

Conflict Prevention and Risk Analysis (CPRA) –Pretoria



CPRA Daily Briefings

Week 21

Thursday, 7 June 2012

CONTENTS

Southern Africa

- **Lesotho's new opposition coalition government ends the political stalemate – what's next?**
- **Swaziland: lack of political reform plummets vital donor support**
- **Zambia: concern over the Zambian backslide?**

The **CPRA Daily Briefings** are held weekday mornings in the CPRA Pretoria's Situation Room and the Briefing Notes are the minutes of this meeting during which each regional expert of the Programme reports on the latest human security developments in his/her region, followed by general discussions around the table. An intern then compiles a summary of the meeting, which is reviewed by the respective researchers, and a senior researcher edits the report and provides quality control before returning it to the intern to prepare it for dispatch to the mailing list to which you have subscribed.

CPRA-Pretoria research team

Dr David Zounmenou (W. Africa)
Mr Andrew Atta-Assamoah (E. Africa & the Horn)
Ms Dimpho Motsamai (S. Africa)
Dr Gwinyayi A. Dzinesa (S. Africa)
Ms Refiloe Joala (Intern)
Ms Naomi Kok (Intern)
Ms Tarryn Warries (Intern)

**Today's Briefings
Compilation**
Ms Tarryn Warries

Summary of Briefings

Southern Africa

Lesotho's new opposition coalition government ends the political stalemate - what's next?

The week's uncertainty over the formation of a government in Lesotho following its May 2012 National Assembly (NA) elections, whose results inferred a hung parliament scenario, has come to end. The 120-member parliament was sworn in yesterday, Wednesday 6 June 2012, after the outgoing Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili and his party the Democratic Congress (DC) conceded failure at augmenting its 48 constituency win to the 61 seats in the NA, as required by the Constitution for the DC to form a government. The Speaker of Parliament and his deputy were also elected. Based on the results of the elections and the interpretation of the Constitution, the DC cannot form a minority government. None of the political parties had an absolute majority in the Legislature, and so the options were either a hung parliament scenario (which could become protracted) or a coalition government. Having anticipated this, the All Basotho Convention (ABC), the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), the Popular Front for Democracy (PFD), the Basotho National Party (BNP) and Marematlou Freedom Party formed an alliance on 29 May 2012, which effectively outmanoeuvred the DC's prospects of doing the same. Seven other parties support the ABC-led coalition and the remaining parties could not increase the DC majority (assuming that the ABC led coalition remains intact). The ABC, which split from the then ruling LCD in 2006, had been the main opposition party since the 2007 elections and has developed cordial relations with the LCD. Conversely, the possibility of a coalition between the LCD and the DC following the acrimony over Mosisili's breakaway in February 2012 and the bitterness over LCD seizure of assets by the DC, among others, negated the possibility of a DC/LCD coalition, which would have maintained the DC in power. For the first time in Lesotho's political history, the opposition has unseated the ruling party.

In the next few days, the Prime Minister, who is likely to be coalition leader Thomas Thabane, is to be sworn in along with his deputy, LCD leader Mothejoa Metsing, who was sacked as communications minister under the Mosisili regime. Mosisili, who had announced that the 2012–2017 stint would be his last, now serves as the official opposition leader in parliament. Cabinet will now be formed and there are calls from civil society to make it as inclusive as possible since the DC's 48-constituency win is significant and should not be overlooked. The ABC's Thabane is most lauded for keeping his party politically active since the 2007 elections, demonstrating a high calibre of discipline and leadership, especially during parliamentary debates and election campaigns. But like its party counterparts, the ABC has not been immune to internal fragmentation and 'floor-crossing problem-solving'. Internal fighting more recently led to two of its MPs crossing the floor in parliament to join the ruling LCD. The need for internal cohesion and unity within the 71-majority ruling coalition cannot be overemphasised. As the transition draws to a close, the Thabane administration will have to get back to the business of governing the country and making parliament work for the electorate. In particular, coalition parties must deliver on their electoral mandates, while also importantly addressing the ills of the past government. These include gross and endemic corruption, institutionalized poor quality of governance and marked lack of progress in dealing with poverty, unemployment and human development.

Swaziland: lack of political reform plummets vital donor support

The momentum gained by donors in 2011 to support the Swaziland government's reform agenda, in particular the objectives of its Fiscal Adjustment Roadmap, has effectively been thwarted by the International Monetary Fund's decision to withdraw support for the recovery

programmes. Factors inhibiting reform are detailed as government's weaknesses in public financial management, a lack of pro-poor budgeting and a lack of commitment to comprehensive and sustainable governance reforms, among others. The African Development Bank (AfDB) has followed suit, effectively underscoring the lack of confidence in Swaziland's operative implementation of agreed reforms, as well as its unwillingness to genuinely engage with development partners on reform requisites. This includes the otherwise sensitive matters of political and governance improvements. The AfDB and the IMF are part of 'The Quartet', which also comprises the South African Treasury and the World Bank, who are responsible for monitoring the country's reform process. Notably, South Africa's obligation under the Quarter's division of labour is underlined as fostering political dialogue and encouraging political reform. The idea behind the Quartet's division of labour was to help devise and support a truly comprehensive reform programme that ushers the country into stability in the longer term. Swaziland's undiversified economy; its unhealthy dependence on Southern African Customs Union (SACU) receipts; an entrenched culture of unaccountable expenditure; and its categorization as a middle-income country have affected its ability to sufficiently support its budget, including in crucial areas of health, education and livelihood empowerment. The unavailability of resources needed to accelerate economic recovery in the face of dwindling donor support makes Swaziland vulnerable to both development and humanitarian crises. This is unless relations with donors change or its 'look East and elsewhere' policy, particularly relations with the United Arab Emirates, Taiwan and Equatorial Guinea, fills the donor vacuum.

Of the four institutions in the Quartet, the South African government, whose responsibility remains relevant to encouraging seemingly impossible political reforms, appears to be the last man standing. The foregoing has dire consequences for the country's economic resilience, future development agenda and political stability in the coming months, especially ahead of its no-party parliamentary elections in 2013. Swaziland's poor track record and unconvincing commitment in implementing reforms; the lack of recognition by the government that 'good governance' is key to the success of economic reform programmes; and the fact that the latter focuses not only on economic institutions but also on political structures, are some of the many reasons for dwindling donor support. Exactly what can be used to anchor dialogue in this direction is an apparent challenge that may see Swaziland permanently characterised by periods of liquidity crises oscillating between bad and worse. South Africa's role in Swaziland will increasingly come under the spotlight, as will the elusive status of its US\$ 300 million loan offer to Swaziland.

Zambia: concern over the Zambian backslide?

The 2011 Zambian elections were hailed as a success because of the peaceful second transfer of power from former president Rupiah Banda, of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), to President Michael Sata, of the Patriotic Front. However, recent developments are viewed with concern as there are reports that the Zambian democracy is at a standstill and governance is in a downward spiral. This week five opposition parties, including the MMD, submitted an open letter to the international donor community, warning them of the poor governance and governing style of Sata's administration. The letter accuses Sata of corruption and nepotism, specifically referring to the appointment of family members to key positions in the ministries of commerce and defence. There is concern that these appointments could be measures being taken to institute a more corrupt form of governance that benefits Sata's family and close allies. Paradoxically, the open letter should also be understood in the context of the political opposition increasingly accusing Sata of using the policy of zero tolerance of corruption to target his political rivals and weaken the opposition. There is a danger that donors, on perceiving a deterioration in governance, could decide to suspend aid, which makes up 7 per cent of government revenue.

The End