Strengthening the National Peace and Reconciliation Infrastructure in Zimbabwe:

Key Milestones of the Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration: (2009-2014)

ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CCSF	Church and Civil Society Forum
CEWER	Conflict Early Warning and Early Response
CEWS	Conflict Early Warning System
COPAC	Constitutional Parliamentary Committee
CPI-A	Centre for Peace Initiatives in Africa
CPMRT	Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Transformation
ECLF	Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum
EFZ	Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe
EWS	Early Warning System
GPA	Global Political Agreement
FBOs	Faith Based Organisations
HOCDs	Heads of Christian Denominations
HICC	Harare International Conference Centre
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
JOC	Joint Operations Command
JOMIC	Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee
OPC	Office of the President and Cabinet
ONHRI	Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration
MDC- M	Movement for Democratic Change (Mutambara formation)
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change (Tsvangirayi formation)
MoESAC	Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture
MHTESTD	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Services
MLGRUD	Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development
MPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
MPSLSW	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
MSMECD	Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development
MSU	Midlands State University
MWAGCD	Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development
MYIEE	Ministry of Youth, Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment
MOFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
NCIC	National Cohesion and Integration Commission
NPC	National Peace Council
NPRC	National Peace and Reconciliation Commission
RBZ	Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe

SFCG	Search for Common Ground
TMASPCRR	Traditional Mechanisms, Approaches and Systems for Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UDACIZA	Union for the Development of Apostolic Faith Churches in Zimbabwe
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union, Patriotic Front
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZHRC	Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission
ZIM-ASSET	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation
ZNPFPR	Zimbabwe National Policy Framework for Peace and Reconciliation
ZUJ	Zimbabwe Union of Journalists
ZUNDAF	Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework
ZYC	Zimbabwe Youth Council

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) was established in 2009, pursuant to Article VII of the Global Political Agreement signed in 2008 by Zimbabwe's then three main political parties, ZANU PF, MDC-T and MDC-M. ONHRI was born out of the realisation that sustainable peace and development requires deliberate normative, institutional, attitudinal and behavioural processes of debating and discussing peace and reconciliation, promoting national healing and integration. Since its establishment, ONHRI has carried out a number of institutional and programmatic activities towards advancing the peace and reconciliation agenda in Zimbabwe. This is the first comprehensive documentation report of ONHRI, and it covers the period 2009-2014, outlining ONHRI's experiences in strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation in Zimbabwe.

The report is therefore a product of desk research and primary data collection which involved engaging national stakeholders concerned with shaping and defining the peacebuilding and reconciliation environment in the country. The documentation of ONHRI's experiences in promoting peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives in Zimbabwe was based on the "appreciative inquiry" research methodology, which underscores the need to build on successes as well as the need to amplify good practices as a strategy of advancing the achievement of peace. By highlighting ONHRI's experiences in peacebuilding and reconciliation, this report provides significant learning curves for the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) and other actors to build on the work of ONHRI.

The Report has 6 main parts, i.e. the Introduction and Background, Methodology, Literature Review, Discussions, Conclusions and Recommendations. The Documentation report highlights the key milestones in the lifespan of ONHRI, including the following:

- *Contextual Background to the establishment of ONHRI*
- *Stakeholders consultative dialogue processes: Development of national policy frameworks for peace and reconciliation infrastructure*
- *Inclusion of peacebuilding and reconciliation into the 2013 Zimbabwean Constitution*
- *Establishment of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC)*
- *Strengthening the capacity of state and non state actors for peace and reconciliation*
- *ONHRI's interface with other initiatives designed to promote peace*

The report reveals that ONHRI has significantly paved the way for the establishment of the peacebuilding and reconciliation architecture in Zimbabwe. For example, ONHRI provided support towards the development of a national peacebuilding and reconciliation framework in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, during its 6 year journey from 2009-2014, ONHRI managed to create and sustain a culture of collaborative engagement with national stakeholders who include Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs), traditional leaders, academic institutes as well as Government Ministries and Departments. As a result, ONHRI's work laid the groundwork for the establishment of the NPRC in the Zimbabwe National Constitution (2013). The capacity to collaboratively engage with stakeholders is one of the key lessons which the NPRC could tap into, as its operationalization is currently underway.

Apart from ONHRI and UNDP as core recipients of this Documentation report, this report can find audience with the NPRC once it is fully operationalised. Other consumers of this report include national stakeholders in the peacebuilding and reconciliation environment in Zimbabwe, who will have some lessons to draw from the ONHRI experiences, towards facilitating the quest for sustainable peace.

1.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) was established following the signing of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in 2008 and the subsequent formation of the Inclusive Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe. Following the signature of the GPA, the three parties to the Inclusive Government, namely the Zimbabwe African National Union, Patriotic Front (ZANU PF), led by President Robert Mugabe, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-T), led by the then Prime Minister, Morgan Tsvangirayi and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-M), led by the then Deputy Prime Minister, Arthur Mutambara agreed to task the Government of Zimbabwe to establish ONHRI. In this regard, ONHRI was established as a government institution, whose mandate was guided by the provisions of Article VII of the GPA which is titled: *Promotion of Equality, National Healing, Cohesion and Unity.*

Specifically, Article 7.1 (c) of the GPA calls for:

> *"...the setting up of a mechanism to properly advise on what measures might be necessary and practicable to achieve national healing, cohesion and unity in respect of victims of pre and post-independence political conflicts..."*

Ultimately, the ONHRI was envisaged to contribute towards the laying of the foundation for a society characterized by mutual respect, tolerance, and development. ONHRI was established as a people-driven entity which sought to achieve restoration of the dignity of all Zimbabweans regardless of age, gender or creed; to achieve peace, stability, unity and prosperity for individual Zimbabweans, their families, communities, organizations and the country as a whole. By proceeding this way, Zimbabwe would not only address its peacebuilding and reconciliation needs, but would also integrate itself among the community of nations.

At the political level, the structure of ONHRI mirrored the composition of the signatories of the GPA, i.e. ZANU PF, MDC-T and MDC-M. At its inception, the ONHRI was composed of three government representatives from these political parties, namely; the late Vice President, John Landa Nkomo (ZANU PF), who was the Chairperson;[1] and two co-Ministers; Mrs Sekai Holland (MDC-T) and the late Mr Gibson Sibanda (MDC-M).[2]

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[1] When Vice President John Nkomo passed away in January 2013, ZANU PF did not send a replacement..
[2] When Mr Gibson Sibanda passed away in August 2010, the MDC's replacement was Mr Moses Mzila Ndlovu

Picture 1: ONHRI Principals, Co-Minister Moses Mzila Ndlovu; the late Vice President John Landa Nkomo; Co-Minister Sekai Holland and the ONHRI Principal Director Mrs Zembe and her Secretariat Team

As a government entity, ONHRI continues to exist at the pleasure of the Head of State and Government, and this attribute explains why the ONHRI Secretariat continues to be in operation even after the end of tenure of the Inclusive Government (the later which was in place from February 2009- June 2013).[3] ONHRI is a Government Department which is located in the Office of the President and Cabinet. It has been argued that this feature allows the entity to have an edge and direct representation in Cabinet. The ONHRI Secretariat is headed by a Principal Director, Mrs Sibusisiwe Zembe.

Since its establishment, ONHRI has engaged in a number of processes at the political and administrative levels. Immediately after its establishment, the three Principals of the GPA, President Robert Mugabe, the then Prime Minister, Morgan Tsvangirayi and the then Deputy Prime Minister, Arthur Mutambara engaged in collaborative efforts towards officially launching the ONHRI. The three Principals attended the ONHRI dedication ceremony, which was held at the Harare International Conference Centre (HICC) from 24-26 July 2009, thereby marking the official announcement of ONHRI's work to the nation, and the leaders' joint call for peace.

Following these efforts at the political level, ONHRI developed a number of documents to guide its operations, including work plans and programmes. With its vision and work plan outlined, the ONHRI political representatives and Secretariat began to engage in outreach activities and

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[3] ONHRI is different from another entity which emerged after the Global Political Agreement, namely the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC). With regards to ONHRI, the principals to the GPA agreed to task government to establish a mechanism that would promote national healing, reconciliation and peacebuilding. On the other hand, the setting up of JOMIC's followed the agreement of the three parties to the GPA to establish a structure which was tasked to monitor the implementation of the GPA.

consultations with a wide spectrum of the Zimbabwean population, including traditional leaders, CSOs, FBOs, members of the academia, and the Zimbabweans in the Diaspora. These consultations were designed to solicit the multi-sectoral inputs from Zimbabweans on the priority areas of focus for ONHRI, as well as to identify stakeholders' suggestions on strategies for strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe.

2.0 SCOPE AND RATIONALE FOR THE DOCUMENTATION

The documentation exercise consolidates the experiences of ONHRI in strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts in Zimbabwe, and it covers the period from 2009 to 2014. It highlights the key milestones achieved by ONHRI in strengthening the peace infrastructure in Zimbabwe, and largely focuses on the following:

- ONHRI`s contribution in enhancing the policy framework for peace and reconciliation in Zimbabwe;
- ONHRI's emerging and promising good practices on peace and reconciliation;
- Case studies and human interest stories from the ONHRI experience;
- Lessons learned from ONHRI's strategic partnerships with state and non-state actors and how such gains can strengthen the work of the NPRC;
- Key success stories including critical milestones in the 6-year journey (2009-2014); and
- Challenges faced by ONHRI, particularly how these were addressed

Several justifications can be presented for the documentation of the ONHRI experiences. First, from an organizational development perspective, documentation is an important strategy of creating institutional memory. Examining the experiences of any entity in its assigned role presents a crucial platform for drawing lessons and imagining a desired future. By taking stock of the journey of the ONHRI, this documentation exercise presents an opportunity and a platform for drawing lessons and encouraging reflective practice in the often expansive and contested fields of peacebuilding and reconciliation.

While ONHRI has been preparing annual reports on the activities during this period (2009-2014), it is imperative to provide a consolidated and synthesized Documentation Report which spans the entire 6 year period. Such a broader and expansive report provides a more holistic rather than truncated and punctuated view of this entity. This allows for the identification of critical milestones and good practices, some of them which needed a significant amount of time to develop and to be consolidated.

Secondly, it is important to take stock of peacebuilding institutions in any country to draw insights that are crucial towards achieving sustainable peace. The documentation exercise highlights the key milestones that were made by the ONHRI during its journey from 2009 to2014. These milestones, success stories and good practices will generate learning curves for actors interested in strengthening the peacebuilding and reconciliation landscape in Zimbabwe, including the NPRC. Furthermore, the Documentation Report provides a useful tool for the NPRC to assess the baseline upon which it will inform its peace and reconciliation initiatives.

