



**UNIVERSITY OF  
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**INYUVESI  
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**An Assessment of the SADC Conflict Transformation  
Capacity in the context of the recurring conflict in Lesotho  
1998-2018: Towards a conflict transformation model**

**By**

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## **DEDICATION**

*I dedicate this dissertation to my children Melissa Dlamini, Samuel Limiphakade Radebe, Nkosenhle Shiloh Radebe and Ziphezinhle. This work is to set an example for all of you that with hard work and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ all things are possible. Be forever encouraged.*

## DECLARATION


I, Noluthando Prudence Phungula, declare that:

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## ABSTRACT

With Lesotho as its case study, the aim of this dissertation is to assess the conflict transformation capacity of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) within the period 1998-2018. The study was guided by the following questions: Which dynamics have been at play in the recurrence of conflict in Lesotho? What strategic political and diplomatic efforts has the SADC implemented in its attempts to resolve the conflict? What have been the major constraints encountered by the sub-regional body in its attempts to resolve the conflict? What scholarly and policy recommendations can be proffered for a sustainable SADC sub-regional conflict transformation model? This study utilised a qualitative research approach. Data which was collected through semi structured interviews was analysed using content analysis. As its theoretic framework, this research used the conflict transformation theory which has a focus on transforming factors that tend to perpetuate conflicts and on establishing a culture of non-violence, empathy and mutual understanding in communities to give them the capacity to resolve conflicts in a manner that is effective and that guarantees sustainable and durable peace. Within the conflict transformation framework, Lederach's pyramid places emphasis on inclusion of all levels of leadership in transformative efforts. The findings of the study are presented under relevant themes. The findings show that SADC has the capacity to transform conflicts from negative to positive and sustainable peace. However, SADC currently does not have a guiding model for its CT efforts. As such, the study recommends a conflict transformation framework centred on local ownership as opposed to an outsider mediation approach, and a multi-pronged approach towards assessing the dynamics of the conflict and in the CT process. The study holds that peace attained under such conditions would be an effective, durable and self-sustainable peace. The study contributes to the debates on the relevance and application of Conflict Transformation as a possible framework that SADC could use to address the myriad of issues in the Lesotho context.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABC	All Basotho Congress
ACCORD	African Centre For Constructive Resolution of Disputes
AD	Alliance of Democrats
AfDB	African Development Bank
APLA	Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
BAC	Basutoland African Congress
BCP	Basutoland Congress Party
BNP	Basotho National Party
CCL	Christian Council of Lesotho
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CMR	Civil-military relations
CNGO	Council of Non-Governmental Organisations
COM	Council of Ministers
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CT	Conflict Transformation
DC	Democratic Congress
DDR	Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FLS	Frontline States
FPTP	First Past The Post
GDP	Gross domestic product
GPA	Global Political Agreement
GNU	Government of National Unity
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IPA	Interim Political Authority
ISDSC	Inter-State Defence and Security Committee

JOMIC	Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee
LCD	Lesotho Congress for Democracy
LDF	Lesotho Defence Force
LLA	Lesotho Liberation Army
LHWP	Lesotho Highlands water project
LMPS	Lesotho Mounted Police Service
LWP	Lesotho Workers Party
MCO	Ministerial Committee of the Organ
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDP	Mutual Defense Pact
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MMP	Mixed Member Proportional
MTP	Maremma Tlou Freedom Party
MRG	Mediation Reference Group
MSU	Mediation Support Unit
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEWC	National Early Warning Centre
NIP	National Independent Party
NUL	National University of Lesotho
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPDSC	Organ on Politics Defence and Security Co-operation
PAC	Pan African Congress
PMU	Police Mobile Unit
POE	Panel of Elders
PR	Proportional Representation
PSC	Peace and Security Council
NP	National Party
REC	Regional Economic Community
REWC	Regional Early Warning Centre
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
RPTC	Regional Peace Training Centre
SA	South Africa
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community

SADCC	Southern African Development Coordination Conference
SADCSF	SADC Standby Force
SAPMIL	SADC Preventive Mission in Lesotho
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SARPPCO	Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Co-operation Organisation
SCU	Sector Coordinating Unit
SCT	Systemic conflict transformation
SEAC	SADC Electoral Advisory Council
SEOM	SADC Electoral Observer Mission
SNC	SADC National Committee
SOMILES	SADC Observer Mission in Lesotho
SSR	Security Sector Reform
SIPO	Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ
UKZN	University of KwaZulu- Natal
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
ZNA	Zimbabwe National Army
ZAPU- PF	Zimbabwe African People's Union- Patriotic Front



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	i
DECLARATION .....	ii
ABSTRACT .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iv
LIST OF ACRONYMS.....	v
CHAPTER 1 .....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2. Problem statement.....	3
1.3 Overview of Lesotho’s geopolitical history.....	3
Map of Lesotho .....	4
1.4 Significance of the study .....	5
1.5 Research objectives.....	6
1.6 Research questions.....	6
1.7 Principal theories.....	7
1.8 Research methodology adopted for the study.....	7
1.8.1 Personal Interviews.....	8
1.9 Data Analysis and presentation.....	9
1.10 Structure of dissertation.....	10
CHAPTER 2 .....	12
LITERATURE REVIEW: RECURRING CONFLICT IN LESOTHO.....	12
2.1 Introduction.....	12
2.2 Factors influencing conflict in Africa .....	13
2.3 The Mountain Kingdom that knows no peace .....	14
2.4 An overview of Lesotho’s historical realities .....	16
2.5 The Geographic location of Lesotho and South Africa’s interests .....	18
2.6 Socio-economic dynamics .....	20
2.7 The impact of Electoral model on Lesotho’s political instability .....	21
2.7.1 The 1965 elections and continued instability .....	21
2.7.2 The 1970 election- An introduction of a flawed electoral system.....	24
2.7.3 The 1993 General Election.....	27

2.7.4 The 1998 elections and post-electoral crisis .....	28
2.7.5 The 2007 election .....	29
2.7.6 The 2012 election .....	31
2.8 Destructive political competition: The Introduction of Coalition governments & fragmented party systems .....	32
2.8.1 The 2015 snap election .....	34
2.8.2 2017 elections .....	35
2.9 Weak governance structures .....	35
2.10 Key players in the Lesotho conflict: An interrelated tri-dimensional conflict .....	36
2.10.1 Security sector involvement .....	37
2.10.2 A deadly coalition: the militarised politics and the politicised military .....	37
2.10.3 Scuffles between the monarchy and the government .....	42
2.11 Incompatible traditional system and Westminster system .....	44
2.12 Conclusion .....	45
CHAPTER 3 .....	47
LITERATURE REVIEW: SADC CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION CAPACITY AND INTERVENTIONS TOWARDS ENDING THE RECURRING CONFLICT IN LESOTHO .....	47
3.1 Introduction.....	47
3.2 The regionalisation of peace and security .....	47
3.3 Formation, principles, objectives, memberships and institutions of SADC.....	50
3.3.1 The genesis of SADC.....	50
3.3.2 Principles and objectives of SADC .....	51
3.3.3 SADC policy framework which supports conflict transformation .....	52
3.3.3.1 The 1992 SADC Treaty .....	52
3.3.3.2 SADC Protocol on politics, defence and security .....	53
3.3.3.3 The Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO).....	54
3.3.3.4 SADC Mutual Defense Pact (MDP).....	54
3.3.3.5 The Troika system .....	55
3.4 The peace and security framework of SADC .....	55
3.4.1 The Summit of Heads of State.....	56
3.4.2 The Council of Ministers .....	57
3.4.3 Commissions .....	57

3.4.4 The Standing Committee of Officials .....	57
3.4.5 The Secretariat.....	58
3.4.6 The Tribunal .....	58
3.4.7 The SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation .....	59
3.4.8 Regional Early Warning System (REWS) .....	61
3.4.9 Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) .....	61
3.4.10 SADC Stand by Force (SADCBRIG).....	62
3.4.11 Mediation Unit and Panel of Elders.....	63
3.5 Assessing SADC’s conflict transformation capacity .....	63
3.7 SADC’s successes in the areas of peace and security to date.....	66
3.8 Successful interventions .....	68
3.9 The less successful interventions .....	69
3.10 SADC in action: Interventions in Lesotho.....	72
3.10.1 The 1994 SADC intervention.....	72
3.10.2 The 1998 Intervention.....	73
3.10.3 Operation boeas: An Intervention or Invasion?.....	75
3.10.4 SADC intervenes after the 2007 election.....	77
3.10.5 The 2014- 2018 interventions and mediations .....	79
3.10.5.1 Perspectives from 2014-2018 interventions and mediation.....	83
3.11 Challenges facing SADC’s conflict transformation capacity .....	84
3.11.1 The principle of sovereignty and non-interference.....	85
3.11.2 Resource constrains .....	86
3.11.3 Overlapping membership .....	87
3.11.4 Institutional and other challenges .....	88
3.12 SADC on a path to sustainable CT.....	89
3.13 Conclusion .....	91
CHAPTER 4.....	94
CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	94
4.1 Introduction.....	94
4.2 Concepts .....	94
4.2.1 Conflict – The definitional debate .....	94
4.2.2 Conflict and violence: Establishing a contextual link .....	97

4.2.3 Negative and Positive Peace.....	100
4.3 Theories .....	101
4.3.1 Social and Psychological Approaches .....	101
4.3.2 Conflict management .....	102
4.3.3 Conflict resolution .....	105
4.3.3.1 Principles and goals of Conflict Resolution.....	106
4.4 Towards a conflict transformation approach .....	108
4.4.1 Conflict transformation defined .....	109
4.4.2 Conflict transformation as a peace-building approach .....	111
4.4.3 Conflict transformation .....	112
4.4.4 Ways of transformation.....	114
4.4.5 Dimensions of transformation .....	114
4.4.6 Actors in conflict transformation.....	117
4.5. Conclusion .....	120
CHAPTER 5 .....	122
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	122
5.1 Introduction.....	122
5.2 Qualitative research design.....	122
5.3 Case study research .....	124
5.4 Sampling .....	125
5.5 Data collection method.....	126
5.5.1 Interviews .....	126
5.5.2 Documents.....	127
5.6 Data analysis .....	128
5.7 Validity .....	129
5.8 Ethical considerations.....	130
5.9 Limitations .....	130
5.10 Chapter summary .....	131
CHAPTER 6.....	131
PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS .....	131
6.1 Introduction.....	131
6.2 Key dynamics in the Lesotho conflict.....	132
6.2.1 A politicised unprofessional and instrumentalised military.....	134

6.2.2 Scuffles between the monarchy and the government .....	137
6.2.2.1 A powerless monarchy .....	138
6.2.3 Destructive political culture .....	139
6.2.4. Socio-economic dynamics.....	143
6.2.4.1 Nature of the economy.....	144
6.2.4.2 Resource competition .....	146
6.2.4.3 Corruption.....	147
6.2.4.4. Politics more than a career: a livelihood.....	148
6.2.5 Historical dynamics .....	149
6.2.5.1 An unsuited electoral model .....	150
6.3. State, regional and non-state actors and their interests with reference to the dynamics of the Lesotho conflict .....	152
6.3.1 SADC mandate to maintain peace and security in the sub-region .....	152
6.3.2. South Africa a regional actor with national interests.....	153
6.3.3. A greater role for CSO's as trusted players in Conflict Transformation .....	155
6.3.4 The AU, UN as critical supporters of SADC .....	158
6.4 SADC strategic political and diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict.....	159
6.4.1 Snap elections: not a solution.....	159
6.5. Does the SADC have the capacity to transform the conflict in Lesotho from violence to sustainable peace?.....	160
6.6 Has the SADC been able to transform itself to transform the conflicts in the sub-region?.....	161
6.7 Constraints encountered by the sub-regional body in its attempts to resolve the conflict.....	163
6.7.1 Sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in internal affair of states...	163
6.7.2 National Interests of member states.....	164
6.7.3 Weak governance structures.....	165
6.7.4 SADC Failure to Enforce Intervention Resolutions .....	166
6.7.5 Shortfalls of conventional approaches to conflict resolution .....	168
6.7.5.1 Mediation.....	169
6.8 Resource Constraints.....	169
6.9 Lack of local ownership and grassroots involvement .....	170
6.10 SADC conflict transformation institutions and structural challenges .....	171

6.11 Nature of CT: a long-term multifaceted program .....	172
6.12 Lack of political will .....	173
6.13 Conclusion .....	174
CHAPTER 7 .....	176
CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS .....	176
7.1 Introduction.....	176
7.2 General conclusions .....	176
7.3 Summary of research findings .....	180
7.4 Towards a CT model for SADC .....	184
7.5 Recommendations for a sustainable SADC sub-regional conflict transformation model.....	185
7.5.1 A Multi-pronged conflict transformation approach.....	186
7.5.2 Proper diagnosis of root causes .....	187
7.5.3 SADC to set clear objectives and targets .....	188
7.5.4 Strengthening sub-regional coherence and political will among member states .....	189
7.5.5 Locally led conflict transformation process .....	189
7.5.6 Long term presence of SADC .....	190
7.5.7.1 Security sector reform .....	190
7.5.8 Transparent and continual monitoring and evaluation.....	191
7.5.9 Socio-economic advancement .....	192
7.6 Contribution of the study .....	192
REFERENCES.....	195
APPENDECES .....	232
APPENDIX A: Ethical clearance letter.....	232
APPENDIX B: Permission to conduct research: ACCORD.....	233
APPENDIX C: Interview Schedule .....	234
APPENDIX D: Interview guide.....	235
APPENDIX E : Informed Consent form.....	236

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

The end of the Cold War signaled diminished competition for allies by both the Eastern bloc and the Western bloc. This led to a situation where Africa lost her relevance and was no longer needed for spearheading the ideological agendas of either of the two blocs. The end of the East-West rivalry also resulted in a situation in which the West became less interested in Africa's problems including emerging peace and security issues in different African states. Subsequently, at the end of the Cold War, the nature of conflict on the African continent had changed, and the prevalence of interstate conflict which had dominated the cold war era had declined considerably (Eneka and Nwagbo, 2016). While interstate conflicts have become less prevalent, intrastate disputes in the post-Cold War period had flourished (Szayna, 2017:3). Notably, several civil conflicts in Africa, such as the ongoing war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the political conflict in Lesotho, have stretched on for decades (Maeresera and Zengeni, 2017). These conflicts have led to the death of millions of noncombatants on the continent (Byiers and Desmidt, 2016). Yet, while these numbers would suggest that the contagion of intrastate conflict is spreading, the real cause for these disturbing statistics could be blamed on the recurrence of previous intrastate disputes.

The United Nations (UN) is mandated with the daunting task of upholding international peace and security. The UN was initially eager to play its part in peacekeeping operations in Africa. It would seem that although the international body was equipped to deal with interstate conflict, it was not equipped to handle intrastate disputes (Nadege, 2019). The UN's experience with interventions in Somalia, Rwanda, Mozambique and Angola have culminated in a reluctance on the part of the organisation to tackle intrastate conflicts on the continent (Eneka and Nwagbo, 2016). The failure of the UN to resolve conflicts in Africa necessitated regional and sub-regional organisations, such as the African Union (AU), the SADC, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to respond and help resolve conflicts in their respective regions and sub-regions (Eneka and Nwagbo, 2016; Nadege, 2019). Hence in 1992, the UN delegated the role of keeping peace to regional economic organisations (REC) (Brookings, 2015). As such, regional

organisations were tasked to partner with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The SADC was initially formed in 1980 with a directive to minimise economic dependence on the then apartheid South Africa (SA) but now tasked to also ensure the upkeep of peace and security in Southern Africa (Mabaleng, 2012).

SADC is a secondary body of the AU, which obtains its directive from chapter VIII of the United Nations charter. Chapter VI and Chapter VII suggest that regional organisations must take on various programmes such as preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacemaking and post-conflict reconstruction in their respective sub-regions. These activities include the right to utilise force, but this must be mandated by the UNSC (Cawthra, 2010). The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has continued to be challenged by political, socio-economic and military conflicts that have persisted in affecting the sub-regions peace and security. Apart from the continuing conflict against armed groups in eastern DRC, the sub-region has also witnessed minor armed conflicts flaring up in Mozambique and Angola (Angerbrandt, 2017; Nadege, 2019; Aeby, 2018). The SADC has consequently faced unique challenges on how to transform and find durable resolutions to such conflicts. Notably, in instances where mediation efforts have been put in place, often these conflicts have recurred.

In this regard, conflict recurrence is not a new phenomenon in most member states of the SADC. These cyclical conflicts have generally ranged from political instability to armed conflicts. In the DRC, the conflict has continued to persist from 1998 to 2017 (Maeresera and Zengeni, 2017). The same has been the case with the 2013-2016 resurgence of conflict in Mozambique; the country is still in an unstable political and security situation. Madagascar has also experienced intermittent conflict. Lesotho, a small, impoverished and dependent enclave state, like many African states, has also throughout its post-independence period been challenged by episodes that have threatened the country's political stability and security (Makoa, 2004). The 'Mountain Kingdom' or the 'Kingdom of the Sky' as it is commonly referred to has hence not been exempted from the scourge of cyclical conflict and the country has continuously faced internal security problems that have followed her since her independence from colonial powers (Matlosa, Shale, Kapa, Southall, and Hoeane). Notable occurrences which threaten internal peace and security, often endangering the established authority of the state, have been rife in the country. For example, the demonstrations against the 1998 election results ignited unrests that have continued to blemish the political scene in the country.



## **1.2. Problem statement**

Conflict recurrence in the Southern Africa sub-region and Lesotho in particular in recent times has provided a litmus test for the SADC's capacity to manage and transform conflict within the sub-region. To date, responses to conflicts in the SADC have been dominated by traditional, militaristic and state-centric approaches such as peacekeeping and mediation. The sub-regional body has paid very little attention to developing peace-building capacities and even less attention to conflict transformation (CT) as a long-term framework for peace-building. Regardless of the various interventions by the SADC, the Mountain Kingdom still finds itself amid deep-rooted protracted social conflicts (Mokoa, 2004). Thus, there seems to be no successful conflict transformation model that the sub-region has adopted towards a sustainable long-term peaceful resolution to the recurring conflict in Lesotho. As a result, this study seeks to assess the SADC's capacity to transform the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of conflict in the Mountain Kingdom in order for the country to attain sustainable peace. The study seeks to do this to detect cracks, challenges and areas that may well necessitate enhancement. This is what this research endeavours to achieve from an academic and sub-regional strategic policy stand.

## **1.3 Overview of Lesotho's geopolitical history**

Lesotho is a small landlocked country within Southern Africa. It is known as *Muso oa Lesotho* in the Sesotho language, meaning the state of Lesotho. As its name implies, it is the land of the Basotho, and unlike most African nations, it has no internal ethnic or linguistic divisions (Khaketla, 1970:8). The country remains one of the few surviving monarchies in Africa and is home to a population of about 2.2 million with a geographic size of 30 355km<sup>2</sup> (World population data sheet, 2018). Approximately 13% of the Kingdom's soil is arable, and mainly located on the western strip. The tremendously slanted distribution of arable land provides an explanation of the excessive population concentration in certain parts of the country, mainly, the western arable areas (Monyane, 2009).

The Mountain Kingdom is one of the smallest nation-states in the world and is completely encircled by its more prominent neighbour, South Africa (Monyane, 2009). It connects with KwaZulu-Natal towards the East, the Eastern Cape to the South, and the Free State to the North and West. Nevertheless, despite its triviality in size; vulnerable geography, economic and



Source: <https://www.bing.com/images/search> (accessed: 10 October 2018).

The state is classified under 'Low Human Development' countries with high levels of poverty, inequality, and unemployment, particularly among the youth. The unemployment rate in Lesotho is estimated at 23.6 per cent with about 57.1 per cent of the populace surviving on less than US \$ 1.90 per day which is the stipulated international poverty datum line (World Data Atlas, 2019). According to the AfDB, OECD and UNDP report, about 75.7 per cent of the jobless reside in traditional homesteads (AfDB, OECD and UNDP, 2017:2). According to the latest United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report (2019), Lesotho falls in the category of countries with the lowest of the Human Development Indices. The state has an underdeveloped and weak economy, with small resource endowments including diamond, minerals, and water. Water, the country's primary natural resource remains critical to the Kingdom's economy as it provides water to various sections of SA, consequently creating revenue (Monyane, 2009). The state further receives tariffs from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). The country has a small private sector that contributes a meagre 14 per cent to the GDP (National Vision Document, 2018).

Since independence, the constitutional monarchy had opted for the British system where the Prime Minister functions as head of government while the King is the head of State (Monyane, 2009). The incumbent king is His Majesty King Letsie III while the Prime Minister is Tom Thabane. Moreover, the country utilises a twofold legal system comprising of traditional customary law and the common law (Monyane, 2009). The Council of Chiefs regulates succession to the throne of Lesotho. In light of its political structure, the country can be categorised into three sections mainly: the highlands, the lowlands and finally, the Maloti Mountain. For administrative purposes, the Kingdom is separated into ten districts: Berea, Butha Buthe, Leribe, Mafeteng, Maseru, Mohale ' s Hoek, Mokhotlong, Qacha ' s Nek, Quthing, and Thaba Tseka. District administrators supervise the various regions (Lesotho Country Analysis, 2017). Sesotho and English are the official languages in the country, with the latter widely spoken and this can be traced to its colonial history.

While the pre-independence period did not experience any violent episodes, the country still failed to transition to a politically stable post-colonial society (Makoa, 2004). The country is well known for its complicated history of political commotions since its attainment of freedom in October 1966, and has over the years witnessed extreme factionalism, political tension, and violent conflict particularly during and after election times (Vhumbunu, 2015).

#### **1.4 Significance of the study**

In its unique way, this research endeavours to further the academic debate and scholarly research on conflict transformation in the SADC sub-region. The study is timely as it is conducted at a period when the Mountain Kingdom has in the past 2 decades faced further intrastate conflict leading to early elections in efforts to end the violence which have not yielded sustainable positive results. It is hoped that this study will be able to elucidate the road ahead for the SADC and its role in transforming conflict into sustainable positive peace. This study is also relevant as it will contribute to discussions on the necessity of a conflict transformation model as a critical tool towards transforming the spate of recurring intrastate conflict in Lesotho. The study envisages to contribute to knowledge in the field of CT and provides findings that could be useful to policymakers, regional economic bodies, scholars, governments, diplomats, and NGOs towards devising mechanisms for CT in the sub-region. Additionally, the study seeks to provide new insights on how conflict recurrences can best be tackled in the sub-region and augment the existing body of knowledge relating to the actual rolling out of CT. Thus, this study will also enhance the literature and discourse on sub-regional organisations and their path towards conflict transformation on the continent.

#### **1.5 Research objectives**

The objectives of this study are to:

- a) Analyse the recurrence of conflict in Lesotho in the context of political, economic, military and social dynamics.
- b) Evaluate the political and diplomatic strategic efforts that SADC has implemented in attempting to resolve the conflict.
- c) Examine the constraints that the sub-regional body has encountered in trying to resolve the conflict.
- d) Proffer scholarly and policy recommendations for a sustainable SADC sub-regional conflict transformation model.

#### **1.6 Research questions**

The research questions that the thesis endeavours to address are the following:

- a) Which dynamics have been at play in the recurrence of conflict in Lesotho?

- b) What strategic political and diplomatic efforts has the SADC implemented in its attempts to resolve the conflict?
- c) What have been the major constraints encountered by the sub-regional body in its attempts to resolve the conflict?
- d) Using the Lesotho conflict as a case study, what scholarly and policy recommendations can be proffered for a sustainable SADC sub-regional conflict transformation model?

### **1.7 Theoretical Framework**

This study argues that the SADC requires a sustainable conflict transformation model in carrying out its sub-regional obligation and responsibility of transforming conflict situations in the region, and particularly in the Mountain Kingdom. This study adopts John Paul Lederach's conflict transformation pyramid which suggests that peacebuilding must be established on the existing relationships and sub-systems in the conflict. Lederach further advises that effort to transform conflict must ensure collaboration between the middle range leaders, the grassroots level and the top leadership (Lederach, 1997). Moreover, the CT theory advocates for changes or transformations in the following dimensions: the personal, structural, relational and cultural facets of conflict. This model is used as a framework to guide this study in its aim of establishing a theoretical basis on which the SADC's efforts at achieving sustainable long-term peace to the recurring conflict in Lesotho, can be grounded.

### **1.8 Research methodology adopted for the study**

This study uses qualitative and historical research methodology. Qualitative research intends to discover issues, comprehend phenomena, and to respond to questions without necessarily depending on numerical data. This method is also concerned with explaining the kind of data, to generate knowledge often through interviews and participant observation. For this study, data comprised both primary and secondary sources as explained below.

Maree (2007) notes that historical research is a systematic technique of unfolding, analysing and inferring past events in an attempt to interpret the facts and explain the cause of events, and how these have influenced and shaped the present. This research method provides useful insight into phenomena through a careful evaluation of historical information collected on the political, economic, military and social dynamics that have contributed to the recurrence of conflict in the Mountain Kingdom. It also aids to get insight on the strategic efforts that the

SADC has implemented in attempting to resolve the violent disputes and on the constraints that the sub-regional body has encountered in the process.

**Primary sources:** This comprises of personal accounts/information from people who had a direct connection and primary original documents such as SADC documents, eyewitness accounts of events and oral histories. Primary sources are critical in historical research, as accessing and evaluating historical data is a process which requires judgement, instinct, perseverance and common sense (Buzan, 1998). The researcher also conducted interviews with academics, politicians, political analysts, journalists and security practitioners to collect primary data from institutions such as Centre for Conflict Resolution. Moreover, interviews were conducted with various think tanks and scholars from the African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) and students from the National University of Lesotho (NUL) who are conversant with Lesotho's conflict dynamics.

**Participants:** The study utilised non-probability and criterion purposive sampling. This suggests participants were selected based on distinct features that deemed them possessors of the data required for the research (Maree, 2007). The participants were purposefully selected based on their unique proficiency in their respective fields of conflict transformation and their involvement in peace-building.

### **1.8.1 Personal Interviews**

The research utilised the unstructured, informal interview method. The criterion for selecting participants was mainly based on individuals holding key positions which allow them to be able to respond to the research questions. Qualitative research often utilises smaller sample sizes. One method of establishing the number of respondents needed is to keep interviewing until a point is reached in the analysis process where no original themes or ideas come out from the data. This point is often referred to as 'saturation'. Interviews were conducted initially with academics (UKZN & NUL); politicians from various political parties in Lesotho; political analysts; NGO's involved in issues of peace; civil society personnel, journalists and security policy practitioners in conflict, peace and security in Lesotho and SA. The research utilised 22 participants and gathered data until empirical saturation was reached. This method of sampling produced rich and reliable data.

The interviews were informal and were guided by a set of open-ended questions. They were conducted from February 2017 to June 2018. The interviews aimed at provoking responses to research questions based on the respondents' knowledge, opinions and insights on SADC's

conflict transformation capacity. The interview method permitted the researcher to attain first-hand information from the interviewee. Furthermore, this method permitted the researcher to explore critical issues at a more profound and personal level than that allowed by questionnaires. The interviews ranged from 30 minutes to an hour for each participant. The strength of the interview is that it enables the researcher to probe further and clarify points which might not be clear through the use of follow up questions. Utilising the interview technique also lessened the possibility of a low response rate (Kumar, 2005:114). All participants signed the informed consent form.

**Secondary sources:** These are the works of other scholars that have written about the issue that is being studied (Maree, 2007:73). The existing or secondary sources used in the study included an assortment of books and academic references; and published papers; online newspaper and media reports; journal articles; published and unpublished theses; and information available on the internet.

### **1.9 Data Analysis and presentation**

Data analysis was carried by a method of content analysis, a methodical tactic to qualitative data analysis that categorises and summarises content for studying documents and artefacts of varying formats (Maree, 2007). Content analysis is defined as “any method for making interpretations by accurately and analytically identifying stated characteristics from a data set” (Holsti, 1969). This was done by thoroughly analysing the transcripts, arranging comparable themes and further categorising and interpreting them in the specific groups. This process was guided by the problem statements and the research questions asked. Triangulation was utilised to improve the validity and reliability of the study. Triangulation is a double-checking data method by either utilising multiple data sources or employing two or more approaches to data gathering. Presentation of data was organised around the themes that emerged from the study and presented as sections with appropriate sub-sections.

### **1.10 Structure of the dissertation:**

#### **Chapter 1- Introduction**

The chapter delivers a general introduction and a synopsis of the study. This chapter presented the background, outline of the research problem, the objectives, and the methodology of the study. This chapter wraps up by giving an overview and structure of the entire study.

## **Chapter 2- Literature review- dynamics of the recurring conflict in Lesotho**

The chapter focuses on a review of the extant literature on the different factors understood as contributing to the recurring conflict in Lesotho. This task is undertaken to establish some of the strengths and weaknesses in the analysis of available studies on the issue of the recurring conflict in Lesotho. This is done to grasp the key conflict issues in the SADC member state and to establish SADC's capacity to transform the conflict and place the country on a track towards the attainment of sustainable positive peace. The chapter also seeks to shift the discussion in available studies from an exclusive emphasis on individual factors contributing to the Lesotho conflict, to a focus on holistic and in-depth and multi-faceted conflict analysis which includes locals. This study envisages that this is important if conflict transformation is to be realised.

## **Chapter 3- Literature review-SADC conflict transformation capacity and Interventions towards ending the recurring conflict in Lesotho**

This chapter deliberates on the available literature around the SADC, its capacity and its conflict transformation record in Lesotho. The review of literature questions the conventions in the literature that concern the capacity of SADC primarily as it relates to conflict transformation. It also explores SADC's attempts (interventions) to resolve the conflict and explore SADC's constraints in conflict resolution. The chapter explores gaps in the literature as a preamble to providing validation for a conflict transformation approach to be used in this research study.

## **Chapter 4- Conceptual and Theoretical Framework**

The chapter focuses on the conceptual framework and offers a synopsis of the central theoretical approaches used in this research. The chapter further elaborates on the critical concepts utilised in this current study. Conflict transformation is analysed in a broader analytical perspective. Approaches such as conflict management, conflict settlement, conflict resolution, that contribute to long-term conflict transformation in Lesotho as a sustainable framework, are explored. The chapter then delves into Lederach's conflict transformation pyramid and also focuses on the aspects of conflict to be transformed which are the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects.



## **Chapter 5- Research methodology**

The chapter provides a synopsis of the methodology and data gathering techniques used during the period of this study. It justifies the use of qualitative research design. The chapter also expands on the case study technique and its importance for the research. Also, the chapter offers validation for the use of personal interviews as a data-collection instrument. Additionally, the sampling technique, the transcription process, data analysis approach and ethical considerations and limitations of this research are explored.

## **Chapter 6- Presentation of research findings and analysis**

The chapter forms an important component of the research as it presents, reports and analyses data gathered. Data presentation and summary of results are presented by means of thematic analysis. The emerging themes are directed by the critical research questions, and responses from the participants are qualitatively analysed within the CT framework.

## **Chapter 7- Conclusions, summary of findings and recommendations**

This chapter offers a summary of the significant assumptions of the research, the study's main conclusion as well as the researcher's recommendations. It also provides propositions for future investigations to be carried out.

### **1.11 Chapter summary**

This chapter has endeavoured to introduce the current research and has also offered a snapshot of the entire study. This was done by outlining the background of the study, the problem statement and the significance of the study. It also outlined the theories upon which the study is constructed and the research methodology utilised in the research. The aim of the next chapter is to delve into the review of literature with reference to the dynamics informing the recurring conflict in Lesotho.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW: RECURRING CONFLICT IN LESOTHO

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature on the recurring conflict in the Mountain Kingdom. It sets to map out the underlying causal factors that various scholars have put forth in their analysis of Lesotho's perennial political instability from independence to date. For this research, this task is undertaken to establish the strengths and weaknesses in their analysis of the recurring conflict riveting the SADC member state. The aim is also to explore and understand the key issues in the conflict and to interrogate SADC's capacity to transform the conflict and realise sustainable positive peace in Lesotho.

In order to realise the stated purpose of this chapter, it is useful to examine the critical conflict issues identified by various scholars and the shortcoming of their analysis. Many of the investigations have focused on the country's poor socio-economic conditions marked by underdevelopment, poverty, inequality, unemployment, etc., which turn contestation over state power into fierce warfare among the political elite (Maphosa, 1995; Gebremichael, 2019). Also discussed in the literature, is the country's colonial history, a factor which informed Lesotho's adoption of a British based electoral system. On the same breath, various other studies have focused on the country's geographical location and South Africa's interests in the conflict (Monyae, 2014; Grimmwood, 2017). Yet, fewer studies have considered the lack of governance structures as a commonly identified source of conflict in the Mountain Kingdom.

Furthermore, the chapter explores a plethora of works (Matlosa and Pule, 2001, 2003; Pherudi, 2018; Letsie, 2018; Gebremichael, 2019; Williams, 2019; Matlosa, 2020) that have reflected the militarisation of politics and politicisation of the military, which has generated political violence underpinning the pervasive instability of the country. To a lesser extent, fewer studies explore the monarchy as a key contributor to the conflict. The recent mushrooming of coalition governments where the country has seen coalitions by different political parties is also a new dynamic in literature (Kapa, 2008; Kapa, 2012; Kapa and Shale, 2012; Ngubane, 2018) viewed as an underwriting factor in the intensifying of violent conflict in the country. This is as many of these coalition governments have sooner rather than later crumbled.

The intention of this chapter is to move away from the exclusive emphasis on each individual factor that impinges on the Lesotho conflict. The chapter instead engages in a holistic, in-depth and multi-faceted conflict analysis which considers the possible role of locals in the effort to

realise the transformation of the recurring conflict in Lesotho. The chapter notes that each extant study often concentrates on one or two factors with a mere mention of other factors but without delving into how each element forms a part of a much profoundly rooted problem. In this regard, it is essential to note the interrelatedness of the various conflict contributors, particularly in the ongoing efforts to transform the conflict into positive, sustainable peace. Moreover, as time has lapsed, various new influencing factors have further complicated the nature of the conflict in the Kingdom of the Sky. As such, it becomes increasingly important that such new factors are considered in the analysis and conflict transformation plans for the Kingdom. Hence, the study advocates for a broad many-fold analysis of the conflict from its inception to date.

## **2.2 Factors influencing conflict in Africa**

Africa has experienced and indeed is still plagued with violent conflicts which seem to deepen by the day. Various scholars such as Cohen (1995; 1996), Duala (1984), Ake (1985) and Okoyo (1977) have pointed towards Africa's colonial past as a key contributing factor to the many conflicts facing the continent today. Achankeng (2017) puts forth the argument that the imperial factor is a fundamental primary cause of conflict in Africa and goes even further to suggest that their repetitive nature may be attributed to their colonial past. Similarly, Okoyo (1977) maintains that the political instability facing various African countries today is primarily rooted in the very structure of society, mainly informed by their colonial history. A similar view is shared by Duala (1984), who argues that the majority of the issues faced by African countries can be traced to their colonial history. Cohen (1995:11) also concurs that majority of the sources and consequences of internal conflicts faced by post-colonial African states today have their roots in colonialism, decolonisation and also the subsequent predicament of state-building (Achankeng, 2013). Cohen (1995) goes further and points to the contradictions posed by the colonial state. The author alludes to the sad reality that these contradictions have formed foundations for the modern African state without consideration of ethnic and regional diversities, which today have led to inequality and skewed wealth distribution in respective countries, often recreating cycles of violent conflict (Cohen, 1995).

The move away from the imperial factor is also cited for the dampening of conflicts while they remain primarily unresolved or untransformed and thus their recurrence. Zartman (2000:3) seems to support Achankeng (2017) who maintains the view that the efforts utilised by Regional Economic Communities have not been successful in disabling the tragedies that have

brought them to the continent. Achankeng's (2017) standpoint reiterates the crucial need of attending to the sources of conflict if actual transformation is to be achieved.

Maphosa (1995) emphasises skewed allotment and access to natural resources, where the impoverished often feel excluded from access to resources as a critical root cause behind African conflicts. In weak economy countries, resources are usually controlled by a few, and this has sparked violent conflict in various countries. In Lesotho, the colonial legacy has remained a critical factor that has formed the current system of governance. For Monyane (2009), the existing governance systems can be linked to the scant competition for scarce resources, the power scuffles by the elect, maladministration, socio-economic variables such as scarcity, feeble civil society, insignificant middle class, and socioeconomic disparities.

In Africa, political, economic, and social issues have proven to be interdependent and deeply intertwined. As such, the continent has witnessed various forms of tensions and violent conflicts. These conflicts have included authoritarianism, post-election violence, armed conflicts, ethnic and religious rivalries, terrorism, insurgencies, and Muslim-extremist movements, among others (Ngoma, 2005). The root causes of some of these acts of violence also appear to intensify the already dreadful situation. Over 700 Million people in the third world continue to be confronted by abject poverty, others remain targets of various types of violence, and these constitute conflict-provoking realities in many African states (Lifewater, 2020). The various regional organisations within the continent have sought to institute multiple mechanisms to deal with potentially dire situations of violent conflicts.

### **2.3 The Mountain Kingdom that knows no peace**

Scholars Holm (1972), Makoa, Sejamane, Shale, Matlosa (1999); Pefole (2004) agree that the Kingdom in the Sky has never enjoyed political stability since the attainment of political independence in 1965. The Kingdom has been marred by violent uprisings, electoral disputes and inter and intra-political disagreements, often denting the Kingdom's democracy and stifling its governance systems (Williams, 2019:65). The political atmosphere in the Mountain Kingdom has been unpredictable often faced with a reality of intermittent violent episodes. This instability in Lesotho has resulted in a considerable loss of lives, dislodgment of citizens mainly into SA and destruction to infrastructure, further escalating the nation's socio-economic predicament (Haynes, 2001). Thus, the self-rule era in Lesotho has been characterised by various peace-disturbing occurrences.

The country from its first democratic elections in 1965 has experienced political instability. For example, Matlosa and Pule start their argument by suggesting: “As an institution of the state, the military in Lesotho was mired in controversy and steeped in intrigue from the start (1999:39)”. Makoa (2004), in his study, puts forward conclusive evidence that shows the Mountain Kingdom has not enjoyed political stability since attaining its independence. On the same breath, Motsamai (2015) reiterates this point further arguing that the country has been haunted by violent episodes emanating from political power struggles from the advent of political liberation in 1966 to present day.

Similarly, Vhumbunu (2015:1) maintains that since independence, Lesotho has been confronted by “political instability characterised by factionalism, tensions, and violent conflicts”. The country has been persistently engulfed by political violence more predominantly, during and after the polls. On the same breadth, Monyane (2009) agrees that the Mountain Kingdom’s over 50 prime years of independence have not witnessed a stable democracy. Instead, throughout its post-independence period, the country has been haunted by continuous instability and rampant periodic political violence.

This study argues that these conflict situations have often been unsuccessfully managed by the local leadership, and have necessitated the intervention of external institutions such as SADC and neighbouring countries. For Matlosa (2008) and Makoa (2014), political polarisation in the Mountain Kingdom runs deep. It can be noticed in the concentration of authority by small elites in the country’s political parties, as a result of intra-party democracy in Lesotho. Matlosa further explains that this polarization is reinforced by “personality cults - a trend that reduces political institutions to individuals and turns individual politicians into institutions (2008:21).”

After attaining independence, the Mountain Kingdom has carried out numerous elections, the majority of which have witnessed some form of violence, either before, during or after an election. This was evidenced in the 2007 post-election violence where the governing party unfairly used the electoral model to advance for a parliamentary majority. In response, the opposition parties demanded electoral reforms, even going to the extremes of utilising violence.

The post-independence political history of the Kingdom of Lesotho has been characterised by frequent political instability submerged in several arrangements of conflict, exposed and concealed, violent and non-violent, short-lived and prolonged resulting mainly from disputes often arising around election time, over the electoral system and eventually the electoral results

(Matlosa, 2006). To date, the country has experienced three military *coups de tat* with the exclusion of the attempted military *coup* in 2015.

#### **2.4 An overview of Lesotho's historical realities**

A critical assessment of the recurring conflict in the Kingdom of the Sky shows that the nation-state's current state is historically rooted in its institutional crisis and constitutional ailment, which can be traced to the period before political liberation (Weisfelder, 1967; Makoa, 1994; Matlosa, 1997; Matlosa, 1999).

The Kingdom of Lesotho is based on the pre-colonial state known as Basotho land, which was established by King Moshoeshe in 1822 (Sanders, 1979; Thompson, 1979). The modern nation of Lesotho also emerged through alliances with clans and chiefdoms of southern Sotho people under the leadership of Moshoeshe during the Mfecane wars in the early 19th century (Monyane, 2009). Moshoeshe and his close relatives who followed him established homesteads in the Lesotho mountains. Moreover, it is also said that the founding father of the Basotho nation, successfully built the united homogeneous federation by welcoming and accepting various peoples from various groups (South African History Online, 2019). Some of the groups were the Basia, the Bamonaheng, the Baphaleng, the Bapedi, the Batlokwa, the Bakubung, the Bamokotele, the Bakgatla, the Baphuting and even the infamous Nguni migrants who were escaping from the great Zulu King Shaka Zulu (Thompson, 1975; Knight, 1994; Mofuoa, 2015). For Maundeni (2010) and Mofuoa (2015), Moshoeshe's rise to domination is not necessarily attributed to him conquering other groups but rather to his occupation of a strategic mountain that allowed for greater protection against enemies and adorned with arable land and abundant water resources.

According to Monyane (2009), Moshoeshe was successful in resisting attacks from King Shaka of the Zulu, the Dutch and the British travelling from the Cape Colony. The efforts by the British and the Boers to inhabit Lesotho justify the history of South African interests in the Mountain Kingdom. Dissimilar to the methods of King Shaka, Moshoeshe's Kingdom was founded on diplomatic and peaceful principles. The King utilised a strategic system in which a reliable devotee and a 'Son of Moshoeshe' is placed to govern over smaller groups (Shillington, 2005; Monyane, 2009). Through this system, a total of 22 prime chiefs and area chiefs came into existence (Monyane, 2009). The people of Lesotho prevailed within the Kingdom under the leadership of Moshoeshe until this serenity was interrupted by the arrival

of the British and Afrikaner colonial invasions in 1843 (Eldridge, 1993; Pherudi, 2000). Before this time, the Sotho kings were accountable to the Basotho.

In the year 1868, Lesotho was colonised by Britain. It was during this era that Lesotho together with Botswana and Swaziland were formally under British Protectorate rule, also known as the three High Commission Territories (Mofuoa, 2015; Pheko, 2017). The attainment of British 'protection' also meant that the country would adopt the British model of a monarch where the people are accountable to the monarch and not the other way around. Before this time, Basotho chiefs and King were accountable to the Basotho people. For Benyera (2017), this marked the next turning point in the country's turbulent history and would have a direct impact on the relations between the monarch and Basotho.

While the French had initially introduced Christianity, the religion also became deeply entrenched, as protection came hand in hand with the holistic British system, including religion. Eldredge (1993:94-95) also refers to the growing influence of the church in the Mountain Kingdom as she points to the rapid growth of French missionaries from 393 in 1843 to 13 733 by 1894. In 1904, the church membership had grown to 13 733, accounting for 5.5% of the total population (Eldredge, 1993). The increasing power of the Roman Catholic Church on the royal family is still very much a reality in contemporary Lesotho.

In October of 1966, the Kingdom of Lesotho became an independent parliamentary democracy led by King Moshoeshoe II and Prime Minister Chief Leabua Jonathan of the Basotho National Party (BNP) winner of the first post-independence elections. On attaining independence, Lesotho naturally adopted administrative features similar to those found in Great Britain (Matlosa, 1993). Firstly, Lesotho is a constitutional monarchy with the King as the head of state, and the Prime Minister is the head of government (Letsie, 2009). Secondly, as in Britain, Lesotho has a bicameral parliamentary system which is made up of the National Assembly and the Senate. Regardless of the adoption of the democratic system, the Kingdom has not enjoyed a flourishing democracy but instead has for more than three decades after that been hindered by intermittent election-related violent conflicts (UNDP, 2012).

For Helen (2014:23), the political unpredictability in the country can be credited to Britain's failure to prepare the country for independence and self-rule. Instead, the former colonial master had focussed on exploiting the country's natural resources. As a result, upon the attainment of independence, the state found itself under the reign of incompetent leaders who were unable to manage the Kingdom's affairs, let alone an economic base (Helen, 2014:23).

Moreover, the Basotho had been forced out of their arable land to live in mountainous areas with very little crop production due to harsh weather conditions (Benyera, 2017:57). The Basotho had the majority of their good land taken by South African Afrikaaner farmers in what today is known as the Free State Province.

Before this time, the monarchy had remained functional and in power from 1822 but lost executive power at independence (Monyane, 2009). In Pherudi's view, the period marked the end of colonialism but also marked the beginning of new political complications for the Mountain Kingdom (2000:10). As already established, the track to multi-party democracy in the Kingdom has been characterised by tension and volatility since independence. Henceforth, political instability in Lesotho can be said to have begun when the state attained independence from Britain (Makoa, 2004; Vhumbunu, 2015).

Before independence, various political parties in Lesotho had been campaigning for the elections but later began to withdraw their campaigns after learning of the highly probable chances of the Basotho National Party (BNP) winning the polls. As such, the King and opposition parties were working on convincing Britain not to give Lesotho its independence in efforts to stop the BNP from attaining power (Aerni-Flessner, 2014). This then attests to the beginning of scuffles and tensions between the monarchy and government in Lesotho. The King argued, "people could not be given independence while there were political problems in the country (Mmutle, 2007:13)". Similarly, opposition parties within the country shared similar opinions on their unwillingness to be governed by a minority government.

## **2.5 The Geographic location of Lesotho and South Africa's interests**

Geographically, the Mountain Kingdom is located within South Africa. This reality denies Lesotho the option of non-involvement and non-interference by South Africa in its internal affairs. In their study, Mahlakeng and Solomon (2013:36) argue that the Mountain Kingdom and its more prominent neighbour SA have come a long way in the past 61 years of the Kingdom's liberation. For Selinyane (1998), this was evident in their good relations in the 1960s towards the early 1970s; to strained relations through the mid1970s to the mid1980s. The two countries then saw improved relations in the late 1980s to the early 1990s; and up to today's good relations (Selinyane, 1998:59). Since 1994, the Mountain Kingdom and South Africa have enjoyed cordial bilateral relations (Government ZA, 2010).

Hadebe (2011:37) in his study, points out the realities of a country-within-another-country, arguing that the geographic position of the country has and will continue to pose challenges.



In fact, it can be argued that the Mountain Kingdom's location deems it susceptible to political and economic impact from South Africa (Mahlakeng and Solomon, 2013). On the same breath, several writers have argued that the country's dependence on its more prominent neighbour necessitates peaceful coexistence with South Africa (Matlosa, 1999; Selinyane, 1998; Matlosa, 1999). Pefole, in his study, demonstrates that the republic has had strong economic and political influence over the Kingdom of the Sky, further arguing that in some instances, there has been direct interference (2004:50). For Weisfelder, "any hope that this tiny enclave will play a significant independent role requires considerable optimism and, possibly, a measure of credulity (1971:50)".

The geographic location and abundance of water in Lesotho, given the water crisis in South Africa, make the country's interests in the Mountain Kingdom inevitable. Various South African governments have acted in ways that have often shown a vested interest in the mountainous kingdom's water resources (Meissner, 2006; Meissner, 2016; Moyo, 2018). Lesotho's water supplies various South African cities including Johannesburg, the country's industrial hub. While SA's interest in the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) has often been cited as the reason behind the country's involvement, one cannot deny that volatility in Maseru would have a devastating impact on South Africa (Matlosa, 2006). This is because of the high possibility that the conflict and consequently, instability could spill over into South Africa. As such, it is in South Africa's best interest for stability and democracy to prevail in Lesotho, not only because of South Africa's water interests but more importantly for stability in the entire sub-region. This reality then suggests that the LHWP while a key feature is not the only aspect in the Lesotho-South African bilateral relationship.

Mahao (2006), in his study of the relationship between South Africa and Lesotho and the geographic position, refers to the hegemonic role stance of SA within the region. For him, this hegemonic role can be understood within the setting of the hierarchical nature of the 'Westphalia State Sovereignty'. Mahao (2006) puts forth the argument that states are ranked in order in the Westphalia system; as such, the higher-ranking states often dominate the lower ranking states. The method further allows for the stronger states to stipulate the rules for weaker states and in this regard, carry out their hegemonic role. In instances where the more vulnerable states divert from the set rules, they are automatically subjected to chastisement by the regional superpower (Mahlakeng and Solomon, 2013). Similarly, Matlosa (2006) argues that more often than not smaller economies that are reliant on external resource flows often expose and compromise their governance agenda to undue influence from powerful external players.

## 2.6 Socio-economic dynamics

Southern Africa is generally composed of unequal societies, and this reality can often be attributed to colonial systems which enforced racial segregation thus creating social cleavages which today have formed a foundation for many of the violent conflicts in the sub-region (UNECA, 2014; Aeby, 2018; IMF, 2020). These social cleavages have persisted despite the independence of post-colonial states. As such, it is expected that socio-economic dissatisfaction will pose a risk to peace and security in the sub-region.

