

Peace, Stability and Prosperity in Southern Africa: An Editorial

The question of peace and stability as pre-conditions for development and prosperity is a major concern for the region of Southern Africa. This arises because much has been done to deepen peace, while the outcomes may be tenuous and unassured. A lot of work has gone into building stability, especially of states, including the public service system; but these may not have resulted in improved prosperity. The regional integration is premised on developmentalism, making explicit the link between security/stability and development. The structures to advance this have been put in place both at regional and national levels, but whether these are effective in creating dynamic links between securities, stability and prosperity is up for discussion. There are evolving conceptual frameworks for holistic efforts at peace, stability and prosperity, but these may have not yet lead to positive outcomes for people on the ground. This edition is a contribution to on-going discussion on these issues, on the basis of research articles in the following format:

Patrick Dzimiri and others propose a conceptual framework for linking peace, security and development as an effort to advance Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals framework. It concludes that the success of this would require a concerted effort aimed at resolving governance and political inhibitors such as weak and undemocratic leadership systems. Clayton Vhumbunu discusses the question of political security as a basis for stability, development and prosperity, concluding that Southern Africa would need to grapple effectively with structural factors that limit citizen empowerment and sustainable national development.

The question of conflict transformation as a potential tool for addressing the issues of peace and prosperity, especially in countries coming out of conflict, is the focus of the article by Darlington Mutanda. This tool is proposed because of its ability to understand the non-material aspects of conflict and its resolution. Using South Sudan as a case in point, the article emphasises domestic ownership of the societal transformation.

The importance of a professional, efficient and effective public service in ensuring a secure, stable and developmental state that is able to meet the needs of the people and to fight public corruption is what Mamello Rakolobe analyses. It makes the depoliticisation of the public service a major priority for Lesotho and suggests that it is an opportunity for a multiparty parliament to advance.

Barend Prinsloo is concerned with how southern Africa's influential player in regional stability, peace and development, South Africa, projects its power and

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influence on the continent of Africa in support of its search for peace, stability and development. It concludes that to effectively do this, South Africa needs to think carefully about its leadership credentials, its acceptance by other African countries and power resources, among other factors.

The edition triggers thought and discussion on a number of fronts that we hope will be taken up by future editions, including special editions that could focus on one of the issues raised. We welcome applications for special editions.

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