

**IN THE SHADOW OF THE GLOBAL POLITICAL AGREEMENT (GPA):
AN EXEGESIS OF THE ROLE OF THE JOINT MONITORING AND
IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE (JOMIC) AS AN INSTRUMENT OF
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN ZIMBABWE**

Tagarirofa Jacob

Lecturer, Dept. of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe

David Tobias

Lecturer, Dept. of History and Development Studies, Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe

Introduction

The paper explores the implications of the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC) in terms of its controversial role in the Zimbabwe Global Political Agreement (GPA). This Committee came under serious attacks after it failed to ensure that the three warring political parties in the inclusive government, namely the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU PF), Movement for Democratic Change –Tsvangirai (MDC-T) and Movement for Democratic Change- Mutambara (MDC-M), implemented resolutions that had been agreed upon in the power-sharing pact couched as the GPA. This paper argues that the JOMIC failed to meaningfully deal with its primary mission because from its formation it was compromised and flawed and therefore could not take any decisive actions in dealing with the numerous violations of the GPA provisions by leading signatories in the GPA. This was against the provisions of Article XXII of the GPA that clearly specified the mandate of the JOMIC set out as to monitor the implementation of the agreement and to meaningfully promote tolerance among all members (Machakanja, 2011). The paper also maintains that the failure by this organ to achieve its desired goals was compounded by the improper membership of the organ which left out critical stakeholders such as traditional and other community leaders. This helped little in providing solutions to the fighting parties. In addition, because the organ was not backed by any

law, it lacked legal terms of references. This meant that it could not arrest or prosecute anyone who violated the power sharing pact. The least it could was to urge members of the GPA to implement the agreed issues and verbally condemn violence through the media. As such, the organ was reduced to a mere pressure group. Some political principals took advantage of this lacuna to pursue non-compliance and promote their own personal and party political interests. On the whole, this encouraged mistrust and suspicion among the three political movements who were signatories to the GPA who continued to latently struggle for both economic and political advantages from their time in the unity government between 2009 and 2013. Also in their conduct, the partisan members were typical of intellectual politicians who by virtue of their status became elitist and became divorced from both rural and urban communities which they were supposed to take on board in their conflict resolution mandate. The paper recommends, in the end, that if such organs are to be useful in any future conflict management engagement, they should have legal terms of references, non-partisan membership and seriously consider African traditional methods of conflict resolution. This entails that leaders such as village heads and chiefs, should be included in such bodies in order to achieve holistic peace and reconciliation in Africa, and in Zimbabwe in particular. Methodologically, this is a qualitative study which made use of data gathered through oral interviews and from JOMIC newsletters and from the media in general.

Background and setting of the problematic

The history of Africa is littered with cases of violence from pre-colonial, colonial and even in the post-colonial period. Upon the attainment of independence the majority of the people thought that wars and violence had come to an end as African leaders became pre-occupied with nation building. Unfortunately the situation on the ground proved that this idea could have been unfounded. From 1957, when the first black African country, Ghana, attained its independence right up to 2016, Africa has experienced unprecedented various levels of political violence. The situation has usually become highly explosive during election times. A glaring example can be drawn from the Kenyan situation. The incumbent President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki, had formed the Party of National Unity (PNU) in 2007 tussled with Raila Odinga of Orange Democratic

Movement (ODM) in a political dispute that had serious ethnic undertones. The available evidence indicates that after the two went to polls, immediately upon the announcement of the election results the nation was rocked by unprecedented levels of political violence (Ahere, 2013: 29). The situation did not improve until after there were some mediation talks which resulted in a power sharing arrangement.