Moreover, the decline of employment opportunities coupled with economic stagnation has impeded the creation of economic opportunities and investments, further heightening the stakes for fierce political competition (Aeby, 2018). In light of this, one critical explanatory factor for the political volatility in the Kingdom can also be attributed to the weak, dependent economy and the country's socio-economic fabric (Matlosa, 1999; Hassan and Ojo, 2002; Kabemba, 2003; Matlosa, 2006). According to Aluju (1995), in comparison to other post-colonial nations in Africa, Lesotho has remained relatively weak. This can be credited to the fact that its colonialist master, Britain had not established any economic base be it manufacturing, commercial nor agricultural which the post-colonial state would be able to benefit from. As such, it could be considered a dependent state par excellence. This reliant nature had placed limitations on what the state was equipped to achieve, regardless of the party in power after the attainment of liberation (Kabemba, 2003). Alexander Falconer Giles, Britain's last representative to Lesotho wrote on the eve of the Kingdom's independence:

“Britain's neglect over the past century has led to Basutoland's complete dependence on the Republic of South Africa, and that by granting independence with insufficient aid Britain is in fact “selling out” the territory to the Republic ... Impecunious independence will not be independence at all, and for this, Britain must bear the responsibility (Aerni-Flessner, 2014)”.

This persistent state of economic fragility has contributed to the political conflict leading to violence in the nation-state (Matlosa, 1999; Kabemba, 2003). The lack of employment opportunities, with the government being the largest employer in the country with means that the state can provide its inhabitant's very few economic prospects (Kabemba, 2003; Aerni-Flessner, 2014). For example, the formal economy in the Mountain Kingdom employs a mere 50,000 people (Gibbs, 2005; Kabemba, 2003: 16; Monyane, 2009, The World Bank, 2018). As such, one's prospects for employment in the country is enhanced with control of political power or connection to government. In turn, being in power permits the governing party to regulate access to available employment opportunities and public coffers. As a result, available

employment opportunities are kept aside for members affiliated to the governing party. This situation produces rivalry among political party members for access to employment opportunities and further increases the probability of political violence (Kabemba, 2003).

Lack of employment opportunities combined with the reality of government being the largest employer in a country where power within the government improves employment opportunities has contributed to a combative political culture, intensifying the chances of violence whenever power is threatened (Matlosa, 1999; Kabemba, 2003). This is accurately captured by Chris Landsberg who puts it as follows: “One key lesson from the Lesotho case is this: the smaller and poorer a country, irrespective of how homogeneous or heterogeneous a state, the more fierce and competitive are elections and the struggle for power (Landsberg, 2002)”.

As a result, elections in Lesotho have been reduced to a competition for employment opportunities which in turn increases the stakes for political competition. Consequently, the competition within and between political parties has brought about factions, even in the military. This competition for seats as a point of entry for employment raises personal stakes for the political game among politicians in Lesotho. The struggle over scant resources has further heightened factionalism in the country, not only between political parties but also within governance institutions at a larger scale. Nqosa Mahao notes: “This has led to a heightened pattern of intrigue and backbiting in recent years, which has undermined the internal coherence of institutions such as political parties, the civil service, and army (Kabemba, 2003)”. This entrenched animosity has created an infested political atmosphere susceptible to political violence and also resulting in weak governance structures.

## **2.7 The impact of Electoral model on Lesotho’s political instability**

### **2.7.1 The 1965 elections and continued instability**

For Letsie (2009), the choice of electoral model chosen in the Mountain Kingdom has also proven to be one of many issues that have triggered election-related conflict in Lesotho. On the same breath, Weisfelder (2001:75) comments: “recurrent political crises in Lesotho are rooted in constitutional and electoral systems and party politics dating back to the 1960s.” For instance, several polls, including that of 1965, 1970, 1993 and 1998, all delivered electoral outcomes that the losing parties felt were not a true reflection of the actual results (Pule 2002: 173; Matlosa, 2003).

The year 1965 marked the first year where the Basotho people voted for the first time in a general election. The 1965 elections would determine the party which was to take over from Britain at independence a year later. According to Mumutle (2007), the origins of Lesotho's instability are said to have begun with the 1965 highly contested election. It seems that the significant issue of contestation was not the actual results, but instead, the central issue in question was over the electoral model used during the election (Matlosa, 2003; Letsie, 2009). This meant that the subject of polls would be a recurring point of contention in the country until the system was reviewed and replaced with a more functional and equitable model. As such, stakeholders called for a model that would be owned and embraced by Basotho.

The Westminster-style majority wins, first-past-the-post (FPTP) model of elections was introduced by Britain in Lesotho and became part of the constitution of the country (Weisfelder, 1999; Matlosa & Sello, 2006; Kapa, 2013). The Lesotho constitution was changed to accommodate the electoral model, which was introduced at independence. This is a voting system founded on single-member electorates with the power to elect executive officers and members of the legislative assembly (Molomo, 2004:118). It is an electoral model that allows for only one winner, who attains constituency by having won the majority of votes (Monyane, 2009). The model allows the dominant party to win the majority of the votes cast, thereby allowing it to form a majority government.

Under the new constitution, known as the Westminster-style constitution, Lesotho was divided into 80 equal constituencies. This meant that the individual, and not the party, was the legal representative of the voter in parliament. As such, the system allowed for individual candidates to represent political parties within a given constituency and political parties could not stand as candidates themselves within the constituencies. Various studies including Kabemba (2003) and Matlosa (2004) have argued that this system had advantages and disadvantages; some of which continue to be part of Lesotho's politics to date.

For Bukae (2005), the First Past the Post system failed in Lesotho as it was inherited without any reflection on the political distinctiveness of the political context in the Kingdom. The system allows for a winner-takes-all stance in the allocation of seats in government. This posture was a critical source of violent uprisings in the Kingdom as was seen in the 1970, 1984, 1994, 1998 and 2007 post-election disputes (Weisfelder, 2001; Matlosa, 2003).

The main political parties that ran in the 1965 elections were the BNP led by Leabua Jonathan, which was more conservative and drew much of its support from chiefs and members of the

Catholic Church (Southall, 1993; Maundeni, 2010). The BNP was founded in 1958 as a result of splits in the mother party, the Basutoland African Congress (BAC) (Matlosa, 1995, 1997). The second was the Basotho Congress Party (BCP) one of the oldest nationalist movement, established in 1957 with a more communist outlook and ideology. The BCP was led by Ntsu Mokhehla member of the Pan African Congress (PAC) during his stay in South Africa (Matlosa, 1997). The BCP was generally accepted as a highly organised party of the three bigger parties and was therefore expected to win the elections. The party's membership was typically made up of academics and professionals. Lastly, the Maramma Tlou Freedom Party (MTP) was more traditionalist in its outlook and in favour of the Monarchy (Southall, 1993).

According to Khaketla (2012), the Catholic Church (largest religious sect) had since independence openly supported the BNP. On the other hand, the Protestant Church gave its support to the BCP (Southall, 1999; Monyane, 2009). This was a very critical time for the country, and its political future since an overwhelming majority of Basotho were affiliated to either of the religious sects. This speaks to a crack of the national consensus on the way forward from the very beginning of a new dispensation for the country. The involvement of the Church in the early stages of political independence dispensation did not help the Kingdom in the Sky. Instead, the division of the Church according to party lines further complicated the future of democratic consolidation in the country.

The results of the 1965 elections were as follows: the BNP consolidated its power and won with 31 seats which were equivalent to 41.6% of the votes, the BCP won 25 seats (37.7%), and the Maramma Tlou Freedom Party (MFP) won the outstanding 4 seats with 16.5% of the vote. This meant that the BNP was the minority winner since they had failed to garner 50% of the votes (Monyane, 2009). The BNP's leader Chief, Leabua Jonathan, was elected as Prime Minister in a by-election held on the 7th of July 1965. The BCP, MFP and other individual candidates were disgruntled by the electoral model and rejected the results, condemning the BNP of cheating in the elections. The opposition parties, led by the BCP and the MFP could not allow a minority government to be in power. The tension emerged between the BNP and the opposition parties that were not willing to accept the government of Leabua Jonathan (Matlosa, 1995, 1997). As a result, the opposition parties contested the election outcomes and cried foul, suggesting that the BNP had collaborated with the British colonial administration to rig the process. This happened at a time when Lesotho was not doing well economically, and the British government did not do anything to help the economy of Lesotho to grow. The

economy was negatively affected by a lack of aid from South Africa and also from international donors (Mmutle, 2007).

The majoritarian FPTP electoral system creates a one-party majority in both parliament and government. At the same time, the system can also bring about tensions as the losing parties may feel marginalised (Bukae, 2005). The system allows for a situation where the winning party's portion of the seats is more than its actual share of the votes received. Matlosa and Calleb (2000:30) allude to the fact that the system was unsuitable for the Mountain Kingdom. For example, on numerous occasions, the system has seen a single party receiving all parliamentary seats despite the large percentage of the vote even received by the opposition parties. Critics of this model view it as adversarial and unsuitable for nation-building, especially in fragile, conflict-ridden and polarised societies (Bay, 2011). This defective electoral system has often become a source of continued post-election violence in Lesotho (Mothibe, 1999:490-91).

It was against this backdrop that the 1965 general elections were held. Due to the problems posed by the system, the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system was introduced after the post-election conflict of 1998 (Maundeni, 2010). The outcomes of the 1965 general election suggest a very tight and fierce competition for state power between the BNP and BCP. The announcement of the 1965 election was followed by violent conflicts, the sending of the King into exile, reducing the role of the traditional leadership within the country and increased relations with the South African government. During this time, the state received support from Britain and was able to establish a Lesotho Mounted Police (LMP). The newly formed LMP would not only function as a law enforcement organ but as a military unit in the country (Makoa, 1988:1).

### **2.7.2 The 1970 election- An introduction of a flawed electoral system**

Motsamai (2015) and Hassan and Ojo (2002) illustrate that the beginning of political violence started with the second election of 1970. The 1970 elections marked the country's first post-independence elections and occurred in a profoundly hostile political environment. To begin with, there was evidence of electoral bullying and misdeeds, which tainted the credibility of the election results. Khaketla (1971:193) highlights some of the biases "following the scrapping of 1965 electoral law and its replacement by that of 1968; the candidate deposit was raised from R50, the fee paid in 1965, to R200". According to Letsie (2009), this was a considerable increase considering the economic and living conditions in Lesotho at the time. Moreover, the

period just before the elections saw a change in the time frame for the submission of nomination forms being brought closer and thus disadvantaging many, particularly, with the weak transportation system in Lesotho. For Pherudi, this was accompanied by various other biases in voting stations, including the kidnapping of an IEC staff member, and the theft of equipment which included the unique stamp used to validate the ballot papers (2004:11).

Despite the discrepancies highlighted above, the polls took place in a peaceful atmosphere on the 27th of January 1970. The results saw the governing party (BNP) under Chief Leabua Jonathan losing the election with 23 seats in contrast to the 36 seats of the BCP, or only 42% of the vote (Matlosa, 1999:172; Monyane, 2009). At the point when both the governing BNP and the opposition BCP were tied at 23 constituencies respectively, Lesotho's Prime Minister, Jonathan declared the election outcomes of 1970 illegal, deferred the constitution, professed a state of emergency and ruled by force after announcing himself as the leader (Tsikoane et al 2007: 14 Khaketla, 1971: 1; Kapa, 2013; Makoa, 2014; Coleman, 2015). This move was premised on the idea that it would allow the government time to restore normality in the Mountain Kingdom (Monyane, 2009). Jonathan alleged that the election process had been rigged and the BCP refused to hand over power arguing it would remain in authority to save the country from the communist ideology propagated by the BCP. Jonathan annulled the whole exercise, and the final election results were never officially announced (Matlosa, 1997). Instead, Jonathan suspended the constitution, which could have formed a legal channel which could have been used to test the validity of the allegations of the election results (Coleman, 2015).

Moreover, the BNP suspended the judiciary, thus toppling the justice system. Institutionally, it politicised the military as a BNP tool to retain it in power and preserve its unlawful rule (Coleman, 2015). Moreover, it placed King Moshoeshoe II under house arrest for alleged support for the BCP and political interference; arrested the BCP leadership and harassed their supporters; furthermore, banned the Communist Party of Lesotho (Matlosa, 1997:143). As such, many of the BCP leaders were imprisoned while others went into exile. A good number of the 'rebels' went to Libya to train as the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) under the pretence of being the Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army (APLA), soldiers of the Pan African Congress (PAC). Some Basotho who empathised with the exiled BCP were attacked and received death threats from the BNP government (Khaketla, 1971; Kapa, 2013; Makoa, 2014). The LLA is alleged to have received financial support from the National Party government in South Africa (Monyane, 2009).

For Matlosa (2011), the BNP government had put in place a one-party rule, thus restricting political activity and forcing many of the BCP supporters into exile. After Jonathan's takeover of the 1970 elections, the BNP became a *de facto* one-party dictatorship in the country (Matlosa, 1999; Moremoholo, 2005; Kapa, 2013). The administration ruled with outright repression and received much resistance as it limited political activity in the country (Pherudi, 2000:13). For Letsie (2009), by declaring a state of emergency, Prime Minister Jonathan's move can be seen as a strategy to hold on to state power at all costs, including resorting to unconstitutional means. The BNP's annulment of the 1970 election not only set back the country's consolidation of its fragile democracy but also ushered in the politics of suppression and hostility in the country (Bukae, 2005). It is undoubtedly to this era of dictatorship that we can trace the majority of the country's problems to. The era marked the start of several kinds of violent conflict and political instability in the Mountain Kingdom.

The events that followed the 1970 elections proved to be a catalyst for the political conflict that still exists in the Mountain Kingdom to this day. Moreover, the events following the elections brought severe division that involved political hostility that would characterise the next sixteen years of BNP's dictatorial rule and beyond. Jonathan's authoritarian rule became synonymous with constitutional crises, economic uncertainty and the repression of the opposition. This saw the country's social cohesion and homogeneity negatively affected. The period 1970-86, often referred to as the era of *de facto* one-party dictatorship, was an intense period in the Kingdom's political history (Matlosa, 2008).

Jonathan's authoritarian rule lasted up until 1986 when Leabua Jonathan was ousted out of office by a military *coup* staged by Major General Metsing Lekhanya (Coleman, 2017). The military council granted King Moshoeshoe II executive power because by that time the King's status was only that of a ceremonial monarch. According to Machobane (2001:13), the Independence Constitution of 1966 "has turned a King into a toy that Chief Kaizer Leabua can toss around to serve his ends and for his friends." This meant that the King was made a ceremonial monarch with less power. However, in 1986 the King's relationship with the military government was defined in Lesotho Order No 2 of 1986 (Government of Lesotho, 1986) under section 9. The order said, "the executive and legislative authority in Lesotho is vested in the King and may be exercised by him either directly or through Military Council, or the council of ministers (cabinet) (Machobane, 2001:13)."



In 1991, Major General Metsing Lekhanya was removed by force by the lower military ranks that claimed the government malfunctioned in its operations and was replaced by Major General Phisoane Ramaema (Machobane, 2001; Kapa, 2013).

### **2.7.3 The 1993 General Election**

The year 1993 would mark the restoration of the multi-party democracy and second post-independence elections in Lesotho when the military government allowed for credible polls to be held in Lesotho. This followed the 23 years of dictatorial rule, 16 of the BNPs one-party rule and seven of the military period. The 1993 elections were highly anticipated considering the long period of democratic absence (Letsie, 2009). The election finally took place on the 27th of March. The proclamation of the results cited triumphal victory for the BCP. The BCP had won all the 65 constituencies and secured all 65 parliamentary seats with an overall 75% of the votes cast (Matlosa, 1999; Letsie, 2009; Monyane, 2009). The BCP's victory was viewed by many observers as the "righting of 1970 wrong" when the party was deprived of its legal right to state power (Letsie, 2009). Once again, the election results confirmed the flaws of the FPTP electoral system. As mentioned earlier, the model allows for an outright winner who takes all while the losing party is unable to represent its supporters despite being a minority. A fundamental assumption of democracy as noted by Reddy (1996:6) who recognises that while the will of the majority prevails in a democracy, the views of the minority must also be respected and represented at least until the next election.

In the context of the 1993 elections, the BCP government found itself as the only player, without any opposition to ensure accountability and to exercise oversight. While the country successfully elected a democratic government during these elections, numerous other problems sprang up for the newly elected BCP government as several types of conflict amongst key institutions had caused so much volatility that the consolidation of democracy was brutally vulnerable (Matlosa, 2011). The country witnessed various strike action, particularly from government employees including educators, nurses, the military and the police. The nation witnessed political volatility and violence within its key governance structures (Matlosa, 2011). The country's chances of a consolidated multi-party democracy were already set up for disaster as it had laid its foundation on a history of decades of authoritarian rule (The APRM Country Review Report, 2010). Despite all these challenges, the BCP survived the first five years in office. The BCP eventually split over internal squabbles when Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle formed the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) which saw the majority of the BCP's members of parliament crossing the floor to the LCD. Mokhehle was supported by the majority

of parliamentarians to form a new government of forty members, while the remaining twenty-five formed an opposition (Matlosa & Shale, 2008; Kapa, 2013). Consequently, the LCD had a majority of seats in Parliament while the BCP became part of the opposition in Parliament, a label it openly opposed (Matlosa, 2006). The BCP felt cheated and treated unfairly, and this resulted in political bitterness in the political landscape of the country.

#### **2.7.4 The 1998 elections and post-electoral crisis**

The Kingdom ran its polls on the 23rd May 1998 under the auspices of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), led by Advocate Sekara Mafisa (Sekatle, 1999). While the polls were pronounced as credible by both local and global onlookers, the opposition parties rejected the results of the elections (Monyane, 2009). The LCD won the 1998 elections, and Pakalitha Mosisili succeeded the previous Prime Minister. The electoral system of First Past the Post was used to elect representative members in the 65 constituencies that formed the National Assembly. The LCD's win was not readily accepted and prompted resentment among the political élite and the electorate. Considering the infancy of the LCD in Lesotho's political scene, the opposition claimed electoral fraud, demanding the government to step down and called for new elections (Pherudi, 2018). Moreover, the opposition sighted the unfairness of the FPTP electoral system used. This was mainly attributed to the electoral system's inability to include opposition parties in Parliament in cases where all the constituencies were won by one dominant party (winner-takes-all). This was the case in the 1998 general elections; despite garnering 22.6 % of national voters, the BNP did not win an individual seat in the legislature (Monyane, 2009: 161). As a result, the Basotho protested against the elected government.

The FPTP electoral system came under intense scrutiny in these elections when the governing LCD won 78 of the 79 available seats but only 60% of the valid votes cast (Monyane, 2009). On the other hand, opposition parties who had garnered 40% of the vote won only one seat (1.25%). The dissatisfaction from the public led to violent protests which resulted in the loss of 75 lives. In December 1998, an Interim Political Authority (IPA) was mandated to evaluate the electoral system of Lesotho. The institution was constituted of 24 members with two members from each of the twelve political parties that had participated in the 1998 elections (Elklit, 2008; Matlosa, 2008). The IPA also included negotiators such as German political scientist, Jorgen Elklit, the SADC, the UNDP, and the Commonwealth Secretariat, among others (Goeke, 2016). The IPA eventually came up with a mixed-member proportional (MMP) electoral model. The system promised representation of the opposition in parliament. It was believed that the MMP system would compensate the smaller political parties, who lacked the

political majority to obtain sufficient votes to capture constituencies yet had enough support throughout the country to warrant participation in the national assembly (Kapa, 2013; Matlosa, 2008; Makoa, 2014).

Some analysts and observers of the political scene in Lesotho have pointed to the 1998 election as the turning point in the country's politics (Matlosa, 1999). However, this study argues that this elucidation is reasonable only to a certain extent. As already established in the review of literature above, numerous factors have underwritten the political instability in the country. It can be argued that the 1998 election was an essential dimension of this multi-faceted political crisis. However, the 1998 election centred analysis for most parts fails to recognise other key contributing dynamics over and above the election.

### **2.7.5 The 2007 election**

The country held its 2007 election on the 17th of February. Similar to the 1998 elections, the 2007 election was termed a 'snap election' (Likoti, 2009; Letsie, 2009; Nyane, 2016). The snap election was as a result of the floor-crossing that took place in late 2006 and saw the reduction of LCD majority from 79 to 61 (of 120) seats in the national assembly (Nyane, 2016). This slim majority created many challenges for the Kingdom in the Sky as it became difficult to manage. It was this reality that necessitated the call for the February 2007 elections. The pre-election atmosphere in the Kingdom before the 2007 election was characterised by various squabbles emanating from frustration from different participants. However, the 2007 elections were held on the 25th May and were rather peaceful. The elections were for the first time held using the revised method of MMP that includes FPTP and Proportional Representation (PR). The LCD won the polls under the revised political system and had 79 out of 80 constituency-based seats. A total of 9 opposition parties held all of the 40 proportional seats, with BNP holding the biggest share of 21 seats (Kabemba, 2003). That was the first-time opposition parties won a substantial number of proportional seats in what was termed peaceful elections.

A key and notable event that preceded the election was the creation of alliances, a strategy which is not officially allowed by the electoral system. The two bigger parties, the LCD and the main opposition, the ABC, made arrangements with the smaller parties. The agreement meant the bigger parties would only run in the constituencies, while the smaller parties would garner for the compensatory seats. The agreement made between the larger and smaller parties was that they would both field their candidates in all the constituencies, while they would also use their smaller partners to field their candidates on the PR lists, disguising their identity. The

ruling LCD went for constituency candidates while the smaller National Independent Party (NIP) included LCD members on its party list. In the same spirit, the ABC arranged with the Lesotho Workers Party (LWP) (Makoa, 2008)

The result of the 2007 elections was as follows: the LCD/NIP coalition garnered 82 seats or 68.3% of the seats in the National Assembly. The split was 61 to the LCD constituency seats while and the NIP with 21 compensatory seats. The ABC walked away with 17 constituency seats, while the LWP secured ten compensatory seats, giving the alliance 27 seats in the National Assembly, or 22.5% of the seats (EISA, 2007:1). The election results revealed that both the smaller parties had reaped more than they had sown. Matlosa (2008: 64) argues that the election results were not an accurate reflection of the respective party's political strength. The results were highly influenced by the instruction given to LCD and ABC supporters to vote for their parties in the constituency ballot and to vote for the NIP and LWP in the party-list ballot (Matlosa & Shale, 2008).

While the election was generally viewed and declared free and fair, lawful and peaceful by the observers; it became increasingly visible that the use of the MMP system in the allocation of seats had advanced the LCD to the detriment of others. As a result, disputes arose between the LCD and opposition parties led by the main opposition. The 2007 electoral conflict stemmed from two key issues. First, the distribution of seats in the National assembly, and secondly, the control of pre-election party coalitions that had mushroomed. To begin with, the opposition complained that the MMP system had been fraudulently applied in the 2007 elections (Mothibe, 1999). Moreover, opposition parties cited the unfair distribution of parliamentary seats through the manipulation of the MMP system. They further argued that the manipulation of the system had tampered with its primary principle of representation of political parties; affecting reconciliation and harmony and compensation for small parties (Elklit, 2008; Matlosa, 2008). Moreover, the absence of a legislative framework governing and overseeing the establishment of party alliances and coalitions during elections proved to destabilise the spirit of the MMP. It defeated its original purpose, especially its compensatory mechanism. In essence, the MMP system was transformed into a parallel model and had been used to distort election results and political party representation in Parliament, which became a highly contested issue after the elections (Kapa, 2013; Matlosa, 2008).

According to Kadima (2015), a ministerial mission noted certain irregularities in the election. First, it was cited that certain political parties had failed to uphold the code of conduct that

governs elections. Secondly, there were irregularities in the reinstatement of LCD ministers who had lost the 2007 elections but were included on the basis that their names also appeared in the NIP party list. For the opposition, this was unethical as it went against the will of the electorate. Finally, the lack of communication among the political leaders was seen to have perpetuated the conflict (Kadima, 2015).

### **2.7.6 The 2012 General Election**

According to Letshele (2018), the outcome of the 2012 election remains a critical factor at the heart of Lesotho's current political crisis. Smith and Flessler (2014) also maintain that the collapse of the coalition which had been in power since 2012 was a critical contributing factor to the occurrence of violence in the Kingdom. Despite the population size of the country, a total of 18 political parties entered the polls in 2012 (IEC Lesotho, 2013). The elections took place under the MMP electoral system where political parties competed for entry into the 120 seats in Parliament. Eighty of these are elected through the first-past-the-post basis at the constituencies, while the remaining forty members are drawn from proportional representation, which in turn is based on party lists (Moseme, 2017).

The election results showed that the ruling Democratic Congress (DC) had garnered 48 seats, 41 from constituencies while the remaining 7 came from proportional representation. This meant that the DC would not be able to form majority government as it was 13 seats short of the required 61 seats required for a majority government. The ABC won 30 seats (26 constituencies and 4 PR). Then LCD followed with 12 constituencies and 14 PR seats, making 26 seats in all (Moseme, 2017). The LCD was followed by the BNP with 5 PR seats. This meant that the 2012 elections failed to produce a single outright winner with enough parliamentary seats (i.e. 61) to form a government on its own (IEC Lesotho, 2013).

After the inconclusive election results of the 2012 elections, the country for the first time, witnessed a hung parliament which brought about the formation of coalition government comprised of three political parties. The newly formed coalition took over the reins of government from the former Prime Minister, PB Mosisili, who had occupied the office of Prime Minister for 14 years. Although the 2012 elections were occasioned by a consensual endorsement of the outcomes by all political parties, the country experienced an unprecedented scenario, where no one party won enough votes to establish a government. This development had no precedent in law to guide the principals on the stewardship of the nation thereafter, generating uncertainties and anxieties across the country (Chirambo, 2013).

As a result, the new government was confronted by numerous challenges, some of which could be said to be of its own making. A case in point is the arrangement between the three parties to divide the government into three fragments. Fundamental among the points of contestations within the coalition was the nature of the executive powers of the Prime Minister (Letshele, 2018). This decision led to a perpetual deadlock in government functioning; with the most severe being the calling off of Parliament and the subsequent attempted *coup*.

## **2.8 Destructive political competition: The Introduction of Coalition governments and fragmented party systems**

Another critical contributing factor to the conflict is Lesotho's destructive political competition among the ruling and opposition parties and the highly fragmented party system, marked by intra-party factionalism and splits (Shale, 2008; Matlosa, 2008). For Matlosa (1999, 2006), the faction-fighting and splits have affected both ruling and opposition parties alike, often destabilising the political system and more importantly undermining democracy and peace in Lesotho. As such, the current political tensions born of a history of conflicting polls in the Mountain Kingdom have been intensified by obstinate intra-party divisions and the subsequent emergence of a delicate tripartite coalition government in the aftermath of the 2012 parliamentary polls (Weisfelder, 2015; Motsamai, 2018). As mentioned earlier, it has become evident that the country's electoral system did not have frameworks to guide or manage coalition governments in the country.

Coalition and alliance are terms that have often been used interchangeably. An alliance can be understood as the joining of forces by at least two political parties before an election to increase their chances of getting votes. On the contrary, a coalition is the joining of forces of at least two political parties working to partner in the national assembly and in government. Coalitions are often encouraged by election outcomes, predominantly when there is no outright winner. Interestingly Lesotho has witnessed both these phenomena in practice in the country's political landscape. For this research, we differentiate between the two for purposes of analysis. An approach is adopted that understands alliances to be those that were generally formed by political parties before the 2007 elections and coalitions as the post-2012 election agreement between the ABC, the LCD and the BNP (Nyane, 2016).

A coalition government led by Thomas Thabane, President of the ABC party had been in power since May 2012. The coalition was made up of the three leading parties: the BNP, LCD and the ABC. At the time of the consummation of the coalition, one commonality existed, a dislike of the outgoing Prime Minister, Pakalitha Mosisili. However, much scepticism arose around

the longevity of the newly formed coalition and these fears were soon to be proven to be correct. In early 2014, corruption charges were laid against Coalition partner, Deputy Prime Minister Metsing, and leader of the LCD. Moreover, divisions became progressively evident in early September 2014. The tensions arose between the ABC, which is also said to receive support from the police, and LCD, which is said to enjoy support from the military (Gida & Selela, 2015). The coalition parties experienced conflict around the distribution of resources within the coalition government. Divisions between the coalition allies have contributed to the breakdown of the security structure, further deepening the hostilities between the military and police.

Faced with the possibility of a parliamentary vote of no-confidence by parties that were able to make up a majority, Thabane reacted by proroguing parliament and denying them the platform to remove him from power constitutionally. Thabane then suspended Parliament to prevent his political adversaries from democratically ousting him. Moreover, his administration continued to arrest and detain the identified corrupt members of the coalition (Rupia, 2016:3). This led to further protest action, particularly against Thabane who wanted to hold on to power at all costs. In efforts to hold on to power, Thabane ordered certain members of the LDF to launch attacks against various police stations, cut off electricity supply in Maseru and, stopped radio stations from airing for several hours, (Monyane, 2009; Letsie, 2018; Pherudi, 2018). Thabane's actions saw many of the Basotho taking to the streets to riot. These strikes resulted in the displacement of many and property damage. It also had devastating effects for the Basotho as many local businesses came to a standstill.

Moreover, the inconclusive 2015 election led to the establishment of an even complicated seven-party coalition government. Within less than two years in office, the seven-party political amalgam started to show cracks effectively paralysing the country's governance system (Nyane, 2016). The 2015 outburst of violent conflict could be traced back to the coalition government formed in 2012. The splits played out within the two dominant parties in the current seven-party coalition government; namely, in the Democratic Congress (DC) the dominant party in the coalition government and the party of the Prime Minister and in the LCD, the second-largest coalition partners, and the party of the Deputy Prime Minister (Nyane, 2016).

### **2.8.1 The 2015 snap election**

The 2015 elections took place on the 28th of February 2015. The elections took place two years earlier than scheduled due to political tensions and security concerns in the Kingdom. Interestingly, the 2015 snap election was also as a result of a failed coalition put in place in the 2012 general election. It can be argued that the current political insecurities, born of a history of troubled polls in the nation-state, have been exacerbated by intractable intra-party fragmentation and the subsequent emergence of a fragile tripartite coalition government in the aftermath of the 2012 parliamentary polls (UNDP Lesotho Evaluation, 2013; Nyane, 2016).

Over 20 political parties participated in the 2015 election. However, the snap election on the 28 February failed to garner an absolute winner as no single party was able to gather the required 61 (out of 120) seats to establish a majority government (Nyane, 2016; Moseme, 2017). The inconclusive 2015 election led to the establishment of Lesotho's second coalition government (The Post, 2018). The DC, LCD and five smaller parties formed a coalition headed by DC's Mosisili. The inconclusive 2015 election results were as follows: The ABC led by Thabane had won 46 seats while Mosisili's DC garnered 47 seats. The LCD, led by Mothetjoa Metsing, collected 12 seats (Noyes, 2015:17). Before this time, Metsing had served as Deputy Prime Minister in the previous coalition but soon ended up in Thabane's bad books after the surfacing of corruption charges. Interestingly, immediately after pledging his commitment to Mosisili in the new coalition government, Metsing was installed to his old post (Noyes, 2015). Collectively, Mosisili's coalition government would have a slim five-seat majority, offering probable leverage power for Metsing and his allies. At the announcement of the coalition, Mosisili maintained that the parties 'have joined forces to form a government that will serve Basotho.' In addition, he asserted that 'the new government's first assignment is to bring normalcy to Lesotho (Noyes, 2015:18)'.

In his book 'Working Towards a Sustainable Democracy', Prasad (2014) indicates that Section 82(1) (b) of the Lesotho Constitution requires the National Assembly to meet no later than 14 days after the date of a general election. This requirement means that the coalition if one is needed to determine which party holds a majority in Parliament, must be completed inside the 14 days. He alludes to the fact that with no doubt, this type of arrangement does not allow enough time to conclude the coalition negotiation process, to create a majority in Parliament. The 2015 results threw the country into yet another challenging period of running and sustaining a coalition government that had no guiding framework. The constitution itself had no provisions for the formation of a coalition government. It only talked about the formation



of a government, and it gave it 14 days after the results of the election have been confirmed. This alone was a major hindrance (Constitute Project, 2016).

It is crucial for the sake of stability and sustainability that political parties be afforded ample time to conduct and conclude negotiations before the establishment of coalition governments (Moseme, 2017). In Lesotho, this is not possible, since, within only 14 days after elections results have come out and are officially confirmed, the King summons the party leader that orders the majority to form a government.

### **2.8.2 2017 elections**

The 2017 general election was heralded the most exciting and promised an upheaval after the coalition that held power since 2015 had disintegrated. This was after Parliament had passed a vote of no confidence on the Mosisili government which had headed a coalition government since a snap election in 2015 that was called to end the country's prolonged power struggles. The Prime Minister at this point would have to choose between two options: resign or request a snap general election. As anticipated, he opted for the latter, and the snap general election was scheduled for the 3rd of June.

## **2.9 Weak governance structures**

At the centre of the majority of conflict situations within the Southern African region in the last decade has been issues of governance (Chigudu, 2019). The pertinent issues include authoritarian rule, electoral impasse, abuse of state power and lack of accountability by governments in a bid to cling on to power and authority (Aeby, 2018:5). This has been witnessed in countries such as the DRC, Zimbabwe and Madagascar that have experienced constitutional crises which have subsequently undermined their own democratic institutions. In countries such as Zimbabwe and Lesotho, the issues have escalated to *coups* (Aeby, 2018:4).

At the core of the Kingdom's multi-faceted conflicts, is the nation's seemingly impossible institutional paralysis that has plagued its post-liberation past. The country has in place governance institutions which are key in guiding various processes. However, due to the predatory nature of the elites in the country, many of these institutions have been rendered weak and dis-functional. Aeby (2018: 5) contends that in Southern Africa, social cleavages, armed insurgencies and governance deficits due to state resource abuse and dictatorial rule all endanger peace and stability. The institutional crisis in Lesotho is consequent on hostile, power scuffles among the top politicians, which is considered synonymous with a fight for survival

considering the important role played by the state in economic advancement (Matlosa, 1999). A case in point would be the Parliament and the judiciary in Lesotho which have been so ineffectual that they have been reduced to secondary institutions answerable for all intents and purposes to the executive. It seems the country has a long path ahead towards understanding that power has to be dispersed and diluted to ensure that it does not crush the citizenry.

Corruption, like in many African countries, is a matter of concern in Lesotho, both in the public and private sectors. Corruption has mainly been seen in the lack of liability and consequence management. Corruption and the misuse of public resources in the nation-state have also been cited as two of the explanations for political tensions and outbursts of uprisings in the Kingdom (Mokotso, 2019). Matlosa captures it in this way: “the political elite perceive state power as the crucial instrument for economic accumulation and the contestation for this power turns into a zero-sum game and more often than not becomes an end in itself and in the process national development suffers (1999:1) sic”. In light of the above, civil society generally believes that the country is more than capable of taking care of its people. However, it seems the country has opted to invest its financial resources elsewhere. A case in point is the country’s budget where the military is often given a healthy chunk of the overall budget (Letsie, 2018). In a country like Lesotho undergoing financial constraints, coupled with political instability economic crisis fed mainly by corruption is a given. Notably, while the country has a wide variety of agencies devoted to the fight against corruption, their functionality has remained questionable, primarily due to limitations on their mandates and also the reality of limited action because of resource constraints (APRM, 2012).

### **2.10 Key players in the Lesotho conflict: An interrelated tri-dimensional conflict**

It can be argued that the Lesotho conflict generally has its foundation embedded in key relationships between three critical players in the country, the Military, politicians/government, and the monarchy. This is in line with Effendi’s (2010:84) definition of conflict which speaks to the opposing interests, principles, ideals, incompatible goals by different groups and disputes between individuals within the state often over scarce resources (political power opens economic doors). Similarly, Wallensteen (2002:16) considers, conflict as “a social state of affairs where at least two parties simultaneously endeavour to attain the available yet scarce resources.” This view precisely describes the situation in Lesotho.

### **2.10.1 Security sector involvement**

Numerous studies have considered the security sector's undue involvement in the state as a critical contributor to the country's political instability (Moremoholo, 2005; Makoa, 2009; Letsie 2018; Chigudu, 2019). Mahao (1997), Makoa (1996), Mothibe (1999) and Matlosa (1995) offer comprehensive perceptions into military interference in politics. They also focus on the army's refusal to cooperate with the democratically elected governments and finally draw our attention to the reality of weak civil-military relations in the country. For example, Smith and Flessler (2014) in their study argue that the engrained alliances between political parties and coalitions with branches of the security forces have exacerbated hostilities in Lesotho. On the same breath, a study conducted by Giessmann (2017:20), reiterates the point that the strong involvement of the national military and police force in politics has added to the political strains and has contributed to escalating tensions after the elections, particularly in 2012 and 2015.

Letsie (2018), in his study, puts forth the argument that since its establishment in 1979, the army has contributed in various ways to perpetuating this violence. Moreover, he highlights the exorbitant budget amounts allocated to the Ministry of Defence and National Security, with over 80 per cent of this allocation going to the army. The study highlights the questionability of this reality, considering Lesotho's size and geographical location. As a solution, Letsie (2018) offers demilitarisation as the most viable option for CT in Lesotho. In light of this, the author stresses the importance of a detailed plan of execution before implementing the demilitarisation process.

### **2.10.2 A deadly coalition: the militarised politics and the politicised military**

Another critical factor driving the political crisis in Lesotho is the militarisation of politics and the politicisation of the army upon which a culture of violence, mischief, and exemption is anchored. Paul Collier reminds us that: "political violence is both a curse in itself and an obstacle to accountable and legitimate government" (Matlosa, 2017:3). The argument here is that it is a curse due to its intrinsic destructive nature and an obstacle because where power is attained through violent means, it often goes hand in hand with a dangerous assumption that government is in place to rule rather than to serve the needs of its people (Matlosa, 2017).

In normal situations, the military intervenes in politics to uphold peace and security in the country. However, in countries where democratic rule is not practised, the military gets involved in politics to protect the interests of authoritarian regimes. In efforts to keep their

governments in power, dictatorial regimes form alliances with the military and divert its attention from overthrowing the government. This was evident in the former Zaire, where Mobutu Sese Seko used the military in the country to remain in power (Wrong, 2000).

In the context of Lesotho, the military as an institution of state has been at the centre of controversy from the onset, which speaks directly to the concept of civil-military relations (CMR). The concept of CMR can be understood as a relationship between the national military organisation and the civil authority (government) within a given society (Pherudi, 2018). In Lesotho, the boundary between government and the military has been an unclear and a curious one. At the dawn of independence, and through the post-independence era, candidates already viewed the military as a potential instrument that could be utilised against opponents (Pherudi, 2018). The participation of the military in the politics of Lesotho may be traced as far back as 1970 when the military establishment became a source of instability due to its politicisation by the BNP (Moremoholo, 2005:4). To date, the LDF remains highly politicised, a term the study refers to as the 'politicisation of the military'. For Matlosa and Pule (2006), the period 1965 and 1970 can be understood as the only period of relative stability in relations between the government and the army.

Moreover, it was also this period of relative calm that laid a concrete foundation for future instability through patronage and politicisation of the armed forces (Pherudi, 2018). The politicisation of the military has contributed immensely to the instability in the Mountain Kingdom. As such, the SADC and the government in Lesotho have been in discussions in attempts to find the most suitable methods of professionalising the army. According to Leeman (1985), the very first post-independence ruling party, the BNP, set a precedent that would have dire consequences on the country for decades to come when it relied on the army to remain in power. It can be said that the BNP roped in the military in efforts to consolidate its government. A parallel opinion is also expressed by Sixishe (1984), who argues that it was the same army that was utilised to intimidate any person opposing the BNP. This was after the BNP declined to transfer power to the BCP. In retaliation, the BCP acted and launched public campaigns against the BNP government. In response, the BNP banned the BCP from holding political gatherings. Despite this, the BCP continued to question the legitimacy of the BNP.

It can be said that the year 1970 marked the beginning of many troublesome years to come for the Mountain Kingdom, as the BNP roped in the military, shaping the institution to serve its own political agendas. This was when the military which was inherited from the colonial

government was transformed into the Police Mobile Unit (PMU). Supported by various players such as the British and Apartheid South African government, the PMU gained much ammunition machinery and airplanes equipped with military strength, to maintain the BNP in power. In spite of the coercive measures utilised by the PMU to halt the BCP from holding political rallies, the BCP did not retreat from challenging the BNP. Instead, in 1974, the BCP militants attempted to overthrow the BNP government. This resulted in many deaths of BCP supporters, further proving that the involvement of the military in politics was deepening authoritarianism in Lesotho.

The period post the attempted *coup* also saw a lot of organisational change in the military. This was as a result of the recruitment of mainly BNP supporters via political recommendation (Moremoholo, 2005:44). Before this time, recruitment and promotion were based on merit; however, this changed significantly with the politicisation of the recruitment process. The political patronage was now also tainted by nepotism and corruption. Furthermore, this meant that those that had benefitted from the poor recruitment and promotion were now indebted to certain individuals within the army and of course, certain factions of the government. While the ramifications of the appointment of unqualified personnel did not show immediately, the impact would show later in the life of the military. In fact, by this time, the military was aware of its power and influence, particularly as kingmakers in the Lesotho political landscape.

In 1979, the BCP formed the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) in its efforts to come against the BNP government (Moremoholo, 2005:45). In response, the BNP also needed to put in place measures to monitor the BCP and its newly formed LLA (Rupia, 2005). As such, in 1980, the PMU was transformed into a fully-fledged military wing known as the Lesotho Parliamentary Force (LPF). This would mean the military had increased strength to maintain the BNP in power. Moreover, in the same year, the Mountain Kingdom established diplomatic relations with the Eastern bloc. This saw the country receiving much military support from strong military countries such as Russia, North Korea, Cuba, and China (Moremoholo, 2005; Monyane, 2009).

This move, however, would have dire consequences for the established SA-Lesotho relationship. More importantly, it would prove to have even worse effects for the BNP/ military alliance that had existed since 1970 (Matlosa and Pule, 2003). Before this time, the ties between the two countries had been cordial with various political, economic and even social relations. However, this changed in 1980 when SA turned towards the LLA, seeing to the formation's

military needs. While the LLA questioned the legitimacy of the National Party (NP) government and its policies in SA, aligning with the SA government seemed like the only hope for the BCP if it was ever to regain power in Lesotho. As such, the LLA became a critical tool for the SA government in efforts to undermine the BNP government in Lesotho. The endorsement of the LLA and support by the SA government exerted pressure on the BNP government.

The scuffles between the highly equipped LLA and the military are said to have resulted in the deaths of many soldiers and civilians in Lesotho (Mothibe, 1999). Eventually, the military decided to withdraw from being actively involved in the politics of the country. This decision is said to have influenced the decision to stage a military *coup de tat* in 1986 which provides a clear example of how the politicisation of the military has contributed to political instability in the country (Moremoholo, 2005; Kadima, 2015). The success of the military *coup* was attributed to a number of factors. To begin with, the military itself had become increasingly divided into two factions. On the one hand, was a faction led by Major General Metsing Lekhanya committed to protecting the interests of certain politicians at the expense of their own lives and the will of the majority. On the other hand, was the faction led by Colonel Sehlabo Sehlabo mainly loyalists of the BNP who no longer wanted to be part of protecting the interests of politicians in Lesotho and instead wanted to establish a military government in the country (Moremoholo, 2005; Monyane, 2005; Letsie, 2009). Another vital factor that contributed to the success of the *coup* can be attributed to Jonathan's trip to the Eastern Bloc. This visit raised serious concerns with the military establishment due to their fear of communism. This was the main reason for their aggression against the LLA, which was believed to be anchored on communist ideology.

Another critical factor was the reshuffling of cabinet ministers which saw all ministers who had shown to be unsettled concerning the decision to forge relations with the Eastern bloc left out in the cold. Moreover, the BNP moved towards the militarisation of the Youth League while the Eastern bloc ensured the League formation was heavily armed, in fact, far more than the military itself (Moremoholo, 2005). Moreover, the BNP government organised for the league to receive training from Korean military experts with others being trained as commandos at Kao (Matlosa and Pule, 2006; Pheko, 2017). Furthermore, graduates were recruited as cadet officers into the military. These changes would be linked back to a system used in the Eastern bloc where a people's militia was established. Members of the youth who had been recruited to the military enjoyed rapid and unusual promotions, often by-passing the

senior officers of the army. As such, the members of the Youth League and Sehlabo's loyalists dominated the military, often side-lining many of the soldiers who had been in office for longer periods. Sehlabo's rapid promotion caused chaos within the LDF, and many started to question the legitimacy of the BNP.

The military viewed this move as making way for a BNP one-party state with a militant and armed youth. This grouping was primarily made up of middle-aged and elderly BNP loyalists, known as the reserve army. The reserve army received weaponry similar to that given to the military. The issues within the military got to a point where they could no longer be ignored by the leadership of the army. As such, various meetings were held in efforts to remedy the situation; eventually, there was a suggestion to overthrow the BNP government by staging a military *coup*. The *coup* was led by Colonel Sekhobe Letsie, Thaabe Letsie (close relatives of King Moshoeshoe II/ the Letsie brothers) and Colonel Nkhahle Tsotetsi. However, it must be mentioned that the *coup* planning process met many challenges (Moremoholo, 2005).

During the authoritarian period in Lesotho, the military had become a key player contributing to political instability. A case in point is the Prime Minister's decision to remove Lieutenant General Tlali Kamoli as head of the army with his supporter, this sparked instability in Lesotho (Smith and Flessner, 2014). On this, Moremoholo (2005) notes that the bond of friendship between the BNP government and the army in Lesotho can be said to have been sustained through increased military technology, inflated salaries, fringe benefits, and allowances. It seems the BNP has always been concerned with the manifestation of violent conflict in post-colonial Lesotho. Nonetheless, the tables were turned when the BNP came out top winning the election against the BCP. This period saw a sudden change of views; the BNP at this point was in support of the military being under the control of the Prime Minister as opposed to the King. Conversely, the BCP was also rooting for King Moshoeshoe to take over control of the military mainly since it viewed this gap as an opportunity for it to have access to the military.

The outcomes of the elections had produced exciting findings: the BNP was astounded by its victory at the polls, whereas the BCP had also not foreseen losing the polls. It seems the surprise election results had opened up a can of worms and fuelled treachery among the politicians. This saw both parties wanting to align themselves with the army at all costs. This reiterates the role of the security forces in the country's political landscape. Consequently, those who had not won the allegiance of the military saw themselves turning to the police for backup. This somewhat explains the army-police tensions in Lesotho. It is such practices that undermine

core political bases such as ideology which inform the formation of political parties to the marginal status of the control of the army (Benyera, 2017).

The year 1986, saw a turning point in the political history of the country as it witnessed the BNP single-party rule toppled by the military. In 1990, Lekhanya himself was toppled by fellow junior officers within the military ranks who were led by Colonel Phisoane Ramaema. The suppressive politics introduced by the BNP were now being substituted by barrel and gun politics, further consolidating the authoritarian rule between 1986 and 1993 (Matlosa, 2006). Throughout the period of military rule, all political activity was suspended. This is captured by Mofuoa (2005:8) who writes; the military government issued Order No 4 of 1996, which banned all forms of political activity in Lesotho. There was a general suspicion on the part of the military towards public gatherings which it generally frowned upon. Despite the ban on political activity, the military régime eventually paved the way to the civilian rule in 1993. Matlosa (2011) affirms that the military abandoned power and went back to its quarters in the early 1990s.

### **2.10.3 Scuffles between the monarchy and the government**

The monarchy in Lesotho is seen as a representation of unity and harmony of Basotho. However, the monarchy has been at the centre of controversies, political violence, social unrest, and instability in Lesotho (Monyane, 2009; Letsie, 2018). It can be realised that since independence from Britain in 1960, Lesotho has experienced intermittent conflict between the monarchy and the Government. Similar to many of the politicians, the King has often been seen as another contestant for power in the Mountain Kingdom. The changing of power from the hands of the people to the King meant that power had shifted. Benyera (2017:58) captures these changes as follows “(1) the constitutional provision which renders the monarch ceremonial, (2) the monarch’s move towards political involvement and forming alliances with various military factions, (3) the Basotho’s displeasure with the King who is considered by some as an extension of the colonial agenda.”

In his study, Kabemba (2003), puts forth the argument that the interference by the monarchy has contributed to the political volatility in the nation-state. This point is espoused by Mokotso (2019) when he argues: between 1965 and 1966; King Moshoeshoe II was already leading a civil disobedience campaign aimed at unseating the legitimate democratic government. Consequently, the King incited the people to resist the newly democratic government, which he believed reduced him to a ‘ghost’ king.



While the Basotho King, as Head of State, is intended only to possess ceremonial powers, the monarchy in Lesotho remains prominent among the ordinary citizens, and it is this historical legitimacy that has further encouraged royal intervention in the politics of the country. Also, the King has a duty to promote unity among the Basotho people. However, in most instances, the King has often been at the centre of political squabbles in the country. For instance, in 1994 when King Letsie III took a decision to dissolve Parliament and further went on to hand-pick specific individuals into government. The King was also at the centre of controversy in 1998 when the MFP, BNP, and BCP requested him to dissolve Parliament; however, the MFP was unsuccessfully in its request.

