**GLOBAL CHALLENGES
POWER SHARING**

**INNOVATIONS FOR
SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES**

'RECONCILING THE IMPOSSIBLE': SOUTH AFRICA'S GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY, 1994-1996

Leon Schreiber drafted this case study based on interviews conducted in Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa, in September and October 2016. Case published December 2016.

This series highlights the governance challenges inherent in power sharing arrangements, profiles adaptations that eased these challenges, and offers ideas about adaptations.

SYNOPSIS

In April 1994, after a decades-long struggle for democracy and more than three years of arduous peace negotiations, Nelson Mandela's African National Congress formed a power-sharing government with its rivals: the National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party. It was vital to overcome lingering distrust between the three groups, which had been locked in a violent conflict. Based on the outcome of an election and in accordance with an interim constitution adopted the year before, political leaders apportioned cabinet posts and appointed ministers from all three parties to the new government. They then tried to design practices conducive to governing well, and they introduced innovations that became models for other countries. When policy disputes arose, they set up ad hoc committees to find common ground, or they sought venues outside the cabinet to adjudicate the disagreements. Despite the National Party's withdrawal from the power-sharing cabinet in mid 1996, South Africa's Government of National Unity oversaw the creation of a historic new constitution, restructured the country's legal system and public service, and implemented a raft of social programs aimed at undoing the injustices of apartheid.

INTRODUCTION

In 2016, Roelf Meyer sat in a hotel restaurant in Stellenbosch, South Africa, and recalled the daunting challenge that had confronted the country's fractious political leaders more than two decades earlier. "Reconciling the impossible" was how the former cabinet minister described the effort to convert former enemies into friends—or at least to turn them into functioning parts of a new, power-sharing government.

More than 20 years earlier, in May 1994, Nelson Mandela had taken office as the country's first democratically elected president, signaling the end of apartheid, a system of racial oppression introduced in 1948 by the then ruling white supremacist National Party (NP). As fighter jets painted the sky over Pretoria in the colors of the country's newly adopted rainbow nation flag, Mandela declared that "the moment to bridge the chasms that divide us has come."[1]

But achieving that goal was a formidable task by almost any measure. The *New York Times* at the time described the cabinet of the new Government of National Unity (GNU) as "an eclectic, even explosive, mix of personalities, backgrounds and styles that will challenge Mr. Mandela's promise to govern by consensus."[2]

While crowds celebrated Mandela's inauguration in the streets, senior officials were working behind the scenes to make sure that the social and political chasms that had divided South Africans for decades would not swallow up the new government. An interim constitution, adopted in 1993 after years of difficult negotiations among disparate political factions, had set forth guidelines for the country's first democratic election—one in which all racial groups would participate. The interim constitution also laid out a basic structure for a transitional government and included a formula for apportioning cabinet portfolios among parties on the basis of vote results.

The three major parties—Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), the National Party, and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), which wanted to create a federal Zulu ethnic state—had a bloody history. From 1961 to 1990, the ANC had waged an armed struggle against the NP government in an attempt to overturn apartheid, which enforced strict racial segregation and attempted to confine black South Africans (who constituted 70 to 80% of the population) to 13% of the country's territory. And since the 1980s, the ANC and the IFP had been locked in a violent struggle for dominance in the eastern region of KwaZulu, and clashes between them continued in the weeks leading up to the election.

Political leaders, officials of the new government, and civil servants—many of whom had served in the previous government—faced the task of fostering the cooperation needed to make a politically fragmented cabinet effective; and principals Mandela and incumbent president F. W. de Klerk were relying heavily on their colleagues and advisers for ideas.

Terms of use and citation format appear at the end of this document and at successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/about/terms-conditions. **2**

THE CHALLENGE

At the outset, uncertainty about the way the GNU cabinet would operate, combined with lingering political suspicions and lack of administrative capacity, potentially posed a serious threat to the cabinet's ability to formulate and implement shared policies. Ensuring continuity in government staffing presented an additional hurdle.

The interim constitution based the GNU's structure on the number of seats each party would win in the 400-member National Assembly, which was the lower house and main arm of parliament. Although after the 1994 election the majority party earned the right to appoint the president, a detailed formula stipulated that any political party that won at least 80 seats in the National Assembly was entitled to appoint one executive deputy president to assist the president in government functions. The formula also stipulated that any party that won more than 20 seats in the National Assembly could appoint at least one minister to serve in the cabinet. Each party's share of the seats in the National Assembly determined the number of portfolios held by each party. (The constitution limited the total number of ministries to 27, and both ministers and executive deputy presidents had to be members of the assembly.)

The ANC, the NP, and the IFP all qualified to participate in the GNU cabinet. Mandela's ANC received more than 60% of the vote, which translated to 252 assembly seats. The NP, headed by incumbent president F. W. de Klerk obtained 82 seats based on about 20% of the vote. And although the IFP had agreed to participate only eight days prior to the election, the party, led by Zulu chieftain Mangosuthu Buthelezi, garnered more than 10% of the vote—enough to secure 43 seats in the assembly. No other party won the minimum 20 seats (equal to approximately 5% of the popular vote) required to qualify for a ministry.

The election results meant that the president would come from the ANC and that both the ANC and the NP were entitled to appoint one executive deputy president. Based on their proportions of seats in the National Assembly, the ANC would appoint ministers for 18 portfolios, the NP would have 6, and the IFP, 3.

Even though political leaders had built cross-party working relationships during more than three years of peace negotiations, lingering distrust and mutual suspicion loomed over the process. Sydney Mufamadi of the ANC, who headed the safety and security ministry at the time, shared Meyer's concerns about the difficulties that lay ahead: "We were on different sides of the trenches, fighting and demonizing one another. Everyone thought the people on the other side of the trenches had horns."

The atmosphere of wariness also reflected the NP's difficult position of playing an active role in the cabinet while fulfilling its obligation as the official opposition party in parliament. The interim constitution stipulated that the cabinet's functions should reflect "the consensus-seeking spirit underlying the concept of a government of national unity."[3] And for the GNU cabinet to

live up to the expectations for the long-awaited onset of democracy, political leaders and government officials had to find ways to build trust between former enemies with divergent interests, who now had to serve as cabinet colleagues.

Another challenge for the GNU was that although the ANC was the majority party, none of its leaders had ever served in government. Prior to 1994, apartheid-era laws barred black South Africans from seeking public office outside their designated "homelands," which constituted just 13% of the country's territory. Moreover, the apartheid government had designated the ANC an illegal organization from 1960 to 1990. That ban led to the exile or imprisonment of most of the organization's leaders, including Mandela, who spent 27 years in prison.

Experienced civil servants below the level of cabinet minister also were stretched thin because the GNU arrangement called for the creation of many new offices. A week before Mandela's inauguration, de Klerk transferred most of his administrative staff out of the office of the president, which was located in the west wing of Pretoria's Union Buildings, the official seat of the South African government, and into his new office of the executive deputy president in the east wing. "This created a big void in the president's office," recalled William Smith, who stayed on in his position as administrative head of the cabinet secretariat when the Mandela government came in. "At the management level, only two people remained behind. . . . It was a unique situation because it was not that an established political party simply took over from another party. Instead, there was suddenly an entirely different political dispensation. There were simply no precedents."

 Ensuring continuity in staffing and procedures was crucial. Workers in the outgoing NP government were anxious about their jobs, even though the ANC had agreed to a five-year prohibition on the summary dismissal of incumbent civil servants who were mostly Afrikaners—members of the ethnic group that had dominated the NP government until 1994 and who traced their lineage mainly to white Dutch settlers. Dave Steward, who headed de Klerk's office in the NP government, said that two months before the election, he had arranged a weekend session with staff from the office of the president, including the cabinet secretariat, that developed recommendations for the new cabinet and tried to ease staff concerns about working under new and diverse political leadership.

The GNU had a lot to do and little time to do it. Getting the cabinet up and running quickly was crucial to dealing with an agenda—framed in part by the peace negotiations and the interim constitution—that included the sponsoring of local-government elections the following year; facilitation of the drafting of a permanent constitution by the constituent assembly; oversight of the integration of 11 homeland governments (with 195 separate departments) into a single public service; the beginning of the process of replacing and streamlining hundreds of apartheid-era laws across the

different regions;[4] and the directing of the integration of South Africa's armed forces.