The decolonisation of the Belgian Congo in 1960 echoes the same views on the concept of violence. Many years later this vast and potentially wealthy territory has remained an epicentre for political instability through coups and counter-coups (Cooper 2009: 164). The culture of violence in Congo can be stretched back to the reign of Patrice Lumumba who happened to be the first Prime Minister of the country and Kasavubu as President in 1960. From there onward so many political parties were formed from different nationalists who ultimately failed to come to terms and speak with one voice on the new constitution of the country (Ayandele *et al* 1981:370). By 1961 Lumumba had been dismissed and Joseph Mobutu an army commander was called to form a government. The situation did not change, in 1965 Mobutu overthrew President Kasavubu and Congo fell under tight military rule. His regime was characterised by corrupt and undemocratic elements, he could hire and fire appointees to keep them loyal and intimidated (Cooper 2009:166). His leadership style generated resistance and a perpetual culture of political violence together with suspicion and mistrust between the future leaders and the general populace. The political violence continued even in the New Millennium, for instance in 2001 the then president, Laurent Desire Kabila, was killed by one of his bodyguards and was succeeded by his son, Joseph Kabila (Ibid:168). Taken in this case, political violence which was ethnically induced remained the order of the day. Peace was only ensured after Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola had intervened on the side of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) government. Taken in this context the DRC has a long history of torture and violence from Mobutu Sese Seko to Joseph Kabila's regime. The runoff between president Kabila and his vice, Jean Pierre Bemba, in October 2006 was characterised by a loss of many lives. Today, because of conflict and violence the majority of the people in DRC find themselves in the biblical Adam and Eve situation where they live in paradise but have no clothes. DRC remained a failed state despite

the fact that it is one of Africa's most endowed in mineral resources (Ewusi and Butera 2012:3). Marongwe (2015) concurs with the same sentiments and argues that the country has got a mineral wealth worth US\$24 trillion yet the generality of the population languishes under the merciless hoof of poverty. This, thus, brings to fore the paradox of the availability of rich continental wealth and the existence of extreme poverty. This has in turn made it impossible for nations, such as the DRC, to maintain peace and as such most regimes are preoccupied with the business of trying to resolve conflicts which are both politically and economically motivated.

The Zimbabwean crisis of the New Millennium which resulted in the formation GNU in 2009 is not an exception. Although it is complex and dynamic in terms of causes, at the core of this crisis was the land issue and the question of opposition politics (Matondi, 2012: 7). It is very important to note the post independent history of Africa is littered with cases and instances where certain political leaders made attempts to turn their nations into one party states and it is this political metamorphosis which has culminated in the proliferation of political stalemates and related crises. We argue that, one party state politics became very fashionable especially among some African states after the attainment of independence and it is pathetic to note that some states have covertly tried to install it in their political trajectories through tempering with the constitution to extent and install constitutional and electoral systems and structures which lengthen their terms of office and ensure their recurrently win elections, yet they claim to be democracies. A current case in point is the recent political development in Democratic Republic of Congo where the incumbent president Joseph Kabila is meddling with the constitution to seek a third term in office (The Herald, 17 November, 2016). This development epitomises the historical path of Zimbabwe's political oscillations which characteristically exhibited similar sentiments through various constitutional amendments meant to ensure the longevity of presidential terms of the ruling Zanu PF. Nkwame Nkrumah of Ghana was the one who seemingly set the ball rolling. He banned all other political parties, amended the constitution, and did everything within his reach to make sure that his Convention People's Party gained a great deal of domination and influence. Other countries like Zambia, Tanzania, and Libya followed suit. Others like Kamuzu Banda of Malawi declared themselves life presidents. The major reason was that they believed

that rival parties were a recipe for disunity. There was also a general belief that opposition parties would further the interest of foreign powers. The Zimbabwean situation is therefore not an exception insofar as it epitomises and transcends these stated cases as the President has technically been declared a life president by virtue of the successive election ‘victories’ since 1980. This political orientation was institutionalized when in 1987 the Robert Mugabe government took the most important step towards the creation of a one party state (Herbst 1990:237). In this regard, party political competition in Zimbabwe was supposed to be minimised or if possible come to an end. This generated a great deal of resistance and criticism especially from the University of Zimbabwe students who accused the government of curtailing freedoms of political participation among the citizens. However, the formation of Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) eventually failed the project as it contested the 1990 elections. To this end opposition politics was never genuinely accepted as a competitor rather it was considered as an enemy to the state. The causes and events which led to the crisis of 2008 were wide and dynamic. At the core of the crisis was the controversial Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) which was officially launched in July 2000 (Marongwe 2003:155). In this context Zimbabwe become a deeply polarised society, with one section of the population strongly in support of the government and the other section solidly behind the political opposition (The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe, 2000: 21). The situation was worsened by the rise of opposition politics which was perceived to be supported by in the west in its regime change agenda (*The Standard*, 25 May -31 May 2008). Each political party had its share in causing political violence and as such there were accusations and counter accusations as the interparty conflicts assumed unprecedented levels.