The King's failure to act as requested by various opposition parties culminated in a violent uprising in the country, which saw a complete paralysis of government activity. Consequently, security forces declined to intervene, citing their non-involvement in political matters. As such, the situation deteriorated to the point of collapse of law and order (Bukae, 2012). This was when the Prime Minister turned to the South African government requesting an intervention. King Moshoeshoe II was also at the centre of the controversy and a key player in the second *coup* that took place in January 1986 where the King in collaboration with a faction of the army took over state power (Benyera, 2017). This was followed by an installation of the King by the army as the country's leader. The King would rule with the assistance of a military council made up of six officials (Matlosa and Pule, 2001).

Moreover, the King sealed the deal by issuing Lesotho Order (No. 2) of 1986, which bestowed all administrative powers on himself. In addition, he banned all forms of political activity in the country. The King would also be part of the third *coup* that took place in February 1990. This was after a power tug of war between the monarch and military alliances; the scuffles saw the King Moshoeshoe II being exiled in Sweden. Furthermore, the King was also party to the *coup* that took place in August 1994. King Letsie III staged a *coup* supported by a faction of the army in efforts to oust Ntsu Mokhehle who had been democratically elected. In January 1995, King Moshoeshoe II was restored to power by the military. The three-year peaceful period eventually came to an end in September 1998 because of an army mutiny instigated by subordinate officers. In September 2014, the country experienced another *coup* targeted at ousting the then-Prime Minister Thabane. The constant *coups* in the country draw attention to the question of the monarchy's role in the Kingdoms' political landscape.

It is worth noting that a stable monarch controlled by Britain would be in the best interest of the British. This would seem like the classic *modus operandi* of the colonial masters, mainly divide and rule. For Benyera (2017), the only differentiation that came with independence was that Lesotho would now be under the control of natives who themselves were also under the influence of the more powerful neighbour, South Africa. For Monyane (2009), the monarch from the time of independence remained an extension of the British colonial project in Lesotho. It seems the political system offered at independence would also be attractive for the political elite in the country. To begin with, the system would allow the political elite to have access to the monarchy. Moreover, the monarchy with only ceremonial powers often turns to factions of the military or political elite for allegiance. As such, it can be said that the relationship between the King and the security establishment in the Kingdom is one of legitimisation, de-legitimisation, and re-legitimisation which have been central to the attempted and successful *coups* in the country (Benyera, 2017: 59).

### **2.11 Incompatible Traditional system and Westminster system**

The views explored above also point to the fact that the Westminster model of a constitutional monarchy system as introduced by Britain was foreign and did not resonate with the Basotho. Instead, the system has been able to lay a strong foundation for the emergence of political and military cliques. For the British style monarch system, the King is the head of state but abstains from political involvement. Moreover, the Prime Minister is the head of government with executive authority (Benyera, 2017).

The country's colonial past gave rise to a marriage between unmatched and polarised governance structures. The contradictions between the two systems have been evidenced by incompatibilities between the crucial divisions between the two heads. For example, the King has on occasions exercised executive powers which the Prime Minister has been opposed to. In light of the conflicting Westminster system and the traditional system in Lesotho, the adage that 'two bulls cannot rule in the same kraal' proves true for the current system of government for the Mountain Kingdom. It would seem from existing literature that the issue has not been explored enough as a critical factor in the recurring conflict. The conflict between the two systems can be seen as a critical foundation for the problems that beset the country today. For example, Moyo (2018), in his study, considers the Western democratic system as one that is incompatible with the Lesotho traditional systems. Moreover, he goes on to argue that Westminster governance was somewhat forced on the traditional governance system and has proven to be compatible with the prevailing conventional political system.

## **2.12 Summary**

Lesotho's history of political instability can be ascribed to many sources that are associated with its feeble economy. Moreover, the country's weak governance institutions have further limited the government's ability to attend to public concerns. The existent 'struggle for power' is combined with the reality of an administration that is required to bring socio-economic advancement in a country whose populace lives in impoverished circumstances (Matlosa, 1999:176). Moreover, it is evident that the imposition of the FPTP electoral arrangement in a homogenous nation with minimal ward disparities was in no way beneficial for the country. Instead, the use of the electoral model culminated in the takeover of Parliament by one party. The limitation of opposition parties in Parliament undermines democratic consolidation. The security sector has also been caught up in power struggles and often used as an instrument in political competitions (Matlosa & Pule, 2001:63). Furthermore, the country adopted the Westminster British electoral system without considering the unique context and complexities of the country.

Whereas a plethora of factors has propelled Lesotho's current crisis, this chapter explored some literature that seeks to understand the fundamental dynamics that have been at the core of the recurring conflict in the Kingdom. Moreover, the study identifies a gap in the sense that the studies explored fail to treat the conflict as one that is recurring which requires a well thought out solution if the conflict is to be transformed and this is the gap the study aims to fill. The various studies and the analysis assist us in having a clearer grasp and understanding of the core conflict issues riveting the Mountain Kingdom. However, their general weakness lies in their failure to provide an interrelated analysis which provides a pre-requisite towards a strategic focus inclusive of CT approaches.

A credible elucidation of the Lesotho conflict is the one that perceives it as a multi-dimensional conflict but also goes further in not only addressing these causal factors as independent and stand-alone factors but rather as intertwined and interdependent factors (Matlosa, 1999). This line of thinking in conflict analysis allows practitioners also to consider cross-cutting solutions that can allow for the process of conflict transformation to unfold. Accordingly, reasonable conflict analysis can be utilised to ensure the installation of a stable and inclusive process of long-term CT, which forms the basis for positive, sustainable peace and eventually democratic consolidation and development of the sub-region.

In light of the review of literature above, it is evident that conflicts and particularly the Lesotho conflict consist of interrelated facets of social, cultural, political and economic experience which do not appear in separate compartments. Considering this interconnectedness of conflict issues, regional approaches must be inclusive and take into consideration the already existing dynamics that contribute to a conflict characterised by inter-sectorial linkages. The next chapter will consider the literature around SADC capacity and its track record in relation to conflict transformation.

## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW: SADC CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION CAPACITY AND INTERVENTIONS TOWARDS ENDING THE RECURRING CONFLICT IN LESOTHO

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a literature review of the SADC's capacity and its track record in conflict transformation. The literature on SADC and its role in conflict management and conflict resolution is plentiful. The literature often displays the effort of SADC in conflict management and conflict resolution. Still, very few studies make mention of conflict transformation as a long-term solution to the recurring conflict. There are still numerous issues relating to CT, which the existing literature appears to be alienating. As such, the effort in this chapter is to highlight some of these issues, particularly in relation to the capacity to carry out CT.

The chapter begins with a rationale for the regionalisation of peace and security. It tracks the evolution from the then SADCC into the present-day SADC with an expanded mandate, institutions and operations. Specifically, the chapter explores the structures that the institution has been able to set up to support conflict transformation efforts in the sub-region and specifically in Lesotho. In this regard, the chapter investigates the historical roots of the SADC forerunner and how these impacted the formation of the SADC, its organisational structures, goals and potential for conflict transformation today. This is followed by a section which assesses the SADC's conflict transformation capacity. Moreover, it provides a review of the existing literature on SADC's track record in its peace and security efforts. The second part of the chapter focuses on regional interventions by highlighting SADC's conflict transformation efforts in Lesotho. The chapter also explores SADC's merits and hurdles faced by the regional body in conflict transformation. The point is to highlight the prominent arguments made in the available literature and to identify and cross-examine intrinsic gaps in some of these studies.

#### 3.2 The regionalisation of peace and security

The unnerving encounters of post-conflict rebuilding facing the majority of African states recuperating from violent conflicts is the risk of conflict relapse (Koko, 2009). This trend has been observed in several African countries, including Lesotho, Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and the DRC (Koko, 2009; Bowd and Chikwanha, 2010; Gounden, 2012). As such, the role of regional organisations in Africa has never before been as important as it currently stands. Over the last two decades, the conflicts on the continent have proved to be a

critical test for the regional organisation's peace support efforts and the frameworks applied in these interventions.

African regional organisations have taken on a more significant role in conflict management since the end of the Cold War, thus bringing increased global attention to the methodologies utilised by these REC's (Alao, 2000). In the context of Africa, the approach of leaning towards REC's in taking a leading role finds its basis on the term 'African solutions for African problems' (Mazrui 1967:12). This is primarily influenced by the reality that the solutions offered by external players have failed to bring about an enduring solution in the post-colonial African context. Moreover, some scholars have argued that recurring conflicts in countries such as the DRC have become profitable for armaments industries, particularly from the west (Rugeje, 2016).

While the obligation of upholding universal peace and security resides with the UNSC as stipulated in Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, Annan (1998:3) notes that the UN lacks the capacity, funds and proficiency to attend to all conflicts on the continent. As such, regional organisations have had to develop and somewhat transform themselves to act as alternatives to the AU and UN in the management, resolution, and broader transformation of conflict within their respective regions. Likewise, Needling (2002:2) mentions that "African REC's have acknowledged the need to ensure the upkeep of peace and security within their respective regions as one of the methods of guaranteeing economic advancement." African REC's have heeded the call and have taken up the task to ensure peace and stability and have emerged as respondents in conflicts in their respective regions. Moreover, the complication brought by security challenges in the post-Cold War era necessitates increased cooperation and coordination among states within a region (Adetula, 2014).

In light of the above, the reinforcement of REC's is increasingly becoming an essential feature of the post-Cold War system. Regional organisations as institutions have gained increased prominence in modern-day international relations. For Moyo (2018), it can be argued that interventions by REC's in intra-conflicts (conflicts within a state) can be categorised under what Boutros Ghali (1992:14) terms 'regional arrangements' which are provided for in the UN Charter. As such, the SADC Treaty (Article 5) makes provision for the advancement and protection of peace and security in the sub-region as one of SADC's objectives (SADC Treaty, 1992). In this regard, the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS) and the Troika can be understood as critical institutional apparatuses for addressing peace and security matters in the SADC sub-region.

Various authors have posited reasons for the preference of REC's to lead conflict transformation activities in their respective member states. Firstly, sub-regional organisations are formed by players and non-players in the conflict. As a result, as Ancas (2011) notes, REC's have various advantages including proximity, familiarity with conflict issues and finally, a sense of balance that allows them to diagnose the root causes of the conflict politically. Khadiagala (2007) argues that a clear advantage is the REC's ability to manage the situation promptly before it escalates to an intractable global issue. Ancas (2011), posits that the close terrestrial proximity can ensure speedy and less costly responses to violent conflict than would be incurred by international bodies such as the UN. Moore (1987), reinforces this view and observes that regional organisations may be more effective at mediating disputes primarily due to their common interests that make their actions timelier and more useful.

Another reason put forth is that REC's are often more knowledgeable on matters of peace and security in their region than international organisations. This is mainly attributed to cultural similarities which often places REC's at an advantage as they have a grasp of key conflict dynamics and the main actors in the conflict. As such, they are better positioned to come up with transformation options which are suitable for that specific context. Moreover, political and geographical proximity already implies consequences for the REC's as they often are affected by a given conflict, and, as a result, they can easily seek support from extra-regional sources to end the dispute. For Ancas (2011), it is in the interest of sub-regional organisations to create peace and security in their regions as adverse effects such as cross-border refugee flow directly impacts on member states.

Moreover, Wehr and Lederach (1991) maintain the view that mediators who are near the disputing parties are more likely to encourage trust-based mediation, which can contribute to reaching a binding and lasting agreement towards long-term transformation of the conflict situation. Francis (2006), observes that proximity and flexibility should, in principle, suggest swifter action and if necessary the quick deployment of peacekeeping forces. REC's and member states are often forthcoming to offer themselves as guarantors of the peace agreements and to support the execution of the peace agreement (Euka & Nwagbo, 2016).

Also, Garnet and Schnabel, (2004) observe that there is often the possibility that belligerent parties are keen to manage disputes at a regional level instead of the international level in platforms such as the UN. The logic behind this is that actors in conflict often have a sense of community and may favour the involvement of less invasive third-parties. Likewise, some

countries might frown upon outsider involvement and international organisations in efforts to safeguard their state sovereignty and to avoid political influence in internal affairs. Alunga (2014) posits that this was illustrated in the Sudan case where the President outrightly refused to allow UN troops to replace the AU force.

### **3.3 Formation, principles, objectives, memberships and institutions of SADC**

#### **3.3.1 The genesis of SADC**

An evaluation of the SADC's conflict transformation capacity can only be appreciated against the historical backdrop of the organisation's changes beginning with the shift from a coordinating conference to a development community. The formation of SADC has mainly been informed by the developments in the global arena and the realities of the sub-region. The SADC was formed in 1992 as a result of a transformational fusion of the Frontline States (FLS) and the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC). The FLS and the SADCC were established in the 1970s and 1980s, respectively, with a primary focus on security cooperation and socio-economic development (Hull and Derblon, 2009:7). At its inception, the FLS was an informal political grouping initially formed by Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia, Lesotho, Botswana and later (1980) Zimbabwe. The focal motivation behind the formation of the FLS was to support the political liberation of the Southern African region from colonial rule and to oppose the increasing regional dependence on the then PW Botha National Party government in SA (Hull and Derblon, 2009:7; Dzierczyk, 2013). Consequently, the Front-Line States had made meaningful contributions to political liberation by providing support to many liberation movements within the Southern African region (Swart & Du Plessis, 2004:30-31).

However, various challenges threatened the existence of the FLS, to begin with, the institution lacked legal personality deeming it an unofficial organisation (Kapinga, 2015). Secondly, its focus was mainly on political liberation. As a result, the attainment of independence by many of its founding countries deemed the formation irrelevant. Moreover, upon the achievement of autonomy, the region was now faced with different challenges such as poverty; diseases; and social inequality, requiring it to focus on a socio-economic agenda. Eventually, the FLS was disbanded, and the SADCC was changed into SADC in 1992 (Burgess, 2009:2).

SADCC's primary objectives at its initiation were to minimise economic dependence, particularly on the then apartheid SA; encourage regional integration and to promote resource



mobilization in the region. Moreover, the formation sought to advance and encourage regional collaboration through initiatives which involved affiliate members in developmental projects such as transport and telecommunications. As such, the primary purpose of the SADCC was not only limited to countering South Africa's economic might but also aimed to work towards equitable regional integration; to raise funding for policy implementation; and promote international co-operation in the quest for economic liberation of member states (Dzietyczk, 2013).

Unlike the former SADCC, SADC was intended to intensify economic cooperation and to find methods to address socio-economic, political and security needs in the sub-region. As such, the sub-regional body adopted the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) in 2003 and the Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ (SIPO) in 2004 to achieve its task. These plans will be discussed further later in the chapter under section 3.4.9.

### **3.3.2 Principles and objectives of SADC**

The SADC conference of 1992 hosted in Botswana held under the theme: "SADCC: Towards Economic Integration" produced two key documents that have contributed to the evolution of the organisation. These are the Declaration of Heads of States and the SADC Treaty. The Declaration, "Towards the Southern Africa Development Community" called upon all member states to develop a vision of a mutually beneficial future for the region (SADC Declaration, 1992). As such, SADC was established as a legal organisation with the capacity and authority to contract, attain, own or dispose of movable or immovable property and to sue and be sued (SADC 1992: Article 3). The Treaty bestows upon SADC objectives, principles, structure, functions and power of execution. The policies and objectives of SADC have been said to be ambitious and rather wide-ranging compared to its forerunner SADCC.

For Ndlovu (2013:54), SADC's vision is to shape a developed, flourishing and secure community through regional integration, with a specific focus on a shared future. Expressly, the objectives of SADC as stipulated in Article 5(I) of the SADC treaty are to: "Achieve development and economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the people of Southern Africa and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration;

- evolve common political values, systems and institutions;
- promote and defend peace and security;

- promote self-sustaining development on the basis of collective self-reliance and the interdependence of member states;
- achieve complementarity between national and regional strategies and programmes;
- promote and maximise productive employment and utilisation of resources of the region;
- achieve sustainable utilisation of natural resources and effective protection of the environment; and strengthen and consolidate the long-standing historical, social and cultural affinities and links among the people of the region”.

The argument put forth by the REC is that this vision can be attained through improved regional integration guided by the principles mentioned above. As such, it seems evident that the body has diverse objectives. Still, it seems that there is greater weight placed on the political and security agenda today than on the economic goals. The view presented above further strengthens the case for a conflict transformation framework in the sub-region.

Article 4 of the SADC Treaty (1992) puts forth values for SADC nation-states. These are as follows:

- Sovereign equality of all member states;
- solidarity, peace and security;
- human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
- equity, balance and mutual benefit; and
- peaceful settlement of disputes

### **3.3.3 SADC policy framework which supports conflict transformation**

#### **3.3.3.1 The 1992 SADC Treaty**

The SADC Treaty of 1992 reaffirms the region’s commitment to the establishment of a robust territorial security collective through the rule of law which reinforces the principle of constitutionalism. As such, the Treaty has generally been accepted as a document that has changed the legal character of the organisation and provides a guiding framework for maintaining peace and security in the sub-region. The Treaty is hailed as one of the structures developed to institute reconciliation and protection in the region.

Moreover, the Treaty requires each member state to put in place a protocol on collaboration in the area of politics, diplomacy, international relations, peace and security (Mabaleng, 2012). The Treaty requires all member states to partake and put in place the body’s protocols (Desmidt

and Hauk2017). The SADC Treaty of 1992 was amended in 2001 after the end of the Cold War and apartheid policy in SA. The amendments resulted in changes in the structures, policies and procedures of SADC. A noticeable difference was the institutionalisation of political and security cooperation in the Organ on Politics, Defence, Security and Cooperation (OPDSC) (Isaksen and Tjonneland, 2001). Despite this, the amended Treaty placed minimal emphasis on internal political issues like democracy and governance. In light of the re-organisation, the SADC Treaty had to be amended to factor in institutional changes that had been made within the organisation.

### **3.3.3.2 SADC Protocol on politics, defence and security**

A key document guiding conflict transformation efforts in the sub-region is the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security which was approved by the 2001 SADC Summit in Windhoek. The Protocol provides for the objectives, structures, functions and procedures of the Organ. As stipulated in article 2 (1) “the general objective of the Organ is to promote peace and security in the region.” It is important to note that the protocol provides specific responsibilities, jurisdiction and approaches for the Organ related to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts (Article 11). As such, the Organ deals explicitly with peace and security issues. The protocol also confers authority on the Organ to intervene in cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing, gross violations of human rights, military *coups*, civil war, insurgency, and any other conflict situation that threatens stability and security in the region (Article 11).

Moreover, the Protocol gives the Organ a mandate to attend to issues of cooperation, defence, crime prevention, and intelligence in SADC member states (Nyakudya, 2013:42). In this regard, the code of behavior mandates the organ to transform conflicts through peaceful methods. The protocol maintains that peace can be achieved through the use of “preventive diplomacy, negotiations, conciliation, mediation, good offices, arbitration and adjudication by the international tribunal (Article. 11(3a).” The Organ is only permitted to consider the use of force as a final course of action when available remedies are unsuccessful. This mandate justifies the role of the Organ in trying to transform persistent conflict in the Kingdom. Furthermore, in efforts to ensure the functionality of the Protocol, the SADC formulated the Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ (SIPO), which sets out guidelines and strategies for the execution of the Protocol. Moreover, the SADC established the Mutual Defense Pact (MDP) in order to operationalise the Organ.

### **3.3.3.3 The Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO)**

The SIPO is a broad five-year proposal outlining possible approaches for the execution of the objectives stated in the Protocol (Mabaleng, 2012). In 2002, the summit tasked the OPDSC to prepare a document that underlines the strategies and activities for the Organ (SADC Communiqué, 2003). The fundamental objective of the SIPO is to create a peaceful and stable political and security environment within the region (SADC Communiqué, 2003). However, as captured by Mabaleng (2012) SIPO did not have a proper yardstick for monitoring and evaluation and focused on too many priority areas. As such, the document was reduced to a ‘wish list’ as it further lacked a detailed plan for its execution. In other words, this shortcoming can be said to be the sole reason behind the dysfunctionality of the first SIPO.

Taking into cognisance the limitations presented by the original SIPO document, a draft SIPO II document was accepted at the SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government in 2003. The final document would later be approved in August 2010, replacing the original SIPO (Mabaleng, 2012). The SIPO II was formally launched in November 2012. It places emphasis on the promotion of democracy, respect for human rights and conflict prevention. While there have been many criticisms against the document particularly around it being too ambitious, other scholars have praised the SIPO for its contributions in making the Organ operational. According to Van Nieuwkerk (2013: 10), the regional organisation can be said to have reaped some tangible results such as the establishment of the Mutual Defence Pact, the positive inauguration of the SADC Standby Force, converting the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization’s (SARPCCO) into the Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISDSC). Moreover, the document was also able to ensure the formation of the Regional Early Warning Center (REWC) and the SADC Electoral Advisory Council.

### **3.3.3.4 SADC Mutual Defense Pact (MDP)**

The Mutual Defense pact was signed in Tanzania in 2003 by the SADC Heads of State and Government. Its origins can be traced to two contentious joint military interventions in Lesotho and DRC (Mabaleng, 2012). The Pact assists in ensuring the operation of the Organ in the domain of defence and security matters (SADC, 2003). The Pact also makes provision for joint action in response to a military attack.

Moreover, it sketches the steps to be followed in response to an attack on a member state. The provisions of Article 6 (1) state that [a]n armed attack against a member state shall be taken as a threat to regional security and shall be met with instant joint action by all member states. Furthermore, the Pact states that such action must be mandated by the Summit on the recommendation of the Organ (Article 6 (2)). Also, Article 6 provides that “any such armed attack, and measures taken in response to it, shall immediately be reported to the Peace and Security Council of the AU and the Security Council of the UN for proper authorisation (Article 6 (3)).” The beauty of the Pact is that it contains the necessary makings of a classic mutual defence pact while concurrently bearing fundamentals of a peaceful treaty to build regional confidence-building measures for SADC (Solomon, 2016).

### **3.3.3.5 The Troika system**

The running of SADC institutions is implemented through the Troika system which is applicable to the Summit; the Organ; the Council, the Integrated Committee of Ministers (ICM) and the Standing Committee of Officials (SCO). The trio can be best understood as the coordinator and the steering committee for the organisation and is constituted by the chairperson, incoming chair and outgoing chairperson (Article 9 (a) (2)). The system gives the trio authoritative power to make swift decisions on behalf of the entire institution when the need arises. These are decisions that are in typical situations taken at scheduled policy meetings (Hull and Derblom, 2009). While the system allows for an opportunity to make decisions when necessary to do so, its downfall is that it can be used to serve the interests of a few (add example here).

### **3.4 The peace and security framework of SADC**

The provisions of Article 9 of the Treaty establish six institutional structures for the implementation of community goals which will be explored in more detail below. These are:

1. the Summit of the Heads of State or Government;
2. the Council of Ministers;
3. the Commissions;
4. the Standing Committee of Officials;
5. the Secretariat and
6. the Tribunal.

### **3.4.1 The Summit of Heads of State**

The Summit of Heads of State and Government is the primary and top institution of SADC in terms of hierarchy. It is comprised of the Heads of States and Governments of the member states. As the highest institution, the Summit is responsible for policymaking, SADC functioning and the achievement of its objectives. This means that the structure is a very powerful one. The Summit meets at least once a year within member states, where a new Chairperson and Deputy Chair are voted in (SADC Treaty 1992: Article 10). In this regard, it is only this structure that has the power to appoint SADC's Executive Secretary and his or her deputy. Moreover, the Summit deliberates on critical topics ranging from economic development, health and security. The Summit is also a legislative organ. It is also responsible for the admission of new members and the formation of committees and institutions when the need arises. The Council of Ministers (COM) advises the Summit on policy matters and the development of SADC as an institution. The Summit presides over the running of the SADC Secretariat, and the Secretariat is accountable to the Summit.

Mabaleng (2012) notes the following as the Summit's weaknesses: firstly, a significant gap is that while its decisions are taken on a consensus basis, the decisions of the summit are not binding. Despite this weakness, the institution was able to flex its muscle and exercise its power when it took a stand and disbanded Madagascar during its unlawful change of government in the country in 2009. On the contrary, the availability of consensus by the Summit has compromised its functionality and effectiveness. A case in point was when Zimbabwe rejected the Tribunal's ruling concerning rights violated during its contentious land reform program. The Robert Mugabe administration challenged the legitimacy of the ruling and urged the Summit to disband the Tribunal (Saurombe, 2012:459).

Secondly, the implementation of Summit decisions rests on the discretion of member states which could be an undermining factor for its capacity. Thirdly, the status of the Summit as a supreme body is further weakened by its composition which often includes Heads of State or Government of member states who often place national interests over regional interests. This was evident with the summit's failure to oblige Zimbabwe to obey the Tribunal's decision. In the case in point, the Tribunal had ruled in favour of Mike Campbell, a white Zimbabwean farmer who contested the government's contentious seizure of his farm. Moreover, the Summit failure can be seen in its failure to censure Zimbabwe on its problematic or fraudulent 2008 elections. Also, it has been silent on the enforcement of the African Charter on Democracy,

Elections and Governance in the country. In light of these cases, the summit can be viewed as a probable perpetrator in efforts to weaken the SADC's conflict transformation capacity (Afadameh-Adeyemi and Kalula, 2010:12).”

### **3.4.2 The Council of Ministers**

The Council of Ministers (commonly known as the Council) is in charge of the running and development of the SADC policy operation and the execution of activities. It provides counsel to the Summit on issues of general policy, approves policies, strategies and work programmes of SADC (SADC, 1992: Article 11). The Council consists of one Minister from each affiliated state, typically from Ministries responsible for Foreign Affairs, Economic affairs or Finance (Article 11(9)). The Council convenes biannually in January or February and immediately before the Summit in August or September. The Council is chaired by the same country that currently chairs SADC. This Council remains a critical arrangement related to the Treaty and is answerable for the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation SADC.

### **3.4.3 Commissions**

The establishment of the commissions is envisaged by Article 12 of the Treaty. The commissions have a responsibility to lead, facilitate and synchronise policies of projects within the designated areas and also linked to the recommended conventions permitted in line with the Summit. Moreover, their role is to direct and ensure collaboration and amalgamation of policies and activities in key focus areas. The Commissions are made up of experts responsible for planning and developing strategies within each of the SADC sectors. They are responsible for running each sector or sub-sector. The Commissions are supported by bodies such as the Politics, Defence and Security cluster which is tasked with coordination teamwork and integration of policies in specific (SADC Treaty, 1992: Article 12).

### **3.4.4 The Standing Committee of Officials**

The Standing Committee functions as a procedural advisory body and plays the role of a technical advisory committee for the Council and gathers bi-annually (SADC Treaty, 1992: Article 13). It puts forth recommendations to the Council of Ministers and the Council, which in turn, makes proposals to the Summit. The Standing Committee of officials consists of one permanent secretary or an official (of equivalent rank) from each member state (SADC Treaty of 2001, Article 13). The official must preferably be from economic planning or finance ministry. The Standing Committees of Officials are said to be the critical functioning units of

SADC. Both the Chair and Deputy-Chair of the Standing Committee are nominated from member states holding the Chairpersonship and Vice-Chairpersonship of the Council (SADC Treaty, 2001: Article 13).

#### **3.4.5 The Secretariat**

The Secretariat is the main administrative institution of SADC at an executive level and is accountable for the administration and coordination of the organisation (SADC Treaty, 1992: Article 14). The SADC Secretariat is the chief implementing body, under the leadership of the Executive Secretary, serving for four years. In addition, it has two Deputy Executive Secretaries who focus on regional integration, finance and administration. In reality, however, the Secretariat does not seem to be the major executive body: it is assigned mere coordinating functions and does not, therefore, assist in any meaningful way with the building of a regional community of states.

Various changes within the organisations have brought with them positive developments for the REC. However, there have been practical difficulties, for instance, was the move where the SADC Secretariat was tasked to provide secretariat services to the Organ and oversee the execution of the requirements of the Mutual Defence Pact. While this is a major change in practice where the Chairperson of the SADC Organ provided the secretarial services, this move brought with it both pros and cons. One of its undeniable strengths is its ability to build institutional capacity while locating the Organ within broader SADC structures. On the other hand, the current SADC secretariat is already overloaded and undergoing a process of rationalisation in efforts to minimise costs for the organisation.

#### **3.4.6 The Tribunal**

The Tribunal is the judicial arm of SADC established by the 1992 Treaty to assist with the interpretation of the Treaty and to mediate disputes over its application where political solutions might fail (SADC Treaty, Article 16). It is constituted to promote proper analysis and compliance with the correct understandings of the provisions of the SADC Treaty. It also arbitrates upon disputes that are referred to it (SADC Treaty, 1992: Article 16). The structure, powers, functions, and procedures mechanisms and principal guiding the Tribunal reside within the Protocol which was adopted by the Summit. According to Oosthuizen (2006), the Summit and Tribunal's decisions are explicitly pronounced by the SADC Treaty as binding;



however, the treaty is unclear in terms of expressing on whom. In August 2010, the Summit disbanded the Tribunal and put in place a commission to look into its mandate and jurisdiction.

### **3.4.7 The SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation**

The Organ's task is to encourage regional cooperation on defence and security issues and to prevent, contain and resolve inter and intrastate conflict (Article 2). The OPDSC offers an outline to be followed by member states in carrying out conflict prevention, management, resolution, peace-building and conflict transformation. In addition, it is supported by two critical committees which make vital decisions on peace and security matters. These are the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) and the Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC). The ISDSC plays a vital role in the OPDS as an operational component. It is tasked with promoting democracy, by becoming a leading institution of political stability, conflict prevention, conflict management, and human rights (SADC Communiqué, 28 June 1996).

The Organ was formed in June 1996 in Gaborone (Botswana) by Article 4 of the SADC Treaty. The Organ is equivalent to the UN's Security Council or AU's Peace and Security Council (Desmidt, 2017). Despite its establishment, the structure has faced several challenges since its inception and never really became operational. One of the critical hurdles that negatively affected the structure was its first chair's refusal to let go of the position. Former President Robert Mugabe was elected as chair of the structure in 1996 and hung on to the position for the next five years until 2001 when the Heads of State forced him out of office. Due to its inactivity, there was a call for review which only materialised in the year 1999 when the Summit called for a review of all SADC institutions, including the Organ (Isaksen, 2001). A second challenge that entangled the organ in its inception stages is identified by Hussein (2016) as the Organ's independence as a complete standalone body outside of SADC. This allowed the then Chair, former President Mugabe to misuse his position as chair to defend Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibian intervention into the DRC, under the auspices of SADC (Hussein, 2016). Moreover, the Organ was restricted by weak institutional structure, financial constraints and limited human resources.

As a result of the call for a review of SADC structures, the current SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation came into existence. The new Organ, if it were to function effectively, would have to address some of the challenges that had inhibited the initial

formation. In this regard, the first notable change concerned the independence of the Organ where the new Organ became an integral part of SADC and reports to the Summit as stipulated in Article 3(1) of the Protocol. This change marked a positive strategic move on the side of SADC. To begin with, it reiterated the need for regional integration, particularly on issues of peace and security. Secondly, it minimised the gap for any individual interests as had been the case in the DRC case.

Currently, the Organ is structured as follows as provided for in Article 3 (2):

1. the Chairperson of the Organ;
2. the Troika;
3. a Ministerial Committee;
4. an Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC);
5. an Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC).

According to Article 4 (4), the Chairperson is in charge of the “overall policy direction and the achievement of the objectives of the Organ”. However, this is in discussion with the Troika of the Organ to prevent abuse of power and to promote collective decision making. Moreover, in efforts to ensure accountability, the chairperson is elected by the Summit for a one-year term. Some of the benefits that come with the rotation are common ownership by members.

The Ministerial Committee is made up of ministers of foreign affairs, public security and defence from each member state and meets annually. A minister from the same country chairs the committee as the Chairperson of the Organ. The Ministerial Committee is tasked with the “coordination of the work of the Organ and its structures” as per Article 5(2). The institutionalisation of the Ministerial Committee is another step in the right direction for SADC as the committee can foster better coordination and integration within and between member states while at the same time ensuring that all member states have an appreciation of peace and regional security.

The ISPDC is constituted by the ministers of foreign affairs of each member state and is tasked with achieving objectives which are related to politics and diplomacy (Article 6). The ISDSC, on the other hand, is made up of ministers of defence, state security, and has the responsibility to achieve defence and security objectives (Article 7). Both structures are mandated to establish other structures necessary in order to perform their functions.

To facilitate the work of the Organ in the field of prevention, management and resolution of potential inter-conflicts (between states) and intra-conflicts (within states), SADC has established mechanisms such as the SADC Standby Brigade (SADCBRIG), the Early Warning System as well as the Mediation Unit and the Panel of Elders. The contribution of these mechanisms is not only limited to the SADC security framework but also to contribute to the AU security plan. Furthermore, article 11 (3b) of the Protocol on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation make provision for the establishment of a Regional Early Warning Centre (REWC) which is aimed to assist in the prevention of the outbreak or escalation of conflict. Similarly, SIPO I also makes provision for early warning capabilities to be established in each member state.

#### **3.4.8 Regional Early Warning System (REWS)**

Article 11 provides that “the Organ shall establish an early warning system in order to facilitate timeous action to prevent the outbreak and escalation of the conflict”. As such, the SADC EWS is composed of the Regional Early Warning Centre (REWC) based in Gaborone and the National Early Warning Centres (NEWCs) in each of the SADC member states. The primary objective of the SADC EWS is to prevent conflicts in the region. However, the early warning system has been criticised for slow implementation (Desmit). This has mainly been as a result of the hesitance of member states to share sensitive peace and security information. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) places emphasis on the secrecy around the REWC since it was launched in 2010. Moreover, there is another view that suggests that the structure is only but an intelligence-based system intended to shield ruling governments in the region (Motsamai, 2014: pg). On the same light, various onlookers have argued that the REWC has been less successful in detecting governance and security threats in member states which would assist the regional body to avert violent conflicts in the region (Lins de Albuquerque and Hull-Wiklund, 2015). As such, there are no major successes that have been documented on the part of the REWC.

#### **3.4.9 Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP)**

The RISDP was formulated in March 2001 in Namibia and was later endorsed by the SADC Summit in August 2003. The preparation of the RISDP was approved by the Secretariat to complement the restructuring and to provide a clear direction for SADC policies and regional integration programmes over 15 years (2005-2020). The plan offers clear directive in terms of

the target areas and operations which will help achieve them. Eventually, the plan aims to enhance “efficiency and effectiveness through the RISDP” (Kaunda, 2008:71). In 2004, the RISDP Implementation framework promoted detailed operational plans for each directorate in the Secretariat (Nathan, 2014:48). At the SADC Extraordinary Summit held in Windhoek in 2001, the SADC has been said to have faced various challenges in coordinating the formulation and implementation of the SIPO and the RISDP.

#### **3.4.10 SADC Stand by Force (SADCBRIG)**

The SADCBRIG was established at the SADC Summit held in Lusaka on 17 August 2007. This brigade is constituted by a military, civilian and police component (SADCPOL), as part of the AU African Standby Force (ASF). The brigade aims to deploy peacekeeping operations in the SADC region, including enforcement tasks and to carry out peace support operations as well as peace monitoring missions (Article 4). The SADCBRIG is envisioned to be equipped to be able to take on the following operations swiftly; “observation missions, peacekeeping and peace-building to complex multidimensional peace operations, peace-enforcement, robust peace support operations and humanitarian interventions in grave circumstances (Mabaleng, 2012: 125).” The SADCBRIG can only be deployed under the mandate of SADC or AU and may only be positioned on the territory of a member state to restore peace and security (Article 4 (c). The intervention may also be requested by a state party itself (Article 4 (c).

Furthermore, the SADCBRIG can also be deployed to contain and avert a conflict from spilling over (Article 4 (d) (i). All member states pledge a certain number of troops to be contributed to the brigade (Cawthra, 2010:11). To date, member states have pledged a total of 3500 troops. In 2005, a permanent planning element (PLANELM) was established at the SADC secretariat in Gaborone to enable it to carry out its mandate. In addition, the task force was supported by the Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre (RPTC) based in Harare (Zimbabwe) which focused on peace support training and research. To date, the RPTC has conducted various training exercises to ensure troop readiness and test the brigade’s effectiveness. However, the RPTC has been criticised for not producing results. Critics have maintained that the region has placed less emphasis on developing regional capacity. The centre has been referred to by some as a ‘white elephant’, consuming financial resources without any tangible results (Daniel, Taft and Wiharta, 2008).

### **3.4.11 Mediation Unit and Panel of Elders**

The SADC has also made provision for a Mediation unit and the Panel of Elders as further mechanisms in efforts to deal with conflict prevention, resolution and eventually transformation through diplomatic means. Former SADC leaders and eminent persons constitute the Panel of Elders. The Panel is assisted by a Mediation Reference Group (MRG). It is solely responsible for leading and supporting SADC mediation missions. It also acts as a conduit by facilitating dialogue and mediation between parties (Hartmann, 2013). Furthermore, Panel members have the responsibility to be in constant communication with both the SADC Organ and the Executive Secretary to ensure the proper coordination of mediation missions as per the directives of the SADC Summit (Hartmann, 2013). To date, the mediation Unit remains un-operational as the SADC Summit has not yet adopted it.

### **3.5 Assessing SADC's conflict transformation capacity**

In *Community of Insecurity: SADC's struggle for peace and security in Southern Africa*, Laurie Nathan suggests that there are various complications that REC's are faced with, and that these have a direct influence on the type of methodology they opt to use to address conflict. As such, any effort that seeks to measure effectiveness or capacity of REC's to deliver on their mandates must be able to discuss the criteria for appraising and analysing the complications that have led to the making of those judgements. Moreover, Nathan (2012) maintains that not taking these considerations into account in evaluations may lead academics, practitioners to paint flawed or skewed pictures of RECs. In addition, Nathan (2012) addresses the challenges in evaluating or assessing SADC's peace and security activities and emphasises the need to provide clear criteria for assessment. Nathan (2012) also warns against the over-reliance on declarations made and structures which have been put in at the detriment of the actual performance of the organisation. Also, Nathan (2012) advocates for assessing SADC's performance in terms of its stated goals and objectives. For him, this is an analytically sound and fair way of evaluating SADC's performance.

The current study agrees with Nathan (2012) that it is reasonably fair to determine an organisation's performance in relation to its stated goals and objectives. In measuring effectiveness, it is essential to note that the criteria used in this study is adopted from Lederach's conflict transformation theory which proposes that conflict transformation efforts should be targeted across four critical dimensions: the personal, the relational, the structural and the cultural dimension (Lederach, 1997:82). Lederach puts forth the argument that

constructive change must take place in all the four dimensions if sustainable long-term positive peace is to be attained in any conflict situation. Similarly, Miall (2004) builds from Lederach's work and further argues for changes in the context, structure, content, issues, actors and rules of conflicts in the Mountain Kingdom so as to attain sustainable peace.

However, this study seeks to assess the SADC's conflict transformation capacity in the context of the recurring conflict in Lesotho. In this regard, Nathan's view puts forth some challenges as the OPDSC does not make reference or provision for conflict transformation. Instead, its fourth objective is to; "cooperate fully in regional security and defence through conflict prevention, management and resolution" (SADC Protocol, 1996). The lack of mention of conflict transformation from the SADC literature and terms of reference can mainly be attributed to the novelty of the conception. Moreover, for this current study, conflict transformation can be understood as a broader term which speaks of the long-term process that encompasses prevention, management and resolution.

Despite the absence of a specific article that speaks to CT, objective (k) of the OPDSC speaks to promotion of political, economic, social and environmental dimensions of security (ibid), which are the objectives of conflict transformation and as such can be said to be speaking directly to conflict transformation. The omission of CT in the organisation's literature is a substantial error on their part, demonstrating that while the REC has preached the concept, it still lacks clarity and closer consideration. This being said, there is a need to clearly and expressly make provisions for long-term conflict transformation in SADC literature and its guiding documents, if it is to successfully implement transformation in Lesotho. It is also prudent to note that when critiquing or evaluating a REC's performance, certain initiatives might fail to attain adequate stability immediately. Still, it then becomes evident at a later stage that the effort has positively contributed and without it, there would have been greater instability (Nathan, 2013). This strengthens the argument for a long-term conflict transformation process which is inclusive of various stages including management, prevention and resolution, if the transformation of the conflict is to be realised. Nathan (2013) argues that researchers must make assessments and predictions based on historical trends, proper in-depth diagnosis and sound analysis. The study itself reiterates the importance of local ownership and involvement of the grassroots.

### **3.6 SADC's track record**

Various scholars such as Van Nieuwkerk (2001) and Van Nieuwkerk and Hoffman (2013) have argued that Southern Africa has been relatively peaceful compared to other regions on the continent. Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Mozambique remain the only countries in the region that continue to brew an internal political crisis. As Cawthra (2010:10) postulates, the SADC has not shied away from taking the lead in conflict activities in the sub-region. To date, the SADC has intervened in Lesotho (1998) and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (1998), Mozambique, Zimbabwe (2007) and in Madagascar (2009). SADC has responded to emerging intra and inter conflicts through a variety of means such as preventive diplomacy, negotiation, conciliation, good offices, adjudication, mediation or arbitration. It has often been acknowledged that the SADC, initially formed as an economic community, has achieved numerous positive developments in peace and security, development, regional integration and cooperation. However, Mapuva and Manyengwa- Mapuva (2014) maintain that the challenges riveting the regional bloc have often outweighed the achievements. As such, it can be argued that the success of SADC interventions in resolving conflicts has been varied. This is largely due to the complexities presented by the conflicts, as they are of a different nature, causes, and dynamics. Several authors have evaluated SADC's interventions in conflicts that have erupted in various states within the sub-region (Malan, 1999; De Conning, 1999; Mbuende, 2001; Essuman-Jonson, 2009; Cathrwa, 2010; Mudzamiri et al, 2012; Du Pisani and Aeby, 2018). The studies generally show that the sub-regional body has made significant efforts towards protecting and maintaining political stability in the region. There are generally two schools of thought which represent two opposing views. It can, therefore, be concluded that the SADC's efforts have yielded mixed results.

According to Du Pisani and Aeby (2018:6), SADC's conflict transformation track record results have been mixed. For Freedom House (2014), the SADC is an institution that has been put to the test several times in recent years. They argue that while it has proven to be quite effective at maintaining regional stability, the Organ has ignored the underlying causes of conflicts in various conflict situations in the sub-region. Malan (1999) maintains that REC's in Africa have heavily relied on ad hoc responses, the argument put forth in this regard talks to the inadequacy of institutionalised structures at the sub-regional level that would address conflict management and resolution issues. Similarly, Cathrwa (2010) maintains that SADC interventions have been met with very mixed results at best and may at times not have yielded the expected results, however, the body cannot be said to have outrightly failed.

According to Phakathi (2018), the regional body has not been consistent in its responses to unconstitutional changes of government in Africa. A parallel view is held by Aeby (2018), who maintains that SADC reacted decisively to military meddling in civilian politics and government instability in Lesotho by sending troops to the Kingdom. However, SADC was less swift to respond in the case of the DRC where President Joseph Kabila failed to hold elections before the end of his term in office. The same was the case in the intrastate conflict in Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

In his paper, Essuman-Jonson (2009) explores two regional groups in Africa, namely the SADC and the ECOWAS as regional security complexes and examines their conflict resolution mechanisms in conflicts that have erupted in their sub-regions. For Essuman-Jonson, the success or failure of the intervention in conflicts is directly dependent on the existence of structures for conflict resolution (in its larger meaning) in the regional security complex. Moreover, Mudzamiri et al(2012) argues that the success or failure of these initiatives is contingent upon the capacity of the regional organisations to create a rapid response mechanism that can effectively deal with any kind of security threat.

In this context, Essuman-Johnson (2009:409) argues that “the SADC intervention in Lesotho was botched and its peace-making efforts in the DRC failed”. For Essuman-Johnson, the interventions in the DRC and Lesotho are the only authentic SADC attempt to forestall conflict in its region (2009). He cites some reasons for the REC’s failures arguing that REC’s were initially created to promote sub-regional economic integration, but due to changing international relations, they find themselves forced to transform particularly at the end of the Cold War. Today they are tasked with the responsibility to attend to peace and security issues which they were not initially equipped to deal with.

### **3.7 SADC’s successes in the areas of peace and security to date**

It is useful to highlight some of SADC’s most outstanding accomplishments in its efforts to contain and transform conflict in the sub-region, in order to give a context to situate the core problem of this research. The SIPO II document, for instance, highlights some of the milestones that have been achieved by member states in various areas including in the areas of politics, defence and security. The SADC can be said to have successfully entrenched a sense of regional ownership as well as a culture of consultation in areas of defence and security among member states (De Conning, 1999). This cooperation has, in various ways, strengthened regional integration and has further served as a Confidence Building Measure (CBM), demonstrating



that regional co-operation is not only an ambitious dream but also an attainable possibility in the sub-region.

Moreover, the region has successfully adopted a regional programme of action known as the SADC Programme of Action, which was designed to ensure cooperation at various levels. SADC has also signed some crucial agreements and established key institutions which are requisite for the organisation's peace and security mandate. Significantly, one worth mentioning is the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, accommodated at the secretariat and the Mutual Defence Pact (MDP) which treats an attack on one-member state as a threat to regional peace and security (Mabaleng, 2012).

Mabaleng (2012) also notes the SADC's success in launching the SADC Standby Force as stipulated in the AU Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The launching of the Standby Force meant that the region had in place a shared approach to defence, security and stability. Likewise, the successful integration of the Southern African Regional Police Chief's Cooperating Organisation (SARPCCO) into the Inter-State Defense and Security Council (ISDSC) also signalled stronger regional integration and cooperation particularly in policing the region. Mabaleng (2012) further notes various other achievements within the regional bloc, including the creation of some key institutions within the organisation. These include the Regional Early Warning Centre (REWC), the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC) and the SADC Mediation Unit (SMU).

Moreover, it can be argued that member states within SADC have witnessed stronger cooperation in the sharing of information, exchanged diplomatic visits, shared training institutions such as the Regional Peace Training Centre (RPTC) being a case in point. The sub-region has also witnessed successful joint peacekeeping exercises between member states, and cooperation in times of political upheavals. Significantly, SADC has also signed some essential agreements and established key institutions indispensable for their peace and security mandate. It can be argued that accomplishments have provided a stable foundation for mutual regional security and defence community for the sub-region (De conning, 1999). Despite the many noteworthy achievements, the sub-regional body remains subjected to many challenges, including but not limited to recurring conflicts and peace and security threatening episodes. The problems mentioned can be attributed to the sporadic and ever-changing nature of threats to peace and security in the region. While the OPDS has various accomplishments to show since its inception in 1996, whether the structure has been successful in achieving its stated

objectives remains questionable. It is fair to indicate that there are impediments, which hindered the Organ from achieving its goals. It is these issues that the chapter considers in more detail below.

The fundamental problem identified by this research is the diverse and complex threats to regional peace and security, which SADC has the mandate to contain and eventually transform to attain sustainable positive peace for the sub-region. Guided by a desire to devise African solutions to African problems, the sub-regional body has taken various steps to reconfigure itself to enable it to successfully carry out its peace and security mandate (Mabaleng, 2012). Dissimilar to its counterparts in other parts of the continent as well as other international organisations, the SADC has placed greater emphasis in promoting locally brewed solutions to conflicts in the sub-region. Moreover, the body has embraced the important role of local actors with minimal intervention from external players. The SADC's creation of units within the OPDS such as the Mediation unit; the Politics and Diplomacy unit; the SEAC, Public Safety unit, the Policing Unit as well as the inclusion of civil society into its peace support operations indicate that the body is not only concerned with peacekeeping and interventions through military means, but instead has invested in being accepted as a credible organisation with the capacity to transform conflict.

### **3.8 Successful interventions**

Mbuende, (2001), in his study, argues that the SADC interventions have been successful in both the DRC and Lesotho as they were focused on creating a conducive environment for political dialogue. The interventions in both countries yielded positive results as cease-fire agreements were reached. In addition, both countries also agreed to hold elections within reasonable timeframes (SADC, 1998). Mbuende (2001) concludes that SADC has demonstrated to the international arena that it does possess the capacity to solve its political and economic problems.

This view is supported by Albuquerque and Wiklund (2015) who explore the region's scorecard over a five-year period and argue that at first glance the organisation appears to have been largely successful in managing armed conflict in the DRC and in preventing political crises in Madagascar, Zimbabwe and Lesotho from erupting into violence. This view is supported by Aeby (2018) who applauds the SADC's move to sanction the deployment of troops in Lesotho in 1998 as decisive. By this move, the formation was able to successfully attend to military interference in civilian politics and government instability in Lesotho.

Another success is noted by Cawthra (2010) in the Madagascar conflict where SADC, with the support of international players such as the AU and the UN, appointed Joaquim Alberto Chissano former Mozambique President mediator and threatened the country with sanctions and suspension of its membership. Motsamai (2018) in her study maintains that SADC has been effective in managing crises within the sub-region; however, she makes it clear that this success has only been for the short-term. This speaks to the unsustainability of the approaches often used by the organisation.

