



Foreword

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The second volume of 2021 consists of six articles covering a very interesting and comprehensive spectrum of conflict resolution themes. In fact, this collection can serve as an overview of the range of challenges peacebuilders in Africa have to contend with. Two articles address communal conflicts, albeit from different perspectives. The others deal with the effects of climate change, the impact of companies engaged in oil and gas extraction, the role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution, and the value of national dialogue processes. Together these six articles cover country case examples that include Mali, North Central Nigeria, Nigeria's Niger Delta, South Africa, and Zambia.

In the first article, Nnaemeka Madumere examines conflicts between oil companies and host communities in Africa. He finds that one way in which to establish a mutually beneficial relationship between host communities and extractive companies is to find ways to involve communities in the ownership of the operations. He argues that this benefits the company by obtaining a social license to operate in the area and builds trust between the company and the community.

The second article by Lovelyne Mboh investigates the role and shortcomings of using traditional leaders to resolve conflict in the Mahikeng Local Municipality in South Africa's North West Province.

In the third article, Kabale Ignatius Mukunto analyses the national dialogue process in Zambia. He considers three critical questions. First, how best can a national political dialogue process build social cohesion? Second, what has been the Zambian experience with the 2019 national dialogue process? Finally, what lessons can be learned for future national dialogues in the country?

In the fourth article, by Al Chukwuma Okoli and Damian Ukwandu reflect on communal conflicts in Nasarawa State in North Central Nigeria and challenge the traditional focus on identity when analysing communal conflicts. Instead, they employ a liberal political ecology lens in their conflict analysis and show that such conflicts are often opportunistic and dynamic. This implies that the specific context needs to be taken into account to interpret, analyse and mitigate such conflicts.

In the fifth article, Colin Walch argues that impartiality is essential for the ability of informal institutions to resolve climate change related resource-based conflicts. The article looks at the situation in central Mali, where partial informal institutions, in conjunction with other factors, have led to increased violence in the region.

In the sixth and last article in this volume, Mathias Jarikre explores the role of legislation in designing paths to peace in fragile ethnically divided communities, with a special focus on Nigeria's Niger Delta.

We hope that you will find this collection of articles insightful. We are pleased to be able to showcase research into various topics related to conflict resolution in Africa and to publish the work of African researchers.