

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **‘Crime’, poverty, political corruption and conflict in apartheid and post apartheid South Africa: The implications on economic development**

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The transition to a democratic, elected, non-racial government, which set in motion in early 1990, stirred a debate on the course of economic policies to accomplish sustained economic growth, while at the same time remedying the poverty, and other socio economic discrepancies generated by apartheid government. These include inequality and unemployment (particularly in the black South Africans), corruption, rash in conflict and the most horrible – high rate of crime. This paper examines and compares the level of crimes in the ‘two phases’ (Apartheid and Post Apartheid periods- ‘1994- 2005’), and their implications, especially on the socio-economic development in South Africa. The paper further elicits comparative evidence on other socio-economic issues (poverty and inequality, political corruption and conflict) in the two phases and argues that the consolidation of democracy has ameliorated these problems. However, the paper concludes that there are still much improvements needed, particularly on crime. The paper calls on some other African countries to copy a leaf from South Africa’s practical democracy, rather than democracy in principle as the cases in many countries in the continent.

**Key words:** Democracy, poverty, conflict, political corruption, crime, economic development.

## **INTRODUCTION**

South Africa appears as one of the unique and distinct Sub-Saharan African countries that strives to achieving advanced and industrialised level of development. It is seen or rather predicted as the future Japan of the Sub-Saharan Africa or even the entire African continent. For example, it is a country highly dependent on international trade, especially with Europe. This was pronounced in its becoming a member of the South African Development Community (SADC) on 29 August 1994, and after four years of dialogue, it signed a Free Trade Agreement with EU in March 1999 (DFID, 2006).

However, the reason why this strategic Sub-Saharan African country is important for analysis in this paper is that South Africa, particularly during the long decades of the apartheid regime also suffered from many of the problems experienced by most African countries. That is to say, during the apartheid era and ‘even now’, if to a lesser degree, South Africa suffered so many socio-economic problems, such as poverty and inequality,

corruption, conflict and particularly a high level of crime that continues to traumatise South Africa, even today. It cannot be doubted that all these and High levels of crime in particular is likely to discourage investment and stifle long term growth and economic development in South Africa (Demombynes and Ozler, 2002). This claim will be substantiated with evidence.

Against this backdrop, this paper examines, compares and analyses the level of crimes (specifically conventional crimes) in the ‘two phases’ (Apartheid ‘1943-1994’ and Post Apartheid periods, 1994-2005) and their implications on the socio-economic development of South Africa. The paper also, after providing comparative evidence on some other socio-economic issues (such as poverty, conflict and corruption) in the two phases, argues that the consolidation of democratic governance in South Africa after the free and fair general election in 1999 has actually helped matters. For the relationship between poverty, conflict and development in Africa

**Table 1.** Recorded Crimes in South Africa between 1995 and 2000, Per 100, 000 Populations.

Crimes	Year		Rate of increase or decrease in (%) over the 5 years
	1995	2000	
Intentional homicide	68.09	51.39	24.5% (decrease)
Major assaults	594.9	664.68	11.7% (increase)
Rapes	121.44	123.85	2% (increase)
Robberies	309.18	460.37	48.9% (increase)
Automobile theft	258.32	233.56	9.6% (decrease)
Burglaries	1319.55	921.86	30.1 (decrease)
Thefts	1752.89	1287.21	26.6% (decrease)
All recorded crimes	4424.37	3742.92	15.4% (decrease)

Source of figures: Robert Winslow (2002), *A Comparative Criminology Tour of the World*, South Africa; San Diego University, pp. 6-8.

(Ikejiaku, 2009).

## Crime in the first and second phases in South Africa

### Crime during the apartheid South Africa (first phase)

Patterns of crime and violence in South Africa have often impacted on both political and social development, especially since the 50s. Crime surged to alarming proportion after a new constitution was implemented in 1984, granting limited parliamentary representation to coloureds and Asians but not black. The available statistics, for example in murder, shows that the number of reported murders rose to 10, 000 in 1989 and to 11, 000 in 1990. The incidence of assault, rape and armed robbery showed similar increases. The police estimate was that 22, 000 people died in crime related violence in the fifteen months ending in February 1991. By 1992 South Africa had one of the world's highest crime rates, on a per capita basis (Winslow, 2002). For instance in 1992, 16, 067 cases of murder were reported, 78, 677 robbery incidents and 24, 360 rape cases (Winslow, 2002).

