

An Analysis of Attempts by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Solving Immigrants and Refugees Problem in the SADC Region: A Case of South Africa

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ABSTRACT Many countries in the SADC region have experienced serious problems concerning immigrants and refugees. The problems troubled and escalated in the region during the 1990s up to date. In the main, this has been due to the nature of the conflicts and violence experienced by the citizens of the countries involved. The purpose of this study is to highlight the role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in its attempt to solve the immigrant and refugee problem in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region with special reference to South Africa. For this study, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were adopted. As previously stated, the focus on the study will be on South Africa as one of the SADC countries. However, it should be noted that although the focus is on South Africa, lessons learnt from other countries proved useful for this study. Furthermore, the study examines and critiques the various challenges as experienced by the UNHCR. A narrative approach was chosen to discuss the findings of the study. The findings show that most immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers felt unsafe in their countries of origin; therefore, they headed to neighbouring countries which in this case included South Africa. In this study, the researcher is mindful of the fact that the refugee status determination is conducted not by governments but by the UNHCR.

INTRODUCTION

After the dawn of democracy in South Africa in 1994, this country experienced a huge influx of immigrants and refugees. The increased flight of immigrants and refugees from some African as well as the SADC countries into South Africa has resulted in rapidly growing problems for the latter as the host country. Coupled with this is also the challenge experienced by the UNHCR in dealing with this problem, with the management thereof becoming increasingly important, not only to promote economic growth, but also to improve the provision of infrastructure and services. The UNHCR's operational effectiveness, thereby enhancing the organisation's capacity to fulfil its mandate on behalf of refugees is thus discussed. It should be noted that in its attempts to solve the refugee problem, the UNHCR embarked on different strategies and systems which sometimes resulted in competition and tension.

A holistic approach to the immigrant and refugee problem has found support at inter-governmental level within the SADC region. As early as July 1996, SADC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the UNHCR whose Article IV enjoins SADC and UNHCR, among other things to: address the social, economic, and

political issues in the region, particularly those which have a bearing on the root causes of forced population displacement, refugee protection, the provision of humanitarian assistance and the search for durable solutions; and establishing and strengthening mechanisms, procedures and institutions at national, regional and international level, in order to create sustainable local capacity for the provision of protection and assistance to refugees and to give effect to the concept of burden sharing (Rutinwa 1999: 35-46).

The main aim of SADC is to achieve development and economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the peoples of Southern Africa, and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration. In order to achieve these objectives, SADC aims at harmonising the political and socio-economic policies and development plans of member states. In view of the above, the refugee problem in the region has immense political, economic and diplomatic implications for the ongoing initiatives and projects in regional cooperation and integration. Using South Africa as a case in point, the study attempts to highlight the challenges of the UNHCR in dealing with the immigrant and refugee problems in the region.

Literature Review

A brief overview of the existing literature regarding the impact and the role of the UNHCR in South Africa is essential to identify the gaps addressed by this study. Bell (1993, in Ile and Mapuva 2008: 127) argues that a literature review helps devise theoretical and analytical frameworks that can be used for the subsequent interpretation and analysis of data. In line with this argument, the related literature cited in this study will be used to analyse the immigration and refugee problem. In this case, the theoretical framework will relate to the concepts of regional integration, state security and, to a lesser extent, globalisation. This approach is propagated by scholars such as Solomon (2003), Stein (1986) and Crisp (1984). Oucho (2005: 11) provides an interesting analysis of refugees and displaced people in the SADC region. The information was a valuable resource for the purpose of this study. The modus operandi of the UNHCR was thus to advance any solution deemed necessary to the immigrant and refugee crisis in South Africa. Research reports by the Forced Migration Study Programme (FMSP) from the University of the Witwatersrand proved to be valuable sources for this study as they provided a comparative and longitudinal study of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and non-nationals in African inner-cities; namely, Johannesburg, Maputo, Nairobi and Lubumbashi.

A Brief Historical Background of the UNHCR

The United Nations (UN) refugee agency emerged in the wake of World War II to help Europeans displaced by that conflict. Optimistically, the Office of the UNHCR for Refugees was established on 14 December 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly with a three-year mandate to complete its work and then disband. On 28 July 1951, the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the legal foundation of helping refugees and the basic statute guiding UNHCR's work, was adopted.

