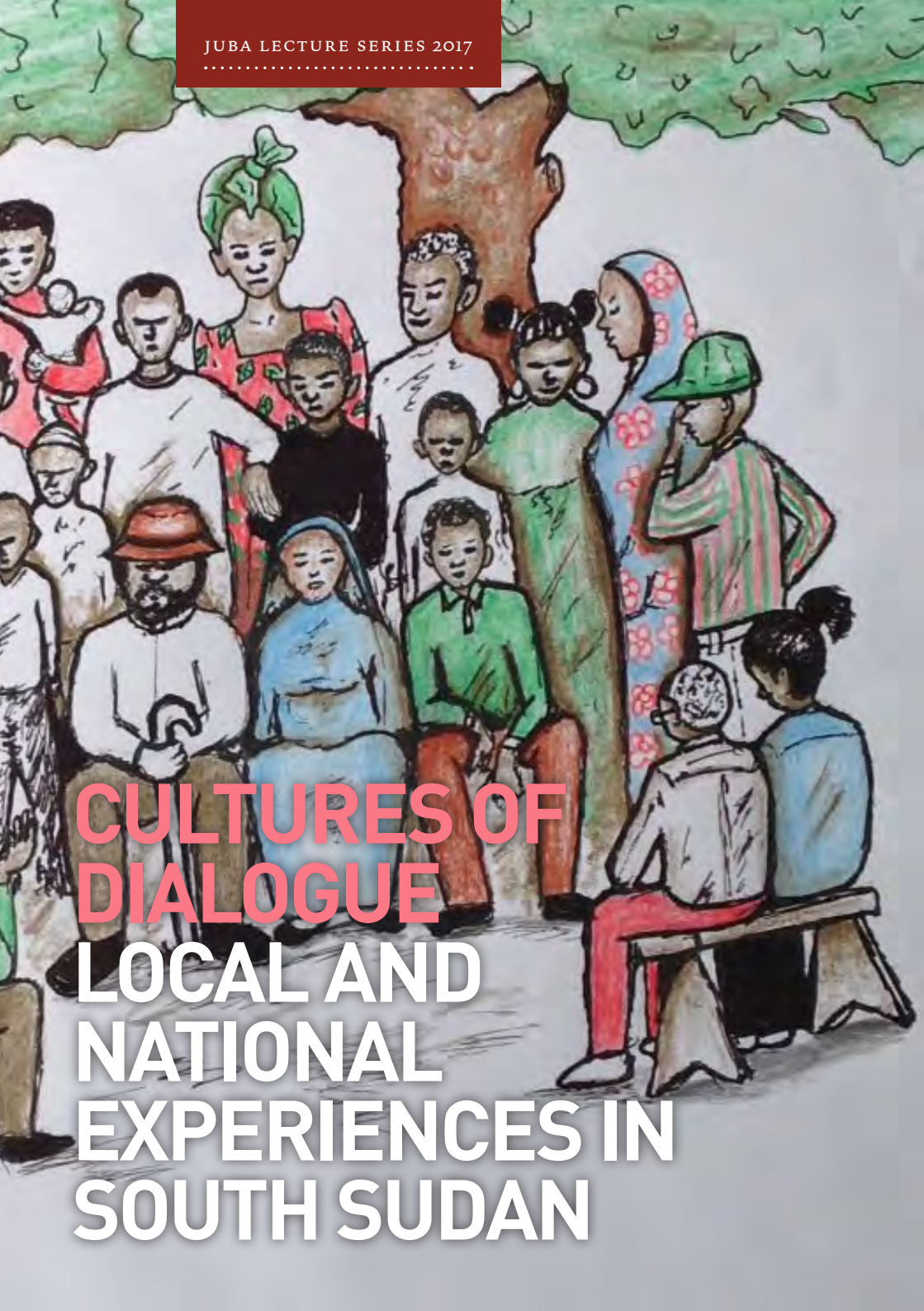
JUBA LECTURE SERIES 2017



CULTURES OF DIALOGUE
LOCAL AND NATIONAL EXPERIENCES IN SOUTH SUDAN

JUBA LECTURE SERIES 2017

Cultures of Dialogue

Local and National Experiences in South Sudan

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THE RIFT VALLEY INSTITUTE (RVI)

The Rift Valley Institute (www.riftvalley.net) works in Eastern and Central Africa to bring local knowledge to bear on social, political and economic development.

THE JUBA LECTURE SERIES 2017

Since 2010, the RVI has organised an annual series of public lectures in Juba. These lectures are designed to promote public discussion of emerging political and cultural issues in South Sudan. The 2017 lectures were co-hosted by the Institute for Justice and Peace Studies (IJPS) at the Catholic University of South Sudan, Juba. The lectures were organized by RVI Programme Manager Anna Rowett and IJPS Director Loes Lijnders, with support from the Australian Embassy in Addis Ababa.

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COVER: Community dialogue: rebuilding peace

RIGHTS

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1. Introduction

The Rift Valley Institute has organized an annual series of public lectures in Juba since 2010, covering complex and demanding social, economic, cultural and political issues in South Sudan. The sixth Juba Lecture Series was hosted in collaboration with the Institute for Justice and Peace Studies at the Catholic University of South Sudan in November 2017, bringing together various constituents of academia, the church, customary authorities and civil society.

At a time when South Sudanese seem more divided than ever, the title of this lecture series is particularly poignant—Cultures of Dialogue: Local and National Experiences in South Sudan. Over the three evenings, the programme focused on dialogue at different levels, from the grassroots up to the national level and from wide-ranging perspectives.

This Juba Lecture Series aimed to go beyond the specifics of the South Sudan National Dialogue and discuss past and present-day communal and community-based dialogue practices. There are also lessons that the South Sudan National Dialogue can learn from the Sudan National Dialogue. In particular, the 2017 lecture series saw national dialogue as a process that moves in stages—from ending the conflicts that continue to devastate the country, to dealing with the pervasive inter and intra-communal conflicts, and recreating the culture of dialogue that was always part of South Sudanese culture.

The first day of the lectures looked specifically at socio-cultural, community and traditional dialogue mechanisms. With Dr Nicki Kindersley as moderator, panellists included Dr Francis Mading Deng, Kuyang Harriet Logo and Chief Wilson Peni. Day two explored church and civil society dialogue processes with the RVI's Pauline Otieno as intermediary. Panellists were Ferdinand von Habsburg, Silvio William and Winnie Gulliver. With a live performance, theatre practitioner Nichola Franco Lado also demonstrated how the creative arts can be a powerful and formative platform for engaging people in dialogue. The final evening saw moderator Dr Bernard Suwa host panellists Dr Elshafie Khidir Saeid and Zacharia Diing Akol, who offered comparative analyses and reflections on historic and current national-level dialogue processes.

The publication is a summary of these discussions, drawn together by Mimi Bior from audio transcripts of the three days of lectures, along with notes made available by the different speakers. This report is structured along themes rather than the three lectures. Every effort has been made to accurately reflect the viewpoints of the speakers. All those quoted are speaking on their own behalf, presenting their personal opinions and views, not those of their respective organizations. Each quote has been verified and approved by the speaker. Any errors that remain are the sole responsibility of the editors.

2. South Sudanese socio-cultural dialogue mechanisms

‘Building a future from the past’

Nicki Kindersley: At a time when South Sudanese people seem more divided than ever and when space to talk frankly and honestly and with trust is so limited, the idea of dialogue is vital. What kinds of dialogue and discussion does South Sudan need? What will these collective conversations look like? Which local and cultural roots can we draw on to give trust, honesty and commitment to this process?

Dr Francis Mading Deng: National dialogue, for me, has several phases. One is of course ending the conflicts that are devastating the country. We hope to cooperate with all those who are working towards mediating the conflict, including the revitalization initiative. The second phase is to deal with the inter-communal conflicts that are quite pervasive in the country. The third is to deal with conflict within the communities.

And that leads to what I think should be a reinforcement and revitalization of the traditional methods of conflict prevention, management and resolution. This is the core of what I will talk about. As some of you who might have seen some of my writings would recognize, this is a topic of great interest to me.

I begin by saying that every society has a system based on fundamental values. Fundamental values that determine the structures of society. Division of role—who gets what, how and when. If you want to change that system, you have to understand the logic behind the system and what fundamental changes have taken place to justify reform and in what areas if you want to reform the system.

I think we would all agree that in most African societies, the principle or the overriding goal of procreation as a home of immortality is widely shared. It is a method of passing on the legacy of a society and has many aspects that relate to the culture as a whole. I have anecdotes that I do not have the time to go into. It is, however, fundamental to say that the life of the dead continue to be pertinent to the living. It is what a professor of mine called

'the myth of continued participation', or permanent identity and influence.

Directly relevant to this is a concept that emphasizes the principles of unity and harmony. The Dinka call this '*chieng*'. I am sure other groups have a similar word. The concept of *chieng* is very, very universalizing; it is a very inclusive set of values. It is how you relate to people. Related to that is the sense of dignity called '*lueng*'. Basically there is no way of translating it as other than human dignity. Human dignity of the person and the community. It relates very comprehensively to things like your appearance, mannerisms, generosity, hospitality. And it militates against violence.

Some people would ask, 'If peace, unity and harmony are so fundamental, why are these societies so prone to violence?' You could say that there is a division of roles between the chiefs and elders, who are the peacemakers, and the warrior age-sets, who are the defenders of society through their military capacity, but who see their dignity and identity as connected to means of violence. So they become prone to violence by the smallest possible provocation. And you could say that some can do this against the will of the elders.

This is a society that forms at the family level. It is autonomous, decentralized, self-reliant and self-governing. As I often said to the late Dr John Garang, and even to Salva Kiir, our society has two fundamental principles that are both positive and negative. The positive is that we are inherently a very egalitarian, democratic society where everybody feels he or she is as good as anybody. Every family is as good as any family. The bad side is that this makes it very difficult to govern because everyone feels why should so-and-so be the leader and not me? Why should that family be in the leadership and not mine? As one Dinka singer says, the problem of the Ngok Dinka is like that of a giraffe, where everybody is equally tall. Nobody accepts that another person is taller. And I have said quite often that this is a society where dictatorship cannot succeed. No one will allow others to lord it over them.

Now this system we know was fundamentally changed by the intervention of colonialism, which centralized power and authority. And central power became the means to access just about anything. The colonial powers, however, used that system in a moderated way—by what they called 'indirect rule'. They enhanced the capacity of the traditional leader not only to

maintain peace and security within their communities but also between the communities.

I should say in my own legal studies, there is a sharp contrast between the consensus-oriented African solution to problems and western approaches. In the African approach, litigation is one of primarily trying to find common ground, to find a solution that both sides should live with, where everybody wins. No vacuums, no losers. And then very often in the traditional method, you would even be blessed after the solution, so that you could go to live in the community. It is a family-oriented, community-oriented system, where you go and live together.

