard it as promoting a culture of impunity, especially when it is blanket and unconditional. In Sierra Leone, the proposal to grant blanket and unconditional amnesty to members of the RUF caused heated controversy, especially in respect of the perpetrators who committed crimes against humanity. The other problem is that amnesty can be manipulated by the incumbent or the former regime with a view to avoid facing justice and accountability.

The study has also established that it is important to acknowledge the conflict, to make public apologies and to memorialise the conflict through various ways. The memorialisation of the conflict encourages public debate about the conflict, preserves what happened and the lessons which were learnt from the conflict, and enables society to propagate the never again message. It has also emerged that it is important for post-conflict societies to reform institutions. This addresses the root causes of the conflict and transforms the society in ways which promote democracy, tolerance, and human rights. This is important because it enables post-conflict societies to avoid a repeat of the violent conflict. It has also emerged that for reconciliation processes to be effective, different actors should be involved, especially the very communities which suffered the abuses.

It is also important to make use of traditional and local approaches to reconciliation and healing. The state and the international community should therefore avoid imposing their own view of healing and reconciliation. It has also emerged that state-led and community-led reconciliation processes can either reinforce or conflict with each other. Having discussed the various faces of reconciliation, the next chapter examines the interface between the one-party state agenda and conflict in Zimbabwe. The link between this chapter and the next chapter is that any critique of reconciliation processes should take into consideration matters such as the root causes, trajectory, nature, scope, and consequences of the conflict. Such matters are important in determining the success or failure of reconciliation interventions because interventions should be informed by many factors such as the nature of the conflict and the needs and aspirations of those who were most affected.

CHAPTER 3: THE ONE-PARTY STATE AGENDA AND CONFLICT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the interface between the one-party state agenda and conflict in Zimbabwe. In particular, it examines the relationship between the one-party state agenda and the *Gukurahundi* massacres which were committed in the 1980s. It also examines politically motivated violence which was committed between 1980 and 1987, when the Unity Accord was signed between the opposition Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (PF-ZAPU) and the incumbent Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF). This is because it is difficult to talk about the need for truth, reparation, and reconciliation in Zimbabwe without mentioning *Gukurahundi* in particular and politically motivated violence in general.

It is argued in this study that the relationship between *Gukurahundi* and the one-party state agenda was that the former was used as a means through which to “crush” the opposition PF-ZAPU in order to establish the latter. The one-party state agenda was pursued by ZANU-PF from 1980 and abandoned in 1990. To achieve its aforesaid objective, the study starts with discussing what constitutes a one-party system, with a focus on making a distinction between a *de jure* and a *de facto* one-party system. It proceeds with an analysis of the various steps which were taken by ZANU-PF towards the establishment of a legislated one-party state and how these steps caused conflict, polarisation, human rights abuses and intolerance of dissent in Zimbabwe.

The steps towards the one-party state which are discussed in this study include the use of violence and coercion; the conflation of the state and the regime; the use of the patriotic history narrative to demonise opposition party politics; repression of civil society; monopolisation of state resources and public media; concentration of power in the office and person of the President; the politicisation of the civil service (particularly the army, the CIO and the Zimbabwe Republic Police); the use of draconian legislation (some of which were inherited from the colonial regime) to suppress dissent; and, the manipulation of institutions which were responsible for the management of elections. The study proceeds with an analysis of the relationship between *Gukurahundi* and the one-party state agenda. In this analysis, it investigates the causes and drivers of the conflict, the nature of atrocities which were committed during the conflict and how individuals, families and communities were affected by the conflict.

In order to put this conflict in its historical context, the study sketches the context of the liberation struggle. This is because scholars believe that the one-party state agenda and the repression of the opposition in post-independence Zimbabwe have their origins in ZANU-PF’s *modus operandi* during the independence struggle (see Du Toit 1995; Sithole 1995; Sachikonye 2011; Makumbe and Compagnon 2000). The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the factors which led to the “fall” of the one-party state agenda. Generally, the chapter details the political context in which reconciliation processes were to take place. This can be used to critique how the political context affected the efficacy of reconciliation processes.

3.2 WHAT IS A ONE-PARTY STATE?

There are basically two types of one-party systems, that is, a *de jure* type and a *de facto* one. ZANU-PF sought to establish the former. A *de jure* one-party state exists when a country’s constitution states that only one political party is allowed to exist and operate while a *de facto* one-party state exists where opposition political parties are allowed to operate but the ruling party uses formal and informal methods to repress the opposition such that it becomes difficult or impossible

for the opposition to exercise constitutional rights (Sithole 1991: 74, Musarurwa 1991: 146). In both a *de jure* and a *de facto* one-party state, the ruling party enjoys a monopoly of power because of its hegemony over the organs of the state (Matlosa and Shale 2008: 10). A one-party state, whether *de facto* or *de jure*, is characterised by the suppression of civil society, democratic freedoms, and political pluralism; use of draconian legislation; human rights abuses; the politics of personality cult; political intolerance; the politicisation of state institutions, especially the coercive apparatus and the bodies which are responsible for election management; the fusion and enmeshment of the incumbent party into the state; patron-client networks; and corruption and misuse of state resources (Matlosa and Shale 2008; Moyo 1992; Hatchard 1993; Makumbe and Compagnon 2000; Sithole 1986; Sachikonye, 1991).

In Africa, the reasons which were cited by the incumbents to argue in favor of the one-party state include that multi-party politics had “failed” because it is inherently divisive, wasteful, and uncharacteristic of African traditional political systems (Hanna 1964); that multi-party politics could worsen ethnic conflicts and engender fractured party systems (van de Walle 2003, Sisk and Reynolds 1998, LeBas 2006); that a multi-party system is inimical to national development and cohesion; that a one-party state is democratic and ideal for fostering national unity, nation-building and development priorities; and that opposition political parties have been used by powerful states to promote imperial interests in Africa (Sachikonye 1991: 26). In Swaziland, King Sobhuza repealed the independence constitution in 1976 via the Legislative Procedure Order number 7 of 12 April 1973, stating that political parties are undesirable, alien to and incompatible with the way of life of the people of Swaziland (Mzizi, 2005:30-31).

3.3 BACKGROUND TO THE ONE-PARTY STATE AGENDA

In order to understand the genesis of the one-party state agenda, it is important to look into the politics of the independence struggle. Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980 following a protracted armed struggle. Two nationalist parties, that is, the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (PF-ZAPU) and the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) participated in the liberation struggle. PF-ZAPU was founded in 1961 under the leadership of veteran nationalist Joshua Nkomo. ZANU-PF was founded in August 1963 (as a splinter from ZAPU) under the leadership of Reverent Ndabaningi Sithole. However, Sithole was deposed while he was in prison and Mugabe took over the leadership of the party. The ZAPU split was caused by many factors, chief among them being ethnicity, personal differences within the party, and strategic differences regarding how to engage the colonial state with a view to bring about the “right” rule (Herbst 1990: 69).

ZANU and ZAPU trained guerrillas and established military wings which fought against the colonial state. ZAPU’s military wing was called the Zimbabwe People’s Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) and ZANU’s wing was the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA). ZANLA and ZIPRA used different approaches in their fight for independence. ZANLA combatants were trained in China while ZIPRA combatants were trained in Russia and the former mobilised the masses through ‘*pungwes*’ (night-time meetings which involved song, dance and politics) while the latter operated as a professionally trained army (CCJP and LRF 1997: 39). These differences in approach to the struggle occasioned some disputes (particularly in 1963, 1964 and 1976) which caused some violent clashes between the two armies.

Both parties had leaders and followers from the Shona and the Ndebele-speaking people. However, as the antagonism between them exacerbated, their recruitment patterns followed ethnic fault lines. As a result, ZANLA came to be progressively dominated by the Shona, and ZIPRA by the Ndebele people (Herbst 1990, Chung 2006). The Shona-Ndebele dichotomy was reinforced by the

operational areas of the armies, as ZANLA operated in Shona dominated areas while ZIPRA operated in Ndebele dominated areas (CCJP & LRF 1997). These developments resulted in the pervasive perception that PF-ZAPU represented the Ndebele and ZANU-PF the Shona people (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008, Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007).

Voting patterns from the 1980 elections also reflected the influence of ethnicity with ZAPU predominantly supported by the Ndebele and ZANU by the Shona people (Gregory 1980, Sithole 1999). The clashes between the two parties displeased the Front Line States (FLS)⁶ because they undermined the capacity of these parties to form a united front against the settler state. In 1976, ZANU and ZAPU formed the Patriotic Front (PF) alliance as a result of pressure from FLS and the then Organisation for African Unity (OAU). The alliance was intended to enable them to coordinate their military campaign and to form a united front against the settler state during crucial negotiations such as the Geneva talks of 1976. The protracted war between the nationalist parties and the Rhodesian regime got to a point where it became clear that the continuation of hostilities was no longer in the best interests of any of the parties. Regarding the Rhodesian state, the following developments had made the need for a negotiated settlement evident:

- By 1979, the PF alliance had launched military offensives which almost led to the fall of the Rhodesian state;
- The expenditure on war regarding human and material resources had become unsustainable; with the immigration rate of the white community increasing because of a war-weary mood. South Africa could no longer indefinitely support the Rhodesian regime, whose defense budget was becoming increasingly unsustainable;
- The internal settlement had failed to achieve the intended results because the international community refused to recognise the Government of National Unity (GNU) and sanctions remained in place, making the regime increasingly isolated;
- Bishop Abel Muzorewa's call for guerrillas to surrender was not accepted by the guerrillas; and
- This occasioned a military and political impasse, forcing the Rhodesian government to reluctantly acknowledge that the conflict could only be resolved through political and not military means (Gregory 1980: 3-5, Kurebwa 2012: 304, Herbst 1990: 29).

Regarding the nationalist parties, so much destruction had been caused and scores of lives had been lost on the battlefield. Insisting on an outright military victory would cause more destruction and loss of lives (Herbst 1990: 30). In light of these factors, the need for a negotiated settlement became imperative. Under pressure from the Front Line States, the Commonwealth stepped up efforts to bring together the belligerent parties with a view to ensure a peaceful transfer of power from the settler regime. As a result of pressure from the Commonwealth, the British government invited Abel Muzorewa and his delegation and the leaders and delegation of the PF alliance to participate in a constitutional conference in London at Lancaster House. The conference was held in December 1979.

⁶ The Front Line States alliance was established in 1976 in order to achieve majority rule in South Africa and to crisis-manage the Rhodesia-Zimbabwe war of liberation. The members were: Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe (Evans, 1985: 1).

The outcome, known as the Lancaster House Agreement, witnessed a transition to majority rule in Zimbabwe (Gregory 1980, Chung 2006). ZAPU and the FLS expected ZANU and ZAPU to contest the independence elections jointly under the PF banner. However, ZANU-PF resolved to contest the transitional elections independent of PF-ZAPU for a number of reasons. ZANU-PF was concerned about the leadership question and it also viewed Nkomo as a “compromising nationalist” because of his attempts to negotiate with Ian Smith during the course of the liberation struggle (Sibanda 2005: 55). Regarding the leadership question, there was no guarantee that Mugabe would be the leader of the PF, especially considering that Nkomo had played a founding role in Zimbabwe’s liberation history.

President Mnangagwa⁷ (1989: 227) explains ZANU’s decision to contest separately in terms of the leadership question and the popularity of ZANU over ZAPU. A number of indicators suggested a ZANU-PF victory in the transitional elections. These included the following:

- The ethnic loyalties indicated that the majority Shona would vote for ZANU-PF while the minority Ndebele would vote for PF-ZAPU;
- By 1979, ZANU-PF had managed to entrench the view that ZANLA was responsible for liberating the country (Sithole 1999: 345);
- ZANU-PF had become more popular because of its Maoist “fish and water” mobilisation strategies during the war. By 1979, its ZANLA guerrillas were visible in more than half of the countryside where they would campaign and intimidate voters to vote for ZANU-PF (see Gregory 1980, Rich 1982, Sithole 1999).

ZANU-PF’s decision to contest the 1980 elections independently disappointed PF-ZAPU which viewed it as a negation of the letter and spirit of the PF alliance. To show its desire for a united front, ZAPU contested the transitional elections as the Patriotic Front (Sithole 1997). Two rolls were used in the elections, that is, the common roll (which was for blacks) and the white roll (which was for whites). The common roll had 80 parliamentary seats while the white roll had 20 seats which were reserved for whites in accordance with the Lancaster House Agreement. Blacks and whites voted on different days. The 20 members of parliament for the white roll were elected on 14 February 1980 and all of the seats were won by the Rhodesian Front (RF), a political party which was headed by Ian Smith, the former Rhodesian President. The RF was later called the Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe (Gregory 1980).

The elections for the 80 seats were conducted on 27, 28 and 29 February 1980 and were contested by nine political parties. These were ZANU-PF led by Robert Mugabe, PF-ZAPU led by Joshua Nkomo, the United African National Council (UANC) led by Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU-Ndonga) led by Ndabaningi Sithole, the Zimbabwe Democratic Party (ZDP) led by James Chikerema, the National Front of Zimbabwe (NFZ) led by Peter Mandaza, the National Democratic Union (NDU) led by Henry Chihota, the United National Federation Party (UNFP) led by Chief Kayisa Ndiweni and the United Peoples Association of Matabeleland (UPAM) led by Frank Bertrand. ZANU-PF won 63 percent of the votes and 57 seats, PF-ZAPU won 24 percent of the votes and 20 seats while the UANC won 8 percent of the votes and

⁷ President Emmerson Mnangagwa is one of the senior ZANU-PF politicians. He became the Vice President in December 2014 and President in November 2017. Mnangagwa participated in the liberation struggle. At independence, he became the Minister of State Security. He then headed various Ministries such as Justice, Rural Housing, and Defence (Alao 2012).

3 seats (Sithole and Makumbe 1997: 43). Under these circumstances, ZANU-PF formed the independence government. Some scholars hold that after independence, ZANU-PF failed to transform into a democratic political party (Sithole 1988, Mair and Sithole 2002).

3.4 MECHANISMS THROUGH WHICH THE ONE-PARTY STATE AGENDA WAS PURSUED

The previous section has distinguished between a *de jure* and a *de facto* a one-party state. This section proceeds to examine the various steps which were taken by ZANU-PF towards the establishment of a *de jure* one-party state. From 1980 going forward, ZANU-PF exhibited a strong “one-party mentality” (Kriger 2005: 5, Raftopoulos 2009: 67) characterised by “the political philosophy of the annihilation of enemies” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012: 6). The quest for a *de jure* one-party state in Zimbabwe had a long history. ZANU-PF resolved to introduce a legislated one-party state during its 1977 congress which was held in Mozambique and officially endorsed the agenda during its first post-independence congress in 1984 and during the post-Unity Accord ZANU/ZAPU joint congress of 1989 (Moyo 1991: 234, Sithole 2000: 75). ZANU-PF’s reasons for seeking the establishment of the one-party state were primarily political and based on its desire to dominate the political space (Sylvester 1990: 383). First, the party distrusted the disgruntled ZAPU, the UANC and ZANU-Ndonga; all of which it accused of plotting to overthrow the government (Hatchard, 1993). The government believed that these parties had forces outside Zimbabwe and that they were willing to be manipulated by internal and external elements (especially disgruntled former Rhodesian agents and the apartheid regime in South Africa) which sought to destabilise the country (Gregory 1980, Hatchard 1993).

Second, ZANU-PF believed that one-partyism was ideal for eliminating tribalism and fostering peace, national unity, and inclusive development under the party’s guidance (Sithole 1991, Moyo 1991). However, the rhetoric of national unity was used as a smokescreen behind which to establish a one-party state (Moyo 1991). Third, ZANU-PF believed that one-partyism would enable it to focus on implementing the socialist policies which it adopted at independence. Fourth, the party, particularly former President, Robert Mugabe, believed that the pressure to adopt multi-party politics was being exerted by western states, which had no right to “teach Zimbabwe” about democracy because of their history in the colonisation and exploitation of other societies. The one-party state agenda primarily sought to eliminate opposition to ZANU-PF rule and to enable the party to dominate virtually all state organs (Saunders 2000: 20, Makumbe 2007: 33, De Waal 1990: 35).

Although the Lancaster House constitution allowed multi-party politics, ZANU-PF ensured that the political environment could not accommodate any other political party (Moyo 1990: 45). As a result, although multi-party elections were conducted regularly, their conduct “merely became a different avenue to achieve hegemony” (Du Toit 1995: 262). According to *The Herald* of 25 January 1982, as cited by Laakso (2002: 324), Mugabe entreated ZANU-PF party structures to “recruit all Zimbabweans”, including members of the opposition PF-ZAPU, to join ZANU-PF so that everyone could hold the party’s membership card and that once this has been achieved, national identity cards would be abolished because they would “serve no purpose”. The following section discusses the various ways which were used by ZANU-PF to entrench hegemony in the quest for one-partyism.

3.4.1 State-party conflation and the use of violence against the opposition

Many scholars argue that the civil service (particularly the police, the army and the Central Intelligence Organisation) has been heavily politicised and that the use of violence has been at the center of ZANU-PF’s power retention strategy. The use of violence and coercion against the

opposition can be traced back to the 1980 elections. In 1980, some high ranking ZANU-PF officials, most notably the then Minister of Home Affairs, Enos Nkala, forcibly argued in favour of a one-party state and entreated the party to “crush PF-ZAPU” in order to achieve this goal (see Kriger 2005). The Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA-which was ZANU-PF’s military wing during the independence struggle) used many ways of coercing the electorate to vote for ZANU-PF. These included “disciplining murders” which were used to warn those who refused to support the party; making threats of “going back to the bush” in the event that ZANU-PF would have lost the transitional elections; claiming to take the names of those who refused to conform with a view to “punish” them; and claims that they were in possession of machines which would show how individuals had voted (Report by the British Observer Group 1980: 9).

Throughout the post-independence history, ZANU-PF used organised violence and intimidation; especially before, during and after elections, in order to punish its opponents (Kriger 2005). As a result, elections came to be synonymous with violence and intimidation. The violence was perpetrated by different actors such as the youth militia, war veterans, members of the women’s league, and state security organs (Compagnon 2011, Masunungure 2008, Raftopoulos 2009). Many of these perpetrators enjoyed impunity and this contributed to the breakdown of the rule of law in Zimbabwe. For example, during the 1985 elections, ZANU-PF was determined to win constituencies in Matabeleland, where ZAPU had won 15 out of the 16 seats during the 1980 elections. The youth militia and state security agents forced villagers to buy party cards and to attend ZANU-PF rallies (Laakso 2005, Wrobel 1985). Mugabe warned the people of Matabeleland regarding the consequences of voting PF-ZAPU and gave them the “last chance” to “vote right” (Moyo 1992: 28). Voters were threatened that should ZANU-PF lose to the opposition, they will experience “a second *Gukurahundi*”. Sithole (1986: 46) argues that the post-election period of the 1985 general elections was characterised by:

...the almost unbelievable reaction of many ZANU-PF supporters, mainly women and the youth in urban areas. A few days after news of the election victory, they went on a rampage, beating up and evicting members of opposition parties from their houses. Whole families and their belongings were thrown out into the streets...several people were killed in this post-election violence.

In response to the political challenge by the opposition Zimbabwe Unity Movement in the run-up to the 1990 elections, ZANU-PF supporters embarked on door-to-door campaigns of terror directed against confessed and perceived ZUM supporters (Moyo 1992, Laakso 2002). As a result, some ZUM candidates withdrew from the 1990 parliamentary elections citing security reasons (Sachikonye 1990). Law enforcement agencies were accused of being reluctant to punish ZANU-PF supporters involved in the perpetration of violence. In many cases, Mugabe used his presidential powers to pardon ZANU-PF supporters convicted of violence and the murder of political opponents thereby promoting a culture of violence and impunity (Makumbe and Compagnon 2000: 56, Moyo, 1992: 35). Another strategy which ZANU-PF used in the quest for a one-party state was to make false charges against leaders of the opposition with a view to intimidate and distract them from organising and contesting elections. For example, on 31 October 1983, Bishop Abel Muzorewa was detained without trial on allegations of engaging in “subversive activities” (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 8 November 1983) only to be released on 4 September 1984. Muzorewa was suspected of conspiring with “subversive elements” linked to the South African apartheid regime and Israel to overthrow the Zimbabwean government (Makumbe and Compagnon 2000).

The government claimed that his former UANC auxiliaries had received training in South Africa and were waiting for an opportune moment to invade Zimbabwe. Similarly, Ndabaningi Sithole, who was the leader of ZANU-Ndonga, went into self-imposed exile in Britain, claiming that his life

was under threat. He was accused of seeking arms from the United States with the view to assassinate Mugabe and overthrow the government. Upon his return, Sithole was tried and convicted of treason before he was released on grounds of health problems (see Kriger 2005, LeBas 2006, Makumbe and Compagnon 2000).

In terms of state-party conflation, the fusion between ZANU-PF and the state made it difficult to distinguish between the two. In this context, ZANU-PF became synonymous with the state. This undermined the capacity of opposition political parties to institutionalise. In particular, the state-party conflation was characterised by the politicisation of the army, the police and the CIO. The CIO has been one of the most dreaded institutions in Zimbabwe because its agents are widely known for engaging in abductions, torture, victimisation and harassment of opposition supporters and leaders (Makumbe 1991: 67). Makumbe and Compagnon (2000: 14) argue that the Central Intelligence Organisation comprises ZANU-PF's "running dogs" who infiltrated various opposition political parties with a view to cause chaos, internal quarrels and disrupt their operations. They also maintain that "what often appeared as factionalism within the opposition was actually engineered by these 'plants' and most opposition leaders failed to uncover the trap". The conflation between the party and the state was also characterised by the selective use of legislation to deny opposition parties democratic freedoms such as assembly, association, and expression; with their rallies being denied by the police or disrupted by overzealous ZANU-PF supporters.

ZANU-PF also ensured that there was convergence between the party and state structures, including at grassroots levels such as the Village Development Committees and the Ward Development Committees (Toit 1995: 272). According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2008: 28), ZANU-PF "sought to make itself and its guerrillas (ZANLA) the base of the nation and the state. This was indicated by the promotion of ZANLA and party songs, symbols and slogans as national and state business rather than party politics".

3.4.2 *The patriotic history narrative*

ZANU-PF made extensive use of the patriotic history narrative to demonise opposition parties as "enemies of the state" and peddle the view that it is the only political party with the legitimacy and mandate to govern the country. This narrative is based on the claim that its military arm, ZANLA, fought the independence war and liberated Zimbabwe from colonial oppression. In its election manifesto for the 2013 elections, ZANU-PF claimed that "it is an enduring and unforgettable fact that it is ZANU-PF which liberated Zimbabwe after prosecuting a heroic armed struggle" (ZANU-PF Election Manifesto, 2013: 1). The party used this narrative to claim "the right to rule" (Compagnon 2011: 3) on the reasoning that its political legitimacy cannot be gained from the conduct of elections because it is rooted in its liberation credentials (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012: 1). According to Tendi (2010: 1), patriotic history "is a narrative which depicts ZANU-PF as sole champion, past and present, of the independence and sovereignty of a country under constant attack from imperialist forces".

Patriotic history is a political culture which divides the nation into "revolutionaries/patriots" and "sell outs/puppets"; rationalizes violence against "sell-outs"; justifies the suppression of civil and political rights with a view to close the space for opposition party politics; propagates the view that ZANU-PF is the alpha and omega of Zimbabwe's past, present and future; and promote the fusion between ZANU-PF and the state (Ranger 2004: 223, Tendi 2009: 8). Matombo and Sachikonye (2010: 111) state that ZANU-PF regards itself as a "repository of nationalism" and that it has defended repression "on the grounds of preserving national sovereignty against domestic "sell outs" and external "detractors". "Revolutionaries/patriots" are regarded as those who are loyal to ZANU-PF and its leadership while "sell outs/puppets" are regarded as those who oppose the party,

regardless of the legitimacy of such opposition. The party has made concerted efforts to propagate this narrative across populations; particularly the youth, war veterans, women's movements, the security sector, civil servants, and traditional leaders. The mantra "Zimbabwe will never be a colony again" became the linchpin of the patriotic history. This narrative downplays the role which was played by PF-ZAPU and by the masses in the struggle for independence. ZANU-PF has therefore been criticised for "monopolising" the patriotic history.

3.4.3 *The monopolisation of state resources*

Political parties need access to resources in order to fund and support their activities. Sound funding enables opposition parties to effectively participate in governance processes, to contest elections, to conduct their activities in between elections, and to meaningfully challenge the ruling party and make it accountable to the citizens (Matlosa and Shale 2008: 27). In accordance with the one-party state agenda, ZANU-PF denied the opposition access to state resources. The opposition was "seriously handicapped by the absence of resources" such that it was unable to fund its activities, especially in between elections (Sachikonye 2005: 127-128). As a result, opposition parties were not able to field their candidates in many constituencies, with the result that many parliamentary seats were won by ZANU-PF uncontested.

ZANU-PF used formal and informal ways of monopolising state resources. From independence, the party was funded by public funds through the now defunct Ministry of Political Affairs. This ministry was abolished in 1992 as a result of sustained criticism from opposition political parties and civil society (Sithole 2000) because it allocated all the resources to ZANU-PF. ZANU-PF used this ministry to facilitate the establishment of the one-party state (Makumbe and Compagnon 2000). It was replaced by the Political Parties (Finance) Act (1992) which regulated public funding of political parties. The Act required political parties to win at least fifteen seats in parliament in order to qualify for public funding. This exclusionary threshold was intended to ensure that only ZANU-PF would be entitled to public funding because the opposition lacked the capacity to reach it (see Makumbe and Compagnon, 2000: 57). The constitutionality of the threshold was legally challenged and in 1997, the Supreme Court ruled out that it was unconstitutional. Subsequent to the ruling, the Act was amended to provide that a political party which would have polled at least 5 percent of the votes in a general election should be eligible for public funding. The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) was the first opposition party to be entitled to public funding under this Act following its performance during the 2000 parliamentary elections⁸. The monopolisation of state resources was characterised by the politicisation of development projects, food aid, and other forms of resources, with many opposition supporters deliberately excluded so as to "punish" them.

3.4.4 *Monopolisation of the public media*

The media plays an essential role in enabling political parties to communicate their policies, programmes, election manifestos, and vision for the country to the electorate. Since 1980, the media fraternity in Zimbabwe was dominated by state-owned newspapers such as *The Herald*, *The Sunday Mail*, *The Sunday News*, and *The Chronicle*. These newspapers were run by government-appointed editors, all of whom were committed to serve ZANU-PF and were card-carrying members of the party, with the exception of Willy Musarurwa (Masuka, 2003). It was difficult for the opposition to access state media to propagate its policies and/or to counteract ZANU-PF propaganda, especially in

⁸ ZANU-PF won 62 of the 120 contested seats, the MDC won 57 seats while ZANU-Ndonga won 1 seat in Sithole's home area (Kriger, 2005). The MDC's performance was historic, especially considering the level of violence and other malpractices by ZANU-PF and that the elections were conducted within a year after its formation.

rural areas because the mass media deliberately avoided the advertising of rallies, policies, programmes and any other events related to political parties other than ZANU-PF (Makumbe 1991: 27).

Compagnon (2011: 3) states that during the first decade of independence, ZANU-PF tightly controlled the state media and used it to “propagate the fiction that ZANLA, its military arm, won the war on the battle field and therefore the right to rule”. Kriger (2005: 5) states that from independence in 1980 going forward, ZANU-PF has been using the state media to promote its war contributions and songs and to denounce and vilify the opposition. For example, according to Moyo (1992: 75), during the 1990 elections:

ZANU-PF election advertisements played on radio and shown on television depicted voting ZUM as tantamount to death. One advertisement featured the screech of tyres and the crushing of glass and metal in a motor accident, followed by a voice warning coldly: “This is one way to die, another is to vote ZUM. Don’t commit suicide, vote ZANU-PF.” Another advertisement showed a coffin being lowered into a grave followed by the stern warning: “AIDS kills, so does ZUM, vote ZANU-PF and live”⁹.

Such adverts were viewed by the opposition as inciting ZANU-PF supporters and security agents to perpetrate violence against ZUM supporters. In this context, it was not surprising that Patrick Kombayi, who was ZUM’s national organising secretary and candidate in the Gweru constituency, where he was contesting against the then vice president Simon Muzenda of ZANU-PF, was shot. The perpetrators (a leading CIO agent and a leading ZANU-PF youth league member in Gweru) were convicted and sentenced but Mugabe freed them under the presidential pardon (Sithole, 2000). ZUM was denied access to state media and its public rallies were routinely denied and/or disrupted by the police, especially under the inherited Law and Order (Maintenance) Act (Moyo, 1992).

3.4.5 Manipulation of the election management body

Scholars argue that the monopolisation and manipulation of institutions which were responsible for the management of elections (for example, by ensuring that they were staffed by party loyalists, including Central Intelligence Organisation agents) was one of the ways through which ZANU-PF sought to establish a one-party state (Makumbe and Compagnon 2000, Moyo 1992, Laakso 2003, Saunders 2000). The elections were managed by different institutions, primarily the Delimitation Commission, the Electoral Supervisory Commission (now the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission), and the Registrar General’s Office. The Delimitation Commission’s main responsibility was to delimit constituency boundaries (this responsibility now falls under the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission), considering variables such as the physical characteristics of the constituency, the distribution of registered voters, and the means of communication in the constituency. The major criticism that was directed against the commission by opposition parties and civil society was the lack of participation of stakeholders such as political parties and civil society organisations, resulting in the gerrymandering of constituency boundaries. For example, Laakso (2002) argues that during the 1985 general elections, the Commission, chaired by Justice Sandura, made some last minutes changes to the boundaries of some constituencies in favour of ZANU-PF.

The Electoral Supervisory Commission (now the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission) is responsible for supervising the registration of voters and the conduct of elections. The commission faced

⁹ In a democratic context, such election adverts could have been banned. For example, ZANU-PF’s first election symbol during the 1980 elections, which showed a hand clasping an AK47 rifle, was banned (Gregory, 1980) because it was regarded as advocating for violence.

criticism from civil society and opposition parties for lacking impartiality (especially considering that the president appointed its members) and executive powers to run elections (Makumbe and Compagnon 2000: 234). Opposition parties and civil society organisations have also criticised ZEC for the failure to make use of/compile a transparent, updated and consolidated voters' roll and that the roll has always been in a "shambolic" state, making it subject to malpractices such as multiple voting (Makumbe and Compagnon 2000, Southall 2013, Moyo 1992). In 2008, ZEC withheld the results of a presidential election which had been conducted on 28 March for more than four weeks. The MDC unsuccessfully challenged the delay in the courts.

SADC, the African Union, and the United Nations called on the government to speedily release the results. The results were finally announced on 2 May 2008, raising widespread speculations that Mugabe had manipulated the votes in order to avoid an outright victory by Tsvangirai. ZEC announced that Tsvangirai had polled 47.9%, Mugabe 43.2%, Makoni 8.3% while Towungana got 0.6% (ZEC, 2008). During the 2013 elections, the voters' roll was only made available to political parties on the eve of the elections. To make it worse, it was only provided in a hard and not electronic copy. This made it difficult, if not impossible, for opposition parties to analyse it. The African Union Election Observer Mission (AUEOM) noted that by the time the voter's roll was provided by ZEC, it was "rather late for meaningful inspection and verification by voters, parties and candidates to take place" (Report by the African Union Observer Mission to the elections 2013: 8). The SADC Election Observer Mission (SEOM) also stated that:

The provision of the voters' roll in time goes to the very heart of fairness in the election process. If the voters' roll is not made available on time, the fairness of the election is brought into question...We are saying so because our observers on the ground reported complains related to the delay in issuing the voters' roll on time. And even in those areas where the voters' roll was issued a few days before, people had no access to it until the day of voting (SEOM report 2013).

According to Southall (2013: 128), the "key to the ZANU-PF victory in 2013 lay in its *de facto* control of the voters' roll via the Registrar General and ZEC".

3.4.6 *The centralisation of power in the office and person of the president*

The one-party state agenda was also pursued through the centralisation of power in the office and person of the President via constitutional amendments. In 1984, the President was awarded the powers to appoint officials of the Judicial Services Commission, the Attorney General and the then Electoral Supervisory Commission. In 1987, the constitutional provision which required unanimity in the House of Assembly in order to change the parliamentary composition lapsed. The government dissolved the 20 seats which were reserved for whites and merged the white roll with the black roll (Makumbe and Compagnon 2000).

In 1987, the government made constitutional amendment number 7. It abolished the office of the Prime Minister and introduced an Executive Presidency with an unlimited term of office. Before this amendment, executive powers were vested in the office of the Prime Minister while the office of the President remained a titular one. The President was not voted into office by the people, but by an electoral college. Robert Mugabe was the Prime Minister and Canaan Banana was the President. In 1989, the senate was abolished and the number of parliamentary seats was increased from 100 to 150. The President was empowered to handpick 30 non-constituency parliamentarians. Mugabe used this prerogative to ensure that the seats were always filled by ZANU-PF loyalists (Sachikonye 2005: 124).

According to Laakso (2002: 344) “the foremost consequence of all these constitutional amendments was the concentration of power in the office of the president” as ZANU-PF moved to introduce a legislated one-party state. Moyo also (1991: 92) argues that constitutional amendments number 7, 9 and 10 could “not make sense outside the context of a one-party state”. The variables which are discussed in this section caused the emergence of small, weak, and ephemeral opposition political parties which often emerged before elections and disappeared immediately thereafter. Many of the parties boycotted elections on the ground that the electoral playing field was grossly unfair. From the Unity Accord in 1987 until the formation of the MDC in 1999, Zimbabwe operated as a *de facto* one party state. The existence of opposition parties essentially served to give Zimbabwe a façade of multi-party democracy.

3.5 GUKURAHUNDI AND THE ONE-PARTY STATE AGENDA

This section examines the relationship between *Gukurahundi* and the one-party state agenda. To achieve this goal, the section discusses the causes and drivers of dissident activities, the government’s response to the dissident problem, and the nature of the abuses which were perpetrated during *Gukurahundi*.

3.5.1 The eruption of dissident activities

In the early 1980s, there was an outbreak of dissident insurgency in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands province. The dissidents committed ignominious acts of brutality which included rape; murder of villagers and commercial white farmers; assault; torture; maiming; destruction of villages and state infrastructure, including schools; ambushing and attacking travelers; enforced disappearance; beatings; armed robbery; and harassment of scores of civilians (CCJP & LRF 1997). The dissidents caused so much destruction and death. For example, in Nyamandlovu commercial farming area, dissidents killed 21 people which included commercial farmers, their families, and farm workers (CCJP & LRF 1997: 36).

However, it was difficult to establish the exact degree of the damage which was caused by dissidents because the state media was biased in its reporting and government agencies such as the Fifth Brigade and the CIO committed human rights violations which could be attributed to dissidents (CCJP & LRF 1997: 48). Interviewee 26M2 stated that at the height of the conflict, it was difficult to distinguish the violence which was committed by the dissidents from that which was committed by state security forces¹⁰. The dissidents also targeted ZANU-PF officials (Alao 1994: 67). In terms of their areas of operation, the dissidents divided Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands into three operational regions which were: the Western region, mainly Tsholotsho and Bulilimangwe; the Northern region, mainly Kwekwe, Lupane and Nkayi; and the Southern region which included areas such as Matobo, Insiza, Gwanda and Beitbridge. Each region was under the command of a particular dissident (CCJP & LRF 1997: 45). Eppel (2004: 48) states that “the dissidents indeed existed, and were committing crimes, and Mugabe had the right to sort out the security problem in his country”. Interviewee 25M1 stated that the dissidents committed “senseless violence” against innocent and peaceful people and that they also forced some people to commit the violence¹¹.

¹⁰ The interview was conducted in the Matobo community.

¹¹ The interview was conducted in the Matobo community.

3.5.2 Who were the dissidents?

There were different types of dissidents. Interviewee 22M2 stated that “some of the dissidents were people whom we knew but others were strangers to our community”¹². The first category consisted of disgruntled ex-ZIPRA soldiers and some former members of the Auxiliary force which had been formed during the Muzorewa administration and disbanded after independence. The Auxiliary force was an army which was set up by Muzorewa with the recognition and support of the Rhodesian regime but they were mainly controlled by the Rhodesian police and army. They were used to police people (Chung 2006: 234). The second consisted of “criminal elements” who had no political affiliation and were simply taking advantage of the violence that was prevalent in the region (Alao 1994, Alao 2012, CCJP and LRF 1997). The third category consisted of “Super-ZAPU” dissidents who were trained, armed, and infiltrated by South Africa under a secret operation which was codenamed “Operation Drama” (Pilosof 2012, CCJP and LRF 1997, Chan 2003). Operation Drama’s objective was to train, support and deploy a small group of “Super ZAPU” dissidents who were recruited from refugee camps in Botswana (CCJP & LRF 1997: 41).

The deployment of Super-ZAPU dissidents was in line with the South African policy of undermining the stability of Front Line States such as Angola and Mozambique. It was also intended to establish and propagate the false view that black rule was incapable of administering a modern state. Super-ZAPU dissidents were also intended to disrupt the operations of the African National Congress (ANC) which were being conducted from Zimbabwe (Alexander 1998: 165). A number of explanations were used to explain why some ex-ZIPRA members participated in dissident activities. The main contributing factor was the antagonism between ZIPRA and ZANLA which did not end with the attainment of independence. This made it possible for the parties to engage each other militarily after the attainment of independence (Chung 2006: 76, Alao 1994: 213). For example, in November 1980, ZANLA and ZIPRA militarily clashed as a result of alleged accusations and insults which were made by ZANU-PF leaders against ZAPU and Joshua Nkomo in particular (Nkomo 2001: 189).

The clashes caused significant casualties. According to Kriger (2003: 46) the clashes in Entumbane in November 1980 killed 55 people, wounded 550 people and destroyed 1 600 homes while the clashes in February 1981 killed at least 197 people and destroyed 1 600 homes. The clashes caused an atmosphere of mistrust and antagonism between the two armies which caused “the concealing of arms on both sides” and the “going back to the bush” of many ex-ZIPRA cadres (CCJP and LRF 1997: 28). At independence, the government was faced with the difficult task of implementing a tripartite integration of the armies which had fought during the independence struggle into the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA). These were ZANLA, ZIPRA and the Rhodesian Security Forces (RSF). According to the CCJP and the LRF (1997: 28) “there were some differences between ZIPRA and ZANLA in training and outlook, and some negative memories of one another which added to the complexity of integrating the two forces into one army after independence”. The integration was characterised by the segregation and “othering” of ex-ZIPRA cadres in the ZNA. This caused disgruntlement among some ex-ZIPRA cadres who felt that their contribution to the liberation struggle was belittled by ZANU-PF.