In 1956 UNHCR faced its first major emergency; the outpouring of refugees when Soviet forces crushed the Hungarian Revolution. Any expectation that UNHCR would become unnecessary has never resurfaced. In the 1960s, the de-colonisation of Africa produced the first of this continent's numerous refugees needing

UNHCR intervention. Over the following two decades, the UNHCR had to help with displacement crises in Asia and Latin America. By the end of the century there were fresh refugee problems in Africa.

It should be noted that the UNHCR is the body making a status determination on refugees. The UNHCR is not a state, and recognition by it clearly gives no right of entry anywhere. It is, in principle, a matter for the State to decide who it will admit into its territory (Alexander 1999: 259). The study also shows that the UNHCR had an important role to play in the SADC region, particularly South Africa.

The Problem of Quantifying the Immigrants and Refugees in South Africa

Mukonza (2011: 1384) states that: 'migration and as a practice is as old as the human race. It has increased in recent times as globalisation has made it possible for people to gain knowledge of a destination point for many nationalities from within the African continent as well as those from as far afield as China, Bangladesh and Pakistan'. In 1989 the South African Institute of International Affairs estimated that there were 1.2 million illegal immigrants in the country. By 1994 they estimated the number at approximately 5 million (Minaar et al. 1995: 33). It is interesting to note that over the same period, however, the South African Police Services (SAPS) estimated the number of illegal immigrants at between 2 and 3.5 million or between 5 and 8 percent of the total population. Senator Carl Werth of the Freedom Front (FF), during a Home Affairs debate in the Senate in August 1994, announced that the number of illegal immigrants in the country was 8 million. A month later, Dr Frederick van Zyl Slabbert announced at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) symposium that the number of illegal aliens in the country might be as high as 12 million (Minaar and Hough 1996: 127).

In 1993, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the South African Government and the UNHCR that allowed refugees to enter South Africa. Since the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994, the South African government under the ANC has passed almost 200 pieces of new legislation. However, migration legislation was slow to be reconsidered with the Refugee Act passed in 1998 and the Immigration

Act passed only in 2002 (Crush and Williams 2001).

In 2010, more asylum applications were lodged in South Africa than in any other country in the world. The trend continued in 2011, and the heavy demands on the asylum system resulted in a backlog of more than 300 000 applications awaiting a decision. Most asylum applications and refugees in South Africa are from nationals of Burundi, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Somalia and Zimbabwe.

As of December 2010 some 58 000 people, mainly from Angola, the DRC, Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia had been recognised as refugees in South Africa. They were allowed to work and to avail themselves of basic social services. Although the situation favoured them in this regard, in practice, it was difficult for them to do so because of the problems of obtaining documentation. Therefore, in one way or another competition between refugees and South African nationals for jobs, housing, business opportunities and social services raised tensions, and aggravated xenophobic attitudes among some in the different local communities. The UNHCR and its implementing partners provided vulnerable refugees with some support, and advocated their inclusion in national assistance programmes. In 2012, the ANC government tried to ease the pressure on the asylum system and made it more efficient. This saw some 275 000 Zimbabweans apply for work, study or business permits. Due to some logistical problems, the scheme ended in July 2011, with the issue of permits still outstanding (UNHCR Global Appeal 2012-2013: 108-109).

Despite the above statistical data, there is general consensus among researchers in the migration field that migration into and within South Africa is poorly collected and coordinated (Wa Kabwe-Segatti and Landau 2006: 5; Forced Migration Studies Programme Report 2010: 1). The Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP) Report of 2010, based on its extrapolation from census data, estimated the total foreign population to be between 1.5 and 2 million or 3-4 percent of the South African population (FMSP Report 2010: 3). In agreement with the above sentiments, Solomon (2003: 90) argues that the researchers were confronted by the central problem of the illegal and clandestine nature of this form of population movement

because it provides an inadequate basis for its quantification.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It should be noted that the success of South Africa's transition to democracy, amongst other things, depended on the manner the ANC's government and the UNHCR handled the crisis of immigrants and refugees in a post-apartheid country. Generally, this included introducing legislation and measures to solve this problem. In this section, the methodology used in the study is highlighted and unpacked for the smooth organisation of the process. The researcher used qualitative and quantitative methods, with special reference to a narrative sequence of UNHCR activities as they fit perfectly within this kind of study.

