

# National Security Strategy Considerations: Reflections on Zambia

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## Abstract:

In this paper, the author highlights the importance of a National Security strategy to the overall development and well-being of any country. The author observes that National Security has a direct bearing on the development process of a country as several forms of insecurity have the potential of disrupting and preventing the development process of any country.

The author argues that in a modern democracy the National Security Sector has an important role to play in defending the constitution and protecting the ideals of democracy. The author further argues that good governance is a critical element in ensuring a viable National Security Strategy.

Given the critical role national security plays in the development process of a country and the need to have a national security strategy in order to effectively and efficiently respond to various threats to national security, the paper highlights some of the critical National Security Strategy considerations to be taken into account in the formulation of a consolidated National Strategy.

The author concludes that, given the fact that the threats to national security in Zambia are numerous and interrelated, there is need to urgently put in place a consolidated national security strategy that can deal with the various threats in a more coordinated manner. The author finally concludes that there is a direct correlation between good governance and the various sources of insecurity.

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## Introduction

A National Security strategy is critical to the overall development and well-being of any country. National Security has a direct bearing on the development process of a country as several forms of insecurity have the potential of disrupting and preventing the development process of any country. This is especially the case in a developing country like Zambia whose capacity to deal with many forms of insecurity is limited.

It is important to take note here that, in a modern democracy the National Security Sector has an important role to play in defending the constitution and protecting the ideals of democracy. Good Governance has therefore become a critical element in ensuring a viable National Security Strategy. In the absence of good governance, it becomes extremely difficult over the long term to sustain National Security. In view of the role of the Security Sector in upholding Constitutional Governance, constitutional oversight over security services is therefore critical in ensuring an effective National Security Strategy. Constitutional Oversight on the security sector can be exercised through Parliamentary Oversight and/or enshrining in the Constitution provisions that oblige the Security Sector to function in accordance with the Constitution.

For effective and efficient response to threats to national security it is important for a country to have a consolidated National Security Strategy. A country is more likely to effectively and efficiently deal with threats to security in a situation where there is a National Security Strategy than where there is none. There is urgent need for countries like Zambia that do not have a consolidated National Security Strategy to develop one. Currently Zambia has no one document that can be referred to as a National Security Strategy but scattered pieces of information and documents that together may be taken as constituting a National Security Strategy. This author has however been reliably informed that Zambia is in the process of formulating a National Security Strategy.

Given the critical role national security plays in the development process of a country and the need to have a national security strategy in order to effectively and efficiently respond to various threats to national security, this paper highlights some of the critical National Security Strategy considerations to be taken into account in the formulation of a consolidated National Strategy.

## Definitions of Key Concepts

In this section various concepts and terms that are central to the discussion at hand are defined and clarified.

**National Security** – in its broadest sense, National Security is concerned with the security of persons, institutions, properties and national territory; it embraces, among others, human security, social security and environmental security (Kotia 2013). In order to possess national security, a nation needs to possess, inter alia, military security, political security, economic security, energy security, minerals security, environmental security, and cybersecurity.

The various elements that constitute national security can be explained as follows:

**Military Security:** implies the capability of a nation to defend itself, and/or deter military aggression (Kotia 2013).

**Political Security:** refers to the stability of the social order and specifically addresses threats to sovereignty (Kotia 2013).

**Economic Security:** refers to the freedom to follow choice of policies to develop a nation's economy in the manner desired (Kotia 2013).

**Environmental Security:** refers to environmental issues which threaten the national security of a nation in any manner (Kotia 2013).

**Energy Security:** the International Energy Agency (IEA) defines energy security as the uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price (<https://www.iea.org>). Examples of energy include oil, hydro power, natural gas and renewable fuels.

**Minerals Security:** refers to possession or access to mineral resources such as copper, diamond, gold and iron that are crucial in securing a nation.

**Cybersecurity:** refers to the practice of protecting systems, networks, and programmes from digital attacks. These cyberattacks are usually aimed at accessing, changing, or destroying sensitive information; extorting money from users via [ransomware](#); or interrupting normal business processes ([https://www.cisco.com/c/en\\_in/products/security/what-is-cybersecurity.html](https://www.cisco.com/c/en_in/products/security/what-is-cybersecurity.html)).