The rejection of the draft constitution by the electorate in February, 2000 acutely signalled the beginning of a campaign of state terror which was directed against MDC and its supporters especially white commercial farmers who were alleged to be bankrolling MDC activities. This development was the first electoral challenge faced by the ZANU PF -led government since independence (The Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice 2000:32) Although there were many strategies employed by both political parties to canvass for support, the establishment of

bases and forced gathering especially by ZANU PF seemed to have worsened the polarisation of the communities. This had given rise to political instability which culminated in the highly contested harmonised presidential elections of 2008. The campaigns prior to the elections were characterised by a great deal atrocious incidence of violence which include beatings, torture, destruction of homes and property and seizure of assets (Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe 2009: 43).The major political parties, that is, the two MDC formations and ZANU PF, accused each other of inciting a widespread political violence in both urban and rural areas of Zimbabwe (ibid). Taken in this context there were accusations and counter accusations, ZANU PF party and its top leadership accused MDC and its leadership of being a by-product of foreign influence that aimed at regime change. It went further to blame MDC formations for the isolation of Zimbabwe from the international community through economic sanctions which resulted in the total collapse of the country (ZANU PF Magazine, 2008: 2). On the other side, the MDC formations accused ZANU PF of having failed to deliver on the development aspirations of the nation. They further emphasised Mugabe’s advanced age and health woes, the ZANU-PF succession conundrum, the controversial land reform, corruption within ZANU PF party and government, its hegemonic and its authoritarian powers for the governance failure and economic meltdown. The crisis was heightened in the 2008, 27 June presidential election run-off which eventually became a ‘one man race’ of president Mugabe when Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC-T withdrew citing high levels of violence and other related electoral mal-practices like the potential rigging of the same election. There were allegations of political violence, abductions, killings and burning of homes from both parties and this further throttled the credibility of the rerun. Machakanja (2009) confirms that, the political violence which characterized the run-off election of 27 June 2008 was not only mostly located in the rural areas, but, signalled how the extent of the political crisis that the country was grappling with. The consequential dilapidation of the social fabric as in the severing of social relations and cohesion through excessive loss of life led MDC to withdraw from the rerun as they allegedly attributed their action to the need to signal a protestation against the credibility of the election. This resulted in Zanu PF being crowned the winner and President Mugabe assuming office. This was pathetically followed by the exacerbation of the economic woes which were again seen as a culmination of the political

stalemate between Zanu PF and MDC. The political and economic implications of this nascent political trajectory precipitated in numerous negotiations between the warring parties with South African government as a mediator. Whether the outcome of the negotiation efforts that resulted in the Global Political Agreement was sincere or not, at least it managed to stagnate the political stalemate between MDC and Zanu PF (Tagarirofa, 2013).

Tagarirofa (2013) further postulates that, the misconception of the GPA as a remedy for Zimbabwe's political quagmire has not only signaled the inherent inadequacies of vague political agreements as positive strategies for the installation of peace, social cohesion and development in the aftermath of protracted intra-state political violence rather, its deficiencies as a political panacea hints to the need for a microscopic scrutiny of whether the presumed cohesive and transformative effect indeed cascaded to all the levels of society especially the rural and at the ward level or it remained confined to the urban dichotomy. The vindication of this notion has been based on the observation that, political rivalry at national level persisted despite the 'agreement'; national institutions meant to uphold justice, peace and social cohesion, such as the judiciary system and law enforcement agents were compromised since they seemingly exhibited partisan inclinations; social institutions meant for post-conflict transformation and peace-building at the lower layers of the society especially at ward level, such as civic organizations and the family were corrupted through sabotage and family disintegration respectively; and the rural institutions meant to espouse rural development and sustainable livelihoods or transformation were destroyed (Tagarirofa, 2013). The crumbling of local community leadership structures through patronage and political interference cannot be overemphasized. These obstructions mostly affected rural life through throttling the very fundamental social infrastructure necessary for consolidation of peace, social cohesion and social transformation or development. This dilapidation of the social mechanisms necessary for the attainment of a stable and peaceful society also stifled the national healing and reconciliatory efforts at the lower levels of society rendering the much anticipated peace, social cohesion and positive social transformation futile hence worsening the crisis. As such, the GPA as a framework seems to have fallen short in attaining one of its objectives, which is elimination of political hostilities;

and the restoration of peace and social cohesion at ward level. This deficiency provoked the need for a particular anatomy of the mandate and composition of JOMIC which was tasked to ensure a pragmatic conflict resolution strategy which would in turn usher favorable conditions for peace and positive social transformation in most affected areas.