In contrast, the western system is adversarial. You go to court, the court applies the law to the facts, you decide who is right and who is wrong. The decision is made and there is a loser and there is a winner and you go your separate ways. In a way, Africa nowadays is trying to reconcile these two different approaches. The concept of truth and reconciliation that South Africa applied is, in essence, the coming together of the two approaches: The African consensus-oriented approach—or a win–win solution—and the adversarial approach. This is also the same with *gacaca* in Rwanda.[1] It is an attempt to apply traditional principles, but at the same time not wholesale. You have those who have committed heinous crimes and are punished in one way or another, even if the sentencing becomes moderate. There is still a tension between justice, on the one hand, and peace and reconciliation, on the other. Even in Cambodia, they had what they called the 'hybrid court', which functioned for a long time, bringing justices from around the world to work together with the Cambodians. In the end, with all the crimes committed by the Khmer Rouge, what you had was a reconciliation solution that had a token selection of people who were to be punished and everybody else was just forgiven and went back to the army, went back to the government. But it was symbolically important to see that there was reconciliation between the two sides.

Let me say that we now have a situation whereby traditional methods have been fundamentally undermined. Leadership has been eroded by various forces. In the case of South Sudan, we have the central government recruiting its own chiefs, who more or less would be representatives of the interests of the central government. We have the SPLM/A [Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army] with its own leaders, who represent their own interests as a means of extending their power. The old traditional

1 The word '*gacaca*' (Kinyarwanda) literally means 'justice in the grass'. It is a system of community justice based on Rwandan tradition. *Gacaca* courts were used to hear the trials of those suspected of all genocide-related crimes, with the exception of those charged with planning the Rwandan genocide.

leaders are not only undermined but victimized and humiliated. So we have a situation where the national dialogue—if it is to have any end result—has to go to the grassroots to see what used to function but has now been eroded. Can those approaches be revitalized? We also have to talk about national dialogue being both a top-down and a bottom-up approach.

Moreover, we are also struggling with a system of governance. We hear a lot of debate about federalism and decentralization. Whatever name we give it, what is physically important is to find a system in which everybody feels they are reflected, that they are self-governed, that they are more or less part of the system in the sense of equality. A very important principle in all of this is the question of identity-related conflicts. This question always comes up in my own work—whether dealing with internal displacement or genocide prevention. Ultimately, these conflicts reflect an extreme form of identity-related conflict. What causes conflict is not that we are different. What causes conflict is how we manage and mismanage our differences. So the solution to all that is constructive management of diversity.

Let me end by saying I am a strong advocate for our national dialogue leading to an outcome that for immediate purposes will end the violent conflict tearing our country apart. And that will also move towards a means of resolving inter-communal conflicts, as well as down to ways of resolving conflicts internally and between communities. And creating a culture of dialogue that is, in essence, a return to our ways of doing things. I will say it is building a future from the past.

Kuyang Logo: As I cruised through the archives [the South Sudan National Archives], it was quite interesting that I found issues that have always caused conflict—in the 1940s and up to the postcolonial period. There are just the same issues as now. There is completely nothing new. These causes of conflict? Resource competitiveness, issues to do with cattle rustling, water point contestations. And at the back of my mind, I kept asking myself: Why is it that we are having challenges resolving conflict in South Sudan if the issues are just the same? Of course there are slight changes today. I mean, the weapons we use in today's fighting are quite different. The tactics have changed but the issues are quite the same.

In my research, I read through several colonial and postcolonial case studies from the former regions of Bahr el-Ghazal, Upper Nile

and Equatoria. What I wanted to do was to discuss features of tribal conflicts and how those were resolved. I also wanted to look at intertribal issues and how those were resolved by colonial and postcolonial authorities. And I looked at interregional conflicts—between communities in Bahr el-Ghazal or communities in Upper Nile and communities in Equatoria.

These communities convened tribal meetings to settle questions of grazing land, water points and other issues that would arise during the dry season. This story is from one of the case studies from Eastern Equatoria in 1942. A tribal meeting was convened in a place called Lokiliaba on the Kideppo. In that meeting, not only the issues of contention at that time were discussed. In the past, it was difficult to convene people together. So, these tribal meetings were also used as a chance to resolve conflicts that had been pending over the year. In this meeting, there were also cases settled between the Boya and the Lotuko. Various forms of compensation were also paid. We still use a lot of compensation to settle conflicts. And we have a plural legal system that intertwines customary practices and formal laws.

'When I was a very young girl working in Yei, I used to sit a lot in court and there was always a very contentious issue of which culture do you apply?'

Kuyang Logo

Most of the time, the colonial authorities relied on the traditional authorities, especially when it was time to discuss the nitty-gritty details of a case. The evidence they tended to consider was presented by the chiefs and this way, it was an opportunity to bring a stronger case. One significant thing that I also noticed in the archive was the issue of blood compensation. To those of you who have a legal background, and those undertaking legal studies, you will know that blood compensation has been incorporated in our penal code.

I looked at files on intertribal meetings between the Nuer and Dinka, going as way back as 1932 in Bahr el-Ghazal and Upper Nile provinces. These meetings were to determine compensation to be paid by Nuer for killing someone from the Dinka tribe. One interesting thing about this file was that in the Nuer culture at that time, compensation was set at ten heads of cattle. This was the norm for tribal killings. It was the norm when the Nuer people had to pay compensation. If another tribe had killed, the issue at hand was: Whose custom prevails? And this is a very current question in our discussion today. In determining matters of compensation, whose customary practices prevail? Is it of the aggressor or the aggressee? When I was a very young girl working in Yei, I used to sit a lot in court and there was always the very contentious issue of which culture do you apply.

Another thing I realized in my readings is that these meetings or conferences—whether tribal or intertribal—not only dealt with the matters at hand. Because our seasons are very recurrent, and we know there is always a change in the season, conflict seems to be prevalent in one season. It was always in the dry season, when there is no water, when cattle have to move for longer distances to graze and so on. So there were rules to deal with future grazing of these groups so that they did not infringe on the rights of others. Not to infringe on the resources of others.

When I contrast back then and now: If the colonial authorities at that time and the postcolonial Sudanese government could look at issues ahead of time, as they did in the meetings they held back then, then we are doing ourselves a disservice by not looking at some of the issues that are completely recurrent.

Two thoughts: First, local conflict resolution has survived colonialism and has been used to reconcile communities in Sudan in the past. Those could be a few good lessons for the national dialogue. Second, local dialogue can only thrive when there is ample space to discuss pertinent issues. Even back then, in the presence of the colonial administration, there was always a need for space to discuss all those issues. If you leave some issues unresolved, they keep coming back.

When conflict erupted in 2013, we woke up in the morning and we were asking: What went wrong? What happened? One of my colleagues said to me that it had been coming all along. Some of the issues, when they are really recurrent, just keep coming back. And they come back in the most violent manner.

In one of the case studies I read in the archives, the district commissioner notes that the dialogue was only successful because everyone had the honesty of a baby. I quote, 'People came with clean hands. People were honest and they told the truth.' So what lesson does that offer for the national dialogue today? When you come before a meeting or a conference with the honesty of a baby, you make headway with all sorts of audiences. But when you are trying to be conservative with the truth and the truth does not come out, then it gets extremely complicated.

Chief Wilson Peni: I was asked to give some examples of chieftaincy, how it works at the moment in the Republic of South Sudan and how it used to work before. I think most of you are South Sudanese and we are coming very far. God created this country with good people, good culture and tradition. Then later on, some

people came in. After their coming, they had destroyed most of our system. They destroyed a system that started a very long time ago. For me, as a Zande traditional leader, my king was also killed in 1905 because he resisted them in order to maintain the culture and custom of his people, and to protect their territory. Because of that he was killed. To me, he was a good leader because he protected the territory and the people, according to tradition. Then the same thing happened throughout Southern Sudan because the country was taken by foreign troops. After that, other people came in and took Sudan, including Southern Sudan, and they also ruled. Once people enter with their system, and if you want to destroy a community, you simply destroy their system—be it a ruling system, the culture or tradition.

So that was the policy. The first group came, they destroyed, they killed some leaders. The other group came with the same policy. Then came the 21 years of struggle. Actually, it was a struggle to get our independence. When you are fighting, sometimes you destroy some areas and things within the country. The three regimes that I mentioned have destroyed a lot. They destroyed the system of traditional leadership. Even the culture you have inherited is not your culture.

But what is the main challenge now? The main challenge at the moment is—after coming out of the 21 years of struggle—that these years of struggle made our societies very stubborn. During the war years, there were also commanders who were very close to the people. In the Bomas, you see the army within the community. You see the army. And our policy to defeat the Khartoum regime was also to train the traditional leaders. That was the policy of Dr John Garang. To train all the traditional leaders, to empower them and give them the army in order to protect them.

So this ideology turned the mindset of the community. As a result of 21 years of struggle, small arms have also spread all over. Now it is a bit difficult. People who have a decent mindset within the community… If there is a conflict between someone with a gun, and the other person has no gun, and you want to reconcile them… Sometimes it is a bit difficult because people are becoming very hostile. We inherited a culture of revenge.

I would also like to say a few words about the issue of cross-border dialogue. You know South Sudan is a big country. In some areas, you can see that some tribes are on both sides of a border. Like the Azande people. They are in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and in South Sudan. The Acholi

people live in South Sudan and northern Uganda. The Anyuak live in the south-eastern part of South Sudan and in south-western Ethiopia. And even the Nuer. This was the policy of divide and rule, especially in Zandeland. We often dialogue with our people who are across the border because the same tribe are on the other side and we intermarry. So if there is a problem, we talk among ourselves at the grassroots. When you are at the border, especially the same tribe on either side, you don't use a visa. That's a secret I know. And it is common because your father is on the other side, even your in-laws are on the other side. So we talk and settle disputes among ourselves, across borders.

Discussion

Deng Nhial: My comment is about the title of the lecture series itself: Cultures of Dialogue. But to me, instead of Cultures of Dialogue, the title should be Dialogue of Cultures. Actually, what we need in South Sudan is a dialogue of cultures instead of cultures of dialogue. Now, we really have to dialogue among our cultures, which is very new because we are a new nation that came together and became a nation state.

I have a question for King Wilson. Your presentation reflects the main idea of the book written by Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*. Because it seems when they changed the traditional system and came back with a new system, things began to fall apart. The question is: How can you put these things that have fallen apart together again in order to revive them? Because if we now begin to empower our traditional system, then people will say: No, this is not the way. We are in modern times. How can we bring that traditional knowledge, which is the power of South Sudanese people, back to life?

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Deng Nhial

Titus Marial, Catholic University of South Sudan: Dr Francis, my first question is this: As the national dialogue has been going for almost half a year, what is the first initiative that is reaching the people? Youth are not getting what the South Sudan National Dialogue Steering Committee is discussing. Is it dialogue among the elders, among themselves or you are dialoguing with the conflicting parties? The victims of the problem are the youth. When will you reach the youth? Second, there are conflicts in most areas of the country and the dialogue is set to reach the grassroots as a bottom-up approach. How will you reach the people

in SPLM-IO [Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition] controlled areas when the head of the SPLM-IO, Dr Riek Machar, twice failed to meet your team? Is the dialogue really going to achieve its objectives?

Dr Francis Mading Deng: In traditional society, you do not kill at a distance. You kill face-to-face. In our traditional society, you did not kill women, you did not kill children. Rape was something that caused you to be exiled from society. You could not live in society having been identified as a rapist.