Vhumbunu (2015) in his study, explores the efficacy of SADC's intervention and argues that in reality, emphasis must be placed on the degree to which the regional organisation's mediation and facilitation have achieved its intended objectives. After considering the approaches utilised by SADC, which have often emphasised negotiation and mediation. Vhumbunu (2015) maintains that SADC's interventions in Lesotho can be understood as a success in terms of conflict management. According to Vhumbunu (2015), the 2014 SADC mediation process in Lesotho can be hailed for several reasons. To begin with, the SADC was successful in coordinating the safe return of exiled former Prime Minister Thabane who had fled to South Africa. Secondly, it successfully ensured the reopening of the Lesotho Parliament. Moreover, the REC facilitated discussions and eventually an agreement on the holding of an early election. Finally, it also facilitated the urgent deployment of an Observer Team on Politics, Defence and Security.

### **3.9 The less successful interventions**

From its inception, the SADC was occupied with the aggression of the apartheid state, and not peacekeeping missions. As such, Hadebe (2011) argues that in 1998, the SADC did not have tangible achievements to show in the areas of conflict prevention and peace-making. Similarly, Nathan (2004) views the SADC in its current state as a body that is incapable of resolving violent conflicts in the sub-region. Nathan (2004) alludes to instances where the SADC has failed to execute its mandate. Citing the civil wars in Angola and in the DRC, he also considers the failed secessionist bid in Namibia in 1998/1999, and the election dispute in Malawi in the year 1999 (Nathan, 2004). Oosthuizen (2011), in her study, also concludes that the Zimbabwe and Madagascar crisis have dented the SADC's global reputation and further tainted the integrity of some of the region's leaders. In Madagascar, the organisation has played a critical role. However, a tenable solution has not been reached (Goncalves, 2013). Goncalves (2013),

in his study, notes that since 2009, all attempts at mediation in Madagascar have failed and no element of pressure has been sufficiently decisive to promote genuine change to Malagasy stakeholders and to find the lasting peace in the country.

SADC has intervened to mitigate and possibly end the conflict in Zimbabwe. Aeby (2018) puts forth the argument that the SADC attempted to contain the situation in Zimbabwe for over 13 years to no avail. Interventions have been through various diplomatic initiatives and were somewhat successful in brokering a unity government which produced some stability in the country. Mehler (2009), in his study, maintains that to date the Global Political Agreement (GPA) can be sighted as the most notable outcome of SADC intervention in Zimbabwe. This view is based on the fact that the sub-regional body was successful in bringing together opposition parties who eventually agreed to a unity government.

On the contrary, Albuquerque and Wiklund (2015) maintain that the SADC outrightly failed to enforce the GPA. Aeby (2018) argues that the SADC observed as the country spiralled into an economic and political crisis. Similarly, Munyaradzi Nyakudya's (2013) study zooms into SADC's management of the Zimbabwean crisis. He contends that the enduring crisis proved that the REC was indeed a 'toothless bulldog' incapable of implementing its policies and decisions on intra-state conflicts, particularly when more powerful member states are concerned (Van Niekerk, 2013). Moreover, the SADC has received criticism for failing to uphold the continuity of the agreement (Cheeseman, 2010). Despite this criticism, Mehler (2009) maintains that SADC's conflict resolution intervention in Zimbabwe, though faced with challenges, was still better than no intervention at all.

According to Ngoma (2005), SADC intervened in the DRC from 1998 to 2003 and in Lesotho, in 1994 and 1998. SADC's military intervention in the DRC in 1998 received much criticism as it showed various cracks in the REC's operations including a lack of unity and cooperation and the displays of choosing national interests over regional security (Nathan, 2002; Williams, 2005; Van Schalkwyk, 2005). SADC's approach in both the Zimbabwe and Madagascar conflict shows various weaknesses inherent in the regional block. To begin with, the REC shows signs of being a state-driven project as it has failed to bring ruling elites to book, let alone openly criticise each other (Dewa, 2014). For Tsunga (2012), SADC's attempts at conflict resolution in the sub-region have paid more lip-service than action. Moreover, the formation has failed to partner and engage with civil society.

In the same light, Goncalves (2013) noted that the SADC has failed in its mandate to provide security for its member states. As such, it can be argued that SADC is less successful in effectively responding to intrastate conflict (Aeby, 2018). This is supported by Cawthra (2010), who says: the sub-regional body has been actively engaged in conflict management efforts in the recurrent conflict. SADC has been involved in efforts to transform the intermittent conflict but to no avail (Cawthra, 2010). Instead, the REC has continuously been tested and this is justified by frequent intrastate conflicts in the DRC, Lesotho and Mozambique.

Achankeng (2015) argues that conflict resolution in Africa is approached from various positions and interests and as such has been guided by contradictory and ambiguous policies. This view is supported by Motsamai (2018) who maintains that the SADC has applied relatively different approaches and resources to the conflicts in Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Madagascar. She further emphasises that the success can be noted in managing conflict and less success in transforming the conflict towards long-term sustainable peace. For Ancas (2011), the 2009 intervention in Madagascar was marred by confusion and dearth of coherent leadership which subsequently weakened the mediation process. This was evident as at least six mediators from different organisations were quickly sent to Madagascar with no clear direction on who would lead the process (Zounmenou, 2009).

On the same breadth, Motsamai (2018) maintains that until 2010, SADC's efforts have largely been driven by a series of ad hoc diplomatic engagements that were not embedded in its institutional architecture for conflict prevention and resolution. Instead, the methodology utilised has commonly been guided by member states given a mandate to mediate, with the exclusion of the SADC Secretariat. The REC has adopted an *ad hoc* approach towards mediation which lacks an institutionalised approach as the body's secretariat has played an insignificant role while the bulk of the work has been left to the heads of state. This view is supported by Motsamai (2018) in her study as she argues that SADC has often opted to approach conflict through "the appointment of mediators –typically a serving or retired president (Cawthra 2010:11)". This is reiterated by Albuquerque and Wiklund (2015), who suggest that when responding to political crises, SADC mediation has mainly been focused on high-level mediators and with less focus on the institutions own mediation infrastructure.

Zulu (2012:98) puts forth the argument that while the sub-regional body can be understood to be stable; however, the institutions efficiency in its newfound role remains questionable. Zulu (2012) further highlights the disaggregated action often observed from member states, mainly

informed by their national interest and principle of sovereignty. The failure of the organisation is also highlighted by Nathan (2006), who argues that the SADC has failed to respond in both the DRC and in Angola crises. In the case of Angola, it would seem the SADC was unable to react definitively to the insurgency in Cabinda and state-sponsored violence against various faith and youth groups (Aeby, 2018). The Crisis Group: Africa report (2012) argues that SADC's intervention in Madagascar and Zimbabwe exposed a severe gap in the REC's capacity to enforce its agreements in member states.

Additionally, Breytenbach (2000) writes extensively on the failure of security co-operation in SADC concerning the suspension of the Organ for Defence, Politics and Security. The author laments the inability of SADC's security organ to effectively deal with these crises primarily through prevention, early warning or management (mediation in peace-making).

The organisation has been less successful in prioritising the long-term transformation process. This has mainly been evident in the organisation's mediation mandates that have failed to address the root causes of the conflict. On the same breadth, Lissom (2012) maintains that the sub-regional body is yet to transform itself into a fully-fledged regional security actor with a track record of interventions that provide long-lasting solutions to problems bedeviling member states. To date, the SADC's responses have been reduced to short-term solutions.

### **3.10 SADC in action: Interventions in Lesotho**

#### **3.10.1 The 1994 SADC intervention**

The years 1993 to 1998 are often referred to as a period of democratic consolidation in the Mountain Kingdom, as the state held its first democratic elections since 1970. The 1993 election was won by the BCP and unsurprisingly faced hostility from the army, which was at this point infiltrated by BNP supporters in its ranks. The military, the BNP and the MFP supported the sacking of the BCP government by King Letsie in August 1994 via a palace *coup* (Motsamai, 2015:2).

Noting the international antagonism towards external intervention, in 1994, the SADC eventually answered the call from the Lesotho government for help to reverse a *coup* that had been staged (Matlosa, 1995:129). It was this call for assistance that paved a way for SADC's first involvement in Lesotho with South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe coordinating the return of the BCP to office. The intervention is said to have been sparked by the SADC's concern on issues of regional stability, particularly its desire to avoid the advent of an autocratic

government in Lesotho. This was after the country had embarked on multiparty elections after a prolonged period of authoritarian and military governments (Motsamai, 2015). Consequently, at its summit in Gaborone, Botswana, the SADC made a call for the reinstatement of the legitimate administration in Lesotho. In its communiqué, the Summit articulated a strong stance against King Letsie's move to illegitimately dissolve Parliament and disband the democratically elected government (SADC communiqué, 1994).

The 1994 election had been viewed by the Basotho to end the of over 20 years of BNP political control. In other words, for the very first time, Basotho would be afforded an opportunity to have a say in the selection of their government since independence. In light of this, the long-standing cry of the Basotho was seen in their voting which imposed extensive chastisement on the BNP which had subjected them to years of ruthless authoritarianism (Daniel, 1995; Fox, 1995; Southall, 1995; 1999a). The BNP's dilemmas were also heightened by its internal leadership squabbles and its well-known association with the army which had brutalised the Basotho for years (Southall, 1995; Matlosa, 1995; Petlane, 1995). On the contrary, the BCP opted to adopt a liberation movement-image. The party flashed its history of a nationalist struggle against colonial rule, the BNP and military tyrannies.

### **3.10.2 The 1998 Intervention**

The 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 1998 marked the second intervention attempt at the invitation of Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili, as 600 South African soldiers moved into Lesotho under the auspices of Operation Boleas (Neethling, 1999; Vhumbunu, 2015). Although the operation is often dubbed a combined military taskforce, with the SANDF and the Botswana Defense Force (BDF), it was only in the early hours of the 23<sup>rd</sup> September that approximately 200 Botswana troops arrived in Maseru (Matlosa, 1999; Letsie, 2009). The arrival of the combined force was the beginning of a seven-month-long operation that sought to curb the worsening security situation in the Mountain Kingdom.

The 1998 general election in Lesotho saw the ruling LCD walking away with 79 of the 80 available in the National Assembly (Likoti, 2007; Ramalepe & Shai, 2016). Contradictory to the observer findings, opposition parties, specifically the BCP and the BNP, argued the results were rigged. Selinyane (2006) maintains that the questioning of the electoral process by the opposition parties overshadowed the election results causing the world to focus on the electoral process followed during the polls. The opposition parties turned to SADC for intervention to settle the dispute over electoral results. Subsequently, SA invited Botswana and Zimbabwe as

part of the SADC Troika and initiated a SADC mediation in Lesotho. The mediation was led by South African High Court judge, Chief Justice Pius Langa, who oversaw investigations into the credibility of the election results.

Inside Lesotho, the operation was largely influenced by the dissatisfaction of the opposition parties. Despite the opposition parties' antagonistic past relations, the election results saw the opposition in cahoots as they collectively contested the outcome of the 1998 election. In addition, the opposition mobilised their members to occupy Maseru and to stop the LCD from governing. Instead, the opposition made a call for the LCD to stand down and allow a government of national unity (Southall & Fox, 1999). The LCD also persisted and defied the call sighting its legitimacy to govern. This tug of war prompted violent demonstrations, clashes with the armed opposition and weeks of political instability (Motsamai, 2015).

The opposition demanded King Letsie III to exercise his powers to dissolve parliament (Mohao, 1997; Weisfelder, 2015). The reason cited was that parliament had been fraudulently elected. What followed was severe action from the LDF who took up arms and caused chaos in the capital. The country saw the incarceration of commanding officers, theft of government vehicles, closure of the broadcasting station and hostage of some ministers, including the Prime Minister (Pefole, 2004). It became evident that the police force no longer had control of the situation in the country. At the same time, the SANDF had growing concerns that a military *coup* was imminent. The protests impacted on the day to day functioning of the country's administration (Matlosa and Sello, 2006:10).

Moreover, the speculation and rumours about the outcomes of the Langa Commission Report (LCR) intensified the tensions as security forces were divided in their support for the new government (Matlosa and Sello, 2006:13). Langa's findings were controversial as the opposition challenged their veracity (Makoa, 2004; Selinyane, 2006). Allegations arose suggesting that the report had been doctored as the interim report suggested the election was invalid (Motsamai, 2015). The final official version cites some irregularities, however, denied any electoral fraud (PMG, 1998).

Feedback from the report combined with the King's refusal to suspend Parliament gave rise to further instability (Motsamai, 2015). Military personnel seized arms and held some of their commanding officers' captives. It became evident that the Lesotho Police Force had completely lost control of public security in Maseru (Moremoholo, 2005; Pherudi, 2018; Mokotso, 2019). When it became evident that the Langa report failed to break the stalemate but instead caused



greater instability, the SADC came in and intervened militarily. The presence of SADC forces was able to bring stability in the country (Malan, 1998; Motsamai, 2015). Moreover, the SADC then brokered an agreement that is often hailed for successfully reinstating the LCD to power. However, the agreement also stipulated that a new election be held within 18 months. Under the guidance of SADC, a Multiparty Interim Political Authority (IPA) was put in place to review the electoral process and coordinate the new elections (Mokotso, 2019).

The operation was part of the SADC's efforts to attend to the escalating unrest in the Kingdom of the Sky. However, it experienced much resistance from the LDF, subsequently seeing the loss of 64 lives (Nathan, 2012:82). The main mission of the Combined Task Force was to promote democracy and stability in the Mountain Kingdom. Furthermore, the presence of the force was expected to contain the anarchic situation, defuse the rebellious LDF, restore normalcy in the military, ensure government functionality, create a conducive atmosphere for the reinstatement of law and order, resuscitate operations of institutions of governance, safeguard the democratisation process in Lesotho while also facilitating discussions for the peaceful resolution of the calamity (SANDF, 1999; Neethling, 2000; Likoti 2006).

### **3.10.3 Operation boleas: An Intervention or Invasion?**

South African officials claimed the intervention to have been authorised by the SADC. The reasoning behind this was that South Africa chaired SADC at that time. Moreover, it was Lesotho's Prime Minister that had directly requested external assistance from the sub-regional body (Likoti, 2007:256). Nonetheless, a contrary view is also sponsored, one that suggests that SADC Summit had not endorsed the intervention. Instead, it was the defence and security ministers of SADC member states that had given the go-ahead. It is worth noting that at the time of the intervention, SADC had no official framework in place for regulating interventions, apart from a Communiqué in respect of the Protocol establishing the OPDS, which would be tasked with dealing with these issues (Likoti, 2007:255). Some analysts like Likoti (2007) and Hadebe (2012) argued that South Africa had intervened in the conflict to protect its water supply from Lesotho.

In the context of this analysis, it is essential to mention that there is much written on the intentions, legality, desired outcomes and nature of Operation Boleas. The 'invasion-intervention' contrast in the literature offers contrasting ideas and validations on the external military intervention in the Kingdom. In essence, available literature yields two differing views behind the legitimacy of Operation Boleas. The first is around the legality of the said

intervention where some scholars and practitioners have questioned whether the intervention was authorised by SADC or was purely unilateral and primarily driven by South African interests (Matlosa, 1998; Molomo, 1999; Neethling, 1999; Hadebe, 2012)

Advocates of the invasion of the SA military in Lesotho emphasise the operation's illegality. Sceptics of the military intervention of 1998, apparently under the authority of SADC raise a number of concerns around the intervention with a few sources referring to the operation as an 'invasion' rather than an intervention. For example, Makoa explains Operation Boleas as an 'invasion', consistent with the 'apartheid mould' reflected by the new South Africa. For example, Matlosa, (1999) paints a picture of doom and gloom, as Maseru was brought to its knees with burning and looting in Maseru. Despite the dire situation in Maseru, the South African forces were deployed to the Katse dam site, where there was no violence. In this regard, South Africa's actions can be viewed as a move motivated by the national interest in efforts to protect its water interest in the Mountain Kingdom (Makoa, 1999; Neethling, 1999). The argument put forward was one that suggested that if the intervention was intended to restore normalcy in Lesotho, the South African forces would have been sent to troubled Maseru first, instead of the Katse Dam.

Similarly, three authors (Molomo, 1999; Likoti, 2007; Tavares, 2011) have argued that Botswana's participation in the intervention was also informed by the country's own interests, related to water supply. While it is expected (from a realistic perspective) that states participate in security cooperation within REC's mainly to achieve their national interests, The SA-Botswana intervention in 1998 was in no way authorised by SADC although various spectators and experts have had mixed feelings over the intervention (Neethling, 1999; Likoti, 2007; Ngwawi, 2014).

Proponents of the military involvement of SA and Botswana as a SADC military intervention emphasise Lesotho's constant political instability and maintain the necessity of the intervention. For others, the operation can be justified based on the following: first, the operation was carried out under the authority of SADC, secondly, the operation emanated from a SADC decision to avert undemocratic ousting of legitimate governments within southern Africa, and finally, it formed part of the 1994 Memorandum of Understanding with South Africa (Nathan, 2012:83). Mosisili's request is accepted by some observers as valid based on the fact that the King assumes a ceremonial role, but does not take part in day-to-day processes, as is the case with the Queen of England. Despite this, the Basotho King still plays a much

more important role than the Queen mainly because of his everyday interactions with his people (Allison, 2014). Furthermore, the question can then be raised concerning what would have happened in the country and neighbouring states if the intervention did not take place (Grimwood, 2017).

Based on the provisions above, it may be noted that the regional body did not authorise military intervention in Lesotho by Botswana and South Africa in 1998; hence the intervention can be said to have been illegitimate.

#### **3.10.4 SADC intervenes after the 2007 election**

In 2002, the MMP was introduced with the hope of avoiding a situation where one party practically occupies all National Assembly seats. Despite the introduction of the new electoral system, the 2007 electoral results were rejected by opposition parties who cried foul citing the manipulation of the MMP system, where the LCD won 61 of the 80 constituencies (EISA, 2008; Letsie, 2009; Ngubane, 2018). The 2007 national elections ended in a political stalemate. The dispute was primarily over how seats were allocated in Parliament. The opposition argued that the LCD had cheated the system by forming alliances with the NIP in a way that threw off the MMP's compensatory mechanisms (Monyane, 2009). Moreover, the LCD's announcement of the NIP as official opposition added fuel to the fire. In light of this, the ABC went on to form an informal alliance with other partners in efforts to stop the LCD from recognising the NIP as the official opposition. The strife between the opposition and the LCD resulted in a two-day strike that brought the capital to a standstill. As a result, the post-election environment became increasingly volatile, marked by instability and assassinations.

The developments stated above occurred concurrently with a Ministerial Troika meeting of SADC in Maseru. Opposition parties utilised the platform to air their complaints to the meeting. SADC's Executive Secretary Thomas Salomao acted swiftly as he summoned the disputing parties to talks in efforts to calm the situation and restore normalcy in Lesotho. Salomao's commitment to initiate regional mediation was able to influence the opposition to suspend the strike (EISA, 2008). The issue was then tabled at the Extra-Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government held in March 2007 in Dar-es-Salaam. The Summit resolved that the Organ Troika at Ministerial level comprising Tanzania, Angola and Namibia would undertake an assessment of the state of affairs in Lesotho post the election and make recommendations to the chairperson of the SADC OPDSC, His Excellency Jakaya Kikwete, President of Tanzania (SADC, 2007b: 1).

As part of its work, the ministerial committee engaged various stakeholders including government, opposition, civil society and the electoral commission in efforts to make an informed analysis. The SADC Ministerial Committee report identified critical issues at the heart of the post-election tension. To begin with, the committee identified the distortion of the MMP electoral model, through controversial political party alliances and the unfair distribution of parliamentary seats. The committee summarised the matter thus “...some stakeholders raised concerns about the PR system. They argued that the allocation of the proportional representation seats was not conducted fairly, and as a result, small political parties were denied the opportunity to participate in Parliament (SADC, 2007a:4).” Secondly, the committee identified the unruly behaviour of opposition supporters who had instigated violence before, during and after the elections. Moreover, it was established that certain aspects of the election code of conduct were violated. Finally, the lack of dialogue between political leadership had also been found to have perpetuated the conflict. The Ministerial committee successfully made recommendations to the OPDS. For Mabaleng (2012), this signaled SADCs commitment towards the transformation of the conflict situation in that it gave a mandate to the OPDS.

In light of this, the SADC Organ Ministerial Troika met again in May 2007 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and approved the recommendations made by the Organ Ministerial Troika. One of the proposals made in the report was the need for a formal political dialogue and the appointment of an eminent person to facilitate the dialogue process as a mediator. As such, the former President of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire, was appointed on the 13 June 2007 to coordinate talks with the various players in the conflict. This was welcomed by the main opposition party (EISA, 2007; Bogatsu, 2013). The main agenda of the talks were primarily based on six key issues (Matlosa, Khadiagala and Shale, 2010). To begin with, the process sought to create a conducive atmosphere for a fruitful dialogue and to reconsider certain democratic parliamentary processes. Moreover, the process would ensure that political parties considered the status of election-related court cases set against the need to facilitate the political dialogue which if successful, would yield sustainable results for the Mountain Kingdom. The dialogue was also concerned with the reviewing and safeguarding of the MMP model with all the political parties agreeing on the methodology to be utilised going forward. Finally, the dialogue sought to entrench a sustainable culture of dialogue in Lesotho. This would safeguard political tolerance among political parties in Lesotho (EISA, 2007).

The eminent person, Sir Ketumile Masire, remained in his position for a period of two years. This period was from June 2007 until July 2009, within which he undertook a mission to the Kingdom in the Sky (Matlosa, 2010). A number of successes can be identified from the 2007 intervention in the Mountain Kingdom. To begin with, the swift action from SADC was able to contain the violence in the capital as the strike came to an end (EISA, 2007). Moreover, the SADC through the appointment of the eminent person, a Special Envoy of SADC and the Christian Council of Lesotho, was able to bring the disputing parties to the negotiating table through political dialogues which lasted for two years. While it cannot be ignored that the country was experiencing negative peace, the mediation generally facilitated talks to engage on electoral and constitutional reforms to provide legal and acceptable underlying conditions for elections to be held. The regional body, through its missions to Lesotho, was able to prove that it could transform the violent conflict into positive and sustainable peace.

### **3.10.5 The 2014- 2018 interventions and mediations**

The first consultations on Lesotho towards the 2014 SADC intervention took place on 22 and 23 May 2014 and were undertaken by the SADC MCO led by the Namibian Minister of foreign affairs, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah. The MCO was tasked to report back to the then SADC Organ chair, the Namibian President Hifikepunye Pohamba. The consultation was as a result of tensions with Kamoli that had gone public (Zihlangu, 2014). Moreover, in June 2014, South Africa was the initial member state to point out a threat of an imminent military *coup*. SADC recommended that interparty dialogue be initiated to resolve coalition tensions. The REC then proceeded to conduct a number of working visits with South African former President Jacob Zuma and Namibian President Pohamba to facilitate a dialogue between the conflicting coalition partners (Aljazeera News , 2014). The dialogues were initially mediated by the Christian Council of Lesotho, led by Pohamba. It is important to note that civic and church organisations leaders had made unsuccessful attempts to bring together the disputing parties as early as March 2014 (Motsamai, 2015).

In July 2014, former South African President Jacob Zuma visited the Basotho King Letsie III to discuss how the challenges faced by the disputing parties could be best addressed (Chimombe, 2014). Regardless of the peace talks between the parties, the 2014 *coup* attempt was staged against the backdrop of a deepening fallout between the coalition government leaders, namely Thabane of the ABC, a splinter party from the LCD; his deputy, Mothetjoa Metsing, from the LCD; and sports minister Thesele Maseribane from the BNP. On the 30th

August 2014, the LDF military units launched a military *coup*, targeting the Prime Minister's residence at State House. Members of the Royal Lesotho Mounted Police and from other stations were captured and disarmed. Inside the Police Headquarters, sub-inspector Mokheseng Ramahloko was shot and killed. The following day the army announced that they had confiscated 250 guns and rifles from the police. These weapons were later distributed to youth supporters of the ABC who were instructed to utilise the weapons to create instability (BTI Country Report, 2014). The political instability of that period cost Lesotho its Chairmanship of the SADC Organ on Politics and Security Cooperation in 2014.

As the new chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, President Zuma summoned the coalition leaders to Pretoria. The SADC Troika summoned an emergency meeting in Pretoria on the 1st of September, which was attended by coalition leaders to discuss the situation in Lesotho (Motsamai, 2015). It was at this meeting that Thabane took advantage of the platform and made a plea for a SADC military intervention to restore order in the Kingdom. However, the meeting rejected the request; and opted for a dialogue between conflicting parties led by SA (Motsamai, 2015:10). At the meeting, the parties committed to the re-opening of Parliament and vowed to work together to restore law and order in Maseru. Thabane was escorted back to Maseru by a protection team from the South African Police Service, the contingent would cater to his security until after the 2015 election. Upon getting to Lesotho, Thabane refused to reopen Parliament until security was restored. His decision was based on Kamoli's refusal to renounce his command of the LDF (Weisfelder, 2015).

SADC intervened by appointing the then Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa as the SADC facilitator after being mandated at the Double Troika Summit on 15 September 2014. His task was to develop a road map to return stability and security to the Kingdom of the Sky. The political stalemate resulted in the call for an early election that was held in 2015, which was believed to have addressed the issues of contention (Fabricius, 2016). The SADC Double Troika Summit had also moved to establish a Commission of Inquiry to investigate current developments in the Kingdom. The Commission would have 60 days to conduct its investigations and present its findings to the Chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation.

Also, it was agreed that the Government of the Kingdom of the Sky would need to develop a roadmap on constitutional and security sector reforms, with the assistance of both the SADC

and SA. As part of the agreement brokered by SADC, the country's security chiefs, Police Commissioner Khothatso Tšooana, Lieutenant-General Mahao, and General Tlali Kamoli, were given leave of absence from Lesotho in November 2014 to ensure that the elections were held without threats of violence from the police and the army (Maseru Security Accord, 2015:19). The SADC also ordered that LDF be quarantined in the barracks for the period of the elections, until 30th March 2015. To close the security gap, the SADC deployed 475 police personnel from 12 member-States (Rupia, 2016:16). In reality, each of the member states from their respective budgets had donated some personnel to assist in overseeing the electoral process in Lesotho. For Rupia (2016) this action from member states reiterated the degree of ownership, commitment and shared values that SADC possessed and exercised in its intervention in Lesotho.

The results of the snap elections consequently led to the formation of a coalition of seven parties with Mosisili as Prime Minister (Mohloboli, 2015). In March 2015, the SADC facilitator, Ramaphosa, closed down the SADC facilitation mission in Maseru, and the mediation was officially concluded (SADC, 2015). The mission had been established to coordinate Lesotho's road to stability, resulting in the February 28 polls (Lesotho Times, 2015). However, soon afterwards, Lesotho was thrown into a deeper instability as Kamoli was reinstated in May 2015 and went on a campaign against Mahao and other officers within the LDF who were seen to be against his appointment. In the same month, the new minister of defence and national security, Tšeliso Mokhosi, reported to Parliament that the government had uncovered a mutiny plot in the LDF. Within a matter of weeks, after Kamoli's appointment, he had given an order for charges of mutiny to be laid against roughly 50 LDF members, related to events at the time of the alleged *coup* (SADC, 2015c: 57). During this period, the senior and middle-ranking officers had been reportedly kidnapped and tortured at the notorious Makoanyane Barracks (Rupia, 2016: 18). Mahao was also said to be under investigation for the alleged mutiny, though no official charge was laid. On 25 June, Mahao was shot and killed by a military unit led by rival Kamoli (Vollgraaf & Ralengau, 2017). The Mosisili administration then went on to remove and replace the countries officials on diplomatic missions who had been appointed by Tom Thabane.

Inside Lesotho, the opposition boycotted parliament, as they called for the ousting of Kamoli. This had a significant impact as the opposition occupied 55 seats of the 120 seats in the legislature, while the governing coalition held 65 seats (Motsamai & Petlane, 2015). Unhappy

with the developments, civil society organisations (CSO) condemned the developments in the country citing the utter disrespect of democracy and the constitution. With Mosisili's administration failing to bring perpetrators to book for the death of the former commander, the CSO's called for an investigation into the security developments in Maseru (Motsamai, 2018; Letsie, 2018; Ngubane, 2019).

Once again, Ramaphosa found himself mediating new further tensions immediately after the assassination of Maaparankoe Mahao, the former army chief. Immediately after the assassination, the SADC summoned an extraordinary Double Troika Summit in Pretoria where SADC appointed a 10-member commission of inquiry led by Botswana High Court judge, Mpaphi Phumaphi, to investigate Mahao's death and to recommend how Lesotho's democracy and political stability could be restored (SADC, 2015b; Fabricius, 2016). In January 2016, SADC provided Mosisili with a long list of demands, amongst which was the removal of Kamoli. Moreover, SADC called for stability that would allow exiled politicians to come back into the country. The Phumaphi report was concluded in October 2015 and endorsed by SADC leadership which further gave orders for the report to be made public and for implementation of the report's recommendations by 1 February 2016. The Phumaphi report was particularly not accepted by the government of the day and thus caused a lot of tension between the DC led government and SADC (Delegise & Sejanamane, 2017: 129).

In addition, one of the army commanders had a legal action pending that sought to set aside the commission's findings (SADC, 2015c). Mosisili was hesitant to live up to the demands made by SADC and argued that the commission did not have authority to operate outside of Lesotho's borders by conducting hearings with exiled personnel in South Africa. SADC cautioned the government against meddling with the commission's work and reminded Lesotho of its commitment to respect and uphold SADC decisions, particularly those involving the de-politicisation of military and state institutions (SADC, 2015c). In response, the SADC threatened to suspend Lesotho. Eventually, Mosisili crumbled under pressure and accepted the report but still maintained that Lesotho had discretion over the reforms to be implemented (SADC, 2016a). Once again, the period necessitated the presence of military and police presence until the next election (Mahlaoli, 2016).

In early May 2017, Ramaphosa visited the country and pronounced that the Mountain Kingdom was ready for the snap general election. A national dialogue with the hope to encourage



tolerance was cancelled in early May after Ramaphosa conceded to Mosisili's argument that there was not enough time for the project (Lesotho Times, 2017). Once again, immediately after the June 2017 election, Lesotho witnessed another violent conflict, prompting the SADC to deploy the SADC Preventive Mission in Lesotho (SAPMIL). The SAPMIL team, a 269-strong multi-dimensional contingent was constituted by 207 soldiers, 15 intelligence personnel, 24 police officers and 12 civilian experts as part of the SADC efforts to ensure a conducive environment for the implementation of reforms in line with its recommendations (Lesotho Times, 2018). The mission would also support the LDF in the management of the security crisis. Two years later, it seemed the road towards reforms was rather slow. In June 2018, Ramaphosa, who was now the President of South Africa, sought to revive the stalled reform process by appointing Judge Dikgang Moseneke, former South African Deputy Chief Justice to serve as his special envoy. Progress with the reforms finally saw a light in late 2018 when SADC exerted pressure maintaining it would no longer tolerate any further delays in relation to the execution of reforms. However, by late November 2018 the Multi-Stakeholder National Dialogue (MSND) which saw SAPMIL depart caused the process to slow down once again.

#### **3.10.5.1 Perspectives from 2014-2018 interventions and mediation**

For Motsamai (2018), in an effort to assess the efficacy of SADC's intervention, it is essential to consider whether or not the REC was able to achieve desired results. In the case of the 2014 intervention, the SADC's role was to facilitate the restoration of political and security stability in the Kingdom of Lesotho in the short and long-term. As such, Ramaphosa had to mediate and facilitate such a process which she argues the REC carried out successfully. Similarly, Vhumbunu (2015), in his study, commends the REC's swiftness to act towards the situation in Maseru. For him, this can be interpreted as an acceptance on the part of SADC that there can be no regional development without political stability. Vhumbunu (2015) hails the REC's work from the organisation of the troika meeting to the appointment of the facilitator, Ramaphosa. However, he puts forth the argument that SADC from 2014-2018 has been successful in managing and mitigating the conflict and less successful in long-term transformation, which leads to positive, sustainable peace (Vhumbunu, 2015).

Vhangani and Malapo (2017) maintain that the SADC mediation process in 2014/2015 led by SA was to pursue the county's interests in Lesotho. The argument put forward is that the involvement was not a humanitarian peacekeeping mission to rescue Lesotho from a *coup* as claimed by South Africa but instead served to achieve the hegemon's own interests. The 2017

intervention, similar to that of 1998 seems to have been inconsistent with the guiding UN Charter and the SADC Treaty. In light of the 2014-2018 interventions, Petlane (2014), Motsamai (2015) and Sejanamane (2016) argue that the facilitation process led by Ramaphosa had numerous shortfalls including partiality, lack of inclusivity, and its failure to address underlying causes of Lesotho's recurrent conflict. For Matlosa (2011), probably the most significant has been the failure to accept and attend to socio-economic dynamics which seem to be at the heart of the issues riveting the Mountain Kingdom. This reality raises questions as to why the REC keeps on ignoring these critical issues and implications for SADC and the efficacy of its conflict transformation agenda should this practise continue (Motsamai, 2018).

On a similar note, Vhumbunu (2015) points out that the SADC's intervention failed to attend to the critical questions that are at the heart of the Lesotho conflict transformation equation. As such, the mediators believed a snap election would be a solution to the Lesotho conflict. In the same breadth, Rupia (2016) criticises the REC's move to suggest a snap election as the exit for its intervention. In assessing the SADC's intervention, Rupia (2016:15) maintains that it is critical to explore issues of compliance against the agreements reached between Lesotho and SADC. Rupia (2016:16) argues that sadly the REC witnessed Kamoli ignoring the security agreement in the run-up to the snap election. Before this, there was the Windhoek Agreement that was also ignored by all the parties upon returning to the Mountain Kingdom. For Rupia, this was a sign that the REC was ill-prepared to have in place measures to ensure enforced compliance. In light of this, a weakness on the part of SADC from 2014-2018 has been to enforce compliance, as was the case with the recommendations of the Phumaphi report (Rupia, 2016:16). Additionally, Rupia (2016) suggests that the period immediately after the 2015 democratic snap election was an opportune moment for extensive Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) as well as Security Sector Reform (SSR), which could have contributed to the transformation of certain aspects of the conflict. The author further maintains that this was a missed opportunity on the part of SADC.

### **3.11 Challenges facing SADC's conflict transformation capacity**

REC's have taken up the newly found role of peace and security within their respective sub-regions. However, such efforts have not been free from hurdles and limitations. The challenges facing REC's have varied including but not limited to: lack of resources, failure to act towards regional powers, internal scuffles between member states, mandate and limited authority given

to critical structures within the organisation, and the conflict management potentials of regional organisations.

Nathan's (2004) study explores the factors that have contributed to SADC's inability to deal with conflict within the sub-region. To begin with, it is noted that there is the absence of a set of shared values. Secondly, there is the unwillingness of member states to surrender their sovereignty to the REC. Moreover, to a fact that most of the countries are underdeveloped and feeble, and often uncomfortable with having an external and powerful body dictating to them.

### **3.11.1 The principle of sovereignty and non-interference**

A critical challenge that has impeded the SADC's effectiveness in conflict transformation can be attributed to the organisation's sensitivity towards the principle of sovereignty and non-interference in the affairs of member states (SADC Treaty, 1992). Despite the abuses suffered by some civilians in various member states, the SADC has continued to respect the principle of sovereignty often avoiding labels that seek to taint the formation as one that meddles in the affairs of other sovereign states. For Motsamai (2018), SADC's previous efforts have been compromised by state sovereignty, quarrels about jurisdiction, and insufficient platforms for implementing standard policies. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2011), the culture of political solidarity among member states premised on liberation war credentials can be said to have negatively impacted on the body's efforts towards CT in the sub-region. This is primarily based on the collective agreement of non-interference between member states. As such, the sub-regional body has been inhibited from effective CT but has instead provided justification for non-interference in cases of potential conflict and security threats.

For Aeby (2018), the ineffectiveness of SADC'S institutional framework can be attributed to the unwillingness particularly from leaders to operate within the confines of democracy and constitutionalism. Another recurring theme in the analysis of regional organisations is the reluctance of members to act against regional powers (Bryon, 1984). In this regard, the practice has been one where Heads of States protect each other and avoid taking each other to book on issues of human right abuses. This ill practice was sealed by their move to limit the powers and jurisdiction of the SADC tribunal, a regional court which initially had the authority to hear grievances from civilians of member states against abuses by member states.

This principle is further articulated in both the UN Charter (Article 2(7)) and the AU Charter, (Article 3 (b)) suggesting that both institutions esteem the sovereign equality of states as a

critical part of their principles. The observance of these principles is surpassed by the strict implementation of non-interference in internal affairs. Moreover, the REC's central peace and security bodies, namely the Organ and the SADC summit uphold consensual decision-making. The principle of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of states was found by respondents to be a primary impediment to SADC's successful transformation of conflict in Lesotho.

As shown above, the principle of sovereignty is a crucial pillar of operation in the sub-region. While the REC has in place solid protocols on security, democracy and elections, it remains evident that the REC itself operates largely on the pillars of absolute sovereignty and solidarity principles which are also in SADC's protocols (Ancas, 2011). In relation to conflict transformation guiding frameworks, while the move to have guiding documents for the region was critical, in reality, the member states prioritise national interests and at times do not share the same values as stipulated in the regional treaty and other regional documents (Desmidt, 2017). The reality is that signatory countries are reluctant to surrender any measure of their sovereignty (Nathan, 2016).

### **3.11.2 Resource constraints**

As a direct result of the long-term nature of conflict transformation which requires both human and financial resources, financial constraints have contributed in impeding the effectiveness of SADC to transform conflict and negative peace to positive peace in member states. A large chunk of the organisation's funding is received from international donors (Landsberg, 2003; Weisfeider, 2015). In light of this, Landsberg (2003) maintains SADC lacks the political will, and institutional capacity to carry out an effective governance role including in peace and security. For him, the institution is impaired by a 'cargo cult' due to its over-reliance on donor resources. As such, the organisation places much of its efforts in attending to donor relations and obligations. As a result of financial constraints in the organisation, the SADC has been challenged to implement conflict transformation programmes on its own, often having to rely on donors or the UN. In reality, however, receiving donor funding usually has consequences, including external influence and interference (Landsberg, 2003).

On the same breath, for the longest of times, various persons have called for reforms in the country which will also require resources. The challenges posed by resource constraints need to be high up on the organisation's agenda if SADC conflict transformation efforts in Lesotho are to be realised. As such, the organisation would do well to reconsider the proposal of

membership contributions if the sub-region indeed values its peace and security as stipulated in its guiding documents (Landsberg, 2003; Masemola, 2005). This being said, to date, the organisation has not been able to come up with an alternative resource mobilisation framework going forward (Isaksen, 2001). The formation of a conflict transformation fund sponsored by member states may need consideration.

Lack of resources, both financial and human, have been identified as some of the most significant impediments to SADC conflict transformation, particularly in Lesotho. On the same note, socio-economic conditions were identified as underlying causes to the recurring conflict in the Mountain Kingdom. As such, any programme of action in relation to strengthening the economy, alleviating poverty, creating sustainable employment opportunities will require financial resources which SADC does not have. Considering these financial constraints, the organ would do well to avoid duplication of similar structures dealing with cross-cutting issues (Kapinga, 2015). A case in point is the similar ISDSC and an ISPDC which are made up of members of the ministerial committee. The funds used here could be better utilised to further the conflict transformation agenda in the sub-region.

According to Landsberg (2003), SADC has ambitions to be a strong regional, political and security community based on shared norms, values, procedures and institutions. Moreover, the author maintains that the regional organisation has serious capacity problems, including human and financial resource constraints, poor coordination, and the reality of national interests sidetracking it from attending to critical issues. The above-mentioned shortfalls have all been mentioned as important factors impeding the sub-region's ability to maintain peace and security, and the promotion of good governance and democratisation. It is therefore important to note that there is an imposing gap between making and adopting norms, values and institutions in the SADC and actually ensuring their implementation.

### **3.11.3 Overlapping membership**

Some spectators have noted that the overlapping membership of nation-states with other regional organisations and SADC has also brought about some challenges. A case in point is the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and SADC cooperation into the conflict in the DRC which has been faced with some challenges (Desmidt, 2017). The inclusion of the DRC into SADC in 1997, brought with it further complications as it came with conflict dynamics rooted in Central Africa (Ancas, 2011). While overlapping membership is not the primary obstacle impeding SADC's CT capacity, however, it must be noted that in

reality, member states will always make careful calculations opting for the membership which caters best for their national interests. For instance, to date, not all SADC countries have joined the SADC Standby Force. Also, Seychelles has leaned towards the Eastern Standby Force, whose maritime security policy has received more attention (Desmidt, 2017).

#### **3.11.4 Institutional and other challenges**

A further challenge concerns the lack of mention of CT in SADC terms and protocols, and this has often been attributed to the novelty of the conception. Moyo (2018) puts forth the suggestion that the REC is still to completely accept and adopt the concept of conflict transformation as a framework for addressing conflict in the sub-region.

Another challenge can be observed at the Summit level. While there is evidence of capacity at Summit level, it also seems evident that there is a lack of political will by signatory countries and disharmony within member states. Moreover, it seems apparent that the level of force used is informed by the strength and positioning of the state, particularly when dealing with regional hegemons. In this regard, there is a level of impartiality.

Moreover, another key challenge faced by the SADC which hinders CT is the issue of executive power in the organisation which rests with the Heads of State and Government Summit. Currently, conclusions on issues of peace and security are made based on consensus. Even worse, there is currently no blueprint in the Treaty for breaking a stalemate in cases where there is no agreement (Saurombe, 2012). Also, it is the secretariat that is anticipated to execute, yet it is not given any execution or monitoring capacity. On a similar note, Oluoch (2008) suggests that SADC did put in place plans for sanctions through the SADC Treaty article 33(1) to enforce agreements and resolutions. That being said, the sub-region remains relatively peaceful. As such, this reality affords the REC a dynamic prospect to build on and improve its peace and security capacity.

A further gap in terms of the legal framework guiding CT is evident in the lack of consistency between the MDP (2003), and the Protocol (2001). The actual relationship between the two is unclear. In fact, the MDP has never been initiated (Söderbaum and Tavares, 2011). For Nathan (2004), this might be attributed to the disagreement regarding the role of the Organ after the formation of SADC, with the more militaristic member states opting for a mutual defence pact.

*In Failure of security co-operation in SADC: The suspension of the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security*, Breytenbach (2000:88) sets out to evaluate the organisational framework and the

original thoughts which informed the establishment of the Organ. He also investigates the Organ's relevance in tackling conflicts within the SADC region. Breytenbach (2000) is of the view that to forge ahead; there ought to be a "regional rethinking about security co-operation" since security co-operation has not met its intended objective.

The SADC OPDSC has been met with various challenges, as shown in the literature, despite the many challenges, Dewa (2014) maintains that not much has been done in providing long-lasting peace and security solutions. Aeby (2018) is of the view that while the regional body has been able to build up its infrastructure in alignment with the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), its institutions lack both financial and political backing, with signatory countries reluctant to give up part of their sovereignty to external bodies and to enforce SADC principles.

### **3.12 SADC on a path to sustainable CT**

Essuman expresses the opinion that "intervention in conflicts succeed or fail, depending on the level of region-ness or the existence of structures for conflict resolution in the regional security complex" (2009:422). On the same breath, Motsamai (2018) maintains that the organisation lacks a comprehensive peacebuilding framework. Her study calls for a higher institutional interface between SADC and the states within which it mediates. Also, she warns against the organisation's over-reliance on diplomacy and further calls for greater involvement of non-state and developmental partners in its conflict transformation processes. Consequently, for SADC to effectively carry out conflict transformation, there needs to be an effort to reinforce and unite its institutional capacities and to place emphasis on member states. Cawthra (2019) affirms that the regional body needs to improve its institutional, conceptual and mobilising potentials.

Khadiagala (2014), further suggests that the SADC states could strategically utilise the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation to place more emphasis on the root causes of conflict. It is central to keep in mind that, over and above, peace and stability, the protocol necessitates the Organ to encourage the advancement of democratic institutions and practices and ensure the adherence to global human rights (Freedom House, 2014). For Khadiagala, A greater focus on these issues by troika leaders, with the full political backing of SADC, would incalculably strengthen the performance of the Organ and open space for the participation of civil society organisations in conflict-resolution processes (2014). Due to the fact that these are clearly stated aims of the protocol, enhancements can be achieved without

necessarily revisiting the touchy subject of sovereignty and solidarity at the highest level of SADC. Moreover, such a move that allows for the enhanced functionality of SADC would simultaneously cater to the moral obligation of all democratic states. This obligation speaks to the advancement and protection of human rights and democracy, not just within their borders, but even beyond them (Khadiagala, 2014).

Nathan (2006:607) highlights the regional body's trouble in launching a standard security regime. Notably, the regional body has been unsuccessful in playing a useful peace-making role in conflict situations. Nathan (2006:618) further maintains that in various intra-state conflicts, the regional body has avoided making critical comment and diplomatic engagement, often dealing with violent crises in governance as purely domestic affairs. The author identifies various factors contributing to the regional body's failure, which includes the reality that member states often want to maintain cordial relations and sustain trade relations with one another and therefore are reluctant to call out unconstitutional behaviour from other member states. Secondly, SADC states are resolute to uphold a stance of cohesion. Generally, SADC has been plagued by many challenges in the implementation of its objectives. In light of these challenges, Nathan (2006:617), emphasises the importance of unity and common values if SADC is to achieve its objectives to promote peace and security in Southern Africa.

Motsamai's study (2018) concludes that the primary condition driving SADC's effectiveness in achieving conflict transformation is the degree to which it distinguishes achieving the objectives of its broader peacemaking mandate, and those outlined in the specific mediation mandate. The study further concludes that the efficacy of SADC's mediation efforts should, therefore, be evaluated against its broader regional order to promote democracy, stability, and development in its member states, regardless of the specificities of the given mediation.

Nathan (2011) does not doubt that the SADC has the interest of the Southern African people at heart. However, the author maintains that the challenges impeding the organisation's capacity to fully harness its potential cannot be ignored. The study attributes these impediments to the reluctance of member-states on sensitive matters of sovereignty. SADC is, therefore, unable to operate at its optimal level in many cases. Moreover, in the Lesotho case, the lack of political will from politicians within the member states has often been cited as an impediment to the SADC's conflict transformation. On the downward slide, this implies giving up a certain degree of national sovereignty by each member state for the more significant and common good. Sadly, this is a touchy matter considering its complexity and sensitivity. Autonomy is one of



the most critical aspects of a state, and if violated, may threaten the existence of the state, its identity and interests.

Scholars who write on conflict largely agree that majority of African conflicts are as a result of numerous factors, which include colonialism, underdevelopment, corruption, unequal distribution of resources, politics of democratisation, and lack of employment opportunities to name a few (Konteh, 2006). This being said, Zartman (2000) puts forth the argument that to date African conflict resolution efforts have not addressed the root causes that continue to incite the intermittent conflict. The argument put forth here is one that suggests that a thorough understanding of the causes of intrastate conflicts may aid successful conflict transformation. Against this backdrop, it is central to state that human existence is always informed by the interconnectedness of various components including social, cultural, political and economic aspects. Analogously, transforming a conflict situation should require understanding the interconnectedness of conflict issues, realising that regional approaches must be inclusive, and to take into consideration the already existing dynamics that contribute to a conflict.

Above and beyond, Gambari (2003:255-274) investigates the security encounters confronted by the UN and the SADC in peace efforts in Southern Africa. For the author, the Lesotho and DRC conflicts have demonstrated the shortcomings of military solutions in peace and security matters in the sub-region (Gambari, 2003). The study maintains that military actions must be combined with political, social and economic programmes to ensure the emancipation of civilians in member states. The recommendation is that there should be a collaboration between the UN and the SADC to encourage and maintain peace and security in member states.

### **3.13 Summary**

The literature shows that indeed regional organisations have the potential to contribute to conflict transformation in African conflicts. However, the negative peace often attained by SADC interventions undermines the prospects for sustainable positive peace in the sub-region. Moreover, the examples discussed in the review of literature add weight to the conclusion that SADC efforts are often uncoordinated and may at times have contributed to certain aspects of the complicated or prolonged conflicts in the region. The literature review showed that SADC peace and security efforts often rely on management and conflict resolution approaches to the detriment of long-term CT.

In efforts to accomplish their newfound mandate, regional organisations such as SADC have successfully drawn up official pronouncements and established institutions of several types. The declarations and structures can be viewed as plausible pointers of development towards a conflict transformation framework since they show unity between member states and afford a platform for the organisation to act in a foreseeable, and focused manner. Nevertheless, these are only probable pointers of advancement; instead, the critical question should be whether these declarations are actually applied and implemented in reality.

