

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



THE VIOLENT NATURE OF CRIME IN SOUTH AFRICA

A CONCEPT PAPER FOR THE JUSTICE, CRIME
PREVENTION AND SECURITY CLUSTER



Prepared by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
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This concept paper represents the first component of an overall project on the violent nature of crime, which has been commissioned by the Department of Safety and Security acting on behalf of the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster. The objectives of the concept paper are:

1. To present an overall picture of the nature of violence in South Africa.
2. To answer questions relating to:
 - 2.1 Why there is so much violent crime.
 - 2.2 Why there is so much “acquaintance violence” between people who are known to each other.
 - 2.3 Why there is such a high degree of violence in many criminal incidents.
3. To make recommendations regarding criminal justice responses to violent crime and violence prevention measures, which are relevant both to the JCPS and social development clusters.

Section 2 deals with the politics of crime and violence in South Africa, highlighting how crime and violence are a focus of political contestation with a range of groups advocating on behalf of specific victim constituencies.

Section 3 defines violence in relation to applications of threats of physical force, and addresses issues relating to the definition of violence, as well as other terminology used in the paper. While violence is prosecuted in terms of specific offences, this paper focuses on forms of violence. While the paper uses the terms “perpetrator” and “victim”, it cannot be assumed that in all incidents of violence these roles are clearly distinguishable. The issue of acquaintance violence is a key focus of the paper and this is juxtaposed terminologically with “stranger” violence. Distinctions between the “level” and “degree” of violence, and between “high-crime” and “violence-prone” communities are also discussed here.

Section 4 talks about the overall nature of crime, distinguishing “violent crime” as a group of crimes from other broad groups of crime, and discussing the contribution of violent crime to overall levels of reported crime, and the contribution of various types of violent offences to overall levels of violent crime. A number of related topics are also discussed in this section, including provincial variations in rates of violent crime, the distinction between property crime and violent crime, and the levels of imprisonment for violent offending.

Section 5 discusses the available information for comparing levels of violent crime in South Africa with that in other countries, noting that this confirms the basis for concern about the high levels of violence in South Africa.

Section 6 provides a table (Table 4) that lists 12 forms of violent crime in South Africa. The section discusses these 12 categories in relation to the offence category “murder” as well as other types of vio-

lence that have achieved a certain amount of prominence in relation to public discussions of violence in South Africa, such as gender violence, gun violence, farm attacks and killings, and the killings of police. While there is no ultimately satisfactory way of classifying acts of violence, the paper argues that the first three forms of violence, namely (i) assaults related to domestic violence, arguments and other circumstances, (ii) robberies and (iii) rape and sexual assault account for most violent crime in South Africa.

The three major forms of violence are then each discussed separately under **Section 7**. The information on assaults in South Africa is discussed, with some use of information from other countries, which illuminates the points being made. Some of the features of assaults are that they are sometimes related to a pattern of repeated violence. Assaults appear to be the primary driver of murder figures in South Africa, with most murders being related to arguments that escalated into physical violence. A high proportion of assault perpetrators is known to their victims. Issues to do with the gender distribution of assault victims and perpetrators are also discussed, as are the comparative rates of common and aggravated assaults, and the issue of victim precipitation. In so far as there is evidence regarding the motivation for assaults in South Africa, a large proportion is ascribed to anger of one kind or another. Analysts in other countries have described the large number of assaults involving two males (as victim and perpetrator, or opponents) using terms such as “status competition” or “honour contests”.

In discussing robbery, **Section 7** discusses issues relating to the basis for differentiating between different types of robbery, and gives particular emphasis to the high levels of robbery in Gauteng, which accounts for 42% of all aggravated robberies nationally, and an even higher proportion of specific sub-categories such as carhijacking and bank robbery. This discussion also strongly emphasises the impact of the politics of crime (see Section 2) on perceptions of robbery, with those forms of robbery impacting on the middle classes receiving far more attention than other forms.

In discussing rape, **Section 7** refers to the issue of the overall incidence of rape as compared to crime statistics. By broadening the definition of rape, the Sexual Offences Bill, if passed, is also likely to contribute to an increase in recorded rape figures. Rape by current or former intimate partners as well as other issues to do with the relationship between victim and perpetrator are also discussed, with most rapes believed to take place between people who are known to each other. These issues are also discussed in relation to rapes involving a group of perpetrators while the phenomenon of the rape of men is also mentioned. This section finishes with a brief discussion of the factors that contribute to rape.

