

Southern Africa

Forecasts for insecurity and conflict in 2014



open briefing
the civil society intelligence agency

February 2014

Published by Open Briefing, 28 February 2014

Open Briefing
27 Old Gloucester Street
Bloomsbury
London WC1N 3AX
United Kingdom

Tel +44 (0)20 7193 9805
info@openbriefing.org
www.openbriefing.org

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Lead author: Nick Branson

Project leader: Nick Branson

Editor: Chris Abbott

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Open Briefing would like to thank the **Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation**, the **Network for Social Change**, the **Marmot Charitable Trust** and the **Philamonic Trust** for their financial support.

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Introduction

Some narratives have painted Southern Africa as a region largely absent of conflict and insecurity. In reality, instability persists beneath the surface due to inequitable settlements following independence or struggles for national liberation. Conflict and insecurity are products of a combination of volatile factors. Understanding these underlying drivers is critical to understanding events. This study from Open Briefing attempts to avoid generalisations by analysing specific factors and identifying forecasts for individual countries in the region.

The drivers that are examined range from those influencing ongoing events to more structural long-term factors. Hence this report draws on a number of themes, including: levels of poverty; socio-political instability; the democratic deficit; incomplete transitions from autocracy to democracy; the role of the armed forces; youth bulges; post-conflict environments; the quality of governance; the impact of natural resources; and small-arms flows. These factors are analysed with the purpose of understanding the weight that they have in shaping the country's recent history and its likely future.

Over 50 carefully vetted sources of qualitative and quantitative data were used throughout this study, with numerous other local sources used for each individual country. Statistics and profiles from sources such as the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Economist Intelligence Unit and the annual *African Economic Outlook*, helped to identify the main features of a country. News articles from the BBC, Al Jazeera, Reuters, Africa Confidential and local media, provided a descriptive element that contributed to a better understanding of the dynamics of insecurity along the timeframe covered by this study. Intelligence and risk companies, such as Control Risks and red24, provided up-to-date, on-the-ground security overviews. And civil society organisations, such as the International Crisis Group, Human Rights Watch, Global Witness and local NGOs, provided background information on many of the factors outlined in the previous paragraph.



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The forecasts set out in this synthesis report derive from the application of the **cone of plausibility method**, which consists of isolating the main drivers that shape events in a country and enables the formulation of fair assumptions. From these assumptions, three types of scenarios for 2014 have been developed: the **baseline**, which is the most likely outcome; a **plausible alternative**, which is possible but less likely; and a **wildcard**, which is possible but unlikely, and usually brings about dramatic outcomes. Each of the narratives is built around different assumptions for the same drivers, which allows for the generation of differentiated but not impossible scenarios. These variables were applied according to specific features within a country. Also included are brief country overviews and short analyses of the origins of current insecurity in each case.

This synthesis report focusses on 10 countries in Southern Africa whose drivers and internal volatility may create instability and conflict over 2014.

This synthesis report focusses on 10 countries in Southern Africa whose drivers and internal volatility may create instability and conflict over 2014. While the region has, in general, experienced around two decades of freedom and prosperity, drivers of insecurity remain. Paramount among them is the growing inequality between rich and poor. The majority of citizens in the region are unable to enjoy the same level of prosperity as the small elite that has profited from the natural resource boom in **Angola, Mozambique and Zambia**, or the wealthy white minority in **Namibia and South Africa**. Another major concern is the extent to which the region's economies were affected by the global financial crisis, particularly the diamond exporters and tourist destinations, such as **Botswana** and South Africa, and the degree to which the emerging middle class in these countries have become dependent on credit to maintain their new lifestyles.

Politics across the region continues to be dominated by an aging generation of figures involved in national liberation movements, and 'struggle credentials' will play a critical role in leadership successions in **Zimbabwe**, South Africa, Namibia, Angola and Mozambique in 2014. These qualifications contrast significantly with the priorities of the educated 'born free' generation, many of whom have no job prospects and feel disconnected from both political elites and popular narratives. A similar picture emerges in agrarian **Malawi**, where the political class is engulfed in scandal ahead of elections in 2014, and in **Swaziland**, which remains an absolute monarchy in a region that leads the continent for political participation and human rights.¹

This report focuses on the above states and excludes the stable mountain kingdom of Lesotho and the prosperous island nations of Comoros, Mauritius and Seychelles. However, **Madagascar** is included in the study, as it will pose a continued test for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and international actors in 2014. In terms of the SADC members not already mentioned, the Democratic Republic of the Congo was included in a previous report on Central Africa and Tanzania would be better treated alongside its neighbours in East Africa.

This briefing paper is the last of three planned reports from Open Briefing forecasting insecurity and conflict in West, Central and Southern Africa during 2014.

Angola

Post-civil war Angola has become one of the world's fastest-growing economies. However, this newfound prosperity is not being shared equally, and the majority of the population continue to live in poverty.² Social indicators remain poor, with the country ranked 148 of 187 on the UN Human Development Index and a life expectancy of 51. Furthermore, Angola has the fifth highest democratic deficit on the continent.³ José Eduardo dos Santos has served as president since 1979, despite having never been directly elected. Alterations to the constitution saw him re-inaugurated in 2012 as leader of the party with the largest share of the vote. However, with his health deteriorating, attention is focused on his succession.

Origins of insecurity

The country is still recovering from a protracted civil war waged between different liberation movements, which lasted from 1975 to 2002. The conflict claimed over one million lives, exacerbated by the intervention of Cold War superpowers and apartheid-era South Africa. It only came to an end when Jonas Savimbi, leader of União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), was killed, allowing the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA), led by dos Santos, to triumph. Since the signing of the Luena Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in April 2002, there has been no credible threat of a return to arms.

Regrettably, the oil boom has led to an upsurge in patronage politics, deployed effectively by dos Santos to prolong his rule. As such, graft pervades in every level of society.⁴ Angola was ranked 157th of 176 countries in the 2012 Corruptions Perceptions Index. However, in recent years the government has taken steps to address a lack of transparency in revenue generation and budget setting. Domestic trade has been slow to rekindle, despite significant foreign direct investment and infrastructure development. This is perhaps unsurprising given that the average cost of civil war, according to the *World Development Report 2011*, is equivalent to more than 30 years of GDP growth for a medium-size developing country.⁵

Angola suffers from a significant youth bulge, and it has one of the fastest population growth rates in Africa at over 3% per annum. The government has been struggling to deliver opportunities for its youth leading to frustration in urban areas, culminating in a series of street protests in Luanda, which would have been unthinkable a few years ago. The government has restricted fundamental freedoms in response.⁶

A low-level insurgency continues in Cabinda province, an enclave separated from the rest of Angola by the River Congo and a strip of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A 2006 peace deal signed with the Frente para a Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda (FLEC) was thought to have resolved the conflict until a dissident faction attacked the Togolese national football team during the 2010 African Cup of Nations.⁷

Major protagonists and recent developments

Street protests have been growing since March 2011, led by unemployed urban young people, who do not share their parents' loyalty to the MPLA. Gradually, opposition parties began to find their voice and formulate alternative political visions for the August 2012 general elections.