**National Security Strategy** – refers to a document prepared periodically by Government which outlines the major national security concerns of a country and how that particular government intended to deal with them ([www.en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php)). A national security strategy is usually general in content and its implementation relies on guidance provided in supporting documents ([www.en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php)).

**National Security Sector** – According to Kotia (2013), the security services refer to “all departments and state agencies whose primary mission is to provide protection or security to the nation”. The security services include the armed forces, gendarmerie, police, intelligence services, border guard, customs, civil defence, fire services, and emergency medical services (Kotia 2013).

In the Zambian context, the National Security Sector includes:

- (i) Zambia Defence Forces which comprise Zambia Army (ZA), Zambian Air Force (ZAF) and Zambia National Service (ZNS) (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zambian-Defence-Force>). Being a landlocked country Zambia has no navy, although a small Marine Unit was formed in Zambia Army during 2015 to patrol inland waterbodies (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zambian-Defence-Force>). The defence forces’ main responsibility is to protect the country against external armed threats.
- (ii) Zambia Police which is responsible for internal security and protection against threats to public order (Zambia 1966).
- (iii) Zambia Security Intelligence Service whose functions include:
  - (a) To collect, correlate and evaluate intelligence relevant to the security or interests of the Republic;
  - (b) To disseminate such intelligence to Government Institutions;
  - (c) To advise Government, public bodies or institutions, and statutory bodies or corporations on the protection of vital installations and classified documents;
  - (d) To coordinate and supervise the activities of any Ministry or department of Government, the armed forces and police force in so far as such activities relate to security intelligence, and to act as a channel for the dissemination of the intelligence obtained from such activities (Zambia 1974).
- (iv) Immigration Department whose functions include:
  - (a) To control all borders ...;
  - (b) To administer and regulate all ports of entry;
  - (c) To regulate the migration of any person to Zambia but at the same time promoting economic growth, encouraging the training of citizens and residents by employers ...;
  - (d) To assist in the prosecution of any offence [under the Immigration and Deportation Act] ... (Zambia 2010).
- (v) Zambia Correctional Service whose functions are to provide custody for prisoners and correctional services for inmates and manage prisons generally (Zambia, 1966; Zambia 2016).
- (vi) Anti-Corruption Commission whose duties include prevention of corruption in public and private sectors, investigations of complaints of alleged and suspected corrupt practices and the prosecution of offences under the Anti-Corruption Act (Zambia 2012).
- (vii) Drug Enforcement Commission whose functions include controlling and preventing the illegal production of narcotics, combating abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and money laundering and providing rehabilitation services to drug addicts in order to contribute to socio-economic development and maintenance of internal security (Zambia 1993).

## **Good Governance**

The World Bank and UN define governance as the “manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social development” (World Bank 1994: vii; UNDP 1997). According to the World Bank and UN, good governance should be underpinned on the rule of law, accountability, participation, transparency and the enjoyment of human and civil rights (World Bank 1994; UNDP 1997). As pointed out by Olowu (2003: 4), “good governance is conceived from a process perspective emphasising the rule of law, accountability, participation, transparency and the enjoyment of human and civil rights.”

## **Parliamentary Oversight**

Parliamentary oversight refers to the crucial role of legislatures in monitoring and reviewing the actions of the executive organs of government (Corder, Saras and Soltau 1999: 2). A country’s National Assembly is elected to represent the people and to ensure

government by the people under the constitution (<https://www.pa.org.za/info/national-assembly>). The National Assembly must therefore hold organs of the state in the national sphere accountable, and exercise general oversight over national executive authority and organs of state on behalf of the electorate.

Parliamentary oversight in Zambia is exercised through various committees of parliament ([www.parliament.gov.zm](http://www.parliament.gov.zm)). Among the parliamentary committees that exercise oversight over national executive authority and organs of the state is the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) which undertakes oversight over expenditure by all ministries and government agencies ([www.parliament.gov.zm](http://www.parliament.gov.zm)). While PAC undertakes oversight over expenditure by all ministries and government agencies there are other various relevant parliamentary committees that scrutinises the activities of ministries and government agencies. These committees include: Committee on National Security and Foreign Affairs (CNSFA); Committee on Agriculture and Lands; Committee on Economic Affairs and Labour; and Committee on Energy, Environment and Tourism ([www.parliament.gov.zm](http://www.parliament.gov.zm)).