Section 8 discusses acquaintance violence. Building on the discussion in **Section 7**, it emphasises the point that most cases of assault and sexual assault are believed to involve people who are known to each other, as victim and perpetrator. Other forms of violence, such as violent or sexual child abuse, are also generally committed by family members or people known to them, while murder perpetrators were usually also known by the victim. There is also data from a survey of young people, indicating that robberies of children are often carried out by people who are known to them. South African data on

acquaintance violence is compared with data on murders in the USA, as well as data from various small-scale studies conducted in South Africa, which also indicates that most murders, and particularly those related to arguments, involve people who are known to the victim. In relation to violent crime more generally, acquaintance violence makes a far more substantial contribution to overall levels of violence in poorer violence-prone communities (discussed further in Section 10) than in wealthier high-crime communities. However, this discussion highlights the issue that there are various degrees of relationship and that the bulk of acquaintance violence *may take place more in the zone of “intermediate relationships”, involving people who are not family or friends but are also not complete strangers*, although this is likely to vary relative to the gender of victims. This section briefly alludes to questions about the explanations for the high levels of acquaintance violence before engaging with a discussion about response to acquaintance violence, specifically in relation to the role of the police. In conclusion this section motivates that acquaintance violence needs to be addressed in its own right but also can be seen as a generator of violence more broadly. Therefore, strategies aimed at tackling violence in South Africa should focus on acquaintance violence.

Section 9 looks at issues to do with the degree of violence used in incidents of violence, listing a large number of manifestations of violence that are cause for special concern. The paper distinguishes between “instrumental”, “expressive” or “gratuitous” motives, suggesting that these may tend to be linked to certain types of psychological dispositions or pathologies. In addition, other factors such as the levels of gun ownership among the general population, alcohol or other substance use, vindictiveness or anger, group dynamics, lack of confidence on an interpersonal level, or the desire for notoriety, may also contribute to the risk of excessive violence. Despite the evidence of incidents of violence that are particularly shocking, perhaps related to the identity of the victim, or the degree of violence used, violence is often used instrumentally so that in many incidents of robbery, for instance, people will be threatened with violence but physical harm will often only be inflicted on them where they resist or obstruct the perpetrators in some way. There are, therefore, general guidelines that people can follow in situations where they are victimised, although these cannot be guaranteed to ensure their safety in all cases.

Section 10 looks at numerous issues relating to the distribution of violence and the profile of victims and perpetrators of violence, including factors such as age, race, gender and nationality. The section suggests that an examination of the distribution of violence can benefit from differentiating between “poorer violence-prone communities” and “middle-class high-crime communities”. While both types of communities may be affected by predatory violent crime, it is primarily the poorer violence-prone communities that are affected by high levels of acquaintance violence. Perpetrators of violent crimes differ quite substantially from each other in the nature of their “violence careers”. While there are many perpetrators who are repeatedly involved in acts of violence, this is not necessarily the norm among perpetrators of violence. While the information on these questions is inadequate in South Africa, the information cited does not contradict research in other countries, which indicates that many people who are convicted of serious acts of violence do not have criminal records for violence (and possibly

for other offences). Violent victimisation and perpetration appear to be more concentrated in African and Coloured than in White and Indian communities. Foreigners may suffer disproportionately high levels of victimisation in some areas. Although there is evidence of foreign involvement in crime, and Zimbabwean and Mozambican criminals play a prominent role in certain types of high-profile robberies, violent crime in South Africa is overwhelmingly driven by South Africans. Perpetrators of violence are overwhelmingly men. It is difficult to draw conclusions on overall levels of victimisation of men and women, as it appears that much violence is also not reported to victimisation surveys. While women are more at risk of sexual assault, and also more affected by repeat violence in intimate relationships, men are more likely to be victims of near-fatal and fatal physical assaults, and thus constitute the overwhelming majority of murder victims. Consistent with patterns documented elsewhere, most violence involves violence committed between people of the same race and class rather than being directed at members of other races or classes.