Before engaging in any processes and programme work, it is usually important for any entity that is recently established to get some sense of what the baseline conditions are, as this will be used to review any progress and milestones that would have been made later. Against this background, other stakeholders involved in peacebuilding and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe will therefore benefit from the gains and momentum achieved by the ONHRI from 2009 to 2014, and will draw key lessons from the ONHRI experiences while locating their own roles in the Zimbabwe national peace infrastructure. Documenting ONHRI's experiences can play a role in enhancing the knowledge of peacebuilding policies and practices in Zimbabwe. It is hoped that this report will contribute to the evolution of both ONHRI and the NPRC as structures that have been established by the Government of Zimbabwe with the mandate of strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation. Finally, since the field and practice of peacebuilding is ever dynamic, it is envisaged that the identified key milestones and good practices from ONHRI can be further consolidated by other peacebuilding and reconciliation entities and actors towards solidifying the national peace infrastructure.

3.0 DOCUMENTATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY
3.1 Conceptual Approach to Documentation

The emphasis of the Documentation exercise was on examining the ONHRI's mandate, programme implementation, and relationships with other actors and processes in Zimbabwe's peacebuilding and reconciliation terrain. This entailed analysing the interaction of ONHRI with national actors such as traditional leaders, faith based institutions, civil society organisations, academic institutions as well as other Government Ministries and Departments. Additionally, the Documentation also focused on examining how the ONHRI journey interfaced with other political and national development processes which have had an impact on the peacebuilding and reconciliation environment in Zimbabwe, including the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC) and the Constitutional Parliamentary Committee (COPAC) processes, among others.

It was clear from the onset that the purpose of the documentation exercise was not to evaluate the work of ONHRI. While evaluations are useful in providing learning curves in the work of any system, more often than not, evaluation research ends up focusing on challenges, dilemmas and gaps. Given the foregoing, the methodology of this documentation exercise was based on the "*appreciative inquiry*" technique, an approach which emerged from the fields of organizational development, leadership, change management and peacebuilding: (Cooperrider, and Suresh (1987); Cooperrider (1990); Srivastva and Cooperrider (1990); Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003); Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2005).

 "*Appreciative inquiry*" seeks to discover the life-sustaining elements and factors within an organisation, paying attention to what enabled it to achieve success in the past, and those elements that are critical towards creating a positive future. "*Appreciative inquiry*" is a form of action research methodology which underscores affirmation rather than criticism, and it focuses on examining what factors have made an entity vibrant vital and thriving, rather than

focusing on deficiencies and faults. Appreciative inquiry differs from the "problem-solving approach," which assumes that organisations are inherently representing constellation of problems which must be solved or corrected. By shifting from a focus on challenges and negative conflict dynamics, "*appreciative inquiry* is a useful tool in strengthening approaches to peace, and provides the necessary conceptual anchor upon which ONHRI was based. In line with the need to underscore and celebrate the key milestones and good practices that were recorded during the period, 2009-2014, this model was useful towards foregrounding the Documentation exercise.

"Appreciative inquiry" encompasses four stages, which are represented by the "4- D Model," highlighted below:

- *Discovery:* The discovery stage focuses on steering the conversations towards the positive elements of an organisation, including key milestones, good practices. This phase underscores questions which seek to discover "*the best of what is*?"
- *Dream:* The phase seeks to envision what could become of an organisation given its key achievements and successes. This phase essentially explores possibilities, and focuses on asking questions, such as: "*What might be*?"
- *Design:* The phase involves looking at structures, systems, processes and initiatives that are emerging from the organisation's positive past, and how these can continue to accompany the process of growth and development. This phase focuses on asking questions, such as: "*What should be*?"
- *Destiny:* The phase is accompanied by actions that result in some certain changes in the organisational processes, systems and procedures with a view to promoting continued learning as well as enhancing growth and development. The main question that is asked during this phase is: "*What will be*?"

The 4-D cycle of appreciative inquiry emphasizes building on past experiences, and identifying positive attributes about what currently exists. In documenting the ONHRI experiences, this model is particularly helpful because it is geared towards strengthening what works. The following illustrated model reflects the 4-D cycle, and it is adapted from Cooperrider (1990):

Discovery "Appreciate the best of

Dream "Imagine what could

Affirmative Action

Destiny "Create and sustain

Design "Determine what should
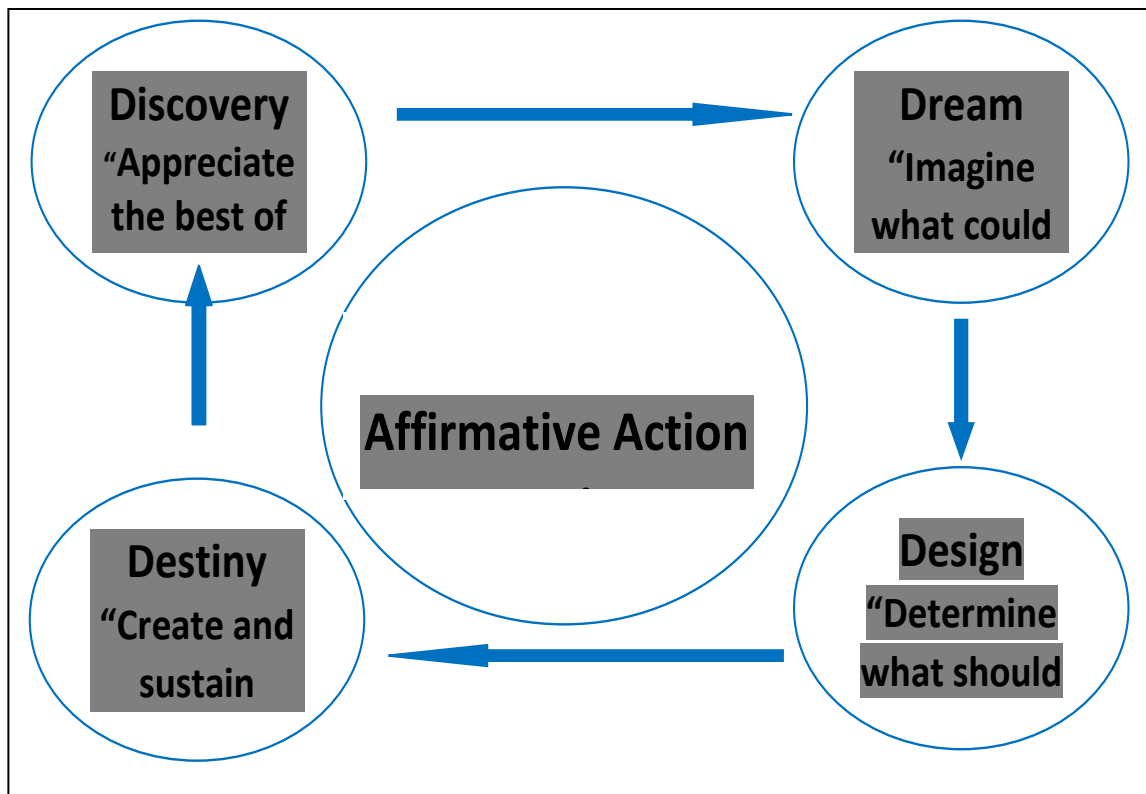
3.2 Forms of Data collection

The Documentation exercise used both primary and secondary data. The desk research included an analysis of reports that were produced by ONHRI, in addition to the analysis of other available publications. Primary data emerged from conducting interviews with participants who included the ONHRI secretariat (current and former), political actors who were involved in ONHRI and national stakeholders who have worked with ONHRI during the period in question. Such stakeholders included traditional leaders, CSOs, FBOs, members of academic institutes as well as representatives of youth groups. As a development partner which worked with ONHRI in supporting peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts in Zimbabwe, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was also consulted during the documentation process. The following section describes in detail the conceptual approach to the Documentation, the phases of research as well as the challenges encountered.

3.3. Phases of the Documentation

The documentation of ONHRI employed a five-phased research strategy which was grounded in principles of "*Do No Harm*,"[4] a human rights-based approach to research (HRBA)[5] as well as

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[4] Originally, used as a phrase in medicine, the *Do No Harm* approach has also become applicable in the context of peacebuilding and development. In peacebuilding, *Do No Harm* emphasizes that any intervention by peacebuilding actors, whether it is research or practice, has an obligation to avoid harming the participants and local communities. For details, see Anderson, M. 1999. *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace- Or War,* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers

respect of the ethics of research. Since this ONHRI documentation focused on sensitive issues of national healing, reconciliation and peacebuilding, it was imperative to ensure that the methodology was anchored in conflict-sensitive principles, from the collection of secondary data to the generation of primary data. This approach led to the portrayal of a holistic picture of the journey of ONHRI from 2009 to 2014. The phases of the research methodology are highlighted in detail in the sections below:

3.3.1 Phase I: Secondary Data Collection

The first step in this Documentation assignment involved extensive desk research to analyse available literature, reports and official documents regarding the work of ONHRI. These reports were critical in contextualising ONHRI's operations, and allowing a more clarified location of its work in strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. Such key literature included ONHRI Annual Progress Reports, as well as Government documents such as the National Constitution (2013). Other reports included materials produced by ONHRI's stakeholders, including the Church and Civil Society Forum (CCSF), focusing on the subject matter of national healing and peacebuilding. The gathering of secondary data also entailed collecting related print, audio, video materials (to the extent that these were available), to facilitate a deeper comprehension of ONHRI's work, especially the key milestones.

3.3.2 Phase II: Primary Data Collection

The process of primary data collection was undertaken from 10 March to 3 April 2015, and it involved extensive consultations and interviews with ONHRI and other actors involved in peacebuilding and reconciliation work in Zimbabwe. Stakeholders representing various sectors, including officials from the ONHRI Secretariat, CSOs, members of academia, traditional leaders as well as development partners were interviewed. Focus was on the various actors' experiences and perceptions on the role of ONHRI in strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. Engaging with multiple stakeholders not only furthered an understanding of how ONHRI interacted with other stakeholders and processes in the peacebuilding and reconciliation environment, but also generated a more holistic picture of ONHRI's work. Primary data collection captured key anecdotes and narratives on the impact that ONHRI made in the peacebuilding and reconciliation landscape in Zimbabwe.

3.3.3 Phase III: Development of a brief documentary on ONHRI Milestones

Given the need to generate audio-visual material from this documentation exercise, the data collection process also entailed collecting and assembling a documentary which captures the images of the work of ONHRI. It was important to adhere to the necessary ethical guidelines for video-recording participants; including acquiring the necessary informed consent and ensuring that the recording was done in a safe space. Furthermore, the recorded data was safely and securely managed, and was only for the purposes of the documentation exercise.

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[5] The human rights based approach to research calls for an integration of a human rights approach in research and development initiatives. This means that any undertaking of research must ensure that research processes and outcomes respect and protect human rights.

