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Peacemaking and Peacebuilding in a Divided Society: South Africa's National Peace Accord in the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy

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Abstract

South Africa's complex history is outlined, providing an explanatory background to the two chief conflicts that existed in 1990 as the apartheid era drew to a close: the divide between the government with its security forces and the majority of the population, and grassroots violence between African National Congress supporters and the conservative Inkatha movement. During the 1990s, as South Africa accomplished its transition, a series of structures were created to manage the process. The best remembered is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which was the final transitional structure, holding its hearings in 1996–98. The first was the National Peace Accord, negotiated and signed in 1991 with the help of business and church facilitators, which established a mechanism to implement itself, an 'infrastructure for peace' featuring inclusive peace committees at national, regional, and local levels. The Accord freed a political logjam, allowing constitutional talks to commence, and its peace structures then carried out a nationwide process of peacemaking and peacebuilding. This included the popularization of peace, and the new activity of peace monitoring, to implement the Accord's provisions on the ground in localities and at mass events. This peace process has lessons to offer and is one key to understanding the remarkable peacefulness of the first democratic election in April 1994.

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In the early 1990s South Africa achieved a remarkable, relatively peaceful transition from its divided and increasingly disturbed state under apartheid, to that of a unified democracy. The major transition period began on February 2, 1990 when the new State President Frederik Willem (F. W.) de Klerk announced the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC) and other liberation movements. The process then unfolded through a succession of structures for change. The best known of these is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The TRC was the fruit of a pre-election agreement, added to the Interim Constitution, that there would be amnesty; it was appointed in 1995 by the Government of National Unity, after the first democratic election in 1994. Its hearings, held in 1996–1998, represented the final stage in this intensive period.

Two essential initiatives had preceded the election: the National Peace Accord and the early constitutional talks. This article focuses on the first, the National Peace Accord, negotiated and signed in 1991. The Accord was historic in being South Africa's first truly multiracial, multiparty consensus agreement. Its signing on September 14, 1991 initiated a nationwide process of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and it opened the way for multiparty constitutional talks to commence on December 20, 1991. The talks, originally named the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa), broke down in June 1992 and resumed in April 1993 as the Multiparty Negotiating Process (MPNP). Despite right-wing boycotts, the MPNP produced the Interim Constitution under which the 1994 election was held.

The Accord, meanwhile, had launched a nationwide peace process that set up a complete 'infrastructure for peace' consisting of peace committees at national, regional, and local levels. Running parallel to the constitutional talks, this peace process reached to the grassroots, engaging thousands of people of all races, from civil society and all political backgrounds except the extreme right and left, in making and building peace. It provided a constant safety-net, holding firm and growing irrespective of setbacks or boycotts at the constitutional talks, and laying groundwork for what proved to be the remarkably peaceful April 1994 election.¹

South Africa, a Fractured Nation

The background to the Accord lies in South Africa's diverse society, its extreme fragmentation under apartheid, the growth of violent confrontation both between government and people and between political factions, efforts for peacemaking, and the leap toward radical change in 1990.

What are the constituents of this 'rainbow nation'? The human presence in southern Africa has a long record. The first modern humans about whom we have some knowledge are the San or 'Bushmen,' the hunter-gatherers who ranged across southern Africa for at least 50,000 years, leaving their art on overhanging rocks and contributing the clicks to several modern vernacular languages.

From about 2,000 years ago the San were slowly confined to the Kalahari as various tribal groups of Bantu cattle-herding farmers migrated southward from central Africa to settle in the northern interior and along the eastern coast beside the warm Indian Ocean. By around AD 1,000 these groups were smelting iron. In the Western Cape a distinct population of cattle-owning pastoralists developed. Dubbed 'Hottentots' by the Dutch, they are related to the San and now usually known as Khoes or Khoes-San.

White Europeans first appeared when the Portuguese expedition of Bartholomew Diaz, seeking a new trade route to the spice islands of Indonesia, rounded the Cape and made landfall at Mossel Bay in 1488. White settlement began in 1652 when the Dutch East India Company

established a vegetable garden under Table Mountain, where Cape Town now stands, to supply its ships trading with Indonesia. The Dutch were joined by Huguenot refugees and German farmers, all conservative Protestant Calvinists by religion, which created the people called Afrikaners (literally, Africans). The Cape settlement expanded, taking over the Khoe-San pasture-lands and importing a large slave population from Angola, Indonesia, Bengal, and the whole rim of the Indian Ocean. The mixing of all these races created the Coloured people, still living mainly in the Cape and numbering some 3.4 million at the time of the transition. The home language of Afrikaners and the Coloured people was Afrikaans, a form of Dutch.

During wars with France, the British took the Cape Colony in 1795, to ensure the French did not do so. Permanent British rule was established in 1814, bringing merchants, prospectors, and missionaries from 'English-speaking' churches: Methodist, Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian. In 1820 English settlers, ordinary townspeople with few pioneering skills, were sent to the eastern Cape, landing at what became Port Elizabeth (now Gqeberha). As they moved north seeking good farmland, the settlers were confronted by the Xhosa inhabitants, resulting in frontier wars, expansion of the Cape Colony, and the Cape government's sending the first political prisoners to Robben Island off Cape Town.

Meanwhile further north on the Indian Ocean coast, in what became Natal, the Zulu Chief Shaka (ca. 1787–1828) subjugated many smaller clans to create the Zulu kingdom, forming the Zulus into the largest South African tribe, training its young men as warriors, practicing a scorched-earth policy to keep enemies at a distance, and giving the Zulus a fiercely warlike reputation.

British rule brought a liberal British-style constitution with a color-blind qualified franchise to the Cape Colony. Free men of all races who met the criteria in terms of education and property ownership had the vote; and in 1834 slavery was abolished throughout the British Empire. Many Afrikaners did not take kindly to British rule and liberalism, and in the 1830s groups of Afrikaner families packed their possessions onto wagons and set off northward in a series of treks, in search of land and independence.

During the treks, two iconic incidents occurred. In February 1838 the Zulu King Dingane received a hundred-strong delegation of trekkers, led by Piet Retief, who were requesting land. Having persuaded them to lay aside their arms, Dingane had them killed. Then on the 16th of December 470 trekkers protected by a wagon circle *laager* faced a Zulu force numbering some 15,000. Prior to this 'Battle of Blood River' the trekkers made a vow to God that if he granted them victory they would build a church and keep that day as an annual remembrance. Victory gave the Afrikaners a new identity as a chosen people, a covenant race like Israel of old, entering a land which, they believed, God was giving them; but profound wariness between the races lingered on. The trekkers moved on up the great escarpment and easily captured the wide grass plains of the interior, establishing the independent republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State (OFS). There the franchise was restricted to whites. The annual remembrance continued on December 16, the 'Day of the Covenant,' popularly known as 'Dingaan's Day.'

In 1824 British traders had received Shaka's permission to establish a trading post at Port Natal, now Durban. It expanded to become the British Colony of Natal. A controversial invasion of neighboring Zululand in January 1879 met disaster on an open hillside at Isandlwana where, having omitted to form a *laager*, the expeditionary force was almost wiped out in an overwhelming Zulu attack. In July a much larger expedition took Zululand, establishing British rule through client chiefs and absorbing it into Natal.

By then Indians were also arriving. Beginning in 1860, the British brought indentured laborers from India to work the Natal sugar plantations. Richer ‘passenger Indians’ followed and set up businesses. It was among the Indians that Mahatma Gandhi worked for twenty-one years, 1893–1914, defending their rights to equality as British subjects and developing his strategy of ‘satyagraha,’ nonviolent resistance.

Diamonds and gold had been discovered then, and this, combined with the European ‘scramble for Africa’ and the imperial ambitions of Cecil Rhodes, culminated in the Second Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902. The Afrikaners fought in fast-moving mounted ‘commandos.’ The British attacked their support base, destroying farms and incarcerating wives, children, and servants in concentration camps where some 27,000 died, mainly of disease. Captured Afrikaner leaders were exiled. Afrikaner dislike and resentment of the British became deep and visceral.