What Chief Peni is saying is that all these things are falling apart but they don't just disappear. Cultures don't totally change overnight. They continue. They change in some ways. They get distorted. They get brutalized. But they continue.

'What Chief Peni is saying is that all these things are falling apart but they don't just disappear. Cultures don't totally change overnight. They continue. They change in some ways. They get distorted. They get brutalized. But they continue.'

Dr Francis Mading Deng

I would like to say that we should not think of traditional societies either as already destroyed because they are remnants; nor should we think of restoring some values of tradition as going back. My experience in Rwanda—I went there in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, immediately after the genocide. I saw the evidence of the genocide and that much later, society had transformed. You could not believe this is an African city, Kigali. I asked how they did it. And believe it or not, the details they gave me were really interpreting their traditional values in a modernizing manner. For instance, they would say something quite similar to the concept that I described: *Dieng*, or dignity. You cannot be dignified if you are dirty. If your house is dirty—but even when your house is clean but your surroundings are dirty—there is no dignity.

Now things are changing. Traditional leaders who used to be the peacebuilders are now becoming the generals who lead wars instead of making peace. And youth become the tools of these generals, who are elders using them. Where are the peacemakers? When the youth are fighting and the elders are the generals guiding them to fight?

Chief Wilson Peni: So, those things we are talking about that have fallen apart can be restored and revived through your efforts. Today, you have heard from a traditional leader that we are powerless and we need your support. Can you spread this news to some friends? We do not need much. Just to bring us here for a day or two and take us back. That is what we are looking for, and your support, so that we can put things that fell apart back together again.

Representative of people with disabilities [speaking through an interpreter]: As you go to the villages, you find that the chiefs and traditional leaders are there, just like the people who are here. They may solve some problems but if the militias are still within the community, and within the traditional leadership of the communities, how can the government talk about national dialogue if they have not solved the problem of the militias? This is a very big problem in the villages. First of all, let them address the issues of the militias in the villages, and then after that, the national dialogue can go to the villages. Because when the people go to the villages now, maybe the militias will attack them and that will be an obstacle for the national dialogue.

Modi Enosa Mbaraza, Young Women's Christian Association: In our culture, like in my Zande culture, women were being respected whenever there was fighting between the youth. If a woman appeared, they would immediately stop fighting. Or when a woman is killed as a result of their fighting, they definitely stop fighting and sit to resolve the conflict. So as we are coming to the national dialogue of South Sudan, I want to first ask what mechanism are you putting in place to ensure that the voiceless women at the grassroots level are heard? Because sometimes they are the victims of the situation. How can we bring these voiceless women to hear their voices at the national dialogue so that the problems they are facing are actually solved?

Secondly, the young women who are experiencing rape, forced marriage or engaged in prostitution: What mechanisms do you have in place in order to address issues to do with women in this national dialogue, especially issues to do with young women?

Kuyang Logo: As a woman, I always take it upon myself to speak about issues of concern to women. Rape is now being used as a weapon of war. When you speak to a community about the issue of rape, they will tell you in the past there was no rape. But now, it is a weapon of war and the dilemma is how to resolve that. In the archives, rape cases do not exist. The case studies I looked at were male-to-male conferences, cattle-related conflicts. I did not come across even one single case study of rape. That tells you that there is a gap. For purposes of dialoguing and looking at these issues that are of concern to women, silence cannot be imposed. From 21 years of war, there are voices of sexual violence that have just been swept under the carpet and they are recurrent and in the worst forms. I was reading a research article recently and one of the

'From 21 years of war, there are voices of sexual violence that have just been swept under the carpet and they are recurrent and in the worst forms.'

Kuyang Logo

survivors said she basically had to beg the men to come one at a time. And the question is: Who does that to a fellow human being?

Dr Francis Mading Deng: To the question of how can we talk about national dialogue before solving the problems of militias, I think this is almost like a chicken and egg question. Do you make peace in order to work for peace? Or do you work for peace in order for peace to be fully realized? I think that if we succeed in the national dialogue, the issue of the militias will have already been addressed, or will be addressed. So I think we have to recognize what I said at the beginning: The national dialogue has phases. The first phase is to end the conflict immediately but the national dialogue does not have the capacity to end the conflict immediately.

We have to look to other initiatives, such as the IGAD [Intergovernmental Authority on Development] revitalization process. We share the same objectives of ending the conflict. What we need to do is to strengthen the capacity of the national dialogue to eventually have a life of its own, which can impose itself on everybody. We have been told that the national dialogue has to be inclusive, has to be credible, has to be transparent. More and more, we are demonstrating that these values are being observed. And more and more, the opposition is getting less and the support is getting more. So we also need to convince ourselves that we all stand on the same ground, seeking the same objectives of ending the conflict. If we succeed, militias won't be there anymore.

I hope that the end result of the national dialogue is to create a culture of dialogue, which in essence is really going back to what we used to do, rather than introducing something that is alien to our culture.

I do see a dilemma, though, in the fact that we are almost making the national dialogue into a fundraising initiative—where we think that if we want to resolve the conflict, even between communities or the way our traditional leaders used to function, we need external support. I am thinking of Wunlit.[2] I was in the United States when those who initiated Wunlit, which was a very successful process that everybody is proud of, came to the United States giving lectures all over the country and raising funds. I would say that I felt conflicted about the fundraising because this—Wunlit—is exactly how people used to dialogue. We have to encourage them to do what they used to do. If they have weakened those processes, go back to them and make them stronger. If we begin to make our people feel that what we used to do can only

2 Held in 1999, the Wunlit Peace Conference brought together Nuer from western Upper Nile and Dinka from Tonj, Rumbek and Yirol in a people-to-people peace process. The conference addressed the root causes of complex and multi-dimensional grievances, which were based on the intersections of local, regional, national and international conflicts.

be done by external support, we are weakening ourselves. We are beginning to be dependent. It is good to interact with the outside world. It is good to be supported in various ways. But let us not weaken ourselves by making what we used to do be a source of fundraising from outside.

Mading: So why should we leave behind the problem and go seek the solution elsewhere? The problem is here in Juba. It is not very far from here. It is less than one kilometre away from the airport. I wish that if you people actually wanted to find a solution, you wouldn't even send people outside. But what is the national dialogue for? Because there are few things that have not been discussed or have not been looked into. One of them is the objectives of this national dialogue. This has not been mentioned. The other thing is that there are areas where your so-called national dialogue cannot go.

Chief Wilson Peni: In some places, traditional leaders are being paid in the Republic of South Sudan. In Western Equatoria, they were being paid by the government but it is tricky. We need to come up with a system whereby traditional leaders can be independent. Because once you depend on the food of somebody else, he [or she] will be able to control you. We need to have a system where a chief in his chieftaincy or a king in his kingdom can generate funds, can be able to generate resources.

'Because once you depend on the food of somebody else, he [or she] will be able to control you.'

Chief Wilson Peni

Dr Francis Mading Deng: Those who said that our problems should not be blamed on foreign powers are also right. We should stop blaming all our problems on colonialism. We have to assume responsibility for our problems. So when we refer to colonial experience, my objective is not simply to put blame on them. Rather, it is to understand the history of how our problems evolved. You have to understand the causes.

I have to say that our traditional leaders, many of whom I interviewed, impress me by their wisdom and honestly. When I look at those of us who have higher degrees, but are so short of knowledge and lack visions of a profound nature, I have to wonder: What does our education mean? Of course, education has a lot of value in itself but education also has to have a purpose. It is not a question of having a document. Let us say I have a PhD. It is a question of what your PhD does for your people. That is why I think our education has to be more purposeful, more targeted towards addressing the needs of our people.

Nicki Kindersley: Our attempt today was to go beyond the specifics of the South Sudan National Dialogue. As such, we asked our panel to go beyond contemporary and immediate questions to focus more deeply and to challenge us to think beyond the short term. I hope we have done that. These discussions will continue tomorrow and we look forward to it.

3. Church and civil society-led community dialogue

‘Limited time frame will mean limited success’

Ferdinand von Habsburg: I know this is a lecture about the local but I think we need to remind ourselves, particularly in the context of South Sudan, that when we say ‘national’, ‘local’ and ‘regional’, there are some people who actually appear and reappear in all of those categories. And one has to ask oneself a question: What does that mean when we are talking about uniquely local or uniquely national or uniquely track one?[3] I think it is more complicated than just one or the other. The other thing I want to just comment on is that, for me, dialogue is not an event, it is a process. It is not a workshop. It is not a conference. It is a process. And what that means is that individuals enter into processes not because they want it to finish in few days but because they are on a lifetime journey.

There is an industry that says dialogue is a project. I think we need to be clear that those tools do not fit well together. Those who represent the NGO community and the donors, who work within very limited time frames, need to remind themselves of this daily because it has impacted on how people see that they should move forward. If it is a limited time frame, then my feeling is that it will be a limited success.

In 2015, the leadership of the South Sudan Council of Churches [SSCC][4] brought about a vision of how to begin to address the many conflicts in South Sudan. Of course, the backdrop is the conflict that began in 2013. They emerged with three principal pillars. The first pillar is advocacy that changes the narrative from violence to peace, and lifts the voices of the voiceless to the leaders, to each other across communities, to the international community and beyond. The second pillar is to have a neutral forum. The term ‘neutral’ is a bit difficult because everybody will argue that there is nothing that is neutral nowadays. Even the ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross] is not neutral—with all due respect to somebody here who works for the ICRC. Also, that it is a forum is a question. What is a forum at this time? But nonetheless let us call

‘If it is a limited time frame, then my feeling is that it will be a limited success.’

Ferdinand von Habsburg

3 Track One diplomacy is official government diplomacy in which communication and interaction is between governments.
4 The South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) is an aggregation of seven member churches, including the Catholic, Presbyterian, Evangelical Presbyterian, African Inland, Sudan Interior, Pentecostal and Episcopal churches. Three associate churches are also in the process of becoming full members. The SSCC is an umbrella organization that enables the churches in South Sudan to make a collective approach to the issues they wish to address.

it a safe space, a space that people can be free to speak, to bring up burning issues, when things have been burning all around.

The third pillar is a longer-term space. It is about creating the bridges that people need to repair their broken relationships. The church is the definition of reconciliation. It is repairing relationships to bring people towards each other. There is also another pillar, a fourth pillar. It is about strengthening the church itself, without which the other pillars will not function very well. This is a summary of where the South Sudan Council of Churches is coming from.

Right now, we have the national dialogue initiated by the government. We have IGAD, with the revitalization process, which is an attempt to re-energize the ARCSS [Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of *South Sudan]. W*e have the civil society fora; for example, the young leaders' forum. We have different initiatives by different NGOs. We have the South Sudan Council of Churches and its action plan for peace. And the question still remains valid: Who starts it? Or does everybody start it at the same time and then these different paths meet somewhere? And what happens when they meet? Do they compete, do they somehow energize each other and fulfil one another? I have to say I am not entirely sure what the answer is because it is ongoing right now. Perhaps the answer will become more apparent as we get further down the road in the next months.