Shortly after his inauguration, Mandela ramped up the pressure even further. In his first state-of-the-nation address to South Africa's parliament, he promised that his government would show "tangible progress" within 100 days by launching new social programs.

FRAMING A RESPONSE

Soon after the April 27 election, the ANC and the NP, both of which won more than 80 seats in the assembly, named their executive deputy presidents. Mandela chose Thabo Mbeki, who had spent more than two decades in exile and was a trained economist; and the NP put forward party leader de Klerk, who had served as South Africa's president from 1989 until 1994.

The next and far more challenging task was to allocate the 27 cabinet portfolios among the three parties—and to do so quickly. Even though the interim constitution provided a detailed formula for the composition of the cabinet, the three parties' political leaders still had to match parties with ministries and appoint people to fill the positions. The interim constitution empowered Mandela to appoint ministers "after consultation with the executive deputy presidents and the leaders of the participating parties."[5] The president also could establish deputy ministerial posts, which would be allocated "in the same proportion and according to the same formula" used for ministerial positions.[6] According to de Klerk, the president had the final say regarding the portfolios each party received, but party leaders had the authority to choose the ministers or deputy ministers for their parties' allocated portfolios.[7] And although the negotiations over portfolios benefited from effective communication channels that the leaders of the three parties had established during years of peace negotiations, de Klerk said, "the negotiations over which party would get which portfolios were tough."

The security portfolios were early sources of disagreement. Although the NP wanted to have one minister in each of what it considered the four main areas of government—security, economy, social, and administrative[8]—Mandela appointed ANC ministers to both of the security portfolios: (1) defense and (2) safety and security. De Klerk said his concerns had been assuaged by a compromise that made him chairman of the cabinet committee on security and intelligence affairs, "which would give me an inside role with regard to the security ministries."

The ANC's Mufamadi, whom Mandela appointed to head the safety and security ministry, said the group tried to work toward consensus but that "where there wasn't an agreement, there was an understanding that it would be the president's call. It required a balance between seeking consensus and deference to the president."

The ANC also insisted on controlling the foreign affairs ministry and proposed that the incumbent NP minister, a seasoned diplomat, move to the minerals and energy portfolio.

In contrast to the security portfolios, the political leaders agreed that the finance minister of the outgoing NP government should retain that powerful position in order to ensure continuity and credibility as South Africa worked to improve its economy. Per-capita gross domestic product had declined at an average rate of 1.3% from 1985 to 1994.[9] "It was going to take some time for the captains of industry to get used to the fact that [ANC ministers] were rational and literate in terms of economics," Mufamadi said. "They thought we were communists. Those who needed reassurances were therefore happy that there was a National Party minister—perhaps even that there was a white minister."

A final sensitive issue involved the decision on an appropriate portfolio for Buthelezi, leader of the IFP. The party had presented the most serious threat to the electoral process in the lead-up to the national vote, because Buthelezi, a Zulu prince and former governor of the KwaZulu homeland, had demanded postponement of the election and the creation of a federal system with a Zulu state. In the midst of escalating violence in the KwaZulu and Johannesburg regions, as well as overwhelming local and international pressure, Buthelezi had agreed to participate in the election process only eight days before the historic vote—on condition that there would be a process of international mediation between the ANC, the IFP, and the NP on the future of KwaZulu.

After the election, the IFP insisted that Buthelezi get a portfolio commensurate with his stature as leader of one of the three parties in the GNU. "The constitution prescribed [it]. . . . It was not through magnanimity or favor if you participated in the government," Buthelezi said. The IFP's position was reinforced by lingering fears that KwaZulu would see a return to violence if Buthelezi was not accommodated. Buthelezi accepted Mandela's offer to become minister of home affairs, responsible for overseeing the upcoming 1995 municipal elections and redesigning South Africa's national identity system.

Mufamadi said the parties agreed to provide some balance in politically sensitive portfolios by selecting deputy ministers whose political affiliations differed from those of their ministers. As a result, the ANC had deputy ministers in the NP-controlled portfolios of agriculture, finance, constitutional development, and welfare; the NP had deputies in the ANC-controlled land affairs, education, and justice ministries; and the IFP had a deputy in the ANC-controlled safety and security portfolio.[10] (Deputy ministers were not members of the cabinet.)

In the final cabinet, the ANC controlled not only the powerful security and foreign affairs portfolios but also most of the key ministries involved in social service delivery: education, health, public enterprises, public works, and housing.

In addition to keeping control of the finance ministry, the NP retained the agriculture ministry, a move that reflected the party's traditional base of rural Afrikaners but that was balanced by the ANC's control over the Ministry for Land Affairs. The NP chose Meyer for the important post of minister of constitutional development and provincial affairs and appointed its people to the economically significant minerals and energy portfolio. The NP also controlled the smaller, welfare and environmental affairs ministries, rounding out the party's six portfolios.

Under the deal that saw Buthelezi become home affairs minister, the IFP also secured the less influential ministries of correctional services and the arts, culture, science, and technology.

On May 11, the GNU cabinet was sworn in—just two weeks after the election.

GETTING DOWN TO WORK

The transition to democracy and the end of international sanctions against apartheid had fueled South Africans' hopes for an economic turnaround and a better life. Meeting the public's heightened expectations required the GNU to build a competent and functional government workforce, and the three-party cabinet had to agree on a shared governance agenda, a clear procedure for conducting cabinet meetings and coordinating policy decisions, a system for promoting ministerial accountability, a way to resolve policy disputes, and a system to communicate policy decisions to the media and the public.

Staffing a divided government

When Mandela arrived for his first day at the office on May 12, he encountered confusion and uncertainty among those who would work with him. Fanie Pretorius, who had headed administration in the president's office during the former NP government, stressed that the new president's top priority was to assuage the fears that incumbent office administrators had about their futures. "He immediately called us all together in a meeting room. People were nervous, and as the new president shook hands with all staff members, one white lady was staring intently at Madiba," Pretorius said, using the Xhosa clan name that South Africans used for referring to Mandela. "He walked up to her and jokingly said in Afrikaans: 'Are you angry with me?' The whole room burst out laughing, and it immediately broke the tension." Mandela went on to explain that "'even though things had to change, if you do your jobs, then you're welcome here. You have knowledge and skills that we need,'" Pretorius recalled. "It was an excellent example of the kind of bridge builder he was."

The new government needed capable senior administrators to ensure the success of long-term goals such as policy making and delivery. A week after his inauguration, Mandela appointed Jakes Gerwel, a scholar and university administrator, to head the office of the president and serve as

cabinet secretary. Gerwel, who died in 2012, "was a highly respected figure within the ANC for the work he had done as an administrator and in transforming the University of the Western Cape into an intellectual home for the left," said Goolam Aboobaker, an adviser to Gerwel during his time at the university and subsequently appointed as head of cabinet research.

Gerwel consulted Pretorius and Smith—both of whom stayed on in their positions—about personnel shortages in critical positions. Working with the Public Service Commission, which had instituted special measures to make early retirements possible and to simplify the process of hiring new staff, "Gerwel quickly filled the vacant posts, which included the heads of cabinet services, communications, and the president's private secretary," Pretorius said. He added that one of the advantages of the large number of vacancies was that "it allowed Gerwel to bring renewal by appointing staff from all population and racial groups in the office without having to kick anyone out."

By June, most of the senior administrative posts in the Union Buildings were being staffed by a mix of experienced holdovers from the previous regime and enthusiastic newcomers sympathetic to the ANC.

Dealing with early complications

In early July, less than two months after Mandela's inauguration, the resignation of the influential NP finance minister rattled the nascent GNU. Although Derek Keys cited personal reasons for his decision to leave the post, his departure threatened to upset the government's delicate political balance. But because both ANC and NP leaders recognized the need for a competent financial expert to handle the finance portfolio, the problem turned out to be less of a jolt than some had feared. Unable to identify a suitable replacement among parliamentarians, Mandela and de Klerk agreed to designate the finance ministry as a nonpartisan position and to appoint a politically unaffiliated businessman, Chris Liebenberg, as Keys's successor.

To formalize the agreement, parliament passed an amendment to the interim constitution that allowed the president to appoint "one minister who is not a member of parliament . . . provided that the president, acting in consultation with the executive deputy presidents and the leaders of the participating parties, deems the appointment of such a minister expedient."[11] Because Mandela and de Klerk favored the move, the amendment process went quickly.