The war ended with the Transvaal and OFS becoming British colonies, with the promise of self-rule within the Empire. A ‘National Convention’ met in 1908–09 to draw up the constitution of a new united country. Its population was about six million, of whom one million were white. The primary concern of the British was to reconcile with the Afrikaners, and despite heartfelt protests and representations to Westminster by black and white liberal leaders from the Cape, no black representatives took part in the Convention. Its outcome in 1910 was the birth of the Union of South Africa, a self-governing Dominion with the same status within the British Empire as Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. The four colonies became provinces. Each kept its own voting system but whites alone could sit in the national Parliament. Black rights in the Cape Province were gradually eroded until finally, in 1956 under apartheid, the Coloured people were removed from the common voters roll.

Black African leaders came together in 1912 from across the new country. Meeting in Waaihoek Methodist Church in Mangaung township, Bloemfontein, they formed the South African National Native Congress, renamed the African National Congress (ANC) in 1923. It declared its loyalty to the Crown, and its determination to keep communication open between the government and the black African population. It was unable to prevent the tragedy of the 1913 Land Act which reserved over 90 percent (later revised to 87 percent) of South Africa for white ownership. For decades the ANC was polite, gentlemanly, and nonviolent. Although its membership was only opened to all races in 1969, it always retained deep non-racial Christian roots.

Nationalism within Afrikaner society gave birth to the National Party (NP) in 1915 and in 1918 to the Afrikaner Broederbond, an influential male-only secret society with an invited membership—academics, clerics, politicians—dedicated to Afrikaner advancement in every sphere of life. During the ascendancy of fascism in the inter-war years, the NP’s hard-line members developed the frankly racist policy of apartheid, literally ‘separateness,’ predicated on racial difference and white supremacy. In 1948, campaigning on an apartheid ticket against the tired, vaguely liberal United Party of General Jan Smuts, the NP won power by five constituency seats, albeit with only a minority of the white and Coloured votes. It proceeded to implement apartheid.

Apartheid and Defiance

Apartheid was institutionalized racism in the starkest sense. ‘Petty Apartheid’ meant the legal enforcement of the social conventions that had previously held the races apart: the separation of transport, amenities, eating places, recreational facilities, beaches, elevators, exits, and entrances. The political project of ‘Grand Apartheid’ aimed to achieve complete separation between races, the four main categories being white, black African, Coloured, and Indian, and even between

tribes. Whites would maintain overall control. Residential areas were segregated. Inter-racial sex and marriage involving whites became illegal. Black students were banned from white schools and universities. Black Africans were provided with an inferior 'Bantu Education' syllabus.

In 1970 black Africans were stripped overnight of their South African (SA) citizenship and assigned to one of ten small tribal 'Self Governing Territories' (SGTs, 'homelands') derisively called 'bantustans.' These were expected to become 'independent.' Just four: Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (the 'TBVC states') opted for 'independence' but were not recognized by any country except South Africa. Black African families were exiled to the 'homelands' or confined to 'townships' as workers in white towns. Because black workers were still needed, vast hostels were built in the urban townships, mainly for men, each housing up to 3,000 'single' migrant workers. Black domestic workers, mainly women, lived alone in often squalid backyard rooms behind white homes. The dream outcome of Grand Apartheid was the elimination of the black population from white South Africa, except as migrant workers.

Rigid control was imposed on black Africans through identity documents ('reference books' or 'passes'), which dictated where each person over sixteen could live and work. Failure to carry a pass meant arrest, fining, imprisonment, and possibly being 'endorsed out' to a tribal 'homeland.' The police, black and white, attracted hatred as enforcers of the pass laws and suppressors of protest.

Apartheid caused immense suffering and profound resentment. South Africa became a pariah state, subject to increasing condemnation and sanctions by the UN, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), Europe, and the Commonwealth; but for as long as the Cold War lasted it played a geopolitical card, presenting itself as the bastion of democracy, free market capitalism, and Christianity, against the onslaught of Communism in southern Africa.

In 1949 new young ANC activists Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, and their colleagues, who had founded the ANC Youth League in 1944, began to organize resistance. The early 1950s witnessed a multiracial, nonviolent 'Defiance Campaign' against apartheid laws. In 1955 the Freedom Charter, a brief manifesto envisaging a free, non-racial South Africa, was formulated after wide consultation and adopted by the ANC as its policy document.

Freedom Struggle and Violence

The turning point to violence came on March 21, 1960 when police fired on an unarmed crowd protesting against passes, outside the police station in Sharpeville township south of Johannesburg. Sixty-nine protesters were killed and 180 injured. Amid international condemnation, Mandela and liberal voices called for a multiracial National Convention to devise a non-racial democracy. Instead the government banned the protesters, including the ANC and the breakaway Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), which continued to operate underground and in exile. The white electorate voted by just 52 percent to become a republic, and in 1961 South Africa fell out of the Commonwealth.

Mandela, despairing of peaceful change, led the formation of a multiracial force, uMkhonto weSizwe (MK), 'Spear of the Nation,' effectively the armed wing of the ANC, with Mandela as chair of its High Command. MK included underground members of the South African Communist Party (SACP), which had been banned since 1950, and it looked to the Communist Bloc for training. Its policy throughout, with future reconciliation in view, was to carry out sabotage but avoid civilian deaths. The armed wing of the breakaway PAC, however, aimed to kill whites and collaborators. Mandela and his colleagues were caught, sentenced in 1964 to life imprisonment, and sent to Robben Island.

In 1976 the school children of Soweto rose up in protest against the attempted imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction for mathematics and other key subjects under 'Bantu Education.' On June 16 in a confrontation with the police, several children were killed and general rioting broke out. From then on, 'unrest' and States of Emergency became endemic. Black youths dropped out of school, insisting on 'liberation now, education later.' Hundreds crossed the border to join the armed wings or seek scholarships.

During the 1980s President Pieter Willem (P. W.) Botha applied a counter-insurgency theory that called for a dual policy of reform and repression. His new Constitution co-opted Coloured and Indian politicians into a 'Tricameral Parliament,' but perpetuated white power. A groundswell of resistance took formal shape in a nationwide network, the United Democratic Front (UDF), in contact with the exiled ANC. Botha repealed some key apartheid laws, ending passes and influx control; but the majority wanted the end of apartheid, not its reform. Activists engaged the police and administrators with stones, petrol bombs, barricades, and a scattering of firearms. In 1985 the exiled ANC leadership broadcast its call into South Africa to 'make the townships ungovernable.'

Botha's government replied with a State of Emergency, imprisoning or placing restriction orders on leaders and deploying paramilitary police and the army in the townships. The Security Police and Military Intelligence each developed covert 'dirty tricks' units, responsible for disappearances and gruesome assassinations. Many of the later TRC hearings referred to this short, brutal period. Attacks on the police contributed to a virtual absence of normal policing in the townships. Vigilante justice took over. Those unfortunate enough to be labeled spies or collaborators were liable to be 'necklaced' (burned alive, using tires and petrol). The media offered the country a steady drip-feed of violent deaths.

Civil War in Natal/KwaZulu

The general 'unrest' was further complicated by the emergence of a low-intensity grassroots civil war in the province of Natal and the 'bantustan' of KwaZulu, the Zulu 'homeland' headed by Chief Buthelezi, comprised of multiple areas within the province. Buthelezi had fallen out with the ANC in 1979. The strikes and protests of the 1980s sparked bloody violence between UDF-aligned activists and Zulus of Buthelezi's Inkatha movement.

Buthelezi maintained that MK, which he labeled the ANC's 'private army,' was fighting Inkatha and assassinating its officials. He appealed to Botha for help. In 1986 Military Intelligence covertly trained some 200 Zulus, at a base in the Namibian Caprivi Strip, in 'security' operations including 'house penetration,' i.e., how to kill 'ANC' in their homes. Some 'Caprivian' trainees were recruited into the KwaZulu Police (KZP), which the ANC regarded as Buthelezi's 'private army.' On both sides the violence was accompanied by intimidation and characterized by pre-emptive attacks and indiscriminate revenge, setting up ongoing local vendettas.

