

State of Violent Crime in South Africa Post 1994

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ABSTRACT One of the most disturbing problems in South Africa is the state of violent crime in the country, which has accompanied the democratic order. Over time, operational strategies and legal reforms have been introduced by police leadership and government to reduce crimes in general. However, not much has been achieved with the reduction of violent crime. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the state of violent crime in South Africa post 1994, find explanations and to make recommendations for the reduction thereof. The case study design was used to obtain primary and secondary data using literature study and the experience of the researcher. Explanations indicate that the state of violent crime may be attributable to the ongoing transformation since 1994, unemployed youth, urbanization, recidivism, drugs, guns, and the different policing styles adopted by police leadership. The researcher recommends the need for public education and partnership policing for the reduction of violent crimes in South Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Global crime statistics on violent crimes are difficult to compare, given the widely varying leadership styles and quality of policing around the world. However, according to the United Nations, South Africa's current murder rate is lower than that of at least ten other countries, including Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, as well as other African nations including Lesotho, Uganda and Cote d'Ivoire. However, there remains at least one category of violent crime where South Africa is still a global frontrunner: rape (The Christian Science Monitor 2015).

The South African government publishes annual crime statistics that provide official data on the local, provincial and national distribution of violent crime per capita (per 100,000 of the population), while the mass media provides journalistic accounts of violent criminal activities on a daily basis. This forms the body of knowledge on the performance of the South African Police Service in reducing violent crime. Since 1994, the violent crime statistics showed a drastic increase for the period 2013-14. This was the worst two years from a violent crime perspective (Africa Check 2015).

Transformation, unemployed youth, urbanization, repeat offenders, drugs and guns play a major role in the increase in violent crimes (Reuters 2015). In addition, the difference in policing styles under different types of leadership, also poses a challenge to police officers on street patrols and investigation duties (Ngantweni 2014). The role of the South African Police Ser-

vice (SAPS) is undoubtedly significant in combatting violent crime in society, as they affect everyone and everything in society by their very presence and actions (Ngantweni 2014). According to the researchers' experience, the intensity and magnitude of violent crime generally extends beyond the parameters of normal policing, whereby the civil society has a major role to fulfill in supporting the police. Better interaction, cooperation and mutual respect between the police and the community translates to the reduction of crime (Ngantweni 2014).

Objectives

The paper is aimed at analyzing the state of violent crime in South Africa post 1994, finding explanations and assisting with operational responses to effectively and efficiently combat violent crime in South Africa.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Literature study methodology and the experience of the researcher as the Area Commissioner/Cluster commander/Station Commissioner in the South African Police Service was used to write this paper.

RESULTS

State of Violent Crimes in South Africa Post 1994

When discussing the phenomenon 'violent crime', it would be useful to know which violent

crimes are on the increase. The level of violent crimes presented hereunder was obtained from the crime statistics report presented by the South African Police Service Ministry in 2014 (Crime Statistics 2014).

Violent Crime in 1994 to 2000

Table 1 shows that there has been a gradual increase of violent crimes from 1994 to 1995. Highest levels of violent crime increase took place during the period 1999-2000. Murder and attempted murder showed the lowest levels of increase, whilst the other categories of violent crime showed a fairly dramatic increase. During 1999-2000, the number of assaults with the intention to inflict grievous bodily harm (Assault GBH) and common assaults increased drastically. This drastic increase in the assaults cannot be overlooked. The implementation of the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 in December 1999, may have contributed to this increase in the number of assault cases. During 1998-2000 South Africa experienced the greatest annual increase in violent crimes compared to any previous year, post 1994. Apart from the decline in the murder rate, violent crime in general remained at a very high level, giving an average of 54 per 100,000 of the population. Hence, the recorded crimes for 1994-1995 to 1999-2000 have increased by 132,001.

According to Albeker (2005), during the 1990's, South Africa developed a reputation for being "the crime capital of the world". Professor Moses Montesh from the University of South Africa stated, "*We cannot take away that crime does take place, but to be classified as one of the most violent countries is an overstatement. If you look at countries as far as policing is concerned, we are far better than many countries*" (Rondganger 2014).

The first National Commissioner appointed in 1994, managed the South African Police Service with democratic policing principles in mind, since the world was watching over the newly dawned democracy and the SA Police Service. Legislative reforms and policies were developed with the help of international expertise to transform policing towards democratic principles. International training and development support was given to police leadership and personnel in the SAPS (DeVries 2008).