3.3.4 Phase IV: Data Analysis

This phase involved analysing the emerging findings, particularly identifying existing opportunities, key milestones and good practices. The phase also examined some challenges, particularly with a view to learning how ONHRI addressed them. Data analysis allowed for the identification of recurring themes, which were prominent during the documentation of ONHRI's experiences in strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation in Zimbabwe.

3.3.5 Phase V: Report Writing and Packaging:

The report writing and packaging phase was characterised by compilation of data into coherent and compact information, which could be used to draw insights from. Using the appreciative conceptual framework, this report mostly focuses on highlighting the milestones of ONHRI during its 6 year journey.

3.4 Challenges and Limitations of the Documentation Exercise

The following section provides a brief analysis of some of the risks which affected this Documentation exercise:

3.4.1 Limited focus on Community-Based Organisations (CBOs):

While the Documentation could have benefited from a deeper engagement with CBOs, the reality was that the limited time and resources rendered this impossible. Most CBOs are located in rural areas which the researcher did not access during the period of the exercise. Nonetheless, this shortcoming was overcome by undertaking interactions with some CSOs and FBOs which draw their membership from large networks, including local CBOs.

3.4.2 Managing Perceptions and Tendency to Evaluate:

One of the risks of conducting any form of assessment is managing perceptions of stakeholders. It was therefore critical during the assignment, to underscore that the documentation was not an evaluation, but a creation of institutional memory to highlight major milestones in ONHRI's journey. Using the "*appreciative enquiry*" methodology, the conversation was deliberately steered towards identification of good practices and key milestones in ONHRI's experiences. This was important in ensuring that this documentation contributes towards the strengthening of the peacebuilding and reconciliation infrastructure in Zimbabwe.

3.4.3 Merging diverse perspectives of stakeholders:

Peacebuilding and reconciliation are contested processes, and in this documentation exercise, the views of civil society and Government might be different. It therefore requires a dedication towards emerging with a holistic story that takes into cognisance the divergent viewpoints.

3.4.4 Expansive nature of the period to be documented:

ONHRI's journey of 6 years (2009-2014) might seem like a simple task, but given the dynamism of the peacebuilding and reconciliation landscape, it can be challenging to narrow down the findings. As such, it was important for the documentation to identify key milestones in this 6

years journey which would allow for the identification of good practices and success stories, particularly given the expansive nature of the period of ONHRI's operation.

4.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides a critical **a**ppraisal of the literature that has been written on reconciliation and peacebuilding. To effectively document ONHRI's work, a clear tone has to be set regarding the meaning of the key concepts, peacebuilding and reconciliation. This Documentation Report begins by conceptualising these two terms, while acknowledging that there are massive amounts of literature that address these two concepts.

In general, peacebuilding refers to a series of interventions that are designed to address the root causes of conflict and to prevent the start or resumption of violent conflict by creating sustainable peace. The term peacebuilding has been defined severally by many scholars and practitioners (Lederach, 1995, 2003). The former United Nations Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros Ghali popularised the concept of peacebuilding and emphasised that it is a more long-term process, which aims to address underlying social, economic and political causes of conflict.[6] Peacebuilding is based on the premise that sustainable peace must be built on strong social, economic, and political foundations that serve the needs of the populace. Therefore, peacebuilding involves strategic, prioritised interventions whose objective is to deal with the drivers and consequences of conflict. Furthermore, peacebuilding seeks to create incentives for non-violent behaviour, reduce direct violence, transform relationships and ultimately to strengthen the capacity of institutions to support and consolidate the peace.

Peacebuilding acknowledges the multi-faceted nature of violence. Galtung (1996) discusses three forms of violence (i.e. direct, structural and cultural violence). From this conceptualization, peacebuilding exists along the conflict continuum to ensure that it has an impact on various levels such as the socio-economic, political, psychological, environmental, security, legal and justice dimensions. Therefore, peacebuilding consists of a wide range of activities, including capacity building, reconciliation, and societal transformation, advocacy, development initiatives as well as addressing immediate livelihood needs.

Lederach (1997) emphasises the need for complementarity in any peacebuilding process. Presenting an analytical model known as "peacebuilding pyramid," Lederach stresses the multi-layered approach to peace, underlining that many actors at various levels have significant roles to play in pursuing and consolidating peace. Thus, peacebuilding involves a whole range of actors including Government Ministries and Departments, and specialised commissions and CSOs and FBOs.

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[6]Boutros Boutros Ghali, in the publication, *An Agenda for Peace* (1992), distinguished between the various approaches used by the UN to promote peace, i.e. preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacebuilding. In this treatise, Ghali emphasized that peacebuilding is more long term and that its aim is to address underlying social, economic and political causes of conflict.

While peacebuilding and reconciliation are conceptually different, in practice their objectives and outcomes are often intertwined. The term reconciliation is quite fluid, multi-dimensional, and quite often contested. However, it is frequently used by scholars and practitioners to refer to processes and strategies that are used to deal with fractured relationships or to address a society's violent past. Kriesberg (2004) conceptualises reconciliation as transformative, meaning it comprises of actions that sometimes help transform a destructive conflict or relationship. It involves changing destructive and negative attitudes, beliefs, narratives and behaviours into positive and constructive ones. The evidence of this transformation is often reflected in the capacity of people to co-exist, dialogue and forgive each other.

Reconciliation is a critical aspect of peacebuilding, which addresses the social, psychological and emotional dimensions of peace through confronting the past. Reconciliation tends to be multi-dimensional, incorporating a range of activities and initiatives, whose outcome is to restore broken relationships. In addition, reconciliation often involves deliberate processes of personal contact, sustained interaction and dialogue among members of the community. Dimensions of reconciliation processes are varied, and these include restoration, forgiveness and repair of broken trust as well as mending of the social fabric.[7]

Like peacebuilding, reconciliation also occurs at various levels, i.e. the individual, inter-personal or collective levels. On the one hand, reconciliation at individual level often involves people choosing to reconcile with themselves or with others (whether privately or publicly). On the other hand, collective reconciliation often involves social groups or communities choosing to participate in reconciliation processes and initiatives with others. The national level of reconciliation involves more public processes, which are often guided and supported by key national actors such as Government, specialised commissions and other stakeholders such as CSOs. Reconciliation at any level requires stakeholders to lend support and legitimacy towards the reconciliation initiatives and programmes. The engagement of leaders in processes such as national dialogues, public apologies, public ceremonies, and memorialisation initiatives is therefore imperative. This helps especially in creating space for both individual and community level processes of reconciliation. More often than not, individual and collective reconciliation are closely linked. Individual reconciliation is a critical building block for collective reconciliation, while public processes of reconciliation also influence the way individuals reconcile with each other.

Reconciliation should be context-driven, and must pay attention to the expressed needs of the population, the dynamics and history of the conflict as well as the local capacities to engage in reconciliation. This might entail incorporating traditional values and indigenous approaches into reconciliation processes. Murithi (2006) underlines that African values are integral in

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[7] There are various perspectives on achieving reconciliation, e.g. through justice and accountability for past injustices or violations, truth-telling, acknowledgement of wrongdoing and forgiveness. Despite their differences, these various elements of reconciliation contribute towards healing of communities and individuals both victims and perpetrators.

reconciliation endeavours, and adds that they have to be incorporated alongside progressive ideas such as inclusiveness, youth-centeredness and gender equality.

Reconciliation is not a linear process, as it often involves dynamic, complex, difficult, unpredictable and iterative processes. Since the factors that contribute to the fracturing of relationships tend to differ from context to context, it therefore follows that the stages of reconciliation cannot be pre-determined. Furthermore, reconciliation requires huge measures of commitment and patience on the part of the individuals, groups and collectivities concerned. Given the complex nature of the processes of peacebuilding and reconciliation, it is only befitting to reflect on the work of ONHRI, the first outfit which was tasked by Government to oversee and coordinate these processes. It is from this basis that the work of ONHRI in strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation needs to be documented. Undoubtedly, the ONHRI is a critical player in the peacebuilding and reconciliation agenda for Zimbabwe, hence this documentation.

5.0 ONHRI'S IMPACT ON PEACE AND RECONCILIATION
5.1 ONHRI's Key Milestones

This section discusses the emerging findings from the documentation assignment. The findings include an elaboration of the good practices, key milestones of ONHRI and lessons learned from the entity's 6 year trajectory. In this section, there is emphasis on ensuring that the discussion of these findings demonstrates substantive practical and policy relevance, especially in view of the impending role of the NPRC. The section also captures success stories, case studies and anecdotes on the achievements of ONHRI during the period, 2009-2014.

The findings are categorized into the major milestones that are characteristic of the ONHRI's 6-year journey, and these are highlighted as follows:
- Contextual Background to the establishment of ONHRI:
- Stakeholders consultative and dialogue processes:
- Development of national policy frameworks for peace and reconciliation:
- Inclusion of peacebuilding and reconciliation into the 2013 Zimbabwean Constitution
- Establishment of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC)
- Strengthening the capacity of state and non state actors for peace and reconciliation
- ONHRI's interface with other initiatives designed to promote peace

5.1.1 Contextual Background to the Establishment of ONHRI

ONHRI was established following the signing of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in 2008 and the subsequent formation of the Inclusive Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe. The conception of ONHRI was clearly spelt out in Article VII of the GPA, which provided for the Government of Zimbabwe to create a mechanism that would promote national healing, cohesion and unity. The establishment of ONHRI followed the realisation by the Principals to the GPA that there was need for determined, committed and sustained processes of national healing, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

At the political level, the composition of ONHRI therefore mirrored the signatories of the GPA, with the late Vice President John Landa Nkomo (ZANU-PF) chairing ONHRI, while Mrs Sekai Holland (MDC-T) and the late Mr Gibson Sibanda (MDC-M) were co-Ministers. At the technical level, ONHRI's Secretariat is located in the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC), and it functions like any other Government Department in engaging in policy implementation, research and related administration processes which seek to further ONHRI's mandate.

ONHRI's vision is "…*to lead in the peacebuilding and consolidation of a sovereign society free of violence, fear, divisions and intolerance.*" Its mission statement is to*"…heal the wounds caused by generations of injustice, intolerance, exclusion and impunity so as to reconcile all*

Zimbabweans to become one nation focused on social, political, cultural and economic development in order to improve the quality of life for all."[8]

5.1.2 Stakeholders' consultative and dialogue processes

Immediately after its establishment, ONHRI was involved in some consultative processes at national and international levels seeking opinions on how the healing, reconciliation and integration equation in Zimbabwe can be addressed. Members of ONHRI met with various stakeholders including faith based leaders, traditional leaders, civil society organisations and members of the academic community to solicit their recommendations on how to mend the social fabric that had been repeatedly torn in the various episodes of violence in Zimbabwe. Through collaboration with CSOs, government departments, traditional leaders, FBOs and academic institutions, ONHRI played a very important role in ensuring that discussions on how to deal with the past as well as how to imagine and design a new future for Zimbabwe take the centre stage, among the several emerging needs in the country. For example, in 2009, ONHRI collaborated with the Church and Civil Society Forum (CCSF) in conducting outreach activities and consultations, seeking the views of the population on the forms and direction of national healing. These actors not only have the moral authority and status, but churches also have demonstrated extensive organizational and mobilization capacity to spread the messages of peace.