Parliamentary oversight over the Zambia Police Service, Zambia Correctional Service, Zambia Army, Zambia Air Force, Zambia National Service and Immigration is exercised through the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and the Committee on National Security and Foreign Affairs (CNSFA) ([www.parliament.gov.zm](http://www.parliament.gov.zm)). The CNSFA provides checks and balances on policy matters for ministries of defence, home affairs and foreign affairs while oversight on expenditure is undertaken by PAC ([www.parliament.gov.zm](http://www.parliament.gov.zm); Chungu 2004: 64). The Zambia National Intelligence Service (ZNIS) is not yet subject to Parliamentary Oversight ([www.parliament.gov.zm](http://www.parliament.gov.zm)).

Despite CNSFA and PAC providing checks and balances on defence policy and expenditure, the two (2) committees have never been involved in pre-budget consultations, which is a very important component in budget formulation. Further, the two committees have no powers to scrutinise defence or intelligence operations as such scrutiny is considered a threat to national security (Chungu 2004).

### **Other Mechanisms for Dealing with National Security**

In Zambia there are several institutions established to protect human rights and the environment. They include:

- (i) Judiciary: – primary institution charged with protection of human rights through enforcing the Bill of Rights entrenched in the Constitution. Anyone who feels that his/her human rights have been violated can seek redress through the High Court which enforces the Bill of Rights ([www.hrc.org.zm/rights.php](http://www.hrc.org.zm/rights.php) 15/2/14).
- (ii) Human Rights Commission – mandated, inter alia, to investigate human rights violations and mal administration of justice and prevent human rights abuses ([www.hrc.org.zm/rights.php](http://www.hrc.org.zm/rights.php) 15/2/14).
- (iii) Police Public Complaints Authority (PPCA) – investigates complaints against actions of the members of the Zambia Police Service that result in human rights violations (Zambia 2016b).
- (iv) Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA) – the functions of ZEMA include, inter alia, to: advise on policy formulation and make recommendations for the sustainable management of the environment; ensure the integration of environmental concerns on overall national planning through coordination with appropriate authorities; review environmental impact assessment (EIA) and strategic environmental assessment reports; monitor trends of national resources; their use and impact on the environment and make necessary recommendations to the appropriate authority; carry out research and awareness raising on environmental issues, as well as national resource management such as the impact of deforestation and environmental degradation; implement environmental safeguards ([www.zema.org.zm](http://www.zema.org.zm) 16/2/14).

### **Threats to National Security**

In the context of Zambia, the threats to national security that a National Security Strategy will have to deal with include the following:

- (i) Poverty – Zambia ranks among the countries with the highest levels of poverty and inequality globally. Poverty reached 60% of the population in 2022, up from 54.4% in 2015, worsened by limited job creation and declining labour earnings. The urban population recorded the highest reversal, with an 8.5 percentage point increase in poverty incidence reaching 31.9% in 2022 (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/zambia/overview>). Currently close to 64% of the population live on less USD2 per day (<https://www.habitatforhumanity.org.uk/country/zambia>) and 54.4% live below the international poverty line (below USD1 per day) (<https://cdn.sida.se>). Poverty in the country has been exacerbated by other factors such as environmental degradation and HIV/Aids (FAO 2001). In 2024 Zambia has witnessed a pressing food crisis caused by the severe 2023-2024 drought that has affected 17% of the population. Triggered by climate-related crisis shocks, particularly prolonged dry spells, this crisis has posed threats to agricultural productivity, food security, and economic stability. The standard of living of the majority of the population has decreased over the years resulting in rising discontent among some sections of the citizens. This rising discontent poses a major threat to the security of the country.
- (ii) Economic and financial difficulties – due to poor economic performance the country is not able to provide adequate essential social services to its citizens. In recent years, Zambia's economic growth has transitioned from poor to fragile. After experiencing slow but steady growth in 2017 and 2018, the country saw its growth rate decline to 1.4% in 2019 (BTI 2024 Zambia Country Report). According to the World Bank, the impact of COVID-19 and the uncertainty surrounding the country's debt resulted in a contraction of around 4% in 2020 (BTI 2024 Zambia Country Report). Zambia's economic recovery under