Liebenberg assumed the post in mid September. To compensate the NP for the portfolio it had lost in the process, Mandela appointed an NP member to the newly created Ministry of General Services, raising the total number of ministers in the GNU cabinet to 28.[12]

The relatively quick resolution of this potentially divisive issue underscored the cabinet's general agreement about the need for economic stability. The decision also provided an early illustration of political leaders'

willingness to find pragmatic and flexible solutions to disputes that had the potential to undermine the work of the power-sharing government.

At the same time, though, disputes over seemingly less significant matters illuminated the sensitivities that lay just below the surface. Shortly after the appointment of the GNU cabinet, tensions grew over the question of housing for Mandela and de Klerk, the former president who now was a deputy president. De Klerk said he had expected that he and his wife would be allowed to remain in the Libertas residence in Pretoria,[13] where they had lived during his presidency, and that Mandela would take up residence at the presidential mansion in Pretoria, which had previously housed the ceremonial state president (a position that had been abolished). However, according to de Klerk, Mandela subsequently told him "he was under great pressure from the ANC to move into Libertas, as that was seen to be the home of the head of government."[14]

The two men agreed to swap residences, with the de Klerks moving into the presidential mansion. "[But] no sooner had we become used to the idea, [when Mandela] informed me that he was now under pressure from his senior colleagues to use the [presidential mansion] for other purposes," de Klerk said.[15] As a result, the de Klerks had to change their plans for a third time and move to another official residence in Pretoria, which he said was in need of "substantial refurbishing."[16] Although de Klerk said he was personally "indifferent" about the housing episode, his family was upset.[17] The confusion added to the pressures of the opening months.

Creating a shared policy agenda

The GNU cabinet had to agree on a common policy framework that fostered cooperation between the three parties. Because the ANC, NP, and IFP had had divergent campaign platforms during the election, reconciling their conflicting interests presented a potential stumbling block.

The ANC's 1994 election campaign and manifesto reflected the organization's long-running aim to build a nonracial, nonsexist, and democratic society. The party emphasized the need for "clear goals and a workable plan" to "build a better life for all."[18] The core of the ANC's campaign was the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), a broadly social-democratic document that prioritized investments in social programs to achieve tangible improvements in housing, health, education, and social welfare. The ANC's manifesto also promised wide-ranging public works and land reform programs as well as the implementation of affirmative-action policies.[19]

The NP was committed to free-market principles and portrayed itself as the party of law and order, administrative competence, and experience. Recognizing that it represented a small minority in South Africa, the party's manifesto called for a nonracial democracy wherein the rights of minority communities would be protected from "terrorism by the majority."[20] The concept of power sharing was embedded in the party's manifesto: "When

any winner has too much power, there cannot be peace. Therefore power must be shared, divided and controlled."[21]

The IFP, which had joined the election process just days before the vote, had no formal campaign platform. However, the party had made clear its support of greater autonomy for customs and cultures it deemed "worthy," a free-market economy, and the eradication of corruption, exploitation, and intimidation.[22]

To bridge policy gaps, the NP proposed a formal coalition agreement that spelled out each party's rights and responsibilities in detail, Steward said. But the ANC argued that a policy agenda already existed in two forms: the interim constitution and the party's RDP document, which had strong recognition and broad support among South Africans. The interim constitution listed (1) 25 fundamental rights in areas ranging from education to labor relations and (2) 34 constitutional principles to guide the process of creating a final constitution. "We already had a script from which we read: the agreements we'd reached in the interim constitution," Mufamadi said. "We didn't need a straitjacket, because we were leading the country on the basis of a common constitution." Rather than a separate coalition agreement, "we needed to persuade each other on a per-issue basis. . . . If I've got a proposal, I must be able to show that that proposal sits happily alongside the principles that anchor our constitution."

Just as important, the ANC regarded its resounding electoral victory as an endorsement of the RDP as the bedrock policy guide for the new government. The program covered five key areas: meeting basic needs, developing human resources, building the economy, democratizing the state and society, and arranging implementation.

The other two parties shared most of the priorities laid out in the RDP. De Klerk explained that the NP supported the document "because we did not have deep-rooted policy differences over what was necessary on the social welfare side." For example, he noted, "The NP was not against the expansion of housing [programs] and the improvement of education."

Indeed, de Klerk said the NP viewed the RDP as a natural continuation of its efforts to equalize social spending across different racial groups since the mid 1980s. Although significant racial disparities persisted in many areas, progress was evident in specific areas such as state spending for old-age pensions. In 1970, the pension amount paid to black South Africans equaled only 13% of the amount received by whites. But by 1993, public pension payments had become equalized across all racial groups.[23]

Because of the ANC's dominant position within the GNU and the RDP's "almost iconic status within society," the program encountered little opposition, said Bernie Fanaroff, astrophysicist and former union leader who became head of the RDP office in the presidency. "Everyone, including both the NP and IFP, was in fact very supportive. Everyone was in favor of a school feeding program and building clinics, roads, and schools in the townships."

The detailed negotiated agreements contained in the interim constitution and the general agreement on the aims of the RDP meant that the two documents became the GNU cabinet's de facto governance agenda.

Conducting cabinet meetings

The next order of business for cabinet officials and their political principals was to create a system for running meetings of the politically diverse cabinet. On his first day as president, Mandela announced he would delegate the management of cabinet meetings to his two deputies, Mbeki and de Klerk, who would rotate chairmanship of cabinet meetings every two weeks. The alternating arrangement not only provided equally important roles for the two most powerful parties in the cabinet but also kept the president above the partisan wrangling that was likely to take place during cabinet meetings. Meyer recalled that "Mr. Mandela never ran or chaired the cabinet. He was there more as a guiding figure." Mbeki said that Mandela "would very rarely come to cabinet meetings because he thought that whereas the rest of us attended to the practical matters of governing the country, he must continue with the message of national reconciliation and national unity."[24]

Mandela's decision to delegate chairmanship of the cabinet was a master stroke on a number of levels. First, Mandela retained final authority because the interim constitution stipulated that any decision made during a cabinet meeting chaired by an executive deputy president had to be submitted to the president for ratification.[25] Second, from an administrative viewpoint, the move incentivized cooperation and assigned clear executive responsibility to both Mbeki and de Klerk.

Perhaps most important, the decision enabled Mandela to avoid direct confrontations with de Klerk, with whom he had an understandably tense relationship. Mbeki and de Klerk, on the other hand, worked well together and shared a keen interest in the details of policy making. "There was no animosity or competition, and they got along fairly well as individuals," Meyer said.

Smith, the administrative head of the NP cabinet secretariat, who remained in his position after the Mandela government assumed office, said he moved quickly to brief Mbeki on the details of past cabinet procedures, including meeting schedules and times, the drafting and distribution of cabinet memorandums, the role of three standing committees (social, economic, and security affairs), and the practice of recording meetings for distribution to all ministers.

When the cabinet held a brief introductory meeting in the Union Buildings on May 12, decorum was important. Smith said the group gathered in the traditional cabinet meeting room even though space was tight because the number of attendees (27 ministers, the president, and his two deputies) had increased from 23 under the previous administration. "We felt it would be politically insensitive to hold the meeting in a different room, so we

swapped out the existing chairs for smaller ones so that everyone would fit," Smith recalled.

During subsequent meetings, cabinet members adopted the NP's established procedures—such as the recording of meetings and the circulation of minutes within 48 hours—and reactivated the three standing cabinet committees. Mandela appointed Mbeki to chair the economic affairs panel, and de Klerk headed security affairs; the two shared the chairmanship of the social affairs committee on a two-week rotating basis. Mandela also assigned ministers to attend meetings of one of the three committees according to their portfolios. Recognizing the need for communication and collegiality, the cabinet also agreed that any minister could attend any committee meeting and that all ministers would receive memorandums of all committee meetings.

The cabinet also set up standard procedures regarding the order of business at cabinet meetings. Mbeki said, "We inherited a functioning state machinery, starting with the cabinet. When we sat in the cabinet, we conducted cabinet meetings according to how they did [it] during the apartheid years."[26]

Smith said the president was allowed to "bring along anything from his desk" to cabinet meetings, and both of the executive deputy presidents had the same right. Smith said, "Mbeki's turn came before de Klerk's based on the fact that he represented the majority party"—a practice that resulted in Mbeki being known informally as first executive deputy president and de Klerk as second.