The chapter finds that SADC has successfully established numerous structures and security mechanisms which have played a meaningful role in the conflict transformation agenda and as such gained popularity as one of the most effective sub-regional organisations in the region. At another level, the research finds that the SADC has to a certain extent, achieved progress in building its institutional capacity and as such, begun the process of preparing for the transformation of conflicts in the region.

A significant number of scholars have opted to hail the SADC's victories based on its success in building an institutional framework containing a treaty, protocols and mechanisms aimed at ensuring security co-operation, peacemaking and democratic governance. However, this study warns against such a practice and proposes instead that greater emphasis must be placed on the ability of nation-states to respect and defend the principles and objectives set out in the declarations. The regional body's security protocols need to be fully implemented so that its conflict transformation strategies can be fully realised. There is no doubt that SADC remains challenged with strategies to end violent conflicts in the sub-region. This is evident in the Lesotho crisis, which appears to be another litmus test for the current SADC framework in responding to threats to peace and security. It was against this background that the second part of the chapter sought to explore the efforts taken by the body to remedy the situation in the Mountain Kingdom.

Through the OPDSC, SADC has advanced in its ability to respond to political conflicts in the region notwithstanding various restrictions. The SADC OPDSC has often relied on military intervention and mediation to address peace and security issues. Furthermore, the appraisal of literature shows that various observers who have engaged the topics teased out in this chapter have failed to demonstrate whether or not the structures set up have been able to transform the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of conflict and this is the gap the current study seeks to fill.

The succeeding chapter will present the conceptual and theoretical frameworks which will serve as points of departure from the literature. The chapter critically discusses the different approaches to transforming conflict, which will assist in filling the highlighted gaps in these studied scholarly works to attain sustainable positive peace.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the study's conceptual and theoretical frameworks. In relation to conceptual issues, the chapter provides a broad overview of the key concepts used in this research. It seeks to clarify the meanings of concepts used to avoid ambiguity and to regulate the sense in which key terms are used. This is significant for grasping the main argument of the study. In relation to the theoretical framework, the subsequent part of the chapter explores the Human needs theory, Frustration-aggression theory, and the Enemy systems theory. It also goes on to explore the 'resolution' and 'management' approaches and seeks to differentiate conflict transformation with the previous approaches that have been utilised in the field. Additionally, the chapter outlines the core characteristics of the approach, viewed either as a process or an end state.

Subsequently, this chapter explores the ways through which conflict transformation is conducted. The chapter identifies micro and macro transformations and goes on to highlight the four dimensions of conflict transformation that is the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of conflict and reveals how transformation is crucial in generating changes in these dimensions. The third section focuses on the various actors who make the conflict transformation process possible. Finally, the chapter will summarise by highlighting the different broad approaches to peace-building that are used *vis-à-vis* the levels of actors to conflict transformation.

#### 4.2 Concepts

##### 4.2.1 Conflict – The definitional debate

Scholars in the field of Peace Studies have defined 'conflict' in various ways. As such, conceptualising conflict has become an important component in analysing conflict transformation efforts. The term 'conflict' is commonly understood as the clash of interests, ideologies, values, and struggle between individuals within states and between states, competition over scarce resources, incompatible goals by different groups (Effendi, 2010:84). For Wallensteen, conflict is "a social situation in which a minimum of two parties strive at the same moment in time to acquire the same set of scarce resources" (2002:16). Galtung posits that conflict can be understood as a situation where there are incompatible goals between

parties in a given setting (1972). Similarly, Mitchell (1981:15) alludes to conflict as a situation where individuals/ or groups desire goals which they view can only be obtained by one of the parties but not both. Moreover, Nicolaides (2008) suggests that conflict must be understood as a difference of interests and the quest of actual or alleged incompatible goals by different groups. In the same breath, Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff allude to conflict as “a condition in which one identifiable group of human beings is engaged in conscious opposition to one or more other identifiable groups because these groups are pursuing what are or appear to be incompatible goals (1997:179)”.

In the context of conflict transformation, particularly in reference to recurring conflicts like the one in Lesotho, this study maintains that conflict must be understood as a cyclical phenomenon, and not as a linear beginning-end event. This suggests the need for various approaches at various stages, including the use of negotiation and other forms of conflict prevention before they develop into open conflict. The study finds that the conflict in Lesotho has generally been accepted as a political conflict. This suggests a clash between political opponents, who go through scuffles to meet their interests which are often meant to acquire gain, control, allocate power, and also change or improve their political status within a given context (Kazanský, 2008:20).

For Galtung, the most common elements found in any conflict situation always include (a) attitudes which can be understood as negative attitudes often perceived in labels about others, (b) behaviours understood as compulsion and signs of antagonism or intimidations and (c) contradictions also understood as incompatibility of interests (Galtung, 2000). Galtung's triangle (diagram 1) may assist practitioners and researchers to possibly understand the underlying causes and nature of a conflict situation. All three components of the triangle as delineated above must be present to institute a conflict. In cases where one or more of these components are missing, it can be said that the conflict is a latent or a structural conflict.

Diagram1: Galtung's elements in conflict situations

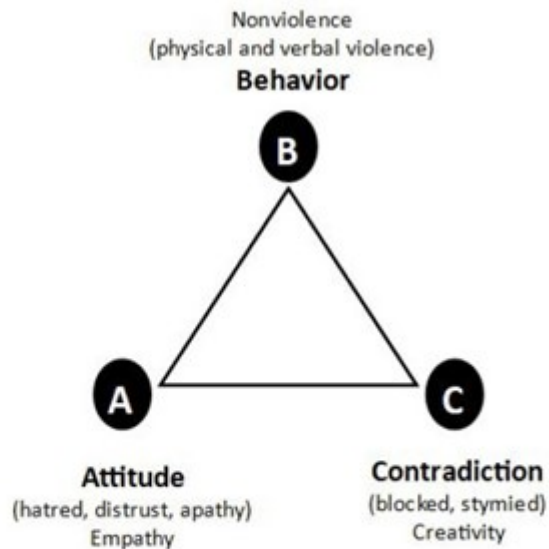


Figure 1: ABC conflict theory (Galtung, 2000, p.1)

According to Galtung (2000), conflict is a dynamic process in which the three factors are continually altering and swaying each other. As such, when a conflict develops, it becomes conflict formation, as the interests of the different parties come into conflict, they begin to express this in their relationships, and the conflicting parties then organise to pursue their interests. In the process, they form antagonistic attitudes and conflicting behaviour. With time, conflict formation will grow, deepen and spread. However, it is vital to note here that each conflict situation is unique and has its own complexities regardless of the main elements inherent in each conflict situation. In this study, the Lesotho conflict has been described by five respondents as elitist and political; moreover, it also has tenets of military and monarchical involvement. This speaks to the uniqueness and complexity of the conflict, requiring a well thought out framework if it is to be transformed into positive and sustainable peace. As such, this study suggests that conflict transformation efforts must not only focus on visible hostile behaviour of key players but must also explore in detail the prejudiced attitudes and incompatible interests of the various involved parties.

Despite the different interpretations of the conflicts discussed above, it is evident that all conflict situations have a common thread that weaves various analyses of conflict together. These are the competition/survival strategy, resources/power, and interests/values (Matlosa,

1999). Fundamentally, these three elements make up the critical triangle of conflicts in all societies. It is therefore generally accepted that conflicts occur, in social contexts when two or more parties compete over the distribution of: “resources/power and interests/values for survival in an environment where all parties are unable to share these resources and values in a mutually equitable and interdependent fashion (Matlosa, 1999).” Similarly, Mack and Snyder (1957: 216) maintain that for conflict to be said to be present in a specific context, there should be: presence of at least two parties; a condition of resource scarceness; the existence of actions that are intended to injure the other party/ parties; in the pursuit for mutually opposed goals.

A common suggestion drawn from the varying definitions is that conflict can occur at larger units such as states in the form of wars but also at the smallest interpersonal level. Consequently, in an attempt to understand ‘conflict’ it is imperative to understand the different levels of conflict, which are micro, meso and macro as discussed by Galtung (2004) in *Transcend & Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*. The personal nature of relationships characterises micro-conflicts, these can range from disagreements between spouses, family members, and even neighbours. In other words, this speaks to conflicts that occur within the very first point of interaction in one's personal life. Meso conflicts, on the other hand, are said to occur through or at the level of institutions of society (Galtung, 2004; Nicolaidis, 2008). This refers to conflicts outside one's household or outside their first point of contact. These may include quarrels concerning the educational system, foreign and defence policies or even gender roles in society. Macro-conflicts can be seen as conflicts between states or international actors, and are possibly the easiest to identify. These conflicts occur between larger entities at a much larger scale. The critical point made in the variations of conflict is that violence, as an end result is not a pointer to the existence of a conflict, but rather a result of the negative interaction of attitudes, behaviours, and contradictions.

#### **4.2.2 Conflict and violence: Establishing a contextual link**

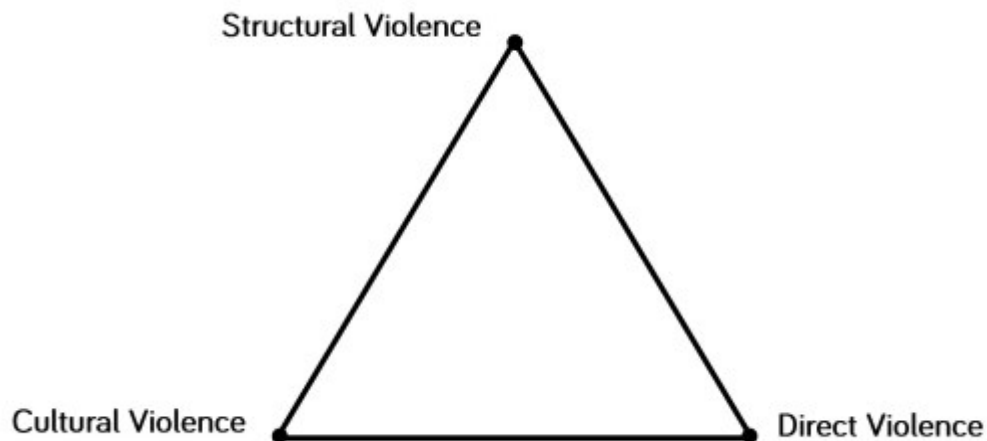
The work of Johan Galtung has mainly influenced the comprehension of violence as a concept in the context of peace studies. Galtung (1969) argues that violence transpires when a conflict is present and attempts to restrain the conflict fail. He suggests: “It is the failure to transform conflicts that lead to violence” (Galtung 2000: 3). For Galtung (1969:168) violence can be said to be in existence “when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisation.” While this definition has been criticised for being abstract, it provides the necessary boundaries within which we can

understand violence, which is, violence can either be direct or indirect. Direct violence is often verbal and is mostly visible (overt), while indirect violence is mainly structural and mostly invisible (covert).

According to Galtung (2000), violence is constituted by three elements, that is, cultural, structural and direct. Cultural violence can best be described as “an invisible element of violence, but one that retains significant weight within the minds of individuals” (Nicolaidis, 2008: 16). As a result, it qualifies as indirect or covert violence. Moreover, it can be understood as “those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence... that can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence (Galtung,1990:291).” In this context, culture is understood as a set of rules and norms that a particular society subscribes to. As such, cultural violence implies a deviation, an opposition or an intention to harm these accepted norms and rules that form the basis of right and wrong, moral and immoral, tolerable and intolerable in a given social setting. Structural violence is an integral part and a reality in the structure of human organisations, that is, the social, political, and economic. This form of violence is usually invisible, and this is mainly attributed to its nature which marks it ordinary, often blending in. As such, structural violence is often acceptable and almost always viewed as normal. It can be said to occur due to rigid and inflexible structures. This type of violence is often attributed to unresponsive policies that are only beneficial to a few often leading to the exclusion of designated groups (Galtung, 1969). On the other hand, direct violence is perhaps the most easily understood. As suggested by the name, this element is direct, with the intention to harm and injure or even kill. As such, it has been said to be the most destructive and irreversible form of violence. Whereas structural and cultural violence is imperceptible elements, direct violence is strongly visible and overt. Galtung’s violence triangle offers an all-inclusive understanding of violence in its various forms (see diagram 2 on page 101).



Diagram 2: Galtung's Violence Triangle



The sad reality is that the majority of sub-Saharan African states experience structural and cultural violence as daily occurrences, often generating brutal series of poverty, starvation, and violent conflict. As such, finding lasting solutions to these realities is critical for regional organisations like SADC. This is mainly because much emphasis is often placed on the apparent, physical violence, but it increasingly becomes critical to also pay attention to the sometimes subtle and often underlying forms of structural and cultural violence inherent in most conflict situations. This would involve a proper process of conflict analysis and understanding the dynamics of communities in conflict with the actual communities playing a key role. A key component of conflict transformation is that it advocates and encourages the involvement of all aspects of society (at various stages) including the people at the grassroots level. This speaks to the importance of utilising local leadership to ensure local ownership of the process so it can be sustainable.

A conflict that is handled constructively and positively is guaranteed to yield positive results and thus yield constructive changes in social contexts. On the contrary, if the conflict is handled destructively, to the exclusion of locals, the results are certain to be retrogressive and damaging. Such outcomes habitually end in violent and recurring conflict, deaths and other undesirable consequences. Rubin et al. (1994:15) maintain that while conflicts may be counter-productive and disruptive, they are not intrinsically violent, hazardous and hostile. Bercovitch & Allison (1996) argue that conflict can, in fact, yield mutual benefit and development, or on the contrary yield animosity, hostility, and violence. This view is supported by Galtung (1996:90) who

maintains that conflicts have both positive and negative aspects which form contradictions in the societal structure.

After consideration of various definitions of conflict, it is evident that conflict is an inevitable phenomenon that is influenced by a variety of causes and can manifest in various ways in society, including positive outcomes as discussed above. Violence, on the other hand, is the highest form of negative manifestation of conflict. As discussed, it is imperative to note that conflict is an undeniable part of human nature and interaction. However, its escalation becomes undesirable when it manifests itself in counterproductive violence leading to disruption and destruction of elements of society. As such, following the work of Galtung and other scholars, this research study adopts a broader definition of conflict. The research concludes that a common denominator present in all definitions is the different goals and interests of actors, who may turn to several means such as violence to meet their objectives. This suggests that conflicts can arise at various stages such as intra-personal, inter-personal, intra-nation and international, but regardless of the form they take, a key feature persists: they remain conflicts. While conflict occurs at the various levels, the study focused on conflicts within Lesotho where the recurring conflict is centred around large groups, mainly political parties, the military, and the monarchy within the same state. Moreover, it is important to note that this conflict exists with or without the direct involvement of external players such as the SADC.

#### **4.2.3 Negative and Positive Peace**

Galtung (1964), in his founding *Journal of Peace Research*, was one of the very first peace scholars to write extensively on the two types of peace in efforts to construct a theory that could assist to end and in the future avoid violent conflict. For Galtung, there are two types of peace: negative peace and positive peace. Negative peace is “the absence of turmoil, tension, conflict, and war,” and positive peace refers to the “conditions that are good for management, orderly resolution of conflict, harmony associated with mature relationships, gentleness, and love (Boulding, 1978:3).” Eventually, the positive-negative peace concept was formulated, it is grounded on the understanding of violence as direct and indirect violence as discussed earlier in this chapter. It is an expanded conceptualisation of violence and hence has an expounded understanding of peace.

For Galtung, these two dimensions of peace cannot be separated; instead, they lead to each other. He argues that negative peace is characterised by ceasefires or what we see when the global superpowers or the UN, National Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) or regional

bodies such as SADC, armed with their coercive military strength, intervene in attempts to end violence (Galtung, 1964:2). While Galtung cannot be labelled as an advocate for coercion, he does, however, suggest that coercion in certain situations may yield to positive peace. Similarly, Sandole (2010:9) notes that “negative peace might be a necessary condition for positive peace. However, negative peace tends not to be sufficient.” For Sandole (2010), the attainment of negative peace still means deep-rooted conflicts remain untransformed and as such may cause the conflict to recur. This is mainly due to the failure of conflict resolution to address the root cause(s) of war (frustrated basic human needs). Instead, conflict resolution places greater emphasis on top leadership at the detriment of addressing the root causes of the conflict. As such, Galtung advocates for strategies that prioritise engagement with all parties to the violence, including the victims, perpetrators, civil society, policy-makers and government institutions within the conflicting society (Staub, 2005).

### **4.3 Theories**

#### **4.3.1 Social and Psychological Approaches**

Akinyoade (2012) categorises the theories in Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS) according to their respective field definition issues, the first group includes, defining peace; nature, causes, and the onset of the conflict. The second definitional issue is the dynamics of conflict. The third issue is concerned with conflict resolution, and finally, the last is concerned with building sustainable peace. The theories belonging to the first and second distinction issue focus on the psychological and the social aspects of conflict and are generally directed towards providing different understandings of the concept of peace and the conceptualisation of the conditions necessary for establishing positive and sustainable peace. These include but are not limited to: Human needs theory, Frustration-aggression theory, and the Enemy systems theory. The human needs theory is premised on the argument that all human beings have vital basic human needs necessary for their survival. Advocates of this theory such as Burton (1990), Azar (1990), Sites (1990), Sandole (1990), Roy (1990), Mitchell; (1990) and Bay (1990) argue that human beings, regardless of race, colour, gender, and religion, have basic needs which are necessary for survival in society. The theory further states that violence is likely to occur because of unmet psychological and physiological human needs, rather than because of interests (Burton, 1990).

The central argument embedded in the Frustration-Aggression school of thought is founded on the belief that violent behaviour generally stems from frustration. The suggestion made here is

that humans become irritable and aggressive when they are repressed from attaining their basic needs or reaching their desired goals (Steger, 2004:124). On the other hand, the Enemy System theory makes the fundamental assumption, that human needs enable people to divide themselves into out-groups (enemies) and in-groups (allies) (Cunningham, 2001). The relevance of the Enemy System theory is that it helps to understand why conflict erupts among people. It further allows us to tie together micro and macro levels of analysis by introducing important multi-level phenomenon.

While the above-mentioned theories contribute to our analysis and understanding of conflict, many of these theories in Peace Conflict Studies are found wanting in this study as they place much emphasis on the causes, onset and dynamics of conflict than the more important issue of transforming the conflict situation and attaining lasting peace. Due to the unsuitability and insufficiency of the above-mentioned theories, this thesis will use the conflict transformation theory as a tool of analysis. Lederach's (1997) conflict transformation can be said to be located within the last core distinction issue, which is building sustainable peace. As a result of its long-term utility, this core distinction issue is chosen for this study towards the transformation of the state of conflict in Lesotho.

#### **4.3.2 Conflict management**

Bloomfield and Reilly (1998:18) suggest that conflict management can be viewed as the optimistic and constructive handling of differences at a certain point in time. For Miall (2004), proponents of this approach view violent conflict as a lasting consequence of differences, of values and interests within and between individuals and groups within communities. The approach aims to manage violent conflicts through different diplomatic initiatives. Instead of encouraging methods for conflict elimination procedures, the conception focuses on the more realistic and attainable inquiry of managing conflict situation. It suggests that conflict is a phenomenon that exists but one that can be managed through a constructive process, moreover, it considers how opposing parties can be involved in the cooperative process of managing the conflict situation. The management perspective seeks to find a "practical, achievable and cooperative system for the constructive management of differences (Bloomfield and Reilly, 1998:18)". Swanström and Weissmann (2005) consider conflict management as measures that minimise, moderate and contain a conflict without essentially solving the issues that led to the conflict. Conflict management is often utilised at a more diplomatic and political level and includes the involvement of respected leaders. The outcomes of this method often yield negative peace, political agreements and ceasefires.

Given intrastate or political conflict, the conflict management approach is seen as an appropriate process that will allow the various leaders of all the different stakeholders to peacefully manage the conflict by making information available and to ensure codification of rules to ensure stabilisation of mutual expectation (Semeniuk, 2010). The approach suggests that after conflict analysis, the opposing parties can be informed of each other's perceptions, as well as alternative methods of achieving the values, goals and possible outcomes expected by all parties. In doing so, the scope of conflict analysis can be broadened. In this regard, the point is to ensure that the conflicting parties are cognisant of their everyday needs hence the relevance of this approach when it comes to diffusing and containing parties in conflict. As such, the approach allows for the achievement of political settlements, mainly by those prominent leaders who possess the power and resources to exert weight on the disputing parties and to influence them to find common ground.

It is noticeable from the above that conflict is a long-term phenomenon and an ineradicable part of human nature. For proponents of the 'management' approach, conflict arises within organisations and within relationships. As a result, resolving the underlying causes of the conflicts is seen as an unrealistic endeavour. In their view, the more feasible option is to manage and contain the volatility of the conflict, and infrequently reach a compromise which might lead to a move away from violence and a resuming of normal politics and healthy functioning of society (Miall, 2005:3).

As mentioned earlier, the objective of the conflict management approach is to mainly tackle the problems in efforts to contain them and not to solve them. The gist of conflict management initiatives is to focus on the short-term management of the conflict. An example of management efforts is intervention through the use of peace-keeping troops. In such occasions, external diplomats from bilateral or multilateral organisation's are often used as peace builders. Furthermore, conflict management can also be useful in violent conflict situations in the form of peacekeeping.

This practice has been observed when the United Nations peacekeepers are sent to manage the conflicting groups often by keeping them apart. Harris (2011:123) notes that separating conflicting parties is often conducted simultaneously with other diplomatic activities until the violence subsides thus making way for more sustainable and transformative programmes from negative peace to positive peace. Similarly, Cooper (2008:86) views conflict management as efforts to isolate the disputing parties and to guarantee that set rules of engagement are followed

without partiality. In a way, peace-making can be seen as a fire fighting initiative that would then allow parties to take time to consider the causes and issues exacerbating the conflict. The aim is to limit fatalities, but it is equally important to ensure a move away from negative peace as achieved by the agreement.

For Buckley-Zistel (2008:22) the main objective of the conflict management programme is to use influential experts and academics who are presumed to be balanced cost-benefit calculators as facilitators to target political, military and religious leaders to change their behaviour which in turn changes the attitudes of communities. A similar view is held by Paffelnholz (2008:3), who argues that the management approach aims to identify and bring to the negotiation table leaders of the conflicting parties. This is mainly achieved through what Foucault (1994:22) terms 'principled negotiation'. In this regard, negotiations, occur in controlled environments where various key stakeholders engage in enabling participants to see the conflict from a different perspective. For that reason, Holmes (2001) ascertains that this assists disputing parties to grasp each other's key concerns, interests and objectives and to ensure they express their emotions explicitly and legitimately. While conflict management may seem like a diplomatic tool which is useful at the macro level, it is imperative to note that the approach is also appropriate at the meso and micro level. This being said, conflict management necessitates a complex level of diplomatic shrewdness for it to bear the anticipated results. Moreover, it relies extensively on external players, and this can be regarded as its shortfall. The world has witnessed numerous conflict management efforts. In the context of Lesotho, this was seen as South Africa, later joined by Botswana, under the auspices of SADC sent in troops for a peacekeeping mission to rescue Lesotho from a *coup* in 1998.

The management perspective shows various merits and contributes to peace-making. While the conflict management approach has numerous shortfalls, it still remains an important starting point for long-term conflict transformation initiatives. In some sense, it can be seen as an initial step in the resolution and transformation of conflicts. This view is supported by Zartman (2009) who maintains that the most effective methodology is to begin with conflict management which minimises hostilities but later can be built on to ensure ultimate resolution of incompatibilities.

However, various criticisms have been put forward against the management approach. The concept has often been criticised for its notion of 'management' which implies that people can be directed or controlled as though they were physical objects (Lederach, 1995: 16-17). Besides, it has been said while 'management' controls the volatility of the conflict situation it

fails to deal with or to address the underlying causes or the sources of conflicts thus offering a propensity to conflict regeneration and recurring conflict (Hoffman, 1995; Wallensteen, 2007; Paffenholz, 2000 and 2008;).

Moreover, the approach has been criticised for its concentration on those in senior leadership often side-lining internal and external actors during and after the negotiation process (Paffenholz, 2000). A significant shortfall of the conflict management perspective is that it puts forward a short-term rather than a long-term sustainable solution to the conflict. Moreover, it fails to recognise the context-based nature, length and complexity of the conflicts; it seeks to attain more limited goals as it is only concerned with minimising and containing violence. As such, the conflict management standpoint on its own does not live up to the standards of long-term and sustainable conflict transformation and peace-building.

### **4.3.3 Conflict resolution**

The conflict resolution approach is one of the most well-known concepts in peace-building theory. The works of scholars and practitioners in the field include but are not limited to Bercovitch (1984 and 1996), Zartman (1985 and 1995); Kriesberg (1997 & 2001), Fisher and Ury (1981) Kelman, Fisher, Kriesberg (cited in Wallensteen, 2002); Spangler (2003) and Avruch (2003). The goal of the conflict resolution perspective is to resolve the underlying causes of conflict and to go even further to rebuild dented relationships between the conflicting parties (Paffenholz, 2009). The key supposition in the approach is that every conflict has its origins and these origins can be traced, and as soon as these origins are traced, then the conflict can be resolved. This is reiterated by Botes (1994:4-5) who records that majority of conflict resolution proponents accept that conflict is in its nature finite and, as such can be effectively solved by attending to the origins of the dispute.

The objective of the conflict resolution perspective is to fashion a permanent win-win solution that satisfies the aspirations and interests of all parties in the conflict (Bush and Folger 1994:51, Burton, 1991:81). Wallensteen notes that conflict resolution occurs “where the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solves their central incompatibilities, accept each other's continued existence as parties and cease all violent actions against each other (2007:18).” Three key elements are worth noting here: first, there needs to be an agreement to solve the fundamental incompatibilities; secondly, an acceptance of each other's existence; and finally, a cessation of violent activities against each other. Advocates of the conflict resolution theory

argue that it is possible to resolve conflict if parties can be assisted to explore, analyse and map the conflict, and to question and reposition their interests and positions (Miall et al., 1999:183).

Conflict resolution seeks to eradicate violence by working on the behaviours of actors through the use of mediation, negotiations and diplomacy (Paffenholz, 2009:4). For Buckley-Zistel (2008:17), conflict resolution can be understood as process-oriented efforts that aim to deal with the fundamental structural roots of violent conflicts. In opposition to the conflict management school, proponents such as John Burton and Ronald Fisher maintain that conflicts do not only occur because of dissenting interests, which can be negotiated but also due to non-material, non-negotiable human needs. For instance, conflict can occur due to marginalisation and exclusion which are factors that need to be addressed in any attempt to end the conflict. A key feature undergirding conflict resolution is that “conflicts have predetermined lives and clear ends and can be resolved or declared obstinate or intractable (Botes, 2003:13)”.

#### **4.3.3.1 Principles and goals of Conflict Resolution**

The very first central principle emphasised within the conflict resolution school is conflict analysis. Avruch emphasises that “effective conflict resolution depends upon conflict analysis (2003:175)”. To ensure effective conflict analysis, it is critical to consider culture since many ethnic, class, religious, or gender-based conflicts are ‘inter-cultural’ in nature, which might not be evident at first glance. The second fundamental principle within the field is a process of reconstruction of relationships. Rubinstein (2003:196) mentions that the goal of conflict resolution is not only concerned with finding solutions, but is also concerned with helping disputing parties to restore, reconstruct, and to ensure the formation of new normative systems. This is also supported by Waisová (2005:31) who places increased emphasis on the importance of rebuilding relationships between adversaries, so as to ensure that no new conflicts arise from attempts of resolving the previous conflict. The process towards resolution includes but is not limited to a party being helped to analyse, explore and reframe the interests and positions of the conflicting parties to ensure a mutually acceptable and constructive outcome. Nonetheless, in identity-based conflicts, a situation might arise that conflicting parties reconsider their interests and positions, yet refuse to compromise on their core needs (Burton, 1981). This causes the process to reach a point of deadlock.

This approach is concerned with how parties can progress from destructive zero-sum forms of conflict to positive-sum constructive results with the aim of developing conflict resolution



processes that will be welcomed by conflicting parties and also effective in resolving conflict (Azar and Burton, 1986:1). Conflict resolution is embedded in human needs approach which as noted by Burton (1990:59), holds that human beings go all-out to ensure their needs are met, should these needs remain unfulfilled, humans may resort to violence, instability and even social conflict in efforts to pursue their needs. This emanates from the belief that in the quest for survival humans both individuals and groups require more than basic needs such as food and water, but require safety and security, love and self-esteem, recognition, personal fulfilment, identity, culture, freedom and distributive justice (Pefferholz, 2009). According to Miall (2004:8), resolution proponents often put forward the argument that warring parties can move away from conflicts as long as parties are assisted to discover, analyse, question and reconsider their positions and interests. As such, one of the critical components in transforming or rebuilding relationships is the intervention by a skilled third party who engages with the disputing parties. The role of third parties is to assist in finding the roots of the conflict and further explore inventive methods that the involved parties may have overlooked in their pledge to established positions.

Various criticisms of the conflict resolution perspective have been put forward. One such criticism is that the approach seems to be overly basic about conflict and its dynamics. Containing, resolving and even transforming conflict proves challenging due to the dynamic nature of conflicts themselves. Furthermore, 'conflict resolution' infers that conflict is pathological and dysfunctional; hence it is regarded as a phenomenon that must be eliminated (Upreti, 2002). This is re-iterated by Lederach as he explains 'resolution' can be understood as implying 'finding a solution to a problem' and therefore bringing a complete halt to some unwanted happenings. Moreover, the resolution perspective ignores that at times conflict can be healthy and constructive as it can serve as an essential catalyst of change and transformation (Miall, 2004:162). Additionally, this perspective incorrectly assumes that all conflict is violent. As a result of its concern with ending the inherently destructive conflict, the perspective pays little or no attention to the more important underlying causes of conflict. It also implies that conflict is a temporary incidence that can be 'resolved' permanently through mediation or other intervention methods (Botes, 2003).

Conflict is a consequent part of human interaction and relationships and thus cannot be eliminated entirely. However, it still needs to be managed appropriately, where possible resolved, but most importantly transformed to ensure positive peace, security and long-term stability. It is apparent that conflict resolution places emphasis on the role of trained toothless

third parties working unofficially with the conflicting parties. Given the shortcomings of the 'resolution' perspective, Rupesinghe (1995) accepting the dynamic nature of conflict processes, suggests that efforts towards dealing with them must be equally dynamic and sustainable. He further emphasises the need for a conceptual shift if the goal is to reduce the negative effects of conflict, a shift from 'resolution' to 'transformation' (Rupesinghe, 1995:65).

Mitchell (2002) disagrees with the arguments put up against the resolution school. Mitchell's argument is centred on John Burton and Frank Dukes who in the early 1990s, wrote extensively on conflict resolution processes. They explained conflict resolution as a process that aims to study needs and options of disputing parties, and reach agreements that satisfy all parties and also transform existing relationships that have contributed to the conflicts initially (Burton & Dukes, 1990). There has always been an acceptable stance that suggests that many 'resolutions' definitely include the important component of ensuring major structural changes in relationships and social systems if the 'resolutions' are to be genuinely acceptable, self-supporting and sustainable. Moreover, in the absence of structural changes mentioned above, any resolutions reached would remain unsustainable (Mitchell, 2000:3). Mitchell's (2000) argument weakens the argument brought forward by transformation advocates who emphasise a systemic change in efforts to end violent conflict; they maintain that this is a defining feature which distinguishes transformation from resolution (Botes, 2003:365). Here we see a clear link between the resolution and transformation approaches. Often the term conflict transformation is used rather loosely and interchangeably with conflict resolution. In such instances, it is used to refer to various forms of conflict resolution or the deeper level of transformation of conflicts (Reimann, 2004:10). It, therefore, can be argued that the interpretation depends very much on one's own conceptual understanding.

#### **4.4 Towards a conflict transformation approach**

The issue of building sustainable peace embodies the theories of the new school that proposes the conflict transformation approach that helps find a long-term solution to conflicts rather than a management approach that offers only temporary mechanisms of managing conflicts (Rupesinghe, 1995; Lederach & Maiese, 2009). For Lederach (1995b:17) "conflict transformation emerged as a search for an adequate language to explain the peacemaking venture." It became "a relatively new invention within the broader field of peace and conflict studies" (Botes, 2003) and "a process that will make up for the inadequacies of mere resolution" (Mitchell, 2002:1). Various scholars and practitioners have attributed the frequent use of the fairly new term 'transformation' as a response to the increasing misuse of the term 'resolution'.

They argue that the term ‘resolution’ as it has been commonly used can “stand for almost anything from outright victory, defeat and revenge as an outcome, as well as for many processes involving overt violence (bombing for peace) or covert coercion (economic sanctions to obtain parties acquiescence to a dictated settlement) as ‘resolution’ methods”. As such, the concept of transformation has gained prominence because of the corruption and ambiguous use of the conception of ‘resolution’. The argument is that the term ‘resolution’ has been used broadly to substitute the term; and fits perfectly into the category of ‘settlement’ approaches (Bloomfield, 1997).

#### **4.4.1 Conflict transformation defined**

The concept of conflict transformation emerged in the 1990s (e.g., Lederach, 1995; Rupesinghe, 1995; Vayrynen, 1991, 1999; Bichsel, 2009:38) as the world witnessed many civil wars that originated from old grievances. This was at a period when proponents of ‘transformation’ felt that the common reigning idea of conflict resolution at the time would not be able to tackle the complexities of contemporary conflict often characterised by scholars such as Kaldor (1999) as ‘new wars’. The most dominant work on the topic has probably been that of Galtung (1996). Moreover, an emphasis on transformation in Peace and Conflict studies can also be traced through the work of Curle (1971, 1990), Galtung (1975, 1976), Lederach (1995, 1997), Vayrynen (1991), Rupesinghe (1995), Jeong (1999). Conflict resolution, conflict management and conflict settlement that had been commonly advocated for in conflict and peace studies had now been discovered to be historically, epistemologically, ontologically inadequate in efforts to deal with violent conflicts. As such, advocates argue that modern-day conflicts necessitate much more than the solutions offered by conflict resolution and conflict management. For them, conflict transformation is a distinct and possibly more wide-ranging process than conflict resolution. However, there are differences among the proponents of conflict transformation. It then becomes increasingly important to have a clear grasp of the conflict transformation process, including its underlying assumptions, its intended outcomes, and how best these can be attained. However, it is also paramount to note that one key point that most writers and practitioners agree on: that “transformation takes the business of coping with protracted destructive conflicts beyond the cessation of violence, the achievement of a compromise settlement or even the joint creation of an acceptable solution to the issues currently in conflict between the adversaries in other words, beyond resolution (Mitchell, 2002:3).”

Conflict transformation is continually closely interconnected to holistic social and systemic change. The transformation approach embraces an all-inclusive approach of dealing with the core causes of conflicts by transforming the causes and cultures which encourage violent conflict in society. One of the strengths of the perspective is that it aims to do more than ending violence and attaining negative peace but seeks to build positive peace and lasting peace over a long-term period. It is reinforced by mutual empathy and is concerned with involving local actors in efforts of transforming conflicts. It is a process that allows interaction between the conflict parties and seeks to build healthy relationships between the warring factions, as well as between the state and the society (Ramsbotham et al., 2008; Miall, Ramsbotham & Woodhouse, 2002; Reimann, 2004; Mitchell, 2002; Spangler, 2003). Various scholars and practitioners have often labelled conflict transformation as a step beyond and the deepest level of 'conflict resolution' (Miall, 2004; Reimann, 2004; Mitchell, 2002; Spangler, 2003). Conflict transformation thus surpasses the limitations of conflict resolution and other previous conceptions.

Similarly, scholars such as Ramsbotham et al. (2000); Caritas Internationalis (2000); and Kriesberg, (2011) argue that the concept of conflict transformation is a broader extension of conflict resolution. The authors further argue that the goal of conflict transformation is to change actual or latent violent conflict into peaceful and non-violent relationships inspired by processes of political, social systemic change. For Kriesberg, conflict transformation "should be viewed in the context of the much broader approach towards managing and resolving social conflicts, generally identified as conflict resolution (2011:50)". In addition, he places much emphasis on the value of an outlook that seeks to initiate and sustain transformations. For Kriesberg (2011), one of the critical components of conflict transformation is the long-term outlook and process nature of conflict transformation efforts. As such, it can be understood as a long-term, complex process that has numerous challenges as it progresses. Equally, such conflict transformation can be understood as a multi-pronged process, which unfolds at varying levels among engaged parties (Kriesberg, 2011:50).

Moreover, conflict transformation proponents see the approach as an improvement on conflict resolution. For them, it seeks to add to and complement the shortcomings of other perspectives such as conflict prevention, conflict management, and conflict resolution, instead of replacing them. A similar view is held by the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy which argues that conflict resolution supposedly brings 'resolution' to the conflict but eventually sets up the disputing parties for failure, as the systematic matters which are very much part of the problem

remain unresolved (Botes, 2003:365). Galtung (1995), a proponent of conflict transformation argues that some types of conflicts do not reach a final state of affairs when 'resolved' but merely change form and may resurface, even off the agenda, they are merely temporarily suppressed and momentarily abandoned in pursuit of other goals. This is in direct contradiction to the argument put forward by conflict resolution and settlement theorists who argue that conflicts have finite and predetermined life comprehended in a linear form. This argument speaks to the increasingly dynamic nature of contemporary conflicts in the international system. Advocates of conflict transformation challenge the alleged notion of the conflict resolution school that suggests that conflict is unwelcome and should be removed or at least minimized, rather the transformation school view conflict as a necessary evil and a transforming agent for systemic change (Lederach, 1995:18).

As an expansion of conflict resolution and other conceptions, conflict transformation extends further than conflict resolution as it aims to attain a more lasting level of change within the conflict society. The inclination towards the term conflict transformation over conflict resolution or management is further highlighted by another idea, which argues that "conflict resolution theory and practice focus on the dynamics of the conflict itself rather than the system (political, economic, or social) in which the conflict itself is embedded (Botes, 2003: 364-5)". Advocates of transformation including Lederach and many proponents have stood in opposition to the 'management' and the 'resolution' of conflict arguing that conflict transformation differs from these as it concerns itself with a firm understanding of the underlying nature of the conflict itself (Spangler, 2003). On the contrary, Mitchell (2007), holds a differing view and refers to the works of Burton and Dukes in the 1990s, arguing that resolution strategies do in fact place emphasis on analysing the disputing parties' needs and options before leading up to changes in relationships and social systems (Botes, 2003:365).

#### **4.4.2 Conflict transformation as a peace-building approach**

Peace-building has often been understood as a process concerned with achieving peace. For Paffenholz (2008:3) based on one's conception of peace, peace-building stands out in terms of approach, the choice of activities and time-frame. In efforts to clearly articulate the concept of conflict transformation as an approach, it becomes increasingly important to pay closer attention to the preceding approaches that have influenced the emergence of conflict transformation as an all-encompassing conception. For Botes (2003:12), conflict transformation follows a process often starting, with conflict management, then conflict

resolution and finally concluding with conflict transformation hence signifying a sequence of indispensable transitional steps.

#### **4.4.3 Conflict transformation**

According to Fisher et al. (2009: 8), “conflict transformation theory assumes that conflict is a product of inequalities, and injustices within social, economic, and cultural frameworks of societies.” For them, the goal of conflict transformation as a practice is:

To change structures and frameworks that cause inequality and injustice, including economic redistribution;

- To improve longer-term relationships and attitudes among the conflict parties; and
- To develop processes and systems that promote empowerment, justice, peace, forgiveness, reconciliation, [and] recognition (Fisher et al., 2000:9).”

This view is supported by Schmid (2000:30) who defines conflict transformation as “an approach that addresses the structural realities of inequality, rights, and justice, and aims to transform violence and destruction into constructive social change.” Moreover, he argues that the term conflict transformation aims to concentrate on the following, continuous tasks:

- [a] “focus on the developmental process of conflict, rather than on its end-point;
- [an] awareness of how conflict transforms relationships, communication, perceptions, issues, and social organisations;
- [the] intention to transform the conflict from violent expression (in armed conflict and war) to constructive and peaceful expression;
- [a] concentration on the structural transformations in or between societies in order for peace to be sustainable; intervention in the resolution processes by combatants themselves, local individuals and communities, and external third parties, in an integrated multi-track framework (Schmid, 2000:31).”

As previously articulated, conflict transformation scholars maintain that present-day conflicts necessitate more than a reconsideration of positions and recognising win-win outcomes (Miall, 2005). Additionally, they argue that there is always the possibility that the relationships between disputing sides may be embedded in a trap of tense relationships going back far beyond the conflict in question at the time. Consequently, conflict transformation can also be understood as a “process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests,

discourses and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict (Miall, 2004:70).”

Productive conflict is seen as an essential change agent. Conflict transformation scholars advocate for a comprehensive approach, which places emphasis on local ownership and on providing support to affected groups within the society in conflict situations as opposed to bringing in mediators or interveners from outside. Besides, advocates of conflict transformation recognise the long-term nature of the conflict transformation process, which consists of various players playing smaller or larger roles, yet all being equally important. For Lederach (1995:212), conflict transformation “must actively envision, include, respect, and promote the human and cultural resources from within a given setting”. This comprises a fresh perspective through which we do not mainly view the context and the parties involved as the ‘problem’ while the outsider or the intervener as the ‘answer’. Somewhat, we accept the long-term goal of transformation as one that advocates for the building on people and resources within the conflict context (Miall, 2004). For Gounden & Solomon (1999:7-8), the strength of conflict transformation lies mostly in its inclusivity approach that ensures that the various actors from the various groups in the conflict society are involved in the transformation towards positive, sustainable peace. Moreover, these groups have an interest in attaining positive peace and are the actual custodians of the peace process, considering that transformation aims to attain peace and build a sustainably peaceful and secure society.

Lederach’s approach has influenced the move towards the importance and emphasis of local players in peace-building efforts. Conflict transformation tactics refer to the outcome, process, and structure-oriented long-term peace-building efforts. According to Paffenholz (2013:13), “Peace-building is a long-term multi-track transformative contribution to social change, helping to create a just and sustainable peace beyond the narrow definition of a post-conflict period.” In that regard, it combines a multi-actor and multi-track approach with short, medium and long-term perspectives. The central notion of Lederach's argument is premised on the necessity and desirability of making ‘long-term infrastructure’ and therefore, the need for a transformation model in the Mountain Kingdom. Another feature that makes the conflict transformation theory appropriate for this study stems from the emphasis it places on bottom-up peace-building approach as opposed to a top-down approach or even force-fed solutions from external players.

In essence, conflict transformation sees peace as constantly evolving and capable of improving the quality of relationships. It is also designed to address the natural phenomenon of conflict inherent in human interaction through non-violent mechanisms that seek to address the issues, and improve understanding, equality and respect in relationships (Lederach and Maise, 2003:3). More importantly, conflict transformation is a deeply rooted and sustainable integrated framework for both short and long-term transformation. Transformational interventions encourage the use of non-violent methods that reduce and eventually eliminate violence. Such interventions put in place social systems that cater to basic human needs and ensure public participation in issues that affect the public. This, in turn, develops a state of peace that is deeply rooted and sustainable.

#### **4.4.4 Ways of transformation**

In efforts to appreciate the conflict transformation approach, it is vital to look further into the facets that undergo a transformation process in conflict environments. In line with this, transformation happens at two levels, the macro and micro levels. Micro transformations entail alterations in the parties, and the nature of the conflict while macro transformation speaks to changes in the socio-political system within which conflict is based. For Augsberger (1992), conflict transformation takes place when there is a conversion, or at least visible change in at least one of the following: attitudes, behaviour and the conflict itself. In other words, the process of transformation must result in a considerable change in the attitudes by altering negative perceptions; it must also transform behaviour as well as the actual conflict by aiming to determine, define, and eliminate incompatibilities between the parties (Botes, 2003). In this regard, Kriesberg, (1998) asserts that transformation occurs when there are visible changes in the relationship between opponents, from changes within one of the important opponents, and changes in the actual setting within which the conflict takes place.

#### **4.4.5 Dimensions of transformation**

Lederach (2003:2) explains CT as a long-term transformation of negative peace in conflict situations to positive peace system. He maintains that the process must prioritise changes in the following dimensions, i.e. the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of a conflict. Lederach argues that both conflict and change are natural phenomena that are a critical part of humanity, as such will have an impact on these four broad categories:

- Personal: Changes in the personal dimension must ensure desired changes in the individual. It also aims to ensure the elimination of negative effects of social conflict while maximising the possibility for development and welfare of the individual at the



physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual levels. In the context of SADC, this would mean interventions that mitigate the damaging effects of social conflict but also maximises the possibility for individual development that includes the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects (Lederach, 1997:82).

- **Relational:** The relational dimension focuses on the human relationships in the conflict situation. The intention is to ensure healthy methods and open communication between various stakeholders. Moreover, it seeks to go beyond the visible issues to reach underlying issues, in order to ensure that the various parties understand and respect each other's aspirations, hopes and fears. In reality, social conflict has a direct impact on the relationship between stakeholders and between warring parties. Also, social conflict determines how power is used and shared but most importantly social conflict has an impact on how warring parties shape their relationships going forward (Lederach, 2003). In relation to SADC, achieving relational transformation would require intentional intervention to maximise mutual understanding, and to bring to the surface fears, hopes and goals of the people involved (Lederach, 1997:82).
- **Structural:** Changes in this dimension aim to understand social conditions and underlying issues that contribute to violence. As such, interventions by RECs must be able to support changes to the system and ensure that basic human needs are met; and local ownership of processes (Lederach, 1997:83).
- **Cultural:** Detect and comprehend the cultural elements that exacerbate violent expressions of conflict. Moreover, build on existing resources for constructively responding to and handling conflict (Lederach, 2014). The cultural dimension intends to transform patterns of group life that have come about as a result of the conflict and the processes that have emerged in relation to dealing with differences. In practice, this would necessitate that the sub-regional body has programmes in place that seek to explore the cultural patterns that give rise to violent conflict and also to build on culturally sensitive and inclusive mechanisms to respond to conflict situations (Lederach, 2003).

Similar to the transformation of the dimensions proposed by Lederach (1997), Miall (2004); Ramsbotham et al. (2005:163) propose five types of transformers of conflict, that if given sufficient attention can effectively mitigate violent conflict in peace-building and conflict transformation efforts. These are: 'context', 'structural', 'actor', 'issue', 'and personal and

group' transformation. It is important to note that conflicts are entrenched within their surrounding environments, such as the social, regional, and international contexts, which affects the replication of hostilities and the potential of resolution. According to Miall (2004), changes in the context of the conflict can alter the perceptions of the conflicting parties concerning each other. Structural transformation is necessary when the initial causes of the conflict lie within the structural relationships between and within the involved actors (Hosvang, 2008:7). It is also essential that the actors change their goals and alter their approach towards the conflict. To enable resolution of the conflict, the asymmetrical relationship must be transformed into an symmetrical and balanced relationship. Within the explanation of conflict transformation is the view that personal, relational and structural transformations are all key in efforts to address conflicts effectively. In this regard, conflict transformation requires various players but is led by the top leadership, (level within which negotiations occur); political leaders, academics, professionals and intellectuals and lastly, local leadership, NGOs and grassroots organisations. The personal/elite change speaks to the leaders with decision making powers to reach a compromise; in other words, they need to rethink and alter their initial stances. Issue transformation speaks to a change in the position taken on key issues so as to enable the parties to reach a state of compromise.

**Table 1: Five types of transformation adapted by the Author from Ramsbothams, Woodhouse and Oliver (2011).**

<b>Context transformations</b>	Changing the local, national, regional and international environment. Changes in the context of a conflict that may change each party's perception of the conflict situation and motives
<b>Structural transformations</b>	Changes in the basic structure of the conflict, the entire structure of relationships and power distribution in the conflict is transformed.  A change from asymmetric to symmetric relations, power structures and root causes of violence.
<b>Actor transformations</b>	Change in the actor's goals, i.e. an alteration of their general approach to conflict. Changes of leadership, goals, intraparty politics and even the appearance of new parties
<b>Issue transformations</b>	Reframing of positions on key conflict issues - transcendence of contested issues - constructive compromise that leads to constructive resolution - de-linking or re-linking issues
<b>Personal / elite transformations</b>	Changes of perspective, heart, will and gestures of conciliation within individual leaders or small groups with decision making power at crucial moments.

From table 1 above, conflict transformation is a peacebuilding viewpoint that is aimed towards a long-term, structural and relational transformation in an ongoing, recurring or a past conflict. The strong point of the theory is mainly found in its “comprehensiveness, its emphasis on tackling the root causes of conflict, and its recognition of the need to change not only situations but also people, relationships, structures and agencies that engender conflict (Makanda, 2016: 61)”. This highlights the researcher’s choice of applying the framework in the assessment of SADC’s capacity to transform the conflict in Lesotho and to suggest that the sub-region moves towards a conflict transformation model.