In 1982, thousands of ex-ZIPRAs deserted the national army as relations within the army deteriorated and this contributed to increased dissident activities in Matabeleland (Alexander *et al* 2000: 181). The dismissal of Nkomo from cabinet and the arrest and detention of high ranking ZAPU cadres also resulted in some ex-ZIPRA members leaving the national army and engaging in dissident activities. The dissidents lacked even vague leadership structures and did not communicate

¹² The interview was conducted in the Matobo community.

any explicit demands, however incoherent, which motivated their insurgency. They also lacked the military and numerical capability to openly engage state security forces or to take control of even the smallest territory in their operational zones. As a result, they suffered casualties from government security forces resulting in desertions. The dissidents therefore posed a security and not military threat to the government (Alao 1994, Hatchard 1993, Pilosof 2012).

3.5.3 *The dissident problem: an opportunity for the one-party state agenda?*

With ZANU-PF's landslide victory in the transitional elections, the one-party state agenda became more conceivable, but PF-ZAPU remained the only major hurdle, especially considering that it actively opposed the idea. For example, during its October 1984 congress, PF-ZAPU re-elected Nkomo as its president and strongly denounced the one-party state agenda. During its congress in the same year, ZANU-PF passed a resolution to introduce a Marxist-Leninist one-party state. Moyo (1991: 83) states that ZAPU was "a thorny obstacle to ZANU-PF's commitment to a legislated one-party state". The 20 parliamentary seats which were reserved for whites were a temporary impediment to the one-party state agenda because they were to be legally abolished in 1987. It was within this context that the dissident activities erupted. The government used state media, especially *The Chronicle*, to propagate the view that the dissidents posed serious security threats which not only undermined peace and security, but also the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the entire country.

There was no doubt that dissident activities caused grave security concerns during the time (CCJP & LRF 1997: 27). It was necessary for the government to intervene in order to restore peace and security in affected areas. The deployment of the Fifth Brigade and other security forces in Matabeleland was therefore a response to the dissident problem. ZANU-PF believed that dissident activities were supported by PF-ZAPU and that the latter was seeking to destabilise the state because it had been disappointed by its performance in the transitional elections. However, some scholars argue that the government deliberately exaggerated the estimated number of the dissidents, the scope of their operational areas, and the sophistication and quantity of weapons in their possession. It claimed that the dissidents were "heavily armed" and that they numbered up to 1 000 people. However, some analysts argue that the dissidents numbered 400 recruits at most (Pilosof 2012, Kriger 2005, CCJP & LRF 1997).

In reference to the dissident activities (and by implication to ZAPU), Mugabe reportedly said that if a cobra enters one's house, the best way to deal with it once and for all would be to "crush its head" (Nkomo 1984: 334). The government responded to the dissident problem by embarking on a Machiavellian-style counter-insurgency campaign commonly referred to as *Gukurahundi*. *Gukurahundi* is a Shona word which refers to the first rains which washes away the chaff. In the context of the massacres, it refers to the celerity, ferocity, and indiscriminate nature of the violence (see Tofa 2013: 82). *Gukurahundi* was primarily used as a means through which to "crush" the opposition (PF-ZAPU) in order to establish a one-party state. Interviewee 24M1 stated that the government took advantage of the dissidents to vent its anger against the Ndebele and PF-ZAPU¹³. Focus group participant 22M6 stated that *Gukurahundi* was used to "fumigate" opposition to ZANU-PF¹⁴. Sithole and Makumbe (1997: 133) argue that *Gukurahundi* was ZANU-PF's policy of annihilating the opposition, which it adopted towards the end of the liberation struggle. According to the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (2005: 49) *Gukurahundi* was the epitome of the politics of

¹³ The interview was conducted in the Matobo community.

¹⁴ The focus group discussion was conducted in the Matobo community.

intolerance in ZANU-PF which “killed” the willingness to share political space with other political parties.

Sibanda (2005: 242) maintains that Mugabe sought to introduce a one-party state “by making ZAPU, by whatever means,... join his party”. Compagnon (2011: 23) states that in 1980, the elimination of ZAPU was Mugabe’s high ranking priority such that “everything was done in the first two years to push ZAPU leaders to err and give Mugabe the excuse to strike mercilessly”. According to Makumbe (1986: 27) the dissident problem gave ZANU-PF the opportunity to eliminate PF-ZAPU as an obstacle to the one-party state agenda. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2008: 30) also argues that ZANU-PF’s intention was to destroy PF-ZAPU and the support base of Joshua Nkomo once and for all and to force all the Ndebele speaking people to support ZANU-PF. PF-ZAPU refused any links with the dissidents and maintained that the dissident activities were being used by ZANU as a smokescreen behind which to further its intention to obliterate opposition politics and establish a legislated one-party state. Some high ranking ZANU-PF officials acknowledged that the dissident insurgency gave the government the opportunity to achieve its long-standing goal of obliterating the only credible and viable opposition political party as a means to establish a one-party state. For example, Didymus Mutasa¹⁵ (1989: 293) argued that “Unity was necessary for ZANU-PF to achieve the long cherished goal of a one-party state”.

3.5.4 *The discovery of arms caches and its aftermath*

Although government had all along believed that dissident activities were being perpetrated by PF-ZAPU, the “irrevocable” breakdown of relations between the two parties took place when, on 6 February 1982, large caches of arms were found on farms which were owned by PF-ZAPU: Ascot Farm and Hampton Ranch. The government announced the discovery and immediately concluded that the arms represented “concrete evidence” that PF-ZAPU was planning to overthrow it. According to Chan (2003: 22) government took the discovery “as evidence that disgruntled ZIPRA fighters were preparing a Western insurrection, that Nkomo’s ZAPU party was untrustworthy and had withheld knowledge in bad faith, and that it was now necessary to stamp out the internal enemy”. ZAPU denied any association with the arms, insisting that since 1980, arms had been discovered in many parts of the country and that nobody associated them with either ZIPRA or ZANLA. It also maintained that the discovery should be viewed through the lens of the distrust between ZIPRA and ZANLA following the Entumbane uprising of 1981. Alexander (1998:155) suggests that “the evidence for a conspiracy was shaky: the existence of arms caches on both sides had been well known for some time, and both ZIPRA and ZANLA had cached weapons after the Entumbane and other disturbances as insurance”.

The other position was that the arms caches could have been deliberately planted by anti-ZAPU elements with a view to make government believe that ZAPU was planning a military coup. According to the CCJP & LRF (1997: 29) it was highly likely that the arms were clandestinely stockpiled by Matt Calloway, who was leading a section of the CIO and acting as a South African agent at the time the arms were discovered. Some former Rhodesian security officers who were

¹⁵ Didymus Mutasa is a former senior ZANU-PF politician who participated in the liberation struggle. He was the Speaker of Parliament from 1980-1990. He subsequently held various Ministerial posts which include Special Affairs in the Office of the President; as well as State and National Security. He was Minister of State for Presidential Affairs from 2009 to 2014, when he was expelled from ZANU-PF and government on allegations of working with former Vice President Joyce Mujuru to oust Mugabe. He is currently a leading member of the opposition Zimbabwe People First, which was founded by Joyce Mujuru following her expulsion from ZANU-PF and the government in December 2014 (*The Daily News*, 1 January 2015).

recruited in the CIO at independence allegedly worked as “double agents” who secretly worked to advance the interests of the South African apartheid regime (CCJP & LRF 1997: 35). Relations between ZANU and ZAPU instantly crumbled as Nkomo and other PF-ZAPU ministers, including Josiah Mushore Chinamano, Clement Muchachi and Joseph Msika, were expelled from government (Kriger 2003). Isaac Nyathi and Major Masala Sibanda, who were senior PF-ZAPU members, were also detained in April 1983. These developments caused ex-ZIPRA officers to feel insecure within the army, causing desertions. In April 1984, Callistus Ndlovu, who was PF-ZAPU’s Minister of Mines, left PF-ZAPU and joined ZANU-PF. Despite having lost elections, Ndlovu was offered positions in government as a “reward” for “making the right decision”.

Nkomo went into exile in Britain citing security reasons, only to return in 1984. In 1984, a ZANU-PF central committee member was killed, allegedly by dissidents who were linked to ZAPU. ZANU-PF responded by expelling the remaining ZAPU representatives. These included Cephass Msipa (who was Minister of Water Resources) and John Nkomo (who was Minister of State in the Deputy Prime Minister’s Office) (Du Toit 1995: 232). ZANU-PF supporters responded by embarking on a violent campaign in which many ZAPU supporters were killed. ZANU-PF used the dissident activities to create a narrative denigrating the contribution of PF-ZAPU to the liberation struggle (see Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008).

3.5.5 Interrogating the abuses which were committed during Gukurahundi

Gukurahundi was achieved through the deployment of a North Korean-trained special unit which was called the Fifth Brigade and other security units such as the regular army and the CIO. Of these units, it was the Fifth Brigade which was notorious for its use of violence against communities. The Fifth Brigade accused the Ndebeles of supporting ZAPU and maintained the view that ZAPU supporters were either dissidents or collaborators (Eppel 2004: 89). In his autobiography, Msipa (2015: 34) states that:

Innocent men, women and children perished in their thousands. They were accused of either harboring dissidents or supporting them. It turned out to be a massacre of people perceived to be PF-ZAPU supporters. The fact that people were Ndebele speakers was regarded as sufficient proof that they were PF-ZAPU supporters, and, therefore dissident supporters.

According to Africa Watch, as cited by Laakso (2001: 331), the Fifth Brigade went to different villages with lists of ZAPU cadres and supporters who were witch-hunted, tortured and killed. Its main function was to make sure that the dissidents could not have any bases in Matabeleland. This was achieved not only through military action against the dissidents, but through terrorising and murdering citizens in those areas where dissidents operated from (Chan 2003: 24).

Unlike other units which fell under the usual command and control structures of the army, the Fifth Brigade was accountable directly to Mugabe (Mashingaidze 2005: 56). The violence which was used to deal with the dissident problem was disproportionate and indiscriminate, such that within a few weeks; the Fifth Brigade had committed mass killings, beatings, maiming, and burning of villages (CCJP and LRF 1997: 47). According to Ncube (1991: 65) the people of Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands province endured a scale of violence which can scarcely be differentiated from that which was inflicted on the people of Zimbabwe by the colonial state. Ncube further maintains that from the beginning of 1983, the Fifth Brigade committed atrocities in which, within weeks, it had massacred more than 2 000 civilians, beaten, tortured, and raped scores of civilians and torched hundreds of thousands of homesteads. Alexander *et al* (2000: 217) share the same view, stating that:

From its deployment in Matabeleland North in January 1983 until its withdrawal from Matabeleland South in late 1984, the brigade carried out a grotesquely violent campaign against civilians, civil servants, party chairmen and, occasionally, armed insurgents...The Fifth Brigade introduced a qualitatively new and more horrific kind of war. For those civilians who bore its brunt, all preceding armies paled in comparison. Civilians stressed the explicitly tribal nature of the brigade's attacks, the forced use of *Shona*, the invoking of a mythical past of Ndebele raids against the *Shona* to justify the brigade's brutality. The brigade used ZANLA's mobilisation methods such as the all night *pungwes* at which song and dance were accompanied by political education. But in this context the songs were in an unfamiliar language, the dance was forced, the slogans were anti-ZAPU, and the "festivities" were accompanied by beatings and killings.

The atrocities which were committed include physical and psychological torture; burning of villages; mass shootings, beatings, and burnings; displacement; enforced disappearance; harassment; rape; maiming; detention; and deprivation¹⁶. Dead victims were buried in mass graves while others were thrown in mine shafts (see chapter five for a detailed discussion). According to Carver (1993: 75), the government also embarked on "Operation Turkey" which was intended to cut food supplies for the dissidents as well as civilians suspected of supporting dissidents. This "policy of starvation" affected scores of civilians, especially during periods of drought. The conflict caused psychological trauma to victims and their families and at least 20 000 people were killed in the conflict, hundreds of thousands were displaced, while scores more lost their livelihoods (CCJP & LRF 1997:135, Du Toit 1995: 232, Sithole 1995: 126, Eppel 2004: 67). The government believed that the dissidents commanded substantial support from the civilian population. Villagers in affected communities faced difficult choices. On the one hand, the dissidents threatened them to elicit their cooperation and to ensure that they refrain from reporting them to state security forces.

On the other hand, doing so would mean that they would be victimised by the Fifth Brigade. Those who were suspected of cooperating with the dissidents faced all forms of victimisation¹⁷. The atrocities which were committed by the Fifth Brigade were regarded by many Ndebeles as a way of "punishing" them in retaliation for the Ndebele raids which were conducted against Shona societies in the nineteenth century. The raids, which involved livestock theft, engendered pervasive antagonism between the Shona and the Ndebele. The CCJP and LRF (1997: 39) states that the arrival of the Ndebele in Matabeleland in the middle of the nineteenth century was characterised by the raiding of the Shona. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Benyera (2015:11) also argue that the arrival of the Ndebele people in 1838 was blamed for bringing *Mfecane*-like violence to Zimbabwe. One of the reasons why the Fifth Brigade was regarded as a force to "punish" the Ndebele was that it predominantly comprised Shona speaking ex-ZANLA members.

3.6 THE FALL OF THE ONE-PARTY STATE AGENDA

There was probably no other debate that pre-occupied the Zimbabwean political system in the 1980s as did the one-party state agenda. The agenda faced criticism from different sections of the Zimbabwean society, especially from civil society. In the early 1980s, civil society focused on development related issues and sought to closely partner with the government with a view to play a complementary role in the nation-building agenda. During this period, ZANU-PF faced little or no criticism from the civil society sector. ZANU-PF used different methods to dominate and co-opt civil society. The party challenged civil society organisations to "join" it as a way of showing their "patriotic commitment" and those which attempted to remain independent were labelled as sell outs

¹⁶ These violations were mentioned during the interviews.

¹⁷ This was gathered during the interviews and focus group discussion in the Matobo community.

working with “detractors” and “enemies of the state” to undermine the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Zimbabwe (Moyo 1993: 7).

However, from the mid-1980s, civil society progressively liberated itself from the clutches of the state. By the late 1980s, it had become a “hotbed” of dissent. Ubiquitous problems such as corruption, shortage of transport, the one-party state agenda, mismanagement of state resources, deepening poverty, and rising unemployment caused disgruntlement across civil society (Moyo 1992: 31). There is consensus among scholars that it was civil society (especially the student movement, the labour movement, and the National Constitutional Assembly-NCA) which spearheaded opposition to the one-party state agenda at a time when opposition political parties were “absent” (Sithole 2000: 81). According to Laakso (1996: 341), “the Unity Accord between ZANU and ZAPU opened up space for civil society and encouraged public criticism of the government; especially towards the establishment of the one-party state...the role of civil society in Zimbabwe was prominent in the defense and support of multi-party democracy”. Sithole (2000: 81) argues that “in the absence of strong opposition political parties, opposition to authoritarianism was spearheaded largely by civil society...First; the demand was public accountability and disclosure of corruption, then opposition to plans for the establishment of the one-party state”.

Drawing lessons from the experiences of Eastern Europe and other African states with their one-party state projects, the student movement vociferously criticised the one-party state agenda as “a phenomenon that leads to fascist dictatorship, fossilised and bureaucratised political system, characterised by a cult of personality, monopolistic politics of domination, inefficiency, corruption and petit bourgeois primitive accumulation” (Mutambara 1991: 139). Running battles between armed riot police and students became a common sight as students protested against the government under the “voice of the voiceless” banner (see Cheater, 1991). The government responded by promulgating draconian legislation to suppress students. These include the University of Zimbabwe Act of 1982 and the University of Zimbabwe Amendment Act (No 21 of 1990) which outlawed student protests, both on and off campus. This consolidated the state’s control of the university in such a way that it was reduced to a parastatal institution (Bond 1998, Cheater 1991). Under the Act, the university faced frequent closures and members of the Student Representative Council (SRC) were subjected to frequent harassment, beatings, suspensions, expulsions, arbitrary arrests and detention, and withdrawal of their grants (Gaidzanwa 1993, Tengende 1994, Mutambara 1991, Ncube 1991).

The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) also vehemently opposed the one-party state agenda. In April 1990, it took the formal position that Zimbabwe should retain a multi-party democracy. It used the May Day celebrations to demonstrate against the one-party state, to demand the right to strike and to denounce the unjustified retention of emergency powers (see Musarurwa, 1991). The ZCTU mobilised people to participate in widespread general strikes which were termed stay-aways. In response, the government used the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act to ban strikes and demonstrations. Morgan Tsvangirai, who was the leader of the ZCTU, was beaten by war veterans and the ZCTU’s offices in Bulawayo were razed by arsonists (Bond and Manyanya 2003: 88). The government also used the inherited Rhodesian security apparatus to repress civil society and the opposition. For example, Rhodesian draconian legislation such as the Law and Order Maintenance Act (1960) and the Emergency Powers Act (1960) were used under the guise of promoting national security (Hatchard 1993).

Opposition to the one-party state agenda also came from the opposition Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) which was formed by Edgar Tekere on 30 April 1989 (Moyo, 1992: 235). Tekere was a maverick and outspoken former ZANU-PF secretary general, parliamentarian, cabinet minister and provincial chairman whose contribution to the liberation struggle was legendary. Tekere formed

ZUM after his expulsion from ZANU-PF in October 1988 because of his vociferous criticism of government in relation to corruption, the one-party state agenda, and authoritarianism (Makumbe and Compagnon 2000: 132). ZUM made the one-party state agenda its main theme in its anti-ZANU campaign. It was within this context that proponents of multi-party politics regarded voting for ZUM as “voting for democracy” (Moyo 1992). Sithole (1993: 15) argues that “going into the 1990 elections, the ruling party was under pressure from ZUM to ‘put up or shut up’ on the issue of the one-party state”.

Opposition to the one-party state agenda also emerged from within ZANU-PF itself, especially after its merger with PF-ZAPU. Although one of the provisions of the Unity Accord was the introduction of a one-party state, many ex-ZAPU cadres continued to resist the idea. During the 1989 ZANU/ZAPU joint congress, senior ex-ZAPU members such as Dumiso Dabengwa¹⁸ openly opposed the one-party state agenda such that there was a possibility of a ZANU/ZAPU split should ZANU-PF insist on it (Moyo 1991). Sithole (2000: 75) also states that when ZANU-PF deliberated the idea of introducing a one-party state during its twenty-six member politburo meeting which was held after the 1990 general and presidential elections, “none of the five in favour were former PF-ZAPU” members. There was also generally an anti-one party state sentiment among the Zimbabwean population which began to grow towards the 1990s. Moyo (1992: 31) states that:

Unlike in 1980, the mind of the Zimbabwean body politic in 1990 was not ready for a legislated one-party state. Many Zimbabweans who, because of the euphoria over the liberation war, would have readily supported the idea of a one-party state under ZANU-PF in 1980, were by 1990 self-consciously opposed to the idea because they had had ten years of ZANU-PF rule upon which they were able to judge the undesirability of legislated monopoly politics.

The agenda was abandoned in 1990, largely because establishing a legislated one-party state would have amounted to “going where others were coming from” (Sithole 1991: 71) because many African countries were transitioning from one-party to multi-party politics. However, despite this abandonment, ZANU-PF continued to be guided by the one-party mentality, especially the view that opposition party politics is fundamentally illegitimate. As a result, the intolerance for opposition has continued and the use of violence, terror, and coercion remains embedded in Zimbabwe’s body politic.

3.7 CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from this chapter that the one-party state agenda was characterised by the use of different strategies, particularly violence, intimidation and coercion; to eliminate opposition to ZANU-PF rule. The agenda inculcated political intolerance among ZANU-PF leaders and supporters, such that opposition politics came to be viewed as fundamentally illegitimate and inimical to national unity and to the values of the liberation struggle. Because the agenda justified violence against the opposition, conflict (especially between ZANU-PF and the main opposition PF-ZAPU) became inevitable, leading to the *Gukurahundi* atrocities. Although the dissident threat was real, *Gukurahundi* was characterized by the “systematic killing of civilians in Matabeleland” with a view to establish a one-party state, an agenda which ZANU-PF adopted during its congress in Mozambique in 1977 and endorsed during its 1984 congress (Carver 1993: 74, Moyo 1991: 234). *Gukurahundi* affected individuals and communities in varying degrees and forms.

¹⁸ Dabengwa is the former ZIPRA head of intelligence. He was part of the ZAPU leadership which joined ZANU under the Unity Accord. However, he broke away and revived ZAPU of which he is the president.

The one-party mentality also caused the commission of politically motivated violence; especially before, during and after elections. Violence, intimidation and coercion have been characterised by the enactment of draconian legislation; the selective application of the law; arbitrary detentions; beatings and torture (including in police custody); rape; hacking of limbs; gouging out of eyes; maiming; widespread killings; confiscation or destruction of property and livelihoods of known and suspected opposition supporters; internal and external displacement of opposition supporters; and the exclusion of opposition supporters from the allocation of resources such as food aid, development projects, land, and state-distributed resources. The violence also forced scores of opposition supporters to dissociate themselves from the opposition and either support ZANU-PF or dissociate themselves from state politics altogether. In some cases, the structures of opposition political parties were forced to go underground.

For example, in 2008, Operation *Makavhotera Papi* (who did you vote for during the March elections?) forced opposition structures and supporters to go underground. Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC was forced to withdraw from the presidential run-off elections. The climate of terror which has been caused by violence has made it difficult for affected individuals and communities to speak about their traumatic experiences and their reconciliation needs and aspirations. From this discussion, it has emerged that Zimbabwe is a country which has been in need of healing and reconciliation, not only in respect of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities, but also in respect of politically motivated violence. It is against this background that the next chapter looks into the politically motivated violations which were committed in the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe district and examines the relationship between state-led and community centered reconciliation processes.

CHAPTER 4: CHAPTER 4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STATE-LED AND COMMUNITY-CENTRED RECONCILIATION PROCESSES IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY OF THE *UZUMBA MARAMBA PFUNGWE* DISTRICT.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Using the case study of the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe (UMP) district, this chapter examines the differences and relationship between state-led and community-centered reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. The chapter speaks to the core objective of this study of interrogating state-led reconciliation processes. In chapter two, the study examined the difference and relationship between state-led and community-centered reconciliation processes. It is against this theoretical background that this chapter uses the case study of the UMP district to critique state-led reconciliation processes in terms of their strengths, shortcomings, and how they enhance or impede community-centered processes. The chapter primarily uses primary data which was collated in the UMP district through a focus group discussion which was conducted on 21 April 2017 and individual interviews which were conducted from 22 to 30 April 2017.

UMP is a district of the Mashonaland East Province. It is one of the poorest districts in Zimbabwe. Social services such as health and education are difficult to access. It is a remote district which is difficult to access because the gravel roads are of poor quality. It is inhabited by peasant farmers whose livelihood is mainly based on subsistence farming. UMP is vulnerable to meteorological hazards and extreme events such as droughts, dry spells, flooding, water logging, extreme temperatures, and outbreak of pests and diseases. Water for domestic and other forms of use is scarce, especially during the dry season. Many of the villagers travel several kilometers to the nearest source of water, usually a dam or a river. Due to frequent droughts, villagers mainly rely on food handouts which are distributed by the government or non-governmental organisations. The distribution of food and agricultural inputs is highly politicised such that known and alleged opposition supporters are often denied access¹⁹.

Interviewee 30A1 stated that whenever food and agricultural implements are distributed, the political affiliation of recipients will be “vetted” in order to determine their eligibility to benefit. In terms of political affiliation, the district is a renowned ZANU-PF stronghold such that it has come to be generally referred to as a “no-go-area” for opposition political parties. Although the opposition MDC has managed to penetrate other rural areas, and in some cases winning parliamentary seats, it has failed to pose a challenge to ZANU-PF in the UMP district. During a focus group discussion, participants stated that in the UMP district, support for opposition political parties is next to zero. They also stated that this has resulted in some opposition politicians mocking the district by referring to it as “Uzumba Maramba Pfungwa” (meaning a district with people who do not want to think)²⁰.

Since 2000, UMP witnessed an extraordinarily high rate of voter turnout. Critics have alleged that ZANU-PF always take advantage of its support in this district to inflate the actual number of votes in its favour. This chapter discusses a range of issues. It starts with examining the atrocities which were committed in the UMP district during the independence struggle. The chapter also examines the politically motivated atrocities which were committed (mainly by ZANU-PF supporters and state security agents) in this district from 2000 going forward. This background enables the study to establish the nature and scope of atrocities which were suffered in this community and how they

¹⁹ This information was obtained during the interviews which were conducted in the UMP district.

²⁰ The focus group discussion was conducted on 21 April 2017.

impacted the community. This is an essential foundation for explaining the need for reconciliation processes and for critiquing the impact of state-led reconciliation interventions in this district. The chapter therefore calls for reconciliation measures in the UMP district not only in light of the atrocities which were committed by ZANU-PF, but also those of the Rhodesian regime.

After establishing the pre- and post-independence atrocities which were suffered in the UMP district, the study proceeds to establish the reconciliation needs of the district from the perspective of the residents themselves. It also discusses the mechanisms and processes which the residents believe should be implemented if reconciliation processes are to be a success and the actors whom they want to be involved in initiating and/or driving the implementation of these processes. This helps to put in perspective what the people of UMP district regard as inclusive and comprehensive reconciliation processes. The chapter proceeds to examine state-led reconciliation processes and their impact on the district. The chapter concludes by examining the strengths and shortcomings of community-led reconciliation processes as implemented in the UMP district.

4.2 THE NATURE OF ATROCITIES WHICH WERE COMMITTED IN THE UMP DISTRICT

This section establishes the nature and scope of the atrocities which were committed in the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe district in both the pre- and the post-independence periods. It also discusses how these atrocities affected the residents of the district.

4.2.1 Atrocities which were committed during the independence struggle

The UMP district suffered a myriad of atrocities under the Rhodesian regime, especially during the liberation struggle. This study established that with regard to the war of liberation, the UMP district suffered different forms of violations. First, interviewees pointed out that the Rhodesian security forces brutally killed and publicly displayed the mutilated bodies of guerrilla fighters, *chimbwidos* and *mujibas*²¹ to send a “strong warning” to villagers to refrain from supporting the war of liberation. Interviewees also stated that many of these bodies were of known members of that community and that it was traumatising to view them. For example, interviewee 24A2 stated that “I will never support opposition political parties because I do not want to see this country going through another war again. The liberation struggle was horrible. I will never forget the day on which Smith’s soldiers brought the dead body of my first born son in this village. I can still see the image in my mind today”. This statement shows that the trauma which characterised the independence struggle is still affecting some of the people in this district.

Second, both the guerrillas and the Rhodesian forces tortured or killed community members whom they accused of collaborating with their enemies, especially through giving them food or informing them of the movements/whereabouts of each party to the war. The peasants were therefore caught in the crossfire. In some cases, the accused people were either shot or ordered to get into a thatched house before it was set on fire in view of other members who were forced to sing revolutionary songs²². In another case which was narrated by interviewee 23A2, a particular man was accused by guerrillas for allegedly collaborating with the Rhodesian security forces. The guerrillas brought the accused man’s family together. They (the guerrillas) gave the man’s wife a rifle and ordered her to shoot and kill her husband in front of the whole family. Abhorred by the thought of killing her own husband, the woman refused to carry out the command. The enraged guerrillas responded by

²¹ Chimbwidos and Mujibhas were young boys and girls who assisted the liberation fighters.

²² This was generally pointed out during the focus group discussion and the individual interviews.

shooting both the wife and the husband dead under the watch of their children. The interviewee stated that this was a traumatising experience not only for the family but the entire village.

Third, interviewees stated that villagers were not allowed to mourn or bury the victims so that their bodies could serve as a “reminder” of the consequences of supporting or refusing to support either side of the struggle. Some interviewees stated that for many years after independence, some human bones were seen in nearby forests and mountains²³. Fourth, interviewees stated that scores of people were displaced and that some of them never returned to the community after independence. Interviewee 26A1 stated that his father left the village during the midst of the liberation struggle because he had been informed that the Rhodesian security forces wanted to kill him based upon accusations of collaborating with the guerrilla fighters. Since then, he has never returned to the village and his whereabouts are still unknown. Some of the interviewees stated that there were cases in which some members of the community disappeared and that until today, family members are not aware of what happened to them. The general belief is that these people were killed and that they were never (properly) buried.

Fifth, many of the villagers lost their sources of livelihood such as livestock and crops to both the nationalist parties and the Rhodesian security forces. These would be destroyed or confiscated whenever villagers were accused of “feeding the enemy”. Sixth, some interviewees pointed out that the *chimbwidos*²⁴ were raped by the guerrillas because they were young and defenseless women. Finally, interviewees also pointed out that some members of the community were victims of the land mines which were planted in the community by belligerent parties. The land mines continued to pose a security risk to villagers long after the attainment of independence. Given the aforesaid violations and atrocities, it can be argued that the need for inclusive and participatory healing and reconciliation processes in this community after independence was evident.

4.2.2 Atrocities which were committed in the post-2000 period

The UMP district did not experience any significant level of violence from 1980 to 1999. Violence started to affect the district from the 2000 parliamentary elections going forward. Because of entrenched intolerance for opposition party politics in the district, the UMP district is one of the communities hardest hit by political violence (*IRIN News*, 21 April 2008). Interviewee 22A1 stated that the violence which took place in the UMP district is “satanic and traumatising” and that the spirits of the people who were killed are causing many problems in the community. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Non-Governmental Organisations Forum (2000: 12) states that during the 2000 elections, some villagers in the UMP community were forced to flee their homes (because of violence or threats of violence from ZANU-PF supporters and war veterans) and seek refuge in Harare where they stayed at open places such as Mbare Msika and the Harare railway station.

According to the Forum, Rodwell Chichetu, a UMP resident who was working for the UMP local council, was forced to flee his community after he received the threat that ZANU-PF youths were looking for him. In an interview with the Forum, Chichetu stated that “I left at night and slept in the bush. I could not take my family with me and I am concerned about their safety” (NGO Forum 2000: 12-13). UMP is one of the areas where the ZANU-PF youth militia established torture camps

²³ Interviewees generally stated that sights of human bones were very common in the village, especially along river banks, in mountain caves, and nearby forests.

²⁴ These were young women who were forced to join the liberation struggle so that they could assist the guerrilla fighters with many duties such as cooking.

to “deal” with known and suspected supporters of the opposition, especially in 2008²⁵. Fielding (2015: 6) states that six torture bases were established in UMP and that each base was composed of between five and twenty ZANU-PF activists.

Sokwanele (2010) argues that the bases were staffed by ZANU-PF activists, the youth militia, and war veterans and that their control involved a chain of command which included village heads, headmen, chiefs, district ZANU-PF organisations, ward councilors, local parliamentarians, and army captains and colonels (accessed at www.sokwanele.com on 28 April 2017). In its analysis of the political situation during the 2002 presidential election, the Zimbabwe Election Support Network states that it was not possible for the opposition to campaign in rural areas such as UMP because they were “fenced off” through massive violence, intimidation and coercion (ZESN, as cited by The South African Institute of International Affairs, 2002: 35).

In April 2010, Elias Mudzuri, who was the MDC-T’s Energy and Power Development Minister in the GNU (now one of the party’s three Vice Presidents), was intimidated by ZANU-PF youth who were in possession of machetes and knobkerries (*The Zimbabwe Independent*, 8 April 2010). The youth wanted to stop him from addressing villagers in the UMP community. In response to the threats, Mudzuri stated that “we all know that Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe are ZANU-PF strongholds and people in this area have been brutalised and are still very afraid... I went there prepared because we are aware that UMP is a difficult place in terms of intimidation. It is this culture of impunity that makes ZANU-PF militia take the law into their own hands” (*The Zimbabwe Independent*, 8 April 2010). Mbire (2011: 8) states that UMP “is one of the most politically volatile areas in Zimbabwe. Over the years (since 2000), UMP has been predominantly ZANU-PF so much that opposition supporters are constantly under scrutiny and are targets for violence once their political affiliation is made public”.

The data which was gathered during interviews revealed that since 2000, known and suspected opposition supporters in UMP were subjected to different forms of abuses such as torture, hacking of limbs, confiscation of property, burning of their houses and sources of livelihoods, rape, detention, displacement, and targeted killing. They were also denied access to food handouts, farming inputs, development projects, and some had their farming land taken away²⁶. It was difficult to establish the number of people who were killed, maimed, or raped because interviewees were generally afraid of speaking about this subject. However, the author saw some of the properties which were reportedly torched for political reasons. Interviewee 25A1 stated that “they (ZANU-PF youth) took all my farming land and left me only with my residential place. They said the MDC wants to give back the land to the whites so I am not supposed to have land because I supported a political party which opposes the land reform programme. In some cases, they would ask opposition supporters to leave the village and go to stay in Britain”. Some interviewees stated that some teachers at Uzumba High School were accused of supporting the MDC and were tortured and ordered to leave the district.

²⁵ This was stated during a focus group discussion which was conducted on Friday 21 April 2017. This was also stated during the individual interviews which were conducted in the UMP district from 22 to 30 April 2017. The interviewees stated that the *Chidodo* torture camp was established to brutally deal with opposition supporters and that it was punishable to bring “wrong newspapers” in the area, to attend opposition rallies, to participate in civil society interventions such as peace building, and to be found in possession of opposition materials such as T-shirts, membership cards, hats, and whistles.

²⁶ These violations were mentioned during a focus group discussion and individual interviews.

4.3 THE HEALING AND RECONCILIATION NEEDS OF THE UZUMBA MARAMBA PFUNGWE DISTRICT

As discussed in chapter one, it is important to establish the reconciliation needs of the affected society in order to ensure the effectiveness of any interventions or to examine the impact of interventions. This is because the path towards healing and reconciliation differs from individual to individual, group to group, and community to community because of unique variables and it also depends on the nature and scope of violations which were suffered (Charbonneau and Parent 2012: 8). This section highlights the reconciliation needs of the UMP district which were stated by the interviewees themselves. These are in respect of the atrocities which were committed during the independence struggle, and the politically motivated violence which was perpetrated from 2000 going forward. It also examines the mechanisms which UMP residents consider essential in the quest for healing and reconciliation.

4.3.1 The need to re-build relations

One of the major findings of this study is that the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe district was polarised because of the politically motivated violence which took place between 2000 and 2008. The violence caused mistrust, antagonism, prejudice, hatred, and a general atmosphere of fear and insecurity among opposition supporters. This has caused the fracture of relationships within the community. Many of the interviewees emphasised the need to rebuild inter-personal, inter-family, inter-communal, and even inter-clan relations in order to re-unite the community to its pre-2000 status. However, some interviewees stated that no reconciliation efforts will ever convince them to reconcile with some of the perpetrators of political violence because of the degree of brutality which was exercised. For example, interviewee 23A1 stated that he cannot accept a situation in which his son or daughter marries someone from a particular family (name provided but withdrawn for ethical reasons) because members of that family are well known perpetrators of political violence who have *ngozi* (avenging spirits).

He stated that “how can my son or daughter marry someone from a family which is full of violent people? In fact, we do not want them in this community. Such a violent people deserve to live among animals and not human beings”. The aforesaid view was echoed by interviewee 26A2 who stated that some victims have been demanding the “cleansing” of their community through the eviction of families which have been involved in the perpetration of violence. He stated that “there are some families which we do not want to see in this community. We want them out of our community. There is no way that we can reconcile with such evil people”. Such sentiments show the limitations of various mechanisms of reconciliation which are discussed in chapter two. Mechanisms such as truth-telling might cause more violence.

What makes the re-building of relationships in this community a difficult task is that there are ZANU-PF supporters who maintain that they cannot reconcile with people who support opposition political parties. In their view, the use of violence against opposition supporters, however brutal, is rational and justified. For example, Focus group participant 21A6, who claimed to be a strong ZANU-PF supporter, stated that “there is no way we (ZANU-PF supporters) can reconcile with people who want to sell this country. President, Robert Mugabe is giving people land and residential stands yet the opposition wants those things to be repossessed by the whites. When violence is used against opposition supporters, they should not cry because there is no any other way of stopping them from what they are doing. We can only reconcile with them when they stop supporting the opposition”.

It is clear from this statement that intolerance for diversity is one of the major drivers of violence and a hurdle to reconciliation processes. Some ZANU-PF supporters believe that when they perpetrate violence against opposition supporters, they will be protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Zimbabwe as well as the interests of the nation against imperial interests²⁷. For community-led reconciliation processes to be successful, it is important for the broad political environment to be characterised by tolerance for diversity and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

4.3.2 Memorialisation and the Need to “appease the spirits of dead victims”

Some interviewees stated that it is difficult to ensure the healing of the UMP community without the memorialisation (*kurangarira*) of the political violence and its victims. They also stated that memorialisation should also include the atrocities which were committed during the independence struggle. The interviewees largely showed that they do not conceive memorialisation in terms of the creation of monuments and museums but in terms of the proper mourning of victims and the conduct of traditional rituals, religious rituals, and memorial services. They pointed out that memorialisation is crucial in sending a strong “never again” message to the community through exposing the regrettable consequences of political violence on individuals, families, and communities.

They suggested that memorialisation should be used as a platform to strongly denounce political violence and to promote unity, tolerance for diversity, and a human rights culture. They expressed the belief that memorialisation enables families and the community to show respect for the victims, express remorse, and acknowledge and restore the dignity of survivors. Hamber (2003: 85) argues that “the healing value of symbolic acts, objects and rituals lies in the way they can help concretize a traumatic incident, serving as a focal point in the grieving process. Such symbols are most effective if they are personalized and culturally relevant. They can also have a wider community or society level benefit, as markers to remind society of the lessons of the past which need to be carried into the future”.

Focus group participant 21A4 emphasised the importance of memorialisation because in some cases, families of dead victims were refused the right to mourn and properly bury their loved ones. Blessing Mbire (2011: 7) states that he experienced a breakdown during his field research in UMP in 2011 when he witnessed a memorial service which was conducted in honor of a victim of the 2008 election violence. During an interview which was conducted by Blessing Mbire on 8 July 2011, Rashid Mahiya (the Director of Heal Zimbabwe Trust- an organisation which has played a crucial role in fostering healing and reconciliation in UMP) stated that the memorialisation of those who died during the 2008 political violence remains one of the pertinent issues in the UMP community. He stated that “the idea is to give families space to mourn openly, something which they were denied in 2008 when violence was rife. The memorial services help people to heal as well as to ensure that they get a sense of closure to the unfortunate demise of their loved ones due to politically motivated actions” (Mbire 2011: 31). Hamber (2003: 85) argues that “specific rituals and ceremonies can have powerful symbolic and healing value”.