The Formation, Composition and Mandate of the JOMIC

JOMIC was a creation set up by the Global Political Agreement. Before it was disbanded, it was widely condemned for its inherent inadequacies especially in its failure to live up to its mandate due to insufficient monitoring capacity among other issues (Crisis Group Africa 2011). It was constituted under Article XXII of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) signed on September 15 2008 between the leaders of Zanu PF, MDC-T and MDC from which “joint” comes from. The committee was composed of 12 senior members, four each from the three signatory parties to the GPA. The committee was co-chaired on a monthly rotational basis by leaders of the parties’ representative members. It needs to be stressed that all 12 members of Jomic are senior members in their own political parties. In short, the functions of Jomic were to ensure the full implementation of the GPA, create mutual trust between the parties, promote continuous dialogue and to receive “reports and complaints” relating to the implementation of the GPA (Machakanja, 2009). Jomic was the “principal body dealing with issues of compliance and monitoring” of the GPA (Manyama, 2013:23).

It was a framework enabling the three political parties under the GPA to “channel all complaints, grievances, concerns and issues relating to compliance with this agreement through Jomic and refrain from any conduct which might undermine the spirit of cooperation necessary” to fully implement it (The Standard, 29 May, 2010). Jomic was always castigated for not “doing anything” or “not doing enough” to enforce compliance with the provisions of the GPA by the signatory parties (Munikwa, 2011). Many have given it denigratory names such as a ‘toothless dog’ since it was always suspected of being an agency of one party or the other. However, we argue that such allegations were based on crude determinism since it was not clear why and how a committee composed of four senior members each from all the three parties to the GPA would

be an agency of one of them. Jomic is in fact the collective face of the three political parties in action.

A fundamental function of Jomic was to monitor compliance of the three parties with the provisions and principles of GPA. It was also its mandate to receive complaints from any member of society or group, including political parties, about the implementation or lack thereof of the GPA (Tshuma, 2010). It was therefore expected to ‘sensitise’ the principals to the GPA, President Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai and Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara about these complaints and deficiencies in the implementation of the GPA as a bedrock for the installation and institutionalization of political harmony and operational cohesion in the aftermath of the historic violent elections.

The coalition government in which Mugabe became the President and Tsvangirai as the Prime Minister though temporarily brought some sanity and remarkable reconstruction of the economy in the long-run it proved that the two ‘bed’ fellows could not peacefully co-exist. The two latently struggled to consolidate their political power and control during the lifespan of the GNU in preparation of the on-coming presidential elections. According to Muzondidya (2009:50) the ability of opposition parties to use their leverage during this phase was restricted. The major reason was that ZANU PF was not interested in any reforms that would loosen its hold on power. It grudgingly agreed on some demands which were less significant in the destabilization of its structural position in the whole political scheme but was bent on pushing its own agenda which would result in legitimising itself. Such tension and mistrust also affected the operations of the organs which were formed under GNU.

The Findings and lessons from JOMIC

It is in the context of a trajectory of political violence of presidential run-off of 2008 controversial elections that JOMIC is to be assessed in terms of its set goals as stipulated above. According to the GPA (2008) the major goal of JOMIC was to ensure the implementation of the agreed 24 issues and to act as a platform for parties in GPA to solve their grievances amicably. The organ managed to bring some warring political party members together in some urban

