

ELECTORAL VIOLENCE AND YOUTHS IN AFRICA: Resolution or Transformation Disposed?

By Ignatius Kabale Mukunto

Dag Hammarskjöld Institute for Peace & Conflict Studies

The Copperbelt University, Kitwe, ZAMBIA



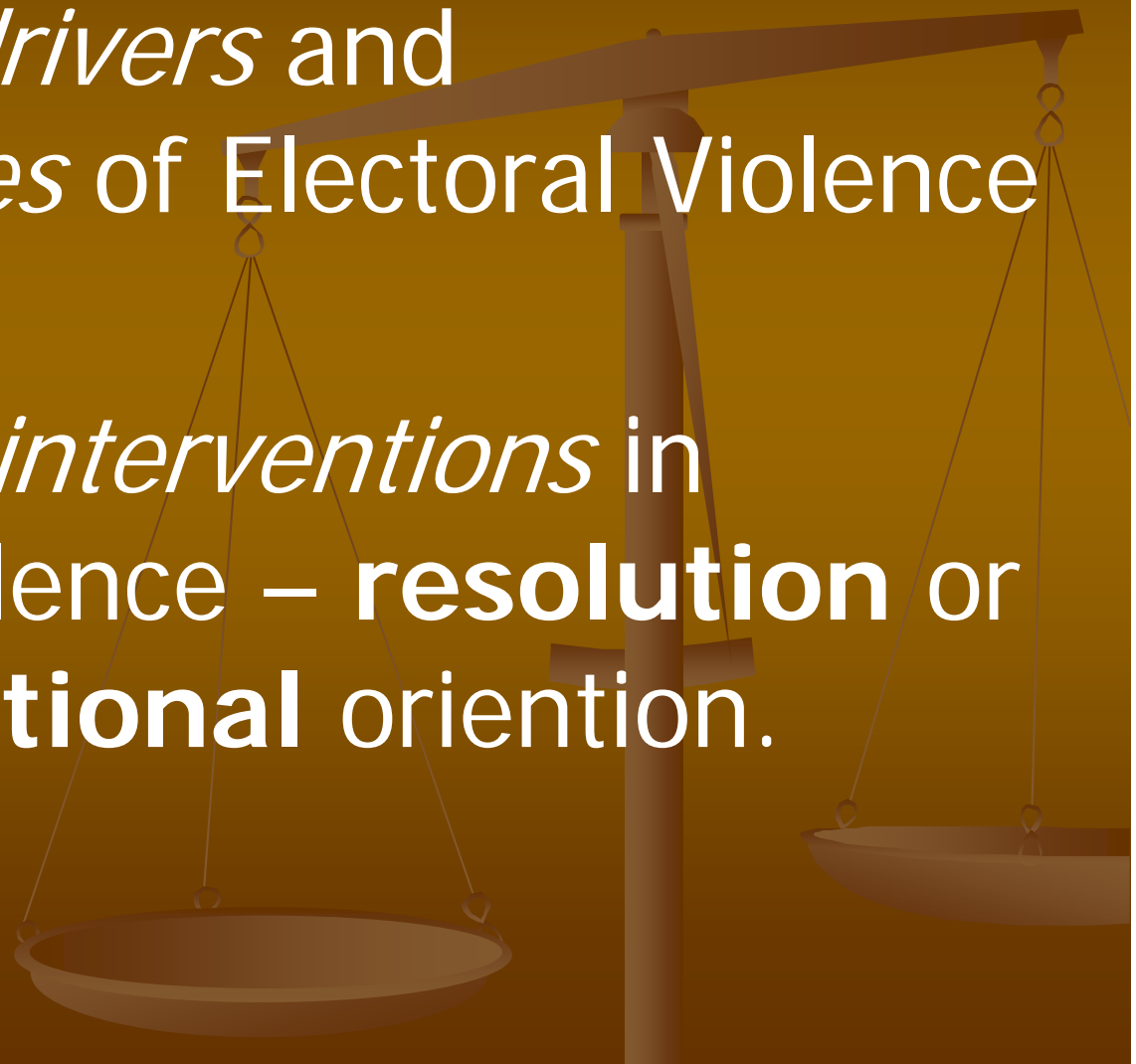
KEY Question...