Peace Initiatives

The turbulent 1980s also saw initiatives for peace. At the grassroots level in Natal/KwaZulu, church, business, and trades union leaders supported talks led by mediators. At the national level, in 1987 a large contingent of South African whites traveled via France to an encounter with the ANC in Dakar, Senegal. There followed numerous meetings in Lusaka, and a key series of clandestine talks in England, the 'Mells talks,' organized by Consolidated Gold Fields, bringing together the ANC leaders in exile led by its then chief negotiator, Thabo Mbeki, with influential Afrikaners. Botha's remarkably forward-thinking National Intelligence Service (NIS) listened in

on the latter talks through one white participant, who shared this secret with Mbeki. The NIS kept Botha informed. Other discreet talks were hosted by Lord Brentford at his home, Newick Park in Sussex. Within South Africa, secret talks took place between Mandela, who had been transferred in 1982 from Robben Island to Pollsmoor Prison near Cape Town, and government and NIS representatives.

These 'track-two' contacts enabled the two sides to feel out each other's positions and build a basic level of understanding and even friendship. Together with the geopolitical shift as Communism fell and the Cold War ended, and the fact, by then obvious, that apartheid was unsustainable and both sides wanted a negotiated outcome, these contacts made possible the momentous speech by the new State President F. W. de Klerk on February 2, 1990, announcing the immediate unbanning of the liberation movements and the imminent unconditional release of Mandela.

Expectations on Mandela's Release

When Nelson Mandela walked free on February 11, 1990, South Africa was mired in two major conflicts: the country-wide confrontation between the majority and the apartheid government, and the related grassroots war in both rural and urban areas in Natal/KwaZulu. Two results were expected to follow his release: Mandela and Buthelezi would immediately meet and reconcile their differences and the grassroots violence would abate; and multiparty 'talks about talks' would begin, to devise new constitutional arrangements under which the first inclusive democratic election would be held.

Neither result materialized. Mandela had intended to meet Buthelezi without delay, but his better judgment was over-ruled by ANC 'hawks,' notably the Communist Harry Gwala in Pietermaritzburg, who were determined to deny Buthelezi any recognition or credibility. Thus a meeting was prevented for almost a year, while the Inkatha-ANC violence intensified and spread. In March 1990 an Inkatha warlord reacted to ANC stone-throwing at Inkatha buses returning from a rally by launching a 'seven days war' in the hills above Pietermaritzburg. It left up to 200 dead and 20,000 displaced.

Until July 1990 this violence was confined to Natal/KwaZulu and involved almost exclusively Zulus. Then in July 1990, Buthelezi announced the transformation of Inkatha into the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). The IFP aspired to be a multiracial political force at the national level, and began recruiting in the hostels and townships of South Africa's industrial heartland, the 'Witwatersrand' or 'Reef' around Johannesburg, and the Vaal. There the IFP was perceived as Zulu, and the violence became ethno-political. Any Zulu, until proved otherwise, might be a IFP spy, an enemy of the ANC, and was liable to be chased from the neighborhood or killed. There was a popular assumption that residential areas could not be politically mixed, but must be defensive 'strongholds' of one or other party. Hostels and streets in the townships suffered ethno-political cleansing. Mutual 'no-go' zones were created through intimidation, expulsions, murder, and the destruction or occupation of homes. Strangers wandering into the 'wrong' streets could be killed. The vast apartheid hostels, most already housing a preponderance of Zulus, lent themselves to becoming refuges and fortresses, looking to the IFP for support. At grassroots in the townships, the violence pitted IFP-aligned Zulus against everyone else. The turmoil engendered intense fear, anger, and resentment including resentment at the police for 'doing nothing' or helping the other side.

It was almost a year before Mandela and Buthelezi met, at a brief ANC-IFP bilateral in Durban in January 1991, to sign a minimal peace agreement. It lacked credible arrangements for

implementation. On the following day a local battle occurred and Buthelezi declared the agreement dead. The churches attempted to promote it, but no effort was made by either side and violence continued.

As to the anticipated constitutional talks, in his February 2, 1990 speech President de Klerk had invited all leaders to come and talk about the future but the only talks that materialized were a halting series of bilateral business meetings between the government and the ANC, focused on the practicalities of the release of 'political' prisoners, safe return of exiles, and suspension of the ANC's armed activities. In a special bilateral on violence in September 1990 the ANC voiced its belief that the government was deliberately failing to stop the violence in order to hamper the ANC's political activities and prevent change.

On April 5, 1991 the ANC sent an open letter to the president blaming the government for perpetuating all the violence, whether through the IFP, police, or 'unknown gunmen.'² It demanded that the carrying of weapons at rallies be outlawed, two cabinet ministers be dismissed and certain police officers suspended, all counter-insurgency units be disbanded, the hostels be closed and converted into family units, and the establishment of an inquiry into police violence. If these demands were not met by May 9 the ANC would suspend any discussion of multiparty constitutional talks. De Klerk rejected the demands, riposting that he would convene a summit on *all* violence on May 22–24 and would legislate for a Standing Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation. The ANC rejected de Klerk's proposals, announcing that it would boycott the president's summit. Deadlock had been reached.

Church and Business: Peace Facilitators from Civil Society

At this critical moment, with the country falling back into polarization, a group came forward, composed of leaders from the churches and business, offering themselves as facilitators in the political process.

Both business and churches, the twin pillars of civil society, had previously prepared themselves to play a proactive role in the transition process. In 1988 when repression was at its height and many of the authentic black leaders were imprisoned or restricted, top business leaders had nevertheless reached out to them. A seminal meeting, the 'Broederstroom Encounter,' took place on August 5–7 at the Gencor training center near Pretoria. It gave birth to the Consultative Business Movement (CBM) an organization dedicated to enabling business to play a united progressive role in the transition that all saw was coming. The CBM's initial membership included the two largest English-speaking business groups, Anglo American and Barlow Rand, and steadily grew to over a hundred. It was not an ordinary business chamber but was free to act as a catalyst. Its board had a compact group chairmanship, able to make quick executive decisions, supported by a small consultative team of process facilitators headed by Theuns Eloff and Colin Coleman. It set about facilitating communication between black and white leadership, in both political and economic spheres.

The churches had, since 1960, been deeply split over apartheid. The white Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) was close to the NP and found a shaky scriptural excuse for apartheid in the biblical myth of the Tower of Babel where God scatters the nations, making their languages mutually incomprehensible. The New Testament replaces Babel with a universal communion of justice and love; and the mainstream 'English-speaking' churches consistently opposed apartheid. Frequently, their mouthpiece and vehicle for action was the South African Council of Churches (SACC). The government consequently viewed the SACC as a front for the ANC and Communism. The Dutch Reformed family also included African, Coloured, and Indian branches, in which anti-apartheid

voices were increasingly raised. By the late 1980s the DRC Synod was listening to its own black sister churches, to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, which had suspended it from membership in 1982, and to rising anti-apartheid voices among its own theologians. Finally in October 1990 its synod condemned apartheid as un-scriptural, un-Christian, and a sin.

Beside these two groupings, there existed numerous 'African-initiated' churches, mostly tiny but including the large Zion Christian Church (ZCC). The ZCC avoided political protest, as did an influential white-led network of evangelicals and charismatics who practiced multiracialism as far as possible while trying to be 'apolitical.'

In November 1990 all of these denominations (except the ZCC) came together in an unprecedented Conference near Rustenburg. A DRC professor confessed the sin of apartheid on behalf of his church and people. Archbishop Tutu offered forgiveness and reconciliation. The evangelicals and charismatics confessed their own lack of action.