#### **4.4.6 Actors in conflict transformation**

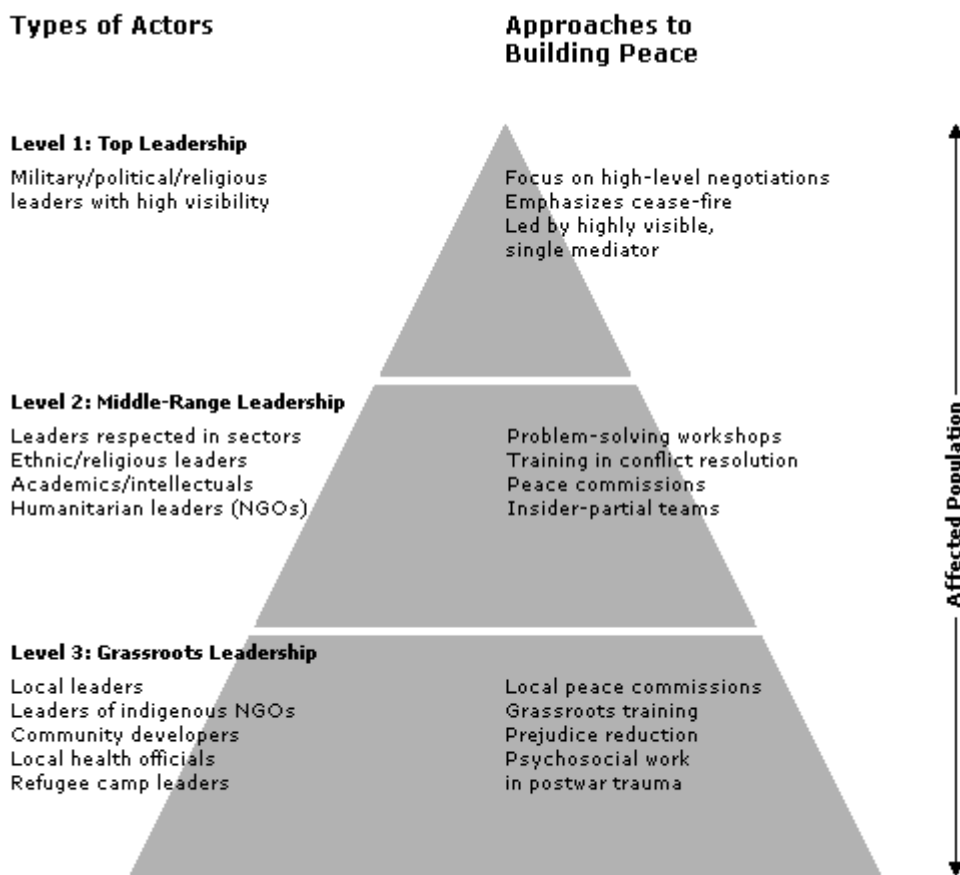
In view of the complexity of conflict transformation, the approach generally encompasses a variety of actors, who also utilise a vast selection of applications. For Miall (2004:12), since the objective is to shape the development of modern-day practice, these actors can be categorised into the following groups: States and intergovernmental organisations; development and humanitarian organisations; international non-governmental organisations concerned with conflict prevention and transformation and parties to the conflict and other relevant groups within the affected societies.

Similarly, Bichsel (2009:40) alludes to the three distinct categories of actors that conflict transformation seeks to transform by noting that, “Conflict transformation does not only attempt to transform relations between groups but also between three levels of actors perceived to represent the socio-political construction of a state.” These three levels of actors are often referred to as tracks. Equivalently, Lederach offers a substantive and logical framework that meets the need for a comprehensive and tactical approach to the alteration of conflicts and a cohesive framework for building peace and sustained reconciliation. He visualises peacebuilding as a structural progression that permits change at three key levels of leadership, namely: top-level leadership (track I) which utilises the top-down approach; middle-level leadership (track II) which uses middle-out approach; and grassroots-level leadership (track III) which concentrates on a (bottom-up approach) (Pillay, 2006:55-56).

Lederach aims to provide a methodology as to how lasting peace should be attained, that is – “how the house of peace should be built” in conflict-ridden contexts (Lederach, 1997:37). This is illustrated in Diagram 3, below. The model outlines the different levels of leadership, through different approaches, play different roles in attempts to transform conflict. The diagrams further assist practitioners with the understanding that there should be different role players at different levels of the conflict in the community brought together around the table to begin to

dialogue around the issue affecting the community for sustainable peace-building in an affected community (Tladi, 2009). This view is further supported by Rupesinghe (1995, 1998) who proposes centering peacebuilding at the grassroots level and within civil society level (where it exists). Moreover, Miall (2004) advocates for the formulation of peace alliances with civil society groups who are able to contribute to bringing about change. This would include business, the media and the military.

Diagram 3: Lederach’s Pyramid



Derived from John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 39.

As demonstrated in Diagram 3 above, the top-level (Track I) consists of key political and army leaders in the conflict and can be accessed via mediation at the state level which is advantageous for peace negotiations (Mischnick, 2007:64; Document of the World Bank, 2006:6). For Reimann (2004), Track I, includes governmental and diplomatic actors with official and formal activities who are well known in that particular context. This was evident in Madagascar where the SADC Heads of State and Government engaged the then President Mark Ravalomanana and *coup* plotter Andry Rajoelina to restore peace in the country. This

was also evident in the DRC in August 1999 where the then South African Foreign Affairs Minister, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, travelled to Kisangani in an attempt to reach a peace consensus between friends that had turned enemies in a country whose government they were trying to oust (Matshikiza, 1999:24).

The middle level is made up of people who are highly respected in society and who may be in formal leadership positions in sectors such as education, business or health or maybe members of ethnic or religious groups within a community. The middle-level leaders can be engaged through activities such as problem-solving workshops or peace commissions with the assistance of renowned local individuals in society. Track II focuses on ‘middle-level’ or ‘middle range’ leadership and is often used through more resolution-oriented approaches such as problem-solving workshops or peace-commissions and with the involvement of partial insiders who are often well known and respected personnel in a particular community (Paffenholz, 2009:5). According to Havermans (1999:223), the activities of Track II diplomats “vary from a dialogue between antagonistic communities, offering mediation courses, organising seminars and conferences and private one-on-one diplomacy behind the scenes.” Utilising the above-mentioned list of track II activities, several examples can be presented as Track II efforts that were undertaken to contribute to a resolution of the Lesotho conflict. Notable from all the Track II efforts is the importance of making proper arrangements before getting the warring groups to meet. Key amongst these prior arrangements is ensuring that there is a proper understanding of the general population and the dynamics of the conflict.

The grassroots level represents the majority of the population or the masses. It includes leaders who operate on a day-to-day basis, like leaders of a local NGO, traditional leadership or leaders within a refugee camp. These leaders can be reached through a wide range of peace-building approaches such as local peace commissions, community dialogue projects, or trauma healing (Document of the World Bank, 2006:6; Paffenholz & Spurr, 2006:22). Track III represents the ‘grassroots’ leadership understood as “those who represent the population at large” (Lederach,1997:38). An example of this was the methodology used in Rwanda, where a peace and reconciliation commission was set up to address entrenched conflict after the 1994 genocide. Evidently, in order to be successful, conflict transformation has to come about on all levels concurrently and that they have to be mutually supporting. Local actors have a pivotal role to play in the transformation of their own conflicts. This is mainly attributed to the fact that community and traditional leaders often have an enormous influence on the relationship between political parties and local communities (Miall, 2004:15).

As part of track III, NGO's are increasingly playing essential roles in the peace-building efforts such as allowing for open dialogue, conducting educational workshops geared towards peace, identifying opportunities for development, engaging in peacebuilding, relationship building and institution building over the long term. In efforts to accomplish the peace-building roles, specific tools, instruments and methods must be utilised. As such, Miall (2004:15) suggests that Track II actors use the following methods and tools: "supporting and sustaining local groups and social movements, building peace constituencies, strengthening capacity, empowering key actors, organisational development and networking and training." This model of conflict transformation addresses and coordinates change at all three levels of society. It recognises the potential, importance, legality, distinctiveness, and interdependency of the needs and resources of civil society in their peace-building processes, and promotes harmonisation at all levels. As stated by Miall (2004:6), the model also broadens the view of the conflict and the disputing parties and specifies the possibility for sourcing peacebuilding resources from the wider society. It hinges on the fact that building mutual relationships is a pivotal component of the peace-building process. It credits the role of indigenous actors from within the conflict society and empowers and supports local efforts by engaging groups in different peace-building activities. Thus, this model of peacebuilding as proposed by Lederach, seeks to bring together various stakeholders through building trust; it requires and promotes intergroup communication, interaction, and cooperation.

#### **4.5. Summary**

The chapter considered key conceptual issues raised in this study. It looked at the concept of violence and conflict., and suggested that the presence of conflict does not automatically imply the use of violence. Furthermore, that conflict should not be categorised as a conflict only when violence occurs. It also advocated for a greater emphasis on the less obvious structural and cultural elements of conflict. This study assesses SADC's capacity in conflict transformation process in Lesotho from 1998 to 2018, and to suggest a CT model for the Mountain Kingdom and the sub-region at large. Accepting that conflict is an unavoidable phenomenon and a necessary part of human interaction, it still requires proper management and transformation. Hence, in efforts to eradicate violence caused by conflicts, there is a need to adopt an effective framework towards transforming the conflict situation. The methodology used to transform conflicts has a direct impact on the success or failure of the conflict transformation process. Evidence suggests that the SADC primary strategy is the use of the SADC OPDS, whose mission is to resolve conflicts. Contrastingly, a key point made by Lederach is that conflict

situations need to be transformed in efforts to achieve sustainable and lasting peace. The need to understand the specific context, nature of the conflict situation remains unquestionably critical in efforts to put into use the appropriate mechanisms for CT. This chapter discussed Lederach's model of conflict transformation, which guided the study's investigation of the SADC's capacity to transform the recurring conflict in Lesotho. The next chapter explains the research methodology adopted for this study.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a justification for the selection of the qualitative research design as well as to present the research strategy and the empirical techniques applied in this study. It also explains the case study research methodology, which forms the basis of this study. The chapter also discusses the research methods used and their relevance to the study. Lastly, the chapter outlines the scope and limitations of the research design and discusses the ethical issues which arose during the study.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section provides a rationale for the chosen research design. The next section is concerned with the research strategy. It looks at the research approach followed in case study research. Section three deals with the research design and covers the reasons for choosing, data sources, the method of data collection and analysis. Finally, the section looks into ethical considerations in the research.

#### 5.2 Qualitative research design

Research methodology can be understood as the numerous approaches, techniques and procedures that are utilised in the process of conducting a research project (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Methodology in the social sciences involves selecting the most suitable theories, techniques, and illustrative models which assist in the better understanding of the phenomenon in question. Qualitative researchers strive to get a thorough understanding of human behaviour and the motivation that informs that behaviour. As such, it can be argued that the approach is geared towards gaining knowledge of social systems. For Creswell et al (2003:54), the qualitative approach is most fitting where the researcher is “trying to make sense of what is happening” and is often linked with the how and why questions. Quantitative research, on the contrary, is a method most appropriate when testing scientific theories by investigating relationships between measurable variables (Creswell, 2003).

In this study, the qualitative research approach is found to be most suitable as it will allow the researcher to understand the SADC’s CT capacity in the Kingdom of the Sky. Strauss and Corbin (1998) note that the methods are often chosen based on the nature of the research problem, the questions and finally the researchers preferred method. The qualitative research approach is selected in this study as the research is concerned with an in-depth understanding



of whether the SADC has the capacity to transform the conflict in the Mountain Kingdom into sustainable peace as opposed to the statistical account of the events.

For Vromen (2010:250), qualitative research methodology seeks to answer research questions that “entail a thorough elucidation and understanding of the phenomena in question and also the settings within which they exist.” This view is also supported by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), who suggest that qualitative research encompasses a descriptive, and naturalistic approach to its subject matter; it attempts to figure out, and to interpret, phenomena in light of the connotations that people in the particular context attached to them. Moreover, qualitative research aims to gather rich, descriptive data related to the phenomenon in question in efforts to get an enhanced understanding of the phenomenon. For Creswell (1998:15), “Qualitative research is a process of understanding based on a distinct methodological tradition of inquiry that explores a social problem.” According to Maree (2007), qualitative research aims to understand the processes and the social and cultural contexts which inform certain behaviours and is often concerned with gaining insight on the “why” questions of research. Qualitative research is also known for placing greater prominence on the quality and depth of data instead of the scope or breadth of the data provided. As such, it necessitates a preparedness on the part of the researcher to spend a lot of time in the field, collecting data to ensure a wide-ranging viewpoint from relevant participants (Creswell, 1998).

Moreover, a qualitative case study is a tactic that permits the use of various data sources for the investigation of a particular phenomenon within a given setting. The qualitative research design was selected due to its ability to collect, assimilate, and present data from various sources of information as a critical part of the study in question. The benefit of this method is that it allows for a broader outlook and an assortment of lenses through which we can explore numerous facets of the phenomenon to be understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This means that the results of a qualitative study are likely to be based on triangulating data from a variety of sources. This then assists by ensuring the credibility and reliability of the study. Creswell (1998:15) also argues that “in qualitative research, the researcher is continuously building and adding to a bigger picture by analysing words, reading deeper into the respondents’ utterances while taking into cognisance the context of the study.” The point stressed above resonates with this particular study as participants who have intimate knowledge of the Lesotho conflict and SADC were targeted for the investigation.

### **5.3 Case study research**

For Bromley (1990) a case study is a strategy and an empirical inquiry that investigates an event, a set of related events or phenomenon within its real-life context. Similarly, Yin (1984:23) understands case study research as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon, a single individual, group or event within its real-life context to explore the causes of underlying principles. This then suggests that almost every real-life incident can be studied as a case study inquiry. A distinctive feature of a case study is that it endeavours to attain a deep interpretation of the interactions and relations of participants in a given context. Qualitative research places more emphasis on allowing for a thorough and in-depth clarifications of intricate social and political phenomena, which can only be realistically carried out with one case, or a few examples, unlike the quantitative research methodology that often utilises many cases in efforts to understand general patterns of behaviour (Neuman, 2011:177; Vromen, 2010:256).

Qualitative research can make use of a specific case within a particular period of time to provide a detailed explanation or description of phenomena. Gerring, for example, notes that a case study should be “an intensive study of a single unit, a spatially bounded phenomenon, e.g. a nation-state, revolution, political party, election, or person - observed at a single point in time or over some delimited period of time” (2004:342). As such, case study analysis can, therefore, be valuable for the testing of theoretical propositions (Levy, 2008). Divergent methods may be used by the researcher to choose cases, informed by the research questions and the variables which the researcher wants to explore (George & Bennett, 2005).

An indispensable characteristic of qualitative research is its case-study approach and its ability to provide “deep” knowledge of social and political phenomena through its contextual lens (Onapajo 2014:46). As such, the use of the case study method allows the researcher an opportunity to infuse the setting or context within which the research takes place to form an important component of the research. Case study research commonly depends on several sources of evidence instead of a single data collection method, and the necessity to use unique tactics of research design and analysis (Yin, 2003). The various sources of data may include observations, interviews, audio-visual material, documents and reports. In this study, personal face to face interviews were used in conjunction with multiple primary documents and reports. The purpose of this study is to establish whether SADC has the capacity to transform the conflict in Lesotho to sustainable peace and also to recommend Lederach’s conflict transformation framework for the sub-region. Case studies allow the researcher to explore

individuals or institutions and relationships. This technique is therefore applicable for the study since it aims to understand how people and institutions relate to each other. Key among the benefits of the case study tactic is the close working relationship between the researcher and the respondents while allowing partakers to narrate their own experiences as people closest to the given context (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). Though there are other conflict-ridden countries in the SADC sub-region, Lesotho was chosen as a case study because the country since its independence has hardly known peace and the political conflict in the small country can be seen as a litmus test for SADC conflict transformation capacity.

#### **5.4 Sampling**

Critical among the distinctive features of the two types of methodologies of research are the different reasons that inform sampling approaches. Qualitative research aims to place meaning on reality from the participants' frame of reference (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013). In reality, this suggests that themes which appear in qualitative research are a representation and a true reflection of the meaning given to actual events by the people who experience them, instead of relying on the researcher's perceptions and meanings. Qualitative methods usually focus comprehensively on specific, moderately small samples or cases (Patton, 1990).

In qualitative research, the choice of participants is mainly based on their relevance and usefulness to the research topic (Neuman, 2011). As such, participants are chosen based on their ability to provide insight and understanding of the issues under investigation. Consequently, in this study, the main factor influencing the choice of respondents was the scope to which the participants could deliver extensive, relevant and expressive contributions and explanations in relation to the research questions. The experiences of the participants were sought because they are conversant with the Lesotho conflict, or involved in conflict transformation activities in SADC. Therefore, respondents were selected on the basis of their knowledge or involvement in the Lesotho conflict and to include were politicians, journalists, NGO's, academics, students and security practitioners.

Probability sampling is used to ensure the generalisations from the sample to a larger population (Paton, 2002). As such, the technique depends on selecting a truly random and statistically representative sample of findings by minimising the potential for bias in selection. On the other hand, the strength of purposive sampling is the methods ability to allow the researcher to use their judgment in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study (Paton, 2002). Information-rich cases are those that can be understood to possess the willingness and

the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate and expressive way. This can assist the researcher to gain more insight on the topic under investigation. In other words, the aim of purposive sampling is to select information-rich cases whose study will help the researcher better understand the question under study (Patton, 2002). This argument is further supported by Yin (2011), who argues that the aim of purposive sampling is to get access to those data sources which will yield the most pertinent and useful data. The same line of thought is followed by Kuzel (1992:37) who argues that a sample must pursue to attain the widest range of data and perceptions on the phenomenon under investigation.

The above is true for this particular study, as respondents were selected based on their knowledge of the topic. Interview respondents were chosen from the following: (1) political parties in Lesotho; practitioners within peace and security studies; NGO's; scholars and academics (NUL and UKZN); experts; journalists and policy-makers. (2) SADC officials: selected officials that have worked on various SADC missions. The method was supplemented by a referral technique which is often known as snowballing, where participants also suggested further individuals who could provide useful information and valuable insight. As a result, all interviewees were directly relevant to the study.

## **5.5 Data collection method**

### **5.5.1 Interviews**

This method is geared toward observing people in their natural environment to elicit needed information and understanding in a particular context. Interviews are a common data collection technique, effective for the gathering of rich experiential data, allowing for the respondents' views with regards to the phenomenon under investigation (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Interviews can either be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. The primary data in this study was collected using semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. This was achieved by conducting face-to-face meetings, and a few (2) email interviews with some contributors in the peacebuilding field and an official working with SADC. The intention is to attain a detailed understanding of the core issues in the Lesotho conflict and the interventions that SADC has made in efforts to transform the conflict situation in the Mountain Kingdom. The majority of the interviews were conducted in Lesotho. In total, twenty-two participants were interviewed. Due to some constraints, the researcher utilised two email interviews as the scheduled face to face interview could not materialise. In this regard, the interview schedule was sent via email and responses received back after five weeks. The rest of the face to face

interviews were conducted within a period of seventeen months from February 2017- June 2018.

Notably, as pointed out by Patton (1990), one of the main advantages of qualitative research, when open-ended interviews are used to collect data, is that social interaction ensues without being disturbed by artificial research procedures. In such settings, respondents get an opportunity to freely express themselves instead of being restricted to responding to a rigid questionnaire. Similarly, respondents are not limited by the restrictions of any laboratory-like setting (Yin, 2011).

Every interview conducted in this study was based on informed consent with the purpose of the research project discussed before the commencement of the conversation. Also, the participant was recorded with a small electronic voice recorder, and the researcher also took notes as the conversation progressed. The use of the recorder is critical as it allowed for a replay of interviews which proved beneficial, particularly at the transcription stage. The majority of the recordings were audible but in cases where there were difficulties with a noisy background the researcher relied on the notes taken during the actual interview.

### **5.5.2 Documents**

This study also made use of various types of document materials, both primary and secondary sources. The first type consisted of the literature comprising books, journals and other resources on SADC and Lesotho. The second type included newspapers, treaties, protocols, charters, publications, decisions, recommendations, official reports, statements, communiqués and official websites. The official documents including treaties and declarations, communiqués, and protocols were mainly utilised as reputable primary sources of information about SADC and its predecessors. Newspaper articles and internet sources contributed immensely as they provided key updates on the situation in Lesotho and SADC's involvement. Various supplementary independent internet sources were also used and provided valuable contributions particularly when accessed from the internet and proved very effective in arranging the events and official briefings by the SADC mediators in Lesotho, and the responses of the various stakeholders in the crises. The diverse sources proved valuable, particularly when the information corroborated each other. These sources provided extensive bibliographic and contextual information that complemented the primary sources of data, thus illuminating the study.

## **5.6 Data analysis**

In the analysis process, the researcher brought directive, structure and meaning to the data attained. Throughout this process, appropriate themes and patterns were recognised within the available data (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). For this study, thematic and content analysis were the main processes used to organise, bring structure and meaning to the available data. Thematic and content analysis methods were adopted mainly due to their appropriateness in the effort to identify, analyse and report patterns within data. The methods also help in searching across a data set in order to find repeated patterns of meaning and allows for thematic organisation. Thematic analysis is a method of analysing qualitative data that focuses on the content of various texts, including interview transcripts. The researcher closely examines the data to identify common themes – topics, ideas and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly (Riessman, 2008).

Immediately after data collection, the notes taken during the interviews were organised and captured on word document. As the process of typing and capturing progressed, themes noted were highlighted and marked accordingly. Secondly, the transcription of the recordings was done during this process. The researcher listened to interview recordings repeatedly to ensure the accuracy of the transcription. As a method of quality assurance, each transcript was read multiple times whilst playing the recordings. This was followed by the code generating process. Coding speaks to the highlighting of sections of transcribed text – usually phrases that recognise topics, issues, similarities, and differences that come up in the respondents' accounts; and coming up with shorthand labels or “codes” to describe their content. Coding was done by making notes on the margin and by highlighting and naming sections of text on the typed hard copy transcript. The coding process allows the researcher a snapshot into the respondent’s viewpoint. This stage is observed to be a critical phase of data analysis within qualitative methodology as it is the phase where meanings are created (Bird & Bogart, 2005: 227; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

After coding, the researcher explored the codes created, identified patterns among them, and came up with themes. The recognized ideas were organised into prospective topics and clustered accordingly and named (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The themes were grouped and re-grouped according to the research questions and the aims of the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher then tried to identify familiar central narratives. The identified themes were revisited and reviewed repeatedly as the analysis process progressed in efforts to enhance the captured findings. In cases where themes were found to be misclassified they were re-grouped.

The principle of saturation also guided the number of respondents used in the study. The researcher constantly added respondents to the study until there was no need for further respondents as the responses yielded repetitive results. Data saturation speaks to adding new respondents regularly to the research until the data set is complete. This is shown by the duplication of data or redundancy of information. As such, a point of saturation is reached when the researcher gathers data to the point of diminishing returns when nothing new is being added to the data set (Bowen, 2008:149). For Glaser (2002), the saturation process can be a difficult task as a large number of data transcripts require a lot of time for coding and analysis. It is also imperative to note that the process of analysing transcripts may take up a lot of time and also be extremely demanding (Bowen, 2008:149). To overcome these constraints, the researcher continuously compared responses from various respondents.

The period of transcription took about two months due to the time needed to categorise various questions into themes, and compare them with emerging topics as the process progressed and regrouping if needs be. When there were no new insights to the question raised and the answers given were becoming repetitive, the researcher realised the saturation point had been reached. Documents were analysed through qualitative content analysis (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). Content analysis in this study suggests that data were transcribed, coded and presented under emerging themes. Content analysis included the extraction of extracts, quotes and illustrations from the various documents for interpretation to support observations and relationships and to strengthen arguments made in the research (Johnson and Reynolds, 2008:282).

### **5.7 Validity**

In research, the validity of the actual study and its results remains a key quality control issue. For Yin (2011:78), a valid research study is one that accurately garnered and construed the collected data in a way that ensures that the study deductions correctly represent the phenomenon under investigation. Numerous methods can be utilised to guarantee the validity of research and its findings. In this research, triangulation was utilised to ensure validity. The principle of triangulation speaks to the aim of cross-checking and verifying the findings extracted from data (Yin, 2011). Moreover, triangulation allows the researcher to capture different dimensions of the same phenomenon. This process remains critical as it assists in reinforcing the validity of the study. Triangulation can be understood as a qualitative research strategy that utilises two or more data sources, methodologic approaches and theoretical perspectives to test validity through the convergence of information from different sources. (Denzin, 1970).

The value of triangulation is seen in its ability to assist in improving the quality and in assurance of the data, allowing for groundbreaking methods of understanding various dimensions of a phenomenon, and unveiling new findings, (Jick, 1979). In this regard, this research study utilised several data sources and further ensured triangulation by interviewing various stakeholders from different sectors of the community. The choice of respondents from various facets of society ensured for diversity and representation of key stakeholders which also improves the validity of the research. The study also made use of SADC primary documents and other secondary sources to supplement the information that was collected through the interviews.

### **5.8 Ethical considerations**

The interview stage in any qualitative research exposes the researcher to many ethical issues. The participation of all respondents in this study was undertaken after their consent to voluntarily participate in the study has been obtained. Participants were provided with an informed consent form, approved by the ethical clearance committee of the College of Humanities at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, which clearly articulated the voluntary nature of participation in the research (see the appendix for the informed consent form). Before the commencement of the interview, respondents were advised that they could freely stop participation in the study at any point. Permission was also attained from all respondents for the recording of the interview session. Participants were furnished with the University's Human and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee's and the study supervisor, Professor Khondlo Mtshali's contact information. Research participants were assured of strict confidentiality, including their identities. All audio recordings and transcripts from the research study were stored on a password-protected computer.

### **5.9 Limitations**

Conducting fieldwork research is always constrained by the issue of time and resources. In terms of resources, the researcher worked on a limited budget but managed to accomplish interviews and documentary analysis. The timing of the fieldwork was important. Elections were approaching in the country, and tensions were high; hence the initially planned trip was postponed. Despite the tension in the area at the time of the interviews, people were willing to engage the researcher and were generally open about their views of the conflict in the Mountain Kingdom. Sometimes, meeting politicians could be very frustrating. The number of days the



researcher planned to spend interviewing was extended. For example, the researcher had to stay extra days in a hotel in Maseru waiting to meet a journalist who had to reschedule his initial appointment due to a tight schedule.

The second limitation of the study is that the views of politicians from all the political parties in the country are not represented. Efforts were made to interview politicians from the various political parties; however, only two political parties could be accessed. This could be attributed to the timing of the data collection and the nature of politics, which often means they are unavailable due to tight schedules and party commitments.

A third limitation was the failure to get an interview with the IEC in Lesotho who are a key stakeholder in addressing the country's conflict.

### **5.10 Chapter summary**

This chapter discussed the research design, methodology and methods, and data analysis used in the study. The chapter justified the use of the qualitative case study methodology for this study. The choice of purposive sampling utilised in choosing research participants was discussed and justified. Through the use of purposive sampling, the researcher successfully selected an information-rich sample: cognisant of SADC's peacebuilding interventions in Lesotho. Personal interviews were used to collect data. Data gathered were analysed guided by the content analysis and thematic analysis approaches. Finally, the chapter looks at the ethical considerations and limitations which arose during the research study. The next chapter presents the research findings and data analysis.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents and analyses the result from data collected from semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted with purposefully selected individuals chosen for

this study. In all, 22 interviews were conducted, which is 8 persons short of the envisioned 30, and this was because a point of saturation had been reached, as the responses were becoming similar to each other. As stated in the previous chapter, the participants interviewed included academics, students, politicians, practitioners, journalists and leaders of NGO's from Lesotho and South Africa.

This chapter presents the results of the study and an analysis of the participants' understanding, experiences, views and reflections on the SADC conflict transformation capacity in Lesotho. The approach followed is to present the results from the interviews on key themes, and then to provide a cumulative view at the end of each section. The findings are presented in thematic sections, aiming to provide answers to the main research questions. The actual analysis is steered by the theoretical and analytical frameworks adopted for the study.

The purpose is to analyse the theoretical and conceptual themes that emerge from the collected data that sought to answer the research questions. Consideration is also given to the relationship with the generated data and to determine if it is in line or in contradiction with the deductions from the literature and previous chapters. This tactic is a critical component of the thematic analysis procedure, which requires broad reading in order to successfully identify and analyse emerging themes from collected data (Dawson, 2007). In this regard, the findings are also discussed in relation to the literature review to fill gaps identified in the literature and in the theoretical framework, which provided the scope for the study. Moreover, consideration is given to any new themes that may arise from the generated data, which provides answers to the overarching research questions which the study is concerned with.

## **6.2. Key dynamics in the Lesotho conflict**

The first theme deals with the dynamics of the conflict in Lesotho. This question is important as it leads to a further investigation of the dynamics at play in the recurring Lesotho conflict. As already recognised in the previous chapters, various dynamics and actors are at play in the conflict. Emanating from findings and conclusions of existing literature and the previous chapters, further questions concerning the dynamics at play were posed to key participants. The narratives of respondents reveal a variety of dynamics that also were raised in the literature. The responses from interviews show that the dynamics of Lesotho's recurrent conflicts are mainly linked to historical, structural, institutional and socio-political-economic factors.

All respondents from various sectors point to the fact that there are many players in Lesotho politics and subsequently in the conflict. Thus, respondent 14 claims that:

*The key players in the conflict can be summarised as politicians, the monarchy, the military and the electoral system within which they compete with one another. Then there are other Independent variables such as christianity, traditional leadership and civil society. Sic*

The claims made by respondent 14 are supported by respondent 4, who says:

*The main players are the military (army), politicians, the church, and civil society, mainly NGO's and to some extent, the government. All of these players have at some point at differing levels contributed to the conflict and violence the country has witnessed. Sic*

While all respondents point to the multiplicity of players, some interviewees point out that these players do not have equal power. Respondent 20 claims that: *The military is too powerful and untouchable; this power is safeguarded by the dirty politics I spoke about how that feeds into the status of the army. There is much puppeting in that relationship ...Sic.* This is reiterated by respondent 21 with the claim that:

*The military has since after independence been a dynamic player in the country's politics. For example, in 1970, the army backed Jonathan in his undemocratic power grab. Jonathan, with protection from the LDF suspended the constitution, declared elections invalid and put in place a dictatorship. But because they say they are no permanent friends nor permanent in politics, in which the military is a key player, the very same military removed Jonathan in 1986 from state power after 16 years. But civilian authoritarianism was swapped with military rule. The monarchy, originally side-lined by the independence constitution and the BNP government, was drawn into politics to provide legitimacy for the military administration after it took over state power. The military was heavily involved in 1994 when King Letsie III staged a "palace" coup after temporarily suspending the constitution and taking over power from BCP. Partly, King Letsie III's gripe with BCP was that the party was refusing to reinstate his father as the king. Sic.*

The data cited above and in the rest of the research suggests that the Lesotho cyclic conflict can generally be interpreted and analysed in the context of three dimensions namely; (a) a politicised, unprofessional and instrumentalised military (b) conflict between the monarchy and the government and (c) destructive political culture. It is significant to note that these dimensions are interconnected. In addition to these key dynamics, the study proffers that there are other dynamics that have provided a fertile ground for the Lesotho conflict to flourish. These are discussed below in the chapter as sub-themes.

The findings of the study in terms of the key players in the Lesotho conflict are in line with Lederach's Conflict Pyramid. The pyramid divides society into three levels, namely; the top leadership which are often the elite with high visibility comprising the military, politicians and diplomats, the middle-level leaders often including leaders in academia, religious leaders, the Independent electoral commission and civil society leaders (Lederach, 1997). The grassroots include communities and their local leadership structures, including traditional leadership. The

level may also take in local community-based organisations. In line with this triangle, the data identifies leaders that are at the top level of leadership further buttressing the notion that the Lesotho conflict is an elitist conflict.

### **6.2.1 A politicised unprofessional and instrumentalised military**

The data established that the Lesotho defence force is a small and poorly or even untrained military entity. This is captured by Respondent 9: *....But to begin with, is an ill-disciplined and untrained army which does not understand its role or rather chooses to ignore it in the quest for power.*

A common finding evident in the majority of the key respondents' accounts, representing the various sectors is the contribution of the unprofessionalism of the security sector in the Lesotho conflict. The study also observes that ascendancy into the military is based on patronage, either to the monarchy or the ruling party. Moreover, the study finds that the top echelons of the military tend to answer to some higher elements in the coalition government or in the monarchy. Accordingly, Respondent 14 maintained:

Respondent 14: *....., you see the military is always mentioned when there is political instability in the country. For example, in 1998 same thing happened and SADC had to intervene. The military was also involved. However, the military lies in bed with the politicians all to their own selfish interests. On the one side, politicians are protected, and on the other, the military bosses are also rewarded monetarily and through military ranks. There is a dangerous marriage of the army and police and the government in power almost every time... Sic.*

Additionally, the study finds that there is an entrenched culture of unprofessionalism in the military, marked by ill-discipline, and nepotism. This culture of unprofessionalism has been evident as new recruits have been seen to climb the ranks at enormously unreasonable speeds (Moremoholo, 2005). This situation has produced angry and bitter older officers who have often resorted to involvement in *coups* as a method of getting even. This finding is in line with a case in point discussed in chapter 2, which referred to of the early promotion of Colonel Sehlabo Sehlabo who had quickly moved from Captain to Colonel in a short space of time. Consequently, the country witnessed members of the Youth League and Sehlabo's loyalists dominating the military often side-lining the majority of soldiers. Sehlabo's rapid promotion caused chaos within the LDF and led to the questioning of the legitimacy of the BNP (Moremoholo, 2005:48).

From both the respondents and the literature, (Matlosa, 1995) (Moremoholo, 2005) (Pherudi, 2018), it is evident that the civil-military relationship underpinning the destabilising role of the

military in Lesotho is unconstitutional. This view is based on the evidence (Benyera, 2017) that instead of answering to the central government, high ranking military personnel often answer to the subordinate element either in the governing coalition or in the monarchy.

A majority of respondents reiterated that prominent politicians campaigned for military support in order to get into and remain in power in Lesotho. The security sector in Lesotho and specifically the military has been used as the means to an end. The military has often been roped in to support and protect self-serving politicians. As discussed in the sections above, the military has become an integral player in the conflict, hence the call for security sector reforms in the country. In this regard one informant maintained:

Respondent 6: ..... *The situation in the country is characterised by situation of an unprofessional military. Lesotho politicians have also been unprofessional by using the military to stay in power. The army is infested and the situation has worsened. You see this began when some were admitted into the army and went up the ranks through corruption and nepotism often bypassing officers who had been in the army for longer. This caused tensions within the army and the side-lined officers were more than ready to rebel against the ruling government and the leadership of the military.* Sic

Accounts from respondents show that the unprofessionalism and political involvement of the security sector has for the longest time to date remained a key dynamic in the continuation and exacerbation of the conflict in the Mountain Kingdom. Accordingly, Respondent 21 further alluded that:

*...In Lesotho, the major constraint for SADC till today is dealing with an unprofessional army which had been entrenched into partisan politics and had at some stage tasted power after a military coup in 1986....*

Mahao (1997), Makoa (1996), Mothibe (1999) and Matlosa (1995) support this view as they offer comprehensive perceptions into Lesotho's military meddling in politics, the military's refusal to cooperate with the democratically elected civilian administration, the poor civil-military relations, staging of *coups*, and finally the assassination of the Chief of Defence on 5 September 2017. A reason behind this is explored by Huntington (1991:120) who highlights the difficulty of securing long-lasting changes from military rule due to the reality that the military often always hold on to the capacity to step back into politics long after returning to the barracks. The army has been caught up in controversy as it has been used as an instrument in prejudiced games (Matlosa & Pule, 2001:63).

The responses from informants corroborate Benyera's (2017:64) argument that the security sector in Maseru has been used to the extent where it is now an easily available instrument for

top military officials and politicians for use against their contenders. The argument put forward by Benyera (2017) is supported by Respondent 4 in this manner:

*.....The military has been for years in a dangerous marriage with different governments. Political parties' outright refuse to let go of power and wing in the military to offer protection for something in return....resources. The funny part is everyone is a saint before elections, but once an election is lost, they too are willing to lie in bed with the unruly army to protect their power.....Sic*

Benyera, (2017:65) maintains that, after being instrumentalised, the military then became aware of its strength and instrumentalised itself. The army was successfully able to transition from being a politicised, partisan institute to governing the country in its own name. For Petlane and Southall (1995) this points to the readiness of the politicised military to hijack democratisation in Lesotho. Throughout numerous interventions, the SADC regional body has encountered challenges of re-establishing trust between the government and the security establishment. Simply put, the military in Lesotho overstepped its mandate, accordingly abusing its structures, mechanisms and authority.

The study finds that those factions that cannot utilise the services of the army often turn to the police forces in the country. So, it is not only the military that has been involved in the conflict but also the police forces in the country.

Accordingly, Respondent 5 maintains

*Respondent 5: ..... The military is equally infested a culture that runs right from its highest ranks to its lowest. Divisions, criminality are rife in the security sector. The LDF should be concerned about the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lesotho. Instead, there are at the centre of chaos and instability in the country. The army was found meddling through its staging of coup in 1986, internal conflicts in 1994 and 1998, and unrest in 2007 and 2014.*

This politicisation of the army has resulted in the military *coup* of 1986 and many attempts after 1998 against democratically elected governments. This situation explains the military's antagonism to democratic civilian governance in which they were expected to be neutral. To date, the politicisation of the security sector still impedes SADC's conflict transformation efforts in the country. The involvement of the police forces also speaks to the lack of patriotism, the destructive political environment in the country and unavailability of opportunities which make involvement in politics highly attractive. As such, the regional body would need to place greater emphasis on professionalising the security sector in the country if it is to see the conflict transformed into sustainable positive peace. (explain)

The siding of military leadership with certain factions of the government is in line with Mitchell's definition of conflict (1981:15). The author views conflict as a situation where individuals/ or groups desire goals which they view can only be obtained by one of the parties but not both. In this regard, survival can only be achieved by aligning with the military.

### **6.2.2 Scuffles between the monarchy and the government**

The study finds that the scuffles or tension between the monarchy and the government are a key dynamic in the recurring conflict in the Mountain Kingdom. It was observed Holm (1972); Makoa, Sejamane, Shale and Matlosa (1999); Pefole (2004); Makoa (2004) Monyane (2009); Motsamai (2015) that since independence from Britain in 1966, Lesotho has experienced intermittent conflict between the monarchy and the government. As explained in chapter 2, the King has often been seen as another contestant for power in the Mountain Kingdom and this has caused tension between the monarchy and the various governments that have been in power (Benyera, 2017). This view is supported by Kabemba (2003), who argues that the interference by the monarchy has contributed to the political volatility in the nation-state. Similarly, Mokotso (2019) puts forth the argument that in the period 1965 to 1966; King Moshoeshoe II was already leading a civil disobedience campaign aimed at removing the democratic government from power. To achieve this, the King incited the people to resist the newly democratic government, which he believed reduced him to a 'ghost' king.

Against the given background, the study observes that the embracing of the Westminster governance system, which is foreign to the traditional monarchy system that had prevailed in Lesotho, can be claimed to have formed discordancy as the two systems have failed to co-exist harmoniously (Moyo, 2018). In reality, various parts of the populace pay their allegiance to the King while on the other hand others favour the Prime Minister. A case in point was after the 1998 electoral crisis where the monarchy had its executive powers taken away, a move that fuelled more tension in the country (Matlosa, 2006). The steady corrosion of the monarchy's power combined with the elevation of democratic consolidation has repeatedly resulted in a clash of pro-Westminster democracy and pro-traditionalist proponents. As such, the study maintains that it would seem that any conflict transformation process would need to take into cognisance the incongruence between the Westminster and monarchy governance system in the country.

### 6.2.2.1 A powerless monarchy

The study finds that the monarchy is a player in the conflict in Lesotho; however, it finds that the role played by the monarchy has less impact than that of the politicians and military. This can mainly be attributed to the king's constitutional status which renders position as a ceremonial King. Views from respondents suggest that the King's role is often seen as one of a rubber stamper for the Prime Minister and Parliament. The position that the King finds himself in can be understood as a key component of the colonial relic in previous colonies. For Benyera (2017:66), the erosion of the King's power and influence via the constitution can be said to have positioned him in a state of a mere spectator, while the military and the government have remained as the only institutions with real power and influence. In line with the views expressed above, it is observed that the monarchy has limited power in the Kingdom of the Sky. This view is supported by Respondent 18, who maintains:

Respondent 18: ....*Eeeh well to a lesser extent there is also the involvement of the monarchy, which at times has interfered in the day to day administration of the country, finding itself at the middle of political battles.Sic*

This current state of the scuffles between the government and the monarchy has its roots in the Lesotho constitution which absolves the monarchy from playing a role in the politics of the country. This is captured by Respondent 13 as follows:

*With regards to the monarchy, since Independence, the monarchy has over the years strived to attain executive powers. As such, there have been clear divisions between the Monarchy and the government. Sic*

This is also reiterated by Respondent 19:

*Among the historical dynamic is the colonial factor which has seen the country adopt problematic systems, the traditional Basotho way of living and the imperialist Westminster system. With this came religion which also saw politicizing involving religion in its early stages, setting the country up for failure as it sought to find itself post-independence. This Westminster system also removed power from the King, the symbol of national unity, making him a ceremonial King. While the Queen in England is endowed with dignity and power to come in in critical decision making. This was the beginning of disintegration of the systems that had sustained the Basotho under King Moshoeshoe for years. Well the other issues have their roots in what I have mentioned. For example, the imperialist did not do justice to Lesotho, as such the country found itself at log aheads in its economic direction after attaining independence.*

Akokpari (1998: 76) notes that the monarchy has played a critical role in supporting certain political parties to achieve by foul means what they could not achieve by fair means. It is further noted that the King at times has been at the centre of the demise of certain regimes as was evident in 1986 and 1994. King Moshoeshoe II was at the centre of the controversy in the coup



that took place in January 1986 where the King in collaboration with a faction of the army took over state power (Benyera, 2017). Moreover, in 1994 King Letsie III took a decision to dissolve parliament and further went on to hand-pick specific individuals into government. The King was once again at the centre of controversy in 1998 when the MFP, BNP, and BCP requested him to dissolve parliament; however, the MFP was unsuccessful in its request. Similarly, Respondent 2 argued:

*The king has also somewhat contributed to the unrest in the country. In 1994, King Letsie III went way out of his powers when we witnessed him dissolving parliament and hand-picking his own government, made up of the BNP and BCP. A totally unconstitutional and unnecessary move on the Kings part. Later in 88the MFP also called to him for a similar move, which we all know was unsuccessfully. After this, there was chaos I tell you.*

The above view suggests that the Basotho King has apparently contributed to the political instability in the Kingdom. Consistent with the findings in the literature (Monyane, 2009; Bukae, 2012), it is agreed that the Basotho King is a symbol of the Basotho nation and can be said to have erred in his mandate. The King's interference led to the collapse of law and order in the kingdom. There is also a view that suggests that the chieftaincy and traditional leadership in Lesotho is a continuation or an extension of colonial rule (Strom, 1978:82) (Monyane, 2009: 31).

While many of the views from respondents are consistent with findings from the literature, a closer look at the actual responses gave more insight on issues that had not necessarily been delved into by other scholars. A case in point is the sense of closeness and pride the Basotho generally hold toward their monarch. This particular reality could in no way be ascertained from the literature. Traditional leadership can be understood to represent the people as an incorruptible national image, epitomizing King Moshoeshoe I who was the first King of Lesotho and is well known for having been opposed to colonisation and imperialism. As such, it can be concluded that traditional leadership is generally viewed as apolitical. Traditional leadership is also generally viewed in contrast to the modern state, where most politicians are viewed as working in their own self-interest (Akokpari, 1998) (Maundeni, 2010). The respondents also suggest that the monarchy can play a critical role as a mediator in disagreements among political constituencies.

### **6.2.3 Destructive Political culture**

The study observes that there is an entrenched destructive political culture in the country, the country has experienced destructive, unhealthy violent conflicts among the ruling, opposition parties and state institutions. Akokpari, in his 1998 study, wrote about the common practice where Africa's political elite often personalise power and hold on to it for as long as possible. In light of this, respondents held:

Respondent 2.... *The biggest problem in Lesotho is a weak economic base that tends to create pressure for people to be in power and to remain in government which allows them to control resources. We have seen this in the recent coalition governments which have added a new factor to instability. We see most political parties united in the beginning when they are in opposition. However, the moment they get into power and smell the coffee, serious conflicts between the arrangements emerge. For me, the main reason behind this type of behaviour is that aspiring politicians have witnessed those in office and those connected to them flourish and once in office, they too, want to have access to the large pieces of the pie. This is when we start to notice the squabbles. Sic*

This is further supported by respondent 5 who states:

*Firstly, the Lesotho conflict is not unique to many of the studied conflicts in the continent and elsewhere. What is unique though is the outright political intolerance. Politicians are like scavengers, in fact power addicts, once they taste power and gain access to the doors that power can open they do anything to protect their power and to remove anyone and anything that stands in their power. There is very little patriotism among politicians..... One immediate thing that does not need schooling is the undemocratic actually outright anti-democratic administration of the political parties. This deems virtually all of the political parties to varying degrees to be amenable to be ivory towers of chieftdom. Sic*

A similar view was buttressed by Respondent 20 in this manner:

*Respondent 20: The politics, the dirty politics in this country can be said to be the main issue. I call them dirty because they have given birth to an array of issues plaguing the country today, and for what? ...personal enrichment my friend. Sic*

The findings of the research show that Lesotho suffers from entrenched political violence and impunity in the conduct of politics. As discussed in chapter 2 and above, the country's politics are characterised by a pervasive culture of violence. According to respondents' views and the literature (Matlosa, 2011; Pherudi, 2018), this culture can be traced back to an age-old trend of militarisation in the country, where the military was been undermined and developed into a political tool for politicians, playing either a covert or overt role in their competition over state power. The country has throughout the years witnessed the political elite often enlisting the support of the security forces with a view to get an upper hand over their opponents. On the same front, the security forces have been a willing accomplice as their involvement in politics has often seen them reap personal benefits. Accordingly, respondent 7 points out:

*The politicians use the military to retain power. In turn, the army officials use the government for individual benefit. Elections have been a formal mechanism to ensure people get into power, once they are in power, legitimacy falls away, and that has been the character of the politics in Lesotho since independence. Anyone government that is in power has relied on the military rather of the legitimacy conferred on it by Basotho.*

The study finds that the political culture in the country is one where there is no cooperation among factions within parties or unity among political parties ideologically and otherwise. This is evident in the reality that the country continues to experience political party splits and breakaways which became a pervasive feature of Lesotho's politics. Party splits and breakaways in Lesotho can be attributed to the political polarity that has characterised Lesotho politics since independence. This polarisation is often highlighted in the scenario in which political leaders refuse to relinquish power, often turning to undemocratic ways of staying in power (Matlosa, 2008:5).

The study also observes that most often politicians opt to form their own political parties in the quest for positions of leadership, control of party resources and other benefits. This view is expressed by Respondent 9 in this manner:

*...this links to the politics and monetary gains that come with power which for me is at the heart of issues in Lesotho. We have self-serving unpatriotic, selfish leadership in this country, and sadly we will also raise aspiring politicians who will master this evil unethical politicking. At the heart of it, is the quest for power which equals money and resources.*

The formation of breakaway parties that have furthered the destructive political culture in the kingdom can be understood in the context of Galtung's (2000) conflict triangle discussed in the theoretical framework which understands conflict as a dynamic process where attitudes, behaviours and contradictions are continually changing and influencing each other. Initially, politicians will need each other to oust another; however, as the relationship matures conflict emerges. This is when differences come to light, as the interests of the different parties come into conflict, they begin to express this in their relationships, and the conflicting parties then organise to pursue their interests. In the process, they develop hostile attitudes and conflicting behaviour.

On a similar note, Respondent, 4 was of the view that:

*Respondent 4: Political parties' outright refuse to let go of power and wing in the military to offer protection for something in return....resources. The funny part is everyone is a saint before elections, but once an election is lost, they too are willing to lie in bed with the unruly army to protect their power. Socially, those that are aligned with the greats that live luxurious lives often benefitting when they are not supposed to at the expense of the majority of Basotho.*

In addition, the study finds that mistrust in political leadership, political intolerance and lack of political will to resolve differences amicably within parties and government also leads to party splits. The relationship between the ruling and opposition parties is one defined by personalised hatred and armed rivalry. As such, the study maintains that the political parties in Lesotho are not democratic institutions that are founded on ideology and vision but are instead created to cushion their founders for as long as possible without grooming future leaders. This political culture has paralysed democratic consolidation in Lesotho making it difficult to attain sustainable positive peace in the country. These findings are consistent with findings from Goeke (2016) who maintains that sustainable positive peace is dependent on the availability of well-functioning political parties and institutionalised party systems.

From the literature (Maundeni, 2010; Williams, 2019) and from the views of participants from various sectors there is a general consensus that political parties in Lesotho have consistently failed to institutionalise themselves as legitimate, respected and credible institutions. The study finds that political parties as organisations have not been able to develop themselves in a manner that brings stability and normality to the political culture in the Kingdom of the Sky. This is consistent with findings from the review of the literature which maintained that intra-party power struggles, factionalism, and party splits have not only stripped the country's party system off its crux but have also undermined the country's fledgeling democracy (Shale, 2008; Matlosa, 2008). This has led to the state facing a crisis of destructive political competition. Consequently, political parties continue to move away from concrete ideologies and values which normally inform the voter's choice, often reducing politics to leadership contestations and elbowing. This ill-disciplined methodology of politics has created a state where politics become a source of income for some and thus the growing number of party splits (Matlosa, 2008). Moreover, the country has seen the formation of political parties founded on vendettas instead of ideological stance.