Next, the cabinet reviewed parliamentary affairs and adopted the minutes from the previous cabinet meeting. The bulk of each meeting's work—the adoption of new policies—took place under the final agenda section, when ministers presented policy memorandums that Gerwel had approved.

Coordinating policy decisions

Because policy making was the core work of the politically and culturally diverse cabinet, the group required standardized procedures designed to avoid perceptions of bias while leaving ministers the latitude to press for initiatives they considered important. Aboobaker explained that the policy coordination process began at the ministerial level, where department officials researched and compiled cabinet policy memorandums. The goal was for the memorandums to "summarize a policy matter, which could be quite complex, in a succinct way: each memorandum had to be between five and eight pages long," he said. An annex to the memorandum could include more details.

To ensure uniformity, the cabinet secretariat compiled the *Guide for the Drafting of Cabinet Memorandums* that established the format for cabinet policy memorandums. The document, which was distributed widely among government departments, stipulated that the first section of each

memorandum had to specify the policy subject, explain its purpose, and summarize the issue. Succeeding sections included a discussion of the policy problem, a description of the motivation behind the proposed solution, and an implementation plan. The document also had to consider the financial and constitutional implications of the proposed policy, and a final section summarized the ministry's policy recommendation to the cabinet. Other documents could be attached as supporting evidence, and the relevant minister had to sign the memorandum.

Policy memorandums then went to Gerwel's secretariat office, which reviewed and analyzed the proposals. In addition to making sure the documents adhered to standards set by the drafting guide, Aboobaker said, "We had studied how the British and German cabinet offices functioned. We were of the view that it was important for the [South African] president to be familiar with all of the matters to be considered by the cabinet. One of my responsibilities as head of cabinet research was to prepare analytic summaries of the cabinet memorandums that dealt with the policy matters before cabinet."

Aboobaker's job was to prepare briefing notes for President Mandela on the implications of each policy proposal before it was considered by a cabinet committee. "I got between 12 and 16 memorandums fortnightly on a Friday evening and had to present notes to Professor Gerwel by the following Tuesday because the three committees met on a Wednesday and a Thursday." The goal was to make sure Mandela was aware of all policy proposals—especially any that might be controversial. Given the GNU's unique configuration, Aboobaker said, "We decided that the service we were providing was only for the president." Mandela was viewed as standing above party politics.

After the secretariat processed a memorandum, the proposal would go to one of the cabinet's standing committees, which could approve, reject, or modify it. If approved, the memorandum was presented to the full cabinet, which made the final decision.

"Cabinet functioned on the basis of coresponsibility," Mufamadi said. The principle drew on the ANC's internal culture of collective responsibility and required that once the cabinet made a decision, all parties had to support its implementation. Although a nominal provision stipulated that the cabinet had to gain the approval of two-thirds of the ministers on certain issues of fundamental importance, decisions were based on general agreement—in keeping with the interim constitution's call for a "consensus-seeking spirit"— and "there was never any voting," de Klerk said.

De Klerk said he and Mbeki, who alternated as chairs of cabinet meetings, played an important role in the consideration of policy memorandums. "Both Mbeki and I were firm chairmen," he said. "We asked ministers sharp, critical questions about their memorandums, and they were expected to defend them both within the committees and in cabinet. The chairman would then provide a summary of the discussion and say, 'It looks

like this is what we should decide.' If the chairman found a wise compromise during the discussion, it would be accepted as such."

The GNU also set up special coordination structures dedicated to achieving the goals set by the RDP. In November, parliament adopted the "White Paper on Reconstruction and Development," which called for the creation of a fourth cabinet committee to implement RDP policies and projects. Mandela appointed Jay Naidoo, a prominent former union leader, to head the new ministry, which was located one floor above the president's office in the Union Buildings. Although the RDP ministry formally had the same powers as other ministries, its physical location within the presidency enhanced its status.

Fanaroff, who was the seniormost civil servant in the RDP ministry, said that in addition to allocating donor funding for RDP projects, "The minister of finance, Derek Keys, created a dedicated RDP fund, totaling 13.5 billion rand [US$3.1 billion at the time] by taking a 'top slice' off the budget from each government department at the national and provincial levels. Our mandate was to give it back to them—but only [for] appropriate projects." The funding mechanism was authorized by parliament in 1994. In order to qualify for RDP funding, proposed projects had to have business cases that set forth milestones, timelines, deliverables, and costs.

The funding system was a way of redirecting government spending toward social priorities, because the RDP emphasized the types of projects implemented by ministries such as housing and water affairs. As a result, those ministries stood to benefit more from the arrangement than would those outside the social services sector. "But we quickly found that very few people at the national or provincial level were able to do effective project management," Fanaroff said. As a result, the RDP minister seconded experienced project managers from state-owned enterprises and the private sector to help government departments.

Whereas the cabinet committees on social, economic, and security affairs dealt with broader policy matters, the dedicated RDP cabinet committee made "all of the policy decisions regarding expenditure" on specific RDP projects, Fanaroff said. Naidoo headed the committee, which also included the finance, public works, public administration, and constitutional development ministers.

Fanaroff, who served as secretary to the committee, recalled: "Procedures within the committee started off as quite informal and became more formal over time. Importantly, [the committee] . . . provided a venue for all of the relevant ministers to coordinate and take joint decisions based on consensus."

Resolving disputes

Despite the creation of mechanisms for coordination within the GNU, policy disputes between the parties sometimes led to disagreements within the cabinet. In such cases, it was first up to the two chairmen to resolve the

conflict. "Both Mbeki and I smoked, so when things got too hot in the cabinet, we would often call for a smoke break," de Klerk said. During the break, "the ministers who were directly involved in the disagreement would then get together in light of the debate that had taken place, and oftentimes that would lead to a compromise," he added.

If the chairmen were unable to engineer a compromise on a particularly thorny issue, cabinet officials and their political leaders often attempted to resolve the dispute by setting up a multiparty, issue-specific negotiating committee. Aboobaker said such ad hoc cabinet committees represented the GNU's preferred approach: "Cabinet would say, 'This is a complicated issue, so let's form a ministers committee to try to address it.'"

If the ad hoc committee failed to generate agreement, the cabinet had the option to refer the dispute to another government branch. Leon Wessels, deputy head of the constituent assembly, said Gerwel identified three such issues on which the "participating parties held fundamentally different positions of principle": abolishing the death penalty, legalizing abortion, and establishing a truth and reconciliation commission to investigate apartheid-era crimes.[27] In the case of abolishing capital punishment, the GNU cabinet decided to "presume the death penalty largely as a legal question as to whether it passed the standards set out in the new constitution's bill of rights. For this position, there was some criticism of the jurisdiction of politics and, equally, the politicization of the judiciary," said Nicholas Haysom, Mandela's primary legal adviser. In the face of political deadlock, with the NP and the IFP opposed but the ANC supporting the abolition of capital punishment, the government referred the decision to the country's newly established constitutional court, which ruled in mid 1995 that the death penalty was unconstitutional.

Deadlock over the question of legalizing abortion, which was supported by the ANC and IFP but opposed by the NP, was similarly referred to another decision-making venue. In a cabinet memorandum from early 1995, Gerwel said the GNU approved the appointment of a parliamentary committee to "enquire into and report possible changes" to apartheid-era abortion legislation. At the same time, "the parties represented in the GNU would reserve the right to argue their different positions on the matter" in parliament.[28] Haysom said the abortion issue ignited "a complex debate that also cut across purely political boundaries. Although the ANC supported it, members of parliament were given the freedom to vote according to their consciences." Parliament settled the issue by legalizing abortion in 1996.

The ANC's intention to create a truth and reconciliation commission to investigate apartheid-era crimes created another flashpoint: "We had tough negotiations with the ANC," de Klerk recalled. "They wanted more leniency for their fighters and a stricter amnesty test for the [previously NP-aligned] security forces. We also pushed for greater focus on reconciliation." In keeping with the GNU's established practice for dispute resolution, the cabinet created a committee led by the justice minister and included ministers

from all three parties to "conduct consultations and deliberations on this matter," Gerwel said in a cabinet memorandum from early 1995.[29]

Although the negotiations made significant progress, the talks failed to resolve disagreements regarding the powers and composition of the proposed commission. As a result, when the draft Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Bill was published for public comment, the ministerial committee agreed to also publish a joint press statement that reflected "in a constructive manner the fact that the National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party hold reservations about the bill."[30] Although the ANC made some concessions, the party's dominance in parliament enabled passage of the bill.