The Rustenburg Declaration, unanimously agreed, committed the churches to working together to achieve a multiracial South Africa, and suggested that church leaders might facilitate a national peace conference. The organizers became the Rustenburg Committee, comprising twelve church leaders: Archbishop Desmond Tutu (Anglican, Nobel Peace Prize laureate), Rev. Dr. Frank Chikane (Apostolic Faith Mission; SACC General Secretary), Professor Johan Heyns (DRC minister and influential former Moderator; Professor of Theology, University of Pretoria), and Louw Alberts (physicist, leading DRC layman, and government scientific adviser), whom de Klerk knew well and deeply trusted. The Committee was mandated to take the Declaration and meet with political leaders to discuss it with them. They met de Klerk, Mandela, and others. Buthelezi failed, at first, to reply.

Intervention

When the political process came to a halt in April–May 1991, the church and business leaders liaised and agreed they must intervene, offering themselves as impartial facilitators. They had the full support of the ANC and its two 'Alliance' allies, the SACP and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Eager support also came from the moderate white, Coloured, and Indian parliamentary parties. De Klerk at first spurned the offer, insisting that politicians alone must control the process; but the ANC's boycott of the President's peace summit in May, its promise to attend a peace conference if it were convened by impartial facilitators, and encouragement from the DRC facilitators, persuaded de Klerk to accept.

At the close of his summit, looking a little sheepish, de Klerk gave a mandate to the church leaders and specifically to Louw Alberts, to explore how a fully representative peace conference could be convened. The third 'main' protagonist, Chief Buthelezi, was drawn into this process while remaining reluctant and unpredictable.

Within a few days Alberts had catalyzed the formation of a 'Committee of Twelve' facilitators who, between them, had a wealth of contacts across the political spectrum. Seven were church leaders: Louw Alberts, Johan Heyns, Desmond Tutu, Frank Chikane, Rev. Dr. Khoza Mgojo (Methodist, SACC President; active in the Natal Church Leaders' Group), Pastor Ray McCauley (Rhema Church, charismatic), and Rev. Dr. Gerrie Lubbe (Indian Reformed Church, representing the interfaith World Conference on Religion and Peace).

Five came from business: John Hall, President of the South African Chamber of Business (SACOB), CBM board member, and Executive Director of Barlow Rand; Bobby Godsell, Executive Director at Anglo American and member of the South African Consultative Committee on Labour Affairs (SACCOLA); Dr. Sam Motsuenyane, a Director at Barlow Rand and President,

National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC); Sean Cleary, an independent mediator, co-founder of the South African Foundation for Conciliation (SAFCON), and former SA diplomat; and Jabu Mabuza of the Foundation for African Business and Consumer Services (FABCOS). The business contingent brought the CBM's expertise in process facilitation.

The facilitators agreed that the specific purpose of this peace process was to address the violence, not to negotiate the constitutional settlement. They did however recognize that peacemaking itself involves negotiation and compromise, and expressed the hope that the parties would be prepared if necessary to sacrifice political leverage in order to make peace. The facilitators also agreed that the negotiation of peace agreements was a task for 'lieutenants,' senior party leaders, reporting back to their principals, before the latter could be invited to a signing ceremony.

Dubbing themselves the 'Peace Facilitating Committee,' the facilitators invited all parties operating at national level, plus trades union groups, to send 'senior representatives' to a 'meeting about peace' on Saturday June 22, 1991. The meeting was hosted in the 100-seat auditorium at Barlow Park, the headquarters of the Barlow Rand corporation in Sandton, north of Johannesburg. Some seventy arrived, representing all three 'main' parties (ANC-Alliance, NP/government, IFP); the moderate white, Indian, and Coloured parties sitting in the tricameral Parliament; and the black far left (PAC and the Azanian People's Organisation, AZAPO). Only the white far right, represented by the Conservative Party (CP), the tiny Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP) and militant Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB), shunned the process, declaring it a communist plot.

The meeting, brilliantly chaired and facilitated, resolved on a negotiation process that would produce a set of peace agreements, to include Codes of Conduct for political parties and the security forces, provisions for socioeconomic reconstruction and development, and implementation structures at national, regional, and local levels. These agreements would be signed as soon as possible by the top leaders. The meeting appointed a 'Preparatory Committee' composed of representatives from the three 'main' parties together with the twelve facilitators, to arrange the negotiations and convene the signing ceremony.

Negotiation of the Accord

The Preparatory Committee convened two days later. It appointed four multiparty Working Groups to negotiate the agreements, plus a 'Process Group' to coordinate the negotiations and prepare for the signing. Administrative support was shared between business, churches, and government. The CBM bankrolled the process until its dedicated fund was depleted and the government's Constitutional Development Service took over.

Following a short break for the ANC's National Conference, the negotiations began in mid-July. Much midnight work and shuttling between negotiators and principals brought them to a conclusion on September 13, the day before the signing.

Most items were agreed with relative ease, but two intractable issues quickly became apparent. One concerned 'private armies.' South African law did not recognize them. The IFP regarded both MK and local 'Self Defence Units' (SDUs) as the ANC's 'private armies' and demanded their disbandment. The ANC maintained that MK was the legitimate national army, and that discussion of it was reserved for the bilateral ANC-government talks. The IFP later showed its displeasure by laying a complaint with the National Peace Committee (NPC) and refusing to participate in the formulation of a Code of Conduct for the South African Defence Force (SADF), the regular army. Post-election, MK merged into the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF). On SDUs, the ANC argued (somewhat speciously) that they were not politically aligned but

‘community-based.’ The parties agreed in section 3.7 of the Accord that SDUs ‘shall be transferred into self protection units,’ i.e., neighborhood watches working with the police. This did not happen. SDUs were however a patchy phenomenon, fading out as peace took hold, with the sad exception of Thokoza and Katlehong townships on the East Rand.

The other intractable issue concerned the carrying of ‘dangerous’ or ‘traditional’ weapons, meaning spears, ‘knobkerrie’ clubs, sticks, and shields, often supplemented with axes and *pangas* (machetes) at events such as rallies, funerals, and marches. Violence was common around such events and the ANC demanded an absolute ban. The IFP adamantly refused, linking the display of weapons to Zulu identity and pride. It was agreed that weapons should not appear at ‘political’ events (Section 3.6.2–3) but the distinction between ‘political’ and ‘cultural’ was contested. This emotive, complex issue went down to the wire. A formula was agreed but its interpretation was referred for further consultations and a new Proclamation, which still left loopholes. In 1993 the Goldstone Commission issued unambiguous guidelines and formulated legislation, which came into force post-election.

Contents of the National Peace Accord

The agreements hammered out in the Working Groups, collated and edited, became the ten short chapters of the National Peace Accord. It is a compact booklet of just thirty-three pages, bound in pale blue. Its preamble states that the Accord signifies ‘our common purpose to bring an end to political violence in our country and to set out the codes of conduct, procedures and mechanisms to achieve this goal.’

The first chapter, ‘Principles,’ enshrines the declaration, made for the first time on a fully multiracial basis, that ‘The establishment of a multi-party democracy in South Africa is our common goal’ (1.1).

Chapter Two sets out, in just two pages, the seminal ‘Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Organisations.’ It affirms the role of parties in the democratic system, and the need for tolerance and freedom of political activity; it then binds the signatories not to ‘kill, injure, apply violence to, intimidate or threaten any other person in connection with that person’s political beliefs, words, writings or actions;’ not to remove posters, prevent people from attending or speaking at meetings of another party, incite violence, or intimidate anyone into joining a party, attending meetings, paying contributions, boycotting, or striking (2.1–4).

Finally, in a ground-breaking section (2.5) the signatories undertook not only to inform the authorities of the date, place, and other details of rallies and marches, but also to consider possible consequences, to take the wider community and the plans of other parties into account, and to establish and maintain effective communication with other parties at all times. This provision formed one of the bases on which peace monitoring was built.

Chapter Three, on general security provisions, contained multiple agreements on police conduct, from wearing name labels to establishing investigative mechanisms for complaints, all in line with the police’s newly-adopted philosophy of community policing. These provisions also applied to the military when acting in support of the police. The government undertook not to use covert operations to promote or undermine any political party. This chapter also dealt with ‘traditional weapons’ and ‘private armies.’ Chapter Four consisted of a personal ‘Code of Conduct’ for the police. A Code for the Defence Force, still in draft at the time of signing, was completed months later under the NPC and was essentially adopted, post-election, by the newly constituted SA National Defence Force.

