



# INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

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Interviewee: Reverend Gift Moerane

Interviewer: Rachel Jackson

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JACKSON: It is March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013, and this is Rachel Jackson. I am here at the South African Council of Churches (SACC) with Reverend (Gift) Moerane. Thank you for agreeing to speak with me.

MOERANE: *Thank you very much.*

JACKSON: I was hoping first you could tell me a little bit about how you came to be involved in the Conflict Management Mediation Panels.

MOERANE: *I started to participate in this process in the '94 general elections, 1994. Then we didn't have the Commission to run the election. There was a need and there was a potential for conflict because of the then rivalry atmosphere that was there between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) that was colluding with the National Party. So there was a lot of violence prior to the elections. So I was a member of the National Peace Accord where we were trying to build peace on the ground to make sure that there is political tolerance and that people ceased from these acts of violence in preparation of the coming elections. So that is how actually I was introduced into taking part into leveling playing field in the elections.*

*So I was one of the people who was identified to sit on the panel and intervene where there were signs of conflict. So that is how I got involved. So the work of the South African Council of Churches, I have been involved in peacemaking as a mission. That is what I was doing. Sometimes I was also sent out to other regions to assist other Councils of Churches on peace work.*

*Because of that background I was the person assigned by the Council of Churches to assist in communities where there are conflicts or that overlapped into the Electoral Commission (IEC) itself. They then approached me officially to say they wanted me to be on their panel. So I have been sitting on that panel since the first election run by the Commission. I have been working with Ilona Tip and the IEC called us and other people who were requested based on their expertise and their professions to sit on that panel. I am one of the people who always assist during the elections to bring the panel together.*

JACKSON: In the first elections that the IEC ran in 1999 what sorts of conflicts or issues were you concerned about in the pre-election period?

MOERANE: *It was the contestation of control of areas by particular political parties. That was the tendency emerging from pre-1994, the war zones, the no-go areas for other parties. So we had to break that culture that in a democracy you cannot actually claim space and claim that this space belongs to you. The people living in those areas have the right to choose which party to vote for. That was not the culture in South Africa.*

*The liberation movement understood themselves as the liberators of the country, of the people, and therefore this loyalty to the liberation movement was sometimes limiting people from making conscious decisions on how to vote for whoever they wanted, even though sometimes it is not very clear in this country when you say you'll vote for the liberation movement which party to vote for because the problem of apartheid and its machinery is linked to political operations of various parties. People still hold the view that if you don't vote for the leaders from the liberation movement it means you have an anti-revolutionary spirit.*

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JACKSON: I see.

MOERANE: *So we, as people who seek to mediate, we try to bring to the table the option for people to choose the leaders they want and to follow the parties they like without being coerced by another party. But in South African politics that has never been very easy because of the kind of system that we come from. It was very racial and it was very destructive. Many people died. There is a history about who we are as people. So even when we mediate, sometimes we can find ourselves trapped into that old history of suffering, the history of apartheid. So we are mindful of that. But we are still a nation that is emerging as a nation; we are still a broken society. We are still people who relate to their past with pain because the tentacles of racism in this country are so encircling that you feel them after you have voted.*

*That is why voting in this country is highly political. During the time of voting you really have to get people who can rise above the politics of loyalty, to look at what the law says of elections and be able to do things within the framework of the electoral act, to put aside your political lineage. For some people it is not easy. It takes a person of character to be able to balance all these forces and be respected. It is a challenge to be respected as a mediator, for all parties to accept you. It has been a miracle that it has happened, maybe our name has become a brand with the IEC, I don't know. But it is not an easy thing for a person to be accepted because already people will label you and say you are actually pro a particular party.*

*But even the white organized political parties are aware of the pressure of the past so they are trying hard to operate from a non-racial platform. Of course they are doing pretty well, to be honest, better than we thought they would. But the agitators of the revolutionary struggle can still pick up racist attitudes and dig them out where you thought there wouldn't be any statements as such, because it benefits them. They will always do that. Therefore conflicts emerge in those kinds of discussions where you still see people behaving as if we are still fighting. Maybe because of our association with some of these people, when you surface during the elections then they cool off because they know your stand, that you are a person who says "no" to them, respectfully so, with determination, without actually playing with words. In terms of the regulations this is what is expected from you; you are not supposed to do this.*