Evaluate whether Youth's involvement in Electoral Violence in Africa is disposed for resolution or transformation.



SPECIFIC Focus...

- To identify *drivers* and *consequences* of Electoral Violence in Africa.
- To examine *interventions* in Electoral Violence – **resolution** or **transformational** orientation.




WHY...?



- ...worrying trend, of election related violence...
- Trend not only poses a threat to peace and security on the continent, but risks undermining long-term sustainability of democratization processes...

(Adolfo, Kovacs, Nystrom, & Utas, 2012)

SCOPE OF STUDY...

- Ongoing Study,
 - Emergence and Transformation of Political Youth Leagues in Zambia (1965-2015),
 - Literature scan on 'Youths in Politics – **Kenya**, Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia.
 - Surveys/Questionnaire – Students/MEF Alumni.
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Electoral Violence...

- “All forms of organized acts or threats- physical, psychological, and structural – aimed at intimidating, harming, blackmailing a political stakeholder before, during and after an election...aimed at influencing an electoral process...”

(Omotola, 2011; Forti & Maina, 2012; Adolfo, Kovacs, Nystrom, & Utas, 2012; Salehyan & Linebarger, 2013)

Cont'd

- Sub-category of political violence, primarily distinguished by timing and motive... coercive and deliberate strategy used by ALL political actors...



(Adolfo, Kovacs, Nystrom, & Utas, 2012)

Appreciating a YOUTH...

- Young people, part of Africa's independence struggle,
- Today, so susceptible to manipulation by their elders...

(Kagwanja, 2006)

- **'Youth bulges'** popular explanation for political instability in the Arab World and recruitment of international terrorist networks...

(Urdal, 2006)

Cont'd



- African Youth Charter youth -15 and 35 years,

- United Nations – youth, persons aged of 15 and 24,

(Akpan, 2015)

- Zambia's definition is any male or female aged between **15 and 35** years.

(Youth & Sports Ministry, 2015)

Drivers...

- a) **Stakes High- Do or Die** Affair,
 - b) **Incumbents Insensitivity**, e.g. Refusal for a re-run in Zanzibar in 2000,
 - c) **Weak Institutionalization of Key Architectures of Democracy**, e.g. EMB/ Political Parties,
 - d) **Use and Dump Politics** (Intertwine of Socioeconomic Opportunities and Youth Bulge) e.g. Liberia/Zambia,
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Cont'd

- Young people, subjects of **co-option, exclusion and repression.**
- **Drivers, both systemic & structural...**

(Adolfo, Kovacs, Nystrom, & Utas, 2012; Leonard, 2010; Kaya, 2004; Posner, 2007; Omotola, 2010; Ukeje & Lwilade, 2012; Urdal, 2006; Akpan, 2015)



CONSEQUENCES...



- 1) **Impedes Democratic Consolidation** – Qs of effective participation abound,
- 2) **Humanitarian Crisis and reversal of socioeconomic development programmes** – e.g. Kenya,
- 3) **Election related deaths** – (1990 to 2010, deaths in Cote d Ivoire; DRC; Kenya; Nigeria; Sierra Leone; South Africa and Zimbabwe ranged from 28 – 1,502 (SCAD),

Cont'd



4) **Spill over effects (Security issue) – Refugees, IDPs – Kenya and Burundi,**

5) **Ethnic Division or Pulling Deepened, e.g. Kenya (Legitimacy Crisis)**

(Kagwanja, 2006; Omotola, 2010; Leonard, 2010; Hansen, 2009; Høglund & Jarstad, 2010; Forti & Maina, 2012; Salehyan & Linebarger, 2013)

Interventions...



- a) **Deployment of Monitors** – To name and shame,
- b) **Mediation** of Election related disputes,
- c) **Legal Framework** (Electoral code of conduct as basis for combating impunity),
- d) **Law Enforcement** – Police (proactive) as a deterrent – before, during and after elections,
- e) **Voter focused strategic long term prevention** (Training, including young people).

Cont'd

- Interventions tilted towards Conflict Resolution,
- Need to go beyond substantive/relational roots to include structural and cultural dimensions.

(Hoglund & Jarstad, 2010; Kagwanja, 2006 Forti & Maina, 2012)



TRANSFORMATION INCLINATION...