Another question is: Who attends? As you know, there is always this chemical formula. We have to have women's representative, a youth representative, a representative from the traditional leadership, a representative from civil society, and so on and so forth. It is a formula. But then the question is: Are these people really representative? Who are they? Because when you have more than one, some people will begin to ask: Where did you pick this person from, how did you select that one? This is a culture that has emerged out of a formula that we in the international community have used to emphasize that people are present. The problem is that it has short-circuited and limited the amount of interaction and the possibilities of more people attending.

So we have to continuously ask ourselves: Is this part of the process sufficient to reach where those who really hold power are? And in most cases, sadly, we fail to reach where they are. Have we reached the cattle camps? Mostly we have not. Have we reached those far away isolated villages where those members of the age-set groups are? Have we reached where the Red Chiefs

are, who are different to the government appointed chiefs? Those are people who are born into their positions, who have spiritual authority in the Murle tradition.

Another question: Why do people attend?

Maybe because they think that there will be a quick outcome. A quick outcome means the NGOs will rapidly move in and build schools and water points or something else that is the symbol of peace. I am not sure that that necessarily works because very frequently when those have been built, you find that six months later they have been burnt to the ground because the root causes of conflict have not been addressed. If people are there to address root causes, then this means they are going to be there not only once but twice, three times and possibly throughout the rest of the year.

The South Sudan Council of Churches led a process in Pochalla among the Anyuak. The Anyuak in Pochalla North and the Anyuak in Pochalla South. It took a year and a half, from the beginning to the point where the king has agreed to perform *gurtong*,[5] which is the ceremony that theoretically should bring about lasting peace.

A year and a half. Not a three-day workshop, not a one-day meeting. But a year and a half. The point is a lot of people are very impatient. People say we need to finish this now, the dry season is coming. We need to finish it now because there is another problem we need to address. We need to finish it now because we need to book the flight. We need to finish it now because we need to earn the profit. And to all those, I say that is entirely unethical.

If the process is only at the local level and there is no discussion of the role of those same leaders who are sitting there in that same forum, and when they go back to Juba, they instigate and manipulate conflict from Juba or any other situation… Unfortunately, that is a very common phenomenon in South Sudan. The question is: If the process is only local, where will it go? I will give an example. In 2012, the president, his excellency Salva Kiir Mayardit, formed a committee for the conflict in Jonglei. One of the additional components that he set in place was a committee to investigate the key actors who were assisting in the perpetuation of violence. Interestingly enough, those committees never made it off the ground.

Pauline Otieno: Thank you, Ferdinand, for your thought-provoking questions and comments. The next session is a conversation with Winnie Gulliver and Silvio William Deng, who will talk about the involvement of civil society in creating spaces for community

'If people are there to address root causes, then this means they are going to be there not only once but twice, three times and possibly throughout the rest of the year.'

Ferdinand von Habsburg

5 This phrase literally means 'to blunt the spear'. Its symbolic meaning is associated with peacemaking and peacebuilding, especially among the Anyuak.

dialogue. What are the challenges around community dialogue? How you have formed partnerships and moved the process forward? Building on what Ferdinand says about reaching those hard to reach groups, the people who bear real power: When you come across these people, how do you engage them?

Winnie Gulliver: We have been engaged in what we call community-level dialogues or community security dialogues in various regions throughout South Sudan for a couple of years now. We hold these dialogues under one theme—that security is everyone's business. This is dubbed the 'safe dialogue'. This basically promotes the notion that we ought not to leave the provision of security, and how security is defined to a particular group of people who say they are the local authorities. Rather, we work to involve local communities in the provision of their security based on what their own perspectives are when it comes to security.

Most of the dialogue sessions we have been running have been going on since SSANSA [South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms] was first registered in 200. We try to keep going back to the people in local communities to find out what improvements there have been. What can we do? What has been happening? This is trying to be open about the fact that this dialogue is not a one-day process, is not a two-day process. It is ongoing.

Safe dialogues are held between the local security providers and the recipients of that security. The recipients of security are basically the community members. The providers of security are the local authorities, members of the armed forces and the police—those who provide security to these people. So we have the dialogue between these large two groups of people. The local and international organizations that work in the community are also there. We try to get them all into one group and have a conversation—what is your perception of security in your county?

At the same time, we are trying to link these local dialogues to various other levels. We share the results of these local dialogues with our partners. We try to reach government officials at the national level. We try to reach civil society organizations that operate specifically at the national level. And we also have a link to the international level. Not only having dialogue at the local level but also ensuring that the message that has been passed at that level is connected to and taken all the way to where we think that the impact can be felt. In this, it is essential to ensure that the

messages we are passing on and sharing—the local perspectives on security—are in line with the issues people have raised.

Silvio William: I would like to share with you one case. The Justice and Peace Commission initiated an intra-communal dialogue in Bentiu. This intra-communal dialogue is based on two interlocutors. The first is inside the POC [protection of civilians site] in Bentiu. Here, the commission is organizing internal dialogue among the members of one tribe residing in the POC. The second interlocutor is people living in Bentiu town. The purpose of our communal dialogue is to improve social relationships between the two groups.

How are the processes being conducted or organized? The process is divided into three phases. In the first phase, we organize separate meetings for each group, within a one-month period—one in the POC and one in town. During the first phase, we talk about prejudice and misconception and misunderstanding. Then, in the second phase, we conduct what we call a 'mini dialogue'. At this stage, we try to bring a small number of people together to try and map out interests and positions. We want to people to learn how to respect each other. We want people to be prepared to actually listen to each other as human beings.

Then in the last phase, we bring together people who are in the POC and those who reside outside, in the town. Now, at this stage, we bring them together and we worship, then we look at the problem. So what do we do when we bring people together? When people come together, we work out things like stereotypes. We look at formulating the points of view of the various parties as clearly as possible. So, we try to map out the views of these two parties. Then we have a communal event—an entertainment or cultural programme, including prayer—that brings together the larger community, similar to the number of people we have here today—about 100 people.

Pauline Otieno: Silvio, is there space in the communal dialogue processes to also work with those in charge of the POC or the local leaders in the town? Are they able to take part in the conversation or is this process just for the community members, both in the POC and in the town? Winnie, because you talked about making security everyone's business, are community leaders part of this dialogue? Do they have space to talk openly and say these are our issues and challenges, these are our problems?

Silvio William: In the POC, we have a group called the High Committee, which is comprised of community leaders. They are the key people in the dialogue itself. We also try to engage them together with the community leaders in town. So, yes, these leaders are within the process.

Winnie Gulliver: That is exactly how it happens. We invite all members of the community, including the local authorities, the police and the army. In the dialogues, people are exchanging ideas, saying, 'I don't like the way the police address us' or 'I don't like the way this happened'. The security providers then stand up and say this or that happened for this reason. So there is always an open space for such an exchange. We have not had bad incidents due to such exchanges taking place but rather we have better relationships—where in subsequent dialogue sessions, someone says, 'You know, last time when that was cleared up, we have been able to build a constructive relationship'.

Pauline Otieno: How do you follow up on the agreements and resolutions that are made within the dialogue spaces? How do you know if this is working after two or three years? Is there also a way you empower the community to be able to organize a dialogue without having to call you? How do you ensure the long-term ownership of the process?

Winnie Gulliver: We try to make sure that the dialogues are sustainable in themselves. We do realize that there are times that we might not be able to access a specific community. So it is important to equip members of the community with the skills they need to be able to do it by themselves. For example, in Eastern Equatoria, we practiced there for a very long time and it reached a point where after attending so many of our dialogues, the local organizations were able to hold dialogues by themselves. We also have convened a security committee in each of the locations where we hold dialogues. These people are chosen by the community members, so you would find that there is a chief, a religious leader and a teacher in the group. And the people who live in that community learn that if they want changes to take place, they have to agitate for it. The community members themselves need to be aware that they need to take part in this as their business. That they are able to work independently.

Silvio William: For our case, recommendations that result from the dialogues come from the communities themselves. I

have realized in South Sudan that many dialogues fail because community recommendations have not been followed or have been ignored. We have a method of putting community recommendations into action. For example, in one dialogue session, both communities suggested that the church form a cultural band for music and drama; in Arabic, a *firqa saqafiya*. In another session, the community suggested that the church form a justice and peace committee in town, as well as in the camp. The following year, the Justice and Peace Commission immediately embarked on establishing a *firqa saqafiya* in Bentiu POC. Today, when they perform a concert, thousands of people attend. They sing in different languages but their message is one: We need to change the narrative. We also put into practice the recommendation to form the justice and or peace committees in town and in the camp. They will be capacitated and given skills so that in future they facilitate these dialogue projects.

Pauline Otieno: When you find other organizations that are already working in areas where you are asked to work, do you work with them? Do you build on what they are doing? Do you both share your challenges and find a way to take the process forward? Do you work together to bring a larger impact?

Winnie Gulliver: The SSANSA [South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms] is a network of civil society organizations throughout various regions in South Sudan. When we visit Jonglei, for example, we already have partners working there. Some of them might be engaging in community dialogues—perhaps not in our style but they are holding sessions where they talk with different people. We always try to ensure that we are working with our partners.

Silvio William: We all agree that building peace is not one person's business. It needs cooperation and also partnership to put together all the energy we have. There are different actors working on peace processes, peace activities, conflict management and so on in the areas where we operate. As a religious entity, we try as much as possible to work in partnership; for example, with the ICC [Inter Church Committee]. The ICC is an umbrella organization that brings the churches together and we do joint implementation of our activities.

Pauline Otieno: Yesterday, there were a lot of questions on community engagement. Ferdinand also touched on this a bit, asking if local processes work and talking about how they need to

be connected. Based on this conversation with Winnie and Silvio, it is clear that these issues are being taken into account. People recognize that they can't do it alone and all these actors have got to be involved. At the community level, the work we do is to give ownership of the process to people because everybody has a role to play in their local communities.

Discussion

Yol Samuel, CAFOD [Catholic Agency for Overseas Development]: The first question goes to Winnie. You said you are working on security issues with the organized security forces. At times of active conflict, when fighting occurs and there are incidents happening, such as rape, how do you tackle those problems? The next question is to Silvio. You said you have organized a crucial dialogue between the people Bentiu POC and those who reside outside, in town. Recently, we have heard about conflict inside Bentiu POC. How did you manage to resolve that conflict?

Winnie Gulliver: There are stages where we can access local communities. And no matter how we look at it, there are situations when we simply cannot access them. I think this is why partnership becomes important. In places that we cannot reach, we work with our local partners to bridge this gap and ensure that at the end of the day dialogue still take place. We are also trying to discourage the notion that the SSANSA has to be there, on the ground, for a dialogue to take place and be successful. We do realize that there are many capable organizations and many capable people in the communities who are able to do these things—perhaps even better than we can.

On the question of rape and what we do about it. First, it is unfortunate that this occurs in some regions but it is not what the SSANSA, or I as Winnie, can do about it that matters. Rather, what does the community think is the best way to address the situation? Because we come to them not with solutions to problems they currently have but knowing that they have experienced these problems and they have solutions that they have not been able to try at a particular time. We talk to them and try to find out what they think the best way forward is, in light of the situation they face. Sometimes the people say we need specialist organizations to come and offer psychosocial support. Other times, they

can propose that they need more disciplined forces or more disciplined youth in the community so that these things do not occur.