Acknowledging the broad-based and expansive nature of peacebuilding and reconciliation, the work of ONHRI had to make sure that it impacted on various sectors of the population. Resultantly, ONHRI's stakeholder consultations and dialogues were crucial in generating ownership of the peace and reconciliation agenda. The details of such stakeholder consultations and national dialogues for peace and reconciliation are outlined below:

5.1.2.1 Conducting National Dialogues for Peace with Traditional Leaders, FBOs and CSOs

ONHRI was also involved in the convening of facilitated and structured national dialogues for peace, with various stakeholders including traditional leaders and church groups. The rationale for such dialogues was to give updates on the process of coming up with the peace infrastructure. For example, in June 2012, ONHRI convened a National Dialogue with the Zimbabwe Chiefs' Council, with the aim of briefing traditional leaders on the progress in the process of establishing a national infrastructure for peace. In July 2012, ONHRI also convened a national dialogue at the Harare International Conference Centre (HICC) with FBOs which included the Heads of Christian Denominations from the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), the Zimbabwe Council of the Bishops Conference and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) and the Union for the Development of Apostolic Churches in Zimbabwe (UDACIZA). The dialogues with Chiefs, CSOs and FBOs resulted in these national stakeholders renewing their commitment and support towards the establishment of a national infrastructure for peace. Furthermore, these dialogues were instrumental in strengthening the role of non state actors in supporting national peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts.

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[8] The vision and mission statement are articulated in a pamphlet developed by ONHRI as publicity material

5.1.2.2. Stakeholder Consultative Processes with Government Departments

ONHRI employed the strategy of working with relevant Government Ministries, and would often engage and collaborate actively with respective line Ministries. Working with various government ministries ensured that ONHRI addressed the several dimensions of peacebuilding and reconciliation, including education, livelihoods, psycho-social needs as well as cultural matters. ONHRI's partners in Government included the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (MWAGCD); Ministry of Youth, Indigenization and Economic Empowerment; the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED); the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operative Development (MSMECD), the Ministry of Media, Information and Broadcasting Services; the then Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (MoESAC)-which is now referred to as the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education); the then Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education (now Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs among others. Through these consultative processes, ONHRI can be credited for mainstreaming peacebuilding into various Government Departments.

5.1.2.3 National Dialogues with Women's Parliamentary Caucus

ONHRI also conducted national dialogues with the Women's Parliamentary Caucus of Zimbabwe towards strengthening the role of women MPs in the national peace and reconciliation agenda. The national dialogue not only provided a platform for inter-party dialogue among the participating MPs but also provided the opportunity for awareness raising and publicity. A key outcome of the national dialogue with women MPs was the galvanisation and highlighting of the peacebuilding role of women in Zimbabwe.

5.1.2.4 Learning Exchange Visits and Diaspora Consultations

Since 2009, ONHRI engaged in activities that have opened up avenues for discussion on how to deal with Zimbabwe's peacebuilding and reconciliation agenda. The ONHRI political representatives as well as the Secretariat engaged in some visits to countries such as Rwanda and Kenya, to learn about how they too had addressed their peacebuilding and reconciliation challenges. In addition, the ONHRI was extensively involved in consultations with the Diaspora as well as members of the international community. International engagements were designed to increase visibility of the ONHRI's work as well as to promote dialogue among the Diasporans towards promoting their return and reintegration. By reaching out to the Zimbabweans in the Diaspora, ONHRI was cognizant of the complexity of peacebuilding and reconciliation processes, which often include internal and external actors. The role of Diasporans in conflict generation and peacebuilding has been well documented by many scholars, and it is on this basis that such outreach to the Diaspora was designed.

5.1.2.5 ONHRI's History of Conflict in Zimbabwe Research Project:

During this period under review, ONHRI also implemented a *History of Conflict in Zimbabwe Research Project*, which is being coordinated by the Midlands State University's Vice Chancellor, Professor Ngwabi Bhebe. Through research, ONHRI has therefore set the tone on the need to

develop a database of empirical studies on the history, trends, extent and status of conflicts in Zimbabwe. The *History of Conflict in Zimbabwe Research Project* follows the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MoU) between the ONHRI and MSU outlining the areas of collaboration, which include mapping conflict prone areas and analyzing underlying causes of the conflict in Zimbabwe. The project also seeks to examine how Zimbabwe has historically dealt with its conflicts and ultimately to draw lessons in conflict prevention, management, resolution and transformation. Members of the academic community were commissioned to conduct specific studies on identified conflicts in Zimbabwe to empirically determine the history and root causes of such conflicts. So far, fieldwork for the research project was undertaken and completed, and draft papers will be finalized in 2015.

5.1.3 Development of national policy frameworks for peace and reconciliation

ONHRI's 6 year trajectory, which was characterized by consultative processes, has significantly resulted in the establishment of an infrastructure for peace and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. During the period 2009-2014, ONHRI progressively developed various frameworks guiding peacebuilding work and practices in Zimbabwe. These include the Zimbabwe National Policy Framework for Peace and Reconciliation, the Voluntary Zimbabwe Political Parties Code of Conduct and the Draft Principles for the NPRC Bill. These normative architecture and frameworks are discussed further below:

5.1.3.1 *The Zimbabwe National Policy Framework for Peace and Reconciliation (ZNPFPR):*
Created in 2012, the ZNPFPR is a product of ONHRI's consultations with national stakeholders such as CSOs, FBOs, traditional leaders and youth, women's groups, employers and employee organisations. The ZNPFPR calls for the establishment of a National Peace and Reconciliation Architecture, i.e. the independent NPRC, and it was presented by ONHRI to Cabinet in May 2012.[9] The ZNPFPR also provided for the NPRC to have supportive architecture and structures at national, provincial, district, ward and village levels to ensure that Zimbabwe establishes an enabling environment to facilitate dialogue and peacebuilding among various sectors and members of the population. Plans are underway for the NPRC to be fully operationalised once the necessary legal processes have been completed.

5.1.3.2 *Development of Draft Principles for the NPRC Bill:*
Through the efforts of the ONHRI Secretariat, which followed consultations with national stakeholders, the Draft Principles for the NPRC Bill were developed. These Draft Principles were derived from the National Policy Framework for Peace and Reconciliation. In accordance with Zimbabwe's legislative procedures and processes, the Draft Principles were tabled and approved in Cabinet. The approved NPRC Principles were then used to draft the NPRC Bill by the Attorney General's Office. Once the due legal processes have been followed, it is expected that the NPRC Act will be adopted. The NPRC Act will enable the NPRC to effectively execute its

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[9] UNDP. 2012. "Support to Peacebuilding and Increased Access to Sustainable Livelihoods in Zimbabwe, 2012-2014 Programme, Annual Progress Report, 1 January 2012- 31 December 2012.

mandate of engendering processes of peacebuilding, national healing, reconciliation and integration in Zimbabwe.

5.1.3.3 Development of the Voluntary Zimbabwe Code of Conduct for Political Parties:
ONHRI also held national dialogues on elections and peacebuilding, targeting the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) and other national actors such as the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN). An example was the national dialogue held by ONHRI in November 2012 with ZEC and civil society actors. This was very important given the double-edged role of elections, i.e. being a vehicle for peacebuilding or a potential source of conflict. Paying attention to how some elections in Zimbabwe have often been the source of contention and violence in Zimbabwe's politics, there was therefore the need to underline the potential peacebuilding role of elections.

Picture 2: Co-Minister for ONHRI, Mrs Sekai Holland at a workshop discussing the Voluntary Zimbabwe Code of Conduct for Political Parties, 2013

ONHRI's engagement with political parties was based on the recognition that political parties not only provide the platform for candidates to voice their aspirations to various elective offices, but that they are also critical players in rallying their supporters to embrace peace. Recognising the centrality of political parties in peace promotion efforts, ONHRI sought to directly engage these actors in ensuring that they craft an inter-party agreement that seeks to eradicate violence in political parties.

In collaboration with the political party leaders (i.e. Secretaries-General of the three political parties who were signatories to the GPA), ONHRI developed the *Voluntary Zimbabwe Code of Conduct for Political Parties*. Adopted by the three political parties during the first quarter of 2013, the Code of Conduct provides guidelines on the behaviour of the respective political

parties' leadership, members and supporters towards an emphasis on constructive resolution of disputes. It further seeks to minimise violent political conflict, eradicate intimidation, and encourage a climate of open, free and fair political competition. The Code of Conduct has since been translated into Shona and Ndebele, and disseminated to political parties. Since this document is not time-bound, it is expected that the Code of Conduct will be used at all times as a tool to promote peace. In the Preamble, the Code of Conduct reaffirms that:

> *"...the promotion of equality, national healing, cohesion and unity underscores the right to free political activity, embedding freedoms of assembly, association, expression and communication, thus the leaders of political parties have explicitly rededicated themselves to putting an end to polarization, divisions, conflict and intolerance that has characterized Zimbabwean politics and society in the past and in recent times..."* (p.12)

The development of this Code of Conduct for Political Parties was preceded by the Peace Indaba which ONHRI coordinated together with the three political parties in the GPA in 2011. At that Peace Indaba, political Principals made a commitment to cascade peace messages to their structures. Against this background, ONHRI played a key role in ensuring that the March 2013 referendum and the July 2013 harmonised elections were conducted in a peaceful manner. ONHRI disseminated the Code of Conduct to political parties, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), Government Departments and other national stakeholders, including CSOs. The Zimbabwe Code of Conduct for Political Parties was adopted by the (ZEC) in the nomination process of the July 2013 elections.

5.1.3.4 ONHRI incorporating traditional values into national healing processes (TMASCRR): ONHRI also engaged with traditional leaders to share experiences, promote dialogue and explore opportunities for using traditional mechanisms in peacebuilding, conflict management and conflict resolution. The elevation of traditional values in peacebuilding and reconciliation is being undertaken by ONHRI through a project titled*, Traditional Mechanisms, Approaches and Systems for Peace-Building, Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation (TMASCRR),* which is being pursued in partnership with the Zimbabwe Chiefs' Council, as well as members of academic institutions and CSOs. In October 2012, ONHRI conducted a Methodology Workshop on TMASCRR with traditional leaders, and this was followed by another workshop in 2013.