Calming the rancor: The peacemaker

When tensions rose and tempers flared in the cabinet, Gerwel played an important—though largely unofficial—role in smoothing ruffled feathers and setting the antagonists back on the road toward resolution. Even though his position as head of the office of the president and cabinet secretary had many weighty official responsibilities, he drew praise for his valuable personal characteristics. "There couldn't have been a better match between President Mandela and Jakes Gerwel," said Aboobaker. Gerwel "was a very committed and humble person and showed no political ambitions of his own. He made it clear that he was there only to provide a service for Mr. Mandela. As a result, he was trusted by ANC and NP as well as the IFP ministers."

Speaking for the NP side, Meyer described Gerwel as "the crucial person" in resolving many disputes. Meyer said he often worked with Gerwel to resolve confrontations and pointed out that ministers from the NP and the IFP were also keenly aware that "Gerwel had the full confidence of Mandela, so he could take messages to Mandela like nobody else could."

De Klerk described Gerwel as "very competent," adding, "there was a genuine friendship between us. I think he accepted my bona fides, and I accepted his bona fides."

Ahmed Kathrada, who spent 26 years in jail with Mandela and advised him during his presidency, said NP ministers trusted Gerwel in part because "he was as much Afrikaans speaking as he was English speaking. . . . This helped him get along with NP ministers. He even got Mandela to include a poem by Afrikaner poet Ingrid Jonker in his very first state-of-the-nation address."

Gerwel's ability to gain the confidence of all sides made him the GNU's principal "peacemaker," Meyer said. This uniquely empowered him to undertake back-channel communication between all the different parties involved in a dispute, which often defused tensions without the need to directly involve senior political leaders.

Promoting accountability

Holding ministers accountable for implementation and performance was problematic. The most effective method for doing so involved setting up systematic, quantifiable, and effective monitoring processes. However, the task of building strong accountability mechanisms took a back seat to policy making and implementation during the GNU period from 1994 to 1996. The government focused its energies primarily on the overwhelming tasks of (1) overhauling a fractured legal system and its public service, (2) integrating the armed forces, (3) overseeing the creation of a final constitution, and (4) establishing new democratic institutions.

Lacking any official way to monitor performance, the presidency used less-formal mechanisms to foster accountability among ministers. "The first was the secretariat's practice of circulating a note on 'outstanding matters' to members of cabinet," Aboobaker said. "The idea was to *remind* ministers of matters that still had to be resolved rather than to directly *tell* them."

A second mechanism was the president's new state-of-the-nation speech to parliament. "We were trying to figure out our version of Britain's queen's speech or the US president's state-of-the-union address," Aboobaker said. "This became an opportunity for our president—who is both head of the government and head of state—to set the tone for the term of the government or the program for a specific year."

Mandela and Gerwel decided to use the mechanism of a speech the president would present at the beginning of each calendar year to call ministers to account. They created a system that required every minister and director-general to submit year-end reports to Gerwel detailing their departments' three major achievements for the current year and their three major priorities for the following year. "At the end of each year, we had to prepare a summary of the end-of-the-year reports for the president, who took them very seriously," Aboobaker said. Mandela included in his speech certain issues he considered most important, including shortcomings where they existed. "In this way, we achieved two key things: we accounted to parliament, and we got ministers to account to the president," Aboobaker added.

Monitoring progress on the government's flagship RDP was also important. Fanaroff explained that "we introduced requirements for business cases, project plans, and monitoring. Much of it we developed as we went along because we were inexperienced in government and there was a lack of project management and control systems within government." Fanaroff said officials from the RDP ministry "monitored all projects through reports, visits to the projects, and requests for spending information . . . In a few of the projects, we found corruption, but many simply struggled to implement." The ministry encouraged the public's involvement in monitoring by erecting "big signboards for every infrastructure project, saying this is how much it costs, these are the contractors, and this is when it's supposed to be

completed." Still, Fanaroff conceded that the RDP's monitoring mechanisms "were not very tight at the beginning but improved with time."

Aboobaker also acknowledged that monitoring was rudimentary "during those early years. Monitoring and evaluation weren't parts of the lexicon of the GNU. In those early years, we were learning statecraft, and the system became more sophisticated only as time went by."

Communicating cabinet decisions

To present a unified and credible front to the still anxious public, the GNU needed a centralized system for communicating cabinet decisions to the media. De Klerk had played a significant role in the prior government's information arm, known as the South African Communications Service, but many South Africans had considered the service little more than a mouthpiece for the apartheid government.

After the change of governments, Gerwel's secretariat set up new procedures for press statements, which were released after every fortnightly meeting of the full cabinet. Aboobaker explained that "following every cabinet meeting, I drew up a draft press statement that I presented to Gerwel," and Gerwel edited the statements for accuracy and length. Brevity was a key concern not only for simplicity but also to avoid creating misconceptions. "We didn't want to give more information than was necessary, mainly because we thought we were not really experts on the matters being considered by cabinet," Aboobaker said. "But that came with the understanding that journalists could always get more information from the relevant minister and line department."

After Gerwel approved a statement, the secretariat arranged a press briefing and distributed copies to journalists. After reading the statement, "Gerwel would then take a couple of questions. We always tried to keep press briefings short to encourage the press to contact the relevant line minister for more thorough briefings or information," Aboobaker said.

While Gerwel's secretariat handled cabinet communications, he also appointed senior ANC official Joel Netshitenze to lead communications for the presidency. Netshitenze's role included issuing statements on behalf of the president, handling media requests, assisting with speech writing, and compiling official documents.

Because cabinet communications operated independently from individual ministries' communication functions, "there were times when ministers were just calling press briefings or doing interviews on their own," recalled Essop Pahad, one of Mbeki's closest advisers. "Sometimes two or three ministers would hold interviews at the same time, which made it difficult for the media to present the positions of government."

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

In an assessment of the stability of the GNU in late 1994, Gerwel said, "One would not be aware that it is a multiparty government if you were sitting in on the debates. . . . You would not realize that people come from different parties." [31] He praised the level of civility and general agreement: "It is an amazing thing to see people from different parties taking the same position on an issue."[32] In his autobiography, published in 1999, De Klerk agreed: "For the first year or so the new cabinet functioned surprisingly smoothly."[33]

But by early 1995, cracks were beginning to fracture the "consensus-seeking spirit" of the power-sharing government. Disagreements over the contents of the final constitution, which was scheduled for completion in May 1996, as well as tensions regarding the NP's role in the GNU and the need for the party to position itself in anticipation of the 1999 national election, contributed to a marked deterioration in the relationship between the two most powerful parties.

On January 18, 1995, the leaders of the two main GNU parties clashed openly for the first time during a cabinet meeting. ANC ministers were angry that in the days leading up to the meeting, de Klerk had made a series of public statements that were critical of the ANC. At the same time, the NP contingent was concerned about "the [party's] problem of simultaneously being part of the government but nevertheless also being the official opposition," de Klerk said. The meeting escalated into a verbal altercation between Mandela and de Klerk, and the media got wind that de Klerk was "seriously thinking of withdrawing from the GNU."[34]

Two days after the acrimonious cabinet meeting, the two leaders met in Mandela's office in the Union Buildings, and de Klerk insisted on the need for a formal coalition agreement that recognized the NP's right to criticize the government. De Klerk said Mandela "was conciliatory, and he assured me that he wanted us to continue to work together in the GNU."[35] During an impromptu press conference on the lawn of Mandela's residence, they announced they had "cleared up the misunderstandings."[36]

But tensions about the NP's role in the GNU continued to simmer. According to de Klerk, "after about 15 or 18 months, the ANC felt they had now learned enough [about governance]. They also no longer accepted that the NP had a right to criticize decisions of cabinet that we disagreed with." The ANC's Mufamadi countered that "because the GNU cabinet was based on the principle of coresponsibility, we all had to defend its decisions."

In September 1995, the strains inherent in the power-sharing arrangement—which saw the ANC in a dominant position whereas the NP was a minority party in government as well as the official opposition—boiled over. Mandela and de Klerk were photographed at a public function in Johannesburg "shaking our fingers at one another in a heated argument," de Klerk said.[37]

De Klerk described the incident as both personal and political, calling Mandela's speech at the event a "vicious attack on the National Party, which he worded in such a manner that it was clear that he had targeted me personally as the leader of the party. . . . By this time, it was clear that the GNU was not working."[38]

Internal NP politics heated up during the same period, adding fuel to the dispute. "Some people in the NP caucus—primarily those who were not in the cabinet—were more confrontational and didn't like the continual compromises," Meyer said.