Violent Crime in 2000 to 2006

Compared to the same period in 1999, there were more violent crimes reported during the period January to May 2000, per 100,000 of the population. Since 2000-2001 all violent crimes decreased with exception to Assault GBH, which increased. There was a general increase in vio-

Table 1: Statistics on violent crimes during 1994-2000

<i>Crimes</i>	<i>1994/1995</i>	<i>1995/1996</i>	<i>1996/1997</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>	<i>1998/1999</i>	<i>1999/2000</i>
Murder	25 965	26 877	25 470	24 486	25 127	22 604
Attempted murder	26 806	26 876	28 576	28 145	29 545	28 179
Assault GBH	21 5671	223 097	231 497	234 819	237 818	261 804
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	84 785	77 167	66 163	73 053	92 630	98 813
Common assault	200 248	206 006	203 023	201 317	203 678	232 024
Common robbery	32 659	45 683	50 676	54 932	64 978	74 711
Total	586 134	605 706	605 405	616 752	653 774	718 135

Table 2: Statistics on violent crimes during 2000-2006

<i>Crimes</i>	<i>2000/2001</i>	<i>2001/2002</i>	<i>2002/2003</i>	<i>2003/2004</i>	<i>2004/2005</i>	<i>2005/2006</i>
Murder	21 758	21 405	21 553	19 824	18 793	18 545
Attempted murder	28 128	31 293	35 861	30 076	24 576	20 553
Assault GBH	275 289	264 012	266 321	260 082	249 369	276 942
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	113 716	116 736	126 905	133 658	126 789	119 726
Common assault	248 862	261 886	282 526	280 942	267 857	227 553
Common robbery	90 215	90 205	101 537	95 551	90 825	74 723
Total	777 968	785 537	834 703	820 133	778 209	738 042

lent crimes in South Africa, for the period 2000-2001 until 2002-2003. During the period 2003-2004 until 2005-2006, South Africa experienced a big decrease in violent crimes. Murder and attempted murder statistics were the lowest for the period 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. Hence, the total recorded violent crimes for the period 2000-2001 to 2005-2006 had reduced.

On 1 January 2000, the second National Commissioner was appointed to provide strategic leadership to the SAPS. He became the chairperson of the South African Regional Police Chiefs Committee (SARPCCO) and later became President of Interpol in Lyon, France. His strategic direction was already chartered by legislative reforms and policies developed by the previous

National Commissioner

The National Crime Combatting Strategy (NCCS) was implemented during his term of office. He became the driver of this policy (Table 2).

Violent Crime in 2006 to 2012

Statistics for the period 2006-2007 to 2010-2011 show that the total recorded violent crimes had decreased. Murder and attempted murders showed the lowest decrease since 1994-1995. The negative 6.5 percent in the murder ratio between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 represents a decrease of 894 murders from 16,834 to 15,940 cases. For the first time in history since 1995, there was a 40.7 percent decrease in murders. Aggravated robberies showed an increase in 2008-2009. The other three categories of violent crimes showed a big decrease. During 2011-2012, there was a huge decrease in violent crimes.

During 2009, the third National Commissioner was appointed in the SAPS. This National

Commissioner urged the men and women in blue to retaliate with the maximum force allowed by law (Table 3).

Violent Crime in 2012 to 2014

In 20 years the numbers of murders have increased for a second consecutive year. Murder cases increased from 16,259 in 2012-2013 to 17,068 in 2013-2014. Murder cases increased by five percent with an additional 809 murders. According to Table 4, street robbery increases are particularly concerning. House robberies increased by 7.4 percent, with 1,334 more cases than the previous year. Business robberies increased by 13.7 percent with 2,238 more incidents, and car hijacking increased by 12.3 percent with 1,231 more incidents than the previous year (Table 4).

Table 4: Statistics on violent crimes during 2012-2014

<i>Crimes</i>	<i>2012/2013</i>	<i>2013/2014</i>
Murder	16259	17068
Attempted murder	16363	17110
Assault GBH	185893	183173
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	105888	119351
Common assault	172909	167157
Common robbery	53540	53858
Total	550852	557717

The number of cases of common assault decreased for the period 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. There was a decrease of 1.5 percent in Assault GBH cases from 2012 until 2014. All categories of robberies increased during 2014. Robberies are usually committed when gangs armed with weapons injure or threaten victims with violence, to steal their belongings.