Section 11 looks at the involvement of groups and gangs in violence. Both “stranger crimes” and “acquaintance crimes” may be carried out by individuals or groups. Many street robberies and home robberies are carried out by small groups of perpetrators, although a relatively large number of home robberies appear to be linked to individual perpetrators. Where crimes are carried out by groups of perpetrators, this may be a group of friends or peers, or even informal acquaintances, rather than a formal gang. More sophisticated robberies tend to be linked to loose networks of criminals, although sometimes the groups are more permanent. Gang structures in Western Cape vary substantially in terms of their size and stability. Violence that is related to gang members is probably more likely to be linked to predatory criminality or internal violence between members of the same gang, and less likely to be linked to conflict between rival gangs, although the chances of violence between different gangs may be accentuated if, for instance, “external factors” destabilise existing gangs. Within drug markets it may tend to be the less-organised elements, rather than organised crime groups, that are linked to violence, both as victims and perpetrators.

Section 12 looks at the impact of violence on South African society. Information from a docket study conducted in the late 1990s suggests that acquaintance violence makes a far greater contribution to levels of injury than does robbery. Violence, including rape, in particular, also frequently contributes to emotional and psychological trauma, which may be long lasting. Violence also has impacts in terms of financial costs, impacts on behaviour, broad impacts on society, including contributing to fear of crime and reinforcing existing social divisions. It also has impacts on specific sectors such as business, although it may be greatest among business in poorer communities. The paper also briefly discusses the impact of violence on perpetrators, not all of whom are entirely unaffected by incidents of violence they participate in or are witnesses to.

Section 13 starts by raising the question of to what degree explanations for violence and crime should differentiate on an explanatory level between different violence and other forms of crime, or between

different forms of violence. It argues that the causes of violence include both factors that contribute to the overall levels of crime, as well as factors that are specifically relevant to understanding violence. Various factors are discussed. Ambivalence to the law dates back to the repressive role of the criminal justice system and the law during the apartheid era, although it is also sustained by factors in the current environment. Long-term and more recent processes of upheaval and change in society have weakened practices and systems relating to the socialisation of young people. The legacy of apartheid is expressed partly in feelings of low self-worth, and high levels of inequality aggravate feelings of lack of self-confidence among the less well off. Factors contributing to feelings of insecurity are also accentuated for men by the emphasis on gender equality, contributing to a type of threatened masculinity. For a variety of reasons violence has become normalised in South African society and the tendency to resolve things violently is also accentuated in poorer communities by numerous other causes of friction. The criminal justice system does not significantly contribute to reducing levels of violence because its effectiveness in apprehending perpetrators is limited, because mechanisms for diversion and for preventing repeat offending among young offenders are poorly developed, and because prisons themselves are highly violent environments, which, in turn, contribute to habituating inmates to further violence. Alcohol and other substances, firearms, the legacy of war in the southern African region, and local, regional and global criminal economies also accentuate the problem.

Section 14 makes a set of principal findings and recommendations, and provides a broad framework for addressing violent crime and short-term measures. The full set of recommendations is listed at the end of this executive summary.

Finally, **Section 15, the conclusion**, draws together the main lessons or insights of this paper, focusing on the high levels of acquaintance violence, the overall high levels of violence, and the questions of the high degree of violence.

Acquaintance violence

In terms of acquaintance violence, the concept paper emphasises that this takes place within a wide spectrum of relationships in which people are known to each other and is not necessarily concentrated among more intimate relationships. Acquaintance violence accounts for the bulk of assaults and sexual assaults, and is the primary contributor to offence categories such as assault with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm (assault GBH), attempted murder, and murder that tends to occur in what the concept paper refers to as “violence-prone” as opposed to “high-crime” communities. Linked to the fact that it makes a large contribution to murder rates, it also appears that there is a higher incidence of serious injury associated with acquaintance violence. As a result, acquaintance violence probably makes a major contribution to the load violence places on hospital services.

Most violence against women is acquaintance violence. But apart from violence against women, acquaintance violence has been largely neglected on a policy level related to factors such as beliefs that it is private and that there is little that can be done about it, that it primarily impacts on poorer communities, and that victims are often marginal people, including young Black men who tend to be labelled as perpetrators and, in terms of prevailing stereotypes, are not recognised as a victim constituency. Furthermore, in some incidents where two young men are involved, the two may in some cases better be understood as opponents rather than victim and perpetrator.

The level of violence — why there is so much violent crime

In accounting for the overall levels of violence, the paper makes reference to several of the factors listed in Section 13. The conclusion emphasises the role of acquaintance violence, which is not only a product of, but itself reinforces, the normalisation of violence in specific communities, so that acquaintance violence can be seen as a key generator of broader violence in society. For instance, children who grow up in families characterised by violence not only internalise the acceptability of violence but are likely to internalise the verbal and emotional style of interaction that characterises these families. While middle-class concerns motivate for government to give priority to predatory violent crimes such as robbery, violence can probably be addressed more productively if greater attention is paid to the problem of acquaintance violence, although this is not to argue that crimes such as robbery should not also be regarded as an important concern.