the new dawn government of the United Party for National Development (UPND) is still work in progress. Economic growth has been disappointing, reaching only 3.1% in 2022, falling short of the government's goal of 4% (BTI 2024 Zambia Country Report). With inadequate financial resources, successive Zambian governments have overtime had limited capacity to deal with the rising discontent among the citizens. This rising discontent among citizens poses a threat to national security.

- (iii) Unemployment – unemployment levels are very high in the country. The proportion of unemployed workers in the labour force is growing and is estimated by the World Bank to have increased from 7.9% to 13% in 2021 (BTI 2024 Zambia Country Report). In 2023, employment to population ratio for Zambia was 57.1 % (<https://knoema.com/atlas/Zambia/Employment-to-population-ratio>). High unemployment levels, especially among the youth fuel incidences of crime posing a major threat to internal security.
- (iv) High organized crime – in the last fifteen (15) years, the country has witnessed an increase in levels of high organized crime. However, it is encouraging to note that with the coming to office of the new dawn government in 2021, levels of organised crime began to decline. In 2021 the country's criminality index was 4.93 and in 2023 it reduced to 4,73 (Global Organised Crime Index 2023).

According to the Global Organised Crime Index Report for 2023, cases of organised crime in Zambia have involved, inter alia, the following:

(a) Human Trafficking – Zambia is both a destination and transit for human smuggling. Human smuggling rackets in Zambia are increasing due to its position as a hub for transit routes to South Africa, where human labour opportunities are perceived to be in high demand. The Horn of Africa, particularly Ethiopia and Somalia, is the primary source of smuggled individuals to Zambia, with the ultimate destination being South Africa. Smugglers, including transport operators, assist people in entering and temporarily residing in Zambia. While many individuals come from other African countries, a significant portion also comes from South Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan and India (Global Organised Crime Index 2023). These illegal movements of human beings to and through the country has the potential of destabilising the peace of the country as most of these illegal foreign nationals are usually inclined to engage in criminal activities because of their desperate situations.

(b) Wildlife trafficking is also a significant issue in Zambia, as the country is a home to many endangered species, such as elephants, lions, leopards and cheetahs. Poaching for the domestic and international trade is widespread, and Zambia is also a transit route for illegal wildlife products from neighbouring countries, with products often ending up in Asia (Global Organised Crime Index 2023). Wildlife trafficking is often connected to transnational criminal organisations and terrorist groups, and therefore a major threat to national security.

(c) Illicit mining has become common in Zambia, especially in relation to copper ore trafficking. Both Zambian and foreign criminal networks are known to be involved in illicit copper and gold mining, particularly in the country's eastern region (Global Organised Crime Index 2023). Illegal mining is a major threat to national security in that it negatively impacts on the environment, habitats, human and animal life, indigenous communities and their livelihoods, public health, economic development, rule of law, and pollutes water sources (<https://earth.org>). Further, illegal mining of precious stones is often associated with serious human rights abuses (<https://www.unodc.org>). Furthermore, illegal mining and trafficking of precious metals are often linked to economic crimes such as tax evasion, fraud, and corruption (<https://www.unodc.org>). As observed by UNODC, due to the high profits associated with precious metals, and the often-low risks of being arrested or prosecuted, organised criminal groups are exploiting this sector (<https://www.unodc.org>).