Nevertheless, the MPLA took 71.8% of the vote, winning 175 of the 220 seats in the national assembly. UNITA won 18.7%, and doubled its representation to 32 seats; while a new party, *Convergência Ampla de Salvação em Angola (CASA-CE)*, won 10.4% and eight seats.⁸

On 23 November 2013, government security forces raided the headquarters of UNITA and CASA-CE, as well as a number of provincial offices. Over 300 people were arrested, and at least three were killed, including Manuel Hilberto de Carvalho 'Ganga', a leader of the CASA-CE youth wing.⁹ This has served only to reinforce links between disaffected youth and the opposition parties, dividing the country further.¹⁰ Local elections scheduled for 2014 have been postponed to 2015, officially in order to conduct the first census since 1970, but potentially to give the MPLA additional time to recapture ground in the cities.¹¹

Within the MPLA, the focus is on agreeing a successor to dos Santos. Although eligible under the constitution to serve two further five-year terms, this is unlikely due to his age and recent ill health. He is rumoured to have cancer, and during 2013 spent over two months in Spain, allegedly receiving treatment.¹² His likely successor is Manuel Vicente, vice-president since September 2012 and former CEO of the state oil company, *Sociedade Nacional de Combustíveis de Angola EP (Sonangol)*. However, there is growing speculation that José Filomeno dos Santos, the president's 35-year-old son, known as Zénú, is in the running. He is chair of the board of the new US\$5 billion sovereign wealth fund, *Fundo Soberano de Angola*, but has yet to become involved in daily politics. The MPLA old guard dislike both men due to their lack of political or military credentials.¹³ Given the lack of an endorsed successor, the prolonged absence from Angola or sudden death of dos Santos would lead to significant instability and the risk of a coup d'état.¹⁴

Scenarios for 2014

Baseline: The protests by unemployed urban youth continue to intensify. The police respond with increased levels of coercion, while the government further restricts fundamental freedoms. Nevertheless, activists continue to take to the streets, recruit new supporters from among the unemployed youth, and strengthen their alliance with the major opposition parties, CASA-CE and UNITA. This serves to deepen the divisions between those who have profited from the post-war prosperity and those excluded from the peace dividend.

UNITA resorts to using inflammatory rhetoric concerning the failure of the post-war political settlement, enabling it to regain the allegiance of the Ovimbundu ethnic group from central Angola, which had been closely aligned to the party during the civil war. The party is thus able to count on support from the largest ethnic group, consisting of 35-40% of the population, together with disaffected urban youth, and poses a serious threat to the MPLA's hegemony. While this does not lead to a resumption of the civil war, it destabilises the country and gives the government further cause to postpone the local elections.

Despite suffering from cancer, dos Santos is dissuaded from standing down in 2014. He instead spends increasing amounts of time overseas receiving treatment. As a result, he becomes increasingly disconnected from the scale of the domestic unrest, undermining executive decision-making and exacerbating the response to protests.

Plausible alternative: Declining health forces dos Santos to handover the presidency to his chosen successor during 2014. Vincente assumes the presidency, which is welcomed by the international community but resented by many within the MPLA and civil war veterans due to his lack of struggle credentials. While many Angolans respond with apathy due to Vincente's low profile, his pragmatic and pro-business mentality leads him to negotiate with the political opposition and find a solution to their grievances. He is able to co-opt some youth leaders with the promise of reform, political representation and patronage, thus splitting the opposition before it is able to form a credible threat to his regime.

Wildcard: Dos Santos dies in office without officially declaring his successor, leaving Vincente as his replacement in line with the provisions of the constitution. The MPLA splits into factions endorsing different candidates. One faction proposes a younger candidate, Zénú, the president's eldest son, to placate urban protests; another wants a man with military credentials and takes up arms to defend the legacy of the independence struggle. A coup d'état occurs undermining the post-war stability.

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Botswana

Landlocked Botswana is often portrayed as one of Africa's success stories: a wealthy and democratic oasis of stability in a historically volatile neighbourhood.¹⁵ However, the economy contracted in 2009, primarily due to the global recession and the consequent decline in demand for diamonds and luxury tourism, and the country remains vulnerable to changes in Western fortunes. In 2011, diamond extraction accounted for 75% of Botswana's export earnings, 50% of government revenue and 40% of GDP.¹⁶ Botswana scores poorly on the Gini coefficient, with a score of 63 ranking it alongside Lesotho and South Africa as one of the most unequal countries in the world.¹⁷ Botswana also has the second highest rate of HIV/Aids infection on the continent, behind Swaziland.¹⁸ Life expectancy has fallen from 64 years in 1990 to 53 in 2011.¹⁹

Origins of insecurity

Botswana's stability has endured because it has been able to ensure conflicts are limited to the judicial and political sphere. However, a potential flashpoint is the battle for political power both within the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) and among opposition political parties ahead of general elections scheduled for October 2014. The BDP has seen a slow decline in its fortunes since leading the country to independence in 1966. Its majority has gradually declined from 80% in the 1965 elections to 52% in 2009. Its current leader and president of Botswana, Ian Khama, lacks the same respect as his predecessors. Khama is the son of the founding president and his British wife, and he was raised in Surrey, educated at Sandhurst and does not speak Setswana fluently, limiting his popularity in rural areas.

Another potential flashpoint is the government's treatment of the Basarwa, or Bushmen, who are members of the indigenous San people. The Bushmen first came into conflict with the national government in 1997, but the situation escalated in 2005-06 and again in 2013 with the imposition of a relocation policy. In 2005, 1,700 Bushmen were moved from their ancestral land on the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) to newly created settlements up to 70 kilometres away. It was thought by many that the relocation was due to diamond prospecting by DeBeers,²⁰ though the government claimed a desire among the Bushmen to become settled agriculturists, abandoning their hunter-gatherer lifestyle.²¹ This policy embodies the exclusion of non-Tswana tribes in the country, echoed by the failure of the constitution to recognise tribal chiefs other than of the eight Setswana-speaking groups that were paramount in founding the Bechuanaland Protectorate and leading Botswana to independence.²² Minority non-Tswana tribes remain frustrated because they cannot live their traditional cultures, and are often impoverished, marginalised and exploited by the dominant groups.²³

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Major protagonists and recent developments

The president's tough approach towards the trade unions during a two-month public-sector strike in mid-2011 cost him support in urban areas.²⁴ A divisive figure, Khama caused the BDP to split in 2009-10, leading to the emergence of a new opposition party, the Botswana Movement for Democracy (BMD). The BMD has subsequently aligned with two other opposition parties, the Botswana National Front (BNF) and the Botswana People's Party (BPP) to form a coalition known as the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC), under which they will contest the 2014 elections. The UDC holds the same number of seats (seven) as another opposition party, the Botswana Congress Party (BCP). Primarily due to tensions between the BCP leader, Dumelang Saleshando, and the BMD president, Gomolemo Motswaledi, the BCP has so far refused to join the coalition.