These initiatives were designed towards developing a strategy for incorporating traditional approaches and mechanisms in peacebuilding and reconciliation. It is anticipated that the TMASCRR initiatives will contribute towards the development of a *National Framework on Traditional Mechanisms, Approaches and Systems for Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution*. The incorporation of traditional mechanisms in peacebuilding processes is particularly imperative given that violent conflict tends to destroy cultural cohesion and to undermine traditional practices. Working with traditional authorities will be crucial towards addressing cultural practices and narratives which can create or fuel violence. The incorporation of traditional mechanisms and approaches in the national peace and reconciliation infrastructure will further facilitate the development of context-driven approaches to peace.

Picture 3: Members of the Zimbabwe Chiefs' Council with ONHRI Secretariat

5.1.3.5 Developing a National Conflict Early Warning and Early Response (CEWER) Framework
ONHRI participated in the consultative processes undertaken by CSOs towards the development of a national conflict early warning and early response (CEWER) system. A critical outcome of the ONHRI experiences in strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation in Zimbabwe is the establishment of a Draft CEWER framework for effective conflict prevention and proactive response. ONHRI participated in the meeting in Nyanga which was held in 2012 towards the development of a Draft CEWER Framework. In collaboration with stakeholders such as the CCSF, ONHRI participated in the development of this national CEWER framework not only to enhance knowledge towards countering threats to peace, but also to engender a culture of joint conflict prevention. The Draft CEWER framework provides the building block and foundation for a solid early warning system. Once it is fully developed and adopted by the relevant national stakeholders such as CSOs, and Government Departments, the CEWER framework will be useful in the prevention and mitigation of violence at all levels in Zimbabwe.

5.1.4 Inclusion of the NPRC into the 2013 National Constitution
The work of ONHRI was cognizant of other ongoing political processes at the national level, and sought to complement these. For example, ONHRI worked with the Constitutional Parliamentary Committee (COPAC) process to advocate for the inclusion of a peacebuilding infrastructure in the constitution. A remarkable milestone was the successful lobbying for the inclusion of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) into the national constitution to COPAC. This was a sterling achievement considering that Zimbabwe was lauded

as one of the first African countries to have a peacebuilding and reconciliation commission provided for in the Constitution. In this regard, Chapter 12, of the new Constitution of Zimbabwe provides for the establishment of five (5) *Independent Institutions Supporting Democracy*, with the NPRC as one of them. Chapter 12, Part 6, Sections 251-253 of the National Constitution thus provide for the establishment of the NPRC, and clearly spells out the Commission's mandate and functions.

Specifically, section 251 of the Zimbabwe Constitution states that:

> *For a period of ten years after the effective date, there is a commission to be known as the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission…"*

The key functions of the NPRC broadly include developing and implementing programmes that promote national healing, unity and cohesion in Zimbabwe. The NPRC is also mandated to develop mechanisms for early detection of areas of potential conflicts and disputes, and to take appropriate preventive measures.

While the Constitutional provisions spell out the work of the NPRC, the Commission will need an Act of Parliament to guide its work. The process of coming up with an Act of Parliament to guide the work of the Commission is still underway. It is anticipated that with a legal backbone, the NPRC will be able to occupy its rightful place of being the chief driver of peacebuilding and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe. Once fully operational, the NPRC will be composed of a Chairperson and eight members with at least 4 of them being women. The conception of the NPRC was therefore achieved through a participatory and inclusive process in which ONHRI and other national stakeholders played a significant role.

 In fact, many countries emerging from episodes of violent conflict often take the model of establishing an independent Commission. A good example is the National Commission for Integration and Cohesion (NCIC) which was established in Kenya in 2008 (and became operational in 2009) following the 2007-2008 post election violence in that country.[10] NCIC's operationalization came after the adoption of the NCIC Act (2008) which clearly specified the mandate, structure and operations of this entity. Similarly, South Africa also established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) after the end of apartheid, and the TRC was preceded by an enabling Act of Parliament, namely the *Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act (1995).* The NPRC's inclusion in the 2013 Constitution reflects the Government of Zimbabwe's deliberate consideration for legally and constitutionally empowering a body which is tasked with the often contested and challenging tasks of peacebuilding and reconciliation in the country.

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[10] The need for the National Commission for Integration and Cohesion (NCIC) was acknowledged during the signing of the National Accord and Reconciliation Agreement following the 2007 post-election violence and subsequent political negotiations. The NCIC vision, mission and mandate is detailed in the NCIC Annual reports (2010-2013)

5.1.5 Establishment of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission

Since the NPRC has been clearly outlined as a constitutionally-mandated body, this has allowed for ONHRI and stakeholders such as the CCSF, NANGO and other CSOs to continue pushing for the operationalization of this mechanism for the promotion of peace and reconciliation. The NPRC was tasked with coordinating peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives in the country. The NPRC Act is now required to facilitate and clearly guide the work of the Commission, including development of clear guidelines and formulation of more succinct objectives and operational details to strengthen the dispensation of the NPRC functions.

5.1.6 Strengthening the capacity of state and non-state actors for peace and reconciliation

During the period, 2009-2014, ONHRI was pivotal in strengthening the capacity of state actors in undertaking peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives. As a result, ONRHI was applauded by many national stakeholders in its efforts towards capacity strengthening of its partners to develop sound methodologies and approaches to peace and reconciliation. ONHRI's capacity strengthening strategies during the 6 year journey included outreach meetings, awareness raising sessions, workshops and information sharing. These points are discussed in detail below:

5.1.6.1 Increasing Knowledge on National Healing, Reconciliation and Peacebuilding:

During the period highlighted in this Documentation Report (2009-2014), ONHRI initiated and executed activities which were designed to influence the public on matters of peace and reconciliation. In many ways, ONHRI planned, coordinated and promoted educational and training programmes which sought to strengthen public awareness and support for peace and reconciliation. The role of education in the promotion of peace and reconciliation has been explored at length by various scholars and practitioners (Zembylas, 2007). Against this background, ONHRI employed a "peace education approach" to spread the message for peace.

Through engagements with a variety of national stakeholders including traditional leaders, CSOs, FBOs, academic communities, artists and Diasporans, ONHRI demonstrated its capacity to partner with various strategic partners in the execution of these educational and awareness-raising initiatives for the promotion of peace. For example, ONHRI identified curricular activities as important forums for mainstreaming reconciliation and peacebuilding within the education sector, and hence collaborated with the then Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (MoESAC) which is now referred to as the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MPSE) and the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development (MHTESTD), as well as the United Nations Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) in these processes. Specifically, ONHRI worked with these actors to advocate for the training of teachers in peacebuilding, and conflict management during their coursework.

Through efforts targeting curriculum reform and training, actors in the education sector were progressively incorporated as vehicles for advancing reconciliation and peacebuilding. These efforts demonstrated that education is critical towards the rebuilding of the social fabric,

fostering tolerance and inclusivity. As a result, ONHRI facilitated knowledge transfer and sharing on the concepts and practices of national healing, reconciliation and integration into the national peace architecture. Through these interactions, ONHRI not only managed to create a platform for dialogue on critical issues at the intersection of peacebuilding, reconciliation and integration but also influenced the mainstreaming of peace and reconciliation into the national education curriculum.

5.1.6.2 Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution &Transformation (CPMRT) Workshops

An example of a capacity strengthening initiative by ONHRI was the training workshop of media personnel in peacebuilding and conflict–sensitive reporting which was organised for the media fraternity in November 2012. Participants for this workshop included the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists (ZUJ) and editors from the various media houses. The conflict-sensitive reporting and journalism training workshop spurned discussions on the need to develop a Code of Conduct for Media actors, as part of a broader strategy of promoting peace and reconciliation in Zimbabwe.

Additionally, ONHRI facilitated a series of *Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Transformation* (CPMRT) training workshops for several stakeholders including CSOs, FBOs, women's groups, youth groups and Government Departments. The objective of the CPMRT training workshops was to strengthen the capacity of a wide spectrum of the Zimbabwean population in conflict management, mediation and negotiation. For example, ONHRI facilitated CPMRT workshops for officials from the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (MWAGCD). These CPMRT workshops were held in Harare (for participants from Manicaland and Mashonaland) and Bulawayo (for participants from Matebeleland, Masvingo and Midlands regions). ONHRI also facilitated workshops for the MWAGCD in Plumtree and Zvimba Districts. The purpose of the training workshops was to empower MWAGCD officials with knowledge on peace building so that they can further cascade similar trainings during their various initiatives targeting women stakeholders. Furthermore, it is anticipated that such training will also offer MWAGCD officials alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in their initiatives on domestic violence and further help to mainstream conflict sensitive approaches in the socio-economic empowerment efforts for women. Ultimately, through these CPRMT workshops, ONHRI significantly contributed to the empowerment of women in peacebuilding, and mainstreaming of gender issues in the peace and reconciliation processes. Such activities are in line with international, regional and national normative frameworks that call for the increased involvement of women in peace processes.

Picture 4: ONHRI facilitating CPMRT training for the MWAGCD officials in 2012

Additionally, during its 6 year journey, ONHRI also targeted the youths in its capacity building process through facilitating workshops. For example, ONHRI facilitated a CPMRT training workshop for the youth from political parties in 2012. In addition, ONHRI in collaboration with Voices in the Vision for Africa (VIVA) and Ministry of Youth Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment conducted a peace building sensitization training and dialogue session for the Joint Youth Working Group (JOWOG) members in Vumba from 2 to 6 April 2013. The objective of the workshop was to foster youth participation and collaboration in peace and reconciliation efforts in Zimbabwe. Collectively, these CPMRT training workshops and the dialogue sessions targeting the youths resulted in young people in Zimbabwe committing to undertake peace outreach initiatives

Picture 5: ONHRI facilitating CPMRT training with the youth from political parties in Vumba

ONHRI also facilitated CPRMT training workshops with CSOs and FBOs, whose key outcome was the creation of community-based local peace committees, which are an important feature of the national infrastructure for peace. These local peace committees are much needed mechanisms for facilitating and coordinating intra and inter community peacebuilding and consensus building processes. Ultimately, from such capacity building efforts by ONHRI, it is evident that a tone has already been set on providing space for national stakeholders such as FBOs, CSOs and traditional leaders in promoting peace efforts in the country.