- Conflict engenders fourfold transformation – Personal, Relational, Structural & Cultural (Lederach, 2003),
 - **Personal** – Minimise destructive effects by equipping youth leaders/constituencies with Peacebuilding Skills,
 - **Relational** – Enhance communication (Bottom –UP & Weed off, 'Use and Dump' Politics); Media regulation-self or statutory
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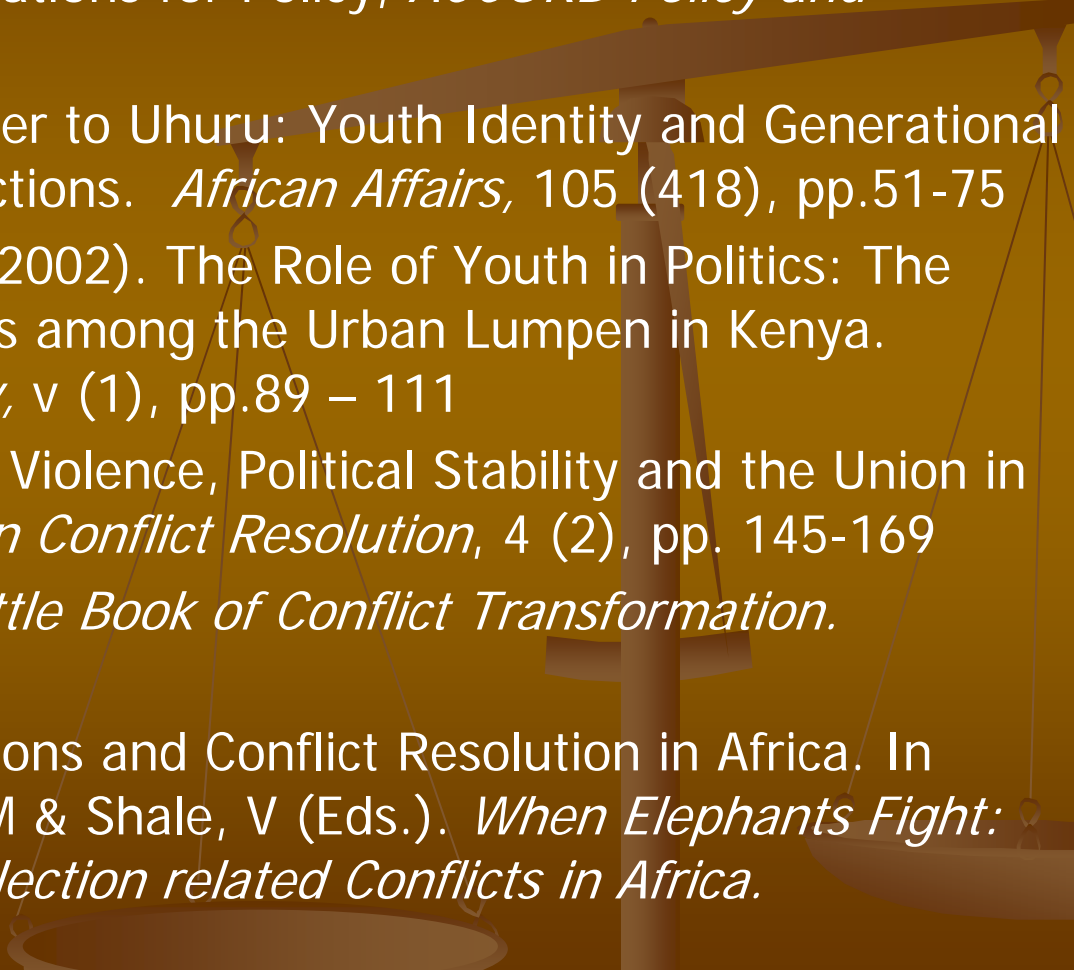


- **Structural** – Improving socioeconomic conditions; Upholding the rule of law; EMB Levelling the playing field; effective policing of voting process,
- **Cultural** – Tolerance & Co-existence; Eradicate culture of impunity; Politics of Pangas & Machetes - Outlaw...

(Mercy Corps, 2011; Chikwanha & Masunungure, 2007; Leonard, 2010; Kaya, 2004; Adolfo, Kovacs, Nystrom & Utas, 2012; Omotola, 2010; Hansen, 2009)

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