



**African Perspectives on Peacebuilding:
Opportunities for 2015**

One UN Millennium Hotel

New York

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Workshop Report

Speakers: Amanda Lucey, Institute for Security Studies (ISS)

Respondents: Sarah Hearn, Center for International Cooperation (CIC)

Ms. Amanda Lucey from the ISS presented on African perspectives on peacebuilding. She outlined the general context of peacebuilding and its relevance for Africa, noting that African countries were the focus of many peacebuilding processes. She spoke about the need to develop synergies between the range of national and global peacebuilding processes including the United Nations (UN) 2015 review of its peacebuilding architecture, the African Union Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy and the role of emerging powers in south-south cooperation. Ms. Lucey noted a number of opportunities for Africa in these processes, such as ensuring ownership, engaging civil society, and driving the UN Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding reviews, but stressed that it was important to analyse what worked and what didn't. She then outlined opportunities for South Africa as a case study of an African country engaged in peacebuilding, particularly given its previous peacebuilding engagements on the continent and as head of the African Caucus for the peacebuilding review. She raised a number of questions including:

- How can we ensure peacebuilding processes are effective?
- How can we ensure ownership of processes?
- What role can African member states play in the 2015 UN Peacebuilding review?
- Do these differ among member states? How can we ensure that all their voices are heard?
- How can we improve capacity of peacebuilding processes, particularly those driven by Africa?
- How do we increase complementarity of peacebuilding processes?

Sarah Hearn from the Center for International Cooperation concurred with Amanda's presentation, noting in particular that in order for the 2015 UN peacebuilding review to be successful, it required the voices of truly inclusive African voices to shine through. It was also necessary that the review focused on the coherence of the UN peacebuilding system. She noted three key questions emerging from the presentation:

- What do we mean by ownership and how can it be implemented?
- What is the role of African countries in the UN 2015 peacebuilding review?
- How can we ensure a strong African voice?

The **discussion** focused on:

- How can the voices of smaller African states be heard?
- Ownership: Sometimes countries are ‘demonised’ when they try to implement principles of ownership. How is the handover process facilitated?
- Best practices on ownership – for example the technical guidance notes on national ownership for security sector reform (SSR) in Mali, which views SSR as early peacebuilding. These technical guidance notes talk about four main elements for peacebuilding, namely the need for a (consensual) common vision, the implementation of peacebuilding measures, monitoring and evaluation (which needs to be carried out by national authorities) and the commitment of national authorities to human and financial resources. It should be national authorities that drive this process.
- The role of external actors in the debate on ownership, as these are the actors who are mostly leading the debate at present. It was suggested that the ISS support African countries in promoting their voices. The African caucus is an important nucleus for the discussion on the 2015 peacebuilding review but it was emphasised that it is important that this discussion does not remain in New York. This was one of the lessons learned from the last review of the UNPBA. The caucus aims to appoint independent experts (not necessarily from government) to carry out 4 or 5 country case studies which will inform a longer analysis.
- How can the 2015 review focus on local actors on the ground and relate more to communal structures? Violence is increasingly intra-state and intra communal.

- The need to use sub regional organisations for peacebuilding. The AU has recently shown leadership but must not act alone.
- The need for greater attention to be paid to peacebuilding as there is too much focus on peacekeeping.
- Peacebuilding is not just about the process but the quality of the process. There is a lack of capacity in many post-conflict societies and donors are scared to channel money to national organisations as they have limited capacity.
- How do peacebuilding processes move out of the national capitals into hard-to-reach areas?
- Is it possible to have ownership when donors are paying?

Ms Lucey then closed the workshop and thanked all the stakeholders for their important inputs. She noted that the ISS will be continuing with its work on peacebuilding and on south-south cooperation in the coming year.