As a result of such capacity building initiatives, ONHRI contributed not only towards enhancing skills and knowledge of peacebuilding actors but has also strengthened ties among the national stakeholders in peacebuilding. In fact, ONHRI's capacity building initiatives have resulted in the establishment of the first Peace Building Community of Practice (CoP)[11]. The CoP includes members from faith based organisations, civil society organisations, International Non-Governmental Organisations and representatives from the academia. The goal of establishing such an entity is to foster knowledge exchange, as well as information sharing and learning opportunities between key stakeholders working in the field of peacebuilding. It is also envisaged that such a CoP will not only encourage critical reflections on the peace and reconciliation discourse in Zimbabwe, but will also generate practice and policy-oriented dialogues on the approaches, principles, guidelines and strategies of peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

5.1.6.3 Strengthening the Capacity of the ONHRI Secretariat
Capacity building was not only limited to national stakeholders but also targeted at the ONHRI Secretariat to ensure that they would be more competent, enlightened and motivated in the processes of dispensing their responsibilities. A number of officials within the ONHRI Secretariat participated in study tours, exchange visits, workshops and trainings. For example, in 2012, ONHRI Secretariat Staff participated in a training workshop on conflict analysis, mediation and negotiation. The goal was to strengthen their capacity in understanding these concepts and practicing them. These staff development processes were designed to ensure that staff strengthened their capacity and exhibited effective work performance and ultimately to ensure that ONHRI would achieve its mandate. Staff development within the ONHRI Secretariat was imperative given that many of the personnel had been transferred from other government departments which were not really focusing on peacebuilding and reconciliation.

5.1.6.4 Institutionalisation of a culture of peace
ONHRI's initiatives significantly contributed towards the institutionalisation of a culture of peace in Zimbabwe. The culture of peace has been defined by the United Nations as "a set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent by tackling the root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals,

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[11] The CoP on peacebuilding, conflict transformation and reconciliation is designed to foster collaboration, knowledge sharing among the various peacebuilding actors in Zimbabwe.

groups and nations."[12] The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is one of the chief proponents of a culture of peace. Various strategies can be used towards fostering this culture of peace, and these include education, art, sports as well as processes of socio-economic development. Accordingly, during its 6 year journey, ONHRI engaged the arts community, education sector as well as public arenas to facilitate the institutionalization of a culture of peace in Zimbabwe. These initiatives are described in detail below:

- ***ONHRI Engaging with the Arts Community***

ONHRI also identified cultural events as important forums for exploring the often challenging and contested issues of reconciliation, national healing and peacebuilding. ONHRI therefore focused on the wide range of local opportunities provided by artistic and cultural events which would bring together people from different backgrounds, in order to relay messages of peace and reconciliation. By engaging the arts community in processes that seek to promote peace in Zimbabwe, ONHRI demonstrated the extent of its innovativeness in its approaches towards peacebuilding and reconciliation. Key partners of ONHRI in the arts industry included the National Arts Council, the Culture Fund, as well as individual artists. Notable outputs emerging from the collaboration between ONHRI and the arts fraternity include the production of a CD and DVD compilation of "peace songs" as well as the production of a film titled, *Two Villages Apart: A Film on National Healing and Forgiveness*.[13] The production of the film mainly targeted the youth and helped ONHRI to use Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials to educate the public on messages of peacebuilding at local and national levels.

- ***ONRHI's Peace Education Approach***

Furthermore, in promoting a culture of peace, ONHRI was very effective in engendering peace education among children and the youth in Zimbabwe. In this regard, in 2012, ONHRI collaborated with the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (MoESAC) in holding a National Art, Poetry and Essay Competition. Over 1000 schools and 5000 students participated in this national competition, which meant there was wider coverage and outreach of ONHRI's messages of peace and reconciliation.[14] Winners of the National Art, Poetry and Essay Competition were announced during the commemoration of the United Nations International Day of Peace on 21 September 2012. The National Art, Poetry and Essay Competition was designed to involve primary and secondary school children in generating ideas that promote national reconciliation and peacebuilding. Additionally, the initiative also provided a platform

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[12] UNESCO (2010) For details, see the UN General Assembly Resolutions (UN/ A/ RES/52/13: Culture of Peace, adopted in 1997; and UN/A/RES/53/343: Declaration and Programme of Action on the Culture of Peace, adopted in 1999)

[13] The film was produced by Tagline Film Productions, and it is a collaboration between ONHRI, UNDP and the arts industry in showcasing the role of arts in promoting peacebuilding and reconciliation. The film development started in 2012, and was concluded in 2013. Shot in rural Guruve, the film is about two villages that have become heavily polarised due to the political violence that characterized the 2008 general elections. It portrays how a retired international cricketer was able to unite the two villages through sport.

[14] UNDP Annual Report. 2012.

for school children in Zimbabwe to be recognised for their unique and important experiences in strengthening peace and reconciliation. Through the National Art, Poetry and Essay Competition, ONHRI demonstrated the importance of understanding and incorporating the perspectives of young people in processes of conceptualising peacebuilding and reconciliation. By targeting the education sector in processes of institutionalizing a culture of peace, ONHRI demonstrated immense understanding of the transformative role of education. Indeed, education, particularly that which targets young people, is critical towards internalizing values of non violence and promoting practices of peaceful settlement of disputes.
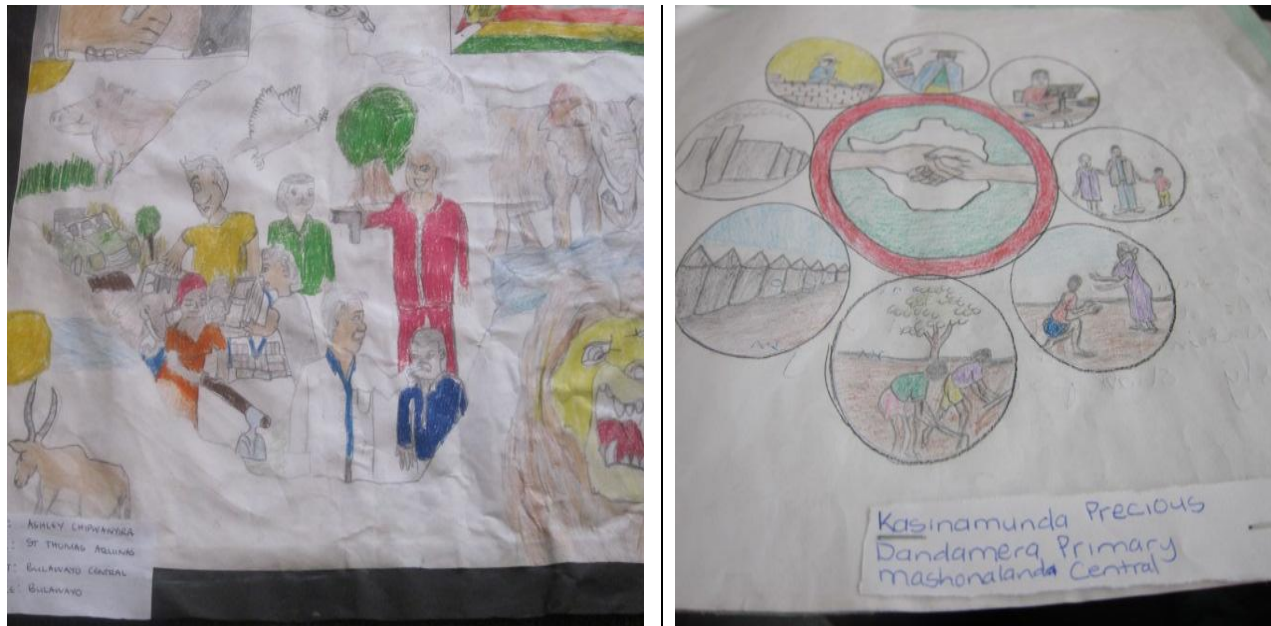
Picture 6: Some of the entries for the Children's Art Competition which was facilitated by ONHRI in 2012

- *ONHRI's Commemoration of International Day of Peace:*

ONHRI has also commemorated the United Nations *International Day of Peace (IDP)*, in collaboration with many stakeholders.[15] Each year, the theme for the IDP was different, and ONHRI implemented activities that were in line with the annual theme. Participating in the celebration of the IDP was crucial for ONHRI to sensitize the population on the need for peace, to reiterate government's commitment towards providing an enabling environment for peace and to showcase ONHRI activities, among other reasons.

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[15] The UN international Day of Peace is celebrated on 21 September of every year. Each year, the theme for the International Day of Peace is specific.

Picture 7: ONHRI Commemoration of the 2013 International Day of Peace

5.1.6.5. ONHRI's Publicity and Outreach Strategy:

Additionally, ONHRI participated in a wide range of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) initiatives which were designed to raise awareness and consciousness for peace in Zimbabwe. In its publicity campaigns, ONHRI participated in the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF), held in April each year, and the Bindura Career Guidance and Book Fair Expo in May 2012. ONHRI also exhibited at the Chinhoyi Agricultural Show in August 2012, the Harare Agricultural Show and the Mutare Agricultural Show in September 2012. In some of its exhibitions, ONHRI jointly hosted its stand with CSOs such as the CCSF and ECLF.

Participating in these shows provided a suitable platform for ONHRI to explain to the public its work and to strengthen the citizens' understanding of its roles and achievements. The exhibitions also presented an opportunity for ONHRI to gauge the population's expectations on how the national healing and reconciliation processes were to be conducted. Additionally, these publicity initiatives and the associated interaction with members of the public were critical in raising the awareness for the need for peace in Zimbabwe, and communicating messages of unity, integration and cohesion. Furthermore, ONHRI used these platforms to engage in education, information exchange and awareness-raising on the ONHRI mandate and objectives. In addition, the joint displays of ONHRI and civil society organisations were also critical in dispelling the myth of tensions between the state and non-state actors. By working together on the common objective of pursuing peace and reconciliation in Zimbabwe, both ONHRI and its non-state partners communicated to Zimbabweans that collaboration between the government and non-state actors is possible in advancing sustainable peace and development.

Picture 8: ONHRI joint programming with national stakeholders, the CCSF and ECLF at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair, 2013

In addition, ONHRI collaborated with various media outlets to spread the message for peace. For example, in 2013, ONHRI developed peace messages which were broadcasted through two radio stations (Zi-FM and STAR FM), and these were being broadcast in three languages; Shona, Ndebele and English. The peace messages targeted youth, women and the general public, thereby affirming the role of these populations in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts in Zimbabwe. Since these peace messages were broadcasted just before the July 2013 elections, the ONHRI radio campaigns not only served to increased ONHRI's visibility, but also contributed towards the sensitization of Zimbabweans on the need for peaceful elections.

ONHRI also participated in the street-cleaning campaigns; in line with the thinking that peacebuilding also targets the environment. While these efforts showcased the nexus between peacebuilding and environmental issues, they also helped to strengthen the visibility of ONHRI to members of the public. [16]

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[16] Multi-track diplomacy is a comprehensive way of looking at peacebuilding using the systems theory. It espouses the need to involve several tracks in peacebuilding processes including government, security, civil society, traditional leaders, media, research, private sector and community based organisations.