It is right to argue that the high level of crime during the apartheid period was because a large number of apartheid and draconian internal security laws were placed on or enshrined in the South African statute books between the mid-1950s and late-1980s. And therefore, behaviours that used to be seen as normal in free and egalitarian society were detested and even criminalised. These include politically motivated strikes; the actions of people of one race working, living or playing in areas reserved for people of another race; inter racial romance and sex; or possession of 'seditious literature' – from the Kama Sutra to Marx's *Das Kapital* (Schinteich and Louw, 2001). Statistics reveal that in the twenty-year period from 1963 to 1983, recorded crime per capita, increased by approximately 35%, particularly in 1980s and early 1990. And the decade 1980 to 1990, in which apartheid state was most strongly challenged, showed significant increase in crime. For example, serious offences rose by

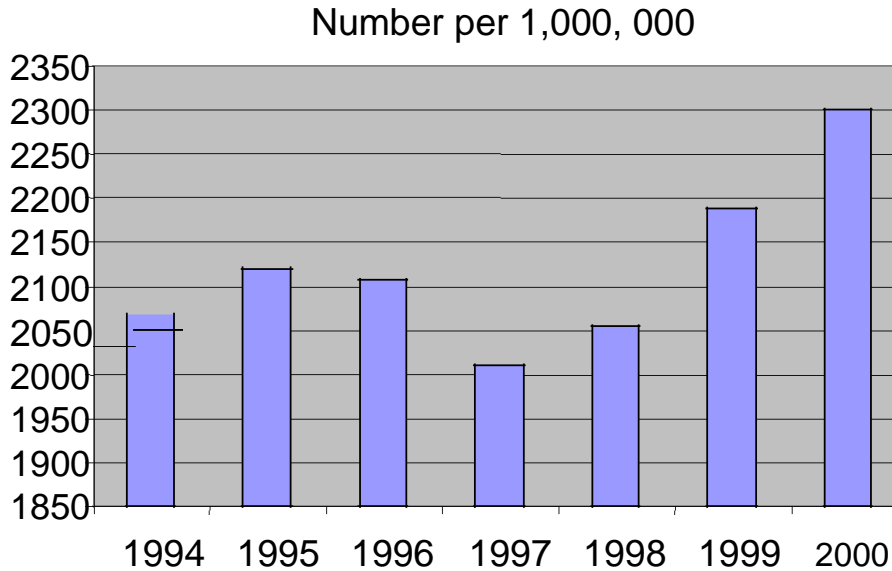
22% and less serious ones by 17%; murders increased by 32%, rape by 24% and burglary by 31% (Shaw, 1997).

### Crime in post apartheid South Africa (second phase)

There is a high propensity that Crime increases during periods of political transition, coupled with instability and violence (this suggests a correlation between crime and conflict), because during periods of instability, regular policing activities are diverted towards controlling violence and crime levels consequently multiply (Schonteich and Louw, 2001). This view is supported by the fact that the increase in levels of crime peaked and was highest in 1990, the year in which the political transition began. Statistics show that recorded levels of all crimes increased absolutely for the period 1990 to 1994. Most crime increased phenomenally during this period: assault increased by 18%; rape by 42%; robbery by 40%; vehicle theft by 34% and burglary by 20% (Shaw, 1997).

Table 1 shows decreases in some offences – homicides, theft and burglaries – between 1995 and 2000. Though there were increases in major assaults, robberies and rape cases, generally there was a decrease (15.4%) of all recorded offences. The implication of these figures is that what has actually increased in post apartheid South Africa is the level of violent crimes and not property crime (though the Table also reveals decreases in burglaries and intentional homicide) . This is remarkable because a decline in property crimes accounted for most of the drop in the index offences between 1995 and 2000 (Winslow, 2002), also it has been argued that the expectation which many had in 1994, that crime – especially violent crime – would decrease has not materialised (Schonteich and Louw, 2001). An examination of the below figure will also be helpful in the assessment of crime level in post apartheid South Africa.

Figure 1 reveals that in the period January to May 2000 some 2, 300 crimes were recorded for every 100, 000people living in South Africa, up from 2, 187 in 1999.



**Figure 1.** Number of crimes recorded per 100,000 of the population, January to May 1994-2000.  
Source: Schonteich and Louw (2001); Winslow (2002) p. 5.