centres like Mbare where people were encouraged to desist from violent acts but exercise political tolerance. Although there were some notable achievements from here to there, the role of JOMIC in achieving its main objectives remains controversial. That is the implementation of issues agreed in the GPA. A great deal of effort was exerted to encourage the political formations implement the terms of GNU. Some of the issues which it failed to resolve included the controversial sharing of governorships, opening up of air waves, removal of sanctions, foreign broadcasts and nothing much was being said on the compensation of victims political violence of 2008 presidential run-off (JOMIC NEWS, Second Quarter, 2012:4). The research established that the spirit of non-compliance among the principals was one of the factors which substantially contributed to the failure of the three parties in the inclusive government to achieve the set goals. It became visible that there were so many cases of suspicion and mutual mistrust especially between President Robert Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai. The scenario was worsened by the fact that recommendations were usually brushed aside and ignored while the will of President Mugabe would normally prevail (Zaba 2011: 9-10). The two mentioned above, at one time declared their displeasure with GPA arrangement and pushed for an early election to end the shaky coalition government (Ibid). On another occasion, on 13 April, 2009 the then Minister of Information and Communication in the Zimbabwe inclusive government, Nelson Chamisa, threatened to resign over the arbitrary action by the President Mugabe. He accused him of attempting to usurp some of his ministerial powers and to transferring them to fellow ZANU PF Christopher Mushowe, the then Minister of Transport and Communication (Mapuva2010:11). We reason that this was a candid exhibition of the rigidity characterising Zanu PF's failure to be flexible to the provisions of the GPA. There continued to be an escalation of politically motivated violence nationally, outstanding non-fulfilling of some of the greed issues, continuing harassment of journalists among other outstanding issues (JOMIC NEWS, Second Quarter, 2012:4). Owing to all these, Tsvangirai at one time actually threatened to pull out of GPA. This paused a mammoth task for the JOMIC as his withdrawal from the inclusive government would create a fertile ground for further political polarisation in the country at a time when the organ was preoccupied by coming up with activities and strategies to establish peace and political tolerance throughout the country.

The other weakness of the organisation emanated from its formation and membership composition which was characterised by people of divergent political backgrounds. These were the very people who were tasked to implement GPA terms and then at the same time were expected to comply with the implementation of the agreed issues. This became more apparent as the organ was formed to encompass four senior members from the ZANU PF, four senior members from MDC-T and four more from MDC-M. This was a great challenge because the very people who were supposed to implement the agreed issues were also expected to be the evaluators of the progress by virtue of being members of JOMIC. It was to be co-chaired by members from the parties. According to Hlatywayo and Mukono (2015: 275) it had full time secretariat at the national level comprising the national coordinator, the communications manager, one political liaison officer from each of the three political parties and the programme manager. Later on, principal liaison committees were set up in the country's ten provinces. The committees were composed of 4 senior provincial leaders from each of the three political parties designated as provincial chairlady, principal chairlady, provincial youth chairperson and the principal organising secretary and commissar (Ibid). Such evidence indicates pretty well that members of JOMIC had different political backgrounds which from time to time continued to influence their operations in the organisation. They were interested parties and therefore had conflict of interest in the operations of the organ. There was no way they could support anything which was not furthering the interest of their parties particularly given the fact that the president and the prime minister were always contesting on certain issues. This therefore jeopardised and compromised JOMIC's capabilities and abilities in its quest to promote tolerance, trust, peace and the implementation of the agreed issues under GPA. In other words, the warring parties were thus left to solve their own issues and at the same time to monitor themselves. This was not really possible given the different backgrounds of these parties in light of their history and political ideologies. The bottom line was the members of GPA were the same members of JOMIC.

Furthermore the organisation displayed an elitist flair as evidenced by the appointment of educated party members without making serious efforts to ensure the representation of the rural

communities in which much of the political violence had happened (JOMIC NEWS, First Quarter, 2013). Major decisions were done at national level and nothing was done to include the traditional leadership which is usually central and indispensable when it comes to dealing with local governance issues in rural areas. As if that was not enough, more than forty four brand new, modern porch vehicles were acquired for the use in travelling and this further strengthened their urbanite character. To make matters even worse most of the activities were concentrated in major urban centres at the expense of rural communities. Much of the time and finance was spent on inter-party weekly meetings especially in major towns which include Harare and Chitungwiza. Some meetings were held at the State House though occasionally they would travel around the ten provinces (Ibid). Having hit a brick wall in terms of implementation of major issues, the organ ended up spending more time on travelling, joint clean up exercises became common together with soccer matches under the banner of trust building and national unity (JOMIC News, 2013:6). Furthermore, probably owing to frustration they seemed to have developed a wrong priority as evidenced by a multiplicity of visits and tours around the region visiting places like Rwanda, Burundi and South Africa. They even participated in the exhibition at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF) in Bulawayo in 2012. More workshops were held in resort places like Victoria Falls under the banner of conflict resolution among warring parties. It only managed to increase its visibility as the vehicles emblazoned with JOMIC logo were seen in every urban centre at the expense of the implementation of the agreed issues (Interview with Taruvinga, 01/02/2012). The generality of the people got the impression that the organisation had a lot of money and some even tried to seek jobs. All these reveal that JOMIC spent most of its time in urban centres at the expense of rural communities.