*So it has been a test. I think South Africa has produced cadres of people who can really handle elections around the world because of the history that we went through. It has really shaped the way people think. You are sensitive to the fact that another person can pick up your antisocial behavior. That is normal, because you know how that person will feel since you come from that background. You know when somebody is acting in a way that can disrupt peace and what it means because we lived through a peaceless condition in this country.*

*So that has helped some of us to be careful not to repeat the mistakes of the past, to be sure that we don't antagonize other people in the daily work where we are expected to bring peace and promote a spirit of reconciliation.*

JACKSON: I wanted to ask, in those early elections were there specific techniques that you used to get the parties to listen to you and to agree to abide by the Electoral Act?

MOERANE: *We were trained of course. The Electoral Commission trained us on how to intervene, but we used our own internal abilities to deal with the most difficult*

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*things. The technique was there, was given to us on how to be neutral and so on and so forth, all those basic things, principles. But what actually emerged strong was your personality as a mediator. Do people trust you? Can people trust you? Can people take what you say, your stature in society? Can people look at you as a leader, as a person of credibility? You can be trained and have all the qualities but if people have a problem with you as a person you'll fail with those techniques that you bring.*

*Yes, we applied all kinds of techniques that are used around the world of making sure that you treat people equally without being biased to a particular group, promoting a certain group and so on, but it all depends on your capability, on the respect, because some people, just by appearance they were able to cool down situations of conflict because people respect them. So that is the reason. Even when we know that we must get trained but you must be a relevant person who can be respected by leaders of all parties even though maybe it may not be 100%, but at least there must be a level of respect that people give you when you appear in public, when you address them. They must actually be affirmed that what you say you are doing, will actually also lift them up. You are not there just to promote a particular ideological position.*

*So as I say, in South Africa the line is very thin for one to be told that you are neutral, the line is very thin for you to be called a person of neutral state. It is very thin because of our past history. Therefore it takes a very intelligent person to emerge as a very respected person. Not necessarily a neutral person but a respected person because you cannot be neutral where there is no justice; you actually take sides with justice. Those are fundamental problems in this country, that we were denied justice, social justice was denied to a majority of these people.*

*Every time when we handle issues as a person facilitating processes, you make sure that justice for the poor remains the cornerstone of what you do. Peace and reconciliation become the pillars that support justice. So you keep on reminding people, even when they dig their feet into the ground to say remember where we come from. We come from that history, that people are suspicious of certain things, certain behavior and attitudes. So you try to remind people every time that it is through your attitude that you can help us as facilitators to bring everybody to a point of agreeing.*

*We are slowly doing it. Maybe that is the reason why I kept some members of the panel there because we are like troubleshooters for the Electoral Commission. They know that maybe when you get into the area people already know you in that community, they respect you. They know. Of course when I vote I vote differently, but they know that my vote is my secret, it's fine. It is my democratic right to vote the party of my choice but when I move out of the booth, the voting booth, into the field, I must be a leader who can affirm every person, irrespective of the political affiliation. That is my principle, that I always rise above political differences that always trap people to become political animals. People who are really political animals in this country, who are the diehards of what they believe in; they can kill for that.*

*So it is for you to say to them, "No, you can't kill for your political stand. You can differ with the next person, but allow them space to express their wishes as well". But it is never easy. You see what is happening in Kwazulu-Natal the killings that are still continuing even today. But in Gauteng we have stamped that out because we approached things from a political angle and then we moved with*

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*people to say yes, we understand, this is where we come from, we are here, but now we have democracy.*

*So it is a question of how do we move from A to B. As we move with people and with that understanding and caring, that they are still carrying the baggage of the past. Until the generation that was born after '94 is in full swing running the affairs of this country, we will still be trapped in problems that need mediation because the generation of our time is carrying that baggage. This generation of '94 knows nothing about what apartheid means. For them, they know that they can attend school with other children from other communities without being discriminated against. Therefore, for them to go to vote it is not a question of whom I'm standing next you, it is a question of what I'm voting for.*