Chapter Five, 'Measures to Facilitate Socio-Economic Reconstruction and Development' outlined the basics of community-based development. Quickly given the acronym 'SERD,' it was effectively an initial draft for the 'Reconstruction and Development Programme' (RDP) which formed the ANC's manifesto in 1994, and it led to some imaginative projects and training workshops. Regrettably this incipient capacity for sensitive, effective grassroots development, appropriately combined with the capacity to manage conflict and promote social cohesion, was largely lost with the closure of the peace structures at the end of 1994.

Chapter Six marks the incorporation into the Accord of de Klerk's proposed Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation, for which Parliament had already passed legislation in July 1991. By becoming an integral part of the peace structures the Commission acquired the legitimacy of consensus. As a statutory body it was attached to the Department of Justice, but its chair had to be chosen, by the President, from a short-list supplied by the National Peace Committee (NPC).

Chapter Seven, noting the need for instruments 'to actively combat violence and intimidation at grassroots level,' created regional and local committees for this task, to be coordinated and supported by a statutory National Peace Secretariat (NPS). The NPS, the central 'engine room' of the structures, would comprise up to nine persons, at least four to be nominated by the NPC and one by the Department of Justice under which the NPS was also placed, thus funding came through that department until in 1993 responsibility passed to Home Affairs.

The Regional committees would be composed of political parties, religious bodies, business, unions, tribal authorities, police, and the army, thus representing a unique spectrum of political, security, and civil society. Each Region could create as many local committees as it deemed necessary. Local committees were to 'be constituted by drawing representatives reflecting the needs of the relevant community' (7.4.7). In practice they mirrored the composition of the regional bodies, plus women's and youth wings and significant community-based organizations. At first the regional and local structures were named 'Dispute Resolution Committees.' Popular usage soon altered this to 'Peace Committees' and in 1993 the change became official. For simplicity, 'RPC' and 'LPC' will be used throughout this article.

The committees were empowered to settle disputes by negotiation, monitor peace agreements, prevent violence and intimidation, improve police-community relations, 'agree upon rules and conditions relating to marches, rallies and gatherings,' and liaise with police and magistrates over these events (7.4.8.8-9). This clause again led to the development of joint, cooperative peace monitoring. The Accord also provided for special Justices of the Peace (JPs), empowered to issue orders to parties in conflict, to work with LPCs. This provision dubiously mixed peacemaking with coercion; in practice no one in a violence-affected area volunteered for so precarious a task. Patient talking, not the issuing of orders, proved the effective way forward. No JPs were appointed and the provision fell away.

Chapter Eight provided for the National Peace Committee, a non-statutory body existing purely by consensus, to preside over the peace process. The Preparatory Committee, shorn of most of the facilitators (who returned to their busy day jobs) became the NPC's Executive Committee, which consisted of the three 'main' political parties plus a chair and vice-chair from churches and business. Greater representation from civil society would probably have been an advantage. Police, instead of sitting on the NPC, gravitated to the Police Board. The NPC was the fount of consensual legitimacy, nominating members of the NPS and Police Board and possible chairs for the Commission. It was hosted at Barlow Park and received a secretary and funding from the

Constitutional Development Service. Val Pauquet served as Media Officer to both the NPC and NPS.

Chapter Nine, ambitiously entitled ‘Enforcing the Peace Agreement between the Parties’ addressed how complaints of breaches of the Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Organisations should be handled. No coercive ‘teeth’ were provided. It was agreed that disputes concerning breaches should first be resolved at grassroots by mediation or arbitration. If this failed, complaints could be ‘referred to the National Peace Committee or a committee to whom it has referred the matter for resolution’ (9.2). Finally the NPC could appoint an arbitrator to make a finding and order the perpetrator ‘to remedy the breach either by a public distancing of the organization from the events or by steps to be taken to prevent further breaches of the Code’ (9.5.4).

A brief Chapter Ten floated the possibility of ‘Special Criminal Courts’ to speed up the hearing of ‘unrest related’ cases. Instead, existing legislation was modified to allow fast-tracking of ‘political’ cases, and this proposal fell away.

National Peace Convention, Signing the Accord

The Accord was introduced, adopted, and signed by de Klerk, Mandela, Buthelezi, and twenty other party and union leaders at the National Peace Convention on Saturday September 14, 1991. Present in Johannesburg’s prestigious Carlton Hotel were some 400 delegates and observers and a further 100 from the world’s media.

A diversion from the carefully choreographed proceedings was provided by the unexpected arrival, starting at dawn, of some 5,000 Zulus from the hostels. Called without consultation by the IFP, complete with weapons, they filled the streets beneath the hotel, determined to pay homage to King Zwelithini. He addressed them, with Buthelezi, at the lunch break; they then peacefully dispersed.

Chief Buthelezi, who bore political and personal grudges against Archbishop Tutu, had refused to attend if, as was anticipated, Tutu co-chaired the Convention with John Hall. The other church leaders decided that, in solidarity with Tutu, none of them would co-chair. Instead Hall co-chaired with another business leader, Sam Motsuenyane. Tutu was given the closing prayer, which he introduced with a funny story and led with aplomb.

The SA Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) provided all-day TV coverage. Interviewed during the morning break, Tutu was jubilant: the Accord, he said, was ‘‘an incredible document, it’s incredible when you come to think of who put it together.’ This very unlikely meeting ‘is *happening*, and *that* is a miracle! ... I don’t mean that we have got our troubles behind us, but this is the start of a very important process: peace for *all* of our people in this country, stability and prosperity – they’re a possibility!’³

It was indeed an astonishing gathering. The invitation list, itself the fruit of much negotiation, was comprehensive: trades unions, traditional leaders, delegations of five from all political parties and organizations operating at the national level, the South African government, all the governments and ruling parties of the six non-‘independent’ ‘SGTs’ or ‘homelands’ and, as Observers with the right to sign, the four ‘independent’ TBVC states. On the far left, the PAC and AZAPO attended and spoke, albeit refusing to co-sign any Accord with the ‘illegitimate’ government. The only absentees were the disbelieving white far right: the CP, HNP, and AWB.

Representatives from thirty-five foreign embassies, and forty-three media editors, attended as Observers. Business and churches, present in force, were not expected to sign the Accord but could sign a ‘Peace Pledge’ in support of it. Transkei signed the pledge, along with ninety individuals,

some twenty churches, business and labor organizations, and all four Provincial Administrations. Many thousand from the public later signed similar pledges.

The same person signed the Accord for both the government and the ruling party of South Africa itself and of five of the six SGTs, hence the Accord was signed by twenty-three signatories for twenty-nine signatory bodies. Of these, four were trades union groupings and one represented traditional leaders; the rest were the political parties and governments.

The day closed with a Media Conference and a cocktail party in the hotel's roof garden. The media fondly imagined the immediate appearance of local peace committees and the sudden disappearance of the grassroots violence.

The Accord was historic for at least three reasons: it was the first fully multiracial, multiparty consensus agreement in South Africa's history; by signaling that all parties were ready to do something about the violence it opened the way for constitutional talks to begin three months later, on December 20; and unlike previous peace attempts it established an ongoing nationwide 'infrastructure for peace' to implement itself, defuse conflict, and build peace. Despite breakdowns and boycotts at the constitutional talks, the Peace Accord held and the peace structures grew and gained strength, providing a nationwide safety-net and mobilizing the masses for peace.

National Peace Committee

The former Preparatory Committee convened on September 20 as the Provisional National Peace Committee. To form the full committee it decided to invite twelve other signatories, so fifteen signatory parties sat on the Full NPC, which met and constituted itself on October 1. John Hall, bringing the invaluable support of Barlow Rand, continued as Chair. The Methodist presiding Bishop, Stanley Mogoba, became Vice-chair. On October 24 Judge Goldstone was appointed to head the Commission; and on November 7 the NPS, with seven members, was formally constituted by the Full NPC.