Some interviewees argued that reconciliation cannot be possible without “appeasing the spirits of dead victims” of political violence. Zambara (2015: 6.) argues that “according to the Zimbabwean belief system, the spirit of the dead plays an essential role in the lives of family members by guiding and nurturing them. If a spirit is not honored with a funeral and the necessary ritual is not

²⁷ This view was expressed during interviews which were conducted in Matobo, UMP, and Bikita East and West district.

completed, the spirit can become restless and angry, thereby bringing ‘bad luck’ to the family and community. Clearly, the symbolic value of the burial and the subsequent rituals are vital to the healing process in the Zimbabwean context”.

The famous case of Moses Chokuda, who was an activist of the Movement for Democratic Change which is led by Morgan Tsvangirai (MDC-T) has tended to confirm this belief. Moses was from Gokwe in the Midlands province. He was killed in politically motivated violence in 2009 by Farai Machaya, Edmore Gana, Bothwel Gana, and Abel Maphosa who were tried, convicted, and sentenced to 18 years imprisonment in October 2011” (*The News Day*, 26 October 2011). Farai Machaya is the son of then prominent ZANU-PF Midlands Governor, Jason Machaya. After the murder, the Chokuda family demanded a payment of 15 head of cattle from the Machaya family as a condition for the burial of Moses. The Machaya family refused to make the payment and Moses’ body was kept at the Gokwe district hospital for two years seven months.

It was alleged that Moses “refused to be buried” and that his spirit severely tormented the accused and their families (*The Standard*, 30 October 2011). During an interview with the *News Day*, Moses’ father stated that “my son (Moses) is seen alive by those who are linked to his death and I hear he is herding cattle belonging to one of the suspects at a farm” (*The News Day*, 26 October 2011). Chief Njelele from Gokwe also said that Moses’ spirit was seen in the Gokwe area and at the district hospital in search for justice and vengeance against his killers (*The News Day*, 26 October 2011). Moses was finally buried (after two years seven months) when Chief Misheck Njelele of Gokwe successfully mediated the dispute resulting in the Machaya family paid 20 head of cattle and US\$ 15 000 cash (*The Herald*, 25 November 2011). In an interview with the *News Day*, headman Kally Mashizha said that “you don’t just kill a human being like that. Life has to be respected. And truly, the fight by Moses was painful but necessary to teach our people a lesson. I hope they have learnt”. After the burial of Moses and the conduct of traditional rituals, Obert Chinyama, who was a local Councilor in Gokwe, stated that “people here in Ndlele ward 16 have rested after his (Moses) spirit has been appeased. We have blamed his death for drought. Everything bad which happened around here was blamed on the avenging spirit” (*The News Day*, 26 October 2011).

Interviewee 24A1 stated that in the UMP district, people believe that when someone is killed, his/her avenging spirit fights until justice is done. This spiritual fight is called *ngozi* in Shona. It involves cases where the perpetrator and his/her family experiences mysterious misfortunes such as sickness, sudden deaths, and evil attacks. The interviewee stated that the only way to deal with *ngozi* would be to ensure that the family of the perpetrator compensates the family of the victim and this has to be followed by rituals which would appease the spirit of the dead victim. Focus group participant 21A4 stated that “if you (the perpetrator) kill someone, you cannot be forgiven by the family of the victim and his ancestral spirits until you come out in the open and declare your responsibility for the murder. You should then be told what to pay and once you have done that, rituals to appease the spirit of that person should be conducted. That is when your family ceases to be attacked by the avenging spirit. There is no other way out”.

The family of the victim is responsible for demanding the nature of compensation and the family of the perpetrator has little or no room to negotiate. The compensation is usually made in the form of livestock, grain, and money. Compensation is regarded not only as a way of appeasing the dead, but of re-building relationships between the families of the perpetrator and the victim. However, some respondents who argued from a Christian perspective stated that the conduct of rituals is inconsistent with Biblical teachings with regard to reconciliation. They stated that victims should unconditionally forgive the perpetrators just as God forgave the world through Jesus Christ. For such interviewees, reconciliation is anchored on unconditional forgiveness. Focus group participant 21A2 stated that “Many people say that we (the community) must conduct some traditional

ceremonies to ‘cleanse’ our community as part of reconciliation processes. I cannot participate in such activities because the Bible teaches us to forgive one another unconditionally just as God forgave us through the blood of Jesus Christ”.

4.3.3 The need for reparations

There were basically two forms of reparations which were mentioned by the interviewees. On the one hand, some interviewees stated that in order to promote reconciliation, it is important for the victims to be compensated with regard to their property which was confiscated or destroyed during the 2008 election violence. The majority view was that the compensation should come from the perpetrators themselves and not from the government. Some interviewees stated that many of the perpetrators are known and that some of them are still in possession of the things which they confiscated while others have sold or used them. However, some interviewees stated that some of the perpetrators were unknown to the local community because they were “hired” from other communities in order to ensure that their identity remains unknown. They argued that with regard to such cases, those who “hired” the perpetrators should bear the responsibility to compensate the victims. On the other hand, some interviewees stated that there is need for reparations with regards to villagers who suffered physical disabilities as a result of the liberation struggle. They stated that this form of reparations should come from the state. However, interviewee 23A1 stated that this form of reparations should come from the former colonial power, Britain.

4.3.4 The need to prosecute perpetrators

Although interviewees expressed the belief that perpetrators should be forgiven through processes such as compensation of victims, acknowledgement of their actions, and asking for forgiveness; there was a general view that perpetrators of certain categories of violence should be prosecuted if individuals and communities are to heal and reconcile. These categories include murder, rape, hacking of limbs, and torture. This view was mainly based on the concern that perpetrators of brutal political violence have never been made accountable and that this has promoted a culture of violence and impunity in the community (see Mbire 2011: 26). For example, focus group participant 21A1 stated that:

Some of the people who perpetrated violence, including the killing of victims, are publicly known in this community. However, these people are going on with their lives as if they have not committed any crime. They are protected by the police, ZANU-PF, and in some cases by our own traditional leaders. If you remind them about the violence which they committed, they threaten to deal with you. So we are forced to keep quiet as if nothing happened. During election times, these people threaten to perpetrate the same kind of violence against supporters of the opposition because they know that no one can ever arrest them. What we want is for the government to send a strong message to everyone that anyone who commits violence would be made accountable. This is the only way to deal with those who regard themselves as being above the law of this country.

The argument by interviewees in favour of prosecution was based on the view that there is need to eliminate the “culture of impunity” so as to guarantee survivors that they will not experience such violations again. Scholars generally agree that the guarantee of non-repetition of atrocities plays an important role in facilitating healing and reconciliation. For example, Hamber (2003: 158) points out that the elimination of the fear of repetition from affected individuals, families and communities creates more psychic space for healing and reconciliation.

4.3.5 *The need to de-politicize traditional leadership structures*

The traditional leadership structure in Zimbabwe is essentially composed of *sabhuku* (village head), *sadunhu* (headmen) and *ishe/mambo* (chief). Chiefs are the most respected (sometimes feared) and influential traditional leaders. They are responsible for many things, including promoting and upholding cultural values among members of the community (Section 5 (1) of the Chiefs and Headmen Act of 1982). Chiefs are also responsible for allocating agricultural and residential land to local residents and for settling disputes which are mainly of civil matters (Makumbe 2010: 89). Headmen are immediately below the chiefs in terms of rank and their duties include assisting chiefs in carrying out their duties, making a report to the police on the commission of any crime or offence in their area, the suspicious disappearance of any person, and any actual or threatened public unrest likely to disturb the public peace of the area under their jurisdiction (Section 9 (1) of the Chiefs and Headmen Act of 1982).

Village heads occupy the lowest rank in the traditional leadership structure but they are very influential within their area of jurisdiction. This is because they preside over the affairs of a particular village such as food for work projects, distribution of food handouts and agricultural implements, development projects, allocation of land and other resources, conduct of religious or cultural rituals, and dispute settlement. Their duties include assisting chiefs and headmen in the performance of their duties; carrying out all lawful and reasonable orders from chiefs or headmen; and leading their village in all traditional, customary, and cultural matters (Section 12 (1) of the Chiefs and Headmen Act of 1982). Traditional leaders have extensive constitutional and customary powers and they normally command respect from members of their community.

However, traditional leaders have been criticised for becoming increasingly partisan in terms of national politics. Some interviewees stated that traditional leaders in UMP have been reduced to the point of becoming ZANU-PF “representatives and watchdogs”²⁸. They argued that this is because they force villagers to support ZANU-PF, they have supported the establishment of “torture camps” in the community, and that they hardly defend opposition supporters who are victims of political violence. Focus group participant 21A5 stated that in the UMP district, some traditional leaders have publicly stated that they do not accept supporters of the opposition in their area. Interviewee 28A1 also stated that during election times, there is a “slogan” which is called “*sabhuku nevanhu vake kumusana*” which means that each village head should “carry his people on his back” to go and vote for ZANU-PF. Those who refuse to comply risk facing different forms of sanctions, especially violence and exclusion from food aid and other resources.

Apart from the information which was gathered during the interviews, scholars also agree that the traditional leadership structure has been politicised. For example, Makumbe (2010: 88, 92) argues that “traditional leaders are generally accepted as the custodians of customary law and practice... Realising the general acceptance of traditional leaders by the majority of the citizens, the Mugabe regime decided to harness this component of customary governance for its political ends. Various schemes were devised to ensure that traditional leaders would not only support ZANU-PF and Mugabe, but would also ensure that their people in the rural communities would do the same”. The interviewees generally stated that the politicisation of traditional leaders has mainly been effected through offering them different types of incentives such as cars, monthly allowances, increased access to government services, mobile phones, and the power to preside over community development projects. It was against this backdrop that some interviewees stated that for reconciliation interventions to be effective, traditional leadership structures have to be de-politicised

²⁸ Interviewee 23A2 stated that it is difficult to distinguish tradition leaders from ZANU-PF because of the role which they play in defending the interests of the party.

so that they can represent the interests of the community regardless of the political affiliation of community members and impartially settle conflicts of a political character.

4.3.6 *The need for truth-telling*

Some interviewees expressed the strong view that in order for reconciliation to take place in the UMP district, it is important for perpetrators to come out, tell the truth about their role and motivation in the commission of atrocities, and seek forgiveness not only from victims but from the entire community/village. They stated that it is important for the community to openly discuss issues such as who perpetrated the violence, under whose instruction/command was violence perpetrated, what forms of violence were perpetrated, who were the victims, in what ways were the victims and the larger society affected, and what are the processes and mechanisms which should be used to promote reconciliation. They also stated that during the truth telling process, perpetrators should express heartfelt regret and remorse for their actions and that victims should be given the right to speak out about their experiences and what they want to be done in order for them to heal and reconcile.

Scholars also support the need for community-based truth-telling processes. For example, Zambara (2015: 96) argues that “truth-seeking and truth-telling exercises are not confined to the national level, and they are not a one-off event. In fact, the benefits of such exercises are best seen where they percolate through to the grass roots of any society. Conversations around “the truth” should be promoted. These conversations exist in every community and should now extend between communities”. Many interviewees expressed the view that truth-telling is important in facilitating community healing. However, this study noted that some community members consider truth-telling as important for purposes of enabling them to “deal with the perpetrators”. For example, focus group participant 21A4 stated that “I want to know the people who burnt down my homestead so that I can also burn down theirs”. For some interviewees, the truth-telling process needs to go beyond politically motivated violence and include the atrocities which were committed during the struggle for independence. They pointed out that it is important to seek the truth about the people who were displaced and who disappeared.

4.3.7 *The need for psychological healing*

This study has established that some people in the UMP district suffered a myriad of violations. Some victims were maimed, raped, or tortured while others were displaced and they sought refuge in other communities and only returned when the violence subsided. For example, focus group participant 21A1 stated that she was a victim of internal displacement and that she sought refuge at Silveira House for six weeks because of violence in the community. Silveira House is a Jesuit Centre for Development and Social Justice which was founded in December 1964 by John Dove of the Roman Catholic Church (*The News Day*, 13 September 2014). In response to the economic challenges and the political violence which has been committed since 2000, Silveira House implemented peace building, civic education, and vocational skills training projects. It also provided refuge to victims of political violence. The focus group participant stated that when she finally returned to the community, she was overwhelmed with a sense of disorientation.

She said that “*ndakashaya pekutangira*” (I didn’t know where to start and how to go on with my life). This was because all of her possessions had been either destroyed or confiscated. Interviewees stated that many victims of political violence in the UMP community experienced a high level of psychological trauma because of the physical violence they encountered as well as the disruption of their lives due to destruction or confiscation of their livelihoods (see also Mbire 2011) and that it is

important for them to go through psychological healing processes. Gutlove and Thompson state that:

Psychosocial healing is an integrated-action process that seeks to promote the psychological and social health of individuals, families, and community groups. It is especially important in a post-conflict environment, where the stress of violent conflict has impacted individuals and the social network. The healing process addresses the individual's psychological health and ability to function in relationship to others (relational health) and the relational health of the society as a whole (as cited by Charbonneau and Parent 2012: 10).

Other interviewees stated that psychological healing is also important in respect of those people who suffered grave physical abuses during the liberation struggle.

4.4 THE UMP DISTRICT'S VIEWS OF THE ACTORS WHO SHOULD DRIVE RECONCILIATION PROCESSES.

This section discusses the views of the people of UMP district with regard to the actors whom they believe should be involved in reconciliation processes in order to ensure the efficacy and effectiveness of these processes. This discussion is important because it establishes the perspectives of grassroots populations with regard to reconciliation processes. These perspectives help to highlight the variables that assist reconciliation processes to be regarded as legitimate, inclusive, genuine, and locally driven by grassroots populations.

4.4.1 *Individuals and families*

The interviewees mentioned different categories of actors whom they believe should be involved in reconciliation processes in their district. There was a shared view among them that individuals and families, especially those which were directly affected by political violence, should be at the center of reconciliation processes. Interviewees emphasised that it is important for these individuals and families to be allowed the right and opportunity to openly speak about their experiences and needs in terms of reconciliation processes because different individuals and families have different needs and perspectives. However, participants stated that in order for reconciliation processes to be effective, there is need for the involvement of a host of other actors whose role would be to assist the community in the reconciliation process. They stated that without the assistance of other actors, it would be difficult for the community to agree on the mechanisms and processes to foster reconciliation. They stated that the involvement of other actors as impartial mediators is important in reducing and eliminating antagonism, hatred, and prejudice between victims and perpetrators in this community.

4.4.2 *Civil society*

Opinion was divided with regard to the essence of civil society interventions in reconciliation processes in the UMP district. On the one hand, some interviewees stated that civil society should not be involved in reconciliation processes because it has demonstrated the commitment to promote the ascendancy of opposition political parties to power. They argued that civil society is "funded by the west" and could not be trusted to fight for the interests of the nation. For example, focus group participant 21A6 stated that civil society opposes populist policies such as the land reform programme and empowerment policies so as to please its funders. She stated that civil society is the platform through which imperial interests have "infiltrated" Zimbabwe. Interviewee 24A2 supported this position, stating that:

We must remember that the puppet Movement for Democratic Change was formed by civil society organisations. They (civil society) continue to talk about human rights and accuse ZANU-PF of beating and killing people. They receive their funds from Britain and other western countries which demonise Zimbabwe. So we need to understand that whatever they do, their objective is to please their funders. We cannot say that they should be involved in reconciliation processes because they obviously take the side of the opposition. As a strong ZANU-PF supporter, I will resist any attempt by these organisations to come to our community under the guise of promoting peace because I know them very well.

Some interviewees pointed out that some ZANU-PF youth, security sector forces, and traditional leaders have actively and sometimes violently resisted reconciliation interventions by civil society in the community. They stated that in some cases, members of the community have been “warned” not to participate in peacebuilding activities which are implemented by civil society organisations, except in situations where they would have been given the permission to do so by community leaders who would have “accredited” particular organisations. The view that civil society tends to support opposition politics is supported by some scholars. For example, Ncube (2015: 291) argues that:

The constrained political space for civil society is compounded by its embeddedness in opposition politics, especially that of the MDC-T. This fuels anti-civil society sentiments in traditional ZANU-PF political stronghold provinces. In those provinces, either the police refused to issue clearance permission for civil society peacebuilding work, or ZANU-PF-aligned community leaders argued that there was no need for peacebuilding in Zimbabwe and refused to cooperate. As a result, a number of planned peacebuilding activities were postponed or cancelled. The implication is that the role of civil society in peacebuilding in Zimbabwe cannot be divorced from political party politics and the attendant societal polarisation. Accordingly, the problem of uncooperative communities reflected not only ZANU-PF-fed anti-civil society discourse, but also demonstrated the rarely acknowledged truth that a number of civil society peacebuilding initiatives in Zimbabwe are supply-driven as opposed to demand-driven.

On the other hand, some interviewees regarded civil society as “indispensable” in the search for healing and reconciliation in their community. They stated that civil society organisations such as Heal Zimbabwe Trust have implemented crucial interventions such as psycho-social support, medical assistance, memorialisation projects, livelihoods projects, promoting awareness on transitional justice, and offering legal and paralegal assistance. For example, interviewee 22A1 stated that:

Civil society is more involved in promoting peace in this community than the government itself. Many projects in this community were initiated by civil society. They (civil society) are good people because they visit us as individuals and as families and talk to us one on one. They always want to assist us the best way they can. Our public representatives such as parliamentarians are not able to do this. They are only interested in enriching themselves. We only see them when it is time for elections and they disappear in between elections.

However, some interviewees expressed the concern that although civil society plays an essential role, it has been unable to sustain its interventions because of lack of resources. For example, interviewee 25A1 stated that: “these organisations (civil society) do not have resources of their own. They can start something today and abandon it tomorrow. Some of them will never tell you why they stopped. But many of them will tell you that we no longer have resources. So you can’t trust that they are able to finish what they would have started”. This study notes that reconciliation

interventions requires adequate, sustainable, and predictable funding because of their long-term nature.

4.4.3 *The government*

There were different views among the interviewees regarding the role and need for involving the government in reconciliation processes. The majority view was that the government should initiate, drive, and facilitate reconciliation processes because without its involvement, local people are unlikely to support reconciliation processes which are not state-sanctioned because of factors such as fear, lack of trust, and the inability to agree on the mechanisms and fundamentals of the reconciliation agenda. However, other interviewees expressed the view that many state institutions such as the police, the army, and the CIO have perpetrated or condoned the perpetration of political violence. They therefore doubted how the very state which has been and continues to be responsible for violence can effectively initiate and promote reconciliation processes. They were concerned that state-driven reconciliation processes are usually more interested in protecting political leaders than in promoting inclusive and meaningful healing and reconciliation. It was from this point of view that some interviewees stated that the involvement of the state is only good and feasible in the case of a democratic transition because unlike the current regime, a new government would be willing to make perpetrators accountable.

4.4.4 *Other countries/the international community*

Interviewees generally emphasised the importance of involving “other countries” in supporting and promoting reconciliation processes in the UMP district and the nation in general. However, some interviewees expressed an **inclusive** while others expressed a **restrictive** qualification of “other countries”. For those whose interpretation was restrictive, “other countries” primarily refer to African countries and those countries which are regarded as “friendly” to Zimbabwe, especially in the East. Their qualification excluded those countries and institutions which they regard as being hostile to Zimbabwe. For example, focus group participant 21A6 stated that it is unacceptable to accept assistance from those countries which have imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe.

Interviewee 24A2 also argued that western countries are committed to promote a “hidden agenda” in Zimbabwe and that they should not be trusted no matter how good their intentions may appear. He further stated that Zimbabwe should accept assistance from SADC because the regional bloc’s mediation processes which led to the formation of then Government of National Unity in 2009 were based on African solidarity and the genuine need to assist Zimbabwe without interfering with its territorial integrity and sovereignty. In explaining the views of people such as the aforesaid interviewees, Machakanja (2010: 12) states that “in the case of Zimbabwe, those who oppose the involvement of the international community in the transitional justice process argue that their agenda is limited to regime-change by undemocratic means”.

On the other hand, those whose qualification was inclusive expressed the importance of accepting assistance from any country, including western states, and especially those with more resources and a history of supporting human rights and democracy in the international society, especially in the developing world. However, although interviewees differed in terms of their espousal of either a restrictive or inclusive qualification, there was a shared view that the role of other countries should be to provide advice, expertise, and funding to reconciliation processes and that external assistance should not undermine local beliefs, values, and practices. Projects such as irrigation schemes; poultry; food for work; construction of social facilities; farming equipment; chicken rearing; and the introduction of community-based, skills-orientated training programmes were mentioned as the areas in which “other countries” should offer assistance.

4.4.5 *The church and community/traditional leaders*

The interviewees generally stated that the church is a very important player in the reconciliation project. They demonstrated that they trust the church more than other institutions because to them, it appears relatively impartial in the conduct of its activities. The church is influential because it is one of the most visible institutions in this district. The major churches which are visible in UMP are the Roman Catholic Church; the Apostolic Faith Mission; the Methodist Church; and many African Initiated Churches, mainly the Zionist and Apostolic sects. Some interviewees stated that the church (especially the Catholic Commission) has played a crucial role in re-building relationships not only through preaching the message of peace; but also through encouraging individuals, families and communities to forgive those who have wronged them, including perpetrators of politically-motivated violence.

However, some interviewees raised the concern that some of the churches, especially African Initiated Churches, are not willing to engage themselves in politically related issues because of the belief that such issues are “of this world” and because of the fear of being victimised by the government. Interviewees stressed the importance of community leaders in reconciliation processes, especially teachers and local business people. Community leaders are considered to be more informed about issues of how to improve the society, including building relationships. However, they expressed the concern that although traditional leaders have to play a critical role, their involvement in politics and the perpetration of violence compromises their ability to meaningfully drive healing and reconciliation processes.

4.5 STATE-LED RECONCILIATION PROCESSES AND THE UMP DISTRICT

Having established the nature and scope of atrocities which were committed in the UMP district in both the pre- and the post-independence periods, the reconciliation needs of the district in respect of these atrocities, and the actors who are believed by people in the district to be essential in driving reconciliation processes; this section proceeds to interrogate the impact of state-led reconciliation processes in the UMP district. It primarily examines the policy of reconciliation which was adopted at independence in 1980 and the interventions by the Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) which were implemented during the then Government of National Unity (GNU) from 2009 to 2013.

4.5.1 *National independence and the policy of reconciliation*

At independence in 1980, the government adopted a policy of reconciliation. Zimbabwe’s independence victory was based on reconciliation processes which were politically-negotiated and imposed by the political elite following the failure by each part to the conflict to win through military means. As part of the Lancaster House Agreement, the transitional government passed the Amnesty Ordinances of 1979 and 1980 which pardoned all atrocities perpetrated by Rhodesian state functionaries, the auxiliary forces which were created during the so-called internal settlement which was led by Bishop Abel Muzorewa, and by ZANLA and ZIPRA nationalist forces (Mashingaidze 2010: 21-22). The first state-led reconciliation processes in post-independence Zimbabwe were initiated at independence in 1980. At independence, the Zimbabwean state faced security and economic destabilisation threats from disgruntled elements within and without its borders. The former Rhodesian regime feared that Mugabe, whom it had arrested and persecuted during the liberation war, might seek to take retaliatory measures against it (Mashingaidze 2010: 22). In order to “keep the new state in line”, the ex-Rhodesians, Britain, and the apartheid regime in South Africa covertly threatened military, political and/or economic destabilisation should the government have moved to threaten the interests of ex-Rhodesians (Mandaza 1986: 42).

The government responded by espousing a policy of reconciliation whose primary objective was to foster reconciliation between the blacks and the Rhodesian regime through state-sanctioned forgiveness for crimes which were committed during the colonial period, especially during the war of liberation (Mashingaidze 2010: 22). In explaining the policy, Mugabe stated that it was time for the nation to eliminate racialism, tribalism and regionalism, and to “beat our swords into ploughshares” with a view to collectively work towards the social, economic, and political development of the country (De Waal 1990: 46). Mugabe further proclaimed that “the wrongs of the past must now stand forgiven and forgotten” and that “our majority rule would easily turn into inhuman rule if we oppressed, persecuted or harassed those who do not look or think like the majority of us” (Mugabe 1980, as cited by Raftopoulos 2004: x).

This policy was adopted without consulting the citizens. However, it is important to note that apart from the political speeches which were made by Robert Mugabe (who was then Prime Minister), the government did not take any concrete steps to implement the policy. Sekai Holland (2009: 20) who was working for the ONHRI as a Minister of State in the Prime Minister’s Office (under the MDC) during the GNU stated that:

The then Prime Minister Robert Mugabe announced the statement of reconciliation and appealed to Zimbabweans, black and white, to turn their swords into ploughshares. He was praised by the whole world for that move. At that time the donor community, civil society, including churches and others did not develop nation building programmes based on that statement. Instead, we all moved on as if all was well. As we all now know, things did not work as the liberation agenda had advocated during the armed struggle against settler colonialism.

The policy was not intended to address the reconciliation needs of the citizens because it was premised on the need to assuage the fears of the disgruntled white community and to promote Zimbabwe’s relations with the international community, particularly the British government, in return for internal cooperation and external support (Raftopoulos 2004: x). Machakanja (2010: 10) argues that “having won the elections in April 1980, Robert Mugabe extended a hand of reconciliation to the white settlers in exchange for positive peace and the promise of external foreign aid to rebuild the war-ravaged country”.

There was a shared view among interviewees that the policy of reconciliation at independence actually failed their district and the nation at large in many ways. First, interviewees argued that it failed to address the socio-economic inequalities which were inherited from the colonial period, especially in respect of the land question. They stated that expectations were high that the new government would restructure the economic architecture to ensure a fair distribution of the economy between the black and the white but the Lancaster House Agreement entrenched racial inequalities instead. They particularly mentioned the issue that land remained in the hands of the whites while the peasants faced land hunger. Colonialism witnessed the progressive expropriation of land from the black people, who were resettled in reserves which were unfit for settlement (Moyana, 1984). A combination of biased land commissions and draconian legislation such as the Land Apportionment Act (1930) and the Land Tenure Act (1969) was used to effect, enforce, and consolidate this dispossession.

Interviewee 23A1 stated that “it was not possible to reconcile with people who continued to exploit us. People died for land but after independence, the white people refused us the right to own our land. They wanted us to continue to live in overcrowded areas with poor and exhausted soil, erratic rainfall, and vulnerable to flooding. I don’t understand why the government did in 2000 what it

should have done in 1980". Interviewee 25A2 also stated that "the white people will never repent. They are like a leopard which cannot change its spots. After independence, they continued to exploit the black people. They continued to dominate the economy. They gave us political independence but the economy remained colonised. Ian Smith himself died a very rich man who lived in the low density suburbs of Harare". Under the policy, many of the former Rhodesians were rewarded with influential positions in the new government while scores of others dominated the private sector.

For example, ex-Rhodesian commander Lieutenant-General Peter Walls was given the responsibility to supervise the integration process of ZANLA, ZIPRA and the Rhodesian Forces into the Zimbabwe National Army (Alao 2013). The Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Agriculture were given to ex-Rhodesians, David Smith and Dennis Norman (Gregory 1980). The policy of reconciliation was acclaimed by the international community, particularly Britain, because it protected and entrenched the interests of the white community. This explains why interviewee 30A1 stated that the reconciliation policy "worked for them (the whites) and not for us (the blacks)". However, some interviewees expressed the view that the policy was used as a strategy by politically connected black elites to pursue their economic interests under the guise of reconciliation. For example, focus group participant 21A4 stated that "Our leaders used the policy to make themselves 'darlings' of the white people so that they can get resources from them (the whites). There are many black politicians who are richer than the white people in Zimbabwe and many of them got these riches because they did what the white people wanted them to do. Our leaders are revolutionaries who later became puppets". Some of the interviewees expressed the concern that since independence, only politically influential people have acquired wealth at the expense of the suffering majority.

Second, interviewees stated that under the policy, the truth about the colonial atrocities was never told and as a result, the victims continued to suffer in silence and discontent. They further argued that there were no attempts to account for people who disappeared during the liberation struggle and those who were internally displaced. Third, the interviewees argued that the policy failed to heal the psychological trauma of the war veterans, individuals, and families who endured the brutality of the Rhodesian forces and the nationalist forces. Focus group participant 21A1 stated that some people in the UMP district later suffered mental illness because of their experiences during the liberation struggle. She also stated that the policy failed to deal with landmines which had been "planted everywhere" and that these have continued to pose security threats in many villages some decades after independence.

Fourth, the interviewees argued that the social and material needs of people who were disabled during the liberation struggle were neglected. Interviewee 23A1 stated that there are some people in the village who were disabled during the liberation struggle and that these people use wheelbarrows as a mode of transport to visit the nearest clinic. She stated that many of these people are poor that they cannot afford to pay for basic and let alone specialised health services which they desperately need. Fifth, the interviewees stated that the policy failed to promote the conduct of traditional rituals and ceremonies to heal the community, to thank the ancestors for their role in liberating the country, and to re-bury dead victims in accordance with the community's religious and cultural tradition. Sixth, some interviewees expressed the view that the policy failed because it never promoted dialogue and relations between the blacks and the whites. For example, interviewee 28A1 stated that "it was good for the blacks and whites to talk together. However, the white people focused on developing and living in areas where they could not interact with the black people. They tried as much as possible to avoid and segregate the blacks. We could see the white people only when they drove past our village. We were expected to reconcile with people whom we could never talk to. But people can only forgive those people whom they see and talk to". This sentiment shows that it is difficult to promote reconciliation without promoting interaction and relations between victims and

perpetrators. Related to this, some interviewees pointed out that the policy failed to promote dialogue among the black people themselves with a view to discuss not only the issue of forgiveness, but how to collectively move from a violent past and build a nation.

It is clear from this discussion that the policy's top-down approach resulted in its failure to address the needs of the UMP community. Under the policy, affected communities were simply encouraged to forgive and forget the violent and dispossessed past. However, despite its shortcomings, some interviewees stated that the policy was instrumental in creating an atmosphere of peace and social cohesion following a protracted and devastating armed struggle. For example, focus group participant 21A2 stated that although the policy failed in many ways, it has to be acknowledged that the policy created an atmosphere in which the country was able to focus on development priorities; especially in the areas of health, education and job creation. He stated that in Mozambique, the Portuguese sabotaged the economy because of the retributive measures which were taken by the new government. He further stated that "the economic problems which Zimbabwe started to experience around the year 2000 could have started to be experienced in 1980 had it not been of the policy of reconciliation because the policy stopped the whites from sabotaging our economy".

4.5.2 The ONHRI's reconciliation processes and the UMP district.

This section discusses the reconciliation interventions by the Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) to establish whether the Organ was able to address the reconciliation needs of the UMP district. One of the major findings of this study is that violence and terror are still embedded in the UMP district more than four years after the dissolution of the ONHRI. It is difficult for researchers to talk to people in the UMP district on matters to do with state politics. Many of the interviewees stated that it was risky for them to speak about issues related to opposition politics because they were "always watched" by ZANU-PF youths, state security forces, and traditional leaders.

The inclination by ZANU-PF elements to use violence with a view to "discipline" opposition supporters made it impossible for Mbire to conduct a focus group discussion in the UMP district during his study of the ONHRI's reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. Mbire (2011: 8) states that "whilst the researcher had planned to hold a focus group discussion in a rural community, this was not feasible due to the tense atmosphere in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe (UMP) at the time of field work. To gain access to victims of political violence and other ordinary people in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe, I had to organise to be part of a field trip that was being carried out by Heal Zimbabwe Trust (HZT), a well-known NGO in the area". Mbire (2011: 7) eventually conducted two in-depth interviews (with a farmer and a victim of the 2008 violence) and had four informal conversations with individuals in UMP to get people's perceptions on ONHRI's interventions in relation to the political violence they experienced. During an interview with a farmer in UMP which he conducted on 15 July 2011, the farmer stated that:

...in this area, people label each other according to party lines. If you are an MDC supporter in this community then you have to be strong. In 2008, for example, people came and beat me up together with my wife...it hurts now that it is one year after she died from the beatings and we still live in fear (Mbire 2011: 25-26).

That community members are still gripped and controlled by fear is in and of itself evidence that state-led reconciliation processes, particularly by the ONHRI, have had no impact on the community. Interviewee 22A1 stated that the culture of impunity is rooted in their community as ZANU-PF youth militia have continued to perpetrate violence against opposition supporters without being made accountable by law enforcement agencies. The study established that none of the

interviewees participated in the consultations which were conducted by the ONHRI. In fact, all of the people who were interviewed said that they were not aware of the existence and work of the ONHRI during the course of the GNU. It therefore shows that the Organ remained “invisible” in this community. Interviewee 23A1 stated that “we cannot judge the work of an institution whose existence we are not aware of. I think that these people (the ONHRI) focused on urban areas and neglected rural areas. The only reconciliation processes which I know have been spearheaded or mediated by individuals, families, traditional leaders, and mainly by civil society organisations”. Chapter six discusses in detail why the ONHRI failed in its reconciliation agenda.

4.6 COMMUNITY-BASED RECONCILIATION PROCESSES IN THE UMP DISTRICT

It is argued in this study that state-led reconciliation processes such as the policy of reconciliation and interventions by the ONHRI were not implemented at the grassroots level. They failed to trickle down to the UMP district because they focused on trying to heal the broad political context. Summarizing his views regarding these reconciliation processes, interviewee 25A1 stated that “the reconciliation processes by the government have remained at the top, they failed to come down to us here in the UMP. We have heard about them but we never experienced them”. In the context of the failure of state-led reconciliation processes to “come down” to the grassroots level; entrenched polarisation, violence and impunity; and politicised state institutions, some of the communities in the UMP district have taken the initiative to embark on informal, unsystematic, and largely un-coordinated reconciliation processes.

These have been initiated and driven by individuals, families, community leaders, traditional leaders, the church, and civil society organisations. This shows that bottom-up reconciliation processes can be initiated and driven by the very communities which experienced violence. According to interviewees, community-initiated and -led reconciliation processes in UMP have taken varied forms. First, as a condition for forgiveness and reconciliation, some victims of violence and dispossession have demanded that the perpetrators return/compensate them in terms of those possessions which they stole, confiscated, or destroyed. According to some interviewees, these efforts gained the support of some community members who sympathised with victims and who believe that violence should be eliminated from the community. Interviewees further stated that these efforts have tended to be more successful in those communities where they got the support of traditional and community leaders. Interviewee 26A1 stated that in some cases, perpetrators themselves volunteered to return the stolen property or to compensate the victims with a view to mend social relations.

Interviewee 21A1 stated that the perpetrators who took away her possessions which include goats, farming equipment, and kitchen utensils as “punishment” for supporting opposition politics were asked by some community members to return them. She stated that the perpetrators returned many of the possessions and that they also asked for forgiveness. She further stated that she has reconciled with them. However, the interviewees stated that in some cases, the perpetrators refused to cooperate and that instead, they threatened to perpetrate further violence against victims who demanded compensation. They also stated that while community-based reconciliation processes can deal with issues such as stolen, confiscated, or destroyed possessions; they have many shortcomings such as the inability to make perpetrators of grievous violations of human rights such as killings, maiming, torture, enforced disappearances, and rape cases accountable and the inability to deal with trauma. They further stated that such cases need to be dealt with by the state through investigations, prosecutions, and professional psycho-social support. It was from this point of view that interviewee 25A1 stated that without being complemented by state-led processes, community based reconciliation processes can leave a “big vacuum” in the reconciliation agenda.

Second, interviewees stated that some perpetrators took the initiative to acknowledge their role in perpetrating violence and asked victims and the larger society to forgive them. They also stated that in other cases, the families of victims and perpetrators engaged talks with a view to rebuild relationships, especially in cases where such families are closely related. Interviewees also pointed out that in their district, forgiveness is not something that should take place only between the victims and the perpetrators, but that it is societal. The society as a whole should be asked for forgiveness, especially through traditional leadership structures.

Third, interviewees pointed out that with the assistance from NGOs, community leaders, and traditional leaders; some families conducted memorial services for the victims of the 2008 violence with a view to find closure. They further stated that in some cases, these efforts have mended relationships and contributed significantly towards healing and reconciliation. However, due to poor coordination, limited resources, lack of government-sanctioned legitimacy, persistent antagonism between perpetrators and victims, and the “embedded culture” of impunity, these efforts have remained intermittent, fragmented and unsustainable. As a result, the efforts achieved some “pockets of success” but their impact on the entire society has remained very minimal. In his analysis of the reconciliation processes in the community, interviewee 22A1 stated that:

These reconciliation process have worked in selected cases of individual to individual and family to family talks. However, at the level of the community, the processes harvested little results because the state was not involved. People are usually afraid of doing things which have not been expressly authorised by the government. It would have been good if the government itself would have gave (sic) the people the permission to reconcile with each other at the community level. The government should have told people to return what they stole from other people. The involvement of NGOs in reconciliation initiatives in this community has been actively and passively resisted by ZANU-PF supporters and traditional and community leaders who are ZANU-PF loyalists because they think that NGOs are aligned to the opposition.

From the above argument, it is evident that top-down approaches are important in order to confer legitimacy on bottom-up approaches. However, some interviewees expressed the view that the government should not be actively involved in driving reconciliation processes but that it should essentially publicly allow the community to use its own mechanisms of dealing with the violent past. Others argued that reconciliation at community level can never be achieved without the transformation of the political context because of the involvement of the current regime in the perpetration of violence.

This study notes that different communities have different ways of dealing with a violent past and that issues such as culture and religion play an important role in defining the mechanisms through which communities bring about healing and reconciliation (see International IDEA 2003). For example, the *Gacaca* courts in Rwanda, the cleansing rituals in Sierra Leone, the *Mato Oput* in northern Uganda, the *Barza Intercommunautaire* in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the *Bashingaantahe* in Burundi (Zambara 2015: 6). Chitsike (2012) argues that in some cultural traditions, the violent past is dealt with through ceremonies, ritual exchanges, prayers, and public acts of atonement. However, it is important to note that although religious and cultural values, rituals, traditions, and texts may be used to promote peace, healing, and reconciliation; they may also be employed to implant negative enemy images, polarise society, and to perpetrate human rights violations; especially with regard to marginalised members of society (Kadayifci-Orellana 2008, Bercovitch and Kadayifci-Orellana 2009).