(d) Counterfeit goods are a significant problem in Zambia, with a wide range of commodities, including medication and consumer goods, being counterfeited (Global Organised Crime Index 2023). Both Zambian and foreign criminal networks are involved in the trade of counterfeit goods. Counterfeit medication is marketed through both legitimate and informal pharmaceutical outlets (Global Organised Crime Index 2023). Counterfeit medication is a danger to people's health. Counterfeit electronic gadgets, including mobile phones, are also being sold in Zambia (Global Organised Crime Index 2023). These counterfeit goods have a negative impact on the economy of any country

(v) Corruption – corruption is still widespread in the country and takes away resources meant for developmental activities and continues to pose a threat to national security. Corruption remains one of the main obstacles to the sustainable development of Zambia. According to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, the world's leading index for public sector corruption, Zambia consistently ranks well-below the global average (43) and other countries in the region (e.g., Botswana, South Africa, Rwanda, Tanzania) (Transparency International 2023; TIZ 2023). The Zambia Bribe Payers' Index, jointly conducted by ACC and TI-Z every two years, reveals that bribery remains endemic to Zambia's public sector. Public procurement officials and politically exposed persons remain the most common perpetrators of corruption (Transparency International 2023). On a positive note, both the Afrobarometer 2022 and the Zambia Bribe Payers' Index 2022 show that **perceptions of corruption have reduced** compared to 2019 or 2020; similarly, in the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index, for the first time in 10 years Zambia has improved its score: experts and businesspeople experienced less corruption than in previous years (Transparency International 2023). Transparency International however cautions that it is still too early to state that corruption is reducing. There is still widespread fear for reporting corruption, and corruption remains prevalent among many institutions and public services (Transparency International 2023).



- (vi) Drugs and money laundering – this is another category of crime that poses a major threat to the internal security of the country. The Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC) is struggling to contain this crime. The use of heroin in Zambia has been on the rise due to heroin-saturated markets in Southwest Asia. Zambia has become a significant transit country for heroin that is trafficked overland from Tanzania and Mozambique to heroin markets in West Africa and other parts of southern Africa. The cocaine market has also grown in the past decade, with rising rates of cocaine supply and consumption. Research suggests that Zambia's cocaine market is also expanding alongside the illicit mining market, which reportedly provides an increase in cocaine demand (Global Organised Crime Index 2023). Money laundering has also continued to pose a major threat to the internal security of the country. According to the Drug Enforcement Commission, the Anti-Money Laundering Investigations Unit investigated 219 money laundering related cases, involving over K1 billion, over USD 54 million, and over Euros 23,000 in 2021 (Diggers News 16 February 2022).
- (vii) Deforestation, Environmental/land degradation and diminishing water resources – Deforestation, Environmental/land degradation and diminishing water resources has continued to be the major contributor to food insecurity in Zambia. The deforestation of primary forests in Zambia has increased significantly for over a decade (Global Organised Crime Index 2023). An estimated 250,000 to 300,000 hectares of forest are destroyed each year by people making space for farming and those in search of firewood. The rampant destruction of forests has had negative effects on the river systems resulting in diminishing water resources (IRN Africa 2014). It has also led to land degradation which has resulted in loss of soil fertility (Council of Churches in Zambia 2014 [www.ccz.org.zm](http://www.ccz.org.zm)).