**Table 2.** Comparative crime levels in the Apartheid and Post-apartheid South Africa within the periods 1980-2000.

Types of crime	1980-1990 percentage of crime rate	1990-1994 percentage of crime rate	*1995-2000 in percentage of increase/decrease
Murder	32%	N/A	25.5% (decrease)
Burglary	31%	20%	30.1% (decrease)
Robberies	N/A	40%	48.9% (increase)
Assault	N/A	18%	11.7% (increase)
Rape	24%	42%	2% (increase)
Theft	N/A	34%	9.6% (increase)

Sources: Schonteich and Louw (2001), Winslow (2002) and Shaw (1997).

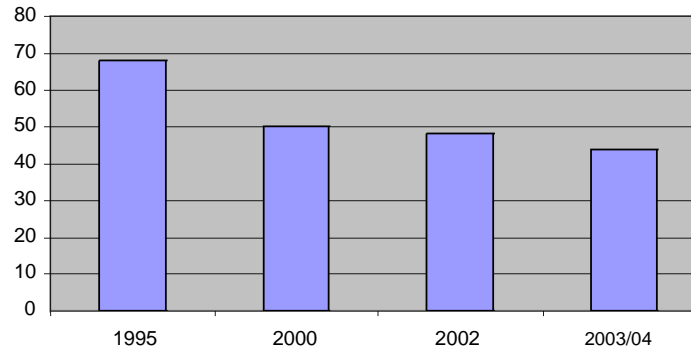
\*Note that data within the period 1995-2000 just provides the average rate of increase or decrease of crimes within these years (1995-2000).

However, data by the Nedbank ISS Crime Index (2000) indicates that if only violent crimes are measured, the first five months of 2000 also show the highest per capita level for the same five-month periods from 1994 onwards. In the period January to May 2000, 755 violent crimes were recorded per 100, 000 of the population, compared to 697 per 100, 000 over the same period in 1999. This shows that the increase in the total number of crimes record was partly due to the violent crime.

Table 2 summarises the various crime figures in South Africa in three major stages: the years when Apartheid was most strongly challenged (1980-1990), the years of political transition (1990-1994) and the early years of democratisation (1995-2000). The only complete data (burglary and rape) suggests lower rate of crime in democratic South Africa, as compared with apartheid era, though rape increased by 2%. The figures on murder show decrease in the democratic era. Though there is an

increase on robbery figures in democratic era, there is a missing data during the intense period of apartheid, it is possible therefore that crime rate is higher in the apartheid era than in democratic South Africa, as this paper claims.

This submission is substantiated by other studies, for example other available statistics on (Figure 2) – the most violent crime show that: ‘Between 1987 and 1994, the country’s reported murder rate increased by nearly 87%, although the figure for 1996, the latest available then, showed a 5.4% drop from 1995’ (Wilson Centre, online) . Also, the most recent study conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2005) reveals that, ‘the highest murder rates in Africa are found in Southern Africa... Excluding attempted murder cases, the highest rate among African countries is probably found in South Africa. But South Africa’s figures have also been improving since the consolidation of democracy, declining



**Figure 2.** Statistics on murder rate in South Africa, 1995-2004.  
Source: See UNODC, (2005), op cit, p. 55.

from 68 per 100, 000 inhabitants in 1995, to 50 in 2000, 48 in 2002 and 44 in 2003/04'.

### **The reasons for high levels of crime in South Africa**

Based on these findings, it is still important to reiterate the claim of this paper that though the level of crime in democratic South Africa has reduced when compared to the apartheid era, crime has not decreased as many envisaged.

It is generally agreed that there is no single explanatory answer to the question why South Africa continued with high levels of crime compared to other African countries. Many scholars on crime studies canvass and support the perception that a number of factors have led to high crime levels in South Africa. For example Schonteich and Louw (2001) argue there is no single satisfactory answer to this question of high crime rates in South Africa, but rather a number of explanations which help to explain the high levels of crime plaguing the country. Consideration in such explanations include the impact on levels of serious crime of the country's ongoing political and socio-economic transition, the connection between the country's violent past and contemporary criminal behaviour, the impact of the proliferation of firearms, the growth in organised crime, changes in the demographic composition of the country and the consequences of a poorly performing criminal justice system.