Silvio William: The reality of the situation of our people who are living in the Bentiu POC is that there are so many problems facing them. So the United Nations, together with the church and other actors, came up with the idea of the High Committee, which is tasked with the responsibility to manage the problems facing the IDPs [internally displaced persons]. The High Committee is a grievance management mechanism.

So whenever there are problems facing the IDPs, the High Committee will intervene to manage them. The church is also art of the grievance management mechanism inside the POCs—like water that cools the fire within these camps. If all the youth arm themselves and fight, do you think anyone will remain inside these camps? It could trigger another mass displacement. But because the efforts of the church and the United Nations, working with the High Committee, we can see that only a few people leave the POC camps.

Modi Enosa Mbaraza, Young Women's Christian Association: My question goes to Ferdinand regarding the activities churches are doing. I witness churches being instrumental in bringing peace, like the CPA [Comprehensive Peace Agreement, 2005], and also playing a greater role in bringing people together. What efforts are you undertaking as the South Sudan Council of Churches to ensure that young people who are actually engaged in conflict are brought on board and trained to be peacebuilders, so that they can own the peace and maintain it at their level?

Ferdinand von Habsburg: I think it is very easy to always come up with the same answer to the question about what we do with youth. You will always hear vocational training, and so on and so forth. My feeling is that there needs to be a lot of creativity. We are also providing mediation training to heads of churches and five key leaders from all over the country are coming to be trained. The idea is to help them to train others, so that people can resolve their conflicts. I think young people should be part of that process. These are just some of the approaches but none of these are enough. They need to be all those and more.

Silvio William: For those who are not familiar with Catholic church structures, we have several dioceses across South Sudan. In each diocese, there is a justice and peace commission headed

by the coordinator. You go to Yei, there is a justice and peace commission. You go to Tambura and Yambio, there is a justice and peace commission. You go to Wau, there is a justice and peace commission. And in Juba and Malakal, there are justice and peace commissions. The only difference between these various commission is the programmes they have because in each place there are different problems facing people and different needs. So, these programmes are there but with different approaches to solving social problems in the different places.

Pauline Otieno: We have learnt that dialogue is a process and it is a process of consultation. Creating safe spaces for dialogue and reconciliation. At the end of the day, we are all responsible and we have to take part. Let us keep talking, questioning and discover that peace in South Sudan is our peace.

4. National dialogue processes

‘Every round of talks starts from square one’

Bernard Suwa: This afternoon, the panel will explore and discuss the processes and objectives of the South Sudan National Dialogue. Our guests will also talk about its place in a longer history of national-level dialogue in the Sudans, including lessons learnt from historical and present-day communal and community-based dialogue practices, and how they are integrated into a national dialogue process. To our first panellist: What lessons can the South Sudan National Dialogue learn from the Sudan National Dialogue?

Dr Elshafie Khidir Saeid: On 23 June 1995, all Sudanese political forces—with the exception of the ruling NIF [National Islamic Front][6] party—held a conference in Eritrea’s capital, Asmara, and issued the wonderful and beautiful Asmara Declaration on the fundamental issues of the day. I remember that at the conference the late Dr John Garang played a major role in getting out this beautiful resolution. The resolution stressed the unanimous consensus on decentralized governance in Sudan, the separation of religion from politics, voluntary unity, the right to self-determination, as well as other issues concerning Sudan’s future economic policy, foreign policy and so on. Unfortunately, that dialogue was just a dialogue among the opposition forces themselves and not a national process, in the sense that the ruling party was not part of it. Nonetheless, this dialogue was necessary because even those opposition forces were not speaking the same language, which was the case throughout the history of Sudan since independence. In all cases, however, many of the parties to that conference forgot the resolution.

My first remark is that these attempts raise the question of the difference between dialogue and negotiations. Dialogue is more changeable and broader than negotiation and it exists before, during and after a dispute. At the same time, dialogue is not a substitute for negotiations and mediation in conflict resolution processes. This is why I always say that even during a national dialogue process, other issues affecting the country should also be preserved; for example, the role of the existing government in health, education, preventing conflict and so on.

6 The NIF was an Islamist political organization founded in 1976 and led by Dr Hassan al-Turabi. The NIF influenced the Sudanese government beginning in 1979, and dominated it from 1989 to the late 1990s.

My second remark is that all of the numerous previous attempts at dialogue were unsuccessful. They did not accomplish their mission, nor did they achieve their needed and wanted objectives and goals. So this history of our dialogues and negotiations is a history of failure. And among many reasons for this history of failure, two factors are of concern. First, these attempts focus on the issue of power-sharing, which alone did not and will not resolve the ongoing crises. Rather, a successful dialogue needs to address the root causes of the crises and not only the power-sharing issue. Second, all those attempts were constructed to be and confined to dialogue between the political elites only, without the involvement of community-based stakeholders.

'Surprisingly, before every new round of dialogue processes, there were no attempts to discuss the causes behind the failure of the last and previous rounds in order to avoid them. So every round of talks starts from square one, as if there is no historical background nor any attempts before.'

Dr Elshafie Khidir Saeid

Surprisingly, before every new round of dialogue processes, there were no attempts to discuss the causes behind the failure of the last and previous rounds in order to avoid them. So every round of talks starts from square one, as if there is no historical background nor any attempts before.

The lessons learnt from national dialogues in the north or in the south in Sudan—the parties to a national dialogue anywhere… I think the first and the most important thing is that they should have the political will for a genuine dialogue to address and resolve the root causes of the crisis, and not to use dialogue as a manoeuvre that serves the agenda of this party or that party. If that is the case, this is the immediate failure of the dialogue. These parties should have clarity on the objectives and goals of the dialogue. This is a very important lesson in the case of Sudan.

The ruling party should not look at the dialogue just as a manoeuvre to stay in power longer. This is one of the accusations being presented in Sudan—that the government of today is using the national dialogue just to remain in power for a longer time. Equally, others should not consider it as a tool to jump into power, or to share this power only with the ruling party. Everybody should accept that the goals and objectives are to address and resolve the root causes of the conflict.

The second lesson learnt: It is well known that in every national dialogue process, a successful preparatory process is a guarantee for the success of the national dialogue itself. This includes political elites, civil society representatives and representatives from the local communities. All these groups should be part of the national dialogue preparatory process, from day one and from the very beginning, even in the technical and minor procedures. Otherwise, failure is imminent.

There are some things now in the national dialogue in Sudan, some procedures and technical issues, that were only carried out by the ruling party. When the opposing parties in the national dialogue complained, saying they were not part of that, the answer was that this is just a technical issue and it is not that important. But when the implementation process began, it appeared that these technical issues were so important because they can even change the drafting language of the resolutions. And with this also came issues of representation and consensus—about whom and how many participants there should be in the dialogue, the secretariat, everything. Such issues should be agreed among all the parties as part of the preparatory process.

Bernard Suwa: Two days ago we were talking about the socio-political aspects of that dialogue, and yesterday we were talking about the role of the church and civil society in this process. The question we are asking our second panellist is this: From historical and present-day communal and community-based dialogue practices, and the experiences in South Sudan, how does this integrate into what you have been called to do with your colleagues in the secretariat of the South Sudan National Dialogue?

Zacharia Diing Akol: On 14 December 2016, President Salva Kiir Mayardit announced his government's intention to initiate a national dialogue process, which he did in the form of both a speech and an accompanying concept note. Quoting from this concept note, 'The South Sudan National Dialogue is both a forum and a process through which the people of South Sudan shall gather to define the basis of their unity as it relates to nationhood; redefine citizenship and belonging; restructure the state and renegotiate the social contract; and revitalize their aspirations for development and membership in the world of nations.' The president goes on to say that for these objectives to be realized, the national dialogue process must be seen as credible, genuine and open to the people of South Sudan. And it should have reliable guarantees for its outcomes to be accepted and be implemented. The South Sudan National Dialogue also has a broader objective. It aims at ending all violent conflict in South Sudan, constituting a national consensus and saving the country from disintegration.

'It should have reliable guarantees for its outcomes to be accepted and be implemented.'

Zacharia Diing Akol

You might ask me, 'What do you think makes the South Sudan National Dialogue process important or unique? Why should people care or even be hopeful that it can reach somewhere?' One answer is that it is home-grown. It is driven and led by the South

Sudanese. It is also inclusive and aspires to be more inclusive. In terms of diversity, there is a lot of representation—whether in the steering committee or the secretariat. And the leadership of the steering committee is open to include others if there is any fear that it is not inclusive enough. Another answer is that it builds on the experiences of the past. Not only our own past but on the experiences of other countries. It is also based on universally accepted national dialogue principles. Most of all, it is the first genuine conversation on dialogue in post-independence South Sudan.

I know some people will ask whether the outcomes will be implemented or not, and who will be tasked with implementing the outcomes. Those I cannot address now because this is a process. For us in the dialogue process, we know the process is very important. It is just as important as the outcomes. So we don't want to focus on the outcomes alone. We want to engage in the process, making the process open, credible and genuine as much as it can be. Then, later on, the decisions that will be made will be made by the representatives of the stakeholders. With respect to the outcomes, the mechanisms of implementing them and even the agenda will be developed by the participants.

How do we draw from the longer history of national-level dialogue processes? We are aware of some of them but we know this process is very unique. It is not like those other processes. This is not just a dialogue about constitution making. It is not a dialogue on power-sharing. It is broader and it is perhaps the first time that we are doing it. These other processes that we have done—such as the 1994 SPLM National Convention in Chukudum or the Yei Dialogue between SPLM and the New Sudan Council of Churches [NSCC] or the Wunlit 2000 People-to-People Peace Conference among the six communities of greater Jonglei… These were all very limited in scope. They were among communities and they were aiming at bringing people together so that the liberation struggles could continue.

It is the first time we are having *this* process. It is a process that will have to redefine our national objectives. It is a process that aims to reach a national, a new political consensus on many things. On the constitution, on resource sharing, on how to structure the state, how to reform the army, how to reform the civil service, how to reform the judiciary and so on.

Bernard Suwa: Let me just highlight a few things that have emanated from these discussions. One is that dialogue must be seen as a process. Dialogue must be seen as inclusive. Dialogue must never be seen as a replacement for other social, political or economic issues. It must consider both the top and the bottom levels for it to be successful and there must be a political will for a process like this to succeed. That if there is no political commitment, it will fall short of achieving its objectives. It has to be community driven and holistic—holistic in the sense that it has to address other issues as well, and not necessarily just political settlements on the conflict of the day.

Discussion

James Nhial, CAFOD: You talked about committees that went out and did outreach about dialogue in some of the states. What is the outcome of those committees that went to those states? Did they come out with some views that they got from the ground? What did they tell people at the grassroots level?

Alex Miskin: The question is, according to the South Sudan National Dialogue Secretariat, who do you define as relevant stakeholders? Secondly, given that SPLM-IO has split into two—the wing led by Taban Deng Gai, who is the first vice president, and the other led by Dr Riek Machar, who continues to wield much force on the ground: How do you engage these two very opposing factions? Do you engage them as independent or as one?