The degree of violence

Members of the public expressing disapproval about violence often label such violence as “gratuitous”, especially where the violence is particularly horrific. As highlighted in the discussion of Section 9 above, the paper highlights a wide range of manifestations of violence that potentially cause particular concern. Rather than focusing specifically on gratuitous violence, the paper therefore highlights a more general problem of the high degree of violence in many incidents of victimisation. While this will vary from one case to another, factors that may contribute to increasing the degree of violence in particular incidents may include:

- The broad normalisation of violence.
- The presence of firearms or other weapons.
- Group dynamics and peer pressure and susceptibility to this on the part of individuals among a group of perpetrators.
- Prior hostility towards the victims.
- Low self-esteem, or other specific types of psychological pathologies or dispositions, the prevalence of which may be linked to factors such as family dysfunctionality and the level of previous exposure to violence.

- A lack of confidence or poor communication skills on the part of the perpetrator.
- Dynamics relating to the specific incident, including whether perpetrators believe they are being obstructed or lied to, language that provokes them, acts of resistance or defiance by the victim, and the mental state of the perpetrators possibly linked to their use of drugs or alcohol.
- A desire on the part of the perpetrator for notoriety.

Overall, it seems that criminal violence is itself a manifestation of South Africa's historical traumas as well as contemporary social ills. Many of the contemporary problems deserve to be addressed in their own right. But South African society will also benefit if measures targeted specifically at the problem of violence are brought more directly and explicitly on to the priority public agenda.

Full list of recommendations

Principal recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1: Sustained investment in measures of the kind discussed in paragraph 14.4,¹ targeted at violence-prone communities, would be likely to be beneficial in reducing overall risk and disposition towards violence and overall levels of violence in many such communities. Government should strengthen the provision of these types of support to high-risk families. Preferably the provision of such support should be financed out of supplementary funds provided to the relevant government departments on a sustained basis rather than undermining existing initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION 2: In addition, the large number of child-headed households should be regarded as deserving of similar types of interventions.

¹ These are measures such as:

- Sending public health nurses or equivalent professionals to visit the homes of high-risk families, such as low-income families, and those with teenage or unmarried first-time mothers to help them with parenting practices, mental-health problems and to address the use of tobacco and alcohol.
- Providing professional child-care workers or using preschool and other programmes to increase the cognitive and social abilities of children in underprivileged socioeconomic surroundings, and to help them develop without the disadvantages of inconsistent and uncaring parenting.
- Comprehensive education and family-support services that reach out to families in high-poverty neighbourhoods to help disadvantaged children get ready for primary school in order to promote children's academic success, to facilitate parents' involvement in children's education, and to enhance family functioning by strengthening the parent-child relationship.
- Increasing support and respite for parents so they are able to provide more consistent and caring parenting.
- Developing emotional skills for primary school children so they can understand, express and regulate their emotions.
- Providing adult mentors to provide a sustained caring relationship and role models to youths aged 6-18 who live in single-parent families below the poverty line.
- Residential programmes that provide social and educational support to youths preparing to enter the job market.

While there are government programmes focused on these problem areas, developing a programme to support more focused implementation of measures of this kind requires sustained political will, as well as financing and demarcating line responsibilities for management and implementation. It also requires investment in developing the human resource capacity to support and implement these kinds of interventions, which may include outsourcing components to agencies outside of government.

RECOMMENDATION 3: While some of these initiatives, such as those addressed at primary school children, fall within the ambit of the existing government departments, and departments may be able to accommodate initiatives of this kind, government should consider establishing a dedicated agency, along the lines of the British Youth Justice Board² to strengthen interventions in this area.

Broad framework for addressing violent crime

RECOMMENDATION 4: Policies, programmes and initiatives at various levels in society should be strengthened in such a way as to better promote social cohesion and inclusion, to motivate poorer and marginalised constituencies to feel that they have a greater stake in society, to engender among these constituencies a greater sense of their value and importance to society, irrespective of their social status and circumstances, thereby promoting awareness of personal worth, and to engage more directly with the problem of inequality.³

RECOMMENDATION 5: Role players in the media and advertising industry should also engage with how the images they present impact on perceptions of personal worth.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Measures to promote a non-violent and law-abiding society and respect for justice and the law should be strengthened by:

1. Strengthening the condemnation of violence against women and extending this to a general condemnation of violence in social relationships and in society more broadly.
2. Articulating the values embodied in the constitution in a manner that clarifies their meaning in relation to personal conduct, notably in emphasising the issue of dignity and by implication the importance of acting in accordance with standards of respect and civility towards others.