The data for this study consist of three kinds; namely, primary, secondary and tertiary data. Primary data include consulting newspaper clippings for a cross-sectional analysis of information. Secondary data include books, academic journals and these forms the basis for the theoretical study and quality analysis. Secondary data were supplemented by tertiary data from the literature and references in academic journals, as well as from available unpublished reports. Furthermore, in order to enhance the validity of this study, the findings and analysis are based upon a desk review of public and internal UNHCR operational and policy documents.

OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

The South African asylum system is mostly hampered by the sheer number of asylum applicants, which makes it difficult to ensure that the refugee status determination (RSD) process is always fair and efficient. Providing access to asylum procedures for unaccompanied and separated children remains a challenge. Likewise, in most cases refugees are vulnerable to the high levels of random crime that afflict South Africa, as well as sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation in the workplace and detention due to lack of proper documentation. Consequently, poor socio-economic conditions among host communities provide a breeding ground for xenophobia. In order to understand the role played by the UNHCR, it is important to highlight some of the problems faced by refugees in a democratic South Africa.

Some of the Reasons for Refugees to Flock to South Africa

Throughout history, people have moved from one place to another and from one country to another for a variety of reasons. The primary driving forces for these movements include flight from persecution, violence and conflict as well as dire poverty and the search for better economic opportunities. The fact that the reasons for movement are different, states applies different means in dealing with them. While African refugees are persons fleeing from their respective countries and, to that extent, share that common characteristic of refugees everywhere, the reasons surrounding the flight from the homeland are complex. These include persecution, social upheaval, civil war, wars of liberation, secessionist war, and natural disasters, especially drought and famine (Blavo 1999: 4-11). However, for the purpose of this study, a number of socio-political factors have been identified as the main causes/reasons for immigrants and refugees to come to South Africa, especially after the democratisation period. The following are some of the noticeable factors:

The Pull Factors, Such as Peace and Stability

As indicated previously in this study, since the advent of democracy in 1994, South Africa has faced the challenge of an increase in immigrants and refugees. This is largely because of the socio-economic and political stability the country enjoys, in contrast to the unstable conditions that exist in source countries. Mukonza (2011: 1384) argues that this foreign population can be dismantled into its various components; namely, economic migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented immigrants. To deal with the challenges, the ANC government crafted the Refugee Act, 1998 (Act 130 of 1998) and the Immigration Act, 2002 (Act 13 of 2002). Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the refugee in South Africa is the composition of refugee groups; these normally include a large number of women and children.

The Escalation of Wars and Conflicts

The wave of armed confrontations in an increasing number of African countries is related mainly to increasing struggles for domination

between persons or groups with religious, racial, ideological, or ethnic differences (Faris 1976: 185). Due to these violent activities in some of the SADC countries, immigrants and refugees flock to South Africa. South Africa becomes their choice destination because of the relative stability prevailing in the country. The pressures exerted by the immigrants and refugees in demanding for social amenities in South Africa poses a threat to its long time political stability. This was evident in May 2008 when xenophobic attacks started in the Gauteng Province and escalated to the other provinces around the country.

Small and Fragile Economies

Some African countries are attempting to cope with various problems, including underdevelopment, revolts, ethnicity and communal conflicts which impact on their economies. Owing to the above, a number of people decide to leave their original countries for others (Stein 1986: 269). According to the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the twenty least developed African countries include: Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia, Guinea, Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Somalia. Among the structural features of the least developed African countries are 'major geographical and climatologically handicaps, such as landlockedness, drought and desertification or high exposure to flood or disaster' (ECA Report 1980).

The Socio-ecological Role of the UNHCR in South Africa

South Africa's popular historiography tends to project a simplified analysis of the problems experienced by the refugees within the country. As Landau (2011: 2) points out 'the 2008 attacks reflect an important point in the country's post-apartheid, post-authoritarian existence'. In South Africa, the word 'refugee' has become synonymous with human rights violations. As mentioned before, people become refugees because their fundamental human rights are threatened or violated in their country of origin, with their governments being unable or sometimes unwilling to protect them. The Office of the UNHCR, whose mandate is to protect refugees, has always recognised the important link between refugees and the respect for and protection of hu-

man rights. In South Africa, the UNHCR promotes international refugee agreements and monitors government compliance with international refugee law. UNHCR staff promotes refugee law among all people who are involved in refugee protection, including border guards, journalists, NGOs, lawyers, judges and senior government officials.