Table 3: Statistics on violent crimes during 2006-2012

<i>Crimes</i>	<i>2006/2007</i>	<i>2007/2008</i>	<i>2008/2009</i>	<i>2009/2010</i>	<i>2010/2011</i>	<i>2011/2012</i>
Murder	19 202	18 487	18 148	16 834	15940	15609
Attempted murder	20 142	18 795	18 298	17 410	15493	14859
Assault GBH	218 030	210 104	203 777	205 293	198602	192651
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	126 558	118 312	121 392	113 755	101463	101203
Common assault	210 057	198 049	192 838	197 284	185891	181670
Common robbery	71 156	64 985	59 232	57 537	54883	52980
Total	665 145	628 732	613 685	608 113	572272	558972

During 2012 the fourth National Commissioner was appointed in the SAPS. This first woman National Commissioner came with a mandate of changing management processes and building a new culture in the SAPS.

Categories of Crimes Classified as Aggravated Robberies in South Africa

Robberies are registered as 'aggravated robbery' when perpetrators use a weapon to injure or threaten a victim. Aggravated robberies increased in 2013-2014. Street robberies increased by 8,598 cases for the period 2012 to 2014. This is higher than the 60,476 cases registered during the previous year. There was an average of 189 cases of street robberies every day in 2013-2014.

A crime of house robbery is committed when people are attacked in their homes by armed gangs with weapons. Many of these crimes start off as a residential burglary, but end up as house robbery when violence is used against the victim(s). During 2013-2014, house robberies increased by 19,284 cases (7.4%), when compared to the previous year. This represents an additional 1,334 households who were attacked in their homes. During the period 2013 to 2014 an average 53 households were robbed each day. During the same period, business robberies increased by 13.7 percent. They have consistently increased over the past decade. In 2013-2014 it reached a new height of 461 percent higher than it was in 2004-2005. Compared to the previous year, 2013-2014 recorded additional 2,238 businesses robberies.

There were 11,221 (12.3%) cases of vehicle hijacking reported in 2013-2014. This shows that during 2013-2014, an average of 31 motor vehicles were hijacked every day. Truck hijacking is of serious concern to the police and the govern-

ment, especially when commercial vehicles are hijacked as it impacts on the economy of the country. During 2013-2014 truck hijacking increased to 943 cases (5.1 percent) from 991 cases in 2012-2013. Vehicle hijacking is usually committed by organized crime syndicates. This shows that there is an increase in organized crime criminal activities in SA (Table 5).

Explanations for the State of Violent Crime in South Africa

To understand crime trends and quality of policing in South Africa, there is always a need to combine analysis of crime statistics with literature study, victim surveys and experience of police officers. Explanations for the state of violent crime in South Africa, post-1994 are many, however the researcher will discuss some of the more important ones.

The advent of democracy in 1994 brought about the restructuring of the criminal justice system by the abolishment of a number of laws and the promulgation of new ones. As a result many criminal justice functions have been operationally weakened. The effects of apartheid in addition to years of political violence and the continued exposure to violence in the home and in the neighborhood have produced a destructive culture, which manifests itself in violence as a means of solving conflicts domestically and socially.

Transformation of the South African Police Force (SAPF) into a South African Police Service (SAPS) was a big challenge for the new government in 1994. The amalgamation of 11 police agencies from different parts of South Africa posed many challenges, which the incoming government had to address to make the South Africa Police Service legitimate (De Vries 2008).

Table 5: Categories of aggravated robberies (Period 2004 to 2011)

Crimes	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014
Carhijacking	12435	12825	13599	14201	14915	13902	10627	9475	9990	11221
Cash-in-transit heists	220	383	467	395	386	358	291	182	145	145
Truck hijackings	930	829	892	1245	1437	1412	999	821	943	991
Bank robbery	58	59	129	144	102	93	39	35	7	21
Residential robbery	9391	10173	12761	14481	18438	18786	16889	16766	17950	19284
Business robbery	3320	4387	6689	9862	13920	14534	14667	15951	16377	18615
Street robbery	100436	91070	92021	77984	72194	67670	57951	57973	60476	69240
Total	126789	119726	126558	118312	121392	113755	101463	101203	105888	119351

In the mid-1980s urbanization rates increased in South Africa especially in the country's larger metropolitan areas to which a large number of people were drawn in search for employment (Crime Statistics 2014). Victim surveys conducted in South Africa post 1994 show that the poor, the majority of whom live in rural settlements and townships, are more at risk of being victims of interpersonal violent crimes like street robberies, assaults and murders. By comparison, people living in the urban areas are most at risk of violent property crimes, such as vehicle hijackings and house robberies (McCafferty 2003).

