

once again. Some argued that civic society can hardly flourish under the conditions of war. No matter what kind of political solution is found, no matter how many referendums for peace are organised, no matter how many peace-building programmes are initiated, there will be no sustainable resolution as long as the war goes on. Nevertheless, one should not underestimate the role of civil society in change.

An argument was made that the role of civil society is not only to mobilise for peace in partnership with the government: Angolan society should be also seen as a force to challenge the corrupt, inefficient and often exclusive Angolan government. There is a danger that preoccupations about reconciliation underestimate the role civil society could play in achieving social equity and justice. These considerations are particularly pertinent since the Angolan government is willing to play the "global game" with all its well documented social costs. This line of reasoning brought to focus the dilemma of what comes first: an active and mobilised civil society or a responsible "facilitating" government? Some participants argued that in the light of the minimal civil society engagement in the peace process the chance of it becoming a critical mass is dubious.

4. Strategies for Peace

Some argued that the only way to peace is the disarmament of both militaries. However, UN-led disarmament before an agreement between the warring factions is reached may actually enhance insecurity of people who are used to live in constant fear of death. Non-transparent disarmament could actually spark hostilities rather than abate them. Buy-back schemes rarely work. In some cases, such as Burundi, a pay-back scheme actually facilitated a weapons up-grade whereby the old weapons were sold to the West and the revenue was used to buy newer models. Disarmament is impossible without national recognition that war is no longer viable.

Sanctions are another tool of influence. However, while sanctions against UNITA only have been imposed by the UN (on arms, travel and representation, petroleum supply, financial flows, and diamonds) they have been poorly implemented or not implemented at all. Caution should be exercised in imposing sanctions and disrupting trade since many African economies depend on the export of raw materials. Diamonds especially represent an extremely fragile market. Balance has to be found between preventing the flow of profits from the sale of diamonds to finance wars and destroying the diamond-dependent African economies.

Control and transparency of the diamond industry (i.e., licencing, regulation, enforcement mechanism) could be a part of the solution to prevent the siphoning of illegal diamond revenues to finance the war machine. Nevertheless, legal and illegal sale of natural resources has a significant role in sustaining the war. We should not underestimate the merit of sanctions and the fact that the diamond buyers in the West are friends of peace only if they are pressured by conscious consumers, NGOs and governments.