Picture 9: ONHRI staff and stakeholders taking the peace message, relating it to environmental issues

ONHRI's public message, which is found on its paraphernalia, posters and bill boards, now resonates with many Zimbabweans, and it goes as follows:

> *Peace begins with me,*
>
> *Peace begins with you,*
>
> *Peace begins with all of us!*

5.1.7 ONHRI's interface with initiatives designed to promote peace

Through the consultative and capacity building initiatives with strategic stakeholders, ONHRI evidently played a huge role in strengthening peace and reconciliation advocacy, outreach and programme implementation in Zimbabwe. In its journey, ONHRI also directly and indirectly interfaced with other processes which were designed to promote peacebuilding in Zimbabwe. In particular, the ONHRI experiences in strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation work interlinked with the efforts of the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC), which was tasked with monitoring the implementation of the GPA.[17] While its mandate was not

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[17] The three political parties that signed the GPA agreed to establish an institution to monitor the implementation of the GPA. JOMIC was established in accordance with Section 22 of the GPA, and it was co-chaired by representatives from ZANU PF, MDC-T and MDC. The co-chairs of JOMIC were Cde Patrick Chinamasa, Cde Nicholas Goche and Cde Oppah Muchinguri (ZANU PF), Mr Tendai Biti, Mr Elton Mangoma and Mrs Tabitha

focused on peacebuilding, during its lifespan however, JOMIC was often involved in activities that were designed to foster inter-party collaboration and peacebuilding.[18] Although ONHRI and JOMIC did not necessarily undertake joint programming, it was inevitable that the activities of these two entities would coalesce and intertwine when it came to implementation and delivery. The interconnected nature of the outreach activities focusing on peacebuilding and reconciliation reflects the notion that peacebuilding is multilayered and involves several actors working cohesively together (Lederach, 1997; 2007).

5.2 Lessons from the ONHRI's Experiences

Importance of consultation and local ownership:

ONHRI's experiences demonstrate the importance of promoting the national capacity for dialogue and consultation. ONHRI was involved in extensive consultative processes at national and international levels seeking opinions on how the healing, reconciliation and integration equation in Zimbabwe can be solved. ONHRI's political representatives and Secretariat met with various stakeholders to solicit their recommendations on how to approach the peace and reconciliation process in the country. A key lesson is that any peacebuilding and reconciliation process must be based on national ownership, and consultation on the form, direction and nature of the activities which seek to strengthen peace.

The strength in capacity building as an approach to peace:

ONHRI's successes are largely owed to the emphasis placed on strengthening the capacity not of only national stakeholders, but also of its own staff. Capacity strengthening efforts were aimed at increasing expertise of ONHRI and its partners so that they could effectively executive the peacebuilding and reconciliation responsibilities. During its 6 year journey, ONHRI focused on enhancing the capacity of partners through training, workshops, outreach and information dissemination. In addition, ONHRI also invited national stakeholders from CSOs, traditional leadership, media, women and youth organisations for trainings and workshops. These processes, albeit largely at the national level, have generated their own momentum and led to replication at lower levels including at provincial, district and ward levels.

Value of horizontal and vertical networking:

Among the distinctive characteristics ONHRI was its capacity to network across the board. ONHRI displayed significant ability and aptitude to network upwards (for example with traditional leaders, development partners), downwards (with CSOs and local community actors), and horizontally (with other government departments) during the process of executing its mandate and implementing its activities.

Khumalo (MDC-T) as well as Mrs Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga, Mr Edward Mkhosi and Mr Edward Chamunorwa (MDC). As a structure which was designed to monitor the implementation of the GPA, the JOMIC tenure ended in June 2013.

Picture 10: ONHRI's joint activity implementation with a youth-focused CSO, Viva Youth Organisation

Embracing African-centred Approaches in Peacebuilding and Reconciliation:

ONHRI reached out to traditional leaders, and in so doing contributed to the restoration of traditional mechanisms in peacebuilding and reconciliation architecture. The emphasis on traditional values of "*ubuntu bethu*" or "*hunhu hwedu*" in the ethos and operation of ONHRI not only amplified African-centred approaches to peacebuilding and reconciliation, but also recognized the relevance of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms and practices in building a culture of peace in Zimbabwe. The incorporation of traditional leaders, community elders and cultural values in peacebuilding infrastructure is important in defining context-specific and responsive peacebuilding architecture.

Importance of political will and commitment

Peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives require political commitment and willingness on the part of government, especially in creating an enabling environment within which other actors can pursue peace. This is because the primary responsibility for securing and consolidating peace lies with government. The story of ONHRI and its key milestones cannot be complete without mentioning the support which was coming from government. ONHRI was established by Government, and received a lot of political goodwill in its initiatives. Key milestones that were recorded by ONHRI reveal that political commitment, particularly from government is integral. The commitment of the representatives of the GPA Principals and representatives who were tasked to head the political dimension of ONHRI has been applauded by many observers and national stakeholders. Perspectives from CSOs, FBOs and traditional leaders in Zimbabwe concurred that during their tenure in ONHRI, the three political leaders of ONHRI, namely ZANU PF's, MDC-T and MDC representatives worked relatively well and collaboratively.[19] The GPA

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[19] Anecdotes from the ONHRI secretariat and observers attest that the late Vice President John Landa Nkomo, MDC's representative, the late Mr Gibson Sibanda and MDC-T representative, Mrs Sekai Holland demonstrated the importance of putting aside personal and ideological differences towards ensuring that the work for peace and reconciliation would be sustained.

Principals (President Robert Mugabe, the then Prime Minister, Morgan Tsvangirayi and former Deputy Prime Minister, Arthur Mutambara) repeatedly preached messages of peace to the public and often appeared jointly on occasions, urging Zimbabweans to heed calls for peacebuilding, national healing and reconciliation.

Picture 11: Minister in the Office of the President and Cabinet, Cde Simon Khaya Moyo addressing an event organised by ONHRI, i.e. the International Day of Peace, 2013

Role of Government in providing an enabling environment for peace:
Governments are critical entry points for peacebuilding and conflict resolution. By creating ONHRI, government allowed CSOs, FBOs, academic institutes and other national actors to have an entry point within the official government apparatus for peacebuilding. Not only do governments possess more capacity, legitimacy and political gravitas compared to other actors, but they also have a central role to play in providing security. The role of ONHRI was strengthened by its definition as a government department in the OPC. The role of government in strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation becomes more poignant especially given the long-term nature of these processes which require strong government institutions which can facilitate an enabling environment for peace. The support from the State was also in the form of endorsement of the ONHRI programmes and work plans. This allowed ONHRI to collaborate effectively with various Government Departments.

State and non state partnerships for peacebuilding:
Sustainable peacebuilding requires strong partnerships and mutual accountability between the government and other actors. ONHRI's experiences from 2009-2014 also highlight the importance of creating and nurturing effective partnerships between state and non state actors. In typical recognition of the multi-layered and multi-sectoral nature of peace, ONHRI developed and nurtured

collaborative partnerships with several stakeholders outside of the state machinery. Thus, ONHRI notably enjoyed joint planning and programming with CSOs, FBOs, traditional leaders and academic institutions. The incorporation of non-state actors in peacebuilding and reconciliation enterprises in Zimbabwe clearly epitomizes the model of multi-track diplomacy, which is discussed in peacebuilding literature as a systems approach to peace (Diamond and McDonald, 1991).[20]

Sustained engagement and follow-up: Peacebuilding is a long-term process which requires sustained engagement by all the key stakeholders. As a result of the long-term nature of peacebuilding processes, a significant amount of dedication and support is required, especially from the government, national and local actors. The ONHRI experiences demonstrate that peacebuilding and reconciliation processes are often gradual, dynamic and iterative; a fact which requires the actors involved staying on course and remaining committed. Thus, the ONHRI journey of six years demonstrated high levels of patience, commitment and dedication which were crucial in ensuring that the key actors in peacebuilding were not only significantly involved but also well-capacitated. The ONHRI consultation, outreach activities and capacity building workshops with several stakeholders provides evidence of this sustained engagement.

Multi-sectoral and multi-level approach to peace*: The experiences of ONHRI in strengthening peace and reconciliation in Zimbabwe have confirmed the multi-layered nature of peacebuilding. It is evident that ONHRI's work targeted a variety of sectors of the peace equation, including political, social, economic, psychological, emotional, physical, spiritual and cultural dimensions. In its work, ONHRI partnered with many stakeholders including CSOs, FBOs, traditional leaders, and artists, to ensure that the resultant programme activities addressed these various dimensions of peace. This is in line with the current conceptualization of peacebuilding, which requires a holistic approach in order to make sustained impact.

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[20] Multi-track diplomacy is an approach to peacebuilding which emphasises the role of various actors, and the need for recognition that peacebuilding is not a preserve of any particular entity. For details, see Diamond and McDonald (1991)

Picture 12: Minister of State in the President's Office, Simon Khaya Moyo and ONHRI officials participating in a tree planting ceremony during the International Day of Peace, 2013

Collaboration with Educational/ Academic Institutions: ONHRI political leaders and Secretariat staff collaborated with academic institutions in Zimbabwe. This collaboration was aimed at strengthening the understanding of the complexity of conflict as well as the root causes. ONHRI partnered with researchers in undertaking the design and implementation of a research project focusing on the history of conflict in Zimbabwe. The project focuses on the different epochs of Zimbabwe's history and the role of violence and conflict in this history. In partnership with the Midlands State University (MSU),[21] and academics from other academic institutions, ONHRI's *History of Conflict in Zimbabwe Research Project* seeks to understand the impact of conflict on peace and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe, as well as generate lessons from this past towards building a more sustainable future.

Engagement of the Diaspora in peacebuilding conversations: One of the lessons emerging from ONHRI's work relates to the importance of engaging with Diasporans in peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives. A number of visits were conducted by the ONHRI political representatives and Secretariat to countries such as Germany, Belgium and the United States of America to interact with Zimbabweans living abroad. ONHRI combined the engagement with Diasporans with publicity events, which included a Peace Show held in Germany. These international trips were critical, given that a significant percentage of the Zimbabwean population resides in the Diaspora.

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[21] Vice Chancellor of MSU, Professor Ngwabi Bhebhe is the Programme Coordinator for the ONHRI History Programme.

5.3 Challenges Experienced by the ONHRI during its Journey

This section highlights some of the noted challenges of ONHRI during the period, 2009-2014. The challenges cut across many levels including organisational, institutional, policy and structural. The several levels in which the challenges can be located imply that addressing them requires not only the efforts of ONHRI but other national stakeholders including Government, CSOs and development partners. Noting that this Documentation Report is not a product of an evaluation exercise, this section discusses challenges faced by the ONHRI, while underscoring the need for "appreciative inquiry." The identification of challenges is designed to strengthen the contextual understanding of circumstances under which ONHRI executed its mandate. Therefore, emphasis will be on examining how ONHRI dealt with these challenges, and what lessons can be drawn from such experiences. The challenges are discussed in detail below:

- ***Limitation of Resources***: Much of the programmes and activities undertaken by ONHRI during the period, 2009-2014 required funding. Although ONHRI is a Government Department in the OPC, the budget for such an expansive mandate was limited. Even though the State provides some financial support, much of the programming funding for ONHRI came from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). A bigger dedicated budget from Government would be crucial for effective execution of the ONHRI mandate, and for the work of the NPRC.