Violent crime grew rapidly 1994 onwards, leading to state resources being concentrated only in certain areas in which organized criminal groups started to operate (Gastrow 1998; Venter 2003). Since the closing of the specialized units and the Area Commissioners management levels, policing became difficult to manage at the grass roots level. Undertrained and overburdened investigators do not have the necessary skills and resources to conduct specialized criminal investigations, and also carry a big case-load of case dockets (Matthews 2015). There is poor crime intelligence coordination to deal with violent crimes such as murders and public violence (Thakali 2015).

The 2014 census shows that about thirty percent of the South African population was under the age of 15 years, and in 1996, forty-four percent was under the age of 20 years (Crime Statistics 2014).

According to Montesh and Berning (2014) and Bartollas (1997), an interesting fact in South Africa is that its relatively youthful population between the ages of 18 to 20 years is more likely to be convicted of robbery than those older than 20 years. This shows that there is a direct link between the age of youths and violent crimes.

South Africa's criminal justice system also needs to be transformed to perform optimally. Post-1994, about 2.4 million crimes were reported to the police and 200,000 crimes ended in conviction of the perpetrators. For some serious crimes, the number of convictions as a proportion of reported cases is even lower. In 1999, the number was two percent for car hijacking, three percent for aggravated robbery and eight percent for rape (Crime Statistics 2014).

Statistics on recidivism is severely limited in South Africa, and estimates indicate that it is

exceptionally high. Literature study on recidivism shows that recidivism rate in South Africa is between eighty percent and ninety percent (Gaum et al. 2006). According to Montesh and Berning (2014), about twenty percent of the criminals are usually responsible for eighty percent of all violent crimes in South Africa. Although there are no accurate statistics of the rate of recidivism, it is estimated by the Department of Corrections in South Africa to be about forty-seven percent (Parliamentary Liaison Office 2012).

There is a direct link between the use of drugs and committing violent crimes. This is not to say that drug users are always violent. However, there is a feeling that perpetrators under the influence of drugs are more likely to be violent and aggressive. The most common drugs seized in South Africa are mandrax, cocaine, dagga and a mixture of other drugs known as nyaope.

People who are arrested are mostly youth and homeless people. They would commit any crime to obtain cash to buy drugs (Naik and Serumula 2015).

Crimes committed by most drugs addicts are said to be violent in nature. The crimes are committed to either sustain the drug habit, or the drug could have been taken to increase the urge to commit the violent crime itself (Shabangu 2008). Addiction to drugs facilitates participation in gangs and consequent self-destructive lifestyles. Drug abuse appears to be one of the main contributing factors to recidivism. The devastating role of substance abuse in the perpetuation of violent crime and its consequent role in recidivism cannot be underestimated. Individuals have committed street robberies or burglaries to pay for their 'habit', but the advent of 'tik', which is relatively cheap but highly addictive within a very short period of time has had a major impact on violent crime (Parliamentary Liaison Office 2012).

On Valentine's Day in February 2013, Paralympic Oscar Leonard Carl Pistorius fatally shot his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp, in his Pretoria home. He said he had mistaken Steenkamp for an intruder hiding in the bathroom, but he was arrested and charged with murder. During 2014, Pistorius was found guilty of culpable homicide and sentenced to imprisonment (Laganparsad 2015). This is one of the many cases in which a firearm has been used to commit a violent crime.

According to the SAPS, South Africa is a very heavily armed society. More than 4.2 million firearms are legally in the possession of about 3.5 million South Africans, of which more than half are small arms. It is believed that a large number of illegal firearms are circulating in the South African society. South Africa's easily permeable borders make it easy for the smuggling of large quantities of firearms into the country. These small arms sell cheaply in sub-Saharan Africa, making them accessible to criminals in South Africa, who frequently use them to commit violent crimes in society (Schönteich and Louw 2001).

Police leadership since 1994 has also been characterized by different leadership styles, the most popular being the autocratic leadership style, which seems to have helped in improving the crime statistics. The crime statistics since 1994 to 2014 speak for themselves (Crime Statistics 2014).