The NPC was at its most active in 1991–92, ensuring that the provisions in the Accord were acted upon. It immediately established sub-committees for Publicity and SERD. In July 1992 it appointed six attorneys to serve pro bono as the 'Complaints Investigating Committee' (CIC). Complaints ranged from frivolous to serious. Of the ninety-five fully formal complaints, most concerned inflammatory speech or actions by the ANC. None of the ANC leaders whom the CIC summoned attended their hearings, but the public naming and shaming of those who incited violence was gradually effective, bringing the leaders to admit the complicity of their own supporters in the violence and to call for it to end.

The most high profile case was sparked by Mandela, who in his speech on violence to the UN Security Council on July 16, 1992 dismissed the IFP as Pretoria's 'instrument and surrogate.' Buthelezi's fury disrupted plans for a reunion of signatories to re-commit to peace. The IFP laid a formal complaint before the NPC. The NPC brought in Kenneth Kaunda, former president of Zambia, as an adjudicator acceptable to both parties. Kaunda wisely listened, congratulated the parties on the cordial atmosphere of the hearing and the compelling arguments on both sides, suggested that adjudication was difficult and that to seek alternative solutions would be preferable, and returned the matter to the NPC. Honor was satisfied, but the moment for a reunion was lost.

Publicity activities were taken over by the NPS in mid-1993, and SERD followed at the end of that year. The NPC Executive continued to meet monthly, supplemented by a weekly administrative meeting. It maintained a 'watching brief' over potential barriers or threats to peace, finalized the military Code of Conduct, made an abortive attempt at the request of the constitutional negotiators to establish a 'National Youth Peace Corps,' drew up proposed minor revisions to the

enforcement procedures in the Accord, and provided an ongoing inter-party forum throughout the political tensions.

National Peace Secretariat

The NPS, the ‘engine’ of the process, was a compact, hard-working, highly effective multiparty committee, with a maximum membership of nine: representatives of the ANC-Alliance, IFP, NP, and Democratic Party (DP); Deon Rudman, a civil servant seconded by the Department of Justice to head the Secretariat’s large administrative team, the ‘Directorate of Internal Peace Institutions;’ and, appointed by the Minister of Justice, the attorney Antonie Gildenhuys, who chaired and proved a vigorous and indefatigable leader. The NPS suffered no breakdowns or boycotts. Tasked with establishing and supporting the regional, and thereby the local, peace committees, it immediately demarcated a provisional ten regions which expanded to 11, convened exploratory meetings in each region, and created a Training Committee to train both the regional and local committees in mediation, facilitation, and conflict resolution. The first regional committee was constituted on December 11, 1991 in Natal/KwaZulu, and the eleventh, Northern Cape, on April 8, 1992. Each region had responsibility for establishing as many local committees and sub-committees as it deemed necessary. At their maximum in 1994, 263 LPCs existed.

The Structures, Peace, and Violence

In 1991 the press were demanding instant results, meaning the appearance of local committees and an end to violence. While attending to the regions the NPS simultaneously headed straight for the grassroots, to violence-affected Soweto, Johannesburg’s main township and the largest in South Africa, to explore the formation of a local committee. The NPS had the help of regional ANC and IFP leaders and of lawyer-mediator Charles Nupen, who were working to establish the Wits/Vaal Regional Peace Committee under which Soweto would fall. Soweto housed between one and two million people in tiny shoebox houses and a few rambling Zulu-majority hostels. ANC-IFP violence had taken hold in 1990, fanned by random killings on the commuter trains. A ‘third force’ was suspected and it appears from later statements that the renegade remnants of apartheid’s ‘dirty tricks’ units were involved, instigating conflict. Soweto’s hostels and residential areas became violently polarized.

Over several weeks, with halts when violence occurred, the relevant political, civil society, and security bodies agreed to form the Greater Soweto Peace Committee. In February 1992 it was handed over to the newly established Wits/Vaal Region. Two smaller local committees budded off within Soweto, in Orlando and Meadowlands. The police played a positive proactive role, working with the committees. The train violence was investigated by Goldstone, rail infrastructure was improved, and violence faded. Soweto, which might have fallen into violent chaos, turned toward peace. In December 1993 it could welcome visitors to run the first Soweto Marathon, ‘for Peace,’ lining the route with 300 local peace monitors.

Also in the Wits/Vaal region, in northeast Johannesburg, the Alexandra Interim Crisis Committee (ICC, as that LPC continued to be known) was formed on April 1, 1992 at the height of bloody conflict between the ANC and IFP, township and hostels, police and community. Beginning with just five members representing the ANC, IFP, Democratic Party, churches, and relief organizations, the ICC met daily, expanding to include displacees, police and army, youth, other community organizations, and International Observers. By December, thanks to constant

work on the ground, frequent meetings, and a weekend away funded by business, the Committee could enjoy a Christmas party together, an event unimaginable in April.

When the Accord arrived at grassroots in the form of the local committees it brought the first ever practical alternative to violence. Suddenly there existed a forum, mandated by the signatories, in which the warring parties, police and community, residents and township administrators, black and white, could meet one another as equals, resolve conflicts non-violently and build trust and relationships. After years of fighting this was a considerable culture shock, but ‘social cohesion’ at its best was a common result.

Local personalities were influential. A student from Alexandra recalled how he and his peers had previously been convinced that they must be aggressive and not talk to the enemy. Now they were won over by respected ANC-aligned elders who said the time for talking had come. They were also impressed that the committee was visible on the streets and interacted with the people.

On June 17, 1992 a massacre took place in Boipatong near the Vaal river, in the southern townships of the Wits/Vaal region. After many months of simmering conflict, attackers from an IFP-aligned hostel fell upon the neighboring township at night, killing forty-five. The newly formed Vaal LPC made a strong intervention to support the community and build peace. As 1992 progressed, the whole Wits/Vaal region followed the same trajectory toward calm. The experience was being repeated across South Africa.

The structures at first depended almost entirely on volunteers, with a few seconded personnel. The committees depended on local resources for venues and administrative support until late 1992 when, in part at the prompting of UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali after a fact-finding tour by Cyrus Vance as his envoy, government funding for staff and offices began to flow. At the same time International Observer missions arrived to support the Accord, from the UN, the Commonwealth, EU, and OAU, and were deployed to accompany the peace committees.

That Christmas, NPS Chair Antonie Gildenhuys could remark that 1992 had been a year of putting the structures in place and he hoped that 1993 would be a year of peacebuilding. So it proved, but it was also a roller-coaster ride.

The diminution in violence had included the adjoining townships of Thokoza, Katlehong, and Vosloorus, historically separate but collectively dubbed ‘Kathorus,’ that sprawled across a dusty plain on the East Rand. In 1993 Kathorus slipped backward. A number of factors were at work. The peace process was fragmented across three separate LPCs, and little proactive peacebuilding had been attempted, hence trust levels remained low. The police, predominantly paramilitary, never became fully engaged. They were not, as often claimed, partisan, but they themselves behaved as a fighting group. The ANC's SDUs and their IFP opponents were strong. The IFP in Kathorus called its fighters ‘Self Protection Units (SPUs)’ although, like the SDUs, they were in fact politically-based and shunned the liaison with the police that the Accord required. In January 1993 the ANC reorganized the unruly SDUs in Thokoza. By contrast with the wise advice of Alexandra elders, leaders in Thokoza placed ‘defence of the community’ before any peace initiatives. The ANC infused militancy into its SDUs, they saw the IFP and police as their enemy, and a war mentality became entrenched.

Youths perpetrated cruel ethno-political ‘cleansing,’ burning or occupying houses, killing and displacing hundreds, and splitting Thokoza into mutual ‘no-go’ zones. Kathorus duly attracted much media attention. The Region, that is the RPC and its staff, organized a forum to administer relief funds. It also ran a 24-hour peace monitoring project based in a small Joint Operations Centre (JOC) on neutral ground at the local hospital. But apart from some brave peace monitors from neighboring Vosloorus (which remained relatively peaceful), this monitoring was remote, not well

rooted in the community. Despite the success of Sharpeville Day, distrust remained. The IFP pulled out of the monitoring, accusing the ANC of using it for spying. Violence was somewhat abating, and in December the Region replaced the JOC with a new initiative for relief and development.