Mbeki said the NP was also increasingly coming under pressure from the Democratic Party, which represented mainly whites and held seven seats in the National Assembly. Due to the NP's involvement in the GNU, the Democratic Party "said the National Party was betraying [white people] and selling them out. . . . The National Party feared that the Democratic Party was taking away their constituency and electoral support," Mbeki said.[39]

In addition to deterioration in the personal relationship between the leaders of the ANC and the NP, tensions between the two parties mounted further during negotiations over the wording of the final constitution. Some NP ministers were unhappy about the ANC's refusal to accept permanent power sharing in the document. "For the future, we wanted a consultative council of minority parties next to the cabinet. Such a council would operate as a consensus-seeking forum on issues of national importance," De Klerk said. But the ANC rejected the idea on the grounds that it would dilute democracy.

On May 8, 1996, the text of the final constitution was adopted by 86% of the members of the constituent assembly. Despite their reservations about the lack of a power-sharing provision, NP members voted in favor of the measure.

Although adoption of the constitution was a historic achievement, just a week later de Klerk announced that the NP would withdraw from the GNU at the end of June 1996. In his speech, de Klerk gave two reasons: "the constitution contains no provision for the continuation of any form of joint decision making in the executive branch," and there is a perception among NP ministers "that our influence within the GNU has been declining."[40] But de Klerk also stressed that "our decision should be seen as an important step in the growing maturity and normalization of our young democracy."[41] He added that internal NP dynamics had contributed to the decision: "We had to position ourselves as an effective opposition party ahead of the 1999 election, and we couldn't do that if we were seen to be part of ANC decisions with which we did not agree."

The ANC acknowledged the legitimacy of the NP's decision. "It reflects the fact that the National Party recognizes that our young democracy has come of age and would need vigorous opposition unfettered by its participation in the executive," the ANC said in a statement issued at the

Terms of use and citation format appear at the end of this document and at <u>successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/about/terms-conditions</u>.

time. "We respect their judgment on this matter as well as the party political considerations which precipitated their decision."[42]

Mandela's legal adviser Haysom indicated that the decision hadn't come as a complete surprise. "The implicit question was always: at what point before the next election will the NP withdraw?" he said. "Even though some people thought it was too early [to withdraw in 1996], de Klerk exercised a political judgment. In other words, the question was how long a period would be necessary to share in the tasks of managing the transition, and what period would be necessary to create a new identity as an opposition party."

In the wake of the NP's withdrawal, IFP leader Buthelezi also voiced his unhappiness with the GNU over political issues. In June 1996, he cited the ANC's failure to honor its 1994 pledge to hold international mediation as the "major unresolved issue" between the two parties. Buthelezi also accused Mandela of treating the IFP with "utter disdain . . . utter contempt" and described their relationship as "tense."[43] But despite widespread speculation that the IFP was set to join the NP in withdrawing from the GNU before the 1999 election, the alliance endured as a regular political coalition, with Buthelezi remaining in his position as home affairs minister until 2004.[44]

In July 1996, ANC ministers replaced the six NP ministers who had withdrawn from the GNU cabinet, and the position of second executive deputy president, which had been held by de Klerk, was abolished. The move did not disrupt the functioning of the cabinet. Although the constitution allowed for the GNU to potentially remain in force until the 1999 election, the NP's voluntary withdrawal marked the end of the power-sharing arrangement—both in name and in practice.

ASSESSING RESULTS

Although differences over the need for power sharing in the final constitution, as well as the NP's right to criticize the government in its capacity as the official opposition, contributed to the NP's withdrawal from the GNU, the structure and practices, as well as personalities, scored some important successes, making it one of the most successful—and a possibly unique—transitional governments. Because the NP was the official opposition party, its decision to focus on positioning itself for the 1999 election could be construed as a vote of confidence in the strength of South Africa's new democracy.

The systems introduced to build trust, capacity, and cooperation within the cabinet achieved a number of successes during the GNU's tenure from April 27, 1994, until June 30, 1996. It was most significant that the cabinet provided sufficient stability to enable the constituent assembly to write and adopt a final constitution, which was lauded by some international observers as "the most admirable constitution in the history of the world."[45] Following nine years of recession and stagnation, the country's economic growth rate also quickly rebounded to 3.2% in 1994, 3.1% in 1995, and 4.3% in 1996.[46]

The GNU further coordinated the monumental task of replacing and equalizing the fragmented apartheid legal structure—which had seen South Africa divided into 11 different territories, each with its own statute books—

into a single set of laws for the entire country. The same applied for the previously fragmented government bureaucracy, in which 195 different government departments with 1.1 million staff members became integrated into a single public service.[47]

Louis du Plessis, a political scientist and former director of the South African Centre for Military Studies at Stellenbosch University, added that the GNU period also saw "the creation of civilian oversight over the armed forces, as well as the integration of 10,000 combatants from the ANC and other militias into the 95,000-strong existing South African Defense Force." Although he bemoaned "a loss of professionalism and skills," he said that "the military's political legitimacy increased significantly among black voters." The focus on military integration also reduced the potential for a return to violence.

Mbeki said: "The South African military and police, under the apartheid system, were trained and brought up to be loyal to the constitution and to the government of the day. Thus they continued to be loyal when we had a new government and a new constitution. I don't think there was ever a danger of a military coup because of that."[48]

Haysom described the GNU's achievements as singular. "Within a matter of days, the government had to transform this system. . . . A large multinational corporation would probably have taken years to effect what we did within a matter of months. We redesigned the civil service, filled new leadership positions at three levels of government, defined responsibilities, and created brand-new institutions like a constitutional court with the power to strike down legislation that was not in compliance with the new bill of rights. Indeed, a considerable volume of legislation had to be replaced with new laws ranging from social welfare laws to liquor licensing."

As the minister responsible for implementing the restructuring provisions in the interim constitution, Meyer concluded: "We did well in creating nine new provinces, setting up a host of new structures, and working with traditional leaders. And in addition, we prepared and successfully held the first democratic local government elections in late 1995."

But effective communication and accountability mechanisms lagged behind. Pahad explained that because of the limitations of the presidency's rudimentary communications system during the GNU period, the cabinet in 1998 decided to establish a central communications agency—known as the Government Communication and Information System—to manage all government communications.

Shortly before the NP's withdrawal, the cabinet created a presidential review commission to make recommendations for accountability and coordination mechanisms. The group's report, published in 1998, said the GNU's parallel office structures had led to ambiguities in the distribution of power and to overlapping functions between the office of the president and the offices of his deputies.[49] A 2001 report on restructuring the presidency concluded, "While the compromise of what might be viewed as a divided presidency [during the GNU period] was historically necessary at that time and was an integral part of the birth of democracy itself, it did not make for efficient administration."[50]

The government's flagship social policy program, the RDP, achieved similarly mixed results. The cabinet adopted the "White Paper on Reconstruction and Development" in November 1994, entrenching the program as the GNU's "integrated and coherent growth and development strategy."[51] By late 1995, 15% of the urban adult population said they believed they had benefited from the RDP through such projects as the extension of free health care to children and pregnant women as well as the construction of new clinics, houses, and electricity and water connections.[52]

But allegations of corruption and poor standards also dogged the program.[53] The dedicated RDP ministry was closed in March 1996. "Some ministers were not happy because they saw the RDP minister as a so-called superminister," Fanaroff said.

Ultimately, the GNU did succeed in bringing together contentious and distrustful political factions to work toward a shared goal of democratic government. Even when serious policy disagreements on matters like abortion or capital punishment arose, "those issues were not as strictly partisan as you would think," Haysom said.

Meyer concluded that "the GNU functioned fairly well. . . . Most people focused on finding solutions instead of looking for a confrontation."