- ***Politically negotiated structure and leadership of ONHRI***: As a structure that was created after the 2008 Global Political Agreement, ONHRI can be characterized as an outcome of negotiation processes, and some compromise might have resultantly been reached. This makes ONHRI a "negotiated structure," whose composition had to mirror the signatories of the GPA, namely ZANU PF, MDC-T, and MDC).[22] During the GPA era, the ONHRI Secretariat had to balance the interests of these political parties during the processes of planning, programming and reporting. While the representation of three political parties at the helm of ONHRI communicated to the nation that the leaders of political parties had decided to reconcile their differences and work together; however in terms of practical day to day operations, this structural orientation of ONHRI could have complicated the bureaucracy as most issues relating to peace and reconciliation had to be sensitively negotiated by the respective political parties.

- ***Human Resources and Capacity Issues***: ONHRI personnel were transferred from other government departments, which were not necessarily focusing on peacebuilding and reconciliation issues. This is why ONHRI embarked on capacity development of its staff to ensure that they understood the concepts and processes in which they were undertaking. The Secretariat's role is to engage in planning, programming, analysis, training and providing logistical support to the political actors involved in peace and

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[22] ONHRI was chaired by the late Vice President John. L. Nkomo (from ZANU PF), with two co-Ministers from MDC-T and MDC.

reconciliation.   ONHRI's mandate of promoting and strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives was to focus on national level processes, shaping policies and normative infrastructure. To this end, ONHRI works closely with partners and stakeholders which engage in community-based initiatives. These stakeholders in turn cascaded the skills and expertise that they had acquired from collaborating with ONHRI, onto the local levels. Ultimately, such an approach proved to be effective in countering the staffing challenges.

- *Balancing numerous and competing needs of multiple actors***:** Peacebuilding and reconciliation are not only contested enterprises but they also require the incorporation of perspectives and needs of a variety of actors. In an environment where the ONHRI was working with diverse national stakeholders ranging from CSOs, FBOs, traditional leaders, media and Diasporans, it was expected that not all of these needs would be satisfied.   Despite the extensive consultations on the nature, form and direction of peacebuilding and reconciliation processes to employ in Zimbabwe, realistically it would not have been possible for ONHRI to fulfill the expectations of all the sectors of the Zimbabwean population.

- *Political fractionalisation*: The work of ONHRI in promoting and strengthening **p**eacebuilding and reconciliation in Zimbabwe might have been hampered by developments in the political arena, particularly at the level of the main political parties which witnessed incidences of intra-party divisions. There are many possible structural conflict drivers for intra-party tensions, e.g. the increasingly competitive nature of politics, contestations emerging from electoral processes as well as deepening socio-political and ideological divisions among party members. There is therefore need for more sustained national healing and peacebuilding processes, especially in politics, including full implementation of the Voluntary Code of Conduct for Political Parties. To its credit, ONHRI worked with respective parties towards the development of the Code of Conduct for Political Parties, and what remains is to ensure its sustained uptake.

- *Competing National Development Priorities***:** Generally, the period, 2009-2014 was quite dynamic, transitional and to an extent complex. Usually, societies undergoing transition and political change are often met with numerous national policies, institutional, structural and programme priorities and key areas of reform which simultaneously require the attention of leaders. The period 2009-2014 was accompanied by difficult decisions regarding which reform processes to prioritize. Key areas for reform included electoral reform, constitution reform and economic revitalisation. Given this list of key reforms, in some cases, "soft issues" such as peacebuilding and reconciliation become easily relegated.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This Documentation Report has highlighted the work of ONHRI in strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts in Zimbabwe during the period, 2009- 2014. Laudable milestones have been identified, including significant lessons on peacebuilding and reconciliation. For the past 6 years, ONHRI has been engaged in various processes which set the tone for peacebuilding and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. ONHRI was crucial in not only stimulating discussions on peace and reconciliation, but also in laying the groundwork for more sustainable peace to be achieved in the country.

Through focusing on strengthening the peace and reconciliation infrastructures at the national level, ONHRI recorded a number of tangible outcomes during its 6 year journey. The development of a national framework for peace ultimately set the tone for the establishment of a national infrastructure for peace. By advocating the inclusion of the NPRC in the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013), ONHRI played a significant role in the institutionalization of peace and reconciliation architecture in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, ONHRI stimulated discussions and conversations on peace and reconciliation among various sectors of the population. In addition, ONHRI promoted a culture of national dialogue on critical matters, thereby strengthening the practice of peacebuilding and reconciliation. In addition, through the outreach activities, workshops and training sessions, ONHRI strengthened the capacity of several national actors in conflict management, transformation and peacebuilding. These experiences provide useful insights and reflections. Going forward, there is need for ONHRI to incorporate values of local ownership, sustainability and commitment in executing its mandate of promoting and strengthening peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts in Zimbabwe.

- *Continued Role of Government in peacebuilding and reconciliation*: From ONHRI's experiences (2009-2014), it was clear Government Departments are critical actors in driving the success of peacebuilding and reconciliation enterprises and setting the tone for a national peace infrastructure. Independent Commissions such as the NPRC should continue to collaborate with other stakeholders, including CSOs, FBOs, academic institutes, traditional leaders and artists to ensure that processes of peacebuilding and reconciliation become nationally owned. Government must re-affirm its commitment in t*er*ms of resources and demonstrate the political will required to ensure the operationalization of the NPRC.

- *Mainstreaming peacebuilding and reconciliation into government sectors:* From the ONHRI experiences of working with various stakeholders such as women, the youth and government Ministries and Departments, it is important to ensure that peacebuilding and reconciliation are cross-cutting rather than being limited to one institution. Instead of tasking only the ONHRI to be the sole entity that would be focusing on implementing peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives, it is important to ensure that the language and practice of peace occupies a central role in all national institutions. To this end, the mainstreaming of national peacebuilding and reconciliation

policies and practices in the relevant government ministries, department and agencies needs to be encouraged.

- ***Integration of gender issues in peace and reconciliation:*** At any level*, g*ender is an indispensable dimension of peacebuilding and reconciliation. More often, violent conflict involves and affects different social groups (including men and women) differently. A gender perspective also entails not only looking at how men and women are affected but also how they contribute to peacebuilding and reconciliation processes. Sustainable peace requires the active and full participation of women in all peacebuilding processes and at all levels. The strategic role of women in peacebuilding needs to be continuously tapped into, and to be amplified.

- ***Operationalising the link between national and local level processes:*** Peacebuilding and reconciliation need to occur at all levels and layers of society, including the macro, meso and micro-levels. While ONHRI's work over the past 6 years concentrated on national level processes, particularly the creation of an enabling policy framework and establishing a national infrastructure for peace, sustainable peacebuilding also requires a commitment to focusing on local level sources and drivers of conflict. This requires readiness to address conflict and to facilitate peacebuilding and reconciliation at the local level. Peacebuilding efforts at the local level will go a long way towards healing and reconstitution of the decimated local social fabrics.

- ***Finalization and implementation of the CEWER System:*** While the ONHRI's collaboration with CSOs, FBOs and traditional leaders was critical in the development of a Draft Conflict Early Warning and Early Response (CEWER) Framework, there is however still the huge need to ensure that the gap between early warning and early response is closed. This will require adequate institutional and material support in order to effectively prevent and mitigate violent conflict in Zimbabwe. This requires building on what ONHRI and CSOs have already done towards developing the CEWER framework.

- ***Increasing the uptake of the Voluntary Code of Conduct for Political Parties***: ONHRI made significant inroads in getting the three main political parties to adopt the Voluntary Zimbabwe Code of Conduct for Political Parties. It is important to ensure that this Code of Conduct is fully implemented and that an enabling environment is created at the national level to allow for constructive resolution of political party conflicts. Additionally, there need for continued capacity building of political parties in peacebuilding and conflict management. Having political parties that are capacitated in conflict resolution and dispute resolution is important in nurturing more tolerant politics. It is also important for the Code of Conduct for Political Parties to be adopted by all political parties (beyond the three which signed the GPA), to ensure a more inclusive approach. Additionally, it should be emphasized that political parties should use this Code at all times, instead of focusing on the election period only.

- ***Capacity Building of national actors for peace and reconciliation:*** Building on the achievements of ONHRI, it is important to continue engaging in capacity strengthening efforts to ensure that national and local actors have the skills and expertise to promote reconciliation and peacebuilding. This requires the collaboration with CSOs, FBOs, traditional leaders and Government Ministries and Departments.

- ***Facilitating continued networking:*** ONHRI's work during the period 2009-2014 clearly demonstrated that networking is important in peace and reconciliation processes. ONHRI's collaboration with stakeholders such as civil society, traditional leaders, academic institutions and other Government Ministries and Departments was crucial in encouraging the cross-fertilization of ideas, exchange of lessons and in strengthening the levels of trust and confidence among national partners in the peacebuilding and reconciliation agenda. There is need to continue with such partnerships as these are key in building a strong infrastructure peace.

- ***Maintaining and Sustaining the Momentum created by ONHRI:*** Given the wealth of institutional memory within ONHRI, it is important to celebrate the milestones that were achieved, and to continue consolidating the gains that were made. Several strategies have been crucial in ONHRI's recording of its major milestones, and these good practices and the momentum generated, have to be sustained. During its journey, ONHRI not only generated discourse peace and reconciliation, but also paved way for the strengthening of Zimbabwe's national infrastructure for peace. Any sustainable peacebuilding and reconciliation interventions must continuously monitor emerging issues while learning from past experiences.

- ***Continued Publicity, Outreach and Awareness Raising:*** There is strong need to continue increasing the visibility of ONHRI by raising public awareness about its activities and achievements. Lessons from ONHRI's robust communications strategy must be cascaded to all levels, i.e. national, provincial, district, ward and village levels. Sustained publicity and outreach will enable the public to understand and embrace the role of peace and reconciliation in national processes. Ultimately, this will engender the culture of peace in national and local discourses.

- ***Recognising peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts:*** ONHRI demonstrated significant innovation and creativity by engaging different community members to speak the message of peace and reconciliation. Sustainable peacebuilding therefore requires recognizing and celebrating national actors and role models who would have made significant efforts towards promoting peace and national healing. By putting in place a rewards system for espousing values of national integration, reconciliation and peace, stakeholders in Zimbabwe will then pave the way in facilitating an acknowledgement that peace is a beneficial enterprise.

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