Rapid urbanisation and age are yet important factors that needs critical attention. There is a firm relationship between age and crime. The most salient single fact about crime is that it is committed mainly by teenagers and young adults. Statistics based on 1996 census indicate that a third of South African population is under the age of 15 years and 44% was under the age of 20 years. Among this, those between the age brackets of 5 to 9 years and 10 to 14 years were numerically largest population (Smith, in Ratter and Smith, 1995, see also Demombynes and Ozler, 2002). It is therefore believed that since 1996 many of these children have moved into

the crime prone ages of 12 to 19 years. Again, South Africa has a third of the most urbanised country in Sub-Saharan Africa, 56% of the country's population is urbanised, up from 46% in 1960 and 52% in 1995 (Schontheich and Louw, 2001). Therefore, common characteristics of urbanisation, such as overcrowding, unemployment and increased consumer demands and expectations are associated to high crime rates; this suggests the impact of changing demographics in the crime rate in South Africa. In fact, on this issue, it is important to point out that high rate of urbanisation impacts negatively on crime in Africa because the region's rate of urbanisation is higher than its growth. Statistics put it at 4.87 compared to 2.5% annual growth in 2002. Also Africa is urbanising far more rapidly than the developed countries did, and nearly twice as fast as Asia and Latin America, however, unlike in other countries, Africa's urbanisation is occurring at a time of economic stagnation (the Report of the Commission for Africa 'RCA', 2005: 122). Thus, resulting in what UN – HABITAT (cited in RCA, 2005: 122) calls a 'premature urbanisation'.

Another view is that some of the crimes, particularly drugs-trafficking are committed by non-South African nationals. In a report, Senior Superintendent Devan Naicker, the national head of the South African Police Service (SAPS) Narcotics Bureau comments that the signs are that the number of people being arrested within and outside South Africa on trafficking charges is on the increase and that some of these are non-South African nationals moving drugs abroad on South African passports (Donaldson, prisontalk, online: 2007).

### **SOME OF THE EFFECTS OF CRIME IN SOUTH AFRICA**

#### **Crime impacts both on the poor and the rich**

Crime impacts both on the rich and the poor, but in different ways. It is important to point out that poor people

are more at risk from violent crime than the affluent, which are more affected by property crime; this is because the poor has little to be stolen and violent crime is one of the more severe shocks that can cause vulnerable households to become impoverished (May, 1997). This indicates that there is a clear link between crime, poverty and inequality. The National Victims of Crime Survey (Schonteich and Louw, 2001) reveals that the wealthiest households are at greatest risk of falling victim to household-related property crime. It reveals that households with annual incomes over R48,000 reported levels of victimisation greater than the average of 18% in 1997. Some 245 of households earning between R48,000 and R95,999 and 29% of those with annual incomes of more than R96,000 were victims of property crime. The survey also shows that in respect of violent household-related crime the correlation with household wealth is weaker. The wealthiest households (those with an annual income of R96,000 or more in 1997) experienced less violent crime than households earning between R24,000 and R95,999 per annum, but more than poor households (Schonteich and Louw, 2001).

### **High crime rates and number of prison inmates**

There is also a correlation between the high level of crime and number of inmates in South African prison; this is because the number of inmates has consequently increased, thereby causing congestions such as struggle for bed spaces and outbreak of diseases in prison. For example, South African prisons, built to accommodate 113, 825 inmates, housed a total of 186, 546 by September 2004, thus resulting in a rise in overcrowding of more than 63% (Howard, South Africa's Prison Crisis, 2007: online). Crisis pervades the South African prison, as they have overburdened in sanitary facilities, warm water supplies, electricity and other creature comforts are often in a state of disrepair, making life excruciating for inmates. As Judge Bertelsmann stated in 2007 '...Most prisons were, therefore, forced to house inmates in conditions indubitably in conflict with the inspirational values of the constitution.... It is no exaggeration to say that, if the SPCA were to cram as many animals into a cage as our correctional services are forced to cram prisoners into a single cell, the SPCA would be prosecuted for cruelty to animals' (Judge, 2007).