According to Gorman (1982: 36-37), many agencies play a role in the refugee crisis. Apart from the role played by the UNHCR, other agencies such as the International Christian Aid (ICA), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), International Council of Voluntary Agencies (CVA) and the Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service (ACVAFS) are active. For the purpose of this study, only the UNHCR is discussed.

Before addressing the possible solutions as provided by the UNHCR in South Africa, it is important to highlight the following challenges which continue to be experienced by immigrants and refugees in recent years in the country:

Failure to Secure a Favourable Protection Environment

In South Africa as a host country, refugees are exposed to dangers associated with unstable circumstances, such as a lack of food and shelter, as well as possible human rights violations. In most cases, women and children are particularly at risk, often suffering sexual abuse and exploitation to gain passage or access to asylum. At the point of asylum, refugees are entitled to have their basic human rights protected and respected by the country in which they have sought and obtained asylum. Having lost the protection of their country of origin, refugees are not like ordinary citizens and therefore enjoy specific rights arising from their particular situation. The UNHCR makes sure that the rights, which include the right not to be sent back to the country of origin wherein their physical safety or freedom will endanger the immigrants or refugees, is protected. Besides the above, refugees should enjoy basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as the right to non-discrimination, the right to life, liberty and security before the law and access to courts of law and so on.

Xenophobic Attacks on Refugees

Solomon (2003: 92) states that: 'One of the first of the challenges with regard to illegal im-

migration is how South Africans should deal with the phenomenon of xenophobia. There is growing evidence that South Africans as a whole are becoming more xenophobic in their attitudes towards migrants generally and illegal immigrants, in particular'. The above statement by Solomon paints a broader picture on the challenges faced by the immigrants and refugees in South Africa. Although initially South Africa was recognized as a country with stable political climate, of late it has turned to be violent against such people. Following Solomon's arguments, it is clear that xenophobic attacks in South Africa started a long time ago, prior to and after the 1994 democratic elections. To a certain extent this was due to the attitudes of some South Africa citizens. This became evident, for example, in 2008 when the country experienced a huge escalation of attacks on refugees started on 11 May 2008, when the residents of Alexandra Township attacked the refugees in the neighbourhood. Within two weeks, citizens murdered more than 60 people, raped dozens, wounded close to 700 and displaced more than 100 000. Consequently, perpetrators destroyed goods and homes belonging to the refugees and displaced people. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM 2009: 24) identified different elements of xenophobic attacks including that: the violence occurred among South Africa's poor communities; there was no violence among the middle class; the actions were based on unfounded and unverified fears that foreigners were the cause of social and economic problems in the country; and that the victims of these actions included South Africans who had migrated into affected areas (Palmary s.a: 1-22).

According to Landau (2011: 1) 'official responses to the attacks were confused, contradictory, and often overtly ideological. During the violence, the government first denied that there was a crisis, then blamed criminal elements, opposition parties and sinister forces'. In one way or another, there were criminal activities, such as rape, the confiscation of goods and looting of shops belonging to refugees.

With the transition to democracy in South Africa, the 1990s witnessed far-reaching changes in refugee movements in southern Africa. Many southern African states remained fragile emerging democracies, with continuing insecurity, which this entails. For example, in September 1998 due to the political upheavals distur-

bances in Lesotho drove about 1000 people to seek refuge in neighbouring South Africa.

Hassan, UNHCR senior external relations officer for Southern Africa stated the following to the *Sowetan* in 1997: 'If government does not formulate clear policies to safeguard foreigners it will create a numbness to human rights violations that allows the erosion of human rights, firstly for the affected people, but later for South Africans themselves' (*Sowetan* 1997: 13). To date, the UNHCR continues to advocate for the strengthening of the legal, administrative and operational frameworks that benefit refugees and asylum seekers in South Africa. With the recurrent xenophobic attacks on refugees, their ability to make a living or integrate into local communities is hampered. The UNHCR is increasing the number of resettlement submissions particularly for refugees with vulnerabilities that cannot be addressed in the country (UNHCR Global Appeal 2012-2013: 109). Furthermore, the organisation advocates a favourable protection environment and supports fair protection processes in a bid to ensure that refugees have access to basic services.