Kathorus had had an impact on the national statistics for 'political' deaths. The overall figures, as collated from police, press, and other sources and recorded in the annual reports of the South African Institute of Race Relations, show 2,706 'political' deaths in 1991, 3,347 in 1992, 3,794 in 1993, and 2,477 in 1994.⁴ These bare figures appear to show that violence simply became worse in the Peace Accord years, but this is deceptive. A discriminating look reveals that by 1994, 91 percent of all 'political' deaths were confined to Kathorus (30 percent) and parts of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) (61 percent). Many places, such as Soweto and Alexandra, that had been violent were now calm, and this can fairly be attributed to efficient work by the structures. The resolution of the political uncertainties through the 1994 election ended 'political' violence in Kathorus. In KZN, the most difficult and most under-resourced of the eleven regions, political animosity and grassroots vendettas persisted. That province alone kept its peace structures, albeit woefully under-resourced and devoid of what had been a strong SERD component. Peace was declared between the IFP and ANC in KZN in 1999, and its peace structures closed in 2001.

Publicity: Marketing Peace

Two developments went well beyond what the Accord's negotiators imagined. One was publicity, the other peace monitoring. It was a priority to get the message of the Accord out, and above all to get it to the grassroots. Government funds for publicity were available, and the media provided significant free advertising space. The NPC's Publicity and Communications Sub-Committee gave the task jointly to Herdbuoys, a black-run agency specializing in the black constituency, and Hunt Lascaris TBWA, a leading agency with international connections. With Herdbuoys came public relations consultant Elspeth Graham who, with Val Pauquet as Media Officer and the later addition of Mark Manley as Marketing Coordinator, made a formidable team.

The first advertising campaign rolled out over Christmas 1991 with the slogan 'Peace now, not another death later.' On TV a dramatic pair of hands, pointing as if about to shoot each other, suddenly opened and clasped one another. The clasped hands, in print media, were accompanied by a short peace pledge for readers to sign and send in. Other ancillary advertisements went out, and most importantly the NPC commissioned a Peace Song from a popular singer-songwriter, Sello Chicco Twala: 'South Africa, we love you, our beautiful land. Let's show the whole world we can bring peace in our land.' A prayer as well as a ballad, the Song was recorded by forty of the nation's top singers, with trumpeter Hugh Masekela and the Soweto Children's Choir. First launched in March 1992 it gradually became a national anthem.

The publicity campaign gained in credibility with the steady growth of the peace structures. At the same time the peace process began to provide an umbrella for spontaneous grassroots initiatives. Two hostels, Jeppe (Zulu) and Selby (Xhosa) in Johannesburg had been at war for two years. To walk near the enemy hostel was to invite death. In August 1992 the elders in Jeppe sent a brave emissary to Selby, which responded. Together they sought the help of Methodist Minister Mvume Dandala, and the Hostels Peace Initiative began. A public meeting launched it in November and the commitment to peace spread to the other hostels, even eventually to the East Rand.

As well as a song, the mobilization of the people needed a unifying symbol. A striking Peace Doves symbol showing two doves, blue and white flying together, was launched in March 1993 after five months of development. Its accompanying slogan was the aspirational chorus line of the

Peace Song: 'Peace in Our Land.' The doves were immediately popular, appearing on millions of T-shirts, plastic badges, flags, banners, car stickers and caps. They signaled support for peace on daily newspapers and commercial packaging. The doves symbol was the corporate logo of the peace structures, emblazoned on peace committee letterheads and the bibs, jackets, and cars of the peace monitors. Its presence continued up to and beyond the April 1994 election. Peace had gained an identity, both audible and visible. Peace had momentum: at the grassroots, peace was becoming 'cool.'

Starting in June 1993 a wide range of organizations came together under the auspices of the NPS to initiate a broad 'National Peace Campaign.' Its focus was a nationwide Peace Day on September 2, 1993. All radio stations held a minute's silence at noon, then played the Peace Song. People came out of their homes, offices, and schools to hold hands in the street or form the word 'Peace' on school playing fields. The day had a real effect on the nation's psychology. There was still violence and there would be rocks ahead, but the day had demonstrated the real possibility of a peaceful future. Numerous events began to happen spontaneously 'for peace,' from running to knitting, yachting to concerts, and the declaration of theaters as 'Places of Peace.'

Peace Monitoring

Alongside the publicity and the National Peace Campaign went the growth of peace monitoring. This was a new activity, developing organically out of the Accord but not fully envisioned at the time of its negotiation. An early example was the presence of the Alexandra ICC, at the invitation of the police commander, as monitors during large police searches for illegal weapons in both ANC and IFP areas. Civility, communication, and understanding improved, and debriefings led to the first ever police-community meetings.

A number of special joint monitoring initiatives were put in place in violence-affected areas, or to prevent threatened violence from breaking out. Such area monitoring, aimed at understanding the dynamics of the fighting with a view to preventing it, was most effective where monitors included people from that locality, developed trust between themselves, patrolled frequently in all areas irrespective of 'no-go' zones, and had a good working relationship with the security forces. Alexandra provided an example, with a joint ANC-IFP operation that ran successfully for four months in 1993.

Peace monitoring was especially significant and effective in relation to public marches and rallies. In August 1992, following the breakdown of constitutional talks at Codesa and a special meeting of the UN Security Council on violence in South Africa in July, the ANC called for a week of 'mass action.' This meant multiple rallies and mass marches, usually to an administration office or police station to hand in local demands.

Previously, such events were routinely denied permission by the local magistrate, were blocked by police, and ended in lethal violence engulfing marchers, community, and police. Now the Accord introduced entirely new possibilities for preventing violence by joint planning before an event, maintaining communication on the day, and having monitors present who were able to liaise with all parties and intervene to defuse any flashpoints. In mass action week, International Observers were present for the first time, in the form of a dozen UN staff accompanying peace committee members on the ground.

The new peace monitoring differed from the earlier human rights monitoring by NGOs. The latter had chiefly focused on recording security force misbehavior and could rarely influence events. By contrast, peace monitoring entailed the implementation of the Accord's agreements and Codes of Conduct, under its authority and utilizing its convening power. Beginning in 1992 a

pattern emerged of joint pre-planning, communication during the event, and debriefing afterward, opening up a new cooperative relationship between the parties, civil society, and security forces.

To offer a few examples: on the Monday of mass action week Rupert Lorimer, a Democratic Party Member of Parliament and Vice-chair of the Wits/Vaal RPC, arrived with a UN Observer in the divided township of Daveyton on the East Rand, where in March 1991 a riot policeman and twelve ANC activists had died in a confrontation over an IFP rally. They found 2,000 ANC would-be marchers, mainly youth, in the stadium jeering at the police. The magistrate had refused permission for a march to the police station. Lorimer negotiated permission from the police, and a peaceful march went ahead. In Alexandra where pitched battles between 'ANC' residents and 'IFP' hostels had raged in April 1992, some 10,000 marched peacefully from the stadium to the administration offices. Peace committee monitors shuttled between the march and the hostels, maintaining communication and ensuring calm.

Most remarkably, that Friday in the small right-wing town of Despatch in the Eastern Cape, the Region's consultant mediator, Mark Anstey, an expert on labor relations, was called by the police to mediate a stand-off between some 500 township residents who demanded to march through the town, and armed khaki-clad white right-wingers who were determined they should not. After a week of intensive meetings the right-wingers were sidelined and 5,000 marchers processed through the town, jointly controlled by party marshals and paramilitary police, accompanied by Anstey with a white NPS flag. A regional ANC leader handed the people's demands to the Mayor, along with a bar of his favorite chocolate.