- (viii) Pollution – on the copperbelt over 200,000 mt of sulphur dioxide is emitted into the atmosphere annually (IRN Africa 2014). These emission levels exceed both government limitations and recommendations by the World Health Organisation. These emissions pose a health risk to the inhabitants of the surrounding areas (IRN Africa 2014). Further, a build-up of toxins in the soil near smelters has also proven to be a problem. Left in the soil for long periods of time, these toxins could eventually find their way into the food chain, posing a health risk to both animals and humans and killing off plants in the area (IRN Africa 2014).
- (ix) HIV/Aids – HIV/Aids undermine the performance of all organisations including the security sector (ACC 2009). The country is losing trained and qualified staff to HIV/Aids and productivity in all sectors of the economy is also being hampered as a result of staff caring for sick friends and relatives and attending funerals (ACC 2009).
- (x) Gender inequality – Although Zambia has made significant progress in promoting the rights of girls and women, gender inequality is still a big challenge in the country (Zambia 2021). Despite notable improvements, Zambia remains in the bottom 38 countries with the highest levels of gender inequality (Zambia 2021). The women who constitute the majority of the population do not, for instance, have easy access to land and financing, limiting their participation in the development process of the country. Further, the participation of women in the politics of the country is very low. A situation where the majority of the citizens (i.e. women) are left out of the development process and the politics of a country poses a threat to the national security of such a country.
- (xi) Violation of civil and human rights – in comparison to the period of the late 1990s there has been an improvement regarding protection of civil and human rights (BTI 2012 Zambia). Nevertheless, during the era of the Patriotic Front (PF) government from 2011 to 2021, some civil and human rights violations persisted, such as unlawful killings, torture, beatings, abuse of criminal suspects and detainees by security forces, arbitrary arrests, prolonged detention and long delays in trials together with poor and life-threatening prison conditions (BTI 2012 Zambia; Lusaka Times 28 March 2014; Times of Zambia & Zambia Daily Mail 28 March 2014).
- (xii) State fragility – a fragile state is a country that is characterised by weak state capacity or legitimacy leaving citizens vulnerable to a range of shocks. The characteristics of fragile states include weak governance, limited administrative capacity, chronic humanitarian crises, persistent social tensions, and often, violence or the legacy of armed conflict and civil war (<https://www.ilo.org>). State fragility is heavily concentrated in Africa with 14 of the 20 most fragile states in the world on the Fragile States Index for 2023 being African (The Fund for Peace 2023) One of Zambia's neighbours, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), is among the five (5) most fragile states in the world (The Fund for Peace 2023). Another neighbour of Zambia, Zimbabwe is also among the 20 most fragile states in the world (The Fund for Peace 2023). When conflict or disorder erupts in a fragile state it has the potential of spilling into a neighbouring country and disrupting the peace and security of that country.
- (xiii) Ethnicity and identity politics – In many African countries including Zambia politicians have developed a tendency to use ethnicity and identity politics to canvass for votes, instead of engaging in issue based political campaigns. Because of the rise in the use of ethnicity and identity politics, many bad elements in African politics hide under ethnicity when asked to account for their bad deeds, arguing that they are being persecuted because they belong to a particular ethnic group. Further, in several African countries, affiliation to political parties and belonging to certain ethnic groupings have become major requirements for appointment to top jobs in the public service. As a result, in several African countries the civil service has been highly politicised and become less professional, worse the Foreign Service. Exclusion and marginalisation has become rife. There is a worrying trend in several African countries whereby governance irresponsibility and negative identity politics is forcing people to resort to their ethnic identities for survival. Several concerns were raised in Zambia during the rule of the Patriotic front Party led