Hanna Mollan, Norwegian People's Aid: Thank you for all those wonderful presentations. I have a very simple question to both panellists. Just listening to the sequence of failed dialogues and listening to the ongoing dialogue, I would be curious to hear: What do you believe the psychological impact of all these failures is on the people both participating in the dialogue and observing it from the outside? It seems to me that even with the current national dialogue, there is a very low expectation and a very high tolerance for failure. So if you have some reflections, just on an individual level, what is the psychological impact of these failures?

'What do you believe the psychological impact of all these failures is on the people both participating in the dialogue and observing it from the outside?'

Hanna Mollan

Dr Elshafie Khidir Saeid: To the question on the psychological impact: Thank God that many of these failures happened long ago. I think if it was within a shorter time period, the psychological impact of failure would be much graver. So, different generations

witness different failures. This may be simply *Rahma min Allah* [mercy from God]. If I can give you an example of what the youth, or the new generation are now saying in Sudan: They are very depressed. They have no confidence in any politicians. So, this is one of the psychological impacts. I think we need to remedy this not by using a doctor but through measures that really regenerate confidence in the future.

Zacharia Diing Akol: There was a question about the outcomes. We are still in the process. The sub-committees that went to the counties for grassroots consultations and have come back are now compiling the outcomes. The report will be presented to the plenary. The outcomes of the grassroots consultation will be used to inform the agenda for the regional conferences. So each region will benefit from the consultations that took place in the counties.

Who is a relevant stakeholder? It is all the groups. We have done a list and we are open for more suggestions. The political parties, for example, all the different armed groups, civil society, women's groups, youth groups, religious institutions, traditional and customary leaders, farmers, the business community, cattle-keepers or pastoralists, and more. It is all these groups in every place. And we are beginning in the counties. Then, of the 1,200 people that I was talking about, we think more than 80 per cent of the total number of participants will come from the regions.

And this brings me to a question. What are we going to do about those who are refusing to participate? Well, I think all of us have to answer this question. Whether we think it will be fair for us to say, OK, if they are not interested, we cancel the process or whether we can go ahead without them and try and convince them to join us. It is our choice. The committees do not have special powers to compel those who are not willing to come and the committee is not waiting, either.

We think majority of South Sudanese are still inside the country, even though the number of those who are outside is staggering. We can have enough conversations in South Sudan, if people are willing. Those who are outside the country will be reached and maybe some will even come to the national conference in Juba. They can have their own processes there, their own deliberations, and send us their opinions. Because what matters the most are the opinions on this issue: How to achieve the ten objectives that are outlined for the process to achieve?

To finish my answer: I think failure is human and when it happens, it creates a certain degree of negative attitudes or doubts. Can this be done? But then what is it that we can do? Can we just say: Oh! Things are difficult, so let's hang ourselves? Shouldn't we instead say: Yes, they are difficult but let's compose ourselves and work hard to overcome those. Learn from the mistakes that we have committed in the past and improve as we go forward. I think, optimistically, that that is what we can do. We have to compose ourselves again, even after we fall down. And say: Let us move forward because life has to continue in some way.

Mimi Bior: My question is to Zacharia on the national dialogue process. It could be interesting to know how many women are represented within the steering committee, and also in the senior leadership or decision-making roles.

Hiipai Stanislaw: My questions also go to Zacharia. First, I would like to know how many youths are represented in the steering committee? Second, in our country, some places are not accessible by road due to insecurity, so I would like to know how you convince refugees and the citizens in the camps [POC areas] to come back for the national dialogue.

Zacharia Diing Akol: The question about women and youth. To my sister, there are women but I am sorry to say that we have not met the quarter requirement that is in the constitution, the 25 per cent. I do not know exactly the number but in the steering committee there are three out of nine, so we are good there. But in the larger body, there are about 10 women but certainly not 20 out of a hundred plus. So we are not doing well there. And in the secretariat, we are not doing well, either. There was a bias that came with the selection of the institutions. The people who came from the think tank all happened to be men. Like with us at the Sudd Institute,[7] the researchers we have are all men. It is not as if we just met and formed ourselves and excluded women. We are very cognisant of the fact that women in our society do play a big role, especially when it comes to searching for peace. They are also going to be an important constituency to compensate for this imbalance.

For the youth, I am also sorry to say that we don't have high percentage but there are definitely youth included. It also depends how one defines youth. At the secretariat, the majority of us are youth but then in the larger body [the steering committee] there

7 The Sudd Institute is an independent research organization based in Juba. For more information, see: https://suddinstitute.org/.

are only a few. To compensate for this, in all the processes and at all levels of the conferences, we are saying 25 per cent should be women and 25 per cent should be youth. In the other 50 per cent, they will also compete because they will come from these other stakeholder groups, too. So in the end, they may be the majority.

Finally, on access to some of the insecure areas. We do not have manifold powers to just parachute between here and there. We are also mindful of the safety of the people. In some areas that we will not have access to for security reasons, we may look for creative ways of getting our ideas out, including getting groups that may be friendly or may be accepted as a substitute for us if we are not going there. And there are places where the committee is thinking of sending the church because the church is seen as neutral and can convey the same message to everyone. That message is really let us talk. What has gone wrong in our country can't be fixed by any other way other than us talking to one another.

Dr Leben[8] reminded me to tell you about a document we released. We have released one document that resulted from the internal deliberations we had in the month of June [2017]. That document is on the South Sudan National Dialogue website.[9] It has just been released with the support of UNDP. The website has special features, especially for those who are outside South Sudan. They can watch videos and listen to audios. They can also make their own submissions, which will be accepted by the South Sudan National Dialogue Secretariat. Fr Pagan is the head of documentation unit, which does very diligent work to document all the proceedings. We are now working on document number two, which will also explain the one-month series of seminars we are beginning to conduct. We invited people who participated in the dialogue processes to discuss their experiences.

Peter Bul, Juba Teaching Hospital: To Dr Elshafie: What is your advice to those of us here so that we do not ask Zacharia so many questions about who will implement the outcome of the national dialogue? Given that you have attended so many agreements and have so much experience, what can you say to us about that?

Dr Elshafie Khidir Saeid: I think the implementation process itself is sometimes more difficult than the national dialogue. In many agreements and in many documents, there are very beautiful resolutions. The national dialogue of today that concluded in Khartoum in October [2017] has got some very beautiful documents—on

8 Dr Leben Moro is board member of the Sudd Institute.
9 For more information, see: www.ssnationaldialogue.org.

identity, the bill of rights, governance, decentralization… It is all very beautiful but then here comes the question of implementation. How can we implement these beautiful documents? And this is a challenge.

The final word is that beautiful documents coming from beautiful dialogue is no guarantee that implementation will also be as beautiful. Implementation itself is a process that needs to be considered as a more difficult one.

Fr Matthew Pagan: And as Dr Elshafie Khidir Saeid said, due to many years of failures to understand the lessons, failures of learning from them, the failures of dialogue… People never pick up where things left off. They always begin anew. Begin anew and never look back and say what happened yesterday. To discuss how we can avoid not falling back into the same mistakes. But instead we begin anew. So the psychological impacts just seem to be passed from one generation to another. We need to learn from our history. And if we do not learn from it, we may always be condemned to failure.

And all those of you who came—the students and other guests, the disabled community who are also here—I heard that you all participated very actively in this conference. Thank you very much and we will welcome you all again next time.

5. South Sudan Theatre: Live performance

‘Young people need to be engaged in new ways’

Nichola Franco: With our theatre performances, we go to the people and ask them what issues they face, what their problems are. They give us their ideas and we pick up on them, then we develop short performances. We take this performance out to the community, perform it and then we give people a chance to talk about the issues that were addressed in the performance. This is how we use drama and theatre as a tool to dialogue at the grass-roots level.

We’ll now perform a short theatre piece that we wrote for South Sudan Theatre Organization.

Cast of characters:

HANNAN: Works in a tea room; good natured, sociable and helpful young woman; university graduate; content with her lot in life

NANCY: Friend of Hannan, who also works in the tea room; beautiful, attractive young woman;

GIDO: Unemployed university graduate; has brand new mobile phone and new clothes; young, confident and full of himself; member of Gonya ethnic group

AWAD: Unemployed university graduate; rom university; young man who feels put upon because of harassment from local kids; member of Laloba ethnic group

OLD MAN: Local elder; frequently visits the tea room

Act 1, Scene 1

A typical tea room in a rakuba in South Sudan.

NANCY [musing aloud to herself]: Now what attracts Hannan to this ugly place? A rakuba! Someone who is educated to work in a rakuba, selling tea?! I do not know what sort of poverty has engulfed Hannan. A university graduate should work in a very rich institution! Hannan...! I will show her later!

10 A rakuba is a thatched hut used for social gatherings.

Enter Hannan.

HANNAN [curious]: Nancy! Nancy!

NANCY: Yes, Hannan?

HANNAN: Why do you speak to yourself? Where are you?

NANCY: Just come here. Come here, Hannan! What is your problem, really? You graduated. But, then after all this education, you have decided to work in this kind of place?

HANNAN: But what is wrong with this place, Nancy?

NANCY: A very ugly place like this?!

HANNAN: Nancy, don't you know the value of this place for me? As far as I am concerned, this is the best place I could possibly be.

NANCY: But you are a graduate! You are supposed to be working in an office. Put your feet up. Enjoy the air conditioning. Drive a company car!

HANNAN: No, no, no, no! Nancy, no! A good place does not mean air conditioning, a car and all the things you are saying. This place you are talking about… Here, in this place, we live together. We love one another and people are united. This is the place to be, Nancy!

NANCY: But there are also people like this in an office.

HANNAN: Here, in the tea room, you collect your wages every time. You get paid today and tomorrow. But in an office, is there anything? Do people get paid on a regular basis?

Pause conversation while Hannan greets a neighbour.

HANNAN: Just a minute, Nancy. Welcome, welcome! Mama Mary, greetings to you!

Hannan returns to Nancy and says:

HANNAN: Mama Mary is one of them. She sells greens. And Ali, who lives over there [gesturing]. All the people who live in our neighbourhood come to the tea room and we chat. We take our rest in this place. [suddenly remembers] Nancy! Nancy! I have forgotten something important! Coffee for this uncle here!

NANCY: Sure! He reminded a while ago.

HANNAN: OK. Now I will go. Fan the fire, OK?

NANCY: OK.

Exit Nancy to tend to fire. Muses to herself about Hannan's plight, failing to understand her friend. Meanwhile Hanna takes a phone call from Ali, a neighbour who is presently in hospital, assuring him that they will bring the items he's requested. Nancy and Hannan return to the tea room and resume their conversation.

NANCY: But, Hannan, I am truly still not happy!

HANNAN: Why, Nancy? What is it now?

NANCY: With the fact that you work in a tea room.

HANNAN: I told you. Here in the rakuba, the people who come to visit are people who are so good, so sociable among themselves. We all studied together, too. There is Gido, James, Rizig.