In the case of the UMP district, patriarchal beliefs and practices and other dynamics of power have tended to undermine or hinder the participation of women and other marginalised populations such as people with disabilities in community-driven healing and reconciliation processes. Some interviewees stated that while it is generally acceptable for men to initiate negotiations with a view to demand compensation, apology, or truth telling from those who perpetrated violence against them/their families, women are expected to suffer in silence or to “negotiate through men”. Other interviewees also stated that it is difficult for women who were raped to speak out because this may lead to ostracism. Scholars generally agree that it is important for reconciliation processes to ensure the participation of marginalised populations. Zambara (2015: 6) states that “for effective community healing to take place, all voices should be heard, especially those of women and children, as they are usually the most affected by traumatic experiences”.

The ZCBC, EFZ and ZCC (2006: 21) maintains that reconciliation and other policy processes should pay “particular attention to those segments of our society whose participation at various levels of society has been restricted. There is need for mainstreaming gender and the needs of disadvantaged groups such as children, youths, people with disabilities, minority groups, and others”. The study also found out that some cultural approaches to reconciliation promote violations of human rights. For example, interviewee 25A1 stated that there was a family whose male member was killed during the 2008 political violence. The victim’s family demanded a daughter from the perpetrator’s family as *muripo* (compensation). He said that the demand was based on the cultural belief that the daughter would be married by the victim’s brother and bear children for the victim’s family as “compensation” for the victim. In such cases, it is possible for a girl who is under the age of consent to be forced to marry a man from the victim’s family so as to settle the dispute.

The argument made here is that if bottom-up reconciliation processes are not monitored and guided by other actors such as government and civil society, they may result in the exclusion of certain populations and the use of harmful cultural practices of dispute settlement. Civil society, the church, community leaders, and the international community can play an important role to eliminate such challenges through interventions such as awareness campaigns, peace education, human rights education, and the provision of psychological support. However, such campaigns should not erode the religious, social and cultural foundation on which the society is built. It can also be concluded from this discussion that the political environment plays a crucial role in enhancing or impeding community-centered reconciliation processes. A political environment that is characterised by democracy, impartial state institutions, tolerance for diversity, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is germane to the implementation of community-centered reconciliation processes. Conversely, a political environment characterised by violence, impunity, politicised institutions, intolerance of diversity, denial, and the breakdown of the rule of law is inimical to the conduct of such processes. The political environment in Zimbabwe therefore significantly undermined community-centered reconciliation processes in the UMP district.

4.7 CONCLUSION

From this discussion, it has emerged that the UMP district is in need of deeper reconciliation processes in respect of the atrocities committed by the Rhodesian regime during the struggle for independence and the politically motivated violence which was committed in the post-independence state. This study concludes that state-led reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe have failed to address the needs of the UMP district because they took an elite-oriented, top-down approach. It has also emerged from the case study of the UMP district that in a context which is characterised by the failure of state-led reconciliation processes, polarisation, impunity, politicised institutions, disrespect for the rule of law, and violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms; grassroots communities can take various initiatives to rebuild traumatised lives, promote reconciliation, and

“move on”. Civil society can play an important role in these processes. The advantages of these processes are that they tend to be characterised by local ownership and a higher degree of participation; they tend to utilise community-based mechanisms of peacebuilding; and they have the capacity to address reconciliation at personal and societal levels.

However, these processes have a number of weaknesses and shortcomings, especially if they are implemented in an authoritarian context in which there is no willingness to promote inclusive top-down reconciliation processes. These include that they tend to lack coordination, legitimacy, trust, coherence, and sustainability; they can be characterised by antagonism and the failure to agree on the mechanisms to be favored; they can be characterised by the exclusion of marginalised populations such as women; they can be characterised by the use of harmful religious and cultural practices of conflict resolution; they are unable to deal with grave violations of human rights such as killings, maiming, rapping, and enforced disappearances; they can be adversely affected by the broad political environment in which they take place; and they are hardly able to deal with post-traumatic stress disorder among victims. As a result, they can have “pockets of successes and pockets of failures” thereby leaving a “big vacuum” in the reconciliation agenda²⁹.

In terms of top-down approaches to reconciliation, this study has noted that they are essential for many reasons. They may create a political environment which can enable the conduct of bottom-up processes, especially if they are characterised by the implementation of faces of reconciliation such as institutional reforms, reparations, truth-telling, and memorialisation; they can create an environment which legitimises and incentivizes bottom-up approaches; they can deal with “hard issues” of reconciliation which bottom-up processes may be unable to address such as enforced disappearances, killings, rapes, maiming, and torture; and they are in a better position to deal with trauma. However, as demonstrated by the case study of the UMP district, top-down approaches also have their share of shortcomings. If they are not properly implemented, they may focus on healing the broad political environment and disregard the needs of affected individuals, families and communities in the process. If not supported by bottom-up interventions, they are not able to ensure inclusivity and to address the needs of the affected communities. They may also be meaningless if they are not characterised by the implementation of various restorative and retributive faces of reconciliation.

Top-down approaches can also be imposed on affected communities by the elite instead of being based on consultations and engagement with such communities. In the final analysis, bottom-up approaches facilitate the healing of affected individuals and communities while top-down approaches facilitate the healing of the broader political context. It can be argued from the study that in order to be effective and successful, reconciliation processes should involve inclusive top-down and bottom-up mechanisms and processes which interact and reinforce each other. These processes should be driven by different actors such as state institutions, civil society, traditional leaders, business community, community leaders, social movements, the church, human rights activists, and the international community. However, although other actors should be involved, the affected communities should be primarily responsible for driving the agenda in accordance with their needs, values, aspirations and religious and traditional beliefs and practices. This study also noted that the legitimacy of a government is important in promoting healing and reconciliation. If the government is considered to be illegitimate and to be involved in the perpetration of violence, its initiatives are usually not taken seriously.

²⁹ This was an argument which was put forward by interviewee 25A1.

CHAPTER 5: THE UNITY ACCORD AND RECONCILIATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE *MATOBO* COMMUNITY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this chapter is to examine the relationship between the Unity Accord and reconciliation in the Zimbabwean context. The chapter seeks to establish the successes and shortcomings of the Unity Accord in the search for national healing and reconciliation after the *Gukurahundi* atrocities. There are different mechanisms through which national healing and reconciliation can be achieved. Chapter two extensively examines the various faces of reconciliation such as Truth Commissions; amnesty; reparations; acknowledgement; apology; memorialisation; institutional reforms; and local and traditional approaches to reconciliation. The objectives of this chapter will be attained through critiquing the Unity Accord from the perspectives of the aforesaid hallmarks of reconciliation which are discussed in chapter two. It also examines the Unity Accord from the perspectives of top-down and bottom-up approaches to reconciliation as discussed in chapter two. The chapter is therefore predicated on the theoretical discussions in chapter two. The chapter also examines how the affected communities in particular and the Ndebele people in general responded to the failures of the Unity Accord, especially through the rise of Ndebele nationalism.

The chapter uses the case study of the *Matobo* community in Matabeleland province. A focus group discussion was conducted in this community on 22 May 2017 and ten individual interviews were conducted from 23 to 26 May 2017. This chapter is therefore primarily based on the primary information which was collated from this community. This community was chosen primarily because it was one of those communities which experienced the gravest forms of abuses during *Gukurahundi*. The interviewees stated that there were various “bases” which were established in the Matobo community where the Fifth Brigade and agents of the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) were based and from which they interrogated, detained, tortured, and killed scores of victims. Interviewee 24M2 stated that in some cases, victims were tortured before they were buried or thrown in mine shafts alive. She further stated that the thought of victims whom she heard screaming in the process of being buried alive traumatizes her and that she does not put on clothes which are red in color because the color always reminds her of the red berets which were worn by Fifth Brigade forces. She believes that the berets were a symbol of the brutality of the Fifth Brigade. Focus group participant 22M3 stated that the mission of the Fifth Brigade was not to ask questions but to kill.

The notorious detention and torture centers in Matobo were Bhalagwe and Sun Yet Sen camps and the latter camp held about 800 detainees at a time (CCJP & LRF 1997: 120). In terms of the Bhalagwe camp, people from different bases in Matabeleland South were trucked to the camp for further detention, interrogation, and torture and hundreds were killed and their bodies were thrown in mine shafts (Eppel 2004: 45, CCJP & LRF 1997: 120). Interviewees stated that scores of people were thrown in the Bhalagwe mine and that their bones are still lying there. For example, focus group participant 22M6 stated that her father was tortured and thrown into a mine shaft while family members were watching. Interviewees further stated that many victims were buried in shallow and mass graves in the Bhalagwe Mountain which is located near the mine.

During the focus group discussion, participants 22M1, 22M3, 22M4, and 22M6 stated that the Bhalagwe camp should be turned into a monument and not a district heroes’ acre so as to memorialise the atrocities which were committed there³⁰. In January 2017, ZANU-PF planned to

³⁰ The focus group discussion was conducted on 22 May 2017 in the Matobo community.

celebrate Robert Mugabe's 93rd birthday in Matobo, some few kilometers from Bhalagwe. The Matobo villagers expressed dissatisfaction at the choice of the site considering the brutality which their community suffered during *Gukurahundi*. In particular, the Matobo business community stated that "we have no powers to stop His Excellency (Mugabe) from celebrating his birthday where ever he wants to. But if we had, we would not want him to set foot in Matobo"³¹.

This dissatisfaction was also expressed during the interviews. For example, interviewee 25M1 asked "how can they (ZANU-PF) celebrate the birthday of President, Robert Mugabe here in Matobo? No one in this community would want to see them here because of the torture and killings which they committed in this community. How can they celebrate while human bones are lying everywhere? The wounds of *Gukurahundi* are still fresh in this community and the government has refused to heal them". Using the case study of the Matobo community, this study concludes that strictly speaking, the Unity Accord in and of itself was not a reconciliation project. It was primarily interested in eliminating physical violence, forging an alliance between political elites, and advancing ZANU-PF's long-standing one-party state agenda. Interviewee 26M2 stated that the Accord "cheated and betrayed" the affected communities because it clearly reflected and protected the power interests of ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU elites.

The majority view among the interviewees was that the Accord was successful in ending violence but it failed in terms of healing and reconciliation because it took an elitist approach in which affected communities were not consulted; it promoted a culture of denial and impunity instead of accountability, acknowledgement, apology, and truth telling; no institutional reforms were conducted in order to guarantee non-repetition of the atrocities; affected communities were denied the right to memorialise the violence, to openly speak about it, and to re-bury victims who were thrown in mine shafts or buried in shallow or mass graves; no reparations or any other forms of post-conflict interventions were made to heal the affected communities; the Matabeleland region has continued to be marginalised in the development discourse of the country; and no attempts were made to transform Shona-Ndebele relationships and relations between the Ndebele and the government, resulting in the rise of Ndebele nationalism. This chapter starts with explaining the Unity Accord. It proceeds to critique the successes and shortcomings of the Accord in the quest for healing and reconciliation. The chapter concludes with examining how the affected communities and the Ndebele people in general have responded to the failure of the Unity Accord, particularly after the death of Joshua Nkomo.

5.2 WHAT IS THE UNITY ACCORD?

This section examines the Unity Accord in terms of the circumstances which led to its establishment as well as its stated and unstated objectives. Many scholars have written about the strengths and shortcomings of the Unity Accord in the search for healing and reconciliation after the *Gukurahundi* atrocities (Murambadoro and Wielenga 2015, Eppel 1998, Raftopoulos 2008, Ngwenya and Harris 2015, Benyera 2014, Machakanja 2010). Scholars agree that PF-ZAPU did not enter into the Unity Accord voluntarily, but that it was forced to sign it through the violence which was perpetrated against it and the Ndebele people in general during the *Gukurahundi* conflict (Mashingaidze 2015, International IDEA 2003, and Eppel 2003).

This view was also expressed by some of the interviewees in the Matobo community. During the focus group discussion, participants stated that the violence which was used against ZAPU and the Ndebele people left the party with no option except to sign the Unity Accord. However, there was a minority view among the interviewees that ZAPU signed the Unity Accord because its leaders

³¹ *The Newsday*, 31 January 2017.

wanted to enhance their access to power and resources. For example, interviewee 25M2 stated that “ZAPU’s leadership wanted power and riches and the Unity Accord presented them with the opportunity to share the cake with ZANU-PF. After the Unity Accord, they never talked about *Gukurahundi*. Instead, they began to enrich themselves”. Interviewee 26M3 also stated that “by entering into unity with ZANU-PF, they (ZAPU leaders) showed that they wanted to eat”. She further stated that only PF-ZAPU leaders and politicians benefited from the Unity Accord and that affected communities have continued to face a myriad of challenges which were caused by the *Gukurahundi* atrocities.

The violence which was used against ZAPU was based on the view that the dissidents were perpetrating their insurgent activities under the auspices of its structures and that the party’s president, Joshua Nkomo, was “the father of dissidents” (Joshua Nkomo, as cited by Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008: 10). The decisive pressure to co-opt PF-ZAPU was exerted through the banning of its meetings and rallies nationwide, the arrest and detention of its top leadership, the forced closure of its offices, the dissolution of ZAPU-led local authorities in Matabeleland North, and a widespread campaign of terror against its officials and supporters (Laakso 2005: 5, Hatchard 1993: 134). Being Ndebele in and of itself was regarded as “evidence” that one was either a dissident or a collaborator³² (Msipa, 2015: 347). As the crackdown intensified, some ZAPU officials defected to ZANU-PF as they feared for their lives. These developments forced PF-ZAPU to resume negotiations with ZANU-PF with a view to form a merger. Weitzer (1990: 174) argues that:

The combination of mob violence, police arrests, and mass defections gave ZAPU little choice but to agree to unity talks with ZANU in late 1985. After the talks broke down in April 1987, all ZAPU meetings were banned and all its offices ordered closed. Now in complete disarray, the party was forced either to accept a merger with ZANU on the latter’s terms or to vanish altogether from the political scene.

It was in this context that the presidents of the two parties, assisted by a sub-committee which consisted of members of their parties, conducted a total of ten meetings during the tortuous negotiations. The first meeting was held on 2 October 1985 and the final meeting was held on 10 December 1987. The two parties were finally merged into ZANU-PF and this culminated in what came to be referred to as the Unity Accord of 22 December 1987. 22 December came to be commemorated as a national unity day. However, some people have criticised the commemoration of this day from the perspective that it represents impunity, shameful denial, and repression of diversity. For example, Dumiso Dabengwa said that the commemoration of the Unity Accord represents “a lasting reminder of how hunger for unchallenged power can needlessly lead to the criminal slaughter of tens of thousands of innocent people” (*The Daily News*, 22 December 2015). The Accord consisted of the following provisions;

- “That ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU have irrevocably committed themselves to unite under one political party;
- That the unity of the two political parties shall be achieved under the name Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front), in short ZANU-PF;
- That comrade Robert Gabriel Mugabe shall be the First Secretary and President of ZANU-PF;

³² This was also stated during the focus group discussion and the interviews.

- That ZANU-PF shall have two Second Secretaries and Vice Presidents who shall be appointed by the First Secretary and President of the Party;
- That ZANU-PF shall seek to establish a socialist society in Zimbabwe on the guidance of Marxist-Leninist principles;
- That ZANU-PF shall seek to establish a one-party state in Zimbabwe;
- That the leadership of ZANU-PF shall abide by the leadership code;
- That the existing structures of ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU shall be merged in accordance with the letter and spirit of this agreement;
- That both parties shall, in the interim, take immediate and vigorous steps to eliminate and end the insecurity and violence prevalent in Matabeleland;
- That ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU shall convene respective congresses to give effect to this agreement within the shortest possible time; and
- That, in the interim, comrade Robert Gabriel Mugabe is vested with the full powers to prepare for the implementation of this agreement and to act in the name and authority of ZANU-PF” (The Unity Accord, 1987 as cited by Eppel, 2009: 45).

The parties also made an unwritten agreement that one of Zimbabwe’s two Vice Presidents as well as the party Chairperson would be a former PF-ZAPU member. The parties stated that their merging was facilitated by a number of common factors such as their participation in the liberation struggle (including their loose alliance under the PF banner); their significant electoral support as evidenced by the outcome of the 1980 and 1985 elections; and their shared desire for peace, security, national unity, and economic development. Following the Unity Accord, the parties embarked on the process of merging their structures. Six PF-ZAPU members were appointed ministers and Joshua Nkomo was appointed a Senior Minister in the office of the President. In a move that consolidated the Unity Accord, the parties held their first joint congress in December 1989. After the merger of their structures, Nkomo was elevated to the position of vice president where he joined Simon Venganyayi Muzenda of ZANU-PF (Ncube, 1989). Nkomo held this position until his death in 1999.

Vice President, Kembo Mohadi, is a former PF-ZAPU leader whose appointment to the position was based on the Unity Accord. There are other ex-ZAPU members who are still holding influential positions in ZANU-PF and the government because of the Unity Accord. However, as discussed later in this chapter, some ex-ZAPU members became disgruntled by what they perceived as the marginalisation not only of former PF-ZAPU cadres but of the Ndebele people in the political and economic discourse of the country. The disgruntlement undermined the Unity Accord as some of the ex-ZAPU leaders repudiated it and broke away from ZANU-PF following the death of Joshua Nkomo.

Critics maintain that the Unity Accord was not a power sharing agreement but rather an arrangement through which PF-ZAPU was “swallowed” by ZANU-PF (Eppel 2009, Sithole 1988, Mhandara and Pooe 2013, Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003). Some interviewees also supported this view. They argued that ZANU-PF retained everything including the party name, slogans, symbols (especially the cockerel), songs, and regalia. Interviewee 23M2 stated that everything to do with ZAPU such as the party’s name, slogans, and symbols was “buried in the Unity Accord”. Other

interviewees also argued that apart from Joshua Nkomo and a few others who were given influential positions, ex-ZAPU officials were given few and less influential positions in the party and government.

As far as the objectives of the Unity Accord are concerned, scholars have analysed them in terms of both stated and unstated objectives. Scholars argue that the primary objective of the Unity Accord was the complete annihilation of PF-ZAPU as a political party with a view to form a *de jure* one-party state (Eppel 2009: 8, Du Toit 1995: 623, Moyo 1992: 30, Makumbe 1986: 23, Sithole 1999: 150). This study notes that there was no point at which ZANU-PF explicitly stated this objective. However, there are many sources which seem to support the view that this was the primary objective of the Accord. First, some ZANU-PF stalwarts such as Didymus Mutasa (1989: 293) argued that “Unity was necessary for ZANU-PF to achieve the long cherished goal of a one-party state”.

Second, an examination of the Unity Accord shows that the overriding objective was the establishment of a constitutional one-party state. This was the main point of discussion during ZANU and ZAPU’s first joint conference. With regards to the *Gukurahundi* atrocities, the Unity Accord made no mention of the term reconciliation or any post-conflict interventions intended to heal the affected communities. It emphasised the need for the parties to take immediate measures to eliminate the violence and insecurity in Matabeleland. Third, ZANU-PF used the Unity Accord to promote the rhetoric that a one-party state is a necessary condition for the promotion and consolidation of national unity and that the formation of any opposition party would be a negation of the Unity Accord. For example, President Robert Mugabe stated that:

any attempt to form any new political parties for the future is a long step backwards in the search for greater national unity and transformation of society in favor of the people, and, in particular, the peasants, the urban and farm workers, professionals and intellectuals (Mugabe, 1989: 354).

Fourth, after the Unity Accord, the government moved to make constitutional amendments which made no sense outside a one-party state (Moyo 1992, Laakso 1998). Some of the amendments concentrated power in the office and person of the president with the implication of making Mugabe the “one center of power”. One of the major criticisms against the Unity Accord is that it took an elitist and top-down approach to reconciliation in which negotiations were limited to the leaders of ZANU and ZAPU (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008, Mashingaidze 2005, Eppel 2008). Affected communities, civil society, the church, other political parties, and traditional and community leaders were excluded from the negotiations and the final agreement.

Mashingaidze (2005: 88) argues that “some of the weaknesses of the Unity Accord are that it was crafted in a *minimalist* way that did not go beyond a power-sharing formula between the leading political elites in PF-ZAPU and ZANU-PF”. As a result, it failed to consider and reflect the reconciliation needs of the affected communities. Scholars have referred to it as a “short-gun marriage” an “elite cohesion” or a “marriage of convenience” (Makumbe and Compagnon, 2000). Inclusive reconciliation processes enable affected communities to express their needs and aspirations and to have a sense of ownership of the process (Vesperini, 2002). During the focus group discussion, participants stated that the talks which led to the Unity Accord were conducted secretly and that the affected communities were simply told to accept the agreement³³.

³³The focus group discussion was conducted in Matobo district on 22 May 2017.

One of the findings of the research which was conducted by Murambadoro and Wielenga (2015: 44) in Nkayi District was that community members remained concerned that they were not consulted and involved in the Unity Accord processes. For this reason, they viewed the Accord as an agreement between political leaders (especially Mugabe and Nkomo) and not between the community and the perpetrators of *Gukurahundi*. This view was confirmed by interviewee 25M3 who stated that after the Unity Accord, ZANU-PF and former PF-ZAPU leaders went to Matabeleland to jointly mobilise community support during the integration of the parties. He further stated that “we did not attend their meetings because it was their agreement and not ours”. In his PhD thesis which examines relations between the Shona and the Ndebele, especially after the *Gukurahundi* massacres, Muchemwa (2016: 182) argues that most of the participants in his study understood the Unity Accord merely as “an agreement between uMugabe and uNkomo”.

5.3 WHAT WERE THE SUCCESSES OF THE UNITY ACCORD?

This section examines the achievements of the Unity Accord. It is crucial to note that *Gukurahundi* was not only protracted, but that it was also deadly in that it caused the loss of at least 20 000 lives; the maiming of scores of victims; the loss of livelihoods; the destruction of homesteads and infrastructure; the displacement of people; and a general atmosphere of insecurity, trauma, and hopelessness (CCJP & LRF 1997, Du Toit 1995, Sithole 1995, Eppel 2004). Affected communities were unable to carry on with their day to day activities. Movement in the affected communities was severely restricted by the government under emergency laws. There was no doubt that affected communities wanted to see a transition to peace and a return to their normal lives.

In this context, the major success of the Unity Accord was that it witnessed the instant cessation of hostilities in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. This heralded the long-awaited transition from war to peace. The retention of peace in Matabeleland and Midlands was a great achievement because it halted further loss of lives and property and it enabled the communities to “close” a long and dark chapter and to begin a process of rebuilding their lives. Mlambo (1995: 202) states that the Unity Accord “saved the country from the calamity of a disastrous civil war and came as a relief to all Zimbabweans”. During the focus group discussion, participant 22M5 stated that “I do not know what would have happened to the Ndebeles had the Unity Accord not been signed. I think that all the Ndebele people would have been killed. Despite its failures, the Unity Accord saved many lives”. Participant 22M3 also stated that the Unity Accord brought the much needed peace and security in the affected communities.

The other success of the Unity Accord was that it helped to improve relations between PF-ZAPU and ZANU-PF, but not between the Ndebele and the Shona/government. During the pre- and post-independence period, relations between the two parties were characterised by mistrust, antagonism, and the outbreak of physical violence, including the dissident activities. During the *Gukurahundi* atrocities, ZANU-PF peddled the view that Joshua Nkomo was “the father of dissidents” but after the Unity Accord, it regarded him as “Father Zimbabwe” because he was seen as a symbol of national unity and reconciliation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008). After the Unity Accord, Zimbabwe never experienced any other civil conflict attributable to the breakdown of relations between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU. Thus the Unity accord helped to achieve and maintain peace.

5.4 WHAT ARE THE FAILURES OF THE UNITY ACCORD?

The argument put forward in this study is that although the Unity Accord was successful in ending the violence which was prevalent in Matabeleland, it failed to address the reconciliation needs of

affected communities in particular and the nation in general³⁴. This section examines the variables which made it difficult for the Unity Accord to promote healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. It critiques the Unity Accord in respect of the hallmarks of reconciliation which are discussed in chapter two which are memorialisation, truth-telling, reparations, institutional reforms, relationship building, cultural and traditional approaches to reconciliation, and the need for proper burial of victims of a violent conflict. It also examines the outcomes of the failure of the Unity Accord in the reconciliation agenda such as the rise of Ndebele nationalism and the abandonment of the accord by some dissatisfied former PF-ZAPU stalwarts after the death of Joshua Nkomo.

5.4.1 *The improper burial of Gukurahundi victims*

This study has noted in chapter two that in Zimbabwean culture, the burial of the dead in accordance with cultural and religious practices and beliefs is very important. It is believed that without proper mourning and burial, the spirits of the dead will be “angry, restless, and wondering”. These spirits are believed to have the powers to cause misfortune (such as mysterious sicknesses, bad luck, failure to conceive, failure in crop production, and mysterious deaths) in the family and community, especially if the dead person was a stranger. According to interviewees, one of the major reconciliation steps which the Unity Accord has failed to address relates to mass/shallow graves and the victims who were thrown in mine shafts. During the *Gukurahundi* disturbances, scores of people were buried in mass graves under torched huts, in Fifth Brigade camps, in mine shafts, in villages, and in unknown locations (CCJP and LRF, 1997). Interviewee 25M2 stated that “during *Gukurahundi*, there was no time to mourn or bury the dead because the Fifth Brigade’s slogan was to let the dead mourn and bury themselves”.

In the Matobo community in particular, some interviewees stated that many victims were thrown in the Bhalagwe mine and that scores of others were buried in shallow graves in the Bhalagwe Mountain and other known and unknown locations. Interviewee 25M1 stated “can you see that mountain? It is called Bhalagwe and many strange things happen there because of the restless spirits of people who were buried there. We cannot have peace in this community unless those people are buried in accordance with our culture”. Focus group participant 22M5 stated that people are different from dogs and donkeys in that they need to be properly buried so that they can rest in peace. She further stated that those *Gukurahundi* victims who were buried in mass graves or thrown in mine shafts are “not resting in peace but in pieces”. Interviewee 23M1 stated that it is common for villagers in Matobo to discover human bones in locations such as forests, mountains, fields, and school yards. He further stated that it is traumatising to see human bones lying on the ground and that some community members believe that this can cause curses to befall families and communities. The situation of human bones is not limited to Matobo. In 2011, parents, teachers, and pupils at Silwane Primary School in Lupane, Matabeleland North Province, discovered human bones protruding from the ground close to class room blocks (*The Newsday*, 19 August 2016). This explains why Msipa (2015: 456) states that “there are schools that have mass graves in their grounds into which all the people of the village, killed by the Fifth Brigade, were thrown in and covered up. Why should children be exposed to these mass graves? Could there not be a decent burial place for those who were killed?”

Interviewees emphasised that it is difficult to talk about closing the *Gukurahundi* chapter as long as victims are not properly mourned and buried. The relatives of dead victims have been denied the right to exhume and bury their loved ones in accordance with their cultural and religious practices. The research which was conducted by Murambadoro and Wielenga (2015) found that the

³⁴ This position is supported by the views which were expressed during the focus group discussion and the individual interviews.

issue of exhumation and proper burial of victims remains one of the major concerns of community members. One of the people whom they interviewed during the research project stated that:

There are many unidentified graves in Matabeleland. The least that the government can do to help survivors ease off the pain they have been holding for the past 30 years is exhuming mass graves, identifying the deceased, and giving bereaved families the opportunity to mourn and rebury their beloved ones in a proper manner (Murambadoro and Wielenga, 2015: 45-46).

It is therefore difficult to see how *Gukurahundi* can be regarded as a “closed chapter” when scores of victims are still buried in mass graves, some of which have remained unknown. This is especially considering that some of the mass graves are located within communities where people would see them in their daily lives. The sites of mass graves only serve to remind communities about the *Gukurahundi* abuses and this makes it difficult for them to heal. In this context, the exhumation, identification and proper burial of *Gukurahundi* victims plays an essential role in facilitating the healing of family and community members. To date, there are calls from civil society, opposition political parties, affected communities, human rights activists and concerned citizens for the government to allow families to offer their relatives proper mourning and burials.

The issue of mass graves therefore remains a critical issue in contemporary Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. Speaking about the exhumation and reburial of *Gukurahundi* victims during a parliamentary debate in March 2017, Phelekezela Mphoko argued that it is “unAfrican” for the government to exhume victims who were buried in mass graves. He stated that “we cannot go to the mass graves and start digging. It is not in our African culture. What we are only going to do is to put a big plaque which will indicate that there are people who were buried there. Those with bones that are visible by the grave site, we will take the bones and rebury them properly” (*The Chronicle*, 15 March 2017). Mphoko’s comments invoked public criticism with regard to the government’s reluctance to deal with the issue in a manner which is consistent with the views of the affected communities.

5.4.2 *The Unity Accord and silence*

In chapter two, this study details how official and public acknowledgement of a violent conflict and exposure of the truth (as opposed to denial) creates an atmosphere which is conducive to individual and collective healing and reconciliation. This explains why the establishment of Truth Commissions in post-conflict societies has become popular. Scholars generally agree that acknowledgement and truth-telling are critical steps in the reconciliation agenda. Mashingaidze (2005: 86) argues that “the best way to bring peace and reconciliation in communities is through truth telling and a shared willingness to reconcile by all the major actors in a war”. Assefa (2006) suggests that reconciliation enables communities to create a social and spiritual space in which they acknowledge the violent past and exercise the freedom to express their loss and grief caused by injustice with a view to deal with the violent past and transform relationships.

This subsection explains why government denial and the promotion of imposed silence with regards to *Gukurahundi* contributed to the failure of the Unity Accord to promote healing and reconciliation. During *Gukurahundi*, the government used curfews, emergency powers, and terror to restrict the movement of community members and people who were interested in visiting the

affected communities so that the abuses could be conducted under “the cover of darkness”³⁵. Restricting access to affected areas was easy because of the government’s monopoly over the media and because during that time, there were no other channels of access to information such as today’s social media. Eppel (2004: 50) argues that:

The daily papers at that time were all state-controlled, as were radio and television... in Bulawayo, while thousands were being massacred a few kilometers away, *The Chronicle* was almost silent, blaming dissidents for what little violence was acknowledged. This explains why in 1983 most people in unaffected parts of Zimbabwe did not realise what was happening: there was no easy route to knowing.

During the *Gukurahundi* atrocities, the government showed little interest in recovering the truth when it established the Chihambakwe Commission in 1983 to inquire into the atrocities. The findings were never made public. The government has consistently refused to listen to the demand by civil society, human rights activists, opposition parties, affected communities, concerned citizens, and other actors to release the commission’s findings. Much of what happened during *Gukurahundi* was exposed some years after the massacres, primarily through the conduct of interviews by human rights NGOs such as the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe.

In July 2000, while making a speech during the burial of Joshua Nkomo, Mugabe referred to *Gukurahundi* as a “moment of madness”. He stated that “it (*Gukurahundi*) was an act of madness, we killed each other and destroyed each other’s property. It was wrong and both sides were to blame. We have had a difference, a quarrel. We engaged ourselves in a reckless and unprincipled fight” (Stiff, 2000: 228). However, this utterance was neither an apology nor an acknowledgement. In fact, the government has continued to defy calls to acknowledge its role in the *Gukurahundi* massacres. For example, in an interview with *The Sunday Mail* in February 2015, former Vice President, Phelekezela Mphoko, exonerated Mugabe, arguing that Zimbabweans should not blame him for the *Gukurahundi* massacres because he was not involved. Mphoko said that *Gukurahundi* was a “conspiracy by the west” whose agenda was to destabilise Zimbabwe with a view to protect the interests of then apartheid South Africa (*The Sunday Mail*, 15 February 2015). Such infelicitous statements by government officials have caused the general belief that the government has remained impenitent regarding the *Gukurahundi* massacres.

Since the signing of the Unity Accord, the state has used the security establishment, especially the police and the notorious CIO, to repress any discussions about *Gukurahundi*. The state maintains that *Gukurahundi* is a “closed chapter” which should remain shrouded in secrecy because talking about it will cause disunity and “re-open old wounds”. The government has not offered an account, even an incoherent one, regarding the atrocities. It has simply adopted the narrative that the *Gukurahundi* atrocities were “disturbances” which were caused by dissidents. This narrative was reflected in the preamble of the Unity Accord, part of which says that ZANU and ZAPU were “determined to eliminate and end the insecurity and violence caused by dissidence in Matabeleland” (Unity Accord, 1987). It is clear that ZANU’s “official” narrative imputes the horrifying violence which took place in Matabeleland to dissidents.

Those who have attempted to tell the truth about *Gukurahundi* have been arrested, detained, harassed, intimidated and tortured. For example, a renowned visual artist, Owen Maseko, who

³⁵ Focus group participant 22M4 stated that during *Gukurahundi* “we (community members) were not allowed to move out of this community and outsiders were not allowed to come into the community. They (the Fifth Brigade) wanted to make sure that no one knew what they did to us”.

survived the atrocities, was prohibited from making some *Gukurahundi* exhibitions at the Bulawayo National Art Gallery. The exhibitions sought to expose the savagery which characterised the *Gukurahundi* massacres. On 25 March 2010, Maseko opened his exhibition titled *Sibathontisele*³⁶ through which he profiled the *Gukurahundi* atrocities. According to Maseko (2011: 99):

The exhibition explored the vivid memories that I and many other people have of that time—the sound of the helicopters, the chanting of Shona ZANU-PF songs, the screams of women being raped, the terrifying sight of red berets (the signature item of the Fifth Brigade), the desperation of people running for refuge, and the crying and the silence that followed the burning of villages and homesteads. I also used quotes that still reverberate in people’s minds—“We eradicate them”. “We don’t differentiate when we fight because we can’t tell who is a dissident and who is not”.

Maseko was victimised, harassed, arrested and detained and his exhibition was prohibited by the government. He was charged under section 33 of the Criminal Law Codification and Reform Act for allegedly undermining the authority of the president and offending people of a particular race, tribe, ethnicity or religion. He was also charged with communicating falsehoods with the intention to incite hatred and violence (*The Newsday*, 26 March 2010). However, Maseko maintained that his recollections of the atrocities were intended to enable the country to face the past with a view to heal and reconcile societies. Explaining his experiences with the *Sibathontisele* exhibition, Maseko stated that:

...when my exhibition opened, the authorities responded quickly. The show was closed down the following day and I was arrested by Central Intelligence Organisation officers and detained for five nights at the Bulawayo central police station. I was eventually charged with publishing and communicating false statements with the intention of inciting violence, which carries a sentence of twenty years, and also with undermining the authority of the president (2011: 95).

Terror has also been used to silence affected communities. Interviewee 24M2 stated that “we (community members) are not allowed to talk about *Gukurahundi*. We have to make sure that no one hears us whenever we speak about this issue”. Interviewee 26M1 stated that “many people and organisations have come to us to ask us about the killings but we are afraid of speaking out because of intimidation from the CIO and other state security organisations”. Focus group participant 22M3 stated that “we never had the opportunity to openly speak the truth about the violence which this community went through during the violence. We only speak to those people whom we trust but we have to make sure that we do not reveal our identity in order to avoid trouble”. Interviewee 25M1 stated that the truth about *Gukurahundi* was “buried along with the Unity Accord”. During the interviews which were conducted by Murambadoro and Wielenga in 2015, one of the participants said that:

I still want to understand why the dissidents killed my father in front of the whole family. I really need to know what they were thinking when they forced me to cut him into pieces. These questions remain in my mind and I do not know if I will ever get the chance to ask for the answers (Murambadoro and Wielenga, 2015: 45).

³⁶ *Sibathontisele* is a Ndebele term which means that “we drip on them”. This was a technique of torture which was used by the Fifth Brigade which involved the dripping of burning and melting plastic on the bodies of victims (Maseko 2010).

Interviewee 23M2 wondered why some government officials such as President Emmerson Mnangagwa maintain that *Gukurahundi* is a “closed chapter” when no truth was told. She further stated that it is only the truth which will set the affected communities free from the agony of *Gukurahundi*. It can be concluded that the refusal by the government to allow individuals and communities to openly talk about their experiences and to acknowledge its role in the massacres has caused continued psychological, emotional, and other forms of suffering. Interviewee 24M1 stated that a dark cloud of trauma and fear continues to hover above the affected communities.

5.4.3 *The Unity Accord and a culture of impunity*

One of the major concerns which were expressed during the interviews was that the perpetrators of *Gukurahundi* were “immunized” from accountability and prosecution through the use of amnesties and pardons. After the Unity Accord, the government introduced Clemency Order No. 1 of 18 April 1988 (General Notice 257A of 1988). The Order granted a blanket amnesty for crimes which were committed between 1982 and 1987. All of the dissidents and about 3 500 Fifth Brigade members who committed the *Gukurahundi* atrocities were pardoned (Eppel, 2004: 46; CCJP and LRF, 1997; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009; Mashingaidze, 2005) without any consultations with the affected communities. Focus group participant 22M2 stated that those who committed the *Gukurahundi* atrocities were forgiven by the government and not by the affected individuals, families, and communities. Focus group participant 22M5 stated that the government’s action was instrumental in making ZANU-PF supporters believe that they can commit violence without being made accountable.

The use of amnesties has promoted a culture of violence, impunity, and disrespect for the rule of law, especially among ZANU-PF youth militia, the security establishment, traditional leaders, and war veterans. There is a strong conviction among these constituencies that they can perpetrate violence without anyone making them accountable for their actions. Focus group participant 22A5 stated that the failure to make those who perpetrated *Gukurahundi* accountable has convinced ZANU-PF supporters that they can commit political violence to defend the party without the state making them accountable. The participant further stated that during election times, ZANU-PF supporters threaten villagers that if they vote the opposition, they will experience *Gukurahundi*-like violence. The use of amnesties, pardons, and the narrative of denial have made it difficult for affected communities to heal and reconcile with the perpetrators and other communities. Interviewee 24M2 stated that it is important for post-conflict societies not only to tell the truth but to make perpetrators of violence accountable so as to uproot the culture of violence and impunity.

5.4.4 *The Unity Accord and the need for reparations*

Gukurahundi was characterised by violations such as the massive destruction of property, homesteads and livelihoods; loss of lives; physical and psychological harm; torture; rape cases; disruption of social services, including education; and internal and external displacement of villagers. In terms of torture, the CCJP and LRF (1997: 92) argue that “beatings constitute about 80% of the physical torture reported, with electrical shock, submarino, suspension, abnormal postures and rape all reported”. According to Maseko (2011: 98) one of the most notorious techniques of torture which was employed by the Fifth Brigade was to drop hot, melted plastics on the bodies of victims. This is referred to in Ndebele as *Sibathontisele* (we drip on them). Some victims sustained permanent injuries and disabilities as a result of torture³⁷. Given these violations, the period after the Unity Accord should have been followed by the implementation of inclusive and

³⁷ This was mentioned during the focus group discussion and individual interviews.

compassionate post-conflict interventions, including reparations. This would have assisted affected communities to heal, reconcile, and move on.