REFLECTIONS

For William Smith, who headed South Africa's cabinet secretariat under the presidencies of both F. W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela, an important lesson on the administrative level was the need to "do as much as possible ahead of time." Smith lamented the lack of proper consultation between the incoming party and the existing office despite various efforts to arrange meetings with the incoming party. Incumbent officials drew up organizational charts and identified vital posts that had to be filled, but they had nobody to consult with about expediting the filling of critical positions. "There have to be a plan and structures in place for incoming officials so that they can have offices allocated and things like computers already set up when they arrive," Smith said. "We had new bosses coming in, and we wanted to be ready and impress them. If there had been a mechanism for people from the president's office to coordinate with the ANC on such issues ahead of time, it would have helped a lot."

Executive deputy president Thabo Mbeki said that from the ANC's perspective, although "we wanted to transform [state institutions] . . . so that they would serve a democratic state," in South Africa "we did not have a revolution; we had a negotiated transition. So we inherited existing state structures, with the personnel, rules and regulations, traditions, and so on."[54]

In terms of dispute resolution—and in sharp contrast to the experiences of countries like Kenya, where a power-sharing cabinet was created after a contentious election—South Africa's GNU featured a clear political hierarchy based on an accepted election result. The ANC was the senior partner, the NP was second, and the IFP was the junior partner. The existence of that undisputed pecking order meant that the ANC was the de facto arbiter in the event of a deadlock.

"De Klerk often had to give up under pressure, because in the end the parties did not have equal status in the cabinet," said Roelf Meyer, minister of constitutional development and provincial affairs. "And you couldn't go behind that because then you would undermine democracy,"

But differences over the need for power sharing in the final constitution, as well as the NP's right to criticize the government in its capacity as the official opposition, contributed to the GNU's ultimate breakdown. Although the interim constitution and the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Program provided the basis for cooperation in terms of policy making, both de Klerk and his director-general, Dave Steward, pointed to the lack of a formal coalition agreement—that would spell out each party's political rights—as a key shortcoming of the GNU cabinet.

Another feature of the South African tripartite power-sharing cabinet was the high level of consensus on policy matters. In addition to building cross-party relationships, the four years of arduous negotiations leading up to the formation of the GNU in 1994 "had already removed many of the obstacles by broadly deciding what the goal of this government was going to be," said Goolam Aboobaker, head of cabinet research.

As a result, added Nicholas Haysom, Mandela's legal adviser, "There was acceptance that the country was moving toward a constitutional dispensation premised on nondiscrimination and procedural justice. There were very few policy disputes."

The political context created by the lengthy negotiations, coupled with South Africa's international recognition as a "miracle nation" for its peaceful transition away from apartheid, fostered "a sense of excitement and enthusiasm," Haysom said. Political leaders "basked in the international recognition of both sides for the constructive way in which they embarked on the transition. Establishing a common policy platform was thus not really difficult, where it would have bedeviled a lot of other GNUs."

Haysom also pointed out that in contrast to the experiences of power-sharing governments in countries like Zimbabwe, Kenya, or Afghanistan, South Africa's GNU "was not employed as a solution to a bitter electoral or political dispute. In South Africa, the idea was really to ensure the success of the transition through assigning coresponsibility for its success in fostering new values and democratic institutions." Instead of employing power sharing as "the tape that sticks together a divided society," the GNU was "an attempt to construct a new model for the liberal democratic state that is more suited to divided societies than the winner-take-all model."

Finally, Mandela and de Klerk's leadership roles were decisive. "I really respected de Klerk's attempt to make it all work and to ride what must have been, in some instances, a really difficult personal situation, being demoted and displaced by Mandela in the eyes of the public," Haysom said. "He handled that with a lot of dignity and attempted to play a constructive role." Haysom added that it should not be forgotten that the IFP under Zulu chieftain Mangosuthu Buthelezi "veered away from [being] a militarily

oppositional party and was [instead] infected by the spirit of the 'new South Africa' that characterized the 'Camelot period' of the Mandela presidency."

At the same time, Mandela's light-handed leadership style enabled him to empower his executive deputy presidents—Mbeki and de Klerk—to allow the two men to exercise significant authority in running the affairs of the cabinet. "Politically, Mandela understood that the NP and the IFP were useless to the GNU if they lost their constituencies, so it was important to bring them along," said Sydney Mufamadi, minister of safety and security.

Ahmed Kathrada, a close personal adviser who spent 26 years in prison with Mandela, concurred. "The whole question of forgiveness and reconciliation came from Mandela," he said. "That really set the tone and was absolutely crucial for all of us to work together."

References

[1] "Transcript: Nelson Mandela's 1994 Inauguration Speech," *BET*, December 5, 2013, accessed October 19, 2016; http://www.bet.com/news/global/2013/12/05/transcript-nelson-mandela-s-1994-inauguration-speech.html.

[2] Bill Keller, "Mandela Completes His Cabinet, Giving Buthelezi a Post, *New York Times*, May 11, 1994, accessed October 19, 2016; http://www.nytimes.com/1994/05/12/world/mandela-completes-his-cabinet-giving-buthelezi-a-post.html.

[3] Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 200 of 1993, section 89 (2), accessed October 19, 2016; http://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/constitution-republic-south-africa-act-200-1993.

[4] *Public Service Commission Report on the Rationalisation of Public Administration in the Republic of South Africa, 1994-1996*.

[5] Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 200 of 1993, section 88 (4), accessed October 19, 2016; http://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/constitution-republic-south-africa-act-200-1993.

[6] Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 200 of 1993, section 94, accessed October 19, 2016; http://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/constitution-republic-south-africa-act-200-1993.

[7] F. W. de Klerk, *F. W. de Klerk: The Autobiography: The Last Trek, a New Beginning*, Canopus Consultancies, 1999, p. 342.

[8] F. W. de Klerk, *F. W. de Klerk: The Autobiography: The Last Trek, a New Beginning*, Canopus Consultancies, 1999, p. 342.

[9] Stan du Plessis and Ben Smit, "South Africa's Growth Revival after 1994," Stellenbosch Economic Working Paper: 01/06, March 2007, accessed October 20, 2016; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/6358779.pdf.

[10] "1994 Cabinet," *South African History Online*, accessed October 20, 2016; http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/1994-cabinet.

[11] Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Fourth Amendment Act, Act 14 of 1994, accessed October 25, 2016; http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/Act14of1994.pdf.

[12] "SA 1994 Post-election Cabinet Overview," *O'Malley Archive*, accessed October 25, 2016;

https://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv02167/04lv02175/05lv02176.htm.

[13] "How Mandela humiliated me," *Mail & Guardian*, January 15, 1999, accessed October 26, 2016; http://mg.co.za/article/1999-01-15-how-mandela-humiliated-me.

[14] "How Mandela humiliated me," *Mail & Guardian*, January 15, 1999, accessed October 26, 2016; http://mg.co.za/article/1999-01-15-how-mandela-humiliated-me.

[15] "How Mandela humiliated me," *Mail & Guardian*, January 15, 1999, accessed October 26, 2016; http://mg.co.za/article/1999-01-15-how-mandela-humiliated-me.

[16] "How Mandela humiliated me," *Mail & Guardian*, January 15, 1999, accessed October 26, 2016; http://mg.co.za/article/1999-01-15-how-mandela-humiliated-me.

[17] "How Mandela humiliated me," *Mail & Guardian*, January 15, 1999, accessed October 26, 2016; http://mg.co.za/article/1999-01-15-how-mandela-humiliated-me.

[18] "The ANC's 1994 election manifesto," *PoliticsWeb*, March 15, 1994, accessed October 24, 2016; http://www.politicsweb.co.za/documents/the-ancs-1994-election-manifesto.

[19] "The ANC's 1994 election manifesto," *PoliticsWeb*, March 15, 1994, accessed October 24, 2016; http://www.politicsweb.co.za/documents/the-ancs-1994-election-manifesto.

[20] *Manifes van die Nasionale Party* (Manifesto of the National Party), April 1994, as cited in Jacobus Marthinus Aucamp, *Die Nasionale Party van Suid-Afrika se laaste decade as regerende party, 1984-1994* (The National Party of South Africa's last decade as ruling party, 1984-1994), Doctoral Dissertation, University of the Free State, 2010, accessed October 24, 2016; http://scholar.ufs.ac.za:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11660/707/AucampJM.pdf?sequence=1.

[21] *Manifes van die Nasionale Party*, (Manifesto of the National Party), April 1994 as cited in Jacobus Marthinus Aucamp, *Die Nasionale Party van Suid-Afrika se laaste decade as regerende party, 1984-1994* (The National Party of South Africa's last decade as ruling party, 1984-1994), Doctoral Dissertation, University of the Free State, 2010, accessed October 24, 2016;

[22] "The South African general elections: 1994," *South African History Online*, accessed October 24, 2016; http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/south-african-general-elections-1994.