The organ under discussion was further incapacitated by the fact that it was not supported by any legal framework. It did not have any law or act of parliament to enforce its decisions and recommendations. It became powerless and as such it dismally failed in certain specific cases like forcing president Robert Mugabe to swear the then supposed to be deputy minister of agriculture Roy Bennet from MDC and also the sharing of governorship posts. It also failed to deal with any case of political violence especially when big politicians were involved. The

researcher subscribes to Tendai Biti, MDC-T who argued that turning the body into a statutory organ would have given it more muscle to enforce its decisions (cited in Zaba 2011: 10). Taken in this context, the JOMIC became more of a circus or a toothless bulldog, if not a pressure group. JOMIC could thus only pointed cases where terms of GPA were violated and ignored the monitoring of and implementation of the pact. The success of the organisation was therefore heavily influenced and centred on the willingness and sincerity of party leadership. In most cases these acted in a partisan manner in which their personal interests would always prevail against the mandate of the organisation. Because the JOMIC had turned into a paper tiger, which greatly undercut its operations, below we turn to a discussion of this in pithy detail to enable us to glean the effects of this toothless-ness on its operations.

Jomic Turns into Pressure Group

A pressure group according to the English dictionary is an organised group that seeks to influence government policies. It advances a particular cause or interest. In Africa they are quite many and they differ in sizes, influence and set objectives. They differ from political parties and any other organisations in the sense that political parties seek to form a government which they can influence directly. There are a myriad of strategies which can be employed by pressure groups to achieve the set objectives by the most common one is through lobbying. Taken in this context JOMIC was more or less like a pressure. It tried to influence the principals of the three political parties but with relative success. It then decided to focus on the campaigning for peace throughout the country and lobbying so that the perpetrators of violence could realize the importance peace and desist from unethical behaviour.

Although some major issues remained unresolved the organ continued to make itself relevant under the unfriendly political and social dispensation of the country. It worked tirelessly in the decentralisation of power as evidenced by the devolvement of its activities through the establishment of provincial liaison committees (PLCs). Although attempts were made to solve some specific cases, much of the time was spent on sensitisation programmes (JOMIC, 2012: 4) in the ten p provinces of the country. All PLC's had to undergo intensive training via workshops

on conflict management. The package involved a number of issues including causes of conflict, intervention strategies and facilitation of a dialogue between those affected by violence. In the process, they were taught how to apply theoretical skills acquired to manage conflicts in their various provinces. The peace was expected to take the Zimbabweans a long way as constitutional referendum and harmonised elections were expected soon. Thus, the organisation managed to decentralise its programmes and increased its visibility but failed on its core business of enhancing the full implementation of the terms of the GPA. That the JOMIC had degenerated into a mere talk show is amplified by its failure to reveal practical ways in which the people affected by violence could be healed. Furthermore, the issue of political polarisation is still rife in the country. Some of the people are still in 2016 angry and suspicious of each other. Also, the JOMIC was not clear on how exactly the warring parties could establish mutual trust and come up with a better understanding of each other especially before, during and after election. This was because it could only preach the gospel of peace and encourage people to desist from acts of violence.

JOMIC though compromised in most of the major contested issues it managed to pressurise for the adoption of the draft constitution on 6 and 7 February in 2013 under peaceful operations (JOMIC, 2012: 1). Whether what finally came out of the draft was that exactly what people wanted was another issue. The constitution making process had actually started in 2009 and was completed in period of 18 months and many parties involved were bitter saying it did not represent the views of the majority. Nevertheless, JOMIC moved from one province to the next guiding people on the need for political tolerance and peace. Thus, the organisation spent most of its time and energy on inter-party public and sensitisation programmes in each of the 10 provinces. This shows that JOMIC had turned itself into a pressure group instead of illegally constituted organ by an Act of parliament it did not have teeth to bite and therefore depended on the goodwill of the affected members.