Tensions within the ruling BDP have seen a change in fortunes for Ponatshego Honorius Kedikilwe (known as PHK), who had served as Minister of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources from 2007 and previously as chairman of the BDP until Khama successfully challenged him for this role in 2003. In July 2012, Kedikilwe assumed the role of vice-president of Botswana owing to the ill health of the incumbent, Mompoti Merafhe, while in December 2013 he succeeded Samson Guma Moyo as chairman of BDP. Although too old to challenge or succeed Khama as president, Kedikilwe will no doubt change the direction of the BDP campaign in 2014 and influence the selection of candidates in the forthcoming primaries.

Scenarios for 2014

Baseline: The BDP score less than 50% of the popular vote for the first time in the October 2014 elections, but retain a majority of the 57 contested seats. Both the UDC and BCP benefit, increasing their number of MPs to double digits for the first time. As the president is indirectly elected by parliament, Khama retains his position, but with a reduced majority. Furthermore, he does not have a clear successor due to Kedikilwe's advanced age. Increased criticism of Khama by both his party and the opposition only exacerbates his authoritarian tendencies during his second full term.

The Bushmen continue to be persecuted by the national government. The buoyed opposition parties drive this issue as a means to undermine the government. In doing so, they exploit tensions between the Setswana-speaking tribes and the rest of the population, thus highlighting the inequalities which exist in the country.

Plausible alternative: Khama is able to retain the support of the majority of the population due to the long-standing political dominance of the BDP. However, the extensive criticism of his leadership and the lack of a clear successor sees influential members of the party take their disputes out into the open, destabilising the regime post-elections.

Wildcard: The BCP is pressured by its domestic and international supporters to join the Umbrella for Democratic Change ahead of the October elections. This poses a serious threat to the continued BDP hegemony and the election results lead to questions over Khama's leadership.

Madagascar

Situated in the Indian Ocean off Mozambique, Madagascar is the second largest island country in the world and has its own unique ecosystem, which had made the country an appealing tourist destination until the recent political crisis. However, agriculture remains the primary focus of the economy, employing 80% of the population and accounting for more than a quarter of GDP.²⁵ Over 60% of the population of Madagascar are under 24 years old, with the median age 19, the same as the mother's mean age at first birth. The current population growth rate is 2.65% per annum, but likely to increase significantly as a result of these demographics.

Origins of insecurity

The past five years in Madagascar have been dominated by a political crisis, which has undermined economic reform and deterred tourism, foreign direct investment and aid, and resulted in the termination of a free trade agreement with the United States, threatening a nascent textiles industry.²⁶ Three underlying factors contributed to this crisis: a significant youth bulge, divisions between coastal and highland Malagasy and a faltering economy.

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Major protagonists and recent developments

Under a newly-elected president, Madagascar is emerging from a long-running political crisis. In March 2009, the government of Marc Ravalomanana (president since 2002) was dissolved following a military-backed uprising led by Andry Rajoelina, a former mayor of the capital, Antananarivo. Rajoelina was able to count on the support of the Malagasy youth as leader of a movement named Tanora malaGasy Vonona (TGV). He served as president of the High Transitional Authority (HAT), which governed the country and endorsed a new constitution.

Presidential and parliamentary elections followed, in which Rajoelina and Ravalomanana agreed not to run. In the first round, in October 2013, Jean-Louis Robinson (endorsed by the ousted Ravalomanana) led a crowded field of 33 candidates, with 21% of the vote, followed by Hery Rajaonarimampianina (the former finance minister, supported by the incumbent Rajoelina), with 16%. In January 2014, Rajaonarimampianina was announced as winner of a second round run-off, with 53.5% of the vote but on the turnout of only half of the electorate. Robinson filed 300 complaints on the polls, but the special electoral court ruled that the result should be respected.²⁷

Rajoelina had been proposed as candidate for the post of prime minister, but in late February committed not to stand, averting the risk of an opposition boycott of the new parliament.²⁸ With a political settlement on the horizon, 2014 may be the year in which peace and prosperity finally return to Madagascar.

Scenarios for 2014

Baseline: Gradually, forces aligned to president-elect Rajaonarimampianina are able to form alliances with enough other factions to command a working majority in both the national assembly and senate. Given the polarisation of Malagasy politics, this is preferable to a cohabitation government, which would create deadlock and prolong the crisis. A council of ministers is not appointed until late March or April 2014, thus delaying the resumption of aid programmes from the World Bank and other donors.

Fortunately, as the former finance minister, Rajaonarimampianina is well placed to negotiate directly with international creditors, donors and investors and agree a series of quick wins. This demonstrates that the country is once again 'open for business' and in a position to welcome tourists and investment. He is able to count on the support of the African Union and SADC, which are due to welcome Madagascar back following prolonged suspension. Rajaonarimampianina is also able to count on the endorsement of former president Rajoelina and the Malagasy youth, who rally around the new government, eager to put the political crisis behind them and profit from an expansion of the mining and agricultural sectors.

Rajaonarimampianina sees these successes, combined with the dominance of the political scene by the Rajoelina faction, and international support for a resolution of the political crisis, as reason to call communal and regional elections in 2014. Irrespective of the election results, the president uses his mandate to appoint his statutory quota of eleven senators, thus ensuring a majority in the upper house which safeguards his term in office.

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Plausible alternative: Rajoelina reneges on his commitment not to stand for the role of prime minister. Robinson, Ravolamana and their supporters refuse to accept Rajoelina's candidacy. This results in a series of increasingly violent protests in Antananarivo, necessitating military intervention by SADC, and leading to a significant death toll, plunging the country into a renewed political crisis. The country's key international partners, France and SADC, face distractions elsewhere on the continent, and fail to engage meaningfully with either party to the conflict, prolonging its severity. This inevitably deters foreign investment and credit, further prolonging the economic crisis.

Wildcard: The military responds poorly to renewed protests by the opposition and a lack of proactive engagement from Rajaonarimampianina, engineering another coup d'état but installing a general as head of state this time. This results in the immediate suspension of Madagascar from the African Union and SADC, and necessitates the intervention of a respected external actor, such as France or the United States, to broker a new political agreement.