[23] Servaas van der Berg, "South African social security under apartheid and beyond," *Development Southern Africa*, 14(4), 1997, p. 481-503, accessed November 14, 2016; http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03768359708439982.

[24] Sergio Bitar and Abraham F. Lowenthal, *Democratic Transitions: Conversations with World Leaders*, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2015, p. 333.

[25] Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 200 of 1993, section 89 (3), accessed October 25, 2016; http://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/constitution-republic-south-africa-act-200-1993.

[26] Sergio Bitar and Abraham F. Lowenthal, *Democratic Transitions: Conversations with World Leaders*, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2015, p. 335.

[27] Leon Wessels, "Negotiations, GNU, power-sharing, and post-conflict reconstruction in South Africa," *The State of Africa: Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development*, Dirk Kotzé and Hussein Solomon (eds.), 2008, p. 50.

[28] Leon Wessels, "Negotiations, GNU, power-sharing, and post-conflict reconstruction in South Africa," *The State of Africa: Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development*, Dirk Kotzé and Hussein Solomon (eds.), 2008, p. 50.

[29] Leon Wessels, "Negotiations, GNU, power-sharing, and post-conflict reconstruction in South Africa," *The State of Africa: Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development*, Dirk Kotzé and Hussein Solomon (eds.), 2008, p. 50.

[30] Leon Wessels, "Negotiations, GNU, power-sharing, and post-conflict reconstruction in South Africa," *The State of Africa: Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development*, Dirk Kotzé and Hussein Solomon (eds.), 2008, p. 50.

[31] "08 Nov 1994: Gerwel, Jakes," *O'Malley Archive*, accessed October 25, 2016;
https://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv00017/04lv00344/05lv00832/06lv00862.htm.

[32] "08 Nov 1994: Gerwel, Jakes," *O'Malley Archive*, accessed October 25, 2016;
https://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv00017/04lv00344/05lv00832/06lv00862.htm.

[33] F. W. de Klerk, *F. W. de Klerk: The Autobiography: The Last Trek, a New Beginning*,
Canopus Consultancies, 1999, p. 344.

[34] F. W. de Klerk, *F. W. de Klerk: The Autobiography: The Last Trek, a New Beginning*,
Canopus Consultancies, 1999, p. 351.

[35] F. W. de Klerk, *F. W. de Klerk: The Autobiography: The Last Trek, a New Beginning*,
Canopus Consultancies, 1999, p. 351.

[36] F. W. de Klerk, *F. W. de Klerk: The Autobiography: The Last Trek, a New Beginning*,
Canopus Consultancies, 1999, p. 351.

[37] F. W. de Klerk, *F. W. de Klerk: The Autobiography: The Last Trek, a New Beginning*,
Canopus Consultancies, 1999, p. 355-356.

[38] F. W. de Klerk, *F. W. de Klerk: The Autobiography: The Last Trek, a New Beginning*,
Canopus Consultancies, 1999, p. 355-356.

[39] Sergio Bitar and Abraham F. Lowenthal, *Democratic Transitions: Conversations with World Leaders*, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2015, p. 337.

[40] "Statement by Mr F W de Klerk, Leader of the National Party," *O'Malley Archive*,
accessed October 26, 2016;
https://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv02039/04lv02046/05lv02047/06lv02049/07lv02064.htm.

[41] "Statement by Mr F W de Klerk, Leader of the National Party," *O'Malley Archive*,
accessed October 26, 2016;
https://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv02039/04lv02046/05lv02047/06lv02049/07lv02064.htm.

[42] "Statement by President Nelson Mandela on the National Party's withdrawal from the Government of National Unity (GNU)," Nelson Mandela Foundation, May 9, 1996, accessed November 19, 2016;
http://www.mandela.gov.za/mandela_speeches/1996/960509_np.htm.

[43] Ann Eveleth, "Inkatha could leave GNU after poll," *Mail & Guardian*, June 28, 1996, accessed October 26, 2016; http://mg.co.za/print/1996-06-28-inkatha-could-leave-gnu-after-poll.

[44] Ann Eveleth, "Inkatha could leave GNU after poll," *Mail & Guardian*, June 28, 1996, accessed October 26, 2016; http://mg.co.za/print/1996-06-28-inkatha-could-leave-gnu-after-poll.

[45] Cass Sunstein, *Designing Democracy: What Constitutions Do*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 261.

46 World Bank Data, GDP growth (annual %), accessed October 27, 2016;
http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=ZA.

[47] *Public Service Commission Report on the Rationalisation of Public Administration in the Republic of South Africa, 1994-1996*.

[48] Sergio Bitar and Abraham F. Lowenthal, *Democratic Transitions: Conversations with World Leaders*, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2015, p. 336.

[49] *Report of the Presidential Review Commission on the Reform and Transformation of the Public Service in South Africa*, 1998, accessed November 7, 2016;
http://www.gov.za/documents/report-presidential-review-commission-reform-and-transformation-public-service-south#ch1.

[50] *Democratic Governance: A Restructured Presidency at Work, 2000/2001: The Presidency*,
accessed November 7, 2016;
http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/presidency01_0.pdf.

[51] Republic of South Africa, "White Paper on Reconstruction and Development," *Government Gazette 16085*, November 23, 1994, accessed October 27, 2016; http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/governmentgazetteid16085.pdf.

[52] Clive K. Corder, "The Reconstruction and Development Plan: Success of Failure," Social Indicators Research 41(1/3), July 1997, accessed October 27, 2016; https://www.jstor.org/stable/27522262.

[53] Tom Lodge, "The RDP: Delivery and Performance," Politics in South Africa: From Mandela to Mbeki, David Philip, 2003.

[54] Sergio Bitar and Abraham F. Lowenthal, Democratic Transitions: Conversations with World Leaders, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2015, p. 335.

INNOVATIONS FOR
SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

Innovations for Successful Societies makes its case studies and other publications available to all at no cost, under the guidelines of the Terms of Use listed below. The ISS Web repository is intended to serve as an idea bank, enabling practitioners and scholars to evaluate the pros and cons of different reform strategies and weigh the effects of context. ISS welcomes readers' feedback, including suggestions of additional topics and questions to be considered, corrections, and how case studies are being used: iss@princeton.edu.

Terms of Use

Before using any materials downloaded from the Innovations for Successful Societies website, users must read and accept the terms on which we make these items available. The terms constitute a legal agreement between any person who seeks to use information available at successfulsocieties.princeton.edu and Princeton University.

In downloading or otherwise employing this information, users indicate that:

a. They understand that the materials downloaded from the website are protected under United States Copyright Law (Title 17, United States Code).

b. They will use the material only for educational, scholarly, and other noncommercial purposes.

c. They will not sell, transfer, assign, license, lease, or otherwise convey any portion of this information to any third party. Republication or display on a third party's website requires the express written permission of the Princeton University Innovations for Successful Societies program or the Princeton University Library.

d. They understand that the quotes used in the case study reflect the interviewees' personal points of view. Although all efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information collected, Princeton University does not warrant the accuracy, completeness, timeliness, or other characteristics of any material available online.

e. They acknowledge that the content and/or format of the archive and the site may be revised, updated or otherwise modified from time to time.

f. They accept that access to and use of the archive are at their own risk. They shall not hold Princeton University liable for any loss or damages resulting from the use of information in the archive. Princeton University assumes no liability for any errors or omissions with respect to the functioning of the archive.

g. In all publications, presentations or other communications that incorporate or otherwise rely on information from this archive, they will acknowledge that such information was obtained through the Innovations for Successful Societies website. Our status (and that of any identified contributors) as the authors of material must always be acknowledged and a full credit given as follows:

> Author(s) or Editor(s) if listed, Full title, Year of publication, Innovations for Successful Societies, Princeton University, http://successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/

Innovations for Successful Societies (ISS) is a joint program of Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public & International Affairs and the Bobst Center for Peace & Justice. The Woodrow Wilson School prepares students for careers in public service and supports scholarly research on policy and governance. The mission of the Bobst Center for Peace & Justice is to advance the cause of peace and justice through mutual understanding and respect for all ethnic traditions and religious faiths, both within countries and across national borders.