Chapter two extensively discusses the importance of reparations in promoting national healing and reconciliation. The chapter also notes that reparations interventions may be material and non-material in nature and that the latter are critical in restoring the dignity of victims and survivors. The provision of reparations in post-conflict societies, especially to those who suffered the most heinous of violations, has been one of the major recommendations by Truth Commissions such as the Sierra Leonean TC, the Liberian TC, and the Kenyan TJRC. In fact, reparations are considered a “right” which survivors are entitled to (Report of the Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission, Kenya 2013: 98).

However, the Unity Accord expressed no interest in post-conflict interventions. As a result, *Gukurahundi* victims and their families were “left on their own” and had to try and “find their own way” out of the post-conflict challenges³⁸. Interviewee 26M3 stated that by the time that *Gukurahundi* ended; scores of victims needed medical, psychological, and psychiatric treatment because of the violations they had suffered. He further stated that in the absence of reparations, many families in the Matobo community have struggled to move on with their lives because of physical, material, spiritual, and psychological problems which were caused by *Gukurahundi*. Interviewee 25M2, who said that he is a survivor of *Gukurahundi*, stated that many people failed to make a decent living because of the physical and mental injuries and material losses which they incurred during *Gukurahundi*.

Speaking in personal terms, he said that he has failed to restore his life to where it was before *Gukurahundi*. Interviewee 24M2 stated that there are many cases of adults and children in the Matobo community who do not have birth certificates because of *Gukurahundi* related challenges such as the lack of death certificates of people who died during the conflict. In order to get a birth certificate in Zimbabwe, the applicant should provide the national identity of his or her parent(s). In the case where the parent(s) could have died, the applicant should provide a death certificate. Focus group participant 22M4 stated that reparations do not only help the affected communities in material terms, but they also send the message that the government is penitent and they appease the spirits of dead victims. He further stated that they appease affected communities and make them believe that they are part of a society which cares for them. Interviewee 25M1 stated that the government should create parks and turn places such as the Bhalagwe camp into sites of honoring and memorialising the victims of *Gukurahundi*.

During the focus group discussion, participants stated that there are a myriad of reparations measures which need to be implemented which include the identification and punishment of perpetrators; exhumations and (re)burials of victims; apologies; memorials; support for children; counselling; medical assistance; provision of tangible goods; the conduct of traditional ceremonies; the introduction of income generating projects; building of schools, hospitals, roads, and water facilities; compensation for destroyed homesteads and properties; and provision of critical documents such as national identity cards and birth certificates³⁹. However, interviewee 26M1 stated that reparations should not be used to silence affected communities because this would “betray” the dead. Speaking about the exhumation and reburial of *Gukurahundi* victims during a parliamentary debate in March 2017, Phelekezela Mphoko, argued that there is need to address the “five scars” of *Gukurahundi* which include the provision of death and birth certificates, empowering

³⁸ This view was expressed by interviewees during the focus group discussion and the individual interviews.

³⁹ The focus group discussion was conducted in Matobo on 22 April 2017.

the people, and reburial of those victims whose bones are outside the ground (*The Chronicle*, 15 March 2017).

5.4.5 *The Unity Accord and institutional reforms*

As discussed in chapter two, one of the most important steps which governments should take in a post-conflict setting is to send the message that “never again” shall the violations be repeated in the future. Some of the best ways of achieving this are to reform institutions and to make public statements to that effect. Institutional reforms play an important role in addressing the root causes of conflict; eliminating a culture of violence and impunity; and promoting and upholding democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms (Machakanja, 2010). The structural dimension of reconciliation gives priority to security, institutions, economy, political processes, elections, and constitutions as a way of fostering peace, unity, and harmonious co-existence of formerly antagonistic individuals and societies.

The restoration of the rule of law, the implementation of security sector reforms, and the building, democratisation, and strengthening of those institutions which failed to uphold human rights during the conflict are therefore important steps in a post-conflict society. These steps show the commitment of the state to ensure that past human rights violations would be avoided in the future. After the Unity Accord, the state took no deliberate steps to reform institutions, particularly those which were responsible for human rights violations, in order to guarantee affected communities that never again shall they experience another “long moment of madness” in their lives.

Political leaders have never expressed the commitment to avoid *Gukurahundi*-style violence, with the exception of Moven Enock Mahachi, who was the Minister of Defence until his death in 2001. In September 1992, Mahachi stated that “...events during that period (*Gukurahundi*) are regretted and should not be repeated by anybody, any group of people or any institution in this country” (CCJP and LRF, 1997: 17). Instead of expressing a “never again” commitment, especially in their political speeches; high ranking ZANU-PF politicians, war veterans, and the youth militia have used *Gukurahundi* as a reference point to “warn” people who oppose the party. The conduct of elections has been characterised by threats of *Gukurahundi*-style violence against ZANU-PF opponents. When the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association convened a meeting in June 2016 and declared its support for President Mnangagwa (who was Vice President) to succeed Mugabe, Mugabe likened them to dissidents and threatened them with a “second *Gukurahundi*” (*The Daily News*, 11 June 2016). In this context, *Gukurahundi* is a legacy of state-sanctioned repression which the ruling party is willing to employ/threaten to employ whenever its power ambitions are threatened.

Those institutions which were involved in the *Gukurahundi* violence (especially the army and the notorious CIO) have continued to be implicated in serious violations of human rights, especially from 2000 going forward (see chapter 5). For example, the Joint Operation Command (JOC), which comprises of heads of the army, police, air force, prison service, and the CIO have been involved in covert and overt violent operations (Chitiyo 2009). They also engineered the strategy to delay the announcement of the 29 March 2008 presidential election results in which Mugabe had been defeated by Tsvangirai (Alexander and Tendi 2008, Masunungure 2008). In December 2016, Minister Josiah Hungwe claimed that during the 2008 elections, ZANU-PF “hired” the army to help Mugabe to retain power. He threatened that during the forthcoming 2018 elections, ZANU-PF would do the same. He warned, “don’t forget what Major General Rugeje did in Masvingo in 2008. We can call him again in 2018” (*The Standard*, 11 December 2016). Instead of reforming these institutions, ZANU-PF has politicised them in such a way as to make it difficult to distinguish the regime from the state. The “militarisation” of the “party-state” has been characterised by the

deployment of some serving or retired senior military officers into civil institutions, including the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission and the National Prosecuting Authority.

These developments have strained relations between the security establishment and civilians. According to an investigation into civil-military relations in Matabeleland which was conducted by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2002: 45), “every interviewee remembered the military in the context of how the Fifth Brigade killed innocent people”. In terms of media reforms, the ZCBC, EFZ and ZCC (2006: 58) argue that it was essential for the state to reform the state controlled media to ensure that it communicates the message of unity, peace, and diversity rather than messages which polarise the country. However, since the Unity Accord, the state media continued to polarise Zimbabwean society. In fact, the government has developed a culture of using the state media to deny responsibility for the *Gukurahundi* massacres and to protect those who perpetrate violence with a view to protect and promote the interests of ZANU-PF. The argument made here is that the Unity Accord completely failed as far as institutional reforms are concerned. This explains why many interviewees, including in the UMP and the Bikita East and Bikita West districts, expressed the view that as long as ZANU-PF is in power, it is difficult to talk about the prospects of inclusive and effective national healing and reconciliation processes.

5.5 RESPONSES TO THE FAILURES OF THE UNITY ACCORD

The argument made in this study is that the Unity Accord failed to meet the expectations, not only of the affected communities, but also of some of the PF-ZAPU politicians who joined ZANU-PF. This caused dissatisfaction among these constituencies. This dissatisfaction has manifested itself in different forms. This section discusses how the affected communities, the Ndebele people in general, and former ZAPU politicians have responded to the perceived and real failures of the Unity Accord. It focuses on the rise of Ndebele nationalism, the repudiation of government and ZANU-PF, and the revival of PF-ZAPU or the founding of opposition parties intended to fill the gap which was left by ZAPU, especially after the death of Joshua Nkomo.

5.5.1 *The rise of Ndebele Nationalism*

Many interviewees expressed the strong belief that *Gukurahundi* was a form of violence which was based on the “othering” of the Ndebele people which had its roots in the history of Shona-Ndebele relations. There was a legacy of prejudice, antagonism, and violence between these two ethnic groups which originated in the pre-colonial period (see chapter 3 for a detailed discussion). Ranger argues that “for far too long the only history of Matabeleland known to Zimbabweans has been the bloody saga of Mzilikazi and Lobengula, with its emphasis on the Ndebele as invaders, raiders and conquerors” (Ranger 1999: 5). Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Benyera (2015:11) also argue that “the arrival of the Ndebele-speaking people in 1838 is often blamed for bringing *Mfecane*-like violence into the space between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers... Even the Fifth Brigade atrocities were justified in some quarters as vengeance for what the Ndebele did in the 19th century”. The perception that Ndebeles are historically “raiders and invaders” is still rooted in some constituencies of the Zimbabwean society.

For example, in March 2017, while making a contribution to the parliamentary portfolio committee hearing on the National Peace and Reconciliation Bill at Mbuya Nehanda Hall in Marondera, ZANU-PF Marondera Central parliamentarian, Lawrence Katsiru, shocked participants when he claimed that *Gukurahundi* victims should be compensated on the condition that the Ndebeles would have “restituted the Shonas by paying lobola for the Shona girls whom they kidnapped and forced into marriage and the cattle which they raided during the 19th century raids” (*The Newsday*, 18 March 2017). Interviewees stated that during *Gukurahundi*, Fifth Brigade agents claimed that “we

have come to take back our cattle and our daughters whom you raided. *Yava nguva yenyu yekuripa*” (it is time for you to pay back). Focus group participant 22M3 stated that the Shona people believe that the Ndebeles are a naturally violent and cruel people and that it is this perception which makes it difficult for the Shonas to think of a Zimbabwe which is led by a Ndebele president. Interviewee 24M2 stated that the Ndebeles are often mistreated when they seek services from state institutions and that in most cases, they are asked to speak Shona for them to be served. She stated that “when I went to Makombe (Registrar Generals’ office in Harare) to apply for a passport, I was told that all Ndebeles should speak Shona. I was forced to speak in Shona in order to be served”. Given these entrenched perceptions, it was important for the Unity Accord to provide for post-conflict interventions targeted at building inter-ethnic relations, especially between the Shona and the Ndebele people.

The Unity Accord did not only fail to transform relations between the Shona and the Ndebele but it exacerbated them by promoting what came to be perceived by many Ndebeles as the economic and political domination of other ethnic groups by the Shona⁴⁰. There are perceptions among the affected communities and the people of Matabeleland in general that the economic dominance of the Shonas has manifested itself through the use of resources from Matabeleland to develop Mashonaland and other Shona dominated regions, the occupation of key jobs in Matabeleland by the Shona people, the sub-standard educational facilities for children in Matabeleland, and the “condemnation of the Ndebele people to (the status of) second-class citizens” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008: 67). Many interviewees expressed the view that the period after the Unity Accord witnessed the deliberate and systematic othering and exclusion of the Ndebele from the geography of economic and political power. This view was also expressed during an interview which was conducted by Muchemwa (2016: 191) in which a Ndebele participant stated that “there are no opportunities in Matabeleland for young people like us; the very few opportunities that arise are taken by people from Mashonaland areas”. Focus group participant 22M6 stated that the nation building agenda in Zimbabwe has been driven and dominated by the views, needs, and aspirations of the Shona people with the Ndebele people being “forced to live with what the Shona want”.

High ranking politicians such as former ZANU-PF Politburo member Joshua Malinga and the former Governor and Resident Minister of Matabeleland North, Welshman Mabhena, have complained about Matabeleland’s marginalisation. This explains why issues of government accountability, uneven development, and the need to compensate the victims of the *Gukurahundi* disturbances have dominated the political discourse in Matabeleland province. These perceptions and realities of exclusion have tended to invoke anti-government, and particularly anti-ZANU-PF sentiments among the Ndebele people. This has contributed to the rise of Ndebele nationalism. Ndebele nationalism has tended to be characterised by the regionalization of politics and the emergence of radical political and social discourses and movements such as the Matabeleland Liberation Front (MLF), the Mthwakazi People’s Congress (MPC), ZAPU 2000, uMhlahlo we Sizwe sika Mthwakazi, Matabeleland Liberation Front (MFL), Vukani Mahlabezulu (VM), Mthwakazi Action Group (MAG), and Imbovane Yamahlabezulu (IY). These groups have denounced the Unity Accord; advocated for the promotion of particularistic features of Ndebele culture; condemned what they regard as Shona triumphalism; called for accountability with regard to the *Gukurahundi* massacres; and most radically, the complete secession of Matabeleland and Midlands from Zimbabwe to establish an autonomous “Ndebele state” in the form of the United Mthwakazi Republic (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008, 2011; Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007).

The Mthwakazi Republic Party (MRP) which is led by Mqondisi Moyo, is advocating for a separate “Matabeleland state”, based on the argument that the region has been marginalised in economic and

⁴⁰ This was reflected in the views of many interviewees.

political terms (*The Newsday*, 24 April 2017). In 2017, Moses Mzila-Ndlovu, who is a former Minister of National Healing in the Government of National Unity under the MDC-M ticket, formed a political party (the Alliance for National Salvation). He said that the party would challenge the dominance of the Shonas in the political field and that it would mobilise support from people in Matabeleland. He alleged that Shona people are *Gukurahundi* accomplices (*The Daily News*, 4 January 2017). Interviewee 26M2 stated that “we (the Ndebele people) are not wanted by the Shona-led government. The only solution is for us to have our own state and govern ourselves. We are tired of being mistreated”.

While it is common knowledge that many Zimbabweans have “voted with their feet” because of the economic conditions and repression in Zimbabwe, some Ndebele people claim that they have migrated to other countries because of *Gukurahundi* and the continued repression and marginalisation of the Ndebele people by the government. Interviewee 24M2 stated that there are many Ndebeles who fled Zimbabwe and have vowed never to return because they are afraid of the government and the Shona people in general as a result of *Gukurahundi*. Over the years, there has been a proliferation of Ndebele groups in the diaspora. Such groups have mainly used social media to express their dissatisfaction with what they regard as oppression of the Ndebele people by the Zimbabwean government. For example, in 2016, a group which claims to represent the interests of the Ndebele people in South Africa (which calls itself the Rejected Citizens of Zimbabwe) called upon the South African government to extend the work permits of Ndebele people who are living in that country beyond the 2017 deadline. The group’s spokesperson, Victor Mthethwa, said that “we want special identity documents that are designed for us the Ndebeles while this situation of the friction between MaNdebele land and the government of Zimbabwe, which is led by the Shona majority is investigated” (*SABC News*, 30 May 2016). However, the argument made in this study is that it is possible for some Ndebele people to manipulate the real/perceived marginalisation of Matabeleland in order to further their own interests.

5.5.2 The Unity Accord after the death of Joshua Nkomo

The Unity Accord was shaky from the beginning because it was not widely embraced by members of PF-ZAPU and the general population of Matabeleland. *The Chronicle* of July 31 1988 stated that “there was a poor turnout at meetings in Matabeleland by an integration taskforce to form new cells for the united ZANU-PF party” (Ncube, 1989: 318). Although the Unity Accord provided for the establishment of a legislated one-party state, some former PF-ZAPU leaders opposed the idea (Moyo 1991, Sithole 2000). In fact, some former PF-ZAPU members continued to have a strong affiliation towards the party although it had been “swallowed” by ZANU-PF. Expressing this view, one of the former PF-ZAPU leaders stated that “a woman doesn’t lose her maiden name even if she uses her husband’s name” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008).

One of the factors which caused dissatisfaction with the Unity Accord was that instead of advocating for truth recovery and reconciliation with regard to *Gukurahundi*, Joshua Nkomo focused on advocating for issues such as land redistribution and black empowerment (Raftopoulos, 1996). There were also reports that Nkomo criticised the publication of the “silence breaking” CCJP and LRF report which details the brutality of *Gukurahundi*. The period after the Unity Accord witnessed the emergence of a political discourse (especially after Nkomo’s death) in which Nkomo and former PF-ZAPU leaders were perceived as having sacrificed their followers and the victims of *Gukurahundi* on the altar of power (Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Willems, 2010: 12-13). This witnessed the emergence in 1990 of a small political party called the Zimbabwe Active People’s Union (ZAPU) which tried to fill the gap which had been left by PF-ZAPU. Because the Unity Accord was largely viewed as a bilateral pact between Mugabe and Nkomo, in which Nkomo was the cornerstone, Nkomo’s death witnessed a further erosion of the accord.

Responding to the death of Nkomo, the late president of *Imbovane Yamahlabezulu*⁴¹, Bekithemba John Sibindi, stated that Nkomo had “died with his signature on the Unity Accord” and that it was time for the people of Matabeleland to move forward with a different political discourse (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008: 188). In this scheme of things, it was not surprising that soon after Nkomo’s death, attempts were made to revoke the Unity Accord and revive PF-ZAPU under the ZAPU 2000 banner. This party accused PF-ZAPU elites of “selling out” the people of Matabeleland for the sake of power (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011). In December 2007, Dumiso Dabengwa stated that:

Some of us were very reluctant to sign the unity agreement with ZANU then. We were convinced that there was no serious commitment to the unity cause on the part of our comrades on the other side, which was ZANU. There were a number of pointers that made us reluctant to sign the agreement, but we were convinced by our leader (Joshua Nkomo) that signing would bring about good things to us as well as to the people whom we were fighting on behalf of. One of the main reasons why we had to enter into unity was that we sought an end to the suffering and killing of the people of Matabeleland by the Fifth Brigade. It was like a forced agreement because some of the leaders in ZAPU had been thrown in jail and the only way their freedom was to be sought was through their agreement to sign the Unity Accord. To a larger extent, unity was achieved in an unbalanced and forced manner, given that the government had failed to crush the dissident activities that were spreading all over the Matabeleland region. Even the appointment of cabinet ministers is still an issue up to this day. We had hoped there would be balance in the appointments but we have realised that most of the young men from the ZAPU side are appointed only as deputies, which raises the question whether they are incapable of performing the same duties performed by their ministerial colleagues from ZANU-PF. We need to revisit this Unity Accord and put right those disparities that have been pointed out by the people because this is a people’s party (*The Zimbabwe Times*, 24 December 2007).

The Unity Accord suffered a major blow when ZANU-PF failed to win elections in Matabeleland province after the death of Nkomo. But it should be noted that the death of Nkomo coincided with the formation of a formidable opposition party in the form of the MDC. From the 2000 parliamentary elections going forward, Matabeleland became a stronghold of the opposition. Interviewee 25M2 stated that “no one in this community wants to vote ZANU-PF because of its legacy of *Gukurahundi* and the fake unity which has only worked for them. Those who may vote ZANU-PF do that out of fear and not support for the party”. After losing the 2000 parliamentary elections on a ZANU-PF ticket, Dumiso Dabengwa stated that:

The people have rejected us not only as candidates, but also as the ruling party ZANU-PF now. The reason is that since the signing of the Unity Accord in December 1987, the people of Bulawayo feel they have not gained anything. The people have been saying what is the use of supporting ZANU-PF and its candidates and that is their message (*The Sunday Mail*, 2 July 2000).

In later years, Dabengwa led a campaign for ex-ZAPU members to break away from ZANU-PF and revive ZAPU. On 16 May 2009, the disgruntled ex-ZAPU leaders (who included Thenjiwe Lesabe, Cyril Ndebele, and Dumiso Dabengwa) ratified the decision to withdraw from ZANU-PF and the Unity Accord. This was followed by the re-establishment of ZAPU. However, many of the high-ranking former PF-ZAPU leaders such as Phelekezela Mphoko (former Vice President), Simon

⁴¹ This was a radical pressure group which opened debates on the *Gukurahundi* atrocities and called for accountability. The group disintegrated after the death of its founder (Ndlovu-Gatsheni: 2011).

Khaya Moyo, Sithembiso Nyoni, Angeline Masuku, and Kembo Mohadi remained in ZANU-PF. Although the revived ZAPU has struggled to mobilise significant support, its formation has undermined the Unity Accord.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Using the case study of the Matobo community, this chapter has endeavored to explore the relationship between the Unity Accord and reconciliation. The major argument which is made in this chapter is that the Unity Accord was successful in ending the violence in Matabeleland but it failed to foster healing and reconciliation not only because it took a top-down approach to reconciliation, but because strictly speaking, it was not a reconciliation project. Its primary interest was to end the violence in Matabeleland and Midlands and to “swallow” PF-ZAPU with a view to establish a constitutional one-party state. The accord therefore failed to consider the need to implement post-conflict reconciliation interventions.

As a result, it failed to address key faces of reconciliation such as institutional reforms, economic and political inclusion of affected communities, acknowledgement and truth telling, apologies, memorialisation of the conflict, exhumations and reburial of victims, and reparations. Instead, it promoted a culture of violence and impunity, denial, exclusion, and domination. This has caused the perception among the affected communities and the Ndebele speaking people in general that the government and the Shona resent them. This witnessed the emergence of Ndebele nationalism which is characterised by radical social movements, some of which have sought the complete secession of Matabeleland and Midlands from Zimbabwe. Three decades after the signing of the Unity Accord, affected communities are still struggling to close the dark chapter of *Gukurahundi* and move on. The Unity Accord therefore failed to address the reconciliation needs of the affected communities in particular and the nation in general. The signature argument is that the Unity Accord was a political agenda with a veneer of reconciliation.

CHAPTER 6: RECONCILIATION UNDER THE ORGAN FOR NATIONAL HEALING, RECONCILIATION AND INTEGRATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE BIKITA EAST AND BIKITA WEST COMMUNITIES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Using the case study of the Matobo community, the previous chapter examines the relationship between the Unity Accord and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. It highlights the successes and shortcomings of the Unity Accord in the search for national healing and reconciliation. The establishment of the Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation, and Integration (hereafter the ONHRI or the Organ) during the Government of National Unity (GNU) was the first state-led reconciliation process after the Unity Accord. Like the Unity Accord, the ONHRI was established in 2009 as a result of negotiations between belligerent and antagonistic political parties. The former was established as a result of protracted negotiations between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU during the *Gukurahundi* atrocities while the latter was established as a result of negotiations between ZANU-PF, the MDC which is led by Morgan Tsvangirai (MDC-T), and the small MDC formation which was led by Arthur Mutambara but is now being led by Welshman Ncube (MDC-M).

The circumstances which led to the establishment of the ONHRI included the violence, intolerance, and polarisation which characterised the Zimbabwean political system, especially from 2000 going forward and particularly the “curse” of the 27 June 2008 presidential run-off elections. The major difference between these two “reconciliation projects” is that the parties which negotiated the Unity Accord formed a merger while the parties which negotiated the ONHRI retained their distinct identities. As a result, the Unity Accord was more of a durable arrangement while the ONHRI was a temporary arrangement. The major similarities between them are that they took a top-down approach to reconciliation and they were primarily driven by political interests, considerations, and expediency. This affected the efficacy and credibility of these interventions and made it difficult for them to mobilise the confidence of stakeholders.

Using the case studies of the Bikita East and Bikita West communities, this chapter examines the relationship between reconciliation and the ONHRI. Its primary objective is to establish the successes and shortcomings of the ONHRI in the search for healing and reconciliation. The Bikita East and West communities are located in Masvingo province. In terms of primary data, a focus group discussion which involved participants from both of these communities was conducted at Mapari Lodge in Bikita East on Sunday 6 May 2017 and ten individual interviews were conducted in both communities from 7 to 14 May 2017.

In terms of its outline, the chapter starts by giving a background to the establishment of the ONHRI. This background enables the study to establish the political context in which the ONHRI was formed and operated and how this context impacted on its work. The study proceeds to examine the politically motivated violations which were suffered by the people in Bikita East and Bikita West communities from 2000 going forward. Doing this, it is possible to establish the nature, scope, and severity of the violations so as to explain the necessity of healing and reconciliation in these communities. The chapter proceeds to establish the reconciliation needs of these communities. This enables the study to critique the ONHRI’s interventions as far as addressing these reconciliation needs was concerned.

The chapter concludes with examining the reasons why the ONHRI failed to meet the reconciliation needs of the Bikita East and West constituencies. The major argument which is made in this chapter is that the ONHRI failed to meet the reconciliation needs of the aforesaid communities in particular

and the nation in general because of a myriad weaknesses and shortcomings which were both internal and external to it. Internal factors included that its mandate was amorphous; it was poorly structured; it lacked the necessary human, material and technical resources; and that it took an elitist, top-down approach in which it focused on addressing the needs of the nation at the macro or national level while marginalising grassroots communities and civil society. The external factors included that it was characterised by antagonism because of the diverse and sometimes colliding political interests of the principals to the Global Political Agreement (GPA) and that it conducted its work in a political atmosphere which was characterised by continuities in the cultures of violence, intolerance, and impunity because the GPA had failed to implement institutional reforms.

6.2 BACKGROUND TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ONHRI

ZANU-PF started to face strong electoral competition in 2000 from the opposition MDC which had been formed in 1999. However, the elections were characterised by violence and accusations of vote rigging. On 29 March 2008, Zimbabwe conducted parliamentary, presidential, senatorial, and local council elections simultaneously in accordance with the newly enacted constitutional amendment number 18. The elections were preceded by the narrow but enabling opening up of the political space as a result of mediation efforts by the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Following widespread criticism of state-sanctioned violence against the opposition and civil society leaders, particularly the 11 March 2007 attacks following a “prayer meeting” which had been organised by the Save Zimbabwe Campaign (Human Rights Watch 2007, Solidarity Peace Trust 2007), SADC appointed former South African president Thabo Mbeki to facilitate negotiations between ZANU-PF and the opposition. Considering the controversy and polarisation which had characterised elections and state politics in Zimbabwe, the mediation process sought to ensure that the antagonistic parties mutually establish and implement a roadmap which would enable the conduct of free and fair elections.

The negotiations focused on issues such as the adoption of a new constitution; amending of legislation such as the Electoral Act, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Act, the Broadcasting Services Act, POSA, and AIPPA; calling for the lifting of sanctions; eliminating politically motivated violence; promoting respect for human rights; and Zimbabwe’s full compliance with the SADC Principles and Guidelines on Democratic Elections. One of the most significant achievements of the mediation process was the amendment of section 64(1) (e) of the Electoral Act to require the presiding officers to publicly display electoral results outside each polling station before sending them to constituency election officers. This allowed the opposition to tally the votes as the results emerged. For opposition supporters, this was an encouraging development because it “demystified” the tallying of votes by enabling voters to check the outcome at their and other polling stations. Coupled with other reforms such as voting in one day, the introduction of transparent ballot boxes, and superficial reforms of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission with a view to enhance its independence; this restored significant voter confidence in electoral politics.

In the parliamentary elections, the MDC-T won 99 seats, ZANU-PF won 97 seats while MDC-M won 10 seats. In the presidential election, Morgan Tsvangirai obtained 47.9%, Robert Mugabe 43.2%, Simba Makoni 8.3% while Langton Towungana got 0.6% (ZEC, 2008). This was the first time that ZANU-PF lost the majority of parliamentary seats to the opposition. Because no candidate received a majority of the votes in the presidential election, a run-off election was to be conducted. 27 June 2008 was set as the date for the run-off. However, the pre-election period was characterised by widespread violence and intimidation which made it difficult for the elections to be conducted (*The Newsday*, 4 June 2008; *The Zimbabwe Independent*, 11 June 2008).

As a result, Morgan Tsvangirai withdrew his candidature immediately before the elections. In his letter to ZEC dated 25 June 2008, Tsvangirai cited the partiality of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC); the disfranchisement of MDC supporters; the party's inability to campaign in rural areas because of violence; (the MDC claimed that at least 86 of its supporters had been killed; 10, 000 homes had been destroyed; 200, 000 people had been displaced and 10, 000 had sustained injuries) the threats of war made by Mugabe and ZANU-PF; the involvement of security forces in the campaign of terror; the MDC's lack of access to the media; and the banning and disruption of its rallies across the country as reasons for his withdrawal (Tofa 2013).

The run-off was conducted despite Tsvangirai's withdrawal. Although ZANU-PF emerged "victorious", the "victory" turned into a pyrrhic victory because it created a crisis of legitimacy, acceptance, and efficacy (Masunungure 2009). Economically, the country was experiencing an unprecedented economic decline which was characterised by galloping inflation, shortage of basic commodities, closing down of industries, high level of unemployment, and widespread poverty and hopelessness. ZANU-PF patently exhibited the inability to deal with these daunting challenges. Politically, the country was characterised by entrenched polarisation, intolerance, divisions, and conflict as a result of the violence which characterised the "election". After the announcement of the results and the rushed inauguration of Mugabe, secret talks began to take place between ZANU-PF and the two MDC formations. The talks were facilitated by former South Africa President Thabo Mbeki as a continuation of SADC's mediation efforts (*The Herald*, 4 July 2008; *The Newsday* 10 July 2008).

This culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between ZANU-PF and the two MDC formations on 21 July 2008. The MoU was to form the basis for formal talks between the parties with a view to establish the framework of an inclusive government. The parties agreed that the talks would be completed within three weeks of signing of the MoU. The MoU was based on the "shared" understanding that the only way to extricate Zimbabwe from the economic, social, and political crisis was to form an all-inclusive government. A series of meetings were held and after protracted negotiations, the parties signed the Global Political Agreement (GPA) on 15 September 2008.

In January 2009, constitutional amendment No. 19 was passed in order to give effect to the GPA. The unity government was finally formed on 11 February 2009. In accordance with the GPA, Morgan Tsvangirai was appointed prime minister while Thokozani Khupe (MDC-T deputy president) and Arthur Mutambara of the minor MDC formation were appointed deputy prime ministers. The parties had different and sometimes colliding interests for entering into the GPA. The primary purpose of the GPA was to restore economic stability and growth and to implement democratic reforms which would ensure the conduct of free and fair elections. The "Declaration of Commitment" in the GPA stated that "the parties hereby declare and agree to work together to create a genuine, viable, permanent, sustainable and nationally acceptable solution to the Zimbabwe situation... with the aims of resolving once and for all the current political and economic situations and charting a new political direction for the country" (The Global Political Agreement, 2008: 1).

The specific effort towards national healing and reconciliation during the GNU was the creation of the ONHRI in 2009. Its creation was vaguely provided for in Article VII (c) of the GPA which stated that the parties hereby agree that the new government:

Shall give consideration to the setting up of a mechanism to properly advise on what measures might be necessary and practicable to achieve national healing, cohesion and unity in respect of victims of pre- and post-independence political conflicts (The Global Political Agreement, 2009).

It is not clear why ZANU-PF agreed to the establishment of the ONHRI. However, it is possible that opposition negotiators negotiated the establishment of the Organ because scores of opposition supporters had suffered extensive violence, not only in the run-up to the June Presidential run-off election, but from the 2000 election. It appears that ZANU-PF reluctantly agreed to the establishment of the Organ because throughout the Organ's work, the government demonstrated a lack of commitment to support it. In fact, ZANU-PF supporters occasionally disrupted the Organ's activities. The Organ had no clearly stated objectives. According to Sekai Holland (2009: 1), the Organ primarily sought to achieve two objectives which were:

- To create a just, tolerant, peaceful, safe, secure, stable and prosperous society where individuals are free to live normal productive lives without fear of violence, intimidation, kidnappings and disappearances, unjustified arrests and discrimination and in which fundamental human rights of all are fully respected.
- To establish a culture of zero tolerance for political violence, all forms of abuse both physical and mental, impunity, intolerance and discrimination and to ensure that the survivors are protected against further victimization and retribution, that perpetrators are dealt with fairly under the law and that the law enforcement agencies fulfill their obligation to protect all Zimbabweans against political violence and all forms of violence in the future.

Throughout its life, the GNU was characterised by controversy. The parties agreed that ZANU-PF would be allocated 14 ministries, MDC-T 13 ministries, and MDC-M 3 ministries. MDC-T was dissatisfied with the allocation of the ministries because Mugabe allocated all the powerful ministries such as Finance; Defence; Home Affairs; Land, Agriculture and Resettlement; Foreign Affairs; Justice and Legal Affairs; and Media, Information and Publicity to ZANU-PF. The MDC believed that it had been allocated ministries whose primary role was to restore the economy. The MDC also accused ZANU-PF of renegeing on the implementation of GPA reforms. The argument which is made in this study is that the ONHRI was undermined by the political environment in which it operated.

6.3 THE NATURE OF VIOLATIONS IN BIKITA EAST AND WEST

This section explores the nature, scope, and severity of the violations which were suffered by the Bikita East and West communities with a focus on the period 2000 to 2008. This period is covered because it was characterised by the commission of widespread politically motivated violence, not only in Bikita East and West communities, but in many areas across the country. Establishing the violations which were suffered in Bikita East and West helps to establish the need for reconciliation processes in these communities. The information which was collated through interviews, a focus group discussion, and secondary sources indicates that from 2000 to 2008, the Bikita East and Bikita West communities experienced a high level of politically motivated violence. The violence was characterised by enforced disappearances; assaults; torture; killings; breaking of limbs; gouging out of eyes; shootings; confiscation or destruction of property; and burning of entire homesteads. The instruments which were mainly used to perpetrate violence included logs, sjamboks, machetes, steel rods, knobkerries, knives, light weapons, improvised petrol bombs, and chains⁴².

⁴² These violations and the methods which were used to commit them were frequently mentioned during the focus group discussion which was conducted on 6 May 2017 and individual interviews which were conducted from 7 to 14 May 2017.

The individuals who were alleged to be the main perpetrators or instigators of violence included the late Chenjerai Hunzvi (who was the leader of war veterans), the late Boarder Gezi (who was the Minister of Youth and Employment Creation), Joseph Chinotimba (incumbent ZANU-PF Buhera South parliamentarian who was influential during the invasions of white-owned farms from 2000), Francis Zimuto (notoriously known as black Jesus), Elias Musakwa, Chamunorwa Taruona, Chikohora, Phillip Dhliwayo, Blessing Chinondiwana, Taguta, Nyikavaranda, Nobert Ndaarombe (the incumbent ZANU-PF Masvingo Provincial Youth Chairperson), Kenneth Matimba (incumbent ZANU-PF parliamentarian for Bikita East), Christen Mashanda, Philip Ticharava, and Jabulani Sibanda (former war veterans leader)⁴³. The interviewees stated that groups which perpetrated violence included war veterans; the ZANU-PF youth militia; traditional leaders; and state security forces, especially high ranking people from the army.

Bikita West is one of the hot spots of political violence in Masvingo province. It was one of the first rural constituencies to boldly vote for the opposition in the 2000 parliamentary elections. The election was won by Munyaradzi Mutongi who contested on the ticket of the MDC. During the 2000 elections, rural areas were engulfed by widespread political violence to the degree that many of them were declared “no-go” areas for the opposition. Focus group participant 6M1 stated that in 2000, Bikita West experienced political violence for the first time since independence and that the violence was characterised by beatings, torture, burning of homesteads, enforced disappearances, and displacement of opposition supporters. Interviewee 14M3 stated that in Maregere area (Bikita West) residents who were suspected or known opposition supporters had to avoid visiting the local shopping centre because of violence, intimidation and coercion.

In 2001, Bikita West conducted one of the most violent by-elections in the history of the country. The by-election was conducted following the death of Munyaradzi Mutongi. Interviewees stated that ZANU-PF took the by-election as an “opportunity” to “teach” voters that voting for the opposition, as they had done in 2000, was “treasonous”. Retired Colonel Claudius Makova, who contested the by-election on a ZANU-PF ticket, conducted a campaign of terror which was intended to make sure that the voters would “vote right”⁴⁴. Focus group participant 6M3 stated that during the 2001 by-election, “Bikita West was turned into a zone of war. ZANU-PF wanted all opposition supporters to repent and vote its candidate. The only way to achieve this was to use violence. *Vamwe vakauraiwa vamwe vakanyangarika*” (some people were killed while others disappeared).

Torture “bases” were established by ZANU-PF youth across Bikita West and the notorious ones were located at Maregere shopping center, Nyika growth point, Bikita Fashu secondary school, and Majembere grounds⁴⁵. Interviewees stated that suspected and known opposition supporters were abducted and tortured and that some of the victims were never seen again. Research conducted for this study could not establish the number of people who disappeared. Makova went on to win the by-election. Another by election was conducted in Bikita West on 21 January 2017. The circumstances which led to the conduct of this election was that the constituency fell vacant after Munyaradzi Kereke, who had won the seat in the 2013 elections, was later convicted of rape and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.

The elections were contested by six candidates who were Kudakwashe Gopo of the Zimbabwe People First (ZimPF), Beauty Chabaya of ZANU-PF, Madock Chivasa of the National

⁴³ The names of these individuals were mentioned during interviews and the focus group discussion. See also a report by the Heal Zimbabwe Trust, 2017.

⁴⁴ Interviewees generally stated that Makova is a “naturally” violent character.

⁴⁵ Heal Zimbabwe Trust (2013). This was also mentioned during interviews and the focus group discussion.

Constitutional Assembly, Tanyaradzwa Makumbo of PDZ, Heya Shoko (independent) and Innocent Muzvimbiri (independent). In the run-up to the by-election, ZANU-PF's Masvingo Provincial Affairs Minister, the late Shuvai Mahofa, made reference to the disappearances which took place in the constituency during the 2001 by-election. Her intention was to warn the voters that they would relive the 2001 violence should they vote the opposition. While addressing a ZANU-PF rally at Gwindingwi primary school in January 2017, Mahofa stated that:

Haa, munozviziva, muno hamusi mekutamba namo (you know it, this constituency is not a place of playing funny games). *Kune vamwe vakatsakatika muno umu gore riya, munoriziva. Handei tinovhota zvakana* (there are people who died in this constituency in that year, you know it. Let us go and vote rightly---*The Newsday*, 7 January 2017).

During the by-election, Madock Chivasa, who contested as a candidate for the National Constitutional Assembly and his manager, Thomas Mudzamiri, were attacked by the ZANU-PF youth militia and they sustained serious injuries. The wave of violence which engulfed this community resulted in some civil society organisations and citizens' movements such as *Tajamuka*⁴⁶ calling for the election to be called off. However, the election proceeded and Beauty Chabaya won by a huge margin. Some focus group participants stated that Chabaya won the by-election not because of popular support but because the "ghost" of the 2001 and 2008 violence was still embedded in the constituency⁴⁷.