Malawi

Malawi is a predominantly agricultural and heavily aid-dependent country. Landlocked, the country hugs Lake Malawi/Nyasa, a body of water in which the precise border is disputed with Tanzania, undermining prospecting for oil and gas. Malawi is already densely populated, and has a growth rate approaching 3%. Two thirds of the population are under 25 years old.

Origins of insecurity

Malawi has been peaceful since independence from the United Kingdom in 1964. Thirty years of one-party rule under President Hastings Banda was followed by multi-party elections in 1994, which resulted in Bakili Muluzi ruling until 2004. He was succeeded by Bingu wa Mutharika, who completed a successful first term but became increasingly autocratic in his second. This culminated in the brutal repression of anti-government protests in 2011, followed by his death in 2012. Over the past few months, Malawi has been gripped by a political corruption scandal dubbed 'cash-gate', and the country faces highly-contested elections on 20 May 2014.

Major protagonists and recent developments

Joyce Banda ascended to the presidency in April 2012, succeeding Mutharika, with whom she had fallen out in 2011 but under the constitution she remained vice-president. Her People's Party (PP) will contest the elections against three former ruling parties: the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), led by Peter Mutharika, the late president's brother and former Foreign Minister; the United Democratic Front (UDF), led by Austin Atupele Muluzi, former minister of economic planning and development and son of the former president; and the Malawi Congress Party (MCP), led by Lazarus Chakwera, a pastor. The MCP was the only official party following independence, and draws its support from the centre of the country, while the UDF draws its support from the south and the Muslim minority.

Banda was forced to dismiss her entire cabinet in October 2013 due to the 'cash-gate' corruption scandal, which implicated a number of longstanding politicians, including some now in opposition.²⁹ This followed the shooting of Paul Mphwiyo, an anti-corruption activist serving as budget director within the treasury, who had refused to approve dubious payments.³⁰ The UDF was the only party that remained relatively unscathed by the scandal. Banda hired the public affairs firm Bell Pottinger to restrict the damage to her own reputation, but the country's donors have scaled down their engagement at a time when she most needs their support. Recognising that the previous DPP government had profited financially from corrupt practices and accumulated a campaign war chest, while she pays the political cost as the incumbent president, Banda's ability to win the 2014 election has been thrown into jeopardy. It is rumoured that she is turning east to court a significant donation, which would enable her to give hand-outs during the campaign. China is the obvious target, having constructed a new parliament building, though Taiwan is a former donor, with the two enjoying diplomatic relations between 1966 and 2008.

Scenarios for 2014

Baseline: With at least four presidential candidates anticipated for the May 2014 elections, and no provision for a second-round run-off election, Banda needs to obtain a simple plurality. In order to achieve this, she seeks to obtain the support of one of the three other major parties. She promises Muluzi the vice-presidency and significant government posts for his party allies, and is thus able to co-opt the UDF and win the elections.

Banda needs to obtain a simple plurality. In order to achieve this, she seeks to obtain the support of one of the three other major parties.

Plausible alternative: A promising alliance with either the UDF or MCP fails to materialise, and Banda seeks to neutralise the DPP threat by ensuring that the electoral commission or judiciary rule that Mutharika is ineligible to contest the presidential elections. Banda and her allies pursue allegations surrounding his involvement in an attempt to prevent her succession and engineer his own ascent to the presidency in April 2012. They also question his continued Malawian nationality, which he was obliged to renounce when he acquired US citizenship.

Wildcard: Banda is unable to forge a meaningful alliance or exclude her competitor, and so loses the election, resulting in another democratic turnover in Malawi. The Mutharika clique that dominated the last DPP and UDF administrations triumph, but they need to co-opt members from other parties in order to maintain a majority in the legislative chamber.

Mozambique

Since the end of the civil war in 1992, Mozambique has become one of Africa's most successful examples of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction. National elections have been held four times with political stability underpinned by progress towards national reconciliation and rapid economic growth. The country has begun to exploit natural resources in the form of coal and offshore oil and gas. However, poverty remains widespread, and Mozambique is ranked third from bottom on the Human Development Index.³¹

Origins of insecurity

The constitution of 1990 entrenched the existence of multiple parties and separated the executive, legislative and judicial powers, effectively ending 13 years of one-party Marxist rule and paving the way for national reconciliation. However, the political landscape remains dominated by the ruling Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Frelimo), in power since independence in 1975. The current president, Armando Guebuza, first elected in 2004, has reasserted Frelimo's traditional hegemony over institutions and the political system.³² Guebuza has been accused of undermining political pluralism by opposition parties, civil society and international donors, which led to a brief suspension of aid in 2009. Unfortunately, the major opposition party, Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (Renamo), was Frelimo's opponent in the civil war, and continues to fixate on the conflict and its legacy. The Renamo leadership now sees force as its only real bargaining chip with Frelimo.

Major protagonists and recent developments

A crucial test for Mozambique's institutions will come with the end of Guebuza's second term in December 2014, which is likely to be accompanied by escalating tensions with the opposition. Renamo claims that it has not benefited from the dividends of peace or prosperity.³³ Its leader since 1979, Afonso Dhlakama, has become increasingly desperate to destabilise the regime having failed to defeat Frelimo candidates in four consecutive elections. In 2009, his share of the vote declined to an all-time low of 16%. These polls were marked by the emergence of a new opposition party, Movimento Democrático de Moçambique (MDM), whose leader Daviz Simago, mayor of Beira, won 8% of the vote.

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Ahead of local elections in November 2013, Renamo demanded revisions to the electoral act, which had been approved without opposition consensus in 2013 as a result of Frelimo holding two thirds of parliamentary seats.³⁴ Renamo boycotted the polls, while MDM won three cities, Beira, Nampula and Quelimane; scored around 40% of the vote in 11 others, including Maputo, Matola, Marromeu and Gurué; and won 30% of council seats nationwide.³⁵ The party is currently contesting the results for Maputo, having successfully won Nampula after a re-run.

The polls cemented Renamo's withdrawal from electoral politics, underlining the fact that Dhlakama has now resorted to using the threat of force and economic disruption to get the attention of the government. In October 2012, Dhlakama relocated to Renamo's former headquarters near Casa Banana (also known as Satunjira) in the Gorongosa mountains and set up a training camp for several hundred followers. The country's main north-south highway, Estrada Nacional 1, passes through Gorongosa, and in response to threats of attack, military convoys have been organised to protect roads for the first time since the end of the civil war. It has been alleged that Dhlakama's plan is to divide the country at the Save River, which separates the traditionally pro-Renamo provinces of Sofala and Manica from Inhambane and Gaza to the south, which have historically supported Frelimo.³⁶

Frelimo is divided over its response to Renamo's military challenge. A number of hardliners, including some close to the president, want to crush Renamo, while moderates argue for more flexibility in negotiations. Former president Joaquim Chissano has argued for a moderate response on the basis that Renamo must have a stake in the peace to maintain stability.³⁷ With the local elections behind them, focus has turned to confirming a successor to Guebuza.