Maluwa (1999: 195) argues that South Africa, as a former refugee generating country, has a historical responsibility to host refugees particularly those from other African countries. However, this does not mean that the country should accommodate the ever-growing masses of bona fide refugees and illegal immigrants streaming across its borders to go unchecked.

Possible Durable Solutions as Provided by the UNHCR

The prevention of forced migration requires political will and radical changes in the world of economic order. The UNHCR calls for a humanitarian agenda in dealing with the problem of refugees. There are both long- and short-term perspectives to the solution of immigration and the refugee problem in South Africa. The short-term solution involves 'meeting the immediate needs of the refugees by giving them emergency aid calculated to ensure their survival; namely, food, shelter, clothing and medical assistance. The long-term solution has the following dimensions: voluntary repatriation of refugees to their countries of origin; settlement in countries of first asylum; and resettlement in new 'homelands' (Adepoju 1982: 32).

There are occasions when the UNHCR, sometimes with the help of other international organisations, coordinates and sponsors the movement of refugees from one place to another. These situations are grouped under the following categories: resettlement, internal relocation, voluntary repatriation and family reunification; the movements being not part of the asylum process. They happen when there is a need for protection and when the UNHCR cannot identify local solutions. Only recognised refugees and, in exceptional cases, also asylum seekers are considered for these relocation options with the UNHCR.

By June 2011, the Department of Home Affairs had received approximately 181 000 asylum applications for the year 2010. Ironically, this was a fifth of the total number received globally during the same period, making South Africa the world's largest recipient of individual applications for asylum. This was due to the fact that South Africa's transition to democracy from 1994 made it the destination of choice for thousands of people in the neighbouring countries fleeing political repression and persecution. The country also attracted many of such people in search of economic opportunities. In dealing with the crisis of immigrants and refugees, the UNHCR recommended the following as measures to solve the problem:

Resettlement

Resettlement is the assisted movement of a refugee, including his or her nuclear family to a different country from the one that had first granted refugee status. It is available only in exceptional cases for refugees who cannot find local solutions and whose protection cannot be guaranteed by the country that had first granted them asylum. However, it should be noted that the general problems in South Africa, such as xenophobia and a lack of employment opportunities, do not satisfy the requirements for resettlement. The UNHCR first seeks to establish a durable environment for such people here in South Africa before they consider resettlement (Entwisle 2010: 3-13; Stein 1986: 277).

Settlement and Internal Relocation

The other primary durable solution for developing country refugees is local settlement.

The UNHCR argues that where voluntary return is not immediately feasible or possible conditions should be created within the country of asylum for temporary settlement or internal relocation. Stein (1986: 273) contends that operationally, temporary settlement is not very different from local integration. Both involve a host permitting refugees to participate on an equal footing in its social and economic life. In terms of the policy the main difference is that temporary settlement is not meant to be a durable solution; the refugees are allowed to remain while waiting for voluntary repatriation to become a feasible option (Stein 1986: 273).

Internal relocation is the official movement of a refugee/asylum seeker (including the nuclear family) within South Africa, for protection purposes. In exceptional cases, persons may be relocated to gain greater access to the UNHCR. The conditions and procedures for internal relocation are very similar to those for resettlement. If the UNHCR is convinced that a person needs to be internally relocated, they will consider safer locations within South Africa (Stein 1986: 273).

Voluntary Repatriation

Voluntary repatriation for refugees became the primary solution for the increasing number of African refugees. This occurs when refugees freely decide to return to their countries of origin. Under international refugee law and the UNHCR's Statute, the voluntary repatriation of refugees and their re-establishment in their own countries bring their refugee status to an end, albeit remaining 'of concern' to the UNHCR until their reintegration process is complete. The UNHCR's 2008 policy on return and reintegration defines reintegration as: '... a process which involves the progressive establishment of conditions which enable returnees and their communities to exercise their social, economic, civil, political and cultural rights, and on that basis to enjoy peaceful, productive and dignified lives ... The notion of reintegration also entails the erosion (and ultimately the disappearance) of any differentials that set returnees apart from other members of their community, in terms of both their legal and socio-economic status. More broadly, reintegration is an important component of the reconciliation and peace building process, and is thus closely linked to the progressive reduction of political and social vio-

lence, as well as the establishment of effective and equitable judicial procedures and of the rule of law' (Entwisle 2010: 9).