### **The implication of crime on economic development**

A firm relationship exists between development and crime. Of particular importance is that crime affects both growth and economic development. The threat inflicted by crime diverts resources to protection efforts, exacts health costs through increased stress and generally creates an environment un conducive for productive activity. And since business and investment cannot thrive in such an unsi-

table climate, this hinders growth and economic development. This is pronounced in the widespread emigration witnessed in South Africa in the past twenty years or so, which has been attributed partly to their eagerness to escape from a high crime environment (Demombynes and Ozler, 2002). In the same pedestal, studies carried out by the South African Migration Project, reveals that both blacks and whites rated security as the most crucial push factor, strengthening the national importance of addressing the crime problem as a deterrent to the brain drain (Dodson, 2002).

Micro evidence also suggests that high levels of income inequality, especially group inequality, are significant, influential and positive determining factors to the incidence of burglary and vehicle theft as well as violent crime in South Africa (Blau and Blau, 1982). Sociological and economic theory has linked the distribution of welfare to criminal activity. Inequality may portray the disparity in returns to criminal activity and thereby have correlation with crime rate. Besides, inequality and social welfare in general may have impacts on crime through other avenues, for example; inequality may be associated with lack of social capital, lack of upward movement, or social disintegration, all of which may generate higher rates of crime (Blau and Blau, 1982). Also, economic inequalities between groups may stimulate or intensify on-going conflict in a society by strengthening and reinforcing ethnic/racial and class disparities and antagonism (Demombynes and Ozler, 2002). Subsequently, high crimes arising from all these factors bear negative consequences on growth and the development of South Africa. Thus, there exists a vicious triangle which associates income inequality to crime which, in turn, brings about high levels of investment uncertainty (ibid). This appears as one of the crucial constraints to long-run economic growth in South Africa.

This argument that crime mostly impacts on the economic development of South Africa is further demonstrated and supported by the African survey carried out by the World Bank on Small Medium and Micro Enterprise (SMME) firms in 2000, which found that: 94% responded that local governments should give priority to crime, and 77% indicated that crime prevention was the most crucial action local governments could take. Approximately 61% of SMME polled responded to have suffered some form of crime in the preceding year. The study also revealed that these small firms spent as much on security as they did on training, a share with a high opportunity cost, thereby diverting funds meant for business growth and development on crime prevention and security (World Bank, 2000).

Other studies have similar findings, for example, a survey conducted by the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS) suggests that murder, the most violent crime, is the highest cause of non-natural death in South Africa, thus, surpasses other factors such as suicide, vehicle accidents, and other accidents. The Trauma Unit studies also reveal that violence causes half of all

**Table 3.** Compares the level of poverty, inequality and unemployment between the two phases, 1970 - 2001.

First and second phase	Poverty real per capita income	Between-group inequality	Race unemployment in percentage
Apartheid South Africa	50% in 1970s and 80s(a)	60% in the 1970s(b)	(1993/1994): Africans 41.2, Coloured 23.3, Indian 17.1 and White 6.2(c)
Post Apartheid South Africa	32% in 1995 to 34% in 2000(d)	43% by 1996 and 40% in 2001(e)	(2000/01): Africans 28, Coloured 17, Indian 10 and White 4.1(f)

Sources: (a) Julian May (1998), (b) Whiteford, AC and Van Seventer, DE (2000), (c) Kingdon and J. Knight (2006), (d) H. Bohart, and R. Kanbur (2006), (e) H. Bhorat and R. Kanbur (2005), (f) Employment figures - Jobs: building after apartheid (online, 2006).

non-lethal injuries brought at trauma units and that treating just fire arms-related injuries at public hospitals could cause South African tax payer \$US300 million a year, or SAR 1.8 billion (both studies are cited in UNODC, 2005: 68). This is more than the entire 2004/5 budget of the South African Department of Land Affairs (UNODC, 2005: 68). Therefore, this has debilitating impact on the economic development of South Africa.

### IMPROVEMENTS IN SOME SOCIO-ECONOMIC STANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The transition to democratic, elected, non-racial government, which set in motion in early 1990, stirred a debate on the course of economic policies to accomplish sustained economic growth, while at the same time remedying the poverty and other socio economic discrepancies generated by apartheid government (Kingdom and Knight, 2004). That is to say, since the institution (1994) and consolidation (1999) of democracy in South Africa, there have been improvements in some of the socio-economic issues such as poverty, inequality and unemployment, political corruption and conflict as the democratic government addresses the problems and effects of apartheid era (for the relationship between poverty, conflict and development in Africa, see Ikejiaku, 2009). This paper provides the following evidence to establish its claim.