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Scenarios for 2014

Baseline: Guebuza designates a weak successor as president, José Condungua Pacheco, agriculture minister and former interior minister, so that he can retain the leadership of Frelimo and dictate decisions behind the scenes. Pacheco has, however, been given the poisoned chalice of leading negotiations with Renamo. He is unable to resolve the impasse with Renamo, and his nomination is met with challenges from rivals within Frelimo and from the opposition. The Frelimo old guard seek to re-introduce a prominent figure from outside mainstream politics: Graça Michel, the widow of both Nelson Mandela and Samora Michel, the first president of Mozambique.

Dhlakama continues to mobilise his men in the bush, but does not significantly threaten the post-war settlement. His main focus is to obtain a commitment from Frelimo to revise the electoral law ahead of polls provisionally scheduled for 15 October 2014. However, with Guebuza eager to bring Renamo back into electoral politics and willing to delay his handover of power, polls are deferred until early 2015 in order to ensure the participation of all actors. Despite this olive branch, Renamo boycotts the elections. Impatient with Dhlakama, a significant number of the party's 51 MPs either defect to the MDM or form a splinter group. This results in the opposition making significant headway, winning as much as 25% of the vote collectively, but they fail to threaten Frelimo's hegemony.

Negotiations between Frelimo and Renamo stall, and Dhlakama targets a vulnerable asset in order to demonstrate his group's reach and continued ability to wage guerrilla warfare.

Plausible alternative: Negotiations between Frelimo and Renamo stall, and Dhlakama targets a vulnerable asset in order to demonstrate his group's reach and continued ability to wage guerrilla warfare. He hits the Moatize coal mines near Tete, which makes use of the Sena railway line to Beira port, and threatens the Feruka Oil Refinery pipeline, which runs between Beira and Mutare in Zimbabwe. The move discredits Pacheco as a negotiator and potential successor to Guebuza. Elections are postponed but international engagement prevents a return to civil war.

Wildcard: Dhlakama is able to rekindle support from his base in central Mozambique and allies from the civil war, including foreign mercenaries. Offering access to the country's lucrative fossil fuels, he obtains enough resources to reignite the conflict. In an attempt to show his leadership of SADC, Mugabe sends Zimbabwean troops to intervene, prompting a full-scale conflict in central Mozambique.

Namibia

Namibia has the second lowest population density in the world, but it has been able to develop a modern economy thanks to sound infrastructure and communications networks, extensive mineral resources, fishing and manufacturing. Nevertheless, the legacy of apartheid continues to loom large in Namibia, which consistently ranks as one of the most unequal countries in the world with a score of 59.7 on the Gini coefficient.³⁸

Origins of insecurity

Since independence from South Africa in 1990, the primary threat to stability in Namibia has come from the Caprivi Strip, or Okavango Panhandle, in the northeast of the country. The area had been subject to repeated incursions during the struggle for liberation, and Caprivians attempted secession between 1994 and 1999. The government indicted 132 secessionists in the Caprivi treason trial, which began in 2003, but has yet to end. The main inhabitants of the Caprivi Strip are the Lozi people, a group that feel more of an affinity for their kin in neighbouring Zambia and Botswana than their fellow Namibian citizens. In order to restrain tensions, it was renamed as the Zambezi Region in 2013.

Although the secession threat may appear to have been temporarily neutralised, the political settlement has become vulnerable to internal wrangling within the ruling party. The outcomes of these disputes will be crucial given that presidential and parliamentary elections are scheduled for November 2014, with a new head of state due to take office.

Over the past 25 years, Namibian politics has turned around the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which led the country to independence.

Major protagonists and recent developments

Over the past 25 years, Namibian politics has turned around the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which led the country to independence. In the November 2009 elections, SWAPO won over three quarters of the vote and 54 of the 72 seats in the national assembly. Thus far, the party has retained the loyalty of the Ovambo group, which makes up approximately half of the population and has provided the two SWAPO leaders, the founding president, Sam Nujoma, and the incumbent, Hifikepunye Pohamba. As the latter is ineligible to stand for a third term, the party's vice-president, Hage Geingob, will stand as the presidential candidate in November 2014. Geingob was Namibia's first prime minister, and served as chief whip and minister of trade and industry before being re-appointed as SWAPO vice-president in 2012. He is from the minority Damara community, which constitute around 8% of the population. This is likely to affect the voting intentions of citizens from the north of the country.

The opposition remains weak and divided. In 2007, the Rally for Democracy and Progress (RCD) was founded by Hidipo Hamutenya. A former foreign minister, who was defeated by Pohamba for the SWAPO presidential ticket in 2004, Hamutenya gained 10.9% of the vote in the 2009 presidential elections and took one of the RDP's eight seats in the national assembly. The RCD re-elected Hamutenya as their leader and candidate for the presidency in 2013. SWAPO's historic rival, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), has seen its share of the vote decline over successive elections as other opposition parties have emerged. It currently has only two seats in the national assembly but in September 2013 appointed a new leader, McHenry Venaani, who is only 36 years old. Like his counterparts from South Africa, Venaani represents a new generation of political leaders that place less emphasis on struggle credentials, and focuses more on policy. While this is unlikely to affect the 2014 polls, it has the potential to contribute to a more balanced emerging democracy.

Scenarios for 2014

Baseline: SWAPO triumphs in the November 2014 parliamentary elections, and Geingob, conformably wins the presidency. However, promoting a leader from outside of the dominant Ovambo group reduces SWAPO's share of the vote by around 10% in the north of the country, where Hamutenya and the RDP are able to gain ground.

Plausible alternative: Although Hamutenya uses his status as the only Ovambo candidate to increase his share of the vote over the 2009 result, the RDP lacks the capacity to significantly increase its number of seats in parliament, and thus fails to threaten SWAPO's dominance of the political scene.

Wildcard: Tensions flare up in the Caprivi Strip once again, exacerbated by calls from Lozi in neighbouring Zambia for self-determination. International pressure on the new administration to conclude the trial of Caprivian secessionists after over a decade further stokes frustration in the region.

Promoting a leader from outside of the dominant Ovambo group reduces SWAPO's share of the vote by around 10% in the north of the country, where Hamutenya and the RDP are able to gain ground.

South Africa

2013 was a difficult year for the Republic of South Africa; a series of scandals gripped President Jacob Zuma, while the country's first post-apartheid leader, Nelson Mandela, passed away aged 95. April 2014 will mark two decades since the end of apartheid. However, progress since the advent of majority rule has been slow. The economy is not growing at a rate sufficient to reduce unemployment, which at 5.6 million is a million higher now than it was two decades ago.³⁹ Access to electricity, water and sanitation has increased by over 10%, but remains far from universal. Growing frustration among residents of informal settlements has led to widespread protests over poor service delivery. In a damning indictment of the African National Congress's (ANC) management of South Africa, the country is soon expected to lose its status as the continent's largest economy to Nigeria.