When conditions change and the safe return of refugees to their countries is possible, it is often promoted by the UNHCR as the best solution. When applying for voluntary repatriation, refugees are expected to fill in forms available from the UNHCR or from legal institutions, such as the Wits University Law Clinic and the University of Cape Town Law Clinic. Repatriation activities, such as returnee monitoring, are guided and informed by basic human rights standards, and enable the UNHCR to ensure the safe reintegration of refugees returning home (Sowetan 1999: 11).

Although the issue of voluntary repatriation has been viewed as the preferred and most desirable solution by the UNHCR; however, there is no means to achieve it. Ironically, voluntary repatriation is the most sought-after solution, but it is the area in which the UNHCR, the international community, and individual states have the greatest limitations of mandate, influence, time, and resources. The UNHCR normally is limited to one year in assisting voluntary repatriation and cannot address economic and developmental difficulties in the country of origin that may preclude return (Stein 1986: 269).

Family Reunification

A refugee who lost a family member during the flight or movement between the countries can either request that the family member join him or her in South Africa or request to be reunited with the family in another country. In most cases this process has not been clearly followed because of some of the risks encountered by the family members.

Dealing with the Attitudes of the Host Countries

Over the past decade, South Africa has increasingly tried to regulate and apply the basic principles of asylum. The country has controlled the borders and increasingly insisting on short-term asylum, regardless of the conditions in the countries of origin. To a certain extent, security at the refugee camps is of concern. This has been accompanied by a general diminishing of the rights guaranteed to refugees under the various relevant international conventions. With

the increasing consolidation of democracy, the South African government is more sensitive to negative public reactions to the presence of refugees. The intervention of the UNHCR with the provision of policies has helped to ease the tension between the host country's citizens and the refugees.

In 2010, at the Lindela Deportation Centre near Johannesburg, for example, the UNHCR evaluation team encountered a young Burundian woman, who had reportedly been subjected to sexual violence at some stage. In monitoring these situations at Lindela, the UNHCR makes use of its partner Lawyers for Human Rights, and this arrangement has reportedly been successful in assisting the refugees (Crisp and Kiragu 2010: 17). In attempts to solve the problems such as the above, S Shange-Buthane of the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) indicated that the challenge should be changing the mind-set of the South Africans. Furthermore, J-P Misago, a senior researcher at the African Centre for Migration and Society, stated that the ANC's government need to show more political will to deal with violence against the foreign nationals. The government should admit that there is a real problem and then pass legislation that outlaws such atrocities (*Business Day* 2012: 5).

CONCLUSION

As it is noted in the text above, the principal aim of this study is exploratory research into the impact of the UNHCR in the resolution of the immigrant and refugee crisis in South Africa; thus, a narrative approach has been adopted. The refugee crisis needs to be addressed at both regional and international levels. Regional groupings such as the SADC will need to increasingly address the root causes of refugee movements. This will entail a political and economic agenda aimed at eliminating ethnic strife and conflict; curtailing the arms trade; establishing a firm foundation for democratic institutions and governance; respect for human rights; and the promotion of economic development and social progress.

Given its contemporary nature, the study does not purport to constitute a comprehensive analysis of UNHCR's operational experience in South Africa. In light of these constraints, the study simply seeks to provide a cameo of the

UNHCR's past and present day country-level activities and broad operational trends over time, placed within the larger framework of durable solutions. It is recommended that the ANC as the ruling party in South Africa and the civil organizations should adopt a proactive approach to dealing with violence against immigrant and refugees. It was commendable that since mid-2010, the UNHCR together with the South African Police Service (SAPS) devised an SMS system which allowed people affected by violence to notify a central hub, which in turn alerts police. In 2012, the UNHCR acknowledged that while attacks on foreign nationals continued throughout the country, the looting of shops had been minimised and violence prevented in many instances.

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