#### Poverty

Table 3 shows that poverty level is higher (50%) in the Apartheid South Africa (first phase) compared with Post Apartheid South Africa (second phase), though the figures suggest that during the second phase, poverty actually did increase (from 32% in 1995 to 34% in 2000), but not as at the level in first phase. Again, it has always been argued that in order to understand and assess the income inequality in South Africa, the between-group inequality should be a key factor. Thus, in the Table 3, this stood at about 60% in the 1970s. In 1996 however, this declined to 43% and by 2001, this figure stood at 40%. Table 3 also suggests that in 1993/94 those of the

African race are mostly affected by unemployment, followed by coloureds, Indians and Whites respectively. However by 2000/01, unemployment on a national basis, though reduced significantly among all races, particularly Africans, was in declining order high, but still remained highest among the Black population.

Therefore, Table 3 suggests that poverty, inequality and unemployment were worse during the apartheid period. Just as May (1998) argues ‘...during 1970s and 1980s, however, a serious slowdown occurred in the growth of both output and employment, while population growth continued at around 2% per year. Consequently, real per capita incomes declined... a marked degree of income inequality and widespread poverty persisted...’

**Political corruption in the first phase (apartheid South Africa):** The political leaders in South Africa were very corrupt, this is particularly common in the first phase, (though there are traces of political corruption in the second phase) and in a bid to cover up their corrupt practices, they turned out as irresponsible leaders and their government were seen as ineffective. For example, the governance that – committed apartheid crimes against humanity, apartheid caused debts (at least \$26 bn) that drain the meagre social and economic resources of South Africa, apartheid that destabilised and destroyed the whole Southern African region (odious debts, online, 2007); such leaders can hardly be seen as incorrupt, nor its governance seen as responsible or effective as the evidence in this paper will establish.

White superiority in South Africa has always been grounded on ideas of greed and corruption. And political ideology has often been misleadingly construed for what imply corrupt conduct by the government. This is aptly presented:

For more than 300 years, all South Africans were under the yoke of colonial and apartheid rule, a system that benefited the few at the expense of the many.... It was a corrupt system of governance. A near monopoly on money, power and influence were in the hands of a minority and they used this to either violently suppress the majority or, at best, transfer resources in order to starve off inevitable revolution.... In closed societies...the truth is hidden from the public view by design. Access to

power (and a monopoly over it) provides the elite in the public...with a unique opportunity to line their pockets.... In terms of common law crime they are simply crooks dressed in the guise of patriots.... They have effectively corrupted themselves (Vuuren, 2006: 2; Vuuren is the only scholar who has carried research on apartheid corruption, so his work is heavily referred to here).

For example, in the late 1970s was the Info Scandal (also tagged 'Muldergate'). Between 1977 and 1979 the scandal stormed in South Africa, involving well-placed members of the NP political elite that walloped (embezzled) cash intended for the creation of the government-fronted Citizens' newspaper, and which ultimately led to the demise of President Vorster's tenure (ibid). According to the report of the scandal, the Prime Minister, Vorster, authorised 'secret funding' to the Department of Information to pursue propaganda wars internally and externally. The secret funding – Orwellian connection is by establishing publications such as the government mouthpiece, 'The Citizen', and attempts to purchase reputable foreign newspapers, such as Washington Star, in order to ensure that the apartheid state obtain impressive press globally (Vuuren, 2006: 2).

Among the top and high place officials incriminated in the scandal include central figures such as: the Prime Minister, B. J. Vorster, who kept information of the slush fund from (some) of his Cabinet colleagues; the Minister of Information, Connie Mulder, who was rated to succeed Vorster as Prime Minister; his deputy, Dr Eschel Rhoodie, head of the Department of Information, who was involved in spending the Department's Money; and the then Minister of Defence, P. W. Botha, who later claimed that he 'strongly' disapproved of the Secret Defence Fund being used in the wrong way. However, according to the report; in his account of the scandal, published in 1983, Eschel Rhoodie maintains that both Botha and General Malan knew full well about the activities of the Department of Information and had agreed to these throughout. In fact, in April 1978, the Rand Daily Mail (RDM) reported that Rhoodie had admitted that his Department had '...spent R10 million in foreign currency annually and for some of this he did not know if he had the authority of the Reserve Bank' (Vuuren, 2006: 29).