Origins of insecurity

South Africa remains one of the most unequal countries in the world, with a Gini coefficient of 63 (the same as the Central Africa Republic).⁴⁰ Despite two decades of freedom, 85% of black Africans remain poor, while 87% of whites are of middle or upper income.⁴¹ This disparity between rich and poor has exacerbated racial tensions and resulted in a national murder rate five times higher than the global average; the rate increased from 43 to 45 murders per day in the last year.⁴²

The leadership of the ruling ANC is increasingly divided. Presidential and legislative elections set for 7 May 2014 will only exacerbate the situation. Although the elections will likely pass peacefully, they will provide an opportunity for voters to send a message to the ANC that they are dissatisfied with the progress that the country has made over the past two decades and the gulf in quality between the present leadership and that offered by the late President Mandela. The polls will likely show that the ANC can no longer count on the unequivocal support of black South Africans, and that it must do more to engage with the 'born free' generation, which focuses less on 'struggle credentials' and more on economic opportunity.

Major protagonists and recent developments

Although selected as the ANC's presidential candidate in December 2012, Zuma faces a split in the tripartite alliance between the ANC and the party's historic allies, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Zuma is dependent on the unions to deliver votes in the forthcoming elections, but tensions have risen during his term as the COSATU membership have opposed reforms related to the National Development Plan. These reforms would undoubtedly do much to enhance South Africa's global competitiveness, reduce unemployment and improve education standards, but the plan has been opposed by unions due to its grounding in orthodox economics and the lack of a radical, immediate solution to inequality.⁴³

The National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) is threatening to leave COSATU, which would likely contribute to the formation of an independent labour party. It is worth recalling that another COSATU member, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), lost credibility following the deaths of 44 people at Marikana in August 2012. This resulted in the rival Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) increasing its membership, drawing support away from the tripartite alliance.

The ANC has secured 62-69% of the national vote since the end of apartheid. It won 65.9% in the 2009 election, just short of the two-thirds majority required to alter the constitution. However, a November 2013 poll gave the ANC just 53% of the vote, a significant drop in its standing. Ahead of the last elections, the party had lost a number of prominent supporters of former President Thabo Mbeki to a new party, the Congress of the People (COPE), which won 7.4%. Although COPE is now seen as a spent force, this poll demonstrates that the supporters have not returned to the ANC.

The official opposition, the Democratic Alliance (DA), has made significant inroads at municipal and provincial levels. The party's leader, Helen Zille, is the former mayor of Cape Town and current premier of Western Cape Province. The DA won 16.7% of the vote in the 2009 elections, with overwhelming support from white, coloured⁴⁴ and Indian voters. The party's focus has been to broaden its appeal to middle-class black voters and the DA has set its sights on winning Gauteng province, the economic heartland of the country, incorporating Johannesburg and Pretoria, in 2014. To this end, the opposition has been able to successfully mobilise voters dissatisfied with the introduction of road tolls by the ANC-led Gauteng provincial government.

Another prominent opposition figure, albeit with less organisational capacity, is Mamphela Ramphele, an academic and businesswoman, who was the partner of murdered anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko. In February 2013, Ramphele established her own political platform, Agang SA, promoting similar policies to the DA and targeting the same demographic, albeit with a black leader endowed with struggle credentials. On 28 January 2014, Zille announced that Ramphele, a long-standing friend, had accepted an invitation to stand as the DA's presidential candidate, but by 2 February Ramphele had reneged on the agreement.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) was launched in October 2013 by the firebrand Julius Malema, a populist former leader of the ANC's youth league. Malema was charged for hate speech for singing 'Shoot the Boer', and claimed that a woman accusing Zuma of rape 'had a nice time'.⁴⁵ He was expelled from the ANC in 2012, and now faces charges of fraud, money laundering and racketeering.⁴⁶ Despite economic policies resembling Robert Mugabe's, and racial nationalist tendencies that are abhorrent to many South Africans, Malema has successfully drawn other leftists under his banner, and will be able to count on votes from young indigent males, particularly in his home province of Limpopo. As such, he will draw support away from the ANC, landing a blow against Zuma, his former political godfather, even if he is unable to take his seat in parliament after the election.⁴⁷

The contrast between the respect and adoration for the late Mandela and that afforded to Zuma could not be more marked. The latter was booed at Mandela's funeral because of his use of ZAR 215 million of public funds on his private residence at Nkandla, in KwaZulu-Natal Province. According to a leaked report, an investigation led by the public protector found that Zuma had derived 'substantial' private benefits from publicly funded building works to make his home secure. The accounts contradict Zuma's statement to parliament in 2012 that his family had paid for all the building work on his Nkandla home, bar the security features. The impact that this scandal had on his already damaged reputation, should not be underestimated.

Scenarios for 2014

Baseline: Zuma is re-elected in April 2014, but he leads the ANC to the party's worst ever poll result. Cyril Ramaphosa – deputy president of the ANC and party secretary-general during the 1990s – is elected as vice-president upon the formation of a new government in May 2014. The recognition that Zuma is more of an electoral liability than an asset leads to divisions within the tripartite alliance and necessitates the transfer of power from Zuma to a successor. Calls for Ramaphosa to replace Zuma threaten the president's position in 2015, but he clings to office as long as he can.

The opposition gain from the electoral misfortune of the ANC. An opposition coalition led by the DA wins enough seats to govern Gauteng province. This further alienates the ANC from the black middle class and the party seems increasingly out of touch with the electorate. EFF wins a small number of seats in the national assembly and secures enough in the Limpopo provincial legislature to ensure representation in the National Council of Provinces. The demagogue Malema and his associates then seek to incense Afrikaner nationalists from the Freedom Front Plus (FF+), undermining many of the gains of the past two decades, and deterring foreign direct investment.

Plausible alternative: Zuma fails to obtain more than half of the popular vote, and is forced out by the end of the year and replaced by the more credible Ramaphosa. Although Ramaphosa is more pro-business and serious about implementing the National Development Plan than Zuma, his installation expedites a breakdown in the tripartite alliance, leading to the emergence of a new, independent labour party. This is both a short-term victory and a long-term threat to the opposition, which ultimately has profited from Zuma's unpopularity and the divisions between the ANC and COSATU, and now needs to differentiate itself from a ruling party that is actually committed to national development.

Wildcard: Malema is able to eclipse other minor parties and prove the EFF a credible opposition party. He is able to form a new left-wing alliance by forging links with more radical elements of the trade union movement and those from the South African Communist Party fearful of the collapse of the tripartite alliance. This temporarily provides him with the credibility to play a role in national politics, with devastating effects on national unity, policy-making, and foreign direct investment. However, his political longevity remains uncertain due to the charges against him.