NANCY [incredulous]: All these people are university graduates, too?!

HANNAN: Yes, all of them come here. This is the place that brings us together. We sit, we chat and we take tea. And we do lots of things together. As for you, Nancy, you are still new here in the tea room. Just settle in and you will see new things in this place.

HANNAN: Nancy! I have forgotten. Please go to Abakar in the shop and tell him that Hannan needs sugar, OK?

NANCY: OK. But, Hannan, what about money?

HANNAN: No, no, Nancy. Money is not a problem. Go tell him it is for Hannan. He will give you the sugar.

NANCY [again incredulous; sceptical]: But for free?! Just like that?!

HANNAN: Nancy, the people here do not care about money. The only thing that matters is good family relationships and staying good with other people.

Act 1, Scene 2

Enter Gido, full of excitement as he greets Hannan.

GIDO: What's new? How are you?

HANNAN: I'm fine. Where have you been? You look so smart. What? So many new things?!

GIDO: Just keep cool. Yes, I've bought many new things.

HANNAN: You didn't tell me. I like your phone!

GIDO: Hey! Why am I here? Where are the other guys?

HANNAN: They have not come yet. Didn't we agree yesterday to meet here today, so that we can go together?

GIDO: Of course, yes.

HANNAN: I do not know why they are so delayed today. Gido, your phone is beautiful! Even water. Your water is purified?

GIDO: Oh, the world has changed, my sister! Do you know what?

HANNAN: Wait, wait, wait! Have you joined Facebook?

GIDO: What's Facebook? I just bought my phone yesterday. I couldn't sleep because I wanted to know everything about it. When anything is new, you must.... [immediately distracted by his phone]

HANNAN: This phone of mine. The screen has broken.

GIDO: How do you live down this phone of yours? Are you not ashamed to pull it out in front of me?

HANNAN: Why do you think your phone is better than mine? I use my phone on Facebook 24 hours a day!

Gido and Hannan look at Facebook together on Gido's new phone, catching up with former friends from university and occasionally expressing surprise at what they've posted. Enter Nancy, who interrupts them to remind Hannan that a neighbour visiting the tea room has ordered a cup of coffee. Exit Nancy to fetch the coffee, with a little bit of sugar, as per Hannan's request.

GIDO [with exaggerated interest and curiosity]: And who is that?!

HANNAN: I did not tell you. That's Nancy. I brought her here to help me with the tea room.

Gido jumps up and goes after Nancy.

GIDO: Nancy! Just a minute! How are you, beautiful? You make this place shine!

NANCY [low key]: Welcome. Shine with friends.

GIDO: I'm Gido. I always come to visit Hannan's tea room. She needs me but I don't need her!

HANNAN [indignant]: Hey Gido! Come on!

GIDO [protesting]: Just a minute! Just a minute!

HANNAN: Come on, Gido!

GIDO [to Nancy]: Can you see how jealous she is?! Nancy, take my phone number, 0951… Just a minute. I'll be right back.

NANCY: What will you drink?

GIDO: Give me hibiscus. Hibiscus, OK!

NANCY: OK.

Exit Nancy to fetch the hibiscus tea. Gido returns his attention to Hannan.

GIDO: We didn't finished looking at the photos on Facebook.

HANNAN [chastising]: No, we didn't. Because you were instantly distracted by Nancy. Have you not stopped this habit of talking to ladies? That habit you've had since our university days?

GIDO: And what else is there in life? In this world, after university, what else do you do? You get a woman and you marry. [fantasizing] Even now I am seeing myself with Nancy…

HANNAN [slightly sarcastic]: Oh, really?

GIDO [confident]: Sure!

HANNAN [sceptical]: Well, we see about that!

Act 2, Scene 1

Enter Awad. Gido and Hannan continue looking at photos on Facebook. Awad immediately notices Nancy, who is serving Gido his hibiscus tea. Gido is annoyed and the two young men bicker among themselves over Nancy.

HANNAN: That is enough! Yesterday we agreed to mobilize some money so that we can go to visit Uncle Ali in the Hospital.

AWAD: Mobilize?!

HANNAN: We agreed yesterday. Have you forgotten or what?

AWAD [distracted]: Sharing of what again?

HANNAN: We are going to visit Uncle Ali, who is sick in hospital.

AWAD: I have forgotten, I swear!

GIDO: You came late *and* you have forgotten?

AWAD [sighing, exasperated]: I couldn't come sooner. It's because of those kids. Every morning, I find them at my door. Give us money for tea. Give us money for school. And then money for transport. What a burden!

GIDO [insulting Awad and making light of his troubles]: Are you telling us now that you're married? To that angry looking amputated guy who with the bicycle?

AWAD [sarcastically]: Yeah! That's right, Gido!

Meanwhile, Hannan continues to look at Facebook on Gido's new phone, finding news and sad stories about their friends and neighbours.

GIDO [to Hannan]: Bring my phone here! Let him see what's there.

AWAD [to Gido, with disdain and ogling Nancy to get her attention]: Phone?! Do I have time for a phone?!

GIDO: Listen! I told you she's taken! You make things so hard for me!

Fight breaks out between Gido and Awad. After the fight:

AWAD: Hannan, what's wrong with him?!

GIDO: It seems this guy is very impatient!

AWAD [to Gido]: Why can't you just leave me alone to be with this girl?

GIDO: Are you happy now?!

NANCY: Can you guys stop fighting over me so we can focus on the fundraising?! [turning to Hannan] But, Hannan. Is that old man our uncle?

HANNAN [pointing in the direction of Ali's home]: He is a neighbour. He lives over there. He asked me if we could bring some things to him in hospital.

Act 2, Scene 2

Suddenly, gunshots are heard in the surrounding area. Gido and Awad are concerned that fighting has broken out again. Nancy is worried, too. They can't decide to stay in the tea room or go, Where is safe?

GIDO: Hush!

HANNAN [calmly]: Those aren't the sounds of gunshots. This noise is coming from the nearby garage. It is the sound of zinc.

GIDO: Zinc?! You said zinc? Are you crazy?! It has it started! This is just the habit of this country!

NANCY [scared]: Let us go, guys.

GIDO [concerned]: Where are you going, Nancy?

NANCY: I am going home… To lay down!

AWAD: Guys! It's started all over again!

GIDO: Where? Just a minute. Get up!

AWAD [disgusted]: On my way here, I passed those people. [tribal reference] Just standing there and looking at us. Oh! No, no!

GIDO [looking around]: Nancy? Nancy?

AWAD: Look! You won't regret what you see here.

Awad shows them his phone and scenes from photos posted on Facebook pages.

AWAD: It is all because of those people!

GIDO: Those people should all die!

Chaos all over the area as gunshots continue to be heard. People running around and shouting.

GIDO: If you still want to sit in this tea room, stay! For me, there is nothing to lose by being here. Everyone should find a place to hide.

AWAD: You? Don't you want to go to safety? I am going.

GIDO: Where to? Just wait a minute! If had gone to Cecilia's family in Kampala, things could be better by now. [shouting] Nancy, we should now! Nancy! Let's go!

NANCY: Let's go!

HANNAN: Gido! Gido! What's the message on your phone? You have a message! What is it? Let's have a look at it.

AWAD [urgently]: Log on to Facebook!

Act 2, Scene 3

The group of friends are still in the tea room, looking at the news feed on Facebook to determine the number of casualties.

AWAD: These are the photos from yesterday, aren't they?

GIDO: Yes.

HANNAN: Gido, scroll to the other page.

NANCY: This one is from today.

HANNAN: Look at this student [lying on ground, injured and bleeding].

GIDO: Look at this old woman. Her head is chopped off. These people have no mercy!

HANNAN: Look at how this woman's leg has been cut. Gido, wait a minute! There's a post. It reads: 'The youth of Laloba are attacking the youth of Gonya.' These are the relatives of Cecilia—against the relatives of James!

GIDO [shocked]: Oh, my God! What's the problem with these youths from Laloba?! They cause trouble every day. What is their problem?

AWAD [agitated]: Just a minute, Gido! You are only blaming the youth from Laloba. What's wrong with you?

GIDO [defensively]: Why are you complaining?

AWAD: Why are you only talking about the Laloba youth? What about the Gonya youth?

GIDO: I am speaking to Nancy!

AWAD [more agitated]: What Nancy?! You are targeting me! Do you have a problem with me?

GIDO [also agitated]: You have an issue with me!

AWAD: Do you think I am afraid of you? What's that? The youth from Laloba attacked the Gonya youth? While it was the Gonya youth who came and attacked us. What's wrong with you?!

GIDO: Come on! Come over here and say that!

Fighting erupts between Awad and Gido. They turn over tables and chairs. Tea and coffee spills and cups smash. Gido is thrown to the ground. He shouts out Nancy's name, saying it's all because of her that this has happened.

AWAD [to Gido]: Let it be now!

NANCY: Awad, why have you beaten up your friend like this?

AWAD [angrily]: Even if he dies!

NANCY: Is there a need for this behaviour of yours? Is there?

AWAD [sarcastically]: If anything happens, it's always the youth from Laloba...!

Act 3, Scene 1

Enter old man into tea room.

OLD MAN [surprised]: My children! My children! Why is this place in such disarray? What happened here?

Hannan [concerned]: Are you okay?

OLD MAN: I am very fine. Did you have any problems?

NANCY [with wonder]: The old man is still alive?! See, guys, he is alive!

GIDO: Yes, that's him!

OLD MAN: What is the problem? I don't understand.

HANNAN: A boy came here and said you were dead!.

OLD MAN: Whose boy?

HANNAN: Were you not caught up in the conflict?

OLD MAN [slightly confused]: There is no conflict.

HANNAN: What about the gunshots we just heard? And all those people running and screaming?

OLD MAN: I tell you, there is no fighting there.

GIDO: But why were so many people are running?

OLD MAN: Ah! There is absolutely nothing! Just sit down and I'll tell you all about it.

The End!

Discussion

Emmanuel Lojo Aquila, student at Catholic University of South Sudan: What I have seen here is real action that takes place in South Sudan. What happens here is about stereotypes. These are people who are living together but because of the fighting, one of the characters in the play only mentioned one community. He said to the other character that they are the ones causing all the violence, so the other one grew annoyed. This is a lesson to all of us. if anything happens, don't just jump to the quickest conclusion.

Nichola Franco: Let me summarize. This performance is talking about two things. Unemployment and hate speech on social media. All these conflicts happened because a statement was posted on Facebook saying that a particular community had killed people from another community. The two friends in the tea room started to fight because one of them mentioned that it was the community of the other that went and attacked the other community.

Take an example that we found in Bor. There was somebody from another community and from a different state. When he came to Bor, he said that the things happening in Bor are the same things happening in his area. Later, our dialogue continued after the performance had ended because the audience is given a chance to talk about what they watched. And then they go home, and of course there will be discussion about the discussion about the performance.

Take another example. A lady in Bor performed a story about early forced marriage. In reality, the story had happened to her. In that performance, it happened that one of her uncles was there. She felt peace after she had performed the play because her uncle came up to the stage and confessed. He realized that what they are doing in terms of early forced marriage is wrong. He appreciated the lady for having the courage to act out the story that had happened to her.