The Media Controversy

According to the GPA, for free and fair elections to be held, all contesting political parties were supposed to have equal access to state media. The state media is very crucial in any given situation since it provides a medium of interaction between a political party and voters in which electoral information can be shared. In this regard there were serious conflicts between ZANU (PF) and MDC which JOMIC failed to put to rest. In fact, there were many accusations and counter accusations which were communicated through letters and brought before JOMIC in order for it to take action. Tendai Biti representing MDC-T wrote a letter to JOMIC complaining about unfair media practice by state controlled newspapers, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) both radio and television stations. He complained that these were being used as a platform to channel propaganda and hate speech. Thus ZBC was in its entirety continued to be partisan in favour of ZANU PF (Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe, 2011). Morgan Tsvangirai and his MDC party was subsequently indecently and even fearfully portrayed as a puppet political party bent on selling out Zimbabwe to callous imperial forces (Mudzengi, 2011: 8) Such developments made the work of JOMIC very difficult. Furthermore, the MDC-T continued to complain to JOMIC about a culture of impunity against the harassment of news reporters for example the harassment of standard newspaper editor Nevanji Madanhire and journalist Nqaba Matshazi by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ibid). JOMIC then remained silent yet such issues were actually reflecting on the urgent call for a media reform in Zimbabwe as agreed under the coalition government.

In a similar way Dydmus Mutasa representing ZANU (PF) wrote a letter to JOMIC complaining about some newspapers that were allegedly tarnishing the image of ZANU PF and its supporters. He complained saying that certain derogatory terms were being used in the media and some of them included the following 'ZANU PF thugs', 'bloodthirsty ZANU PF supporters', 'ZANU PF torture camps', 'youth bases', 'ZANU PF rogue generals', 'the looting party' (Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe, 2011). As such, ZANU PF was portrayed as a party instigating violence in the country. JOMIC, thus, did not take such complaints seriously and as a result the parties were left to solve their own conflicts. Thus, the relevance of the JOMIC became under fire. This

provided for the need to bring this organ to academic scrutiny with an endeavour to draw lessons for future conflict resolution.

As indicated above, and from other sources, such as the membership composition of the JOMIC should be analysed as it portrayed aspects of being partisan. As such all members of ZANU PF and two MDC formations actually viewed the other with suspicion and mistrust as they all discharged their duties. This means that all members became more inclined to the interest of their political parties at the expense of furthering the interest of JOMIC. Taken in this context the researcher established that on many occasions members were caught in a dilemma either to stand for their respective political parties or JOMIC A glaring example was when copac first submitted its draft constitution to the GPA signatories on 18 July 2012. (JOMIC NEWS, Fourth Quarter2012:2).The two MDC formations endorsed the draft while ZANU PF initially refused arguing that the qualitative method used by the drafters missed out on many issues raised in the National Statistical Report (ibid) Although some members eventually reached a consensus which made the draft constitution to sail through such cases were a tip of the ice-berg. Members continued therefore to be partisan in discharging their duties and their commitment to JOMIC was thus compromised. They could not leave the organisation at the same time because working for it had some financial benefits which actually improved their livelihood. In other words they were handsomely being paid.

Owing to mistrust among political members ZANU PF threatened to pull out of GNU (*New Zimbabwe*, 14/11/12). It further argued that some members especially from the MDC formations together with certain NGOs like South Africa based Zimbabwe Institute (ZI) were being partisan and working against ZANU PF. ZI was entrusted with the sourcing and managing of JOMIC's funds. However, Nicholas Goche, the ZANU PF co-chairman of JOMIC argued that ZI's involvement in the organisation had extended to areas that had nothing to do with its remit of sourcing and managing of donor funds. Furthermore, the director of ZI Isaac Maposa was accused of being a close association of MDC parties, especially the Arthur Mutambara formation