DISCUSSION

Prior to 1994, the collection of crime statistics in South Africa was complicated by the existence of different policing agencies and the relationship between the police and the public. The crime statistics in South Africa excluded crimes committed and reported in the former homelands (Transkei, Bophuthswana, Venda, Ciskei self-governing states (TBVC states) and KwaZulu-Natal). This resulted in a substantial portion of crime statistics not being collected and accounted for in the national crime statistical database. Crime statistics prior to 1994 should be treated with caution.

In 1996, the *National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS)* was introduced as a new integrated strategy to reduce crime in South Africa. It was intended to be the overarching strategy for a number of projects focused on increasing safety. The NCPS was aimed at improving criminal justice functioning, environmental design, community values and education, and transnational crime (Leggett 2004).

Since 1994, SAPS put in place many crime combatting strategies and reforms to address crimes in general. *Crime Intelligence*-led policing was adopted in South Africa in 1995 to address violent crimes. Influenced by the National Intelligence Model (NIM) from the United Kingdom (UK), it was aimed at addressing organized crime syndicates. The spotlight was to target

the criminal and not the crime. Research in the UK has shown that a small percentage of repeat offenders, commit a large number of violent crimes (National Criminal Investigation Service (NCIS) 2000).

Community Policing in South Africa was written into the interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1993. The Constitution legally empowers the SAPS and the communities in South Africa to establish community police forums (CPFs) at every police station. The purpose of the CPF is to improve the delivery of police service to the community. In terms of Section 18 of the South African Police Service Act No 68 of 1995, community policing encouraged community participation through the establishment of CPFs. According to Burton (2003), homeowners and businesses became involved in community policing so that they could improve the service delivery. Hence, it became important for community involvement in safety and security issues, both to identify the crime problems and hotspots, and to assist in solving the problems. It has also shown that planning against crime required partnerships between the police, the municipality, and the community that they serve. To succeed, this approach to local safety required an integrated approach (Landman and Lieberman 2005).

During April 1998 *Sector Policing* was introduced in Johannesburg by the then Provincial Commissioner, as a distinctive style of policing and subsequently rolled out to other parts of the country. Sector policing entails dividing police station areas into manageable sectors, appointing sector managers, sector teams and establishing Sector Crime Forums (SCF's). The reason for the geographic division of the policing area into sectors is to ensure police visibility. Sector teams comprising of street patrollers from the community and the SAPS officials patrol the sectors to get to know particular neighborhoods and the residents. These sector teams will get to know the problems of the sector and the crime trends and manage them accordingly (Burger 2007: 6). At the police station level, crime hotspots and flashpoints are identified and personnel from the police station's crime combatting sections are mobilized into response teams to neutralize the identified crime threat. The crime combatting sections move into the crime hotspots and flashpoints in numbers, set up

cordon-and-search, stop and search operations and roadblocks (Steinberg 2005).

During 2000, there was pressure on SAPS to use the visible policing approach aimed at crime reduction but also pressure to use response teams to respond quickly. This resulted in the development of the *National Crime Combating Strategy (NCCS)* as an in-house strategy by the SAPS in 1999 and implemented in 2000. The NCCS focused on three elements, the first element focused on the identification of areas with specific crime problems. Police targeted these areas with all the available resources, carrying out roadblocks, stop and search and cordon, and search operations. The second element of the NCCS focused on gang and syndicate crimes. This involved deploying experienced detectives in the investigation of these gangs and syndicates. The third element focused on improving police services in the identified areas, by initiating medium to long-term social crime prevention programs. The focus on police service was critical in improving public confidence (Leggett 2004).

In the researchers' experience the NCCS led to establishing Crime Combating Forums (CCF's) at the station level, area level, provincial level and national level. These forums stereotyped the Crime Control Strategy (CCS) meetings of the New York Police Department (NYPD), in which they implemented the Compstat. The purpose of these forums was to compare statistics and to initiate appropriate police action, and to measure results in the form of successes. The much publicized crime rate drop during 1993 to 1998 in New York around this time cemented the popular view that Compstat was responsible for making the city safer (Ratcliffe 2003).