Mariak Benjamin Makoi, student at Catholic University of South Sudan: To the actors: I enjoyed the performance. I liked it because it stressed what is happening here in South Sudan. You have demonstrated how problems are generated through social media or physically [fighting] by our people. I agree with that. So, is there a mechanism that can show how these problems are solved? That you can show us in a drama, just like the drama you showed us about how problems are generated?

Yol Samuel, CAFOD: We have really learned about the impact of modern technology and the way it was represented in the play was good. It has taught us what creates conflict among people nowadays is what you get on the internet, like how this guy in the play fought just because of what he heard. Information can create conflict but it can also create an environment where we can live as South Sudanese. What I also got from the play is that ladies can bring problems. The guys in the play intended to look after that lady, and it created chaos and conflict between them.

Nichola Franco: Samuel made a comment that ladies are a reason for the problem. I won't agree with you. Because to me, it is all about how you think towards others—be it a lady or any person. Let us just see people as human beings, regardless of gender, ethnic and religious affinity.

To Mariak on whether there is a mechanism to solve this problem. I will say if you are asking about this performance and the hate speech, there is a mechanism to reduce hate speech, especially on Facebook. How? There is a portal with an option to report to Facebook about hate speech and they can immediately remove that particular post. So just go to that option and report to Facebook, so that they remove it. By doing so, fewer numbers of people will have read that hate post.

Ferdinand von Habsburg: Every day, each one of us has to challenge ourselves about the stereotypes we have—that we hear in both ears and our houses. We also have to challenge our own community, which is not easy. If you tell them, 'I think this issue is wrong', you risk isolating yourself. Why is there conflict? Well, very often we have to ask our leaders—whoever they may be. They may be leaders at the community level, in the military, from very different walks of life. But there is a question. If they are leaders, it means they are taking people in a direction. So it has to be asked: Is that direction peace or war?

I saw a similar theatre performance in Kapoeta State with young people from the Toposa community about the use of weapons. A large crowd of young people came—about a thousand people. They were completely spellbound and their eyes all locked on the group that performed. The group was telling people: This is our situation. The audience were connected to it. I think theatre is an answer to engaging youth. To begin to get them to engage their minds for what comes next. It was interesting that as soon as the theatre group had finished, a very respectable noble person stood up, made some remarks and people started to walk away. It disconnected them from that very issue. That person was not really reaching them. And I think that is about young people, who need to be engaged in the right way.

Glossary of acronyms, words and phrases

CAFOD	Catholic Agency For Overseas Development
chieng	(*Dinka*) Dinka principle of unity and harmony
firqa saqafiya	(*Arabic*) a cultural band for music and drama
ICC	Inter Church Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	internally displaced person
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
gacaca	(*Kinyarwanda)* a system of community justice based on Rwandan tradition
NIF	National Islamic Front
POC	protection of civilians
rakuba	*(Arabic)* a thatched hut used for social gatherings
SPLM-IO	Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SSANSA	South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms
SSCC	South Sudan Council of Churches

Notes on Contributors

Dr. Nicki Kindersley is a Research Fellow at Pembroke College, Cambridge University, where she teaches history and politics. Since 2007, she has conducted research focusing on how people keep societies together in times of crisis. She has worked across northern Uganda and South Sudan on the local history of displacement, social and political organization, education during conflict, and popular ideas of being and becoming South Sudanese. In 2012 and 2013 she was coordinator of the Reclamation Project for the South Sudan National Archives, helping staff in the Ministry of Culture rescue, protect and organize the surviving national records of the country. She has worked on various projects in South Sudan, which recently included a British Council project in Juba, which sought to engage customary authorities in improving court access—bringing communities together to discuss common rule of law challenges today. Most recently, Dr. Kindersley has worked with colleagues from the University of Juba on an Australian project to assess the impact of the South Sudanese diaspora on life in South Sudan.

Dr. Francis Mading Deng is South Sudan's roving ambassador. He is Deputy Rapporteur of the South Sudan National Dialogue and was the country's first permanent representative to the United Nations. Dr. Francis also served as UN Secretary General Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide, and as the Secretary General's representative on internally displaced persons (IDPs). He was Sudan's ambassador to Canada, the Nordic countries and the U.S., and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and is also the author of many books on Dinka culture and history.

Kuyang Harriet Loggo is a Doctoral Fellow at the Centre for Peace and Development Studies at the University of Juba. Consulting in the area of democratic governance, access to justice and the rule of law, Kuyang has previously served with United Nations Development Programs (UNDP) in the capacity of rule of law analyst, program analyst for rule of law consent and access to justice specialist in Sudan, South Sudan and Timor Leste. She is a researcher and widely published author on legal systems in South Sudan.

Chief Wilson Peni Rikito has been the Paramount Chief of the Azande since 2011. He studied in Switzerland and has undertaken a study visit to South Africa to acquire knowledge on local government in democracy.

Pauline Otieno Skaper is the Rift Valley Forum Program Manager and holds a Master of Science in Violence, Conflict and Development from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), as well as a Law degree from Birkbeck College, University of London. She has worked on various programs as a researcher and a coordinator in UK, East Africa and Horn of Africa.

Winnie Gulliver is Program Manager for the South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA). She oversees the development and implementation of a program working towards the promotion of peace in the country. Currently, her work is mostly centered on working with local communities and partners and promoting dialogue at different levels. Winnie holds a BA and an MA in the fields of Peace Studies, International Relations and Conflict Resolution.

Silvio William Deng is coordinator of the Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) at the Catholic Diocese of Malakal. As part of his work, Silvio mobilizes communities for peaceful coexistence through the formation of justice and peace committees. Silvio holds a BA in Political Science from Catholic University of Eastern Africa, and a Diploma in Philosophy from the Major National Seminary in Khartoum, Sudan.

Nichola Franco is a theatre practitioner, playwright and director, human rights and cultural activist and a journalist. He holds a BA in Drama from the University of Juba College of Arts, Music and Drama. He was a scriptwriter for the 'Free Voice South Sudan' radio program from 2008 to 2015, and collaborated with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport in the Cinema department from 2007 to 2010. Nicholas is also the coordinator and administrator of South Sudan Theatre Organization: Ammalna Organization.

Ferdinand Von Hasburg is Swiss Government Advisor to the South Sudan Council of Churches. He has lived and worked in Sudan and South Sudan for the past twenty years. He has extensive experience in the fields of humanitarian action, peacebuilding and reconciliation. He has helped design and advised on courses for and with the government of Southern Sudan. Ferdinand has liaised

between civil society and various humanitarian organizations. Ferdinand holds a Masters in International Humanitarian Affairs.

Dr. Bernard Suwa has long-standing expertise working on issues relating to conflict, governance, reconciliation and peace building and social cohesion at both the community and national level in South Sudan. In 2013, Dr. Suwa helped to establish the National Secretariat of South Sudan National Committee for Healing, Peace and Reconciliation (SSCHPR) and has conducted research into the border conflict between communities on the South Sudan-Uganda border, and developed a framework for traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. He has worked with RVI to facilitate a national meeting of chiefs and churches in Eastern Equatoria. Most recently he developed a conference framework for community engagement with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. Dr. Bernard holds a PhD in Education from the University of Western Sydney in Australia.

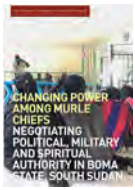
Dr. El Shaafi is a politician, writer and columnist based in Sudan, and was the organization secretary for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), which is an alliance of opposition parties and SPLM/A, and later became the head of the political committee in the leadership of the alliance. He was part of the coordination committee between NDA and SPLM during the CPA negotiations, and subsequently became the chief negotiator for NDA in the Cairo agreement. El Shaafi graduated from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Khartoum, before joining politics. He is the author of 'Tribe and Politics in Sudan', published in 2016.

Zacharia Diing Akol is a founding member of the Sudd Institute, a policy research organization based in Juba, South Sudan, where he currently serves as a senior policy analyst and director of training. Zacharia also serves as the deputy head of the research unit in the secretariat of the South Sudan National Dialogue, and has extensive experience in community outreach, government and organizational leadership. His research interests include: the role of civil society organizations in peace building, traditional leadership and democratic governance, post-conflict reconciliation, faith and public policy, and the dynamics of civil war.

Selected RVI publications

Politics, Power and Chiefship in Famine and War

This report investigates how customary authorities on South Sudan's border with southern Darfur have managed repeated wars and famines, both for the communities that they claim to represent and for their own survival and benefit.



Changing Power Among Murle Chiefs

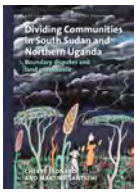
This report investigates how Murle customary authorities navigate and negotiate political, military and spiritual authority, while simultaneously challenging the view that Murle society has no organic leaderships structures.

Instruments in Both Peace and War: South Sudanese discuss civil society actors and their role

A series of public debates on the role of civil society that took place in June 2016 at the Catholic University in Juba.

Now We Are Zero

A report based on the first meeting of traditional leaders and chiefs from opposing sides of the conflict since 2013, which took place under the RVI SSCA project in Kuron in 2016, where they discussed their own roles in peace and conflict.



Dividing Communities in South Sudan and Northern Uganda: Boundary disputes and land governance

This report argues that boundary disputes must be understood in the context of changing land values, patterns of decentralization and local hybrid systems of land governance.

The role of transnational networks and mobile citizens in South Sudan's global community

This report explores the nature of the impact of South Sudan's international community on the evolution of the country's civil wars.

Expectations and belonging in Dire Dawa

This report analyses the drivers and dynamics of rural to urban migration in Ethiopia and the impacts on the physical and social infrastructure in Dire Dawa.

Un microcosme de militarisation: Conflit, gouvernance et mobilization armée en territoire d'Uvira

Ce rapport analyse la militarisation en territoire d'Uvira et la manière dont celle-ci façonne les rapports entre conflits locaux, gouvernance et mobilisation armée. *Also in English.*

Carrada Ayaan Dhunkannay: Waa socdaalkii tahriibka ee Somaliland ilaa badda Medhitereeniyanka

Sheekadani waa waraysigii ugu horreeyay ee ku saabsan waayo aragnimadii wiil dhallinyaro ah oo reer Somaliland oo taahriibay. *Also in English.*

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Mounting peace agreements and numerous ceasefire violations have resulted in sustained international pressure on South Sudan's leaders to end a civil war that has displaced some 4 million people and created a severe humanitarian crisis. In an effort to address the root causes of the crisis, South Sudan's president, Salva Kiir Mayardit, announced his government's intention to initiate a national dialogue process in December 2016. While dialogue should be welcomed as a necessary part of peacemaking and reconciliation, South Sudan's national dialogue process has had its fair share of skepticism and even opposition.

The sixth annual Juba Lecture Series, held in November 2017, focused on themes of dialogue at both the local and national levels. The lectures—a collaboration with the Institute for Justice and Peace Studies at Catholic University of South Sudan, with support from the Australian Embassy in Addis Ababa—are designed to support local knowledge and provide a safe, open space for debate on key issues. This text forms a summary of some of the key debates that were held during the Juba Lecture Series 2017.

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