During mass action week an ANC march attempted to enter Bisho, capital of the 'independent' Ciskei 'bantustan,' to demand its immediate re-integration into South Africa. The Ciskei Defence Force (CDF) threatened to shoot. NPS Chair Antonie Gildenhuys and a UN Observer, shuttling between Bisho and the march, negotiated a nonviolent end to this first Bisho march. The ANC organized a second Bisho march on September 7. This time its leaders avoided mediation and tried to run past the CDF, which opened fire killing twenty-eight marchers and one soldier. Both parties were severely censured by Goldstone, and the ANC pulled back from planned marches on other 'bantustans.'

Experience was pooled and guidelines formulated. Wits/Vaal took a leap forward on Sharpeville Day, March 21, 1993 when two rival rallies, one ANC, one IFP, were held in the stadiums of the adjoining violence-affected townships, Katlehong and Vosloorus. The Region had just appointed full time staff, and could field a growing corps of monitors including residents of Vosloorus. In pre-planning, the parties agreed on a timetable by which the rallies would end two hours apart. Multiparty monitoring teams, 'roving peace committees,' were prepared, their members distinguished by large neon orange 'Monitor' stickers. The UN Observers lent radios, and the police opened their control room as a communications center.

It rained heavily, there were delays and deviations, and the rallies ended simultaneously. Two processions of armed men, each several thousand strong, were converging at ninety degrees on a major crossroad. Armed police were ready to prevent the IFP supporters from going straight across. The monitors were able to liaise with the leaders to halt the marches and rapidly negotiate a solution. Certain battle was averted by having the processions pass each other diagonally, the IFP wheeling left, the ANC right, separated by a line of monitors (some inwardly calm, some terrified) holding hands or the sticks of their orange monitor pennants. Reporting on this scene, the well-known journalist Denis Beckett asked why it was 'high fashion' to say the Peace Accord was failing. Was it not because, in a land where there were fifty murders a day, the alternative was not in fact fewer murders, but *more* murders? "The measure of success is not the gap between the

50 actual and the 0 desired, but between the 50 and the 100 or 1000 we might have been having without the peace committees.”⁵

A bare three weeks later, on Easter Saturday April 10, SA Communist Party leader Chris Hani was tragically assassinated by a white right-winger. Mandela led the nation’s response with great control and dignity. As in mass action week, local marches took place throughout the country. Damage occurred in Cape Town and other cities, but Wits/Vaal was ready to deploy its eighteen LPCs and its recently gained expertise in logistics and radio communication. With help from police Observers from the EU a permanent Joint Operations Control/Communication Centre (JOCC) was established in the regional offices. LPCs monitored their local marches, culminating in a huge, well-planned multi-legged march into Johannesburg. Discipline was kept and damage minimal.

Hani’s funeral itself involved over 120,000 highly charged mourners filling the FNB Stadium near Soweto (capacity at that time was 80,000) and traveling in fleets of buses to the cemetery forty-five km away. Monitors were again key to the management of the event. Deaths were confined to two white house owners in an un-monitored ‘no man’s land’ behind the stadium who refused to leave their homes, and tragically died in an arson attack when police and marshals lost control.

When the peace structures reviewed the events following Hani’s death the chief conclusion was that violence had only occurred where monitoring was inadequate, and many more party marshals and peace monitors needed to be trained. This was done with British funding. Training accelerated through the months prior to the 1994 election, producing 1,930 marshals for the ANC, IFP, DP, and NP, and 20,161 peace monitors.

The truth of the ‘counterfactual’ statement that without the Accord, far more violence would have occurred at rallies and marches, is not in doubt among those who experienced the change. Before the Accord, confrontations with police or opponents could be expected and easily turned violent. After its signing, serious violence only broke out at events where one or other party committed an egregious breach of the Accord. The ANC committed such breaches at its second march to Bisho, and in Thokoza on May 22, 1993 where thirteen died and violence flared for months. On March 28, 1994 in Johannesburg the IFP failed to notify either peace structures or police of their plans for a large anti-election rally. The result was the shambolic ‘Shell House massacre,’ ANC guards shooting as IFP groups passed the ANC offices, on a day that saw some fifty deaths. By contrast literally thousands of events were monitored and free of violence. Even in Natal/KwaZulu, monitors could head off clashes and Observers noted the effect of their presence on the discipline of rally-goers.

The Peace Monitors came from all races, from the parties, churches, and general public. All were volunteers, aged eighteen or over, with at least a Standard Eight education and no criminal record. Many were unemployed youths from the townships, immensely proud to serve their country. Monitors got lunch but, except over the election period, no pay. Peace monitors were accredited and deployed by the LPCs or RPCs, and training was gradually developed. From late 1993 the training was given over a residential weekend, imparting knowledge of the Accord and valuable transferable skills: listening, conflict resolution, team work; working with colleagues, police, and different parties; joint event planning, and radio communication. An ideal monitor unit comprised four: two from different parties, two non-aligned, including a leader and radio operator. Deployed in a car or on foot, during major events monitor units reported to and received advice and support from a JOCC where more senior personnel were available.

Over the election days 18,500 peace monitors were deployed, coordinated by an efficient dedicated radio network. They were a presence for peace, reporting problems, assisting with

voters' ID cards and the supply and safe movement of ballots and ballot boxes; even taking on the running of some voting stations. Their work, together with the general mobilization for peace, undoubtedly contributed to South Africa's miraculously peaceful first democratic election.

Closure

The Peace Committees depended on government funding. After much uncertainty the Cabinet decided not to provide further funds and they were closed, except in KwaZulu-Natal, at the end of 1994. The grounds for closure were that because peace and democracy had been achieved, government was now responsible, and the capacity that had been built up in the fields of police-community relations and SERD should transfer to the nine new provincial governments. Arguably the closure was premature: much capacity was lost while much peacebuilding remained to do, not least in the fields of social cohesion and community-based socioeconomic reconstruction and development.

Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
AWB	Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
CBM	Consultative Business Movement
CDF	Ciskei Defence Force
CIC	Complaints Investigating Committee
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CP	Conservative Party
DP	Democratic Party
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
EU	European Union
FABCOS	Foundation for African Business and Consumer Services
FNB	First National Bank
HNP	Herstigte Nasionale Party
ICC	Interim Crisis Committee
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
JOC	Joint Operations Centre
JOCC	Joint Operations Control/Communication Centre
JPs	Justices of the Peace
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
KZP	KwaZulu Police
LPC	Local Peace Committee
MK	uMkhonto weSizwe
MPNP	Multiparty Negotiating Process
NAFCOC	National African Federated Chamber of Commerce
NIS	National Intelligence Service
NP	National Party
NPC	National Peace Committee
NPS	National Peace Secretariat

OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OFS	Orange Free State
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RPC	Regional Peace Committee
SA	South African
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SACCOLA	South African Consultative Committee on Labour Affairs
SACOB	South African Chamber of Business
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADF	South African Defence Force
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SAFCON	South African Foundation for Conciliation
SDU	Self Defence Unit
SERD	Socio-Economic Reconstruction and Development
SPU	Self Protection Unit
TBVC	Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Ciskei
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UDF	United Democratic Front
UN	United Nations
ZCC	Zion Christian Church

Notes

¹ For a fully referenced account of the Accord, see Liz Carmichael, *Peacemaking and Peacebuilding in South Africa: The National Peace Accord, 1991–1994* (Woodbridge, UK: James Currey, 2022). For the negotiation of the Accord, see also Peter Gastrow, *Bargaining for Peace: South Africa and the National Peace Accord* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 1995). For a lively account of the Accord from the Western Cape, see Susan Collin Marks, *Watching the Wind: Conflict Resolution during South Africa's Transition to Democracy* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 2000).

² The text of this letter is in Nelson Mandela, *Nelson Mandela Speaks: Forging a Democratic, Nonracial South Africa* (New York: Pathfinder, 1993), 85–91.

³ Transcript of SABC video, quoted in Carmichael, *Peacemaking and Peacebuilding*, 169.

⁴ South African Institute of Race Relations, *South Africa Survey 1995/96* (Johannesburg: SAIRR, 1996), 51.

⁵ *Sunday Star*, 28 March 1993, quoted in Carmichael, *Peacemaking and Peacebuilding*, 294.