Again, Dr. Nico Diedrichs (nicknamed 'Dr. Gold' for his unavoidable inclination in gold, then an essential aspect of the South African economy) was involved in series of corrupt allegations when he served in various positions of trust in South Africa. For example, in the 70s, as the Minister of Finance he consented to change the base of South Africa's gold sales from London to Zurich on condition that a small amount (valued at US 10c per ounce sold) would be transferred into a private account; and in relation to this, Alister Sparks, the then- editor of the RDM, travelled to Switzerland and made two deposits into a numbered Swiss bank account (no. 187 -613-L1 E) totalling 50 Swiss Francs. While serving as State President, he involved in property speculations with a company

called Glen Anil. One of the greatest, but serious corrupt deals was in 1975 when he sold a piece of land for R125, 000, which amounted to 62 times the purchase price of R2.000 two years earlier (Vuuren, 2006: 29).

In the late 1980s (as the imperial presidency, as it is popularly called, of P. W. Botha declined), a number of corrupt allegations came up, particularly the 1989 exposure that centred on a R650-million foreign exchange fraud and various other multimillion rand scams. These incriminated Cabinet Ministers, the MPs and other several government departments and multiple rungs of the state bureaucracy (Vuuren, 2006: 29).

In this direction O'Meara (1996, 351) notes 'In fact, the multiple rungs of structures and political officers that Botha has to maintain within the system dictates that it is almost impossible that he can oversee state expenditure with any certainty, transparency and accountability'.

**Political corruption in the second phase (post apartheid South Africa):** The only allegation of political corruption in the new South Africa, which has continued to raise some dust is the US \$5 billion Strategic Defence Procurement Package (known as the 'arms deal'), which was finalised in 1999/2000. By 2003, the case has opened up some surprises; for example, it reveals that Deputy President Jacob Zuma's financial advisor (and an arms dealer in his own right), Shabir Shaik, has been charged with corruption relating to the arms deal (Vuuren, 2005).

It is right to argue that on comparative assessment, the apartheid regime is more corrupt than the post apartheid regime. This is evidential because relying on a perception-based survey of the 'Afrobarometer survey (2003) : In its most recent study, in which some 2400 South Africans were surveyed between October – November 2004. The study shows a decline in public perceptions of corruption between the late 1990's and 2004. Where over 50% of respondents felt that 'all' or 'most' government officials were involved in corruption in 1997, this figure has now dropped to just over 20%. In 2000 almost 50% of respondents believed that 'all' or 'most' MP's were involved in corruption; this figure has plummeted to 24%. Similarly, the National Integrity Systems TI Country Study Report – South Africa 2005, findings suggest that the country has made tremendous progress in the ten short years since the end of the corrupt apartheid rule (Transparency International, 2005).

### **Conflict in the first phase**

In the first phase (apartheid period), violent conflict were common and rampant. Few examples are: on June 16, 1976, the youth of Soweto that marched against being taught in the medium of Afrikaans were fired on by the police which gave rise to a high surge of violence that overwhelmed the country (The Official Gateway, online, 2006). The violent conflicts become critical in the late 70s

and the apartheid government took drastic measures and more ruthless repression amidst turbulence. In March 1985, the township rebellion escalated, when the police opened fire on an unarmed Africans procession in the city of Uitebhage, killing 20 and wounding several people (The Regional Survey of the World, 2002). Again, it can be remembered that Kwazulu–Natal has been a notable conflict ridden area during apartheid. This includes conflicts that involved the Zulus and the Xhosas (African National Congress supporters in the KwaZulu-Natal homeland in 1970/80s, Irobi, 2005). In fact, the cases of conflicts during the apartheid era were catholic.

### **Conflict in the second phase**

Even after the end of apartheid in 1994, conflict continued if to a lesser degree. Since 1994, when apartheid was finally dismantled wide-spread violent conflict has reduced. The only conflict, which this paper has the knowledge is the recent Tshwane Foreigners Riots in January, 2005, in which two Zimbabweans were killed and several other people injured in the clashes [UN Integrated Regional Information Network (UNIRIN), 2005]. No doubt, violent conflict was more intense during apartheid regime compared with the post apartheid South Africa; for example in Natal alone, well-over 1,147 people were killed during the first months of 1992 (The New York Times, 1992).