Swaziland

The landlocked kingdom of Swaziland is one of the last remaining absolute monarchies in the world, and has the second-highest democratic deficit on the continent.⁴⁸ King Mswati III was crowned in 1986 at the age of 18, and has banned political parties, trade unions and student associations in order to retain power. The country has an estimated unemployment rate of 40%.⁴⁹ A quarter of the population suffers from HIV/Aids, which is the highest infection rate in the world.⁵⁰

Origins of insecurity

Swaziland is dependent on an over-sized share of the revenues generated by the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), an annual grant of \$200 million a year from Taiwan, sugar exports and remittances from the diaspora.⁵¹ However, Swaziland has one of the highest public sector wage bills on the continent, relative to its size.⁵² Public funds have been mismanaged by the monarchy, while poverty and inequality have increased among citizens.⁵³ While this approach is evidently unsustainable, the absence of an independent media or civil society has mitigated the threat of public discontent.

Swaziland has one of the highest public sector wage bills on the continent, relative to its size.

Major protagonists and recent developments

Parliamentary elections took place in September 2013, but, with political parties banned, candidates contested as individuals, and turnout fell to 44.5% of eligible voters.⁵⁴ Indeed, 10 of the 65 MPs and two thirds of senators were actually picked by the king himself.⁵⁵ Although Mswati III reportedly had a vision of 'monarchical democracy', hopes of reform were dashed when this amounted to merely a rebranding of the country's tinkhundla system of governance based on traditional administrative subdivisions.⁵⁶

Activists from a banned opposition party, the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), remain active in the diaspora. Pudemo joined the Socialist International as a consultative member in 2013,⁵⁷ and met with ANC Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe on 12 February 2014.⁵⁸ The party has endeavoured to raise awareness of their peaceful struggle for democracy with members of the royal family.⁵⁹ However, given that such groups are unable to organise within the country, it is difficult to determine whether a credible opposition could organise a civil uprising without significant external support.⁶⁰

Scenarios for 2014

Baseline: The main sources of revenue, SACU income and sugar exports, both decline in 2014.⁶¹ Consequently, Mswati III is forced to enact reforms to lower the crippling public sector wage bill and improve the business environment.

The king is unable to balance the national budget again, and following the elections in South Africa, the new administration in Pretoria intervenes in support of a new political settlement.

Plausible alternative: The king is unable to balance the national budget again, and following the elections in South Africa, the new administration in Pretoria intervenes in support of a new political settlement. In sending a senior envoy to mediate between the opposition and the king, the ANC is able to distract from domestic issues, show leadership within the region and the Socialist International, and demonstrate a proactive approach to reducing the number of Swazi migrants to South Africa.

Wildcard: Opposition elements from the Swazi diaspora obtain sufficient funding and unite behind a credible leader. They are able to purchase weapons from post-conflict Mozambique and initiate a coup d'état.

Zambia

Landlocked Zambia is the continent's leading copper producer. The mineral wealth has, however, been unequally shared, with a Gini coefficient of 50.8 ranking Zambia one of the 20 most unequal countries in the world.⁶² The country is ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse, and while predominantly peaceful since independence in 1964, Zambian politics have been dominated by 'tribal balancing', which has at times led to a sense of division and resentment among minority groups.

Origins of insecurity

Three major sources of instability in Zambia are President Michael Sata's advanced age and reported ill health; the discord among the major political parties and civil society on constitutional reform; and calls for independence by Barotseland separatists.

Sata, known as 'King Cobra', is due to turn 77 years old in July 2014, and despite repeated denials by officials, is rumoured to be seriously ill and receiving treatment in India. His repeated absences from the country have led to instability within his own party.

Nationally, divisions have emerged among the political parties and civil society over a constitution-making exercise begun in 2011. There is a lack of consensus concerning the manner in which the draft document will be agreed, adopted and enacted, with Sata insisting that the cabinet see the document first. There is a risk that the government might unilaterally enforce a new constitution by enacting a bill in parliament, which could have serious consequences for the country's stability.

The Lozi, which dominate Western Province, formerly Barotseland, are one minority group that could potentially destabilise the country. In January 2012, police broke up a secessionist meeting with live fire, resulting in riots that left two people dead.⁶³ In August 2013, authorities arrested 45 Lozi activists who tried to hoist their own flag.

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Major protagonists and recent developments

Sata served as a minister during the single-party United National Independence Party (UNIP) era and again for the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) following watershed elections in 1991. When Sata failed to be elected as MMD presidential candidate in 2001, he left the party to establish the Patriotic Front (PF). In the 2006 election campaign, Sata adopted populist and xenophobic policies attacking the Chinese mining companies, which resonated with the youth, urban poor and miners in the Copperbelt, as well as his Bemba-speaking base. He finally won the presidency in September 2011, ending 20 years of MMD rule. Outbursts of violence punctuated the polls and left two people dead. However, the new president was sworn in within hours of the election result being declared, and the result was respected by the MMD.

Sata's period in office has been marked by autocratic and unilateral decision-making, causing schisms within the three main parties. He stripped former president Rupiah Banda of his immunity and charged him with abuse of power. This destabilised the MMD, which is now led by Nevers Mumba, a televangelist and nephew of Zambia's first president, Kenneth Kaunda. Sata has also publicly insulted, threatened and repeatedly arrested Hakainde Hichilema, leader of the opposition United Party for National Development (UPND).

Moreover, he has perpetuated battles within the PF in order to prevent a natural successor from emerging. His vice-president, Guy Scott, a white Zambian, has been one of a few leading party officials to show support for the beleaguered secretary-general and justice minister, Wynter Kabimba, who faces a tribunal to investigate an alleged abuse of office and breach of the oath of secrecy. Neither Scott nor Kabimba are part of the Bemba clique, which has been awarded the top jobs in Sata's cabinet, in a break of practice from the tribal distribution under UNIP and MMD. Kabimba's main critics have been Defence Minister Geoffrey Bwalya Mwamba and Finance Minister Alexander Chikwanda, both potential successors to Sata. A further division has arisen over the viability of the PF's populist policies, which included Sata re-imposing a 10% export tax on mining ores and concentrates, much to the chagrin of the business community.

This political instability within the ruling party and the opposition has resulted in issues that would otherwise be dealt with peacefully, such as presidential succession, constitutional reform, and demands for self-government, becoming threats to the continued stability of the country.

Scenarios for 2014

Baseline: Presidential and parliamentary elections are forecast for September 2016, but the main political focus of 2014 is the persistence of the protracted constitution-making crisis. The president continues to exclude political parties and civil society from consultations on the document as a means to demonstrate his authority. However, without consensus around the draft, the constitution lacks popular legitimacy, further dividing Zambians on ethno-linguistic lines.