(ibid). Taken in this context, certain individuals and some NGOs were suspected and perceived as driving the regime change agenda through MDC formations to remove ZANU PF from power. Pressure therefore mounted from some members so that JOMIC would delink with ZI, which was next to impossible given the fact that JOMIC heavily depended on ZI for its financial operations. Therefore, the issue of mistrust and non-compliance was central in compromising the achievements of both JOMIC and GPA. However, instead of throwing away the organ as a total failure, lessons can be drawn for future generations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The commitment to end violence by all political parties under the GNU seemed to be compromised by the notion that various members tended to be partisan when implementing the agreed issues discharging their general duties. The success of the coalition government and the established organs thus continued to be influenced by prior events leading to the highly disputed and contested harmonised elections and the presidential election run-off of 2008. Since 2000, the two major political parties had publicly portrayed a history of mutual mistrust, suspicion and tension which culminated into an intense spirit of non-compliance. Cases and incidents of violence actually increased as accusations and counter-accusations became the order of the day as revealed by some media coverage. It was absurd since certain leaders were politically harangued and incarcerated in public. All these, together with general divergent political philosophies polarised the public down to the grassroots levels. Taken in this context, ZANU PF and MDC formations seemed not to have a shared destiny. These became more manifested with the progression of time as members constantly displayed elements of non-compliance and at times threatened to pull out the coalition arrangement. Such developments were not only confined to various government structures but to other supportive organs like JOMIC. The available evidence, thus, indicates that the process of peace –building in Zimbabwe under GNU was entrusted to members, who prioritised their political affiliation at the expense of national interests. Having been caught in between, some ended up displaying double standards on discharging their duties and deciding on national policies. Therefore the history of Zimbabwe is littered with a crop of politicians who in the public preached a doctrine of non-violence but

actually organised violent actions behind closed political doors. This affected the member composition of JOMIC as some figures became partisan in pursuit of the goals of the organ. However even if principals and prominent figures compromised the achievements of JOMIC, the organ itself had weaknesses which should be corrected if such organs are to produce good results in the future. Members of JOMIC displayed an elitist flair and this made it detached from the rural communities where political violence was prominent. By and large, communities were polarised on political lines. Most members of JOMIC were educated echelons and almost everyone was an urbanite. The organ's financial position was quite stable because both the government and the donor agencies came on board. A fleet of cars were imported but the majority were actually luxury cars and the fact that members were paid handsomely both in terms of their travel and subsistence and salaries made them to be a class of their own. The composition of JOMIC thus became a bunch of elite politicians and technocrats whose dictates in the organisation would actually prevail but substantially and latently being determined by an element of partisan political affiliation. Such issues need to be corrected so that everlasting peace can be possible. Traditional leadership and youths were never part of the membership of the JOMIC and therefore were never adequately represented. JOMIC brought with it a package of 'expert perceptions' on a conflict resolution, which signified the problematic top-bottom approach. In this it emphasised tolerance, trust, peace and national unity. Yet peace building initiatives and mechanisms must be rooted in the soil where the conflicts rage. Party leadership and members of organisations like JOMIC should have perused the laid objectives without being partisan in their approaches. Zimbabweans should draw lessons from Rwanda's traditional 'gacaca' mechanism. Under *gacaca* the warring individuals came together in a traditional court. The offenders were given time to confess and express remorse and be able to ask for forgiveness for crimes like instigating violence or murder or rape or burning somebody's house. The offender should be asked to pay and then shake as way of showing that he/she sorry of having committed acts of violence. In this way the author argues that meaningful conflict resolutions are informed by indigenous cultural practices as is revealed by the case of Rwanda. If this assumption is something to go by, then it implies that an ordinary person should be taken on board and be actively involved in public decision and policy crafting organs like JOMIC at the

levels like village, community, family. Under GNUs the victor and the defeated parties will always be there though the phenomenon at times is not easily noticed and realised. Usually parties with strong history have a habit to continue to gain and dominate. As such, a spirit of suspicion and mistrust continues to manifest. Whatever the case may be it should be remembered that there is need for mutual respect for each party whether opposition or defeated. All parties should think deeply and be willing to compromise in words and in deeds not to underestimate the dignity and potential of another party. Through this way negotiated agreements can stand against issues of stalemates and threats to pull out by some leaders. This subsequently makes the work of organisations like JOMIC possible. Had such issues of mutual trust and willingness to comply been genuinely observed JOMIC could have been much better appreciated in terms of its achievements. Subsequently instead of disbanding it, it could have been transformed into organs like Zimbabwe Political Parties Dialogue (ZPPD). Taken in this context, Zimbabwe could have moved a giant step forward in terms of conflict management.

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