Bikita West also experienced extensive violence since the 2000 parliamentary elections. Focus group participant 6M7 stated that during the 2000 elections, all villagers in Mandadzaka and Chikuku areas were forced to buy ZANU-PF party cards in order to avoid being beaten and tortured by ZANU-PF youth. Interviewee 14M3 stated that ZANU-PF youth embarked on a door-to-door campaign of terror in which they targeted those people who were in possession of opposition campaign materials such as t-shirts, hats and whistles. The interviewee further stated that the youths also visited schools and beat, harassed and tortured teachers who were known or suspected opposition supporters and that they turned some schools into their operational bases. According to interviewee 14M1, the youth were so ruthless that "they even disciplined their own parents, grand parents and grand grand parents". The interviewee further stated that the youth established *de facto* road blocks in order to search passing vehicles and that those who were found in possession of opposition campaign materials were tortured, harassed, detained and sometimes their vehicles were stoned or burnt.

Apart from the violence which was committed in 2000 and in 2001, Bikita East and West experienced the worst forms of violence in 2008. During the 29 March 2008 elections, both Bikita West and Bikita East constituencies were won by the opposition MDC. Bikita East was won by Mr Edmore Marima while Bikita West was won by Mr Heya Shoko. The opposition's victory in these constituencies enraged ZANU-PF and according to some interviewees, the constituencies were among those areas targeted under a brutal campaign of terror code-named operation *Makavhotera Papi?* (Where did you place your vote during the March 29 election?). The operation was conducted in the run-up to the 27 June presidential run-off elections in order to "punish" those who had voted for the opposition during the 29 March election. It therefore targeted those areas where the opposition had won, particularly with an overwhelming majority. According to interviewees, in

⁴⁶ *Tajamuka* is a "citizens' movement" which is led by Promise Mkwanzani. Its objectives are to stand up against authoritarian rule by ZANU-PF through the mobilisation of citizens to strike, demonstrate, stay away, and vote ZANU-PF out of power.

⁴⁷ This was mentioned during the Mapari focus group discussion which was conducted on 6 May 2017.

some gruesome cases, the perpetrators would hack the arms of their victims either from the wrist (what they called ‘long sleeve’) or from the elbow (what they called ‘short sleeve’). The “curse” of 27 June remains the darkest chapter in the history of electoral politics in Zimbabwe. Interviewees stated that in both Bikita East and West; homesteads, business premises, and livelihoods of opposition supporters were destroyed or confiscated; limbs were hacked; eyes were gouged out; and scores of opposition supporters were maimed; tortured; raped; displaced or killed.

The 27 June run-off was an election whose “terror factor” broke the spirits, the euphoria, promises, expectations, and hearts and minds of opposition supporters. In fact, the MDC’s structures and support base were forced to retreat underground. According to the CCJP (2009), sixty four homesteads were burnt in Bikita alone. Focus group participant 6M6 stated that Mapari Rest Resorts (which also trade as Kupuka Hospitality) was burnt down by ZANU-PF youth and suspected state security agents. The resorts were used to host opposition supporters who were fleeing violence from surrounding communities such as Buhera and Bikita. In Buhera, it was alleged that Joseph Chinotimba, who had contested the Buhera South constituency under a ZANU-PF ticket but lost to the opposition MDC, was conducting a violent campaign to “re-educate” voters who had “voted wrong”⁴⁸.

During interviews in the Maregere community, interviewees stated that many homesteads and a business premises at Maregere shopping centre were burnt down by known and suspected ZANU-PF youth. Interviewees also stated that there were cases of people who died as a result of injuries sustained from assaults by ZANU-PF elements. Many victims fled the community and sought refuge in urban and other areas where the situation was relatively calm. Interviewee 9M1 stated that the late Mr. Murimba (whose homestead is situated close to Maregere shopping center) was severely assaulted by ZANU-PF youth many times during the course of his activism. In some cases, he sought refuge in Masvingo urban and other areas because ZANU-PF youth often visited his homestead looking for him. The interviewee further stated that Mr. Murimba’s late son, Admire Murimba, also fled the Maregere community because of repeated assaults from ZANU-PF youth. The interviewee blamed the opposition for what he regards as its failure to protect its support base.

During the interviews which were conducted in Gedhe Maranganyika⁴⁹, interviewee 11M1 told the researcher that the entire homestead of a particular villager (the name was provided but it is withheld for ethical reasons) was burnt to ashes by ZANU-PF youth. The interviewee further stated that the victim was unable to recover anything and that he fled to Harare for safety. During interviews in Nyika (Bikita West), interviewees stated that many homesteads were burnt down and that some of the alleged perpetrators were Claudius Makova, Kenneth Matimba, Elias Musakwa, Nobert Ndaarombe, and Taguta⁵⁰. During the interviews which were conducted in Mandadzaka (Bikita East), interviewees stated that the Matsika Training Centre, surrounding schools, and other places were turned into torture and interrogation centers by ZANU-PF youth and war veterans with the cooperation of some traditional leaders⁵¹. Interviewees further stated that villagers were forced to attend meetings at these “bases”, especially during the night and that opposition supporters were forced to supply food to the youth as part of their “punishment”.

Interviewees further stated that in some cases, opposition supporters were tortured during these meetings as a “warning” to other opposition/potential opposition supporters. They were also forced

⁴⁸ This was stated by some interviewees from village “A” in Manyuchi community, Bikita East. Interviews in this community were conducted on 7 and 8 May 2017.

⁴⁹ Interviews in this community were conducted on 11 May 2017.

⁵⁰ Interviews in this community were conducted on 12 May 2017.

⁵¹ Interviews in this community were conducted on 13 and 14 May 2017.

to “repent and convert”. The torture and beatings were accompanied by the chanting of ZANU-PF slogans, the denunciation of the opposition as the enemy, and the singing of revolutionary songs which were sung during the liberation struggle. These included songs such as “*vana mukoma vanorova, vanorova nematanda, vana mukoma vanouraya*” (comrades can beat, they can beat with logs, comrades can kill). The interviewees stated that many villagers were forced to flee and hide in mountains, forests, and along river banks. A 69 year old interviewee (13M1) who stated that she was a victim of the 2008 violence showed the researcher some permanent injuries which she sustained from assaults allegedly by ZANU-PF youth. She further stated that in her community, there are people who lost their limbs, and their senses of hearing and sight because of torture. Speaking about her personal experience, interviewee 14M1 said that “I lost my cattle, goats, crops, food, radio, a television set, a solar panel, clothes, cash, kitchen utensils, land, farming equipment, and everything during the violence in 2008”. Interviewee 14M2 stated that her farming land was taken away by the headman on accusations that she was an MDC supporter. During the course of the GNU, some victims made efforts to claim their confiscated or looted belongings. In some cases, these efforts were successful or partially successful, while in other cases, they worsened relations and caused further violence.

In both Bikita West and East communities, schools were forced to close as the ZANU-PF youth embarked on a campaign of terror against teachers who were known or perceived supporters of the opposition. The youth were rewarded with alcohol and cash. Interviewees in Mandadzaka stated that Rupare secondary school was closed in 2000 and in 2008 as a result of violence and that some teachers (some names were provided but they are withdrawn for ethical reasons) were assaulted by ZANU-PF youth⁵². A notorious torture “base” was established at Chikuku shopping center. In the run-up to the 27 June 2008 presidential run-off elections, ZANU-PF youth confiscated and destroyed or withheld the identity cards of opposition supporters so that they would not be able to cast their votes in the election. The youth also embarked on a door to door campaign of terror in which they demanded that everyone be in possession of ZANU-PF party cards. Those who were found in possession of opposition materials such as hats, T-shirts, cards, bags, and whistles were assaulted. The Roman Catholic Church offered refuge to victims of violence.

Those people who were the MDC’s polling agents during the 2008 elections were assaulted and some were killed. For example, interviewee 13M1 stated that Clemence Makombo was killed in Bikita East by alleged ZANU-PF youth for his role as the MDC’s polling agent. Scores of people were killed between 2000 and 2008. These include Joseph Madondo who was killed by ZANU-PF youth in Bikita in June 2008, Manyame Ropafadzo who was killed in Bikita West on 6 January 2001, Mazambara Maribha who was killed by ZANU-PF youth in Bikita in June 2008, Mhete Leonard who was killed by ZANU-PF youths in Bikita East on 9 June 2008, Mudzingwa Mabiko who died because of the injuries sustained when he was assaulted by ZANU-PF youth in Bikita East in June 2008, Chatunga Richard from Bikita East who was killed on 20 January 2002, Maphosa Richard from Bikita East who was killed on 20 January 2002, Rukuni Thadeus (who was an MDC parliamentary candidate for Bikita East during the 2000 elections) who was beaten to death in Bikita East on 29 May 2000, Ziweni Osbon who was shot and killed in Bikita West on 18 August 2001, and Edwin Chingami (who was an MDC election observer in 2008) who was killed in Bikita West on 29 August 2009 (The Movement for Democratic Change, 2012; The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, 2002; The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, 2001. Some of these people were also mentioned during the interviews and focus group discussion).

⁵² This was stated by the interviewees.

Apart from political violence, opposition supporters were also denied access to food aid, farming inputs, and participation in food for work and other development-related projects⁵³. They were not allowed to buy maize from the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) which is located a few kilometers from Nyika growth point. They were told to choose between supporting ZANU-PF and obtaining food aid or supporting the opposition and dying of hunger. Food aid distributed by non-governmental organisations such as Care International was also politicised by traditional leaders⁵⁴. In ward 9 in Bikita West constituency, interviewees stated that former ZANU-PF District Chairperson, Claudius Nhongonhema, has been involved in intimidating and refusing opposition supporters access to food aid.

6.4 THE RECONCILIATION NEEDS IN BIKITA EAST AND WEST

In order to establish whether the ONHRI was able to foster healing and reconciliation in the Bikita East and Bikita West communities, it is important to examine the reconciliation needs of these communities before the establishment of the ONHRI. This is the objective of this section. The section is based on the information collated during the interviews and the focus group discussion. It notes that the reconciliation needs of the Bikita East and Bikita West communities are largely similar to those of the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community which are discussed in chapter four. The section discusses reconciliation needs such as reparations; acknowledgement, apologies and truth telling; the need to de-politicize the security establishment and traditional leadership structures; and the identification and prosecution of the perpetrators of violence.

6.4.1 *Reparations*

Interviewees emphasised that in order to facilitate healing and reconciliation, it is important for perpetrators to compensate victims in respect of those belongings which were torched or confiscated. They also said that in respect of those victims who were maimed, it is important for the government to offer them medical and material assistance. Most of the interviewees expressed the view that restitution is important in the rebuilding and transformation of relations between victims and perpetrators.

6.4.2 *Acknowledgement, apologies, and truth-telling*

Interviewees stated that the perpetrators and instigators of violence should apologise, acknowledge the crimes, and tell the truth about the violence which they committed. For example, interviewee 8M1 stated that he finds it difficult to forgive the people who burnt the homestead and confiscating livestock of his brother. He state that he can forgive them on condition that they apologise or at least show that they are sorry for what they did. Interviewees also said that it is important to tell the truth about the people who disappeared. Interviewee 9M1 from the Maregere community stated that community members suspect that some of those victims who disappeared were abducted and taken to Gonarezhou National Park where they were tortured and killed.

6.4.3 *De-politicisation of security institutions and traditional leadership structures*

Some interviewees expressed the concern that violence and other forms of sanctions against opposition supporters have been facilitated by the politicisation of traditional leadership structures, especially village heads; and the security sector, especially the army, police, and CIO. They

⁵³ This was mentioned during interviews in both communities.

⁵⁴ This was frequently mentioned by interviewees from both communities.

therefore stated that healing and reconciliation cannot be possible as long as these structures remain partisan and continue to be involved in the perpetration of violence.

6.4.4 Prosecution of perpetrators

Some interviewees stated that in order to promote healing and reconciliation, perpetrators of grievous human rights abuses should be prosecuted so as to send the message that violence and impunity have no place in the Zimbabwean society. They further stated that perpetrators continue to walk free and even threaten opposition supporters with further violence. Some interviewees expressed the pessimistic view that no meaningful reconciliation can take place as long as ZANU-PF remains in power because of its cultures of violence, intimidation, and impunity.

6.5 WHY THE ONHRI FAILED

The argument which is made in this study is that as far as the needs of the Bikita West and Bikita East constituencies are concerned, the ONHRI was a complete failure. Almost all of the people who participated in the interviews were not aware that this organ existed and operated during the GNU period. Having examined the abuses which were suffered by these communities as well as their reconciliation needs, the discussion turns to why the ONHRI failed in the reconciliation agenda. It examines how variables such as access to resources, its structure, its mandate, the approach it took in executing its work, and the political environment in which it operated made it difficult for the ONHRI to meet the healing and reconciliation needs of the Bikita East and West communities.

6.5.1 Unclear mandate

It is clear from Article VII of the GPA that the mandate of the ONHRI was not enunciated from the beginning. In this context, issues such as defining its functions and how it would be structured were left to be the responsibility of its leadership. When the Organ was established, there were many challenges, including the need to establish its objectives and the mechanisms for achieving them. Sekai Holland (2009: 1) states that when the Organ was established “there were no offices, no staff, no equipment, no work plan, and no funds”. Its leaders were to propose a policy framework which would be presented before the Council of Ministers for debate and approval (Machakanja 2010: 8). This lack of clarity caused confusion with regard to its structure as well as the scope and nature of its mandate, including whether it was to assume an advisory or implementation role (Mbire 2011: 21, Murambadoro and Wielenga 2015: 36). Murambadoro and Wielenga (2015: 37) states that the ONHRI was “critiqued for being poorly structured and having a confused mandate that made it difficult for the parties involved to set up applicable guidelines for addressing the past”.

A reading of Article VII shows that the intended mandate of the ONHRI was vague and too broad in that it was expected to deal with pre-independence conflicts and post-independence conflicts such as *Gukurahundi* and the politically motivated violence of 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008. While the idea of including pre-independence conflicts in the reconciliation agenda seemed to show the commitment by the government to take a comprehensive approach; in reality, it appears that the intention was to avoid a focus on specific post-independence conflicts. ZANU-PF was aware that such a focus would have increased the likelihood of it being made accountable for the violations. Given that the ONHRI had to last only during the course of the GNU, ZANU-PF knew that the term of the ONHRI would come to an end before it was able to make any significant progress in making the party’s leaders accountable. It can therefore be argued that during the GPA negotiations, the two MDC formations were unable to put enough pressure on ZANU-PF to ensure that Article VII was crafted in such a way as to ensure the implementation of effective, genuine and inclusive healing and reconciliation processes.

When the ONHRI was established, it mainly engaged political leaders with a view to raise awareness regarding their role in the fight against political violence. It also made some superficial consultations with civil society, the church, traditional leaders and Zimbabweans based in the diaspora on the mechanisms of implementing national healing and reconciliation. This was done through the conduct of experts and all stakeholders' conferences. The ONHRI also lacked guidelines on how to deal with the past, especially the *Gukurahundi* atrocities. As a result, it focused on promoting political reconciliation between political parties and failed to focus on divided communities and ethnic groups. The argument which is made in this study is that the lack of clarity with regards to the Organ's nature and mandate made it vulnerable to contestation and left room for the GPA parties to disagree on everything to do with the Organ.

6.5.2 Exclusion of the affected communities

Like previous reconciliation efforts, the ONHRI failed to attract legitimacy and confidence from grassroots communities because it adopted an elitist, top-down approach to reconciliation in which it failed to consult and engage those individuals and groups who were affected by violence. Discussions in various sections of this study have noted that it is important to actively include different stakeholders at different levels of society if reconciliation processes are to be successful. Interviewee 14M1 stated that "I wonder why the ONHRI disregarded the poor and marginalized us in its reconciliation efforts yet we are the people who are worst affected by violence". Sharing the same view, interviewee 12M1 also stated that the reconciliation interventions by the ONHRI were "conducted in hotels and not in the affected communities".

The interviewees were either unaware that the organ existed or they were aware that it existed but they were not aware of its work. The statement which was said by many interviewees was that *takangonzwa kuti kune vanhu vaitaura nezvekunyaradza nyika asi hatina kumbovaona munharaunda medu* (we just heard that there were people who were speaking about healing and reconciliation but we never saw them in our communities). Sekai Holland, who was one of the Ministers in charge of the ONHRI stated that the Organ adopted a two-pronged approach which it called in *Shona* "kutonhodza nyika, kutonhodza pfungwa" and in *Ndebele* "ukuthoba uMhlaba, sithobizinhliziyi zikaZulu" (cooling the country, cooling the minds). It can be seen that the approach focused not on individuals and communities but on the "national psyche" as an abstract entity.

As discussed in chapter two, Ignatieff (1998: 169) and Hamber and Wilson (2002: 37) argue that one of the main reasons why reconciliation processes have failed to heal individuals is that they have tended to assume that nations have collective psyches, post-traumatic stress disorder, conscience, identities and memories which can be healed as if they were individuals. Interestingly, focus group participant 6M4 stated that the Organ conducted its reconciliation processes "in wrong places, with wrong people". Some interviewees expressed the view that the Organ focused on seeking to be recognised, validated, and praised by SADC and the international community with a view to seek funding and other forms of support. For example, focus group participant 6M7 expressed the view that the Organ engaged SADC and the international community more than it engaged the people of Zimbabwe.

6.5.3 Colliding political interests of GPA parties

The argument made in this study is that the performance of the Organ should be examined within the broad context of the politics of the GNU. ZANU-PF and the MDC were motivated to enter into the GPA by different and sometimes conflicting political objectives which were bound to affect the work of the Organ. In justifying its decision to enter into the GNU, the MDC argued that:

The decision was made because the MDC cared for the people of Zimbabwe and had observed that the political, economic, and social conditions of the people were extremely desperate. The aim was to restore hope where despair ruled. The risk of being tainted was recognised but the party put the people first and formed the inclusive government with its erstwhile opponents (Election Manifesto of MDC-T, 2013: 3).

From the perspective of interviewees, the MDC entered into the GNU because: it hoped that the GNU would position it to implement electoral reforms; to break ZANU-PF's traditional rigging mechanisms and its stranglehold on state institutions; to gain trust, support and sympathy from state institutions; to gain experience in government; and to turn around the economy and prove that unlike ZANU-PF, it was able to deliver "a new Zimbabwe". However, some interviewees stated that there were some MDC leaders (such as Tendi Biti) and supporters who opposed the idea of entering into the GNU and that their objection was based on the fears that: the MDC might be "swallowed", infiltrated or outwitted by ZANU-PF; that it would be tainted by the perception that it was power hungry and unprincipled; that a "marriage of convenience" with ZANU-PF would betray its support base and the democratic gains and sacrifices which had been made since 2000; that ZANU-PF was untrustworthy and therefore difficult to work with; that the GNU would legitimise a violent and illegitimate regime; and that the GNU would save ZANU-PF *in extremis* by giving it the opportunity to re-group and re-strategise before the next elections.

In terms of ZANU-PF, interviewees stated that its reasons for entering into the GNU included that it wanted the time to reenergize, reunite and re-strategise following the factionalism which had undermined its performance in the March 2008 elections and to use the GNU to stabilise the economy and then claim the credit. The GPA was characterised by acrimony between the parties, with the MDC criticising ZANU-PF of negotiating and implementing GPA reforms in bad faith. Mugabe disregarded some of the rules governing the GPA. For example, he made appointments to key positions such as attorney general, central bank governor, court judges, provincial governors, and ambassadors without consulting the prime minister as required by the GPA. Mugabe justified his actions on the reasoning that the GPA had not nullified his powers under the constitution. Tsvangirai protested against the unilateral appointments.

The ONHRI was led by three Ministers of State from the three political parties which constituted the GPA. ZANU-PF was represented by its then Chairman John Nkomo, MDC-T was represented by Sekai Holland while MDC-M was represented by the late Gibson Sibanda and later by Moses Ndlovu. One of the major weaknesses of the ONHRI was that it was an inherently political entity which was established via negotiations. Some interviewees pointed out that it was difficult for the Organ to be trusted by the public because it was managed by representatives of political parties who were keen to protect and promote the interests of their parties. Focus group participant 6M5 stated that the Ministers who led the Organ could not do anything before they consulted their principals and that this disempowered them in the conduct of their work.

Interviewee 14M3 stated that it was difficult for the Organ to be effective because it composed of people who were coming from political parties whose major objective was to "outdo each other". Interviewee 7M1 stated that the GNU was a "hide and seek game" in which the interests of political parties were of more value than any other issues. Focus group participant 6M3 stated that "ZANU-PF and the MDC are like oil and water. During the GNU, ZANU-PF wanted to maintain its revolutionary principles while the MDC wanted to focus on issues of human rights, democracy and making those who committed violence accountable. It was obvious that the parties could not agree on many issues, including on reconciliation. ZANU-PF never wanted to talk about the killings of the Ndebele people in Matabeleland". Focus group participant 6M5 stated that it was not surprising that

the ONHRI failed because it consisted of people from political parties “which were always fighting each other”.

6.5.4 Continuities in the cultures of violence, intolerance, and impunity

Apart from the conflicting political interests of GPA parties, it is important to examine the broad political environment within which the ONHRI worked. The implementation of institutional reforms in order to eliminate intolerance, violence and polarisation and to promote democratic freedoms was one of the major objectives of the GNU. In Article 7.1 (d) of the GPA, the parties agreed that they “will strive to create an environment of tolerance and respect among Zimbabweans and that all citizens are treated with dignity and decency irrespective of age, gender, race, ethnicity, place of origin or political affiliation”. In Article 12.1 (a), the parties agreed “to work together in a manner which guarantees the full implementation and realisation of the right to freedom of association and assembly”. GPA parties also agreed that “state organs and institutions do not belong to any political party and should be impartial in the discharge of their duties” (Article 31). They agreed to take measures to ensure that state organs operate impartially, ethically and professionally. The argument made here is that if these objectives were attained, they would have created an environment which was conducive to the implementation of healing and reconciliation processes by the Organ.

However, there was a shared view among the interviewees that the GPA failed as far as the implementation of democratic reforms was concerned. Some interviewees attributed this failure to the reluctance by ZANU-PF to implement reforms and the opposition’s limited capacity to exert pressure on the former because of the unequal sharing of power in the GNU. Although Article XIII, 13.2 (b) of the GPA stated that the parties were to ensure that “all state organs and institutions strictly observe the principles of the rule of law and remain non-partisan and impartial”, some state organs such as the police and the army remained openly partisan. For example, on 27 May 2011, the then army commander brigadier-general Douglas Nyikayaramba stated that Tsvangirai was “a security threat” because he wanted to effect “an illegal regime change” in Zimbabwe (*The Newsday*, 7 July 2011). Nyikayaramba said that Mugabe should be allowed to be Zimbabwe’s life president, arguing that:

Why do you want to force him (Mugabe) to go? Where were you when he crossed into Mozambique and why didn’t you go? If you can change your father in your family, then we can do the same, but has anyone changed his or her father just because he is old? Until your father dies only then can you have a step father-that is that (*The Zimbabwe Independent*, 27 May-2 June 2011).

State security organs aggressively resisted the implementation of the reform provisions of the GPA. During the course of the inclusive government, the securocrats refused to salute Tsvangirai, blocked his attempts to interact with security institutions, and ridiculed him for demanding security sector reform on the reasoning that Zimbabwe has one of the most professional security forces in Africa (see Chitiyo, 2009). The MDC demanded a code of conduct for security forces, especially in respect of elections. However, this effort was not successful. In some cases, the security sector opposed the work of the ONHRI. It was therefore not surprising that violence and other forms of human rights abuses continued to be perpetrated during the course of the GNU.

For example, Moses Mzila-Ndlovu, who was a co-Minister for the ONHRI, was routinely jailed for making calls for the government to provide restitution to the victims of *Gukurahundi* massacres. Other people who called for accountability with regard to *Gukurahundi* such as Father Marko Mnkhandla were also jailed. During the course of the GNU, at least 30 people were abducted and scores more remained in arbitrary police detention where they were tortured (Machakanja, 2010: 5).

Such actions discredited and undermined the work of the ONHRI. In the context of on-going human rights abuses, it was difficult for the opposition to demand acknowledgement and redress of past atrocities, especially considering that it wanted to avoid any further fragility of the GNU. During the focus group discussion, some interviewees stated that during the GNU, violence and intimidation continued to take place in their communities and in various parts of the country and that this made it difficult for the Organ to conduct its activities. Some interviewees stated that there were cases in which the ZANU-PF youth militia (violently) disrupted the meetings of the ONHRI.

6.5.5 Continuities in the culture of denial

The ONHRI failed to break the culture of denial which has traditionally characterised reconciliation efforts in Zimbabwe. Some interviewees expressed the view that it was not possible for reconciliation efforts under the GNU to be successful because the government remained unwilling to take responsibility in respect of the violence which was committed. For example, focus group participant 6M5 stated that the first steps in any reconciliation efforts are to acknowledge the violations which were committed, accept responsibility for the violations, and officially apologise to the nation and the victims in particular. The participant further stated that none of these steps were taken. ZANU-PF never apologised or acknowledged responsibility for post-independence atrocities throughout the course of the ONHRI. In fact, the party tried as much as possible to silence any discussions about atrocities such as *Gukurahundi* and politically motivated violence. As a result, the ONHRI failed to recover the truth and to initiate or recommend reparations for victims of political violence, especially the *Gukurahundi* massacres. This culture of denial was evident in some of the texts of the GPA. For example, Article XVIII expressed concern over “the displacement of scores of people after the election of March 29, 2008 as a result of politically motivated violence”. It appears that the use of the term “displacement” was intended to avoid exposing the nature of the abuses which were committed such as torture, beatings, murder, maiming, and raping of opposition supporters.

6.6 CONCLUSION

It has emerged from this study that between 2000 and 2008, the Bikita East and Bikita West communities suffered atrocities which require the implementation of inclusive and compassionate healing and reconciliation processes. The ONHRI was established in 2009 by the GNU with a view to promote healing and reconciliation after a decade of politically inspired violence which polarised the country. During the course of the GNU, the ONHRI made some interventions which were intended to promote national healing and reconciliation. The Organ was dissolved in 2013 following the end of the GNU. In accordance with the provision in the 2013 constitution, the government has established the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC), to succeed the ONHRI.

The conclusion which is made in this study is that despite the establishment of the ONHRI, the Bikita East and Bikita West communities have continued to face dire reconciliation needs: relations have remained fractured; terror and threats of repetition have remained embedded; state security institutions and traditional leadership structures have remained partisan and perpetrators or instigators of political violence; the truth has remained untold; perpetrators have remained free, impenitent and willing to perpetrate further violence; access to food aid, development projects, and farming inputs has remained difficult for opposition supporters; no material or symbolic reparations have been made to victims; polarisation has remained embedded; those who were maimed due to violence are still struggling to move on with their lives; and those who needed psychiatric and other forms of treatment haven't received any assistance. Throughout the course of its existence, the ONHRI was never visible in these communities. It failed to mobilise, engage, and include grassroots

communities. It is therefore clear that the ONHRI failed to transform these communities as far as healing and reconciliation is concerned.

This failure was a result of variables which were both internal and external to the Organ which included that: it lacked the human, material, technical and other resources which were essential for its work; it was largely “hijacked” by political interests; the political environment in which it operated was characterised by continued violence, intolerance, and impunity; it failed to break the ZANU-PF culture of denial; it lacked a clear mandate from the beginning; it took a top-down approach in which it focused on the needs of the nation as an abstract entity and left the needs of individuals and communities on the periphery of its interventions, and it largely failed to engage civil society. The engagement of civil society would have made a significant contribution to the work of the Organ, especially in enabling it to include grassroots communities. It is against this background that the next chapter examines the role of civil society in reconciliation processes using the case study of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 7: CIVIL SOCIETY AND RECONCILIATION PROCESSES IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY OF THE CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Using the case study of the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community, chapter four examines the differences and interface between state-led and community-centered reconciliation processes. The previous chapter (chapter six) uses the case study of the Bikita East and Bikita West communities to examine reconciliation processes under the Government of National Unity's Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation, and Integration. Although these chapters are not dedicated to inquire into the role of civil society in reconciliation processes, one of the major arguments which are made in both of them is that reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe have failed because they have tended to be exclusionary, elite-based, politically negotiated, and that they have tended to take a top-down approach in which civil society and grassroots communities have not been meaningfully involved and engaged.

It is further argued in these chapters that it is important for civil society to participate in reconciliation processes if such processes are to mesh top-down and bottom-up mechanisms and to enhance their prospects of legitimacy, impartiality, and inclusivity. In chapter two, it is argued that civil society plays a critical role in facilitating the interface between top-down and bottom-up approaches to reconciliation and that compared to the state, it is more able to respond to the needs of individuals and communities which have been affected by violent conflict. The argument which is made in this chapter is that while the state has tended to take the top-down approach to reconciliation, civil society has facilitated bottom-up approaches to reconciliation.

It is against this background that this chapter examines the role of civil society in peace, healing, and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe using the case study of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJP). The CCJP was chosen because of its distinguished historical and contemporary contribution to peace, justice, and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. One of the major arguments in this chapter is that in the absence of inclusive, comprehensive, and meaningful state-led reconciliation processes, civil society can play an important role in advocating for healing and reconciliation in divided societies. Apart from the findings in this chapter, this view is also supported by the findings in chapter four in which some interviewees stated that civil society organisations such as the Heal Zimbabwe Trust have played a crucial role in facilitating healing and reconciliation in the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community.

It is further argued in this study that civil society has conducted extensive research which has been useful in exposing the truth about violence, human rights abuses, and conflict in Zimbabwe; especially in remote areas where it is difficult for violations to be exposed because of intimidation and poor or lack of access to the media. It is also argued that individuals and communities which were affected by violence have hardly had the much-needed opportunity to openly speak about their horrible experiences and their reconciliation needs through state-led reconciliation processes. The only time when the state attempted to do this was through the Chihambakwe Commission of Inquiry which was established in September 1983 to inquire into the *Gukurahundi* atrocities (CCJP and LRF, 1997: 8). However, the state never published its findings. It is civil society which has offered affected communities the forum to speak about their experiences and their views about what needs to be done in order to deal with a violent past⁵⁵.

⁵⁵ This view was generally expressed during the interviews which were conducted in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe, Matobo, and Bikita East and West communities.

However, it is noted in this study that interventions by civil society have been undermined by factors which are both internal and external to it. Internal factors include the shortage of resources, weak or lack of decisional autonomy, lack of/poor coordination and collaboration in the implementation of interventions, weak institutional capacity, and the tendency to get embedded in opposition party politics to pursue the “regime change agenda”. External factors include political violence, impunity, intolerance, polarisation, breakdown of the rule of law, and a political environment which is characterised by the repression of democratic freedoms. This chapter is divided into three sections.

The first section discusses the origins of the CCJP, how it is structured, its interventions and how it implements them, and the geographic areas in which it works. The second section examines the interventions of the CCJP during three distinct historical periods, that is, during the struggle for independence, from the attainment of independence in 1980-2000, and the post-2000 period. It also discusses the factors which influenced the nature and trajectory of its interventions. The third section uses the case study of the Masvingo Diocese in Nyika, Bikita West community. Ten interviews were conducted from 28 to 31 May 2017 in this area with a view to evaluate the interventions of the CCJP from the lived experiences and views of those local communities affected by its work. This enables the study’s evaluation to be evidence-based.

7.2 THE CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE IN ZIMBABWE: A BACKGROUND

The CCJP was founded in 1972 by the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishop’s Conference (CCJP and LRC, 1997). Its founding objective was to advocate for justice and peace, especially with regards to the war of liberation. The Commission works through the structures of the Roman Catholic Church. Its founding motto is that “if you want peace, work for justice” (Chingoroma, 2008: 135). The Commission has been involved in the propagation of human rights education; the conduct of research on institutionalised violence; monitoring, reporting, and documenting human rights violations; promoting a culture of tolerance for diversity; advocating for the enactment and impartial enforcement of just laws; and defending and assisting victims of human rights violations, including through mechanisms such as litigation. According to Hallencreutz (1988: 452-453) the CCJP’s objectives are:

To give visible witness to the churches’ concern for justice and peace, to inform the conscience of people on the social teachings of the church, to recommend reforms- both radical and intermittent- to social structures, and to investigate allegations of injustices and publish its findings.

The Commission’s interventions such as civic education, peace building, conflict management and resolution, research, human rights education, lobbying, and advocacy are predicated on the Social Teachings of the Church (STC). The STC include the dignity of every human being; respect for the sanctity of human life; the right of citizens (especially of the poor and marginalised) to actively and fully participate in the social, economic, cultural, and political activities of their country; the freedom of association; the promotion of the common good; the just and equitable sharing of natural resources (stewardship of creation); the elimination of injustice; and solidarity (CCJP, 2013: 3).

Structurally, the Commission consists of a national office which is headed by a secretariat. At the present moment, it has (arch) diocese offices in all provinces. It has structures from the village to the national level and this has enabled it to be “close to the people”. Unlike other civil society organisations, the CCJP has ensured that its interventions are visible in the most remote and

marginalised areas of the country. The organisation's (arch) diocese structures are illustrated in the table below:

(Arch) Diocese	Districts Covered
Archdiocese of Bulawayo	Bulilima, Mangwe, Nyamandlovu, Tsholotsho, Bubi, part of Lupane and Ngayi, Insiza, Matobo, Umzingwane, Beitbridge and Gwanda.
Archdiocese of Harare	Mazowe, Bindura, Shamva, Murewa, Rushinga, Mudzi, Mutoko, Kadoma, Chegutu, Harare, Goromonzi, Seke, Marondera, Chivhu, Wedza, and Buhera.
Diocese of Chinhoyi	Makonde, Hurungwe, Kariba, Guruve, Centenary, Mount Darwin and Rushinga.
Diocese of Gokwe	Gokwe North and South, Omay (between Sengwa and Sanyati rivers in Kariba district), and the area of Nkayi district North of the Shangani river.
Diocese of Gweru	Gweru, Kwekwe, Shurugwi, Chirumhanzu, Zvishavane and Mberengwa.
Diocese of Hwange	Hwange, Binga, and part of Lupane North and Shabula river.
Diocese of Masvingo	Beitbridge, Chiredzi, Chivi, Gutu, Bikita, Masvingo, Mwenezi and Zaka.
Diocese of Mutare	Mutare North and South, Mutasa, Makoni, Marange, Chimanimani, Chipinge, and Nyanga.

Source: (CCJP, 2013: 4)

Each (arch) diocese office has civil districts which are dispersed in its geographic region. The national office is responsible for the overall governance of the CCJP and its responsibilities include:

- To strengthen the technical and material capacity of the dioceses to effectively implement justice and peace interventions;
- To develop and distribute training; educational; policy advocacy; informational; and communication materials which advocate for reconciliation; peace; justice; good governance; respect for human rights; and the formulation and implementation of pro-poor policies;
- To work with the Catholic Liaison Office in collaboration with other church institutions and like-minded organisations to disseminate gospel oriented teachings (including the Social Teachings of the Church) with a view to promote justice, peace and a human rights culture in Zimbabwe;
- To conduct research and regularly inform the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) on topical justice and peace issues and how to respond effectively; and
- To mobilise resources which would be used to support the implementation of programmes at national and diocesan levels (CCJP, 2013: 14-15).

Diocesan offices are led by a coordinator who is responsible for program implementation. Each diocese has deaneries, parishes, and some small Christian communities. 'Diocese' is a term which is used by the church to delimit its boundaries. The functions of diocesan offices include:

- To mobilise communities and raise awareness on issues of justice and peace through workshops, seminars, focus group discussions, and other activities;
- To coordinate and conduct training and civic education on issues such as the Social Teachings of the Church, peace building, economic justice, democratic governance, human rights, voting, election observation/monitoring, and paralegal knowledge;
- To train and deploy election observation missions;
- To conduct research and write reports on pertinent issues which are related to peace, justice, and reconciliation. Such information is used to inform local interventions and is transmitted to the head office for policy formulation;
- To create vibrant and effective structures (also known as CCJPZ actors/animators or peace committees) at Deanery (or District), Parish (or Ward) and Small Christian Communities (or villages) that will act as the “ears” and “eyes” of justice and peace;
- To carry investigative research into allegations of injustice, violence, and human rights abuses; and
- To disseminate campaign and advocacy materials such as t-shirts, pamphlets, banners, research reports, bags, newsletters, and hats (CCJP, 2013: 14-15).

In general, the CCJP uses press statements, bulletins, publications, pastoral letters, situational reports, trainings, workshops, seminars, focus group discussions, and campaign and advocacy materials such as T-shirts, pamphlets, banners, bags, newsletters, and hats to raise awareness among citizens about peace, justice, and reconciliation. In terms of its strategic plan for the 2013-2017 period, the CCJP has focused on the following key results areas;

- Provide civic education on issues such as peace building, healing and reconciliation; voter education; election monitoring/observation; human rights, Social Teachings of the Church; democratic governance; and economic and social justice;
- Conduct research and advocate for justice and peace through information sharing; collaborating with other organisations; documenting, publishing, and disseminating informational and educational materials; and
- Strengthen and establish more animators and committees, building the capacity of the organisation to implement its programmes, and promoting self-reliance through in-come generating projects (CCJP, 2013: 19-20).

7.3 INTERVENTIONS BY THE CCJP

This section examines the role of the CCJP in the quest for peace, healing, and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. The section distinguishes the interventions by the CCJP into three distinct periods: from the time it was founded in 1972 to the attainment of independence in 1980, from 1980 to 2000, and the post-2000 period. This is important because the Commission’s interventions have been shaped, influenced, and affected by political and other developments in the country.

7.3.1 *Interventions during the liberation struggle*

As discussed in chapter four, the liberation struggle was characterised by the commission of atrocities. As each party to the struggle sought to gain the upper hand, the atrocities were committed with little or no restraint. As a result, civilians suffered a myriad of abuses. It was within this context that the CCJP conducted its peace and reconciliation interventions. What made its interventions critical was that during that time, the Rhodesian regime repressed civil society with a view to undermine the struggle for independence. As the liberation war unfolded, the CCJP investigated, documented, and published the atrocities which were committed by the Rhodesian regime, especially in a report which was entitled *Civil War in Rhodesia: The Man in the Middle* (1976). It used its findings to call for restraint in the use of force, especially against civilians and to shine the international spotlight on the atrocities so as to influence other countries to call for peace and justice in Zimbabwe. The Church and Civil Society Forum (CCSF, 2012: 28) argues that “before independence, the CCJP became a protagonist of justice for Zimbabwe by documenting and collating cases of human rights violations in the country”.