Non-Bemba speakers feel increasingly excluded from public life, and opposition groups attempt to coalesce in order to increase their voice. The UPND leader, Hichilema, garners additional support from beyond the traditional Tonga support base of Southern Province, but is unable to unite other communities from across the country, such as the Lozi in Western Province, who have the potential to play a destabilising role.

Plausible alternative: Sata decides to invite Zambian citizens to participate in a consultation on the new constitution, and is able to divide and rule due to the multitude of perspectives across the highly diverse country. However, his failure to unite Zambia ultimately costs him the 2016 elections, which are won by a joint MMD-UPND alliance.

Wildcard: Lozi separatists attract international support from their allies in the Caprivi Strip in Namibia, thus presenting a serious threat to the status quo.

Zimbabwe

The radical policies implemented by President Mugabe have both failed to deliver change for ordinary Zimbabweans and deterred foreign direct investment, creating a stagnant economy. Regrettably, income from the lucrative mining sector is not reaching the treasury due to corruption. In 2012, minerals accounted for 47% of Zimbabwe's exports and 84% of foreign direct investment, but in the same year only \$45 million of diamond revenues were reported.⁶⁴ With a Gini coefficient of 50.1, Zimbabwe is one of the 25 most unequal countries in the world.⁶⁵

Origins of insecurity

Zimbabwe is currently ranked tenth in the Failed States Index and has been consistently in the top five for most of the past decade.⁶⁶ It is remarkable that the country survived Mugabe's failed land reform policies, which decimated agricultural output and devastated the economy, coupled with his brutal repression of the political opposition.

Zimbabwe confounded many predictions in 2013, holding peaceful (if potentially flawed) elections in July and returning Mugabe to the presidency. The elections brought about an end to the government of national unity formed by Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (Zanu-PF) and two factions of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). The decision of the SADC observers to endorse the polls despite alleged manipulation of the electoral roll sent a clear signal that the regional economic community wanted to end this protracted crisis. The confirmation of Mugabe as deputy chairperson of SADC in August 2013 underlined this sentiment.⁶⁷

Major protagonists and recent developments

With rumours of Mugabe's ill health, his recent ninetieth birthday and no clearly endorsed successor, politicians have begun to openly position themselves ahead of the Zanu-PF congress set for December 2014. Two major factions have emerged. One, led by Joice Mujuru, the current vice-president and wife of the late General Solomon Mujuru, is regarded as the moderate, purportedly pro-business bloc, open to international engagement. Another, led by Emmerson Mnangagwa, the current justice minister and former defence minister, is more hardline and seeks to maintain the status quo.⁶⁸ While the former was able to profit from the 2013 election and secure the majority of Zanu-PF provincial chairs, the latter has dominated Zimbabwean politics since 1980 and remains willing and able to provoke domestic unrest and international disputes in order to retain power.

A key asset of the Mnangagwa camp is Minister of Information Jonathan Moyo, a powerful spin doctor well connected to the seurocrats that have come to control Zimbabwean politics. Furthermore, Mnangagwa has been seen as a loyal confidant of Mugabe since his spell as minister of state security during the 1980s, when he oversaw the brutal repression of a rebellion in Matabeleland, known as Gukurahundi, by the North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade.⁶⁹

A major issue remains Zimbabwe's links to the international community. Following his recognition as the elder statesman within the SADC region, Mugabe has turned his attention to formally reconciling with the European Union, which has imposed 'restrictive measures' (or sanctions) on the country and a travel ban on him and his family since 2002. Under threats of a mass boycott of the EU-Africa summit in April 2014, Mugabe appears to have won the battle. Consequently, the EU is taking steps to normalise relations, but has retained an asset freeze and travel ban on the president and his wife, as well as an arms embargo. Mugabe will be exempted from the ban for the EU summit in Brussels in April and will thus have the opportunity to reengage with the EU, including the former colonial power, the United Kingdom.

The United States remains resolute that it will not reengage with Zimbabwe until there is political change. For Mugabe, the bigger issue remains whether he can persuade the World Bank and IMF to clear the country's debts, as it seems unable to borrow from China, despite repeated overtures. Zimbabwe desperately needs to attract foreign direct investment to restart the economy and rekindle the dormant agricultural and manufacturing sectors. The economy remains poorly managed, and this former bread basket of Africa now depends on imports for staple foods. Together with the legacy of hyper-inflation and the dollarisation of the economy in 2009, this has resulted in unaffordable prices for the majority of citizens.

While Mugabe is due to succeed Banda as SADC chair in August 2014, it is unclear whether his health will allow it. A 2008 leaked diplomatic cable revealed that the US ambassador had been told by the governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe that Mugabe had prostate cancer and been advised that he only had three to five years to live and needed to cut back on activities.⁷⁰ Mugabe recently took a month long break in Malaysia, reportedly for treatment, but is alleged to have collapsed according to a social media rumour from a self-styled Zanu-PF disgruntled insider calling himself 'Baba Jukwa'. The possibility of economic recovery is, therefore, largely dependent on Mugabe's successor as leader of Zanu-PF and, ultimately, president of Zimbabwe.

The possibility of economic recovery is largely dependent on Mugabe's successor as leader of Zanu-PF and, ultimately, president of Zimbabwe.

Scenarios for 2014

Baseline: Mugabe continues to play off different factions of Zanu-PF against one another, undermining international support for Zimbabwe. Due to ill health, he publicly anoints Mnangagwa as his successor ahead of the Zanu-PF congress in December. Despite progress with the EU, Zimbabwe fails to receive the foreign direct investment necessary to restart the moribund economy and service its debts, leading to increasingly erratic decision-making by the Zanu-PF leadership. While generals and seurocrats express their public support for Mnangagwa, the younger generation of Zanu-PF supporters begin to question the succession. The party congress in December 2014 results in a split in the ranks and leads to the emergence of a new opposition party, which is able to gain support from former adherents of the increasingly directionless MDC.

Plausible alternative: Mugabe fails to anoint a successor, instead dying in office. Mujuru is legally entitled to succeed him as president of Zimbabwe and does so with the support of the international community. The EU leads reengagement, providing direct budget support from November (when the current suspension expires), and the United States terminates its sanctions.

Wildcard: Mugabe dies in office. However, prior to Mujuru being inaugurated as president of Zimbabwe, the securocrats stage a coup d'état and install Mnangagwa as head of state. International engagement stalls and the country returns to a state of crisis.

The securocrats stage a coup d'état and install Mnangagwa as head of state. International engagement stalls and the country returns to a state of crisis.

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the civil society intelligence agency

Open Briefing
27 Old Gloucester Street
Bloomsbury
London WC1N 3AX

t 020 7193 9805
info@openbriefing.org
www.openbriefing.org