government from 2011 to 2021 where Kaunda's regional balancing in public appointments was abandoned. For example, in 2012 the cabinet of 19 consisted of 10 members from one language group out of the seven language groupings in the country. To worsen matters, at the same time (Mukwena 2012), the President and heads of the judiciary, legislature and civil service were all from this same language group (Mukwena 2012). At the close of the Patriotic Front Government rule in 2021 the list of permanent secretaries comprised of 18 from Northern Province, five (5) Eastern Province, two (2) each from Luapula and Muchinga provinces, and one (1) each from Western, Northwestern, and Southern provinces (Zambian Watchdog, 2 February 2023). A situation such as the foregoing breeds feelings of exclusion, resentment and frustration among the groups that are left out, posing a potential threat to the stability and security of a country.

- (xiv) Political violence – It refers to violence which is perpetrated in order to achieve political goals ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political\\_violence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_violence)). It varies widely in form, severity, and practice. The various forms of political violence include electoral violence, inter-party violence, and intra-party violence. Electoral violence includes any acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arise in the context of electoral competition (<https://aceproject.org>). Interparty violence is the violence occurring between or involving two or more political parties, while intraparty violence is the violence occurring within the membership of the same political party. In the case of Zambia electoral violence, has in recent times been increasing. During the rule of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), from 1991 to 2011, the country witnessed many incidences of interparty violence during bye elections and general elections, involving violent clashes between cadres of the then ruling MMD and the then opposition Patriotic Front (PF) and ruling MMD and the then opposition UPND (Lusaka Times 26 August 2011). Interparty violence in Zambia during the rule of the PF, from 2011 to 2021 increased to high levels. The violence mostly involved violent clashes between cadres of the ruling PF and the then main opposition UPND (Zambiareports.com 17 October 2012; Muvi TV 4 September 2013; Lusaka Times 8 September 2013; Lusaka Times 4 January 2015; Lusaka Times 13 March 2016; Times of Zambia, 13 March 2016; The Post 4 March 2013; News Diggers 4 May 2019; Kalemba 31 July 2021). There were also incidences where the Patriotic Front cadres, during bye elections, attacked other citizens leading in some cases to serious injuries and loss of life (Zambiareports.com 17 October 2012, Muvi TV 4 September 2013, Zambia Reports No. 13,2018; News Diggers 24 June 2017; Lusaka Times 13 November 2013; Lusaka Times 13 March 2016; Lusaka Times 4 January 2015; News Diggers 4 May 2019; The Post 26 February 2014; Times of Zambia 26 February 2014; Lusaka Times 13 November 2013; The Post 4 March 2013; News Diggers 4 May, 2019; Kalemba 31 July 2021). Further, there were also cases of PF party cadres attacking leaders of small opposition political parties (Zambia Eye 14 July 2016). Intraparty violence has occurred mainly in the Patriotic Front when it was the ruling party and after it lost power (The Zambian Observer 15 September 2023). The violent clashes have involved clashes between cadres of factions within the same party jostling for control of the party. During the PF rule, there were also incidences where cadres protested violently against their own top party leaders (The Post Sunday 15 September 2013; The Post 26 February 2014; Times of Zambia 26 February 2014). There were also cases where the ruling PF cadres attacked innocent citizens who held contrary views to theirs (Lusaka Times 26 February 2013). Another former ruling party the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) has also witnessed violent clashes between cadres of two factions jostling for the control of the party (Lusaka Times, 22 November 2014). There is need for any progressive country to adopt zero tolerance towards all forms of political violence, as such violence poses a major threat to the security of any nation. On a positive note it is gratifying that since the United Party for National Development took office in August 2021 the problem of political violence has largely been resolved due to the new UPND government's policy of zero tolerance on all forms of political violence. It should however be pointed out here that there have been some very isolated cases of political violence involving some suspected cadres of the ruling UPND and the main opposition Patriotic Front (Lusaka Times, 10 October 2021; Zambian Eye, 12 March 2023). Since the UPND took office, the country has also witnessed isolated cases of intraparty violence within the main opposition PF involving two rival factions claiming ownership of the party (The Zambian Observer, 15 September 2023).
- (xv) Political intolerance – political intolerance refers to not accepting and respecting the basic rights and civil liberties of persons and groups whose viewpoints differ from our own. Intolerance in the politics of the nation remains a big challenge. Towards the end of 2014, political intolerance within the then ruling party (Patriotic Front) and within the country had escalated to higher levels leading at times to violent clashes involving cadres of rival factions resulting in serious injuries and loss of life (Times of Zambia, 1 September 2013; The Post, Sunday 15 September 2013; Lusaka Times, 12 November 2013). There was also an incidence where suspected PF party cadres stormed a church to beat up journalists and citizens that had gathered to protest the removal of subsidies (Misazambia.org.zm 2 March 2014). If not firmly dealt with, the culture of political intolerance can take root and become a threat to the stability of the country.

## **Good Governance and National Security**

A viable national security strategy must be based on a good governance framework. Parliamentary oversight over the security sector and other organs charged with responsibility for securing national security is therefore critical (Mtonga 2004). Key to securing national security within the framework of good governance in a democracy relates to the effectiveness of mechanisms by which the institutions charged with securing national security are held accountable (ISS Africa 2009).

The security sector in a democratic country like Zambia is expected to operate within a doctrine that aims at respecting the constitution, human rights and ratified international security instrument (Mtonga 2004: 27). As has been noted by Mtonga (2004: 28), citizens' security and state security are inseparable from the full and free exercise by citizens of their political, economic, social and cultural rights and duties. Thus, in the absence of a good governance framework, national security in its broad sense is untenable or not sustainable.

## **Observations**

Given that most of the threats to national security are tied to economic performance of the country, sustainable national security will largely depend on improving the economy. For instance, threats emanating from poverty and unemployment will be minimized through improvements to the economy. Needless to mention the fact that measures aimed at improvements to the operations of the security institutions and other institutions dealing with various threats to security will require adequate financial resources.