The drop in violent crimes during 2003-2004 in South Africa may also be attributable to the Crime Combating Forums. In addition to the crime reduction strategies discussed above, new laws to address specific problem crimes have been developed. All of these laws have the potential to contribute to the prevention of crime and victimization. They include laws to address organized crime, terrorism, sexual offences, domestic violence, children's rights, firearm-related offences, criminal procedure and evidence and corruption. A number of other *reform oversight initiatives* have also been implemented. These include innovations in civilian oversight of the police such as the Secretariat and the In-

ternal Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) the creation of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, the establishment of a single National Prosecuting Authority, and changes in the Department of Correctional Services (Montesh 2007).

According to Du Plessis and Louw (2005), it is widely acknowledged that crime prevention is not simply the business of the government. The role of *civil society partnerships* is equally important. South Africa presently has a well-organized, energized civil society participating in the safety and security sector. After 1994, the government formally recognized the importance of the contribution that civil society makes in the prevention of violent crime, most notably in crime combatting projects and community policing. This has led to the formation of many partnerships at the national, provincial and local levels. These partnerships have been especially important in the areas of offender reintegration, diversion programs, victim empowerment, community policing, school safety, and most importantly, responding to rape and domestic violence and providing child protection and welfare services. Business Against Crime (BAC) was established in response to a call from former President Nelson Mandela for private businesses to partner with the government in the fight against crime.

The private security industry, while still retaining 'traditional' private security tasks, engages in more and more law enforcement duties to combat violent crimes, for example, the South African Banking Risk Information Centre (SABRIC), Consumer Goods Risk Initiative (CGRI) and the Petroleum Security Initiative (PSI) (Govender 2012; Shearing and Stenning 1982). According to Landman and Lieberman (2005), homeowners and businesses in South Africa have reacted to violent crime by protecting themselves and their property. They make use of security risk control measures that range from using electronic surveillance (Close Circuit Television) cameras to bullet proof glasses in banks and in 24-hour garage shops, burglar bars in front of windows, security gates on doors, and shutters covering entire shop windows. High fences or walls are constructed around properties. Access control entrances are common to many businesses and organizations (Maggio 2009).

Residents have also enhanced their physical protection systems. They have included the installation of closed circuit surveillance camer-

as, alarm systems, panic buttons, electronic gates and intercom systems, to physical modifications such as burglar bars, security gates, fences and walls around properties. The extent and nature of the changes depend, among other things, on the location of their homes, their financial position, the measure of security perceived to be necessary, and the risk of victimization. For many urban South Africans the implementation of these physical protection systems is not enough. They want to live in a more protected neighborhood. This has led to an increase in the number of security villages and enclosed neighborhoods. These areas are financed for development by the residents (Maggio 2009). An enclosed neighborhood is also considered as a type of gated community. These neighborhoods are characterized by road closures, with fences or walls around entire neighborhoods in some cases. Security companies are contracted to control access to these gated communities (Landman and Lieberman 2005).

There is a need for specialized skills, advanced technology and resources to combat violent crimes. To become professional, the local police need to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding of violent crimes. According to Ratcliffe (2009), policing of violent crime should include proactive and reactive models.

Since the advent of democracy in 1994, there were four National Commissioners who provided strategic leadership to the South African Police Service (SAPS). Each provided strategic leadership with their own vision. Different crime combating strategies have been implemented to address the public perception and experiences of violent crime in general. The change in leadership and the vision of the different leaders, accompanied by the implementation of different operational strategies may have contributed to the state of violent crime that is confronting South Africa. The social awareness and sense of responsibility of the different National Commissioners is reflected in the way they structured and defined the functioning of the South African Police Service.

CONCLUSION

Community experiences of violent crime in South Africa as indicated in the crime statistics is of serious concern. The negative experiences do not only undermine the legitimacy of the po-

lice, but also that of the government and the rule of law. Although SAPS had introduced crime combatting strategies and legal reforms post 1994, trying to reduce crime, the situation with violent crime is unabated. Police leadership does not generate a capacity for specialized knowledge and skills to tackle crimes that require specialized interventions using unconventional policing methods. There is still a great deal more work that needs to be done regarding public education, community crime prevention and crime intelligence-led policing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policing violent crime should start with minimizing the opportunities and disturbing the criminal's state of readiness to be involved in crime. Models should include the elimination of precipitating and predisposition factors, increasing the possibility of arrest, as well as enhancing the capabilities of the police and communities. Public education and partnerships policing should be reinforced to reduce violent crime in the society. Public education should be aggressively implemented in communities, schools and at workplaces. Communities including business should be engaged to become involved in community crime prevention, so that every home, block, sector and the community is protected at all times.

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