The study also observed that this type of political culture creates a vacuum where the unprofessional military finds a gap to meddle in the political space in the politically unstable country. There was a general view from respondents that members of the LDF could literally get away with murder, abuses, including killings, torture and corruption. Moreover, it was also observed that upon being voted into power, the governing party failed to reign in the military into its rightful place but instead became subservient to it. This contributed to the destructive political culture in the country where the political elite create and maintain supportive

constituencies with the use of material rewards and sinecure appointments (Akopari, 1998:70).

Conflict transformation as discussed in the theoretical framework chapter aims at changing perceptions, attitudes and the conflict itself from a destructive to a constructive one (Schmid, 2000). The continual conflict situation in the Mountain Kingdom shows that the SADC working with the top-level leadership has failed to attain transformation in the personal level and even relational dimension. This refers to changes in the attitudes, perceptions and minds of the elite who are seen to be key players in the conflict in Lesotho. Considering also the destructive political culture, this would necessitate addressing the structural and social root causes by challenging injustices and restoring human relations, ethical and value-based dimensions in the political landscape of the country. Responses from informants suggest that there have been no transformations in the context, the issues and the actors or the relations in the conflict, which is the reason behind the recurrence of the conflict.

The transformation of the destructive political culture in the kingdom can be explained through the lens of the conflict resolution approach, which forms a critical part of the conflict transformation process. Wallensteen notes that conflict resolution occurs “where the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solves their central incompatibilities, accept each other's continued existence as parties and cease all violent actions against each other (2007:18).” Three key elements worth noting here are: first, there needs to be an agreement to solve the fundamental incompatibilities; secondly, an acceptance of each other's existence; and finally a cessation of violent activities against each other. Advocates of the conflict resolution theory argue that it is possible to resolve conflict if parties can be assisted to explore, analyse and map the conflict, and to question and reposition their interests and positions (Miall et al., 1999:183). The lack of transformation in the various facets speaks to the regional body's constraints in conflict transformation, this remains a significant constraint since Lederach (1997) and Miall (2004), among others, point out that: for conflict transformation to have taken place, party's must have been assisted by the various levels of leadership to analyse, explore and reframe the interests and positions of the conflicting parties to ensure a mutually acceptable and constructive outcome.

#### **6.2.4. Socio-economic dynamics**

A key factor identified to be an important dynamic in the conflict is the socio-economic conditions of the country. This being said, the regional organisation has often focused its

analysis of the conflicts on the political arena to the detriment of the underlying causes of the Lesotho crises. The country's underdevelopment and dependency on SA is common knowledge. This is a notable underlying source of friction between the two countries which inevitably permeates the political realm and exacerbates the underdeveloped economic status of the kingdom. This view is buttressed by Akokpari (1998), who finds that when there are conditions of scarcity, the state inevitably becomes both the channel and the source of accumulation. The study further finds that the country's weak and unsustainable economy is considered another factor intensifying conflict in the country. According to Respondent 18: *Britain the country's colonial master did very little to develop Lesotho's economy.* This view is further reiterated by respondent 17, who argues:

*Our country, as I'm sure you are aware has a weak economic base with a very little private sector. I am also certain you are aware of the labour opportunities taken by our people in your country since apartheid times. This is because of the very few employment opportunities that are available. Sic*

As a result, the country has been forced to depend on its neighbour South Africa. Moreover, this has affected the tiny country negatively seeing high inflation rates due to the economic instability in SA. This reality is also reinforced by an argument presented in the literature review, which maintains that: In Africa, political, economic, and social issues have proven to be interdependent and deeply intertwined. Obasanjo (1991) identifies poverty as one of the most common factors that are behind the majority of the conflicts in Africa. It is worth noting that respondents generally agreed that socio-economic dynamics were drivers to the phenomenon of politicians holding onto power which results in conflict. However, they did not agree with the claim of poverty as a key cause, rather greed is cited as a more plausible argument as players in the conflict are not affected by abject poverty. These findings support the claims made in the literature (Matlosa, 1999; Letsie, 2009; Williams, 2019) and by respondents that the conflict was an elitist conflict and hardly involved the ordinary Basotho 'layman' on the street. This point becomes clearer when we look at the reality of a lack of political demonstration from the general public as often seen in other countries. In the Lesotho case, the involvement of the public in the conflict has only been observed in the scenario in which a handful of supporters (mainly the youth) are used by the elite who want to control and remain in power. This has also been witnessed in the military where new recruits are seen to be making inroads and climbing the ranks of the military at high speeds.

#### **6.2.4.1 Nature of the economy**

Monyane, (2009:5) argues that the country has in the past seen some institutional reform, however, the same cannot be said for the country's socio-economic conditions. The country is marred by factors such as poverty, unemployment, nepotism, corruption, poor civil society, minor working-class and socio-economic inequality within sectors (Ajulu, 1995; Banyera 2017; Letshele, 2018). The study establishes that these are all socio-economic factors that contribute to the escalation of conflict in Lesotho and will continue to impede consolidation of democracy and ultimately conflict transformation in the country. In fact, Akokpari (1998) maintains that the fragility of the country's economy remains its greatest impediment towards democratic stability. Accordingly, respondents held that:

Respondent 1: *But mainly is the issue of stomach politics is underlying many of the challenges in the country. This is tied closely to the economy of our country. Sic*

On a similar note

Respondent 2: *.....Mainly because of the nature of our economy that does not provide a wider base of opportunities outside government. Sic*

This is in line with the UNDP Human Development Report (2015), which maintains that Lesotho falls into the category of countries with the lowest of the Human Development Indices. The HDI which maintains that "approximately 57.1 per cent of Lesotho's population lives below the international poverty datum line of US\$ 1, 25 per day." (World Data Atlas, 2019). The SADC has failed to assist the country's weak economy into an active economy that is able to meet the needs of its populace. In view of this, Makoa (2002:14) upholds that the country's failure to accumulate and equally allocate resources among its citizens remains a critical challenge. It then becomes increasingly important for the regional body to pay greater attention to its initial mandate of economic development and integration as stipulated in its founding treaty and protocols. Looking into the SADC's objectives, they suggest that the body acknowledges the importance of economic growth as a step towards, political stability, peace, security and ultimately development. However, the organisation has failed to balance the security mandate with the economic mandate in Lesotho.

Against the above backdrop, it has to be posited that for SADC to succeed in its CT efforts in the Mountain Kingdom, greater emphasis must be placed on the economic transformation. Also, in moving forward with the quest to achieve sustainable positive peace in the Kingdom, it will be important for the SADC to focus on a multi-pronged approach that seeks to address the challenges of poverty, youth unemployment, corruption and underdevelopment that are rampant in the country. It is a well-known and documented fact that Lesotho's economy is

limited in terms of resource endowment, trade, and employment opportunities and income generation. Hence Matlosa (1993) suggests that the country needs support from the REC in terms of both micro and macro-economic re-orientation. This necessitates that the SADC in its short, medium and long-term plans ought to strive to support the country to address its devastating economic challenges if it is serious with attaining sustainable positive peace in the country.

For Matlosa (1993), an economically viable Mountain Kingdom would mean less dependence on SA and equal distribution of resources to its population, thus minimising political tension and violent uprisings in the Kingdom. This view is also supported by Williams (2019), who maintains that a vibrant private sector in Lesotho is bound to positively contribute to a healthier political culture in the country. With a vibrant private sector in place, Williams (2019) envisions a state where political parties differ on ideology and ultimately over policy positions rather than fighting over the benefits that are attached to political power.

#### **6.2.4.2 Resource competition**

Another factor that was observed (Landsberg, 2002; kabemba, 2003) to be fuelling the Lesotho conflict is the resource competition or the greed factor among the elite. This factor can be explained by the elite who would go to extreme ends to hold on to economic opportunities and resource competition for as long as possible. The study finds that in Lesotho state power can provide for access to control of economic resources. The findings of the study are corroborated by Mack & Snyder (1957:218) who argues that for conflict to exist in specific context or setting, the following should be present: first the presence of two or more parties; a condition of scarcity; the presence of behaviour that seeks to harm the other; in the quest for mutually opposed goals.

Accordingly:

*Respondent 6: The scramble for power be it politically or within the ranks is one for resources. Also is a very little or non-existent private sector. Government jobs become the ultimate for all people. Sic*

Considering the country's socio-economic dynamics, membership and positions in the governing party become a means to an end in providing access to opportunities. As a result, the country has witnessed politicians in influential positions refusing to relinquish power, thus posing a challenge to the government in the Mountain Kingdom and democratic consolidation. In light of this, Respondent 7 expressed:



Respondent 7: *The country has a weak economic base, and there is a stiff competition for scarce economic resources by different actors. The Lesotho economy depends much on the SACU revenues, which makes up much of the revenue. Which have been declining. The public service has been the main source of employment in the past. Everyone looks up to the state for livelihood in a context where the private sector does not exist. Sic*

Moreover, the study observed that the country's poor resource endowment coupled with its political culture and socio-economic realities, yield a zero-sum political landscape with no room for cooperation and compromise. Moreover, in this type of political environment personal interests often outweigh national interests. Accordingly:

Respondent 2: *The biggest problem in Lesotho is a weak economic base that tends to create pressure for people to be and to remain in government which allows them to control resources.....For me, the main reason behind this type of behaviour is that aspiring politicians have witnessed those in office and those connected to them flourish and once in office, they too, want to have access to the large pieces of the pie..... All these conflicts we see, at the gist of all of them, is a struggle for power and economic resources.*

The study found that the regional organisation's concentration on the political aspect of the conflict and thus ignoring the underlying issues exacerbated resource competition in the country. The study in the previous chapters ascertained the underdevelopment of the country and its economic dependence on South Africa for its economic survival. This view is buttressed in the literature by Azar (1986) who perceived that there was a firm link between violent uprisings, underdevelopment, unfair allocation of resources and ruthless resource competition.

#### **6.2.4.3 Corruption**

The study found that corruption undermines the rule of law and the conflict transformation process in Lesotho. It is common practise in the country that persons who have been exposed to political positions and power seek to continue to make personal gains from positions held. Corruption poses a serious threat to economic development and democratic governance in Africa, and the Mountain Kingdom has not been exempted (Isbell and Malephane, 2019). The literature suggested that weak rule of law and governance institutions provide fertile ground for rampant corruption, and this is found to be the case in the Mountain Kingdom. Lesotho's ranking in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index dropped from 55th in 2013 to 83rd in 2016 before rebounding to 74th in 2017 (Transparency International, 2018). Both petty and grand corruption are common in public service (Corruption Perception Index, 2017). This is reiterated by a statement made by Prime Minister Thomas Thabane who argued that "corruption in Lesotho is the worst enemy after AIDS" (Lesotho Times, 25 July 2013:7). Accordingly, the respondents argued:

Respondent 20.... *The socio-economic realities of the country have a huge role in the country's belligerent political culture and rampant corruption.*

On a similar note,

Respondent 16: *Given the size of the economy and its dependence on the government, the relationship between political power and economic prosperity with weak governance structures is a given.*

It is deduced from the above responses that corruption is rife among Lesotho's elites. However, various respondents were of the view that the country's political culture of corruption can be traced to Colonialism. For Respondent 18: *colonialism laid a festering political landscape that today haunts the country.* The argument here suggests that the country was never founded on firm democratic principles and as such, all the country has ever known is corrupt systems, in fact, Respondent 8 maintains: *the very institutional structures of the state were never structured to serve the people except the elite.* As such, it can be concluded that while serving their own interests, the elite in the country have configured the institutional structures to be ungovernable.

The study posits that the SADC would need to assist the country to transform the structural issues and mainly its economic realities. The study also found there is a relationship between fewer economic opportunities, corruption and the prevalence of a damaging political culture. In light of the socio-economic standing of the Kingdom, it would be imperative to prioritise the multi-pronged features for dealing with the problems of poverty, youth unemployment and development that the Kingdom grapples with in the short, medium and long-term period (Matlosa, 1993). The argument here is that the regional bloc should place greater emphasis on assisting the country to address its debilitating economic realities if it is to achieve positive, sustainable peace.

#### **6.2.4.4. Politics more than a career: a livelihood**

As a result of the factors discussed above (the lack of economic opportunities, opportunities for corruption, the nature of the economy), politics in the Mountain Kingdom have become more than a career but have become a source of a comfortable livelihood for the elite.

The study also revealed that politics in Lesotho are not only an ideological issue based on the quest for democracy but an issue of bread and butter for the elite and those in power. This notion is captured by Respondent 16: *Economic aspirations drive the politics in Lesotho.* Similarly, Respondent 17 was of the view that:

Respondent 17:..... *well political dynamics are at the heart of the situation in our beloved country- frankly, politicians, as has been witnessed in other countries outright, refuse to*

*relinquish power and obviously this is because of the socio-economic benefit that comes with political power. Sic*

It was also observed from the data collected that politics in Lesotho have turned out to be the key method of dispensing and controlling resources in the country. Accordingly, Respondent 21 maintains:

*At the centre of Lesotho's crisis is the pursuit of happiness achieved through economic muscle.*

These findings agree with Miller's definition of conflict since the country has witnessed an irregular rivalry for power by the elite since its liberation in 1966. Findings from the data also corroborate Matlosa's (1999) argument (in the theoretical chapter) that all conflict situations have a common thread that weaves various analyses of conflict together. These are the competition/survival strategy, resources/power, and interests/values. The literature in previous chapters outlined socio-economic dynamics as a key cause behind the many problems facing the country. However, the responses give a clearer picture as they break down further themes that can be said to flow from the socio-economic conditions of the country. This is evident as 18 respondents referred to politics in the country as being more than just politics but a livelihood. This particular theme can be seen as a new theme emerging from the responses.

In line with Galtung's violence triangle, this study maintains that it is important for conflict transformation efforts to pay attention to existential structural violence when economic and social conditions lead to violent episodes, as a result of uneven wealth redistribution, rather than as the sole consequence of physical violence (Galtung, 2001:24). The accomplishment of conflict transformation is influenced by numerous fundamentals that play a role in the attainment of peace. These would include transformations at various stages and also regional contributions towards a healthy economy, legitimate political institutions, governance structures and an independent judicial system. In the context of the findings, this would necessitate that regional organisations also place much of their focus in transforming the socio-economic conditions in their member states so that the political arena can be free from hostage as a result of lack of economic prospects as in the Kingdom.

### **6.2.5 Historical dynamics**

Various scholars such as Cohen (1995; 1996), Duala (1984), Ake (1985) and Okoyo (1977) have pointed to Africa's colonial past as a key contributing factor towards the many conflicts facing the continent today. Achankeng (2017) argues that the imperial factor is a fundamental underlying cause of conflicts in Africa and goes even further to suggest that their repetitive

nature may be attributed to their colonial past. In line with this thinking, the study observed that there are numerous historical factors which still haunt nation-building, democratic consolidation and conflict transformation processes in Lesotho. A number of respondents from the various sectors were of the view that some of the problems in the country today can be linked to a historical culture characterised by the incoherence of the traditional state, ill-discipline of its principal players and armed confrontation that mirrored Basutoland's colonial history (Maudeni, 2010:138). Accordingly, Respondent 19 claims that:

*Respondent 19: Among the historical dynamic is the situation in which have seen the country adopt problematic systems the traditional Basotho way of living and the imperialist Westminster system. With this came religion which also saw politicking involving religion in its early stages, setting the country up for failure is it sought to find itself post-independence. Sic*

On a similar note, Respondent 20 was of the view that:

*Respondent 20: But even before independence, the political leadership failed to adopt a system that would be best suited for the realities of this nation. Instead at independence, the country adopted western systems that have formed the backdrop for the issues today plaguing this country. ibid*

The study observed that there are incompatibilities between the Westminster and monarchy governance system which co-exist in the Kingdom in the Sky which SADC needs to take into consideration in efforts to lead the conflict transformation process in the country. This view is bolstered by Weisfelder (1992) who contends that Lesotho's democratic interruptions as early as independence were as a result of a defective Westminster type of democracy. It is also the case that an extremely politicised populace exists in a volatile atmosphere of hopeless clashes between modern democracy and traditional systems (Weisfelder, 1992). The current study also confirms views in literature, for example Benyera (2017:60) who noted that the situation in the country can be explained by a "politically excluded monarch" which attempts to remain politically relevant by colluding with political and security factions and contributes to the complications of the Lesotho conflict.

#### **6.2.5.1 An unsuitable electoral model**

The study discovered that the MMP electoral system, a blend of the FPTP and PR models adopted by Lesotho since independence as one historical contributing factor to the conflict in the country. One respondent argued that it was not the model itself that can be blamed for instability but rather the politicians using the loopholes in the system to meet their own selfish ambitions. Accordingly, Respondent 11:

*....In reality, the conflict in Lesotho has not been caused by the electoral system itself, but the model has been misused by the elite who use any trick to remain in power. Sic*

This is evident as the model was replaced by MMP but the country still continued to experience instability.

On a similar note Respondent 22 claimed that:

*.....Well the other key issue has been the electoral system which has provided for political viruses to fester and flourish in Lesotho. Politicians are quick to find loopholes and ways to manipulate or even abuse the system to meet their own ends. For me, the country created a problem for itself when it failed to adopt the mixed-member model in its entirety but instead took parts of the system. This meant that critical elements of the model were left out and allowing for floor crossing. Sic*

Lesotho enacted electoral reforms in 2002, opting for mixed-member constituencies alongside PR based on a party list. The system was adopted under the premise that it would be able to compensate the smaller political parties, who lacked the political majority to obtain sufficient votes to capture constituencies yet had enough support throughout the country to warrant participation in the national assembly (Matlosa, 2008; Kapa, 2013; Makoa, 2014). As shown in the responses, this system has proven to face numerous challenges in the country. In a country with numerous interrelated issues mainly around a destructive political culture, it increasingly becomes important for regional organisations to understand the dynamics of the politics of the country to be able to diagnose the problems that might come with any type of reforms. In light of this, it would seem that when the system was adopted there was an understanding that the politicians would respect the system and not take advantage of any loopholes present (Ace Project, no date). However, evidence points to an oversight even on the part of the regional organisation to foresee the gap for the manipulation of the system. It can be argued that the SADC (in consultation with the IEC) with all its experience and resources could have been more vigilant and foresee the loopholes in the electoral model adopted by the Kingdom and propose suggestions towards averting the conflict situation in which the country finds itself. Accordingly, Rich and Bennejee (2016) the Kingdom's experiences with the electoral system stand more as a warning than a criticism of the system.

Hence, it goes without saying that Lesotho's electoral system needs to be reformed to not only protect the compensatory devices but also to ensure that there are legal methods in place to address possible loopholes in its MMP system. Also, there needs to be a political mechanism put in place to facilitate the accommodation of coalition politics and seat allocation.

Additionally, any reforms in the country must involve all stakeholders in the country. This is in line with Lederach's conflict transformation theory that emphasises the involvement of all levels of leadership. In the case of electoral reform, these would ensure that there is an understanding of the adopted electoral system. The responses from interviews also show that there was little understanding of how the mixed electoral system works. As a result, the country has witnessed a huge gap between expectations and election outcomes often leading to increased political instability.

### **6.3. State, regional and non-state actors and their interests with reference to the dynamics of the Lesotho conflict**

The study found that the Lesotho conflict has seen the involvement of numerous stakeholders, nationally, regionally and internationally. Nationally, there have been state and non-state actors including the IEC. The national state actors can be identified as the security sector, the monarchy and politicians who have all been discussed in the sections above. Regionally, neighbouring countries such as South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe were identified as regional actors with interests in the conflict. While still in the region SADC was cited by all respondents as the body with a mandate to transform conflicts in the sub-region to sustainable peace.

The sub-themes that emerged are presented and discussed below:

#### **6.3.1 SADC mandate to maintain peace and security in the sub-region**

All respondents interviewed held the view that SADC as a regional body had the mandate to maintain peace and security in the sub-region and thus is generally perceived as a legitimate actor in the conflict. Accordingly, respondent 7 maintained:

*SADC has been acting as a provider of an externally organised solution to the collective action problem facing the reforms. SADC has been on the ground in Lesotho since 2014 in its capacity as a conflict mediator and reforms facilitator.*

Similarly,

*Respondent 1: At regional level has of course been SADC. I'm not sure though if we can term SADC as an actor in the true sense of the word. Nonetheless, we have seen SADCs presence in Maseru at various periods..... As mentioned earlier SADC has attempted many times to intervene in Lesotho. In terms of their interests, well every regional organisation would want to seem in control and able to deal with issues within its jurisdiction.*

In line with this thinking Respondent 9 held:

*....Then in the region, it's been SADC in various time frames throughout..... The same can be said for SADC who would want to be viewed as a credible regional body with the ability to handle issues in its own backyard. I personally don't have any sinister views about SADC.*

A similar view was corroborated by Respondent 12 who maintained

*.....As a regional organisation SADC has led the transformation process in Lesotho through various methods.....*

The responses above suggest that SADC is viewed as a legitimate body with authority to lead the conflict transformation process in Lesotho. This observation was echoed across the board among academics, politicians, practitioners and leaders of NGO's. The respondents were generally of the view that SADC's presence in Lesotho was justified. The main reason was that SADC is a REC, legally mandated to assist a member state in instances that threaten democracy, security and overall regional peace and stability. In fact, the SADC had guaranteed to safeguard democratic consolidation and denounce any attempts of using undemocratic means to attain power in the region.

The majority of respondents argued that the SADC was legally functioning within its mandate as stipulated in its founding treaty, the OPDS and MDP protocols, which regulate the institution's interventions and security operations and the assessment by the Troika guarantors. The general view was that the country is a member of the SADC which has endorsed SADC treaties and protocols, and as such a mandate to step in to assist the member state. The legitimacy of SADC as a credible body with a mandate to maintain peace and security is a strength that the organisation can rely on going forward in its CT efforts.

### **6.3.2. South Africa a regional actor with national interests**

The study finds that South Africa is a key regional actor with national interests in Lesotho. In light of this, the majority of respondents were of the view that SA's participation in the conflict in the country was more of a matter of self-interest than the benefit of the Kingdom or the entire sub-region. Accordingly, respondent 11 argues that

*..... realistically speaking South Africa is the first non-state actor. The country surrounds Lesotho completely. In-fact the 1998 intervention has been said to be unauthorised by SADC but instead was led by SA who clearly have interests in the LHWP which supplies water to the country.....*

Similarly, respondent 20 held that:

*The other player is also South Africa, the big brother who also wants to direct and keep a close eye on political processes in Lesotho. The behaviour from SA can be viewed to be somewhat strange as it has interests in the water resources and the lifeblood of Gauteng, which is the base of their economy. Lately, we have seen business interests with the Bidvest saga in Lesotho.*

Study participants also emphasised that the stability of the Mountain Kingdom was vital to the socio-economic and political position of SA. The logic behind this is that instability and security challenges within Lesotho would have some consequential spill-over effects on SA, either through an influx of refugees and wide-ranging economic disturbances. Respondent 4 was of the view that:

*....Regionally, it's been SADC and to a greater extent South Africa. At most times SA comes in for its on interest under the auspices of SADC because of its location. Instability in Lesotho would mean people flood into SA. SA has a lot of investment in Lesotho, so they need to protect all these investments. The Commonwealth has also been prominent by virtue of Lesotho being a former British protectorate. Sic*

Elements of South Africa's self-interests were highlighted by respondents in Lesotho's *operation boleas*, a military intervention led by SA and Botswana. For example, Letsie (2015) held that South African troops were originally deployed at the dam site while the disturbances were occurring mainly in Maseru (ibid). This demonstrates how SA, like other nation-states, is keen on ensuring that its interests are secured in Lesotho, regardless of the consequences in Lesotho's CT processes. Accordingly, Respondent 1 maintained:

*For obvious reasons South Africa has interests in Lesotho, the main one, of course, is ensuring that instability in the country does not spill over to SA. But then there's also the water highlands project which SA has interests in and must safeguard. I think the interests of SA are varied. To begin with, Pretoria is a regional power within the SADC and I would say its intervention at times have been about showing off and flexing its muscle. I think South Africa also has interests in obtaining a seat in the Security Council so in my thinking Maseru is the perfect ground to show off on. For example, SADC has not played with Zimbabwe considering the country's military might. The country would need to be seen as relevant and create a good image as an effective regional mediator. Sic.*

A similar view was held by Respondent 7:

*....There's also been SA that has played an active role often with blurred lines as it has interests in Maseru. South Africa has interests around the water Highlands project. This has always been a key interest for the SA government as evident even during the reign of the National Party government. Sic*

Another finding in the study suggested that South Africa had interests in the government in Lesotho. This argument is based on the view that Ramaphosa's involvement in Lesotho has mainly been for his country's interest: to ensure that the same political leaders stayed in power. The argument made here is that a change of government would pose a challenge for South Africa as it would be difficult to penetrate the country. In light of this Respondent, 18 was of the view that:



*RSo SA's presence in Lesotho is a given. In fact, there is a longer history of intervention by SA to shape the leaders in power to conform and to serve South African interests.... The Lesotho military has a long relationship with the apartheid regime while the Basotho mineworkers form the bulk of South Africa's National Union of Mineworkers. Sic*

The study found that the Mountain Kingdom is dependent on SA in a variety of ways. This has been the case since the country's inception, and others argue that this relationship has been maintained by South Africa through systemic violence (Benyera, 2017: 61). Due to the geographic positioning of Lesotho, this relationship is bound to be opportunistic. From the earliest of times, South Africa has benefitted from Lesotho's problems and instability in various ways; for example, the majority of mineworkers are migrants from the Kingdom. Secondly, the water-scarce country benefits from the country's water resources, and moreover, Lesotho's economy allows for lucrative markets for South African goods (Benyera 2017:61).

### **6.3.3. A greater role for CSO's as trusted players in Conflict Transformation**

The research exposed that SADC has not fully engaged the grassroots in its conflict transformation efforts in Lesotho. Moreover, it found that civil society organisations are trusted mediators in the Lesotho context, which is an advantage for the conflict transformation process.

Accordingly,

*Respondent 2: In mediation efforts there are critical local actors... there has been the church, the civil society organisations Christian Council of Lesotho and the Lesotho Council of NGO's LCN. Well on the men of the cloth, we relied on moral authority to assist to reach negotiated settlement.*

Motsamai (2018: 187) maintains that in the 2007 conflict, CSO's also played a crucial role though they had not been engaged as part of SADC's efforts to localise its initiative. Moreover, in 2012, the country witnessed engagements led by civil society organisations. The extracts from respondents below demonstrate the important role that has been played by the civil society sector in Maseru: Accordingly:

*Respondent 1: In terms of the non-state actors we have seen the presence of non-government organisations such as the CCL lead peace talks with state actors in efforts to bring about stability in Maseru. (Sic)*

Similarly,

*Respondent 4: ...Nationally, we have seen CSO's such as the council of NGO's which has always been involved in mediations. They facilitate meetings between parties and have been very active. The council of chiefs have also played a role in trying to resolve the conflict.*

On the same breath

Respondent 5: *...Nationally, non- state actors we can count your civil society organisations including the Church which has been at the forefront in efforts to bring peaceful dialogue among disputing parties.*

There is a general consensus that locals are better placed to lead mediation efforts as they are in close proximity with the context and closer ties with conflicting parties which makes it easier to build trust, respect and confidence between those directly involved in the conflict (Galtung, 1990; Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1999; Lederach 1995, Rupesinghe 1995; Muller, 2003). The fact that grassroots actors are familiar with the dynamics and historical relations of conflicting parties empowers them to impact positively and have an audience with the locals and the populace in general as they bring in traditional methods that are more favourable to durable stability and peace advancement. The importance of locals in the conflict transformation process cannot be overemphasised. The grassroots has a significant role to play in transforming the conflict in Lesotho.

The SADC took a shift leaning towards the inclusion of CSO's in 2015 when the SADC Commission on the ground began to engage various stakeholders in the conflict. This move is supported by Muller (2003:12), who posits that grassroots actors are best placed to deal with issues involving reconciliation and community building, which are critical for achieving positive sustainable peace in conflict situations. However, in the Lesotho case, SADC has often emphasised dialogue with the elite who are main players in the conflict. The study noted that the optimum engagement of the grassroots through various local groups with no real interest in the perpetuation of the conflict was crucial in facilitating a national conference. The engagement of civil society was argued to have been successful in facilitating and ensuring the running of the 2012 elections, which saw a coalition government in Lesotho that sadly broke down. This argument is also supported by Saunders (1999) who highlights the role of individuals at the grassroots level in conflict transformation by stating that whilst REC's and governments can write peace treaties and reach peace agreements; it is only individuals that can transform human relationships.

The study found that there were attempts on the SADC side to consult CSO's in Lesotho. However, the findings also suggest that these attempts were rather ad-hoc and not institutionally linked to SADC mediation processes. Furthermore, while discussions take place at high levels such as the Summit and ministerial meetings reporting back to CSOs is still a challenge for the regional organisation, constituting a stumbling block on local conflict transformation. The study found that CSO's are a critical player and generally accepted to have

Lesotho's interests at heart. This means they are trusted as the moral authority of the country and agents who have a critical role to play in the transformation process. In light of this:

Respondent 7: ....*The civil society organisations and the church I would say have no ulterior motives those are people of peace and high moral regard. Well civil society at times can drive certain agendas depending on their donors. Sic*

Similarly, Respondent 18 maintained:

*A key role has been that on NGO'S, a case in point is protest by academics, Researchers, the Lesotho Law Society, Trade Unions and students who all called to the King to summon a national conference to find possible solutions to the challenges faced by the country and how they could possibly be avoided in the future. Sic*

Today CSO's are respected in Lesotho considering that parties to the conflict are seen yielding to the call from CSO's to the negotiation table. This being said, it is also crucial to note that this has not always been the case. In light of this Respondent 20 concludes:

Respondent 20..... *Well the church has played changing roles in the conflict. Initially, we saw the Catholic Church in open support of the BNP whilst on the other hand, the Lesotho Evangelical Church (LEC) was in support of the BCP. At some point, the differences between the two denominations intensified the conflict. Mind you both denominations served together in the Christian Council of Lesotho. Eventually, the political polarity between the two subsided as splits happened within the BCP and change of leadership. Today, the moral authority of the church is intact and we have seen the church working with the SADC as mediators in the conflict at various points. At times it's been unclear whether the mediation is SADC or South Africa. NGO's like the Lesotho Network for Conflict Management (LNCM) played a critical role in the formation and operationalisation of the Interim Political Authority in 1998. We cannot deny that the church-led mediation clearly made a substantial contribution to political stability and the deepening of democracy in the country. Today the church is well respected and accepted by Basotho collectively. It was not always like this at some point the church itself was at the centre of instability but was able to reposition itself. Sic*

It is evident from the responses received that it was only after the stepping down of the Masire-led SADC mission that the CSOs were actually seen to be participating. The CCL played a role in mediating the political stalemate between the government and the opposition parties. However, while CSO's have a critical role to play in the conflict transformation process, it would also appear that CSO's pose the risk of being viewed as partisan. This is mainly due to the reality that they generally receive most of their funding from external international organisations who might also have their own interests in the country. As such, CSO's can at times be viewed to be furthering the agenda of their external donors, and this poses a threat to the conflict transformation process in the country.

#### 6.3.4 The AU, UN as critical supporters of SADC

The views expressed by the respondents are in line with data received from documents which suggest that the UN has indeed allowed the SADC to take a leading role while it has provided support to the regional body. A case in point was the UN Interagency Framework Team and the UNDP Regional Service Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa. There has also been support from the UN Bureau on Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR). Moreover, the UN Department of Political Affairs appointed a Peace and Development Advisor, specially assigned to expand the mediation capacity of the local CCL team in Lesotho. The UN was also able to successfully support the CCL led mediation that led to the May 2012 election through technical support. The study found that the UN has played a critical role in providing support to SADC in its conflict transformation efforts in Lesotho. This was expressed by Respondent 1:

*Well considering that we live in an international system, the first non-state actor at International level would be the United Nation's with a less visible presence but which realistically engages the regional body to stabilise the situation as swiftly as possible. Sic*

However, the study finds that's the role of the UN has been a supportive one to the SADC. For example, respondent 3 noted:

*....There was also the UNDP who did not take a lead but provided a technical team which contributed. Similarly, respondent 15 maintained that: Internationally, we have seen international organisations such as the UN stepping up while allowing the regional establishment to lead.*

This view is also corroborated by Respondent 17:

*First is the SADC with its mediation efforts supported by the AU and the UN.*

However, there was a contrary view which maintained that:

*Respondent 2: ....Internationally, the UNDP and the Commonwealth have been involved in the internal affairs of the country. The involvement of all these players while it has been positive, their involvement has also somewhat perpetuated the conflict situation in Lesotho....*

A common thread noticeable through the various narratives of the key informants in the various sectors suggests that SADC should lead its regional activities while the UNSC provides support at its request. More importantly, SADC requires financial and technical support which the UN can easily provide. As such, the important role of the AU and the UN in the successful conflict transformation process in the Mountain Kingdom cannot be underplayed.

The concept of local ownership of the conflict in Lesotho resonates with the argument by Lederach (1997) and Miall (2004) who maintain that conflict transformation is more successful when handled locally. As such, the SADC may need to place greater focus on how best it can facilitate local ownership with the inclusion of the various levels of leadership in the country while SADC remains in its role as facilitator or mediator (Moyo, 2018).

## **6.4 SADC strategic political and diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict**

### **6.4.1 Snap elections: not a solution**

The study observed that the SADC has focused on the holding of snap elections as if this were a panacea for the deep-seated political crisis besetting the country. Although the snap elections did contribute in the forming of a legitimate new coalition government, it did, however, not resolve the structural challenges that had paralysed the first coalition government. Literature (Williams, 2019) suggests that the MMP system was able to contribute to the inclusivity of the country's parliament. However, the system has also produced a series of fragile coalition governments that have failed to survive the harsh political culture. In light of this, Respondent 7 said:

*Lesotho's problems go much deeper than elections.*

Similarly, Respondent 19 said: *You see SADC has insisted on calling snap elections and whenever coalitions have problems, and you call for an election, elections will not bring peace let alone stability. You are merely creating new problems.*

Majority of practitioners and onlookers of Lesotho's political situation have often agreed that the country's mediator Ramaphosa had failed Lesotho by calling for elections, whilst governance and security issues remained unresolved. This view is reiterated by Respondent 5, who suggests:

*My dear, until the political landscape is transformed through multi-pronged reforms elections will produce problematic results. Sic*

The study maintains that by relying on snap elections, SADC has ignored the root causes and the dynamics at play in Lesotho's conflict. The study also found that security agencies remain polarised, with some politicians using such agencies to hold on to power (ibid). The study maintains that snap elections are not the sufficient methodology for conflict transformation in Lesotho, they have rather proven to be a quick fix for Lesotho's political and security problems. This finding is in line with Williams (2019) findings who maintains that the country cannot continue to solely rely on elections in the absence of reforms to the country's electoral system.

Williams (2019) also warns that this false promise of elections will not bring stability and sustainable peace to the Kingdom in the Sky. SADC cannot continue to rely on snap elections particularly in Lesotho. For 25 years, regional and local actors have advocated elections on a number of occasions to bolster the legitimacy of Lesotho's government (Williams, 2019: 6). SADC's obsession with snap elections as a solution for the instability in the Kingdom can be understood within the conflict management approach, which maintains that a more feasible option is to manage and contain the volatility of the conflict. The effort in this strategy is also to reach a compromise which might lead to a move away from violence and resumption of normal politics and healthy functioning of society (Miall, 2005:3).

### **6.5. Does the SADC have the capacity to transform the conflict in Lesotho from violence to sustainable peace?**

The narratives emanating from responses reveal that there are differing views on whether SADC has the capacity to transform conflicts in Lesotho and the sub-region. Some of the respondents felt that the organisation had done much work to build its capacity to be able to transform conflict in the sub-region. According to Respondent 1:

*Well I should think SADC has capacity particularly led by regional hegemony with strong militaries and years of experience including SA, Zimbabwe and Botswana. However, there are various limitations to the organisation's capacity including internal issues such as political will from member states, this has been the situation in Lesotho. We must begin to ask ourselves uncomfortable questions as a country. Various structures exist in the SADC including OPDS which have been created to deal with situations like the one in this country. Sic*

On the same breath,

*Respondent 2: For me, based on my knowledge mine would be to say SADC has conflict transformation capacity. I would say though not expressed directly, the organisation has seen the need for long-term multi track processes that are expected to transform the conflict in Lesotho and possibly attain long-term peace with altered perceptions of power and politics. Sic*

Similarly,

*Respondent 4: SADC can assist Lesotho to get rid of the army completely, a Demilitarization of Lesotho. Without the army I do not see any violent conflicts. The army has proved overtime to be a hindrance to political solutions even small conflicts that could be solved politically because of involvement of the army become a crisis. SADC does have capacity in that respect to transform the situation. But there must be political will and SADC must forget about diplomatic approach and consider military means. Sic*

Correspondingly,

*Respondent 10: My dear .... SADC certainly has capacity maybe not the will, in fact, even SA on its own has capacity to bring the instability in Maseru to a complete halt. But the constraint has been the issue of sovereignty. So, SADC does have capacity but not the will to do it. Fixation with buddy type of politics as a result the problem will not be solved.*

Further responses also reveal that others were less optimistic arguing that the body as it stands does not have the capacity to deal with the conflict in Lesotho. Accordingly:

*Respondent 18: Considering the organisation is relatively new particularly in relation to its security role, it would seem the formation is still in the process of building its capacity as it continues to test different methodologies. But I must acknowledge and commend the progress made thus far with declarations and so forth. So, in short there is capacity but it's not yet fully fledged as there are numerous challenges such as resources both human and financial. Sic*

*Respondent 21: Not on its own. I think SADC has convening power, power to legitimately lead the process. But If you think of SADC not just as the secretariat and heads of state but think of first of all the capacities available in SA and other strong SADC members. For example, should the IEC be a problem in Lesotho the IEC in SA can help them. There are numerous institutions in SADC countries that could really play a role in leading an effort but that effort should involve a lot of partners including other partners outside of SADC such as the AU and the international community. Most importantly the UN and the EU. I would welcome whoever can contribute to different parts of such a strategy but most importantly Leotho people should be in the lead of implementing such a process. Mostly SADC has the convening power as leading the process pushing from the outside. Sic*

The mixed results from respondents are consistent with findings from extant literature which also shows diverse opinion on this issue. One of the reasons that the study established to be behind the mixed results is the lack of consistency and clear criteria for the assessment of the regional body's capacity. Nathan (2012) advocates for assessing SADC's performance in terms of its stated goals and objectives. While this study agrees with Nathan's (2012) argument, it also goes further to advocate for the argument made by Lederach that constructive change must take place in all the four dimensions if sustainable long-term positive peace is to be attained in any conflict situation. This view is further explored by Miall (2004) who builds on Lederach's work and argues for change in the context, structure, content, issues, actors and rules of conflicts in the Mountain Kingdom to attain sustainable peace.

## **6.6 Has the SADC been able to transform itself to transform the conflicts in the sub-region?**

Further probing on whether the REC has been able to transform itself to be able to tackle CT in the sub-region, yielded responses which revealed two opposing views on the matter. The study found that the regional organisation had made strides considering the 180 degrees turnaround from an economic development focus to one having to champion peace and security issues in the sub-region. On this Respondent 1 expressed:

*Definitely the formation as you know began as one with an economic focus. However, leaders within the region appreciate that you cannot have viable economies in the mist of violent conflicts and subsequently insecurity. So, much has been done within the organisation to prepare it and to deal with issues of security in the region. These strides have all been carried out to ensure that the regional body is able to carry out its peace and security mandate. Sic*

Respondent 14 affirms the above and further insists that:

*Considering the formation was initially created as an economic body designed to ensure the economic growth of all member states, the SADC has done a sterling job. The SADC has gone from having no peace and security architecture to one of the most admired in the world. Contrary to popular belief, this is one aspect the sub-region can really be proud of. Now as you know transformation as the word suggests is not an overnight process. This has been the case for SADC as a body, it is still undergoing a process of transforming itself and this is a never-ending process. In recent time, in the advent of cybercrimes ect. The regional body will have to evolve to keep up with the current challenges. But all in all, I am confident to say the body has been able to transform itself to deal with issues relation to peace and security thus far. Sic*

Other responses raised the view that the institution had successfully transformed itself as it was initially created to deal with economic issues. However, Respondent 11 maintained that other REC's had also just found this new role of peace and security function and thus should not be treated specially:

*With this argument most people you would have interviewed will highlight how the organisation has transformed from an economic body blah blah blah. But it is immaterial as other bodies were also economic bodies prior to having to deal with security issues, so there's nothing special about SADC. The crux is its working relationships with other formations such as the AU. SADC has shut out the AU to a large extent even when they need support. The main thing for me is 'will' more than anything else. Each formation has its own closet with skeletons. ECOWAS is decisive SADC has no history of being decisive.*

Further responses from the key informants indicated that the methodology adopted by SADC very much depends on the member state being dealt with. This refers to inconsistency and problems of hegemonic member states in the body. In this regard, Respondent 7 was of the view:

*Yes, but only to a certain extent. If you look at SADC, the way it is structured suggests it can only deal with security issues in certain countries not in every country and this a norm in all organisations. The organisation itself is unable to deal with regional powers who are member states. The actual structuring of SADC means these superpowers like SA have crucial positions they play in the organisation. The approach used by SADC differs depending on the country they want to act on at a point in time. For example, Madagascar was easily dealt with by SADC when they got suspended the same is not with Zimbabwe and Mugabe as they have struggled. Think of any situation where SA is seen to be violating some of the SADC arrangements. Would SADC be able to handle the South African case. You can easily deal with small fish. For a country like Lesotho that can easily be done. Sic*



Respondent 16: *Yes, with the establishment of OPDS, however, it also depends on which country is being dealt with. Also, SADC's secretariat is not strong enough, there is also limited resources both human and financial capacity. The challenge is the regional body is unable to facilitate strategy development and policy harmonisation within the region.*

It was deduced from the above responses that; the REC still has challenges with dealing with stronger members, a situation which undermines the body's capacity to transform conflict in the sub-region.

## **6.7 Constraints encountered by the sub-regional body in its attempts to resolve the conflict**

### **6.7.1 Sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in internal affair of states**

One of the critical challenges that can be said to impede SADC's conflict transformation efforts is the sovereignty of member states as guided by the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states. Both the AU and SADC subscribe to and respect the sovereign equality of states as part of their key principles. This view was supported by Motsamai (2018:1) who maintained that SADC's previous efforts have been compromised by state sovereignty, quarrels about jurisdiction, and insufficient platforms for implementing standard policies. Surprisingly, while the literature listed issues of sovereignty as a major impediment to the conflict transformation process, the study found sovereignty and non-interference to be a minor challenge as it was only cited by three of the respondents.

A few respondents interviewed, among whom is a representative of the academia and a journalist, cited the principle of sovereignty and non-interference as a challenge to SADC conflict transformation of the conflict in Lesotho. Adeniji (1992:4) notes that the relaxation of the UN insistence on non-interference in state's domestic affairs is worth considering. Hence, the proposal made here is that it might prove increasingly useful for SADC to relax some requirements of sovereignty if it is to succeed in its conflict transformation efforts.

In the context of Lesotho, however, the study found that while respecting and upholding the principles of sovereignty, the SADC has failed to call out authoritarianism in the country. In this regard, the country has witnessed the same actors hoarding the political scene since independence. Change of leadership or actor transformation is an important component of the conflict transformation process as advocated for by Lederach (Miall, 2004:10). The majority of respondents also raised the issue of change of leadership and holding on to power as a key challenge that has contributed to instability in the Mountain Kingdom.

The stated challenge of sovereignty was also raised by a few participants who corroborated the argument that the principle was an impediment to SADC conflict transformation efforts in the region particularly in the case for implementation of institutional reform.

Respondent 20: *On a few occasions, in 1998 and during the Phumaphi commission, politicians have relied on sovereignty to boycott South Africa's interference in the country.*

The SADC as a regional body is limited by the principle of sovereignty and non-interference to enforce reforms and neither can it force Lesotho to implement structural and institutional reforms. This was evident when in 2016 Mosisili refused to accept the Phumaphi report maintaining that the commission did not have the authority (Motsamai, 2018). Because of the principle of sovereignty SADC cannot do much to ensure that the country implements its reforms. It also came up that the soft power often used by SADC in Lesotho is informed by the principle of sovereignty.

### **6.7.2 National Interests of Member States**

Majority of respondents cited national interests of regional hegemons like SA as impediments to the transformation of the conflict in Lesotho. It was revealed by a significant majority of respondents (70%) including politicians, academics and practitioners that South Africa's well-known national interests in Lesotho were a key factor contributing to SADC conflict transformation challenges in that country. The commonly accepted one was around the highlands water project worth billions of Rand mentioned by 15 of the 22 respondents in their responses. To a lesser extent, the discovery of diamonds in Lesotho is said to have also added to interests of South Africa.

The existence of national interests, on the part of the SA Republic in Lesotho was also argued to have had a direct impact on the conflict transformation process in Maseru. For some respondents, SA despite its known interests in Maseru has continued to use its influence to lead mediation efforts even in cases when it ought not to do so. The various SA statemen that have been deployed to the country, such as former President Mandela, Mbeki and former Deputy President Ramaphosa, have at various times during their involvement in interventions showed that they were in Lesotho to further their country's interests.

This study, however, established that in reality no SADC conflict transformation can be assumed without the participation of South Africa, given its proximity to the country and its national interests. The study also observed that Botswana, considering its terrestrial realities apparently had interests in the water project in Lesotho, and hence its involvement in the 1998

intervention. Some respondents however, opposed this assertion and argued that Botswana's presence was more for the purposes of projection of its military force and based more on her moral obligation to intervene.

As already established, states participate in or take up membership in international or regional organisation to better realise and safeguard their interests. This reality poses a challenge to the success of conflict transformation for SADC. This being said, it equally remains critical for states within regional organisations to strike a balance between their national interests and the morale reasons for the transformation of conflicts in member states. Still, Morgenthau (1978) maintains that the reluctance of member states to concede national interests at the benefit of transforming a particular conflict may be a major challenge which SADC will contend with for some time.

Another key factor that was explored in the literature is "the politics of greed where profits are extracted by exploiting situations of intractable conflict" as advocated for by Van Nieuwkerk (2001) in Moyo (2018:104). In the context of Lesotho, it could be argued that during the apartheid era, the internal conflict was being aggravated by South Africa's pursuit of water in the Lesotho Highlands. As shown in the literature and interviews, the 1986 *coup* in Lesotho is said to have been instigated by apartheid South Africa to remove Leabowa Jonathan and the King who were both opposed to signing an agreement that would see the construction of the Katse dam. Immediately after Leabowa's removal, the construction of the dam commenced proving that the Republic had in fact taken advantage of the conflict in Lesotho to further her own interests.

### **6.7.3 Weak governance structures**

Remarkably, the respondents were also of the view that weak governance structures in the Kingdom of the sky posed a major challenge to the SADC's conflict transformation efforts in Lesotho. Respondent 5 puts it this way:

*The SADC also needs to invest in building the weak governance structure of member states. The next stage is how do we build the governance institutions. The lack of governance structures breeds a fertile ground for undemocratic dispensations, particularly in Lesotho, the process must be multifaceted dealing with issues at the same time. We need proper courts and judicial systems driven by autonomous institutions. Sic*

In the literature, this view is supported by Hegre and Nygard (2014) who maintain that good governance is crucial in reducing the risk of conflict recurrence. For Le Billion (2001:562), states with weak governance institutions are more prone to experience recurring conflicts,

whereas, those with functional and well-established institutions with good governance have less chances of going to war. Lack of effective legitimate state authority to regulate and govern people makes it easy for conflict to erupt thus causing instability. Since they lack effective restraining mechanisms on the quest for power, polities with weak institutions are, as a rule, vulnerable to instability (Akokpari, 1998).

In the context of the Lesotho conflict, the study established that there is a lack of consolidation of state authority thereby leaving room for the various groups to perpetuate violence in the country. In further buttressing the notion of the absence of sound governance in Lesotho, it was asserted that in Maseru, governance was distinctively absent and deficient. In light of this, respondent 19 was of the view that:

*There are some institutions in SADC that can be used to help develop and strengthen governance institutions in Lesotho.*

In supporting this notion, Likoti (2003) noted that since independence the Maseru political system has been inherently weak, deficient and problematic as it is characterised by gross corruption, mismanagement of power and violent episodes. States that have poor governance institutions and structures increase the gap between social classes in society. It is the big gaps between social classes that become an obstacle to advancement. In fact, it can be argued that the presence of weak institutions exacerbates various forms of injustices.