The dominance of the Executive branch in Zambia since independence has rendered Parliament less effective in providing checks and balances on the Executive. The extended powers given to the Presidency by the constitution has made it even more difficult for the other organs of the state to provide effective checks and balances on the Executive (Ndulo and Kent 1996). Parliament and other institutions such as the Human Rights Commission have been rendered generally ineffective in holding the Government to account (Mtonga 2004).

Oversight mechanisms remain weak due to several economic, political, historical, legal and administrative factors (Bulaka 2013). Due to the same factors, institutions established to ensure national security have been less effective. For instance, due to inadequate funding and weak institutional and legal frameworks, the investigative capacities of DEC, ACC, Zambia Police, Police Public Complaints Authority, Human Rights Commission and Zambia Environmental Management Agency have been limited, rendering these institutions less effective (ISS Africa 2009).

Despite being charged with the responsibility to ensure protection of human rights, the Zambia Police Service is often a major violator of human rights. Police officers have committed various human abuses such as torture, extra-judicial killing of suspects, false arrests, illegal and over-detention without trial ([www.hrc.org.zm/roghts.php](http://www.hrc.org.zm/roghts.php) 15/2/2014). Zambia Prison Service Wardens have also been involved in cruel and inhuman treatment of inmates (ISS Africa 2009). There have also been cases of violation of human rights by DEC and ACC law enforcement officers in the form of coercing of witnesses to secure convictions and brutality on suspects (ISS Africa 2009). The credibility of the ACC was lost a long time ago, with many citizens viewing it as a political tool used for victimisation of political opponents (ISS Africa 2009).

Environmental laws and regulations are not strictly enforced and there are many cases of non-compliance involving large-scale organisations especially in the mining sector. Environmental standards are unsatisfactory, with recorded accidents and continued threats to human health due to pollution of rivers, streams and the air in the mining areas (IRN Africa 2014).

The country should continue to ensure inclusivity in recruitment and promotions in the security sector. The trend where ethnicity and political party affiliation became important criteria in appointment to public office in the last three decades should never be extended to the security sector.

## **Conclusion**

Given the fact that the threats to national security in Zambia are numerous and interrelated, the country needs to urgently put in place a consolidated national security strategy that can deal with these various threats in a more coordinated manner.

The interrelations among the various threats include, for instance – high poverty levels and unemployment promoting conditions for corruption to thrive; corrupt practices delaying access to justice; land degradation increasing poverty levels; HIV/Aids undermining economic development, etc. These interrelationships among the various threats to national security do indeed give strong justification for a harmonized and coordinated approach to dealing with national security.

Further, the various institutions that deal with national security in the country have operational linkages with each other. For instance, in the fight against corruption, the ACC has operational linkages with other law enforcement agencies such as the Zambia Police Service, DEC, Zambia Revenue Authority, Immigration Department and Zambia Security Intelligence Services. To effectively carry out its mandate, the ACC will need to strengthen the existing cooperation with the other law enforcement agencies. Strengthened cooperation will enable efficient and effective exchange of information and conduct of joint programmes. Thus, it is necessary that the country comes up with a consolidated National Security Strategy in order to enhance cooperation and effectiveness among the various institutions charged with the responsibility of securing national security.

As has been noted earlier in the paper, citizens' security and state security are inseparable from the full and free exercise by citizens of their civic and human rights. And, as was also earlier noted, the security sector in a democratic country like Zambia is expected to operate within the confines of the constitution and respect citizens' civic and human rights. Thus, a viable national security strategy for a democratic national such as Zambia has to be based on a good governance framework.

Furthermore, it should be noted that adherence to good governance principles such as the rule of law, accountability and transparency by institutions charged with securing national security and those providing oversight is likely to improve their performance and make them more effective in discharging their roles. For instance, adherence to rule of law and accountability are critical to prudent utilisation of resources by these various institutions. Needless to mention the fact that adherence to good governance principles will

contribute to making the ACC and other investigative wings more effective in safeguarding and recovering resources meant for development that are lost to corruption every day.

Finally, and most important, it should be noted that there is a direct correlation between good governance and sources of insecurity. For instance, lack of transparency fuels corruption. Thus, a good governance framework is an integral part of a viable National Security Strategy.

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