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2010: 1) states that the CCJP “was one of the first organisations to call for justice in the latter part of the 1970s. They collected data on human rights abuses and managed as early as 1975 to bring the then Rhodesia onto the international agenda”. The Rhodesian government responded by deporting or restricting the freedoms of the most vociferous leaders of the Commission such as the then Chairman and Bishop of Mutare, Donald Lamont (CCJP 2013: 3). Interviewee 28M2 stated that during the liberation struggle, it was difficult for people in the rural areas to speak about the violations which were committed by both the Rhodesian fighters and the nationalist forces and that people were not allowed to properly bury those who were killed. She further stated that the CCJP played a crucial role in exposing the abuses and in encouraging restraint in the use of force by both of the parties to the conflict. Interviewee 29M1 stated that the CCJP “is one of the most experienced organisations in the area of peacebuilding” and that its work was instrumental in exposing the brutalities of the liberation struggle.

7.3.2 *Interventions from 1980 to 2000*

It is difficult to talk about peace and reconciliation interventions by civil society in post-independence Zimbabwe without talking about the CCJP. The CCJP is particularly renowned for its work during the *Gukurahundi* atrocities (between 1983 and 1987) which are discussed in detail in chapter 3. As the massacres were being conducted, the CCJP monitored them and made various attempts to lobby the government to exercise restraint in its use of violence and to seek a peaceful resolution of the conflict. For example, in November 1982, the CCJP presented a confidential report to Robert Mugabe (who was then Prime Minister) in which it expressed concern over the brutality of the army in responding to the dissident activities in Matabeleland (CCJP and LRF, 1997: 34). In March 1983, the ZCBC and the CCJP met with Mugabe and spoke to him about the conflict in Matabeleland and the need for the government to exercise restraint in its suppression of dissident activities. This was in response to the deployment of the Fifth Brigade in Matabeleland North and the atrocities which followed, the detention of scores of people in Bulawayo, and the arrest and detention of Joshua Nkomo who eventually fled into exile in Botswana (CCJP and LRF, 1997: 34). It was against this background that the ZCBC and CCJP presented Mugabe with a paper which was entitled *Reconciliation is Still Possible* (1983). One of the arguments which was made in the paper was that:

We entirely support the duty of government to maintain law and order even by military means. What we view with concern are the occasions in which certain influential people have influenced the situation by their words, instead of seeking to pacify it. We appeal to

government to put an end to the excesses and to appoint a judicial commission charged with the responsibility of establishing the truth (cited by Chingoroma, 2008: 138).

The CCJP's advocacy efforts contributed to the establishment of the Chihambakwe commission of inquiry into the *Gukurahundi* conflict and the signing of the Unity Accord in 1987⁵⁶. Based on its investigations, the CCJP produced a report which offers the most authoritative, accurate, and evidence-based account of the *Gukurahundi* massacres. In the "silence breaking" report, the CCJP underscored the need to acknowledge the violent past and to allow the victims to tell the stories regarding their experiences with a view to ensure reconciliation. The report contains a "project proposal" which details some suggestions about how to ensure healing and reconciliation. The CCJP's investigations of *Gukurahundi* remain important because the atrocities were conducted "under the cover of darkness" and the international community and local people were reluctant to condemn the government or to call for restraint in the use of force.

This was primarily because the atrocities took place at a time when ZANU-PF was popular within the country and in the international community. Its popularity in the international community was largely a result of the policy of reconciliation which it adopted at independence and its observance of the restrictions in the Lancaster House constitution which allowed the minority white community to maintain its economic privileges. As a result, the atrocities were known by the communities which experienced them. Interviewee 30M1 stated that citizens in other provinces were completely unaware of the violations which were being committed in Matabeleland province. He further stated that "we were celebrating independence and the economic achievements which we were making as a nation without knowing that the same government was busy killing its own people in a way which was more brutal than the Smith government". Interviewee 31M3 stated that the atrocities were conducted in a secretive manner such that some government ministers were not aware of what was happening and that it was mainly through the CCJP that many Zimbabweans became aware of them.

During the interviews conducted in the Matobo community with a view to establish the relationship between the Unity Accord and reconciliation (discussed in chapter 5), some interviewees stated that the government has demonstrated a lack of commitment to investigate the effects of *Gukurahundi* on the affected communities and to take measures to address them⁵⁷. Interviewee 23M2 stated that while the government has refused the affected communities the right to speak about *Gukurahundi*, the CCJP was the first organisation to present affected communities with the platform to speak about their experiences during *Gukurahundi*, post-*Gukurahundi* challenges, and their reconciliation needs and aspirations. Interviewee 25M1 stated that the CCJP has helped the affected communities to try and cope with the impact of *Gukurahundi* through the implementation of programmes such as peace education, promoting the teachings of the church, promoting social cohesion, giving referrals for psycho-social counselling and support, and advocating for the provision of birth certificates.

As part of its interventions to promote peace, justice, and reconciliation in Zimbabwe, the CCJP also advocated for good governance and the elimination of political violence. For example, in the run-up to the July 1985 elections, ZANU-PF youth and state security agents used extensive violence against PF-ZAPU leaders and supporters (Moyo, 1992: 56). The CCJP responded by conducting research and documenting the findings in a confidential report which it presented to Robert Mugabe in March 1985. In the report, the CCJP condemned the violence and the arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance of PF-ZAPU officials. In January 1987, the CCJP also presented Robert Mugabe with a report on cases of torture of civilians by state security agents. Following the signing of the Unity Accord and the movement towards a *de jure* one-party state, the CCJP was one of the

⁵⁶ This view was expressed by some of the interviewees in the Matobo community.

⁵⁷ The interviews in Matobo community were conducted from 23 to 26 May 2017.

leading organisations in the anti-one-party state campaign which gathered momentum in the late 1980s. Articulating its opposition on the one-party state agenda, the CCJP stated that:

We believe that a constitutionalised one-party state is contrary to basic human rights; we believe that no generation has the right to make immutable decisions for the generations of the future. Therefore, we recommend that the ruling party abandons all plans to establish a legislated one-party state in Zimbabwe (*The Herald*, 11 April 1990, as cited by Sithole, 2000: 82).

The CCJP also advocated for legislative reforms and criticised legislation such as the Political Parties (Finance) Act of 1992 for its exclusionary threshold for eligibility of political parties for public funding.

7.3.3 Interventions in the post-2000 period

The interventions of the CCJP from 2000 going forward were largely influenced by the changing political atmosphere which is characterised by increasing human rights abuses, political violence, intolerance, polarisation, hate speech among political opponents, increased levels of corruption and patronage, unaccountability, marginalisation of the poor, deteriorating economic conditions, and the militarisation of the state. The formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999 and the conduct of hotly contested elections from 2000 was characterised by widespread political violence (Masunungure 2008, Badza 2008, Sachikonye 2005, Raftopoulos 2008). In 2000, the CCJP published a report entitled *Crises of Governance: A Report on Political Violence in Zimbabwe* and in 2008, it published a report entitled *Graveyard Governance*.

In these reports, the CCJP looked into the gravity of politically motivated violence and its impact on Zimbabwean society. Given these developments, the CCJP realised that it needed to adopt a multi-pronged approach in order to foster peace, healing, and reconciliation. As a result, it broadened its strategies and interventions. First, it started to take care of victims of violence, many of whom needed urgent medical, psycho-spiritual, psychiatric, and material assistance. In a Pastoral letter, the ZCBC (2009) states that:

We accepted without discrimination and looked after those whose hands were chopped off, those whose homes were burnt and those wounded in crossfire. We saw victims of inhuman torture in our hospitals. Through our faith, we were made to be the good Samaritan, prepared to heal, often at our own expense...we appeal to the perpetrators of these atrocities, accomplices, and instigators of violence to acknowledge the evil deeds and in conscience to own up and make restitution as Zacchaeus did (Luke 19: 8)...we appeal to victims of any of the evil acts in our country, the offended, to forgive.

During the interviews which were conducted in Bikita East and Bikita West, interviewees 7M1, 9M2 and 11M1 stated that they are victims of political violence and that they were offered refuge by the CCJP. Interviewee 7M1 stated that he was offered refuge at Masvingo Diocese's Bethany House. The CCJP also offered spiritual, social, physiological, and medical assistance to some of the victims of violence. Second, the CCJP became increasingly involved in advocating for the conduct of peaceful, free, and credible elections and the provision of civic education on conflict management, voting, and electoral processes and institutions (CCJP 2009).

This involvement is based on its belief that citizens have the inalienable right to "elect capable individuals from all the people—men and women who fear God, trustworthy men and women who hate dishonest gain---and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens"

(CCJP, 2013: 56). The CCJP has mobilised, trained, and facilitated the accreditation and deployment of election observers, especially to remote areas and those areas which it has identified as “hotspots” of political violence. It has also worked with individual observers, which it calls CCJP animators or justice and peace actors. These play different roles, including election observation.

In February 2013, the CCJP adopted the Election Response Strategy whose objectives are to increase the awareness and knowledge of citizens on the Social Teachings of the Church and Human Rights, to contribute to the creation of a conducive political environment for citizens to vote in a violence-free and fair election, and to ensure that the post-election period is free (CCJP, 2013: 16). In its report on the 2013 elections, the CCJP concluded that the elections were not free and fair because they were conducted before the full implementation of the Global Political Agreement reforms and that they were characterised by imbedded violence, intimidation, politicisation of humanitarian assistance in rural areas, and the partiality of election management institutions.

From 2000, the Commission got actively involved in the search for a new constitution. During the 2000 referendum, it worked with other civil society organisations (especially the National Constitutional Assembly) to conduct awareness campaigns with a view to enlighten voters about the importance of a democratic constitution. During the constitution making process under the Government of National Unity, the CCJP also conducted awareness campaigns with a view to promoting the making of a democratic constitution. Its participation was based on the view that many of the challenges which Zimbabwe faced were a result of the defective Lancaster House Constitution. The Commission believes that the 2013 constitution was an outcome of a people-driven process. The Commission also promoted dialogue between the government and the citizens with a view to influence the policy direction of the country and to promote respect for human rights and economic and social justice.

7.4 A CASE STUDY OF THE CCJP’S MASVINGO DIOCESE INTERVENTIONS IN NYIKA

The previous sections examined the peace and reconciliation interventions of the CCJP broadly. This section takes a departure by using the case study of the Nyika community in Bikita West to examine the impact of peace and reconciliation interventions by the CCJP’s diocese of Masvingo. The reason for this case study is to ensure that the critique of the CCJP’s role in fostering peace and reconciliation is based on the views and lived experiences of those communities in which the interventions were implemented. The diocese of Masvingo has the following civic districts: Beitbridge, Chiredzi, Chivi, Gutu, Bikita, Masvingo, Mwenezi and Zaka (CCJP, 2013). Ten interviews in the Nyika community were conducted from 28 to 31 May 2017. Nyika growth point is one of the areas worst affected by violence, especially in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2008 (see chapter 6).

The diocese of Masvingo implemented a number of interventions in the Nyika community, especially after the violence which characterised the 2008 elections. According to interviewee 30M1, after the 2008 election violence, the CCJP deployed a task committee which conducted a survey in the community with a view to establish the violations which took place, their impact on the community, the needs of victims, and local perspectives of peace building and reconciliation mechanisms. Interviewee 28M2 stated that the CCJP has implemented its projects in the Nyika community through peace committees, Christian communities, and animators. She further stated that in CCJP parlance, peace committees are called the community based “ears” and “eyes” of CCJP whose responsibility is to research, monitor, collect, and document information about violence, coercion, peace, justice, and reconciliation in the community.

This information will be used to inform its interventions. The CCJP capacitates its peace committees through trainings on social cohesion; conflict analysis, management, and resolution; peace building; human rights; and good governance. Interviewee 31M2 stated that in the Nyika community, peace committees have taught local communities (especially traditional leaders, community leaders, and the youth) how to analyse, manage, and peacefully resolve conflicts and that they have played a major role in promoting inclusivity, healing, and reconciliation after the 2008 election violence.

In the Nyika community, the CCJP has conducted community mobilisation through teachings, trainings, advocacy, and education. It has also disseminated materials such as pamphlets, hats, t-shirts, bags, reports, fliers, and banners to promote justice and peace and to raise awareness on issues such as constitutionalism, economic and social justice, civic participation in processes of governance, paralegal knowledge, democratic governance, human rights, accountability, social cohesion, unity, voting, and elections⁵⁸. Some interviewees stated that the use of these structures and strategies has enabled the CCJP not only to be “based in the community” but also to ensure that its interventions are owned and driven by local communities. They further stated that this has enabled it to gain the trust and cooperation of community members, some of whom work as its volunteers and that faith-based advocacy has enabled it to gain the support of the Christian community, including non-Catholics.

Interviewees 28M1, 30M2, and 31M2 stated that in the Nyika community, the CCJP has conducted community peace events such as sports, concerts, traditional dances, songs, drama, and poetry to foster peace and reconciliation. These include “peace tournaments” in which people from different backgrounds would play soccer or netball with a view to build relations, promote social cohesion, and political tolerance. According to the interviewees, the concerts have attracted people from different Churches which include apostolic sects and Pentecostal movements. Given that the youth is one of the main constituencies involved in the perpetration of violence, the CCJP reached out to the youth in the Nyika community through what it calls Youth Voices Forums. The forums integrate the youth in their communities, connect the youth with community leaders to design frameworks for managing and resolving conflict, and create platforms for the youth to amplify their voices within their community and in the nation at large.

Under the forums, the CCJP has distributed netballs and footballs for the youth to use during peace tournaments. According to some interviewees, the CCJP organised some tournaments at Nyika growth point to enable the youth to build relations and to keep them occupied. It also organised youth leader’s workshops through which it trained youth leaders on violence prevention, peace building, social cohesion, democratic freedoms, human rights, and political tolerance. In the Nyika community, the CCJP has also organised what it calls community visioning workshops under which members of the community (including the youth, women, men, and community leaders) would gather together and collectively “map the vision” of the community which they want and the steps which should be taken to create such a community⁵⁹.

Interviewee 28M1 stated that these workshops have helped community members to forge a common vision for their community and to understand the essence of putting the interests of their community first. In his evaluation of CCJP’s interventions in Nyika, interviewee 28M2 stated that they have helped the local people to understand that they can have different political affiliations and views and still live in peace, harmony, and love each other. Another interviewee also stated that as a result of the CCJP’s interventions, some perpetrators of violence have voluntarily compensated or returned

⁵⁸ This was stated by some of the people who were interviewed.

⁵⁹ This information was gathered from some of the interviewees.

what they confiscated from victims while others have approached their victims and asked for forgiveness. The interviewee further stated that this has facilitated forgiveness and reconciliation among some perpetrators and offenders.

7.4.1 Challenges to CCJP's interventions in the Nyika community

The information which was collected through interviews in the Nyika community shows that despite the good work which the CCJP has done, the organisation has faced a number of challenges due to factors which are both internal and external to it. Internal factors include poor coordination and monitoring and evaluation of interventions. Some of these challenges are a result of the shortage of resources which causes it to rely on volunteers, some of whom lack the incentive to do their work. Interviewee 30M3 stated that the shortage of resources has made it difficult for the CCJP to sustain its peace and reconciliation projects, especially considering that it works across the country. Interviewee 30M2 stated that one of the major internal factors which have undermined the CCJP's peace and reconciliation interventions is that they are "donor driven" and are based on the liberal peacebuilding model which does not consider the needs and "ways of doing things" which differ from community to community. He further argued that if reconciliation efforts are to be successful in Zimbabwe, there is need for the peacebuilding agenda to be "de-colonised" and to be premised on cultural and religious values, practices, and beliefs.

The major external factor which is believed to have affected the interventions by the CCJP is the political environment which is characterised by the suppression of democratic freedoms. The CCJP has been "labelled" by both the colonial and the post-independence state as "anti-government". In the post-independence state, particularly from 2000 going forward, it has been regarded as supportive of opposition party politics, especially the MDC. The Church and Civil Society Forum (2012: 29) argues that "with the polarisation engulfing the country, the CCJP's advocacy for peace and justice has been seen as siding with opposition politics and supporting regime change". A CCJP Director who was interviewed by Shonhiwa (2016: 131) stated that "there was a time when we were not allowed to carry out our programmes in the communities. We were labelled as the opposition mouthpiece yet we were doing our work".

In some cases, the CCJP has avoided mentioning ZANU-PF when reporting about political violence. Instead, it has used the language that "a certain political party" uses violence against its opponents (CCJP, 2013). Interviewee 29M2 stated that the CCJP's interventions are "politically motivated" and that this has eroded the organisation's credibility, especially in the eyes of ZANU-PF supporters. Community members who participate in the activities of those organisations which are regarded by ZANU-PF as fighting the agenda of opposition politics make themselves vulnerable to harassment, torture, and other forms of abuses by actors such as traditional leaders, ZANU-PF youth militia, war veterans, and state security agents (especially the police and the Central Intelligence Organisation)⁶⁰. This has made it difficult for some people in the Nyika community to be volunteers of the CCJP or to participate in peace and reconciliation processes by the CCJP. Interviewee 28M1 stated that:

In this community, people are not allowed to work with any organisations which are believed to support opposition political parties. The CCJP is one of those organisations. I have heard about them but I have never participated in what they do because I am afraid of being beaten up or of being refused access to food aid, food for work projects, and agricultural inputs.

⁶⁰ This view was expressed by interviewees 29M1, 30M1, and 30M3.

Interviewee 30M1 stated that although the CCJP works in the Nyika community, during periods of political volatility such as election times, the organisation often “goes underground” because of the fear of victimisation and this “reverses the gains” which it could have made in the quest for peace and reconciliation. Citing the by-election conducted in Bikita West in January 2017, the interviewee stated that political leaders, especially from ZANU-PF and the Zimbabwe People First mobilised their supporters to perpetrate violence against political opponents. She further stated that in the run-up to the elections, major political parties conducted their rallies at Nyika growth point during which they intimidated political opponents. Interviewee 28M2 stated that Nyika growth point is the “headquarters” of ZANU-PF and that that is where the party make plans about how to deal with opposition supporters in Bikita district. Ncube (2014: 291) argues that it has been difficult for civil society to implement peacebuilding projects and that in ZANU-PF strongholds:

...either the police refused to issue clearance permission for civil society peacebuilding work, or ZANU-PF aligned community leaders argued that there was no need for peacebuilding in Zimbabwe and refused to cooperate. As a result, a number of planned peacebuilding activities were postponed or cancelled. The implication is that the role of civil society in peacebuilding in Zimbabwe cannot be divorced from political party politics and the attendant societal polarisation.

7.5 CONCLUSION

Using the case study of the CCJP, this chapter has inquired into the ways through which civil society has contributed to peace and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. A number of conclusions can be drawn from this discussion. First, it has emerged that the need for civil society-initiated and -driven reconciliation processes is imperative, especially in a political context characterised by denial, impunity, continued violence, and the unwillingness of the state to implement bottom-up and inclusive reconciliation processes. In such contexts, interventions by civil society can help victims and communities (many of whom would not have had the opportunity to speak about their experiences and needs) to deal with a violent past, build relations, and “move on” with their lives. Interviewees 22A1, 30A1, 23M2, 26M1, and 30M2 stated that although reconciliation processes by civil society organisations such as Heal Zimbabwe and the CCJP have had their challenges and shortcomings, they have significantly assisted communities to reconcile in a context in which the state has been unwilling to do so.

Second, reconciliation interventions by civil society tend to take the bottom-up approach because they are anchored on the participation of grassroots communities. As a result, such reconciliation interventions tend to be inclusive; sensitive to the needs, values, practices, and aspirations of affected communities; and to ensure local ownership. This is especially considering that interventions by civil society (such as those by the CCJP) are often informed and guided by evidence-based research findings. However, interviewee 30M2 argued that reconciliation processes by civil society are unable to address the needs of communities because they are based on the liberal model of peacebuilding and that for that reason, even if grassroots people participate in them, they cannot “own” them. He believes that “local ownership” cannot take place within the context of a liberal-based reconciliation agenda.

Third, the nature of the political context is a very important factor in enabling or constraining reconciliation interventions by civil society. A political environment in which democratic norms and freedoms are promoted, embedded, and respected tends to be conducive to reconciliation processes by civil society. Conversely, a political environment which is characterised by the use of terror, state-civil society antagonism, suppression of democratic freedoms, polarisation, and intolerance tends to make it difficult for civil society to implement peace and reconciliation projects.

Interviewee 31M1, who stated that he is a CCJP animator, stated that there are areas which the CCJP consider to be “hot spots” of political violence and that residents of such areas cannot freely and independently participate in democratic processes, including peace building initiatives by civil society. He further stated that the CCJP often avoid conducting its projects in such places because of security concerns.

From this view, it can be argued that civil society driven reconciliation interventions in Zimbabwe have been implemented in certain constituencies and not in others depending on the cooperation or hostility of residents (especially community and traditional leaders), ruling party elements, and state security forces. Thus the country has areas where reconciliation efforts by civil society have been made and areas where reconciliation efforts have not been made or have been abandoned. Fourth, resource constraints make it difficult for civil society to sustain their peace and reconciliation interventions. As a result, civil society often make sporadic ventures into rural constituencies depending on the availability of funding and this makes it difficult for it to sustainably engage rural communities on peacebuilding activities (Ncube, 2014: 34). In order to try and do its best within the context of limited resources, the CCJP has largely relied on volunteers. Without the use of volunteers, it would have been difficult for the CCJP to be able to reach out to most of the remote and marginalised areas where it works. The strengths and weaknesses of civil society in reconciliation processes are summarized in the next chapter. The chapter discusses the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 8: FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This study has examined the strengths and shortcomings of state-led reconciliation processes as they were implemented in Zimbabwe. It has also used the case of Zimbabwe to critique how state-led and community-led reconciliation processes can interact, reinforce or conflict with each other. The study focuses on the policy of reconciliation which was adopted at independence in 1980; the Unity Accord between the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (PF-ZAPU) and the Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) which was signed in 1987 to deal with the *Gukurahundi* atrocities; and the Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation, and Integration (ONHRI) which was established by the Government of National Unity (GNU) from 2009 to 2013.

The study made use of case studies in order to achieve its objectives. It used the case study of the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe (UMP) community to examine the differences, interface, and efficacy of state-led and community-centered reconciliation processes; the case study of the Matobo community to establish the successes and shortcomings of the Unity Accord in the search for national healing and reconciliation after the *Gukurahundi* atrocities; the case study of the Bikita East and Bikita West communities to examine the successes and shortcomings of the ONHRI in the search for healing and reconciliation during the GNU; and the case study of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJPZ) in the Nyika community (Masvingo) to examine the role of civil society in peace, healing, and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe.

Using the discussions and findings in other chapters of this study, this chapter starts with synthesizing and critiquing the study's findings in the light of its objectives. The discussions and findings are used to inform the conclusion and recommendations which are made in the study. The various mechanisms which were regarded by interviewees as essential in making reconciliation efforts a success in Zimbabwe will be examined in this chapter. In particular, the chapter evaluates the need for mechanisms such as a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, reparations, lustration, memorialisation, criminal prosecutions, the granting of amnesty, and institutional reforms. The chapter concludes by examining the views of the interviewees in terms of the actors who should be involved in the search for healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. These are government, civil society, traditional leaders, and the international community.

8.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section discusses the findings of the study in light of its objectives which are stated in chapter one. One of the objectives of this study was to critique the successes and challenges of reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. The study uses the definition of reconciliation put forward by Mashingaidze (2010), which states that reconciliation "is the transformation of relationships through the official recognition of the violent past, truth-telling, justice, addressing the needs of victims and perpetrators, and allowing affected communities the right to express themselves and to memorialise the violent past". The argument made in chapter one is that it is important to establish the healing and reconciliation needs of affected societies (from the perspective of such societies) as the basis for critiquing reconciliation interventions. It is against this background that the study has established the healing and reconciliation needs of the following case study societies: the Matobo district in respect of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities; the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe district in respect of violations committed during the liberation struggle and politically motivated violence committed in the post-independence period; and the Bikita East and West communities in respect of politically motivated

violence committed between 2000 and 2008. The table below summarises the healing and reconciliation needs of these societies.

RECONCILIATION NEEDS IN MATOBO DISTRICT

- Exhumation and reburial of *Gukurahundi* victims who were buried in mass/shallow graves;
- Truth-telling and psychological healing;
- Eliminating impunity;
- Acknowledgement and official apology;
- Prosecution of perpetrators;
- Allowing affected communities and the nation to openly speak about *Gukurahundi*;
- Reparations (identification and punishment of perpetrators; exhumations and (re)burials of victims; apologies; memorials; support for children; counselling; medical assistance; provision of tangible goods; the conduct of traditional ceremonies; the introduction of income generating projects; building of schools, hospitals, roads, and water facilities; compensation for destroyed homesteads and properties; and provision of critical documents such as national identity cards and birth certificates);
- Institutional reforms;
- Transformation of relations between the Ndebele and the Shona people;
- Implementation of development projects; and
- The inclusion of the Ndebele people in development processes and government structures and positions.
- However, some believe that healing and reconciliation can only be achieved through the establishment of an independent "Ndebele states'.

RECONCILIATION NEEDS IN UZUMBA MARAMBA PFUNGWE DISTRICT

- Rebuilding relations between individuals, families, and communities;
- Memorialisation, truth telling and psychological healing;
- Appeasing dead victims;
- Reparations (community-based and state initiated);
- Criminal prosecution of perpetrators of serious human rights abuses;
- The de-politicisation of traditional leadership structures; and
- Institutional reforms/lustration.

RECONCILIATION NEEDS IN BIKITA EAST AND WEST

- Reparations (community-based and state initiated);
- Acknowledgement and official apology;
- Truth-telling;
- De-politicisation of state organs and traditional leadership structures;
- Psychological healing;
- Relations-building;

- Prosecution of perpetrators; and
- The elimination of violence, intimidation and coercion/promotion of tolerance, social cohesion and democratic freedoms.

Table 2: The reconciliation needs of case study communities

As shown in the table above, affected societies have various healing and reconciliation needs. It is clear that many of these needs (such as criminal prosecution, institutional reforms, national reparations, and official acknowledgement) can be met only through state-led reconciliation processes. This shows the indispensability of state-led reconciliation processes in a post-conflict or post-authoritarian society. However, the overarching finding in this study is that state-led reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe have failed to meet any of the aforesaid needs because they were characterised by many weaknesses.

With regards to the 1980 policy of reconciliation, it is argued in this study that it failed because its objective was to assuage the fears of the white community. It ended at the level of ‘pronouncement’ because the government did not take any reconciliation steps such as the reburial of people who were not properly buried during the independence struggle; the reintegration of former combatants; truth-telling, especially with respect to people who disappeared; reparations, especially in respect of those people who sustained serious injuries as a result of the armed struggle; the provision of psychological, medical, and psychiatric assistance; the memorialisation of the violence which characterised the struggle; the elimination of colonial inequalities; and the promotion of relations between the black and the white people. The failure of the reconciliation policy shows that it is difficult or impossible to promote healing and reconciliation without promoting relations and social interaction between victims and perpetrators.

With regards to the Unity Accord, the argument made in this study is that it failed because its primary objective was to promote political reconciliation at the elite level, ostensibly to peddle ZANU-PF’s one-party state agenda. As discussed in chapter six, the Accord was not characterised by the implementation of reconciliation mechanisms such that strictly speaking, it was not a reconciliation project. With regards to the Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation, and Integration (ONHRI), the argument made in this study is that it failed because it focused on political reconciliation at national level and marginalised inter-personal reconciliation at the grassroots level, it was characterised by antagonism between the principals to the GPA, it lacked a clearly defined mandate, it was crippled by the shortage of resources, it largely excluded actors such as civil society and grassroots communities, and the political context within which it worked was inimical to the conduct of reconciliation processes because it was characterised by the cultures of violence, polarisation, and impunity.

The concluding argument made in this study is that the common shortcomings of reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe are that they have tended to be driven by political and not reconciliation objectives; that they have tended to take an exclusionary, elite-focused top-down approach whose objective was to heal the political environment without promoting individual healing and inter-personal reconciliation; that they have been characterised by the need to protect perpetrators of violence rather than the need to seek justice for victims; that they have not been characterised by the implementation of reconciliation mechanisms such as truth-telling, apologies, acknowledgement, memorialisation, and reparations; and that reconciliation initiatives have not been based on broad-based consensus. It is therefore possible for state-led reconciliation processes to be meaningless as far as the search for healing and reconciliation is concerned.

The second finding made in this study is that in the absence of meaningful state-led reconciliation processes, it was civil society which played a major role in promoting healing and reconciliation at the grassroots level. For example, in chapter four, some interviewees stated that civil society organisations such as the Heal Zimbabwe Trust and the CCJP have played a crucial role in facilitating healing and reconciliation in the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe district. In chapter five, it is argued that it was civil society which offered affected communities the forum to speak about their experiences and their views about what needs to be done in order to deal with a violent past. However, it was found in the study that despite its often-praised efforts and strengths to promote reconciliation at both national and grassroots levels, civil society was unable to address virtually all of the reconciliation needs stated above. This failure was not mainly because of the internal weaknesses of civil society itself, but because in the absence of top-down reconciliation processes, civil society has a very limited capacity to promote healing and reconciliation processes; especially in a political context which is characterised by violence, intimidation, polarisation, and state-party conflation.

For example, civil society interventions cannot make affected societies able to publicly speak about their experiences. As a result, affected societies may speak about their experiences through civil society but they can continue to suffer in silence because the space offered by civil society is often private. It is also noted in the study that some reconciliation needs such as “appeasing” dead victims may be met by neither state nor civil society interventions but through processes which are initiated and conducted by the affected communities themselves, sometimes in the absence of top-down approaches. It is against this background that one of the findings in this study is that in order to enhance the prospects of reconciliation interventions, it is important to ensure interaction, engagement and collaboration between different actors such as the state, civil society, affected communities, and the international community as shown in the diagram below:

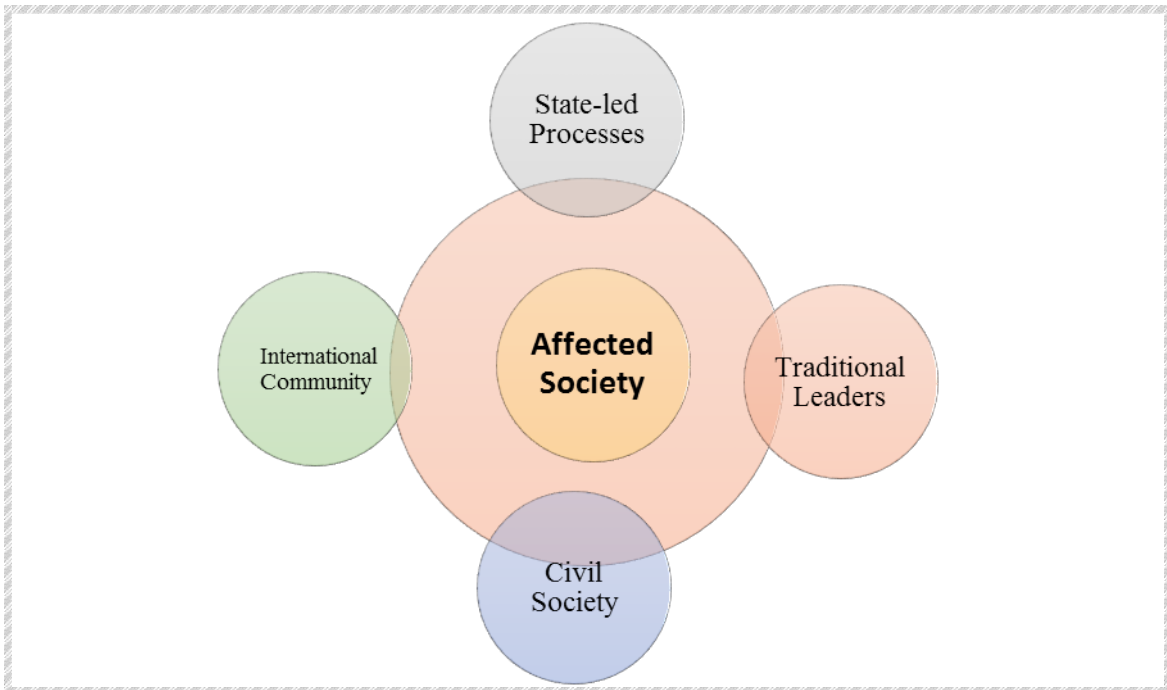


FIGURE 1: THE ROLE OF DIFFERENT ACTORS IN RECONCILIATION PROCESSES

In terms of how these actors engage and collaborate with each other, the affected society should be at the centre of reconciliation processes in terms of establishing the nature and impact of the

violations which were committed, identifying its reconciliation needs and aspirations, establishing the mechanisms for promoting healing and reconciliation, implementation of healing and reconciliation processes, and monitoring and evaluating these processes. Traditional leaders can play an important role in using cultural and religious mechanisms of reconciliation and facilitating the interaction of these actors. For example, in rural communities, it is difficult for civil society to engage communities without ‘going through’ traditional leadership structures. Traditional leaders can create an atmosphere which allows these different actors to trust and work with each other.

The international community can build the capacity of the government and civil society through the provision of resources and technical and other forms of expertise. Civil society engages the international community, the state, traditional leaders and the affected society. Civil society is able to conduct research and produce knowledge about different aspects of reconciliation processes such as establishing the root causes of the conflict, the violations which were suffered, the victims and alleged perpetrators, the needs of the affected societies, the mechanisms which may promote healing and reconciliation, how to implement the reconciliation processes, and monitoring and evaluating impact of the processes. This gives it the capacity to build the bridge between top-down and bottom-up processes.

The third finding in this study is that while many interviewees emphasised the need for truth-telling, it is not true that truth-telling in and of itself promotes healing and reconciliation. In fact, truth-telling may cause more violence. As discussed in chapter four, some of the interviewees consider truth-telling as important not for purposes of healing and reconciliation, but for enabling them to “deal with the perpetrators”. For example, focus group participant 21A4 stated that “I want to know the people who burnt down my homestead so that I can also burn down theirs”. It can therefore be argued that the “what is revealed” and “how is it revealed” factors are important in truth-telling processes. It is therefore important to note that attempts at healing and reconciliation may hardly promote healing and reconciliation. In chapter four, while talking about the prospects of reconciling with some alleged perpetrators, interviewee 26A2 stated that “there is no way that we can reconcile with such evil people”. Such sentiments show the limitations of various mechanisms of reconciliation which are discussed in this study, including truth telling.

The other objectives of this study were to explore the limitations of elite-focused, top-down, and politically-driven reconciliation processes and to examine the interface between state-led and community-based reconciliation processes. Using the findings in this study, the diagram below summarises the characteristics, strengths, weaknesses, and relationship between top-down and bottom-up approaches to reconciliation.

Characteristics of the top-down approach	Characteristics of the bottom-up approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is initiated and driven by the state; • It is high-level in that it focusses on the national/political level but it may filter to the grassroots level; and • It is characterised by processes such as TCs, reparations, institutional reforms, prosecutions, official 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is initiated and driven at the grassroots level. The main actors should be the affected communities themselves but they can be assisted by other actors such as civil society; • It focusses on healing and reconciling individuals, groups, families, and communities at the grassroots level; and

<p>acknowledgement and apology, amnesty, and memorialisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is mainly characterised by processes which are rooted in the social, cultural, and religious beliefs and practices of the affected community.
<p>Strengths of the top-down approach</p>	<p>Strengths of the bottom-up approach</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may establish and address the root causes of the conflict thereby avoiding a repeat of the conflict and violence; • It may create a national and political context which enables reconciliation processes to take place at different levels of society; and • It can (re)build public trust and confidence in state institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It promotes the participation of those people who were affected by the conflict; • It tends to be sensitive to the uniqueness of the context within which reconciliation processes are implemented; and • It can promote healing at individual and societal levels.
<p>Weaknesses of the top-down approach</p>	<p>Weaknesses of the bottom-up approach</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can be “captured” by political interests, especially those of the elite; • It may fail to make an impact at the grassroots level because of the failure to ‘trickle down’; • If implemented without democratic consultations, top-down mechanisms may clash with bottom-up preferences; • It tends to be undermined by the lack of resources, political will and weak and partial institutions; and • It is difficult to build consensus on the mechanisms for promoting healing and reconciliation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can be characterised by the marginalisation or exclusion of certain groups and the use of harmful conflict resolution mechanisms; • Bottom-up processes are difficult to conduct in the absence of top-down processes; especially when the elite remain polarised and state institutions remain ‘captured’; • Bottom-up processes may cause more violence and tension; and • Bottom-up processes tend to have no capacity to deal with cases of grievous violations of human rights.
<p>The relationship between top-down and bottom-up approaches</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a context where the two approaches are implemented simultaneously, they can either 	

complement or conflict with each other. The conflict may take place when top-down mechanisms collide with the mechanisms which are preferred by the grassroots communities or when they are not perceived as impartial, legitimate, and fair.

- Top-down processes can give grassroots communities the incentive to embark on bottom-up processes.

Table 3: Top-down versus bottom-up reconciliation processes

8.3 HOW CAN RECONCILIATION BE ACHIEVED IN ZIMBABWE?

One of the research questions which this study has sought to answer is “which mechanisms should be adopted in order to ensure that reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe achieve their objectives? This section examines the mechanisms through which inclusive, compassionate, and meaningful reconciliation processes might be implemented in Zimbabwe. Using the reconciliation needs of the communities which served as case studies, this section interrogates the essence of retributive and restorative faces of reconciliation such as amnesty, prosecutions, TCs, reparations, memorialisation, lustration, vetting, and institutional reforms in the Zimbabwe context.

8.3.1 Prosecutions

There were basically two views with regards to the need for prosecuting perpetrators and instigators of violence as one of the reconciliation interventions which are needed in Zimbabwe. On one hand, the majority of the interviewees expressed the belief that two of the major hurdles to effective healing and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe are the ingrained cultures of violence and impunity. Those who advocated for criminal prosecution argued that it helps to eliminate impunity, to deter perpetrators from committing political violence in the future, to promote a human rights culture, to restore the rule of law, to reinforce social norms, and to make the victims believe that justice has prevailed. During a focus group discussion which was conducted in Bikita East on 6 May 2017, 90 percent of the participants emphasised the need for the prosecution of offenders. For example, participant 6M3 stated that:

Many people who have committed political violence in village A of the Manyuchi community are known. One of them is (name was provided but withdrawn for ethical reasons). However, these people have never been arrested. They continue to threaten people, especially during election periods. It is important for such people to be arrested and tried because that is the only way reconciliation can be achieved in this country.