The data also affirm the interpretations established in Chapter 3 on the contribution of weak governance structures in conflict-prone countries. The existence of weak institutions, lack of good governance combined with poor infrastructure, provides a fertile ground for undemocratic regimes and creates a situation in which individuals and organisations steal from the public purse. According to one respondent, the lack of institutions in Lesotho has resulted in the government failing to hold those that have committed crimes accountable.

#### **6.7.4 SADC Failure to Enforce Intervention Resolutions**

The regional body has often faced numerous challenges with breaking self-serving political deadlocks and this has been mainly attributed to the organisations lack of teeth. This lack of enforceability of its resolutions and prescriptions has dented the effectiveness of SADC as a regional peace-making organisation. This gap has been identified not only in Lesotho but also other member states such as the DRC, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar. A case in point is the SADC mediation led by the former president of Botswana, the late Ketumile Masire, which collapsed allegedly due to Lesotho's refusal to cooperate. The same was the case with the

government's refusal to implement recommendations from the Phumaphi report. This view was also upheld by Respondent 9 who maintained:

*The other challenge impeding SADCs efforts is the failure of government to implement some recommendations by SADC to address the country's challenges. And there are no sanctions to ensure implementation for example with the reforms. The only tool that SADC has used is its soft power in efforts to influence Lesotho to act towards reforms. Sic*

On a similar note:

*Respondent 12: I would say the lack of respect for peace agreements reached is one of the core issues putting SADC under strain and are frequently punctuated by relapses into conflict. Sometimes, these agreements are reached without actual ownership from the parties, as such, they are not honoured. As soon the mediator leaves its back to the status quo. So, we can say that most of these agreements are not genuine and are often rushed in efforts to manage the situation. This is what you get when the process is led from outside. People will behave whilst you are there before their eyes. Sic*

SADC has adopted many declarations over the years but these have mainly been shelved away without any legislative authority binding member states to domesticate or enforce them.

A similar view was expressed by Respondent 22:

*.....But in practice I would say the organisation is strong on rhetoric but weak on commitment and engagement plus its secretariat has a small budget unable to carry out its ambitious programme. I would also raise the issue of the organisations unclear work programme and lack of focus that does not link to SADC's overall objectives.*

A critical point from this study is that SADC's capacity in conflict transformation is weakened by its failure to put into action and operationalize its agreements. Moreover, the study observed that the SADC's ability to monitor the implementation of SADC's decisions is a major obstacle to the REC's conflict transformation efforts in Lesotho. This has also been the case in Lesotho where the REC does not have teeth to deal with non-compliance from member states.

In fact, this is corroborated by views in the literature which maintain that SADC's implementation was limited from the initial Windhoek Declaration onwards (Motsamai, 2018:191). It can be argued that the declaration was breached due to the failure on the part of SADC to effectively manage the transition process from negotiations to the actual implementation of the agreement. During this time, coalition partners generally defied many SADC resolutions. This included Thabane's violation of the electoral pact under the SADC Maseru Declaration, and Mosisili's later refusal to implement SSR as per the SADC Commission's recommendations.

A case in point would be after the 1998 mediation when the SADC put up an inclusive IPA as a governing authority which involved all the political parties. In this instance, the government consistently frustrated the operations as it took its time stalling the process of making constitutional amendments to ensure that the 2002 polls were held in a free and fair and peaceful political climate. In short, the IPA was facing resistance from the LCD and SADC faced challenges with overseeing its implementation. Responses from interviewees suggest that the regional body has failed to apply enough pressure on the government and all stakeholders to implement and live up to some of the recommendations as stipulated in agreements. Ensuring compliance with agreements would safeguard attainment of sustainable peace and security in the Kingdom. Going forward, the SADC in its quest to transform itself to deal with peace and security issues would have to consider how it can ensure that it has measures in place to ensure that member states enforce resolutions.

#### **6.7.5 Shortfalls of conventional approaches to conflict resolution**

Consistent with views from the extant literature and responses of interviews is the suggestion that the previous conceptions of conflict management, conflict resolution through various methods including mediation are not complex enough to transform the conflict in Lesotho. Accordingly:

*Respondent 3 .....Second is the methods used by SADC in conflict situations even before they get to the violence stage. Either way, the methods used by SADC must be questioned, the formation itself must be able to reflect. Yes, the conflict is dynamic but to what extent has the SADC really self-introspected. Sic*

The study established that the conventional approaches to conflict transformation that have been used in Lesotho have fallen short as a panacea to the recurring conflict in Lesotho. Strategies employed in Maseru (including conflict resolution, conflict management and conflict settlement through instruments of dialogue, negotiations and mediation often led by regional hegemony such as SA), have contributed in achieving negative peace in the Mountain Kingdom (Vhumbunu, 2015). Muller (2003:12) asserts that the fluctuating nature of conflict in the post-Cold War world has reduced many of the realist, state-centric approaches to conflict resolution inadequate to promote peace particularly in prolonged intra-state conflicts where there is unequal distribution of resources. As such, the reliance on conventional approaches in resolving conflict in Maseru has proven to be inadequate.

While numerous methodologies have been employed to prevent violent episodes in the Lesotho conflict, these have mainly resulted in negative peace deals without transforming weak institutions that continue to breed injustices which are at the root of the conflict. This re-affirms Sandole's (2010:9) argument that "negative peace might be a necessary condition for positive peace ...but falls short of transforming deep-rooted causes and conditions of conflict." One respondent argued that the efforts of SADC have placed greater emphasis on engaging the elite.

#### **6.7.5.1 Mediation**

This study shows that SADC has generally opted for mediation as its preferred tool towards conflict transformation efforts in Lesotho. SADC has formerly appointed eminent persons particularly former Presidents to mediate conflicts in Madagascar, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and the DRC. The regional body has relied on Mediators or "Eminent Persons" on an ad-hoc basis as the body is still in the absence of process of setting up an elaborate mediation infrastructure (Mabelang, 2014).

It would seem that the majority of previous and current peacebuilding attempts have sought to end the conflict in Maseru at an artificial level (*negative peace*). Nevertheless, according to Respondent 20:

*SADC interventions have only attempted to deal with issues in the region at a very superficial level without going skin deep in addressing the root causes of conflicts. As such, since the approach adopted by SADC is one leaning on treating the ailments on the surface without dealing with the core issues and thus resurfacing. So, the conflict is bound to recur. Sic*

The regional body's stance on peace and security has often relied on deterrence and management, but not much emphasis is placed on the peacebuilding activities after the violence has ended to ensure that root issues are addressed. The strategy which leans towards conflict management framework is bound to see a recurrence of conflict and will definitely not lead to enduring solutions, as it does not focus on the root causes of conflict. This study also noted that the SADC has often placed its focus on track one diplomacy which often involves mediation with the elite (top-level leadership) such as politicians and the military personnel with interests in the conflict. The study observed that the grassroots are left out of the process.

#### **6.8 Resource Constraints**

The study established that the organisation's capacity constraints are more concerned with the convictions of its member states, rather than the reality of lack of finances in the sub-region.

Instead, SADC's conflict transformation capacity can best be boosted through the financial support of its member states who are devoted to the cause (Nathan, 2012). On this issue respondent 3 maintained:

*...The first constraint has been financial resources.*

While respondent 6 argued,

*.....Resources have been a constraint but not a major obstacle, the main obstacle is technical limitations. The personnel within SADC cannot understand the issues that engulf the country which are simple and straight forward. SADC does not have capacity to handle it. Sic*

And respondent 12 suggests that:

*.....Intense interventions require resources as the presence of personnel requires funds. Sic*

The study found that funding and resources are a critical component for the implementation of a long-term process of conflict transformation. Equally important is planning and budgeting for the various phases of the implementation of the conflict transformation process. Moreover, monitoring of the funding and budgets would also continue to be important to ensure the sustainability of the process.

## **6.9 Lack of local ownership and grassroots involvement**

Lack of Local ownership and involvement of grassroots were also cited as a major limitation of SADC's conflict transformation efforts. In this regard, respondent 10 maintained:

*Any efforts that seek to transform the conflict must begin with opening it up to grassroots, currently it operates on a state centred approach and this has remained a key challenge in Lesotho. Sic*

Majority of Basotho interviewed expressed the importance of local solutions in the transformation of conflict in the Mountain Kingdom. Respondents expressed the view that SADC had not done enough to involve or consider the needs of locals in coming up with a productive way of addressing underlying roots of the recurring conflicts. As a result, the sub regionals body's conflict transformation efforts have failed to transform the conflict in the country. In light of this, Respondent 6 maintain:

*SADC can provide leadership and must take a leading role. It can have strategic vision of what needs to be done and then run with it in collaboration with internal stakeholders, specifically CSO's. Sic*



The research found that Basotho were sceptical of SADC's conflict transformation role in Lesotho. Particularly where SA was involved, which has been majority of the time. For Basotho, the transformation of the Lesotho conflict should be a locally led process spearheaded by the various civil society organisations while SADC continues with its role acts as facilitator. This view is supported by Lederach (1997) and Miall (2004) who posit that conflict transformation is more successful when it is handled internally. Contrarily, the from the account of respondents, it can be inferred that SADC conflict resolution initiatives have always overlooked and undermined the indispensable role played by the local leadership, including traditional leaders and civil society leaders. As such, the SADC may need to reconsider how best the locals can be weaved into the transformation process in Lesotho.

Respondents' accounts show and confirm that the conventional approaches utilised by the sub regional body have failed to give local players a platform in the conflict transformation process. The study also found that there are benefits of involving local leaders in conflict transformation processes as they are better positioned to deal with issues concerning cultural identity, settlement and community building. Conventional approaches that have been utilised by the SADC have seen regional leaders at the forefront. Notably, it is the same leaders who have had vested and diverse interests in the country, thus making it difficult for them to objectively participate in forging peace in Lesotho.

Lederach's Conflict Pyramid splits society into three levels, namely; the top prominent leadership encompassing the military, political and religious leaders, the middle range leadership consisting leaders respected in sectors such as academia and intelligentsia, ethnic and religious leaders and humanitarian leaders or NGOs (Lederach, 1997). NGOs can further be split into regional and international with an emphasis on the local NGO's grouped within the grassroots. It is at the second level that the civil society is involved while the third level involves the grassroots leadership which comprises of the local respected leadership. The conflict transformation process requires the inclusion of all three levels and all actors in the conflict.

#### **6.10 SADC conflict transformation institutions and structural challenges**

The research also acknowledged structural challenges within the regional body as encroaching on its conflict transformation capability. The respondents interviewed were of the view that SADC had done a sterling job on the establishment of structures for temporarily managing conflict in the region, but they were less pleased with the actual operation of the structures. In

relation to the OPDSC, it became evident that the organ had financial challenges that inhibited its ability to actually enforce its decisions. Another point emphasized by respondents is the reality that the structures' decisions are not binding, which constitutes a significant limitation to its effectiveness, particularly with implementation. This point has also been highlighted in the literature as limiting the functionality of SADC.

A further weakness identified was the unreadiness of the SADC Brigade – SADC had to request troops from member states for SAPMIL in December 2017 (Lesotho Times, 2017). This indicates that the SADC Brigade was not ready despite the fact that it has already been declared functional. The readiness of the Brigade remains a critical challenge considering the realities of the sub region. On the same note, the study found that the Organ is perceived as a passive body whose influence is directly dependent on the current chair. A similar view was held with regards to all the key structures including the OPDSC, The Troika and Double Troika. In relation to the Summit, which is a high structure made up of heads of state and governments, there was a general view that Heads of States were unable to relate with other Heads of States objectively and in the best interest of their entire sub-region. The study also found that the regional body placed greater emphasis on engaging the top leadership at the expense of grassroots involvement. The study finds that the ineffectiveness of SADC institutions create a vacuum where member states like SA can take over the conflict transformation process, and possibly still drive their own agenda in the process. This means CT is compromised as it can be inhibited by the national interests of member states were member states would assess the benefits of being seriously involved in dealing with a particular internal conflict. It becomes increasingly important for the regional body to transform this common practise, otherwise it will be difficult to implement successful conflict transformation.

### **6.11 Nature of CT: a long-term multifaceted program**

The study finds that conflict transformation is a complex process that is inclusive of conflict management, conflict prevention and conflict resolution. These programmes and processes are long-term efforts which are entirely dependent on the conflict setting and context and can be demanding on resources both human and financial as mentioned earlier.

Considering the long-term nature of the conflict transformation process, the study finds that SADC has experienced challenges in this regard as it has failed to maintain a presence in Lesotho. The study notes that the regional organisation has faced challenges in its attempts in

the conflict afflicted country mainly in its failure to ensure that sustainable programmes and processes related to conflict transformation are carried out, monitored and evaluated.

One respondent cited the touch and go methodology by SADC as a great impediment since politicians will go back on their word as soon as mediators left. Respondents in Lesotho clearly cited SADC's touch-and-go method, in this regard Respondent 4 said:

*....first is the inconsistency and no plan of action or framework being followed. So you have a regional body operating on a very much on a touch and go and trial and error basis.*

Instead, it was observed that the REC became visible when the situation was out of hand and had placed less emphasis on facilitating a permanent solution to what Lederach refers to as “a constructive conflict” (Lederach, 1997). This refers to the management approach adopted by the organisation, one that seeks to see results in the short term while ignoring the root causes. The main reason for this lack of consistency is the outlook adopted by SADC, one that is guided by management approaches which place emphasis on getting the situation under control at that particular period. The study also found that management is not a negative approach but that it must form part of a larger CT process in the long-term which would require the presence of a regional body in the country for a long period of time.

In addition, equally disturbing is the lack of mention of CT in SADC literature. In fact, it was established that SADC OPDSC makes no provisions for conflict transformation in its objectives. However, it can be argued that conflict transformation is to be implied though indirectly in objectives (k) (h) of the OPDSC.

## **6.12 Lack of political will**

The lack of political will particularly from politicians to transform the conflict in Lesotho was also identified as an impediment to the conflict transformation process in the country. This is no surprise considering that politicians benefit from the instability in the country. Accordingly, Respondent 1 expressed the following:

*As I mentioned earlier politicians in Lesotho for me have no political will to once and for all face the real issues that are rippling the country. Sic*

Similarly

Respondent 3 *.....I mentioned earlier the first is around political will from Lesotho. Sic*

On the same note:

Respondent 9..... *The other issue is the unwillingness on the side of Lesotho..... Then inside the state there is generally a lack of commitment by politicians to the programme of post conflict reconstruction and development. Sic*

In any efforts to transform the conflict in Lesotho, the political will from politicians generally and the government of the day will be critical to the success or failure of the conflict transformation process. This being said, politicians in Lesotho would need to place the national interests of the country before their own individual gains. The politicians in the country are elected into office and are trusted to represent the interests of the majority of Basotho. It is important that they, as political leaders, have the will to see the situation in the country transformed. This would mean putting the country's national interests over their own self interests. The presence of political will would be as a result of the change of attitudes and perceptions at the personal level as captured by Lederach.

### **6.13 Summary**

The chapter presented data and findings from interviews conducted with 22 respondents from Lesotho and SA. The respondents were purposefully selected because of either their expertise in conflict transformation or the actual conflict in Lesotho. Respondents included academics, students, politicians, NGO's and practitioners in the peacebuilding field. The interviews sought to respond to the research questions stemming from noted gaps in extant literature.

Responses from informants revealed that there are numerous dynamics at play in the recurring conflict in Lesotho. Summarily, the undercurrents of the Lesotho conflict are historic, structural, institutional, political and socio-economic. The dynamics can generally be interpreted and analysed in the context of three interrelated dimensions namely; (a) a politicised, unprofessional and instrumentalised military (b) conflict between the monarchy and the government and (c) political culture. In relation to key non-state actors in the conflict, the study found that SADC as a regional body is generally perceived as a legitimate body with the mandate to lead conflict transformation and maintain issues of peace and security in the sub-region. Regionally, the study found that SA was a key actor with national interests in the conflict, which at times posed a threat to CT efforts in the Kingdom. The research revealed that CSO's were trusted actors in Lesotho, however, they had not been fully engaged by SADC and therefore there was a greater role for CSO's to play in the CT process. The study also averred that the United Nations Security Council's role in complementing SADC's efforts in solving conflicts in the SADC region should be that of creating roadmaps and support regional efforts, financially and otherwise. In this vein, SADC should be at the forefront in solving the problems in their respective sub regions.

The research also found that the regional body has faced numerous constraints in its attempts to resolve the conflict. These constraints include but are not restricted to the reluctance of nation states to give up sovereignty, national interests of member states, SADC institutional challenges, resource limitations, the demanding nature of CT processes, poor participation of the grassroots, absence of political will and weak governance structures. Informed by the data analysis and discussions in this chapter, the next chapter will conclude this study by presenting the summary of the findings and recommendations of this study.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine SADC's conflict transformation capacity in the context of the recurring conflict in Lesotho. The study also sought to suggest a move toward a SADC conflict transformation model for the sub-region. The research was underpinned by Lederach's conflict transformation theory which maintains that the CT process must prioritise changes in certain dimensions – the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of conflicts. It also utilised Lederach's conflict transformation pyramid which calls for a greater role to be delegated to local actors in the effort to transform conflicts. In this model, there is also a need to ensure the participation of all levels of leadership in society.

A qualitative methodology was utilised in the study. The sample for the study comprised politicians from various political parties from Lesotho, students and academics from the NUL and UKZN, leaders of civil society organisations, journalists, military officials and also practitioners in the field. Data were mainly collected via semi-structured face to face interview method. Policy documents, books, and journal articles were also accessed and reviewed to guide the research plan and in triangulating the research findings. Research respondents were purposively chosen primarily based on their acquaintance with the conflict itself, their understanding of conflict transformation, and the specific role they played in the political space in the country. Data were analysed using thematic analysis to produce a descriptive narrative. The conflict transformation theory was used as an analytical tool which allowed for a clear grasp of the descriptive narrative acknowledged in the data. *ibid*

This chapter provides a recap on how the study responded to the research questions and how it achieved the study's objectives. The chapter begins with the general conclusion of the study. The second portion of the chapter offers a summary of the findings of this study. The final section focuses on the recommendations that this research proffers and includes recommendations on how the SADC can move towards a CT approach for the sub-region.

#### 7.2 General conclusions

Chapter one delineated the central research problem emergent from the background of the study. It also looked at the overview of Lesotho's geopolitical history. The chapter also presented the research questions, the matching objectives, and justified the choice of the research topic. Finally, this chapter provided the structure of the research project.

Chapter two mapped out and reviewed available literature on the dynamics at play and the main issues in Lesotho's recurring conflict. This task was undertaken to establish the strengths and weaknesses in the analysis of literature on the recurring conflict riveting the SADC member state. This was done with a view to first grasp the key issues in the conflict and to establish SADC's capacity to transform the conflict and to set the country on the path of attaining sustainable peace. The chapter examined critical conflict issues identified by various scholars and the shortcoming of their analysis. Subsequently, it addressed the underlying causal factors impinging on Lesotho's perennial political instability from independence to date. These were found to be the role played by the country's history, geographic location, and socio-economic conditions. It was noted that Lesotho has had to deal with the scourge of the politicisation of the poorly trained military and the militarisation of the country's politics. The state has witnessed a small clique of politicians strategically aligning themselves to the military. As a result, a culture has developed where politicians conspire, misuse public resources and even murder without any fear of consequences since they are affiliated with key personnel in the military (Sejamane, 2017). It is also evident that ascendancy into the military is based on patronage, either to the monarchy or the governing party. The study established that top echelons of the military tend to answer to some higher elements in the coalition government or the monarchy.

Consequently, chapter two concluded that political uncertainty in the Mountain Kingdom has become repetitious with each of the disputing parties competing for political supremacy and access to resources even to the point of resorting to undemocratic means. The tendency of intra-party power struggles, factionalism, and party splits has not only stripped the country's party system off its crux but has at a larger scale undermined the country's fledgling democracy. This has led the state to deal with a crisis of destructive political competition. This culture has propelled political instability and insecurity in the Mountain Kingdom and the politicisation of the military. The reality of weak governance structures was also explored as a contributing factor to the conflict in the country.

A gap identified in the literature was that scholars in their analysis generally accept the conflict as a recurring one, however they often focus on one aspect of the conflict. This single focus has a direct impact on the chosen methodology if the conflict is to be transformed. The available literature did present views that aid in attaining a more informed understanding of the core conflict issues, however, a general weakness was also noted, and that is the failure of some scholars to provide an interconnected analysis of the various dynamics of the conflict. This

study on its own argues that a holistic interconnected analysis is important as it will provide a pre-requisite towards a shift to a multi-pronged CT strategy.

Subsequently, the chapter posited that the conflict must be understood as a multi-dimensional conflict that treats causal factors as interrelated and connected factors, which impacts on the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects in any conflict context. This chapter suggested that this approach in conflict analysis allows practitioners to consider solutions that are cross-cutting and that are able to allow for the process of conflict transformation. The chapter concluded by suggesting that the Lesotho conflict is made up of and has been influenced by interconnected facets of social, cultural, political and economic experiences which do not appear in stand-alone partitions. Considering this interconnectedness of conflict issues, it becomes increasingly important that regional approaches be inclusive and take into consideration the already existing dynamics that contribute to a conflict characterised by inter-sectorial linkages.

Chapter three reviewed the available literature on SADC's CT capacity and track record in its peace and security efforts. The section argued that the methodology that has been used in attempts to deal with the conflict situation has generally been focused on management and resolution approaches. The literature showed that regional organisations have the potential to contribute to conflict transformation in African conflicts. However, the negative peace often attained by SADC interventions undermines the prospects for sustainable positive peace in the sub-region. Moreover, the examples discussed in the review of the literature add weight to the conclusion that SADC efforts are often uncoordinated and may at times have contributed to certain aspects of the complicated and prolonged conflicts in the region. As such, the chapter explored the gaps in the literature as a preamble to providing validation for a CT approach being proposed in this research study.

The chapter also explored the evolution of SADC and interrogated whether the formation has been able to transform itself to deal with the sub-region's woes. The chapter began by tracing the development of the formation from the then SADCC into the present-day SADC with broadened objectives, institutions and operations. The study also investigated the historical roots of the SADC predecessor and how these impacted on the establishment of the SADC and its potential for CT today. A particular focus was on the origin, values, objectives, and institutions of SADC. The chapter also focused on interventions conducted by the regional body from 1994 to 2018 by highlighting SADC's conflict management mechanisms in Lesotho.



Furthermore, the chapter explored the structures that the institution has been able to set up to support conflict transformation efforts in the sub-region. It was established that SADC had developed a strong institutional framework made up of various directorates mandated to transform aspects of conflicts. The research conclusions strengthen the argument that SADC has advanced in developing a policy framework to transform conflicts. The chapter also explored SADC's attempts to resolve the conflict and explored the regional body's overall conflict transformation capacity, merits and challenges.

A significant assumption from the findings of this research as seen in chapter three maintains that the majority of CT efforts in SADC have been approached in a shallow and cosmetic way at the detriment of addressing critical central issues at the heart of the conflict. The minimal reference to CT in the vocabulary and language of SADC, as apparent in its treaties, protocols, declarations and literature was also noted. This was found to be as a result of the newness of the concept. However, the study warns against a focus on declarations and treaties, while these are important as guiding documents what is important is whether or not SADC in its document and practices incorporates long-term structural changes. Moreover, the review of the literature reveals that available literature fails to illustrate whether or not the structures set up have been able to transform the conflict at the personal; structural; relational and cultural aspects. Chapter four considered key conceptual issues raised in this research study. This was done by exploring the concepts of violence and conflict. In light of this, it was ascertained that the presence of conflict does not automatically imply the use of force. Furthermore, the chapter noted that conflict should not be categorised as conflict only when violence occurs. Instead, it was established that conflict is an unavoidable phenomenon which, when it erupts must be managed and transformed accordingly. The chapter also advocated for a greater emphasis on the less obvious structural and cultural elements of a conflict.

Chapter four also discussed Lederach's model of conflict transformation, which guided the research's investigation of the SADC's conflict transformation capacity in transforming the recurring conflict in Lesotho. The section using Lederach's conflict pyramid and CT theory argued that the method utilised to transform conflict would have a substantial bearing on the triumph or catastrophe of the conflict transformation process. Evidence suggests that the SADC conflict resolution mechanism is the SADC OPDS and the definitive aim is to resolve conflicts. This is in contrast with a key point made by Lederach which is that conflict situations need to be transformed in order to achieve sustainable and lasting peace. The need to understand the

specific context and nature of the conflict situation remains critical to ensure the use of appropriate mechanisms for CT.

Chapter five provided the methodology utilised in the study. The chapter began with a justification for the use of the qualitative research design, methodology, and data analysis. The purposive sampling methodology utilised to select participants of this study was discussed. The chapter also highlighted the importance of personal interviews that were used to generate data. The chapter also discussed content and thematic analysis which were used to analyse data. Lastly, the chapter discussed the ethical issues which arose during the research study.

Chapter six presented the results of the study and an analysis of the respondents' understanding, perceptions, interpretations and thoughts on the SADC conflict transformation capacity in Lesotho. The findings were presented in thematic sections which sought to answer the main research questions. This was accomplished by providing the results from the interviews on critical themes and a brief summary at the end of each section. The actual analysis was guided by the CT theory as advocated by Lederach.

The chapter analysed the theoretical and conceptual themes that arose from the data set which sought to answer the research questions. The chapter also determined the relationship between the generated information with the deductions from the literature and previous chapters. The findings were also discussed in light of the literature review, and the aim was to fill the gaps identified in the literature and theoretical framework.

### **7.3 Summary of research findings**

It became noticeably clear in the discussion of conflict transformation as a theory that the framework provides a comprehensive solution to the recurring conflict in the Mountain Kingdom. It also became evident that the framework is crucial in addressing the root causes of the problems that are fuelling endless disputes in the country. The shortcomings evident in the use of conflict management and resolution approaches as independent strategies in trying to eliminate violent conflict in the Kingdom of the Sky has necessitated this research. Contrary to the above prevailing strategies, this study proposes a shift towards a CT framework. The research brought to light the shortfalls of the isolated application and usage of disintegrated and uncoordinated stand-alone approaches in peace-building which have proven to be implausible.

Subsequently, the study also sought to find answers to the research questions which the current research is concerned with. The first research question asked:

Which dynamics have been at play in the recurrence of conflict in Lesotho?

The study sought to ascertain the dynamics that are at play in the recurrence of conflict in the Kingdom of the Sky. The findings revealed that the dynamics of Lesotho's recurrent conflict can be categorised as historical, structural, and institutional and informed by socio-political and economic factors. Moreover, the study finds that the cyclic conflict can generally be understood in the context of three dimensions. The first dimension is a politicised, unprofessional and instrumentalised military that has been used by various actors including politicians and military leaders to further their personal interests. The study found that the army is marred by an entrenched culture of unprofessionalism, marked by ill-discipline, and nepotism. As such, the country has often witnessed prominent politicians campaigning for military support to get into and remain in power. Further, the security sector inclusive of the police force has been used as a means to an end, with the military often being roped in to support and protect self-serving politicians.

The second dimension involves tensions between the monarchy and the government. The study established that the tensions between the monarchy and the government are key contributing factors in the recurring conflict in the country. In this regard, these tensions were traced to as far back as the period of independence from Britain in 1966. Secondly, the study observed that the adoption of the Westminster governance system had proven to be problematic and unsuited for the country as it has brought with it incompatibilities with the traditional monarch system.

A sub-theme that emerged here was that the country has a powerless monarchy. The study ascertained that the monarchy is indeed a key player in the conflict in Lesotho, however, with less impact than that of the politicians and military. Views from respondents suggested that the King's role is often seen as one of a rubber stamp for the Prime Minister and Parliament. Moreover, the study found that the intermittent tension between the government and the monarchy has its roots in the Lesotho constitution, which absolves the monarchy from playing a role in the politics of the country.

The third dimension is a damaging political culture. The study found that there is an entrenched destructive political culture in the country. The country has experienced destructive, violent conflicts among the governing party, opposition parties and state institutions. The findings of the research show that Lesotho suffers from entrenched political violence and impunity in the

conduct of politics. According to respondents' views which were supported in the literature (Matlosa, 2011; Pherudi, 2018), this culture can be traced back to an age-old trend of militarisation in the country, where the military was undermined and developed into a political tool for politicians, playing either a covert or overt role in their competition over state power.

In addition, the study found that the political culture in the country is one where there is no cooperation among factions within parties or unity among political parties ideologically. This is evident as the country continues to experience political party splits and breakaways, which have developed into a persistent feature in Lesotho's politics. In this regard, the study established that political parties in Lesotho had failed to institutionalise themselves as legitimate, respected and credible players in the political space, and as such, have been unable to bring stability and normality to the political culture in the Kingdom of the Sky. It was this type of political environment that was found to be providing a conducive environment for political meddling by unprofessional institutions such as the military.

A key factor identified to be an essential dynamic in the conflict is the socio-economic conditions of the country. In other words, behind most conflict episodes or political moves which have led to violent incidents were economic interests. The study also found that SADC in its analysis of the conflicts had mainly focused on the political arena to the detriment of the underlying causes of the Lesotho crises, which can be traced back to socio-economic conditions and various other factors discussed in previous chapters. In light of this, the study found the country's weak and unsustainable economy to be another factor escalating the conflict in the country. Various sub-themes were also addressed under the theme of socio-economic factors. To begin with is the nature of the Lesotho economy, and on this, the study found that the economy in the Kingdom in the Sky is small and not diversified and therefore has caused serious resource competition particularly among the elite. Also, the research established that the socio-economic factors that contribute to the escalation of conflict in Lesotho would continue to impede democratic consolidation and ultimately CT, if not transformed. This view was reiterated by Akokpari (1998), who argued that the fragility of the country's economy remains its most significant impediment towards democratic stability. The study also observed that SADC had failed to assist the county's small and weak economy to develop into a vibrant economy that could cater to the needs of its people.

Moreover, it was ascertained that there is a need for the regional body to pay considerable attention to its initial mandate of economic integration and economic growth as stipulated in

its founding treaty and protocols. A closer look into the SADC's objectives suggests that the body acknowledges the importance of economic development as a catalyst for political stability, peace and security. However, it would seem that the organisation has failed to balance the security mandate with the economic mandate in Lesotho.

The second research question asked: What strategic political and diplomatic efforts has the SADC implemented in its attempts to resolve the conflict?

To begin with, the research has established that regional organisations such as SADC are best suited to carry out conflict transformation in respective member states. This is primarily influenced by the reason for their existence, which is to facilitate cooperation in various aspects, including peace and security in addition to economic integration.

The study found that SADC has expended both political and diplomatic efforts in the Mountain Kingdom. The regional body has notably been effective in managing crises in the short-term. This was mainly influenced by its chosen methodology, which has relied on conflict management through mediations often led by former heads of states. On a larger scale, the study found that the regional body has made significant changes to equip itself to maintain peace and security in the region. This was evident in the various structural arrangements the regional organisation has put in place to support the maintenance of peace and security.

The third research question asked: What have been the major constraints encountered by the sub-regional body in its attempts to resolve the conflict?

The study found that there are numerous challenges that impede SADC's CT efforts. To begin with, the study identified the impact of state sovereignty together with the provision of non-interference to be a constraint. The national interests of member states, the weak governance structures in the Kingdom, and the SADC's failure to enforce intervention resolutions were also cited as constraints impeding on the conflict transformation agenda.

Furthermore, the study acknowledged the shortfalls of conventional approaches to conflict management and resolution, such as mediation that have often been utilised by the regional body. Besides, the study identified structural challenges within SADC conflict transformation Institutions. In this regard, a consistently recognised obstacle is the elitist nature of the REC's structure which endows Heads of States and government with decision-making powers to make decisions on peace and security matters.

Funding and resource constraints were viewed as obstacles to the CT processes in the country. The study also established that the lack of local ownership and limited involvement of grassroots in the CT process acts as an obstacle to any efforts that seek to transform the conflict situation. On this, the study recognised that regionally, SADC has generally neglected ongoing engagement with the grassroots in conflict-affected countries.

The study found that the nature of CT as a long-term multifaceted program can be taxing and as such also poses a challenge. Finally, the lack of political will, particularly from some politicians to transform the conflict in Lesotho was also identified as an impediment to the conflict transformation process in the country.

#### **7.4 Towards a CT model for SADC**

As established in the study, conflict transformation is concerned with transforming the way that societies deal with conflict, allowing them to transition from violent methods to non-violent methods of conflict. Its objective is to build just and sustainable communities that resolve differences by non-violent methods. To be able to achieve this, regional organisations must have measures in place to address the direct and structural causes of conflict. The regional organisation must first spell out its stance towards CT. This will mean the inclusion of the concept of CT in the organisation's objectives and working documents. However, most importantly ensuring that there is political buy-in from member states for the region to move towards long term CT in dealing with recurring conflict in the sub-region.

The conflict transformation approach generally accepts conflict as an inevitable aspect of social change (Rychard & Mason, 2005). Based on this understanding and its application in different contexts, it also becomes clear that CT efforts to transform conflicts can take a wide variety of forms and is inclusive of several programmes. Despite this plethora of types of CT that can be adopted, each conflict transformation initiative, indirectly or directly will be grounded upon a theory that will guide in the effort to bring about changes in the various facets of the conflict. The study puts forth the argument that SADC must place emphasis on transforming not only the apparent conflict issues but must go beyond and assist member states in changing, the personal structural, relational and cultural aspects of the conflict. In the context of Lesotho, this would mean assisting the country with economic growth and its socio-economic status. Moreover, it would require transforming the political culture, governance systems and implementing necessary reforms be it constitutional, military and otherwise. The methodology adopted is often based on an analysis of the conflict and the volatility of the situation. Despite

this, regional organisations working with the local leadership must consider the type of change desired and endeavour to include the various actors involved and prioritise transformation in the numerous sectors once the violence has subsided.

On numerous occasions in this study, CT has been referred to as a long-term process. One of the significant difficulties with CT is the problem of defining and designing the actual long-term CT process. It is to be remembered that conflict is not a static phenomenon, but one that is ever-evolving, either regressing or progressing. This means that the process of designing CT strategies is envisaged to be extremely complicated. According to Cordoba Now Forum (2013), processes have different rhythms at various instances which can change considerably as they progress. A process cannot be planned from commencement to conclusion at the beginning, meaning that we cannot really map out a CT plan specifically from A to Z at the very onset. The reality is, while there is a plan in place, the process may commence as planned but at a later stage require deviation or adjustment due to the nature of conflict as a non-static phenomenon. There are numerous frameworks that may be useful in designing a CT process. However, the methodology chosen should be informed by the stage of the conflict, the cultural setting, the socio-political background and the objectives aimed at, in order of their priority. Process design, then, generally necessitates elasticity and ongoing modifications as well as a guiding model. As such, this study suggests the model put forth by Lederach who advocates for changes in the personal, structural, relational and cultural dimensions and involves the various levels of leaders in society.

It is equally important to note that the model presented here is an elementary model that can be utilised at the starting point to help trace a possible path towards the desired objectives. It must be categorically stated, that the model is not appropriate in all cases, and it is not a solution in every case, but can be a standard instrument utilised by regional organisation and facilitators in early stages to lay a strong foundation for the long-term CT process. But emphasis should be placed on a plan that prioritises transformation and change in the four areas. Additionally, the three levels of leadership must all be part of the process.

### **7.5 Recommendations for a sustainable SADC sub-regional conflict transformation model**

Having discussed the various deadlocks and challenges to transforming Africa's obstinate conflict situations and particularly in the Mountain Kingdom, this segment aims to posit strategies that may assist in setting up an effective CT framework and processes in Lesotho. The task of transforming the conflict in Lesotho has proven to be complex and shown obstinacy

towards inflexible and ad-hoc management and resolution frameworks. The features that can lead to the transformation of the specific challenges of violent conflict in the country can be said to be centred in the regional organisation's outlook on the conflict situation.

### **7.5.1 A Multi-pronged conflict transformation approach**

The preceding chapters have demonstrated the complexity of the dynamics that have marred the Mountain Kingdom including but not limited to historical heritages, institutional factors, socio-economic factors and policy decisions that have influenced the incidence of political instability in the country. The study maintains that addressing these complications will entail a multi-pronged approach, custom-made to the detailed patterns of each of the challenges contributing to political instability in the country. For interventions in the kingdom to be effective, short, medium and long-term measures must be combined.

The study found that the reality of the situation in the country suggests that the state must strike a balance between enforcing accountability, proposing a blended approach of amnesty, putting in place corrective measures but also ensuring reconciliation. At the same time, the country requires institutional reform and the strengthening of its judiciary. Moreover, the state requires a complete transformation of its political culture, the reviewing of its constitution, particularly with powers of the monarchy and the transformation of its stagnant economy.

The thesis argued that the country if it is to realise the transformation of the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of conflict, must adopt a multi-pronged CT approach. Otherwise, as one of the issues is tackled, the other relapses and causes strain on progress already made. This being said, these are different phases of the same processes which will move at differing speeds and varying success, but the key to all the transformations is the inclusion of locals which legitimises the process. To ensure the effectiveness of the CT process in Lesotho, a multi-pronged approach would require informed planning that is locally accepted as legitimate by the various stakeholders in society. In reality, it would also necessitate guidelines informed by the locals for the selection and prioritisation of reforms that will be tailored to treat the ailments in the country as soon as possible to ensure the sustainability of positive peace. Furthermore, a strategy of operationalising and implementing reforms needs to be developed. While corruption in the country benefits an elite few, the fight against the scourge needs to be assumed by all levels of leadership in the country.



The point being made here is that for the CT process to be effective, efforts to transform the situation in the Mountain Kingdom must transition from a narrow and ad-hoc approach to a far-reaching response of dealing with its underlying roots. This suggests a well-planned short, medium and long-term strategy with stated objectives which must be continuously monitored and evaluated by the regional body. The study acknowledges that taken together, the four dimensions of transformers at the various levels of society as advocated by Lederach might appear overwhelming. This can be attributed to significant changes required in various areas including the structure of the prevailing economic, military and political institutions, in the nexus of relationships within the state and between the state and citizenry. It is also prudent to note here that regional organisations and national governments are bound to face numerous challenges in efforts to implement reforms in all these areas suggested by the study. Additionally, in an underdeveloped country like Lesotho marred by the legacies of colonisation, socio-economic challenges and the political culture constraints, holding back the implementation of reforms heightens the magnitude of the problems.

This long-term process would require a well-developed and expert team guided by a clear programme of action that also monitors and evaluates as the process progresses. The SADC already has institutions in place that can carry out these processes. However, each committee must be able to deal with each issue assigned to it, and this would necessitate a fully-fledged SADC team coming into the country to support the process in the long-term. It is important to note here that such a process would also need to take into cognisance the states sovereignty. A fully-fledged team in the long term as necessitated by the nature of CT requires financial resources. If the CT model is tried and tested in Lesotho and proves to be successful, then it can be modified and suited for the contexts of other countries in the sub-region that are devastated by conflict. These issues are addressed below as recommendations.

### **7.5.2 Proper diagnosis of root causes**

Most conflict transformation scholars are of the view that proper conflict analysis is a critical part to undertake towards effective corrective action of violent conflict. The lack of adequate diagnosis remains an impediment to African RECs and may be said to contribute to the protracted and recurring nature of some disputes. The study also established that there is a necessity to have an informed understanding of the underlying causes of conflict in attempts to deal with them. The methodology SADC often relies on can best be understood as what Mabaleng (2012) refers to as “bandage remedies”, these remedies have only been able to deal with symptoms while ignoring the core of the wounds”. In this regard, respondents emphasised

the importance of coming to an agreement on the root causes of the conflict, which can be traced to the adoption of the Westminster system in Lesotho.

Conflict analysis provides an analytical framework to guide strategies, programmes and projects towards responding to the conflict in question. The study appreciates that each conflict is different but maintains that if regional organisations plan their interventions guided by Lederach's framework with the inclusion of all levels of actors in the conflict and on sound analysis, this can lead to sustainable positive peace. This line of thinking elucidates the shift from management which concentrates mainly on the elimination of the violent displays, towards resolution which aims to resolve the conflict, and now to a more comprehensive conflict transformation which tries to go deeper and transform the conflict, the setting in which it ensues including causal roots of conflict and the attitudes of players involved. Miall (2004) is of the view that this can best be achieved through collaboration with parties in conflict. It is vital to recognise issues and relationships, and then move on to identify the actors, stakeholders third-parties or probable peace alliances with the ability to bring about change (Miall, 2004).

### **7.5.3 SADC to set clear objectives and targets**

The SADC has tried and tested various methodologies in trying to remedy the situation in Lesotho and as already established, these attempts have failed to achieve sustainable peace dividends in the Mountain Kingdom. Hence, it becomes increasingly essential for the regional body and the rest of the stakeholders to clearly state their objectives from the very onset instead of trial and error methodologies. It is crucial for RECs such as SADC to appreciate the role of setting targets as a starting point. Without clarity of the objectives it is very difficult to identify the actors, the content, and the issues inherent in the conflict.

In any process, it is essential to be certain of the objectives we want to achieve. This assists to keep the plan in check and to avoid unnecessary deviations but also to make necessary alterations only when necessary. The intended objectives may be unclear, general and even long term. The process may commence with vague goals that are built on and refined later. In some processes, the objective may be established without the presence of all actors. Preferably, the key objectives should be constructed by ensuring collaboration during the onset of designing the process.

#### **7.5.4 Strengthening sub-regional coherence and political will among member states**

The study puts forth the suggestion that the SADC member states at a political level need to resolve to have a common political approach to transforming conflicts in the sub-region and particularly in Lesotho. The status *quo* has been that the organisation waits for routine SADC summits where the recurring conflict within the sub-region becomes one of many items on the agenda. Accepting that all member states have different national interests, the study maintains that the regional body must push for the commonality of interests among member states in the context of promoting sub-regional peace, security and stability for the development of the region. While all states have their own interests, SADC member states must work towards universal peace and security goals with other regional and international bodies such as the AU and the UN. Internally in Maseru, for the longest time, the instability has become beneficial for many of the elite in terms of personal interests. The regional organisation has a responsibility to steer the leadership of the country to place national interests over individual interests.

#### **7.5.5 Locally led conflict transformation process**

In highlighting the effectiveness of the locally-led CT approaches in promoting peace in the Mountain Kingdom, the study established that internally driven CT will go a long way in addressing unending conflict in Lesotho. A key component of conflict transformation is that it advocates and encourages the involvement of all levels of society (at various stages) including the people at the grassroots level. As such, regional organisations like SADC must appreciate and ensure participation of all levels of leadership, including the grassroots. This also speaks to local ownership where the lower levels of society are part of the process from the very beginning. This reiterates the importance of utilising local leadership to ensure local ownership of the process so it can be accepted but most importantly sustainable. Traditional leaders and civil society organisations at large should be involved in the CT process as they have the customary legitimacy to bring their subjects together. Traditional approaches tend to succeed because they bring in the grassroots in the peace-making arena, and their participation legitimises the process.

#### **7.5.6 Long term presence of SADC**

The study has established that the long-term nature of the CT process requires extended in-country presence if it is to attain sustainable peace in the Mountain Kingdom. It is imperative for SADC to establish an appropriate presence in the countries in which it mediates, and that this continues after the mediations are concluded, in the larger scale of CT. The continued presence in the country must be locally accepted and utilised by locals as much as possible.

The organisation would also need to continually monitor and evaluate developments on the ground, documenting lessons learnt and challenges encountered to ensure continuity. Moreover, it is also evident that such a process and long-term presence would require funding and resources. As such, it may be useful to develop regional CT funds.

#### **7.5.7 Institutional reforms: a necessity for Lesotho conflict transformation process**

The review of the literature from previous chapters and responses from interviews all showed that since 1994 SADC has made recommendations of reforms in Lesotho. With regard to this, respondents maintained that the implementation of reforms in previous years had failed to bring stability in Lesotho. This point supports Lederach's call for a transformation of minds, characters, interests and insights of the elite who want to remain in powerful positions. The point made by Lederach suggests that attitudes must be altered in addition to reforms if real conflict transformation in Lesotho is to be realised. Moreover, it also came out that there was a need for SADC to engage all the relevant stakeholders and not only the top leadership as it has traditionally done. This would include the IEC in the country supporting the electoral system reforms in the country. It is also important to note that because of the respect of the principle of sovereignty, SADC cannot enforce any reforms, be it structural or institutional in Maseru. Instead, the regional body can advise and encourage the nation to implement the required reforms (Moyo, 2018).

The study established that conflict transformation requires institutionalised stakeholder engagement if it is to bear fruit. The suggestion made here is for CSO's in Lesotho to take lead in dialogues while SADC plays the role of a facilitator. SADC needs to elevate the role of the grassroots and civil society in its conflict transformation efforts. SADC should partner with civil society and allow them to take a leading role since various views in extant literature have suggested that such organisations' conflict transformation processes are more effective. In this regard, SADC can still excel and concentrate on its role as facilitator.

As such, the sub-regional body must ensure that it creates a platform for CSO's to play a visible role in CT from the planning stage.

##### **7.5.7.1 Security sector reform**

Successful CT in Lesotho would also require in-depth reform of the nation-state's security sector. As suggested in the need for a multi-pronged approach, the security sector reform in the Mountain Kingdom will also require the active involvement of military, economic and political

actors. It is significant to note here that the security sector comprises all organisations that are endowed with legislative and constitutional power to protect the state and its citizens through the use of force. As already established in the study, the security sector through its various factions has been used by multiple players to meet their own needs. In the context of a volatile security situation like that of Lesotho, security sector reform becomes critical in the direction the country will take in relation to CT. The guiding framework on security reform focuses on the broader security system, it also entails the involvement of actors, and stipulates their roles and duties in managing the system through democratic norms and good governance, in efforts to achieve an effective and legitimate security sector. The suggested reforms in Lesotho offer prospects for the country to attain durable solutions to its perpetual political crisis. Nevertheless, the study noted the difficulties inherent in negotiating and implementing the reforms.

#### **7.5.8 Transparent and continual monitoring and evaluation**

The responses from interviews indicate that SADC has been challenged in the area of monitoring and enforcing compliance with its resolutions. This was evident from the initial breach of the Windhoek Declaration where the SADC outrightly failed to oversee the conversion from discussions to the actual execution of the agreement. This was evident when parties to the coalition flouted many other SADC resolutions. One of these was Thabane's (then Prime Minister) violation of the electoral pact mediated in terms of the Maseru Declaration. The agreement maintained that the government should not make any senior appointments until after the elections. However, right before the elections, the country witnessed the appointment of Kananelo Mosito as president of the Court of Appeal by Tom Thabane. Also, Thabane fired Lesotho's chief delegate to the Lesotho Highlands Water Commission, Charles Putsoane, for alleged incompetence and insubordination (Motsamai, 2018: 191). The decision brought turmoil to the country not only angering the LCD but also other opposition figures, who argued that this displayed a disregard for the settlements negotiated under the SADC mediation. This points to a failure on the part of SADC to follow up and ensure the implementation of its resolutions.

SADC established the SOMILES mission in Maseru in September 2014, to systematically monitor ongoing political developments. Its public outreach was minimal, and its staff was described as 'unreachable and aloof' to ongoing insecurity in the capital. The office was closed down in March 2015 after the February elections, when SADC officially completed its Lesotho mission. South African police officers and SADC military advisors remained in place for a

brief period after the vote. A critical component of the CT process is the monitoring and evaluation of initiatives. Such a long-term process has to embrace among other things hindrances, substitutions and candidness to other external initiatives that could eventually impact the entire process. The study found that it would be important to continually document and report failures. This underscores the importance of ‘institutional memories’ which must be shared with all stakeholders for learning purposes.

#### **7.5.9 Socio-economic advancement**

Williams (2019) suggestion (also supported by respondents) recommends that SADC must assist its member states with alternative avenues for economic progress aside from involvement in the government. Williams (2019) further suggests a resuscitation of the private sector to relieve the over-reliance on government. For example, Williams (2019:9) maintains that SADC can put in place trade policies that will expand the regional market for the countries goods. In other words, the regional body should partner with other development partners in Maseru to complement existing efforts to grow the private sector. Areas that could be resuscitated include the country’s textile industry and greater opportunities within the US government’s African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). This argument was supported by Akokpari (1998) who argues that a thriving economy bears a robust middle class, which amasses and controls economic power, thereby ensuring separation between political and economic power.

### **7.6**

#### **Contribution of the study**

In its own unique way, the study serves as a reference point on CT in the SADC region. This study contributes to new knowledge in the context of SADC conflict transformation and its role in the recurrent conflict in Lesotho and the sub-region at large. In relation to the analysis of the dynamics of the conflict, these must be explored holistically and as interrelated components. The study puts forth a framework within which regional organisations can coordinate the CT long-term process. The study contributes to the field in that it suggests a CT framework for the regional body in terms of its peace and security mandate. It fills the gap by providing a model and a guide on the direction the sub-region may take to ensure conflict transformation and sustainable positive peace in the SADC region. The CT model must be based and focussed on transforming the personal, structural, relational, cultural dimensions of the conflict. Moreover, the study contributes uniquely in that it argues that any assessment of

the regional body's capacity must be based on its ability to transform the realities in the areas mentioned above with the inclusion of all levels of local leadership in the context of the conflict. In relation to interventions, the study argues that these must involve a well thought out process with short, medium and long-term goals.

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