² The Youth Justice Board was established under the Crime and Disorder Act, 1998. In addition to initiatives focused on improving the efficiency of juvenile courts, and orientated to reducing repeat offending among young offenders, it also funds the Youth Inclusion Programme, which focuses on small groups of “most at risk” youth — the 8-17-year-old age bracket — in 110 of the most at deprived/high-crime neighbourhoods in England and Wales. Youth are provided with 10 hours of activities per week, including “sports, training in information technology, mentoring, and help with literacy and numeracy issues”, as well as “assistance in dealing with violence, drugs, gangs, and personal health”. Waller, 2006: 35, as well as <<http://www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/yjs/Prevention/YIP/>>.

³ Compare first bullet point in recommendations section of Irish-Qhobosheane, 2007: 214.

3. Motivating members of the public at all levels of society to report criminal activities and to refrain from conduct that supports crime, including the purchase of stolen goods.⁴
4. Emphasise the need for public officials to conduct themselves in terms of standards of integrity.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Within public space, recreational facilities, schools, correctional institutions and in society more broadly, there should be a stronger emphasis on discouraging violence, including:

1. Discouraging and preventing the carrying of guns and other weapons.
2. Taking measures to ensure that there is safety in specific areas, and at times when there is a heightened risk of violence.
3. Empowering appropriate people to intervene to discourage and prevent violence.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Overall there should be a strengthening of the focus on emotional and interpersonal awareness and development, and positive peer-group relationships, with notable emphasis given to the quality of interventions of this kind in violence-prone communities. Skills of this kind can be promoted among people in troubled families, in schools, in prisons and in the police.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Along with measures of the kind referred to in Recommendation 8, efforts at discouraging violence at schools should include measures to ensure that violence and bullying at school are reported,⁵ and to work in a focused way with bullies to stop bullying⁶ and with the victims of bullying.

RECOMMENDATION 10: In relation to the policing system:

1. CSVR has recently issued a report that provides an overall framework and approach for stabilising and consolidating the South African Police Service, and the recommendations made in that report are relevant to an overall framework for strengthening the criminal justice system.⁷
2. Among the recommendations made in the report are recommendations to strengthen support to SAPS members in their interactions with suspects and in dealing with conflict situations.⁸ The context in which the police are working is characterised by high levels of violence and conflict. Empowering police to deal with armed suspects and to intervene in an effective manner in interpersonal confrontations that are violent or potentially violent are necessary if they are to have the confidence to work in this environment.
3. In addition to strengthening initiatives to deal with gender violence, police should be trained and motivated to recognise other categories of victims, including victims of male-male peer violence, as

⁴ Compare fourth bullet point in recommendations section of Irish-Qhobosheane, 2007: 214.

⁵ See the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (undated: 5) regarding informal pressures within the school environment not to report violence and other bullying.

⁶ See Waller, 2006: 30–31.

⁷ Bruce, Newham and Masuku, 2007.

⁸ Ibid. See p. 178, Recommendation 26.

deserving of sympathetic service. This should apply notwithstanding the fact they may be intoxicated, and despite the fact that this may add to the difficulty of providing assistance to them.

4. In line with this recommendation, and recognition that there is a strong overlap between victim and offender constituencies, police members should be motivated to ensure that suspects and offenders are also treated in a respectful way. In this regard the SAPS should renew its commitment to, and reinvigorate the Prevention of Torture Policy.
5. In terms of broad analysis the police should differentiate between poorer violence-prone communities and middle-class high-crime communities, and tailor their strategies accordingly.
6. Vehicle stops by municipal police should consistently be used to check for illegal firearms.
7. Recommendations below that are also directly relevant to the police include:
 - 7.1 Recommendation 11 on firearms.
 - 7.2 Recommendation 12 addresses the need for strengthening interventions in relation to domestic violence to support violence prevention.
 - 7.3 Recommendation 13 addresses responses to “youth at risk”.