During the focus group discussion conducted in the Matobo community on 22 May 2017, 96 percent of the participants stated that those people who were responsible for the operations of the Fifth Brigade during the *Gukurahundi* massacres and those who were responsible for committing politically motivated violence should be prosecuted. During a focus group discussion conducted in the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community on 21 April 2017, 91 percent of the participants supported the prosecution of perpetrators. For example, participant 21A3 stated that:

In this country, the law does not have a long arm because it does not discipline people who support ZANU-PF, especially the big fish. These people know that they can abduct, torture, and kill opposition supporters and get away with it. Look at what happened to Itai Dzamara, Tonderai Ndira, and Jestina Mukoko. This explains why ZANU-PF people are not afraid of

committing violence. If reconciliation is to be successful in Zimbabwe, the arresting and trial of those who have been involved in violence should be the first step to be taken.

However, the interviewees differed in terms of the alleged perpetrators whom they believe should be prosecuted. The first view was that everyone who is known or alleged to have committed or instigated political violence should be arrested and prosecuted. This argument was based on the view that this will send a strong message across Zimbabwean society that violence and impunity should never again be acceptable in the country. The second view argued in favour of narrowing the range of prosecutions only to those who committed the most grievous human rights abuses such as abductions, torture, rape, hacking of limbs, maiming, and killing of political opponents. This view was mainly expressed by interviewees from the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community as discussed in chapter four of this study.

This argument was based on the view that some perpetrators committed “pardonable offences” which may only require them to acknowledge their violent acts, compensate their victims, and/or ask for forgiveness. The third view argued in favour of further narrowing the range of prosecutions to only instigators and accomplices of violence who hold (or formerly held) influential positions in the government, political parties, and the community. For example, interviewee 14M3 argued that the “foot soldiers of violence” should not be prosecuted because they committed violence in order to comply with “mandatory orders from the top”⁶¹. Supporting this view, interviewee 12M1 argued that it is not necessary to prosecute the youths who committed violence in Bikita East but those “who ordered them to do so”. In the Matobo community, some interviewees stated that it is not necessary to prosecute the individual members of the Fifth Brigade who committed the *Gukurahundi* atrocities but people who were in control of the security forces such as Emmerson Mnangagwa and Robert Mugabe. Generally, those who argued in favour of “narrowing the range of prosecution” expressed the belief that prosecuting every alleged perpetrator is cumbersome, hardly feasible in terms of costs, and that it can make it difficult for communities and individuals to rebuild their relations because it is extremely retributive.

On the other hand, a minority of the interviewees expressed the view that instead of promoting healing and reconciliation, prosecutions can yield negative results. They argued that the forgiving of all of the perpetrators of violence is the only way which will enable Zimbabwe to “move on” as far as reconciliation is concerned. For example, focus group participant 6M6 stated that all perpetrators of violence should be shown love through forgiveness so that they can understand the importance of love, tolerance, unconditional acceptance, and living in peace. He further argued that “digging the past” for purposes of prosecutions can cause more societal divisions, arguments, polarisation, and hatred because the prosecutions are likely to be driven by the spirit of vengeance rather than the spirit of rehabilitating perpetrators and rebuilding broken relations⁶².

Arguing from the perspective of Christianity, focus group participant 22M4 stated that perpetrators of violence should be unconditionally forgiven just as Jesus Christ unconditionally forgave humanity⁶³. Interviewee 26M2 argued that the reason why perpetrators of violence use every means they can to refuse the democratic will to prevail in Zimbabwe is because of the fear of being prosecuted for past crimes. He stated that it is important to assure all perpetrators of violence that they will be forgiven because this can act as an incentive for them to refrain from violence and to allow the democratic will to take its course. In the final analysis, given that the majority view is that prosecutions should be conducted against alleged perpetrators of violence, this study argues that

⁶¹ The Interview was conducted on 14 May 2017 in Manyuchi Village, Bikita East.

⁶² The focus group discussion was conducted on 6 May 2017 at Mapari Lodge in Bikita East.

⁶³ The focus group discussion was conducted in the Matobo community on 22 May 2017.

what might work for Zimbabwe is to limit prosecution to those who committed heinous violence, and especially those who hold/formerly held influential positions at government, party, and community levels who are alleged to have committed or instigated the commission of violence. This is because given the history of amnesties and impunity in Zimbabwe; the blanket forgiving of perpetrators might be seen as representing continuities with the ‘impunity-clad’ past. The prosecution of a limited number of alleged perpetrators can be seen as representing a symbolic but essential gesture that Zimbabwe is metamorphosing from an “old order” to a “new order”.

8.3.2 *Institutional reforms*

It has emerged from this study that in most cases, state institutions (especially the army, the police, and the Central Intelligence Organisation) were involved in the egregious violations of human rights with a view to protect the “old order”. These institutions conducted overt and covert violent operations such as Operation *Murambatsvina*, Operation *Makavhotera Papi?* Operation *Hakudzokwi*, Operation *Chikorokoza Chapera*, and Operation *Tsuro* (Chitiyo 2009: 3). In chapter five, it was established that the Fifth Brigade and the Central Intelligence Organisation were the perpetrators of the *Gukurahundi* massacres. Interviewees in the Matobo community expressed the view that those institutions involved in the *Gukurahundi* violence have continued to be implicated in serious violations of human rights and in refusing the affected communities the opportunity to speak about *Gukurahundi*. This has eroded their trust in these institutions. The government has failed to guarantee the affected communities that the violence suffered during *Gukurahundi* will never again be perpetrated in future.

In chapter four, one of the concerns raised by the interviewees in the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe community was the politicisation of traditional leadership structures which are headed by village heads, headmen and chiefs. Some interviewees mentioned that these structures have been involved in the perpetration of violence against opposition supporters and in denying them access to food aid, land, food for work projects, community development projects, and agricultural inputs. The interviewees also stated that the army was involved in the establishment and violent operations of “ZANU-PF bases” in their community.

The same concerns were also raised by interviewees in the Bikita East and Bikita West communities as discussed in chapter five. The security sector is the most dreaded organ in Zimbabwe because of its history in the use of terror against ZANU-PF critics. Generally, there was a strong view among interviewees that the politicisation and militarisation of state institutions and the fusion between the state and the party to form the “party-state” have been one of the major impediments to healing and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. It was against this background that interviewees stated that the reforming of public institutions in order to foster the cultures of transparency, non-partisanship, accountability, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law is a crucial step in reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe.

In chapter two, this study argues that one of the most important steps which post-conflict and post-authoritarian governments should take is to reform state institutions with a view to send the strong and credible message that “never again” shall the violations of the past be allowed to recur. Institutional reforms show the government’s commitment to oversee a transition from a violent past to a peaceful and democratic order. They play an important role in addressing the root causes of conflict, eliminating cultures of violence and impunity, and promoting and upholding democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms (Machakanja, 2010). Lustration and vetting are some of the ways which can be used to reform institutions in a post-conflict or post-authoritarian state. Lustration is the process of prohibiting individuals who were associated with a violent past from holding public office. It serves to prevent the recurrence of gross human rights violations by people

who perpetrated or instigated those violations in the past and to restore citizens' trust and confidence in state institutions (Kenyan Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission, 2013: 6).

Vetting is a process through which people targeted for employment in a post-conflict or post-authoritarian state go through screenings with a view to evaluate their eligibility to work within public and private institutions and to establish whether they were responsible for crimes which were committed in the past (Kenyan Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission 2013: 26). Eppel (2003: 54-55) argues that lustration and vetting would make many victims "feel relieved to know that those who tortured them have been removed from positions of authority" and that it would serve to replace the need for dozens of trials for middle-ranking officials by restricting prosecutions to senior people in the government. One of the views which came out strongly during the interviews was that for reconciliation processes to be meaningful in Zimbabwe, those people who perpetrated or instigated violence should be removed from public office or be prohibited from holding public office in the future. For example, focus group participant 22M5 asked "how can people such as Emmerson Mnangwagwa continue to hold public office when he was the chief engineer of *Gukurahundi*? It is important for all perpetrators of violence to be weeded out of the system in order for Zimbabwe to have a clean system, a system which citizens can trust, embrace, and engage"⁶⁴.

Interviewee 15M3 also stated that "we need to purify our system. The system which we have currently is full of people whose hands are full of innocent blood. We cannot talk of reconciliation while we still have such people at the helm of our system. We need a people who fear God, a people who respect human life and dignity"⁶⁵. There was a strong view among interviewees that institutions such as the judiciary, the police, the army, and the Central Intelligence Organisation should be the major targets of the lustration exercise. Interviewee 26A1 stated that agents of the CIO are renowned for abducting, torturing, and killing ZANU-PF critics and that such people should never be allowed to hold any public office in a "new Zimbabwe"⁶⁶.

Lustration was regarded by some interviewees as an alternative to prosecution. For example, interviewee 26M2 stated that all of the perpetrators and instigators of violence should be forgiven but prohibited from holding public office⁶⁷. Another view which came out strongly was that apart from prohibiting perpetrators and instigators of political violence from holding public office, they should be dispossessed of possessions which they acquired through violence and corruption such as farms and business ventures. Interviewee 7M2 stated that in Zimbabwe, violence and corruption are closely related and that those people who committed human rights violations have also looted state resources. He further argued that such people should be dispossessed of these resources if reconciliation efforts are to be a success. This study argues that vetting and lustration can play a crucial role in reforming institutions and restoring public trust in them. However, if not conducted properly, they may be politically inspired and result in violations of human rights.

8.3.3 A Truth Commission?

In chapter two, this study extensively discussed the role of TCs in the quest for healing and reconciliation after a violent conflict. Using examples of TCs which were established in South Africa, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, the chapter discussed the strengths and weaknesses of TCs. In terms of strengths, the chapter argues that TCs can "excavate" the historical truth of the conflict; they provide a public forum for victims and perpetrators of violence to openly articulate their

⁶⁴ The focus group discussion was conducted on 22 May 2017 in Matobo.

⁶⁵ The interview was conducted in Maregere community, Bikita West.

⁶⁶ The interview was conducted in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe.

⁶⁷ The interview was conducted on 23 April 2017 in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe.

individual and collective narratives of the conflict in a sympathetic and safe environment; they engage the public and stimulate debate about political, moral, cultural, social, psychological, and spiritual issues which should be addressed during the reconciliation process; investigations by TCs can identify the root causes of the conflict and the individuals and institutions which failed to uphold human rights; and the findings and recommendations of TCs can be used to initiate the prosecution of alleged perpetrators and to inform institutional reforms.

As demonstrated by the findings in chapters four, five, and six, the unwillingness by the government to acknowledge the violent past, to allow affected individuals and communities to freely speak about their experiences and needs, and to excavate the truth about past conflicts are some of the major obstacles to reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. Victims of *Gukurahundi* and politically motivated violence have never had the opportunity to tell their stories through state-led reconciliation processes. As a result, the truth about these conflicts has remained hidden and this has made it difficult for affected individuals and communities to find closure. The government has continued to deny responsibility for *Gukurahundi*. For example, speaking during the launch of a national identity programme in Tsholotsho in July 2017, former Vice President, Phelekezela Mphoko, stated that “the disturbances that happened after independence were not because of President, Robert Mugabe’s problem, it was a Western conspiracy to destabilise the newly-independent state of Zimbabwe” (*The Herald*, 5 July 2017).

In chapter five, this study argues that since the signing of the Unity Accord in 1987, the state has used the security establishment, especially the police and the notorious CIO, to repress any discussions about *Gukurahundi*. It is actually difficult, frightening, and risky for individual researchers, NGOs, and other concerned actors to access the Matabeleland province with a view to conduct research about *Gukurahundi*⁶⁸. As discussed in chapter five, those people (such as Owen Maseko) who have attempted to tell the truth about *Gukurahundi* have been arrested, detained, harassed, intimidated, and tortured. The state maintains that *Gukurahundi* is a “closed chapter” which should remain shrouded in secrecy because talking about it will “open old wounds” and cause disunity. In chapters four, five, and six, the study also established that telling the truth about the politically motivated violence which engulfed the nation, especially from 2000, is regarded by many interviewees as an important step in reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe⁶⁹. It can be argued from the discussions in this study that reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe should include truth-telling if they are to achieve their objectives.

This makes the establishment of a TC necessary. However, although an argument is made in favour of a TC, it should be noted that telling the truth in and of itself is not a sufficient condition for healing and reconciliation. If not revealed rightly, the truth may end up causing more divisions and conflict between some of the victims and perpetrators. It is also argued in this study that for a TC to play an important role in reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe, it should be complemented by other faces of reconciliation such as criminal prosecutions, institutional reforms, and memorialisation. However, as discussed in chapter two, the study notes that TCs have a number of weaknesses.

⁶⁸ It was difficult for the author of this study to find focus group participants and individual interviewees during the interviews. This was because of the climate of fear which has characterised any discussions about *Gukurahundi*. Many potential participants refused to take part because of fear. It was also difficult for the author to be granted the permission to conduct the interviews in the Matobo community.

⁶⁹ In Bikita West, some interviewees mentioned that some victims of violence disappeared and it is believed that some were forcibly taken to Gonarezhou National Park where they were killed and improperly buried.

These include that governments are often unwilling/unable to (comprehensively) implement recommendations from TCs; TCs tend to conflate individual reconciliation with national reconciliation and this makes them less able to deal with individual trauma; they tend to assume that revealing the truth in and of itself enables societies to heal; factors such as their institutional design, their historical and contemporary context, the resources available to them, access to information, and their life span may constrict their capacity to excavate the truth and this may cause them to establish “half-truth”; and they tend to propose simplistic ways of “moving on” without radically and comprehensively dealing with the causes of the conflict.

8.3.4 Reparations

It has emerged from this study that Zimbabwe has gone through different forms of violent conflict whose impact on individuals, families, and societies has been destructive, polarizing, and traumatising. In terms of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities, the study has established in chapter five that the atrocities were characterised by myriad abuses such as the massive destruction of property, homesteads and livelihoods; loss of life; physical and psychological harm; torture; rape cases; disruption of social services such as health and education; and the displacement of scores of people. In terms of politically motivated violence, the case studies of the Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe and the Bikita East and West communities have revealed that many people were killed, maimed, tortured, had their limbs hacked, homesteads destroyed, and livelihoods confiscated or destroyed, especially between 2000 and 2008.

In chapter two, the study argued that reparations take material and non-material forms and that they help to restore the victims to their status before the violations occurred; to compensate, rehabilitate, and satisfy the victims; and to guarantee affected communities and the nation at large that the violations will never be repeated again. Some interviewees stated that reparations play an important role in “appeasing” the spirits of the dead because they are one way of acknowledging wrongdoing and that they are a gesture of the commitment by perpetrators to mend relations. Reparations have material and symbolic meanings.

It was against this background that some interviewees stated that reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe should involve a wide range of reparations such as the identification and punishment of perpetrators; exhumations and (re)burials of improperly buried victims; apologies; memorials; support for affected children; counselling; medical assistance, provision of tangible goods; the conduct of traditional ceremonies; the introduction of income generating projects; building of schools, hospitals, roads, and water facilities; compensation for destroyed homesteads and properties, and the provision of documents such as national identity cards and birth certificates to people in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. As discussed in chapter five, interviewee 24M2 stated that there are many adults and children in the Matobo community who do not have birth certificates because of *Gukurahundi*-related challenges such as the lack of death certificates of people who died during the conflict. Without identity documents, it is difficult for citizens to participate in governance processes such as voting and to access social services and different forms of opportunities.

In July 2017, former Vice President, Phelekezela Mphoko, who was also the Minister for Peace and Reconciliation, launched a national identity programme for Tsholotsho villagers at Tshino Primary School claiming that it was part of the peace and reconciliation process. Under the programme, those people who lost their parents due to *Gukurahundi* are provided with birth certificates. Mphoko acknowledged that “due to these disturbances, many people in Tsholotsho, Nkayi, Matabeleland South and Midlands don’t have birth certificates and identity cards (*The Herald*, 5 July 2017)”. However, these interventions have been criticised for being implemented as part of ZANU-PF’s

politics of electioneering: providing identity documents with a view to influence the people to vote for the party. For example, interviewee 24M2 stated that the issue of providing birth certificates for affected families is always raised by the government in relation to the conduct of elections. He further argued that this shows that the government is moved not by the desire to address *Gukurahundi*-related challenges but to pursue its own political interests. Mphoko also acknowledged that many of the people in Matabeleland are not able to read and write because they failed to go to school as a result of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities. The need for reparations in respect of *Gukurahundi* and politically motivated violence cannot therefore be underestimated.

However, it should be noted that Zimbabwe is a country that has been going through difficult economic times for decades. It is a country that needs to recover economically and is therefore unable to pay reparations on a large scale. If a reparations policy is to be implemented, it should not be ambitious in terms of its target because it is not feasible for all victims to be beneficiaries of the policy in terms of material assistance. This study therefore suggests that reparations may target victims of the most grievous crimes such as those who were maimed or orphaned. As discussed in chapter four, some victims expect reparations not from the government or other actors but from the perpetrators themselves. This view was especially held by those victims whose property or other possessions were either confiscated or destroyed by the perpetrators. The expectations are that the perpetrators or those who “hired” them to commit violence should return the confiscated possessions or compensate the victims in some other ways which are agreeable to both parties. It is therefore important that reparations processes in Zimbabwe take into consideration the need for community-based reparations which may be facilitated by traditional and community leaders.

8.3.5 *Memorialisation and reburials*

In chapters four and six, some interviewees stated that families were not allowed to mourn and properly bury their members who were killed through political violence, especially in 2008. In chapter five, the study has established that during the *Gukurahundi* atrocities, affected families and communities were also not allowed to mourn and bury their family members. For example, interviewee 25M2 narrated how she hurriedly buried her two year old son who had been killed by the Fifth Brigade. She said that she used sticks to dig a shallow grave in which she buried the child. Due to the fear of being killed by the Fifth Brigade if she would have been caught burying the baby, she could not mark the “grave” or memorialise the features which would make her remember the place where she buried her child. She further stated that sometimes she visits the forest where she buried her child with the intention to at least exhume the body and have it buried properly but she has failed to identify the place. The memory of her child troubles her, especially because she feels that “she is alone” in bearing it⁷⁰.

One of the common features of the violent conflicts which have occurred in Zimbabwe is that the suffering and experiences of victims have not been made part of the public domain. It is the affected individuals, families, and societies which have shouldered the burden of keeping the memory alive. The transference of the burden of memory from victims to the whole of society through the memorialisation of the violent past is a crucial step in reconciliation processes. This is because it eases the burden by enabling the nation to empathize with victims and to create spaces where victims and non-victims share the memory through discussing and memorializing the violations⁷¹. Memorialisation can also address the psycho-social effects of conflicts on the victims. It can be

⁷⁰ The interview was conducted in the Matobo community.

⁷¹ Interviewee 25M2 stated that creating public spaces where people share the memory of *Gukurahundi* can make victims believe that at least the nation cares about what they went through and that this can help in easing the burden of memory.

achieved through the creation of museums, statues, and memorials; the erection of tombstones; the turning of sites of notorious detention, torture, and massacres into memorial sites; artistic exhibitions and contributions; the naming of public institutions, buildings, streets, and highways after dead victims; the conducting of religious and cultural ceremonies; and the introduction of days of remembrance and public holidays (see Hamber and Wilson 2002: 39).

As discussed in chapter five, during a focus group discussion which was conducted in the Matobo community on 22 May 2017, participants 22M1, 22M3, 22M4, and 22M6 stated that the Bhalagwe camp in Matobo should be turned into a memorial monument in honor of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities in general and the atrocities which were committed at Bhalagwe in particular. They argued that this would enable the nation and the affected societies to collectively memorialise the violations which were committed during *Gukurahundi*. In chapters four and six, interviewees emphasised the need to memorialise the experiences of victims of political violence. However, the interviewees conceived memorialisation not in terms of the creation of museums, parks, or the naming of roads and other public buildings and places after the victims, but in terms of proper mourning of victims and the conduct of religious, cultural, and memorial rites.

Some interviewees expressed the view that the conduct of healing ceremonies and rituals can “cleanse” communities of misfortunes which are related to the politically motivated killing of victims. They expressed the belief that memorialisation enables families and the community to show respect for the victims, express remorse, to acknowledge and restore the dignity of survivors, and to send a strong “never again” message to the community through exposing the regrettable consequences of political violence on individuals, families, and communities. Another critical reconciliation step which should be taken in Zimbabwe is the exhumation and reburial of victims, especially those who were buried in mass graves during *Gukurahundi*. Speaking during the launch of a national identity programme in Tsholotsho in July 2017, former Vice President, Phelekezela Mphoko, stated that “there are mass graves here. It is unfortunate we can’t bury them, but we will make sure these people are given the respect they deserve” (*The Newsday Zimbabwe*, 6 July 2017).

Mphoko stated that the government will identify mass graves and build tombstones with a full list of the names of people who were buried in each grave (*The Newsday Zimbabwe*, 6 July 2017). However, the government’s approach is not in line with the needs of the affected communities. Affected families want the government to exhume victims and conduct forensic tests to identify each of them and then have each victim reburied properly. For example, interviewee 24M2 stated that “it is culturally unacceptable for many people to be buried in one grave, especially considering that many of the people who were buried in mass graves are unrelated. The government should identify each individual and then allow each family to bury their own relatives”. For those families which believe that ancestral spirits play a role in their lives, they would want their relatives to be buried near their homesteads so that they can visit their graves to conduct cultural rituals. This practice is difficult to conduct in the case where the dead are buried far from home and in mass graves.

8.4 WHO SHOULD DRIVE THE RECONCILIATION AGENDA IN ZIMBABWE?

One of the findings in this study is that if efforts towards healing and reconciliation are to be successful in Zimbabwe, they should not only look at what needs to be done but also at the actors who should take part in doing what needs to be done. This is primarily because reconciliation is a multi-faceted process which requires the collaboration of different actors and resources. On the basis of the findings in this study, this section examines the different actors who should be involved in the reconciliation project in Zimbabwe.

8.4.1 *The government*

The majority view among interviewees was that the government should initiate, drive, and facilitate reconciliation processes because without its involvement, local people are unlikely to support reconciliation processes which are not state-sanctioned because of fear, lack of trust, and the inability to agree on the mechanisms and fundamentals of the reconciliation agenda. However, they expressed the concern that in a state which is characterised by polarisation, repression, and authoritarianism, state-driven reconciliation processes are unable to address the needs of grassroots communities because they are mainly driven by the need to protect and promote the interests of those who have political and economic power and to protect perpetrators from being made accountable. It was from this point of view that many interviewees expressed the belief that in Zimbabwe, the state can play a meaningful role in healing and reconciliation processes following a democratic transition of power and the reforming of public institutions.

8.4.2 *Civil society*

Opinion was divided among interviewees in respect of the role that civil society has played and could play in reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. On the one hand, the majority of the interviewees expressed the belief that civil society is a critical player in the reconciliation project because “it is close to the people” (especially community based organisations); it is better able to know the needs of affected communities because of its capacity to conduct research; it is more engaging compared to the state; it is willing and able to empower communities to solve their own challenges; and it is able to implement crucial interventions such as psycho-social support, medical assistance, memorialisation projects, livelihoods projects, promoting awareness on transitional justice, and offering legal and paralegal assistance. In chapters four, five, and six, some interviewees stated that civil society has played a major role in offering victims the platform to tell their stories and that organisations such as Heal Zimbabwe Trust, Amani Trust, and the CCJP have played an essential role in promoting forgiveness, healing, and reconciliation at grassroots level. They have conducted seminars, conferences, and training programmes with a view to assist affected communities to deal with a troubled past.

On the other hand, some interviewees expressed the belief that civil society has failed and could not play a meaningful role in healing and reconciliation processes because it is “funded by the west”, its interventions are driven by donor interests and not those of the affected societies, and it has embedded itself in opposition politics. For example, interviewee 30M2 argued in favour of “de-colonizing” the peace building agenda. He stated that reconciliation interventions by civil society are based on the “neo-liberal template which was imported from the west” and that for this reason, they have missed the “ways of doing things” of the communities in which they have implemented their interventions. Instead, he argued that reconciliation interventions should be based on the cultural and religious norms of the affected societies⁷².

This study has also found that civil society’s capacity to contribute to healing and reconciliation has been affected by factors which are internal and external to it. These include the shortage of resources; poor coordination; weak institutional capacity; and the political environment which is characterised by polarisation, terror, intolerance of diversity, and the suppression of democratic freedoms. Civil society can therefore play a more enhanced role in a context in which it has access to resources, its activities are coordinated, and the political atmosphere is characterised by tolerance, peace, and respect for human rights and democratic freedoms.

⁷² The interview was conducted in the Nyika community in Bikita West.

8.4.3 Grassroots communities

The individuals and families who are based in the communities which experienced violations should be at the center of reconciliation processes. Reconciliation processes at grassroots level should be implemented following extensive consultations with the people. Grassroots communities should take a leading role and should be allowed to use traditional and cultural mechanisms of conflict resolution, provided that they do not violate human rights. If reconciliation processes are “imposed from above” there could be a clash between state-led and bottom-up processes.

8.4.4 Traditional leaders

Traditional leaders hold an influential space in their communities. They are the custodians of the values and principles of the communities which they lead. However, the capacity of traditional leaders to promote healing and reconciliation has been compromised by the politicisation of these structures by ZANU-PF. As a result of this politicisation, some traditional leaders have been implicated in the perpetration or condonation of violence and other forms of abuses against opposition supporters such as refusing them access to food aid, development projects, land, and farming inputs which are distributed by the government and non-governmental organisations. It was against this background that some interviewees expressed the view that if they are depoliticized, traditional leaders can play a crucial role in reconciliation processes, especially through the use of cultural and religious practices and norms.

8.4.5 The international community

Generally, interviewees agreed that the international community has a role to play in healing and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. However, they differed in that some expressed a restrictive while others expressed an inclusive qualification of “other countries”. The former argued that only African countries and those countries that are “friendly” to Zimbabwe should play a role in reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. Their argument was based on the belief that some countries, especially those whose relations with Zimbabwe are hostile, cannot be expected to play a role because they are only concerned with protecting and advancing their economic interests at the expense of the interests of the masses. The latter conceived “other countries” as all countries which are willing and able to assist reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe, especially those with a record of supporting human rights and development projects in developing countries. However, although interviewees differed in terms of their espousal of either a restrictive or inclusive qualification, there was a shared view that the role of other countries should be to provide advice, technical assistance, expertise, and funding to reconciliation processes and that external assistance should not be used to denigrate and undermine the integrity and sovereignty of Zimbabwe as well as the local beliefs, values, and practices in reconciliation processes.

8.5 CONCLUSION

Zimbabwe is a country that has experienced different forms of violent conflict in both the pre- and post-independence periods. This study found that the country needs to implement inclusive mechanisms and processes which are aimed at enabling it to heal the violent and traumatic past in order to foster reconciliation and social cohesion. At different turning points, the government has taken some steps couched in reconciliation terms. In 1980, it adopted the policy of reconciliation in respect of the atrocities committed during the liberation struggle. In 1987, ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU signed the Unity Accord in respect of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities. In 2009, the Government of National Unity established the now defunct Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and

Integration in respect of pre-and post-independence conflicts, particularly the politically motivated violence committed from 2000 onward.

However, the conclusion made in this study is that these interventions failed because they were characterised by many weaknesses and shortcomings. These include that they were primarily informed and driven by political motivations and not the desire to promote healing and reconciliation; that they took a top-down approach in which affected communities and other actors such as civil society and affected communities were not consulted and engaged; that they focused on promoting reconciliation without justice through the “forgive and forget” mantra; and that they were not characterised by the implementation of essential faces of reconciliation such as truth-telling, acknowledgement, apologies, reparations, memorialisation, and institutional reforms. Continuities in the legacies and cultures of denial, violence, abductions, impunity, and repression of democratic freedoms have also made the implementation of reconciliation processes and mechanisms difficult. It is against this background that the majority of interviews expressed the view that meaningful reconciliation processes are only possible in a post-authoritarian Zimbabwean society. It is argued in this study that in order to be successful, reconciliation processes should be multi-faceted (including retributive and restorative justice) and should include different actors such as government, civil society, traditional leaders, community leaders, the church, grassroots communities, and the international community. They should include state-led, individual-oriented, and community-based and -led initiatives which interact and complement each other.

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ANNEXES

Ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal



15 March 2017

Mr Moses Tofa 215076737
School of Social Sciences
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Tofa

Protocol Reference Number: HSS/1040/016M
Project Title: An analysis of state-led reconciliation processes: The case of Zimbabwe

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 11 July 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully


.....
Dr Shenika Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr Candice Moore
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Maheshvari Naidu
cc School Administrator: Mr N Memela & Ms N Radebe

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



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Informed consent document in English



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Dear Participant,

My name is **Moses Tofa**, Student Number 215076737. I am a PhD candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus. The title of my research is: **An analysis of state-led reconciliation processes: The case of Zimbabwe**. The aim of the study is to examine the strengths and shortcomings of state-led reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe, especially in respect of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities and election-related violence from 2000-2008. It also seeks to understand how state-led and community-led reconciliation processes can reinforce each other so as to ensure that reconciliation processes are inclusive, comprehensive, and sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the affected communities. I am interested in interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter. Please note that:

- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only;
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action;
- Your views in this interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study;
- The interview will take about (45 mins);
- The record as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to myself and my supervisors. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning;
- If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures).

I can be contacted at: School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, Durban. Email: moses.anogona@gmail.com; Cell: +27 (0) 836239029. My supervisor is Dr Candice Moore who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Pietermaritzburg Campus / Howard College Campus, Durban of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: Email: moorec@ukzn.ac.za; Phone number: +27 (031) 2603848. The Humanities

and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za, Phone number +27 312603587.

Declaration

I,.....(*full names of participant*) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate. I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable).

Signature:

Date:

Informed consent document in vernacular



Anodiwa mupinduri,

Zita rangu ndinonzi Moses Tofa, nhamba yangu yekudzida inonzi 215076737. Ndirikudzidza zvidzidzo zvepamusoro pa Yunivhesiti ye Kwazulu Natal ku Pietermaritzburg campus mu South Africa. Musoro we tsvagiridzo yangu unotarisa nyaya yekuyanana mushure menhirizhonga dzakaitika muZimbabwe kubva muna 1980 kusvika parizvino kunyanya mushure meGukurahundi uye mhirizhonga yezvesarudzo dzakaitika kubva muna 2000 kusvika muna 2008. Chinangwa chemusoro uyu ndechekutarisa kuti yanano dzinotungamirwa nehurumende dzinogona here kugadzirisa zvichemo zvevanhu vakatadzirwa. Chinangwa changu ndeche kukubvunzai kuti ndinzwe maonero amunoita maererano nezve nyaya iyi.

Rangarirai kuti:

Umbowo hwamuchapa huchashandiswa panezvandiri kunyora chete;

Isarudzo yenyu kupindira mutsvagiridzo iyi. Makasununguka kupindira, kuramba kupindira, uye kusiira pindiro yenyu panzira kana mukaona kuti hamuchakwanisi kuindirira mberi. Hapana zvamunoiwa kana mukasarudza kutora chere danho ramada panematanho ataurwa pamusoro;

Pfungwa dzamuchapa mutsvagiridzo iyi dzichange dzisina anoziva kuti ndedzenyu. Zita renyu harinyorwi mutsvagiridzo iyi, tiningoda maonero enyu;

Tsvagiridzo iyi ichatora maninitsi anoita makumi mana nemashanu (45);

Zvose zvamuchataura zvichachengetedzwa zvakanaka mufaira rinongoonekwa neni neavo varikundidzidzisa. Zvichazoparadzwa kwapera makore mashanu (5) maererano nemitemo yeYunivhesiti yeKwazulu Natal;

Kana muchibvuma kupindira mutsvagiridzo ino, ndinokumbira kuti musaine pepa iri (ndichakupai rimwe pepa rekuti muise signature yenyu).

Ndinobatika pa: Chikoro che Social Sciences, Yunivhesiti ye KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, Durban. Email yangu inoti: moses.anogona@gmail.com; Foni yangu inoti: +27 (0) 836239029. Mudzidzisi wangu anonzi Dhokota Candice Moore anobatika pachikoro che Social Sciences, Pietermaritzburg Campus / Howard College Campus, Durban of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Email yake inoti: moorec@ukzn.ac.za; Foni yake inoti: +27 (031) 2603848. Dare rinoona nezve tsika dzetsvagiridzo muchikoro che Humanities ne

Social Sciences rinobatika panotevera: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email yavo inoti: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za, Foni yavo inoti +27 312603587.

Declaration

Ini Ini..... (zita rakazara)
ndinopupura kuti ndinonzwisisa zvakanyorwa mupepa rino uye chinangwa chetsvagiridzo iyi. Ndinobvuma kupindira mutsvagiridzo iyi. Ndinonzwisisa kuti ndinogona kusarudza kubuda mutsvagiridzo iyi chero nguva kana ndichida. Ndononzwisisa chinangwa chetsvagiridzo iyi uye ndinobvuma kuipindura. Ndinobvuma/ handibvume kuti nditapwe panezvandichataura (kana zvakakodzera).

Signature:

Zuva:

4. Interviews and focus group discussions schedule and guide

Individual Interviews

Place of interview	Dates	Interviewee code	Total number of interviews
Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe District	22-30 April 2017	22A1 23A1 23A2 24A1 24A2	10
		25A1 26A1 26A2 28A1 30A1	
Bikita	07-14 May 2017	7M1 7M2 8M1 9M1 11M1	10
		12M1 13M1 14M1 14M2 14M3	
Matobo	23-26 May 2017	23M1 23M2 24M1 24M2 25M1	10
		25M2 25M3 26M1 26M2 26M3	
Nyika District	28-31 May 2017	28M1 28M2 29M1 29M2 30M1	10
		30M2 30M3 31M1 31M2 31M3	
Total interviews			40

Focus group discussions

Place of focus group discussion	Date	Participant code	Total number of participants
Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe District	21 April 2017	21A1 21A2 21A3 21A4	7
		21A5 21A6 21A7	
Bikita	6 May 2017	6M1 6M2 6M3 6M4	7
		6M5 6M6 6M7	
Matobo	22 May 2017	22M1 22M2 22M3 22M4	7
		22M5 22M6 22M7	
Total number of participants			21

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Interview guide for individual interviews which were conducted in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe, Bikita and Matobo Districts: Note that the first set of questions were asked in these three districts while the second set of questions were asked in particular districts.

1. Do you think that Zimbabwe has experienced forms of conflict and violence which has made the implementation of reconciliation processes necessary? State and explain.
2. Are you aware of any reconciliation processes which were implemented by the government since independence? If yes, do you think that they were able to achieve healing and reconciliation? Explain.
3. Are you aware of any reconciliation processes which are being currently implemented by the government? If yes, state them and explain whether you believe that they can achieve healing and reconciliation.
4. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of reconciliation processes which are/have been led by government?

5. Do you think that state-led and community-led reconciliation processes have a relationship? Please explain.
6. Do you think that the Unity Accord between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU was effective in addressing the reconciliation needs of the affected communities? Please explain yourself?
7. Do you think that the reconciliation processes which were implemented by the Government of National Unity managed to address the needs of the affected communities? Please explain.
8. Apart from the state, which actors have promoted reconciliation processes (in this community)? Explain whether reconciliation processes by these actors have been effective.
9. Which actors do you think should be involved in driving the reconciliation agenda in Zimbabwe and why?
10. What do you think are the reconciliation needs of the communities which were affected by violence?
11. What are the reconciliation needs of people in this community?
12. What do you think needs to be done in order to address the reconciliation needs and aspirations of communities which were affected by violence?
13. Are there any initiatives which were taken by the affected communities to try and cope with a violent past?
14. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of reconciliation processes which are led by the community?
15. Do you think that inclusive reconciliation processes can strengthen democracy and promote a human rights culture? If so how?

Questions which were asked specifically in the Matobo community
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- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the violations which were committed during <i>Gukurahundi</i> and what has been their impact on the affected communities? 2. Who do you think were the perpetrators of <i>Gukurahundi</i> and what do you think were their objectives? 3. Are there any interventions which were taken to try and address <i>Gukurahundi</i>? If so, by who and what is your evaluation of the interventions? 4. What do you think needs to be done in order to deal with <i>Gukurahundi</i>? |
|--|

Questions which were asked specifically in the Bikita district

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you know about the then Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration? 2. If so, are you aware of the healing and reconciliation interventions by this organ? 3. If so, what is your evaluation of these interventions? |
|--|

Interview guide for individual interviews conducted in Nyika District
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- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are you aware of reconciliation interventions which were conducted in this community by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace? 2. If so, what are they and how do you evaluate them? 3. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of healing and reconciliation interventions which are led by civil society? |
|---|

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Guide for a focus group discussion conducted in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the forms of violations which were committed in this district? 2. Who were the victims and who were the perpetrators? 3. What do you think are the reconciliation needs and aspirations of this community? What do you think needs to be done to address these? 4. Has the state made some reconciliation interventions in this community? If so, what is your evaluation of these interventions? 5. Are there any other actors who have promoted healing and reconciliation processes in this district? If so, who are they and what is your evaluation of their interventions? |
|--|

6. Are there any reconciliation processes which were undertaken by the community members themselves? If, so, what have been their strengths and weaknesses?
7. What do you think is the relationship between those reconciliation interventions which are taken by the community and those which are taken by government?

Guide for a focus group discussion conducted in Bikita

1. What are the forms of violations which were committed in this district?
2. What are the reconciliation needs of the people of Bikita district? What do you think needs to be done to address these?
3. Do you know about the then Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration?
4. If so, are you aware of the healing and reconciliation interventions by this organ?
5. Is so, what is your evaluation of these interventions?
6. Are there any reconciliation processes which were undertaken by the community members themselves?
7. If yes, what do you think were their strengths and weaknesses?

Guide for a focus group discussion conducted in Matobo

1. What are the forms of violations which were committed during *Gukurahundi* and what has been their impact on the affected communities?
2. What are the reconciliation needs of the people of Matobo district? What do you think needs to be done to address them?
3. Who do you think were the perpetrators of *Gukurahundi* and what do you think were their objectives?
4. Are there any interventions which were taken to try and address *Gukurahundi*? If so, by who and what is your evaluation of the interventions?
5. What do you think needs to be done in order to deal with *Gukurahundi*?
6. Who should play a role in these processes, and what should be their role?
7. Are there any community-based reconciliation processes which were conducted to try and deal with *Gukurahundi*?
8. If so, who led them and what do you think are their strengths and weaknesses?

Turnitin report

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