The general reduction in violent conflict in post apartheid South Africa is attested by and encapsulated in the views of Nobel Prize Winner on Peace, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, in his speech delivered as Nelson Mandela Foundation Lecture on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2004. It is telling to reproduce some excerpts from the speech:

Hey, the world has still not got over the fact that we had the reasonable peaceful transition from repression to democracy that we experienced. Have we forgotten so soon how we were on the brink of comprehensive disaster ...when we had indiscriminate killings on trains, taxis and buses? Do you recall how when they announced the statistics of the previous 24 h and they said 6, 7 or 8 people had been killed, do you recall that we would often sigh with relief and say well only 7 or 8 have been killed? Things were in such a desperate state...just think of massacres that were taking place at regular intervals – Sebokeng, Thokoza, Bishop Boipatong and the killing fields of KwaZulu Natal...the AWB raid into Bophuthatswana and the World Trade Centre, ...the assassination of Chris Hani...(SAFM, online, 2006).

### **Conclusion**

It is reasonable to submit that improvement in the socio economic problems during the second phase as this

paper demonstrated is because of the efforts of the democratic government towards addressing the needs of the people. More so, the majority of these socio-economic issues within this period are spill-over effects from the apartheid, if so, they may not be blamed on the present democratic government. However, In spite of the government efforts to improve the 'lot' of the people in South Africa, much improvement is still needed. For example, there is still a big gap between the formal and informal economies. That is to say, many people in South Africa are trapped in a third world (informal) economy, but structurally disconnected from it by the formal economy (Andries de Toit, 2005). Mbeki refers to this as 'two economies' – a vibrant first world economy and the much larger informal rural and urban economy where poverty is still rife (in DFID, 2006). Importantly, the government should devote more time to ascertain why crime has not reduced as envisaged after the dismantling of apartheid and redress the situation, because the high crime rate (particularly violent crime) negatives the economic development in South Africa; as the United Nations Office of Drug and Crime recapitulates: 'Violent crime is a major problem and remains a serious concern for business... Many in the police are inexperienced, poorly trained and corrupt: the institution itself cannot be relied upon to enforce the law adequately and to protect the public... High levels of crime are one of the main obstacles to economic growth' (UNODC, 2005: 79).

The paper however, calls on some other African countries to follow the consolidated democratic experiment exemplified by South Africa, because this will help them in addressing their socio-economic problems. In some African countries where democracy has been introduced, the problem is creating the necessary conditions that might facilitate democratic politics in practice, which endows each citizen with a sense of worth and equality. There is unavoidable connectivity between unbridled (unrestrained or participatory) democracy, poverty and economic growth. A genuine democracy cannot thrive for all citizens unless citizens enjoy certain basic rights (Azinge, in Okafor, 2004), such as rights to food, minimum wage-income, health, education and political participation; for example since the introduction of democratic institutions in places like Ghana (1957), Nigeria (1979), Kenya (1992), Tanzania (1995) and Uganda (1996); governments in power have been unable to provide the basic needs to the people and even chose to use violence and other forms of repression to deal with the citizens and detention of politicians opposed to the regime was a common thing (Ikejiaku, 2009, UNODC, 2005: 79). In places like Sudan, outright military operation was continuously employed to frustrate opponents of the regime. The government also imposed Islamic law on all citizens irrespective of the preferred religion. All these were recipes for internal instability, particularly upsurge in conflicts and high criminal networks that deteriorate economic growth in Africa,



which blame lies squarely on the nature of democratic practices that do not give freedoms to the people (Wayande, 1997). The rises in the level of poverty, conflicts, genocides, violence, homicide and destructive existential relations have been rampant and prevalent since the democratic process started. In Rwanda, Burundi, Congo Brazzaville, Sierra-Leone, Liberia and Cote D'Ivoire democracy seems to have lost control as the massacre arising from conflicts prevail over African brotherhood (Okafor, 2004). In the Democratic Republic of Congo alone, for example between 1998 and 2002, some four million people died in the civil war (RCA, 2005). Today's democracies such as Angola, Ethiopia and Mozambique are in reality presiding over politics where over 80% of the citizens are refugees (Okafor, 2004).

This paper has captured so many socio-economic issues that work against growth and economic development in South Africa, particularly crime (especially during undemocratic apartheid period).

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