RECOMMENDATION 11: The implementation of the Firearms Control Act by the police and the courts should be strengthened, notably in ensuring that firearms are not legally available to persons who are unfit to possess them, and in reducing the number of illegal firearms.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Domestic violence is in some ways the core of the problem of acquaintance violence. Children who grow up in an environment where there is domestic violence are particularly at risk of engaging in violence, or of other social practices that may feed into violence. Dealing with domestic violence situations can be taxing for police but support provided to police relating to interventions (see Recommendation 10 and, particularly, point 2 above) should engage with difficulties in dealing with these types of situations and help police to reflect on the types of outcomes they can achieve through these interventions. In addition, some children in families affected by domestic violence may be at risk, particularly if the domestic conflict is also associated with neglect, inconsistent or inappropriate discipline, or other abuse.

RECOMMENDATION 13: In addition to factors associated with the home environment (see recommendations 1, 2 and 12 above), violent or other conduct – *and violent victimisation*⁹ – can be seen as warning signs for future violent or other criminal behaviour, particularly among young boys. The types of support and interventions most appropriate for such youth will depend on their age and broader circumstances, but such interventions need to start with identifying those who have the greatest need them.

1. Many of the types of measures highlighted above (see footnote 1) would be appropriate for interventions targeted at these “youth at risk”.

See, for instance, Shaffer and Ruback, 2002, as well as Dissel, 2005 and Langa, 2005.

2. Where such youth have been involved in perpetrating acts of violence, diversion measures, possibly modelled on the framework in the Child Justice Bill, may be helpful in addressing their violent behaviour, but should also include a component of the kind outlined in Recommendation 8 above.
3. Restorative justice approaches should be strengthened generally in addressing acquaintance violence, although in some instances this should be in addition to imprisonment.
4. Probation services would also need to be aligned with interventions targeted at this constituency.
5. Strengthening interventions in these types of areas requires developing specific types of human resource capacity. In particular, it would require much greater investment in the social work profession.

RECOMMENDATION 14: In line with Recommendation 7, the Department of Correctional Services should take stronger measures to ensure that prisons are managed in such a manner as to minimise violence and promote a non-violent environment in prisons. Programmes around emotional and interpersonal awareness and development should also be provided to prisoners along with other life skills or occupational training.

RECOMMENDATION 15: In line with paragraph 3 of Recommendation 10 above, victim support programmes should also be motivated to recognise victims of violence broadly, including victims of male-male peer violence, as deserving of support and should inform themselves about the type of empowerment measures that are likely to be most beneficial to different victim groups.

RECOMMENDATION 16: The advertising of alcohol should be prohibited. Revenues from taxes on alcohol should be directed to public education around violence, including public education, that specifically addresses “hazardous drinking”, such as drinking to intoxication,¹⁰ as well as the vulnerability to violence associated with alcohol consumption.

RECOMMENDATION 17: Public education around sexuality should be strengthened and should seek to speak to young men in a way that is meaningful in terms of their experience of their own sexuality, and address issues of responsible sexual behaviour.

RECOMMENDATION 18: Government should fund further research focused on understanding and addressing violence, as well as scientific evaluations of violence-prevention initiatives. In particular, research should be carried out on recidivism among violent offenders in order to inform the debate about the usefulness of minimum-sentencing legislation.

Short-term measures

RECOMMENDATION 19: Government should consider this framework of recommendations and adopt an action plan for implementing the recommendations. This should also address questions to do with financing, line responsibility and institutional arrangements.

¹⁰ See Parry and Dewing, 2006.

RECOMMENDATION 20: Government should initiate a programme of action focused on strengthening non-violence in South Africa and involving civil society groups. Such a programme could draw on the lessons and symbolism of the National Peace Accord of the early 1990s.

RECOMMENDATION 21: Public education measures should be produced, focusing on the problem of acquaintance violence, highlighting its destructive consequences and assisting members of the public with steps that they can take to prevent such violence.

RECOMMENDATION 22: Government should launch an initiative in violence-prone communities aimed at mobilising local-level capacities such as those located in community police forums towards strengthening family and community life in these communities and the ability of community members to resolve conflict and prevent violence. Such initiatives could draw on models such as those of the Peace Committee structures as promoted by the Community Peace programme.¹¹ These initiatives should be based on models of community empowerment but should be supported with capacity and resources from outside the community.

RECOMMENDATION 23: There should be a rapid audit of government policy in relation to the above recommendations, specifically in relation to the impact of policy on violence-prone communities.

RECOMMENDATION 24: This report should be made available for general public comment and discussion.

See Cartwright and Jenneker, 2005.