*For our generation it is a question of who am I voting for. I'm voting for this person, why? Because history tells me that this person was like this and he or she represents this kind of thinking. So this generational gap in South Africa is the one, in the coming elections of next year, determining factor for us to say are we now crossing over to a real democracy where color and ideology of liberation will never apply or confine us on how the patterns of voting. Currently the patterns of voting are characterized by where we come from, our history, not about the quality of democracy that we want. Hence the problems of service delivery and so on.*

*People are aware that they don't get the kind of services they expected because of loyalty. You see, people who are loyal can behave very strangely. Instead of fighting their own comrades they will actually point fingers at people who are doing much better than their own comrades, because of the history. "I cannot vote for a particular group because of what they stood for, what their brothers or their mothers did to us. I cannot". But the generation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century now can say "I am looking at the caliber of the politician who can make sure that I have books in the classroom, I have roads to drive my car on, I've got a plush house" and this and this and this. Whereas the other generation still looks at who is occupying that position. So that itself is a reason for conflict on the ground during the elections.*

JACKSON: I see. I wanted to ask if you recall any specific conflicts that you mediated in 1999, if you can give me an example and then how you dealt with that conflict.

MOERANE: *I dealt with conflicts in no-go areas. Where other political parties were not allowed to take part. You look into the district where our office was then. I had to travel in those no-go areas. It was difficult because you could be killed. It was a war zone. So I had to interact with those warlords to allow people to vote the way they liked to vote. So '94 for us was a serious kind of conflict that was on the scale of a civil war in a way, because we lost people before the elections. We lost a number of people. So in the elections there was much blood. You were cautious when you were moving into hostile areas to monitor, to move around, to check if other political party agents are there and you find that they are not there sometimes, but to make sure, you remain in those war zones and make sure the IEC offices are protected because we had to protect IEC facilities as well.*

JACKSON: I see.

MOERANE: *To report anything that could actually endanger the staff. I remember during those elections I had to travel most of the time with the police, the Army, with security forces. So we had a joint operational center where I would have to go every hour to listen to radio talks. What is happening where? Then the police*

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*would call me and say something can happen in a particular section of the township so we had to drive to that place.*

*We need to be careful of the areas, where you should be seen with security forces or areas where you should just be alone and show a brave face to confront the warlords and say, "You can't do this". The question was how you approach them when you say you can't do this. It was really difficult for us. But we managed the situation.*

*The IEC was clever enough to say we don't deploy people in areas where they are not known. We want members of the panel who come from the same areas where they are respected, where they are known by political leaders and the community and activists. So when they see that person they should know it is so-and-so and we know what this person stands for.*

JACKSON: Yes.

MOERANE: *But surprisingly, now we don't have women on the panel. The reason is the kind of situation that we deal with. It's a dangerous situation. You have to make a choice to sit on that panel. A member of that panel could be called at any time to say so-and-so is stopping other members of a particular party from coming to vote.*

JACKSON: So did you find that your experience changed a lot between '94 and '99 or were a lot of the same issues coming up?

MOERANE: *I think South Africa is developing very quickly in terms of democracy. We are developing very, very fast. I am amazed by the maturity of our people. When you think actually of the political leaders who led the struggle for liberation, because our struggle was not a race struggle it was a struggle for liberation for non-racial sort of treatment, those principles are bearing fruit today. Even though we come from a brutal system, you can see how people are rising above all these things. Even though the elections don't necessarily bring with them the kind of things that were expected materially and economically, but in terms of political development, we have improved very fast. There is understanding during elections when the party lines and committees are playing their part that they try hard not to do those kinds of things they agreed not to do.*

*The situation can change when the air is hot, when one party realizes they are losing. There will always be tricks that they play. So you follow their tricks, you watch them and you call them, you say, "I see what you intend to do". The politicians who are crooks and political activists who are crooks will always play their cards very close and subtly trying to push to win and they will use all kinds of methods. So it is for you to be able to read between lines what they are intending to do.*

*Sometimes they will do things in your presence without realizing that actually this can be rigging the results. So you must know everything about elections as a mediator. You must be informed about the full process. So initially we thought being a member of the panel, we would be able to sit there at home and wait for a call. No, you are a field worker on the ground. You visit police stations. You see how people vote. You observe party agents to see whether they understand and follow the electoral process. You also even look at the electoral officials themselves because they can cause conflict if they don't know how to conduct themselves. So our work is not just to look at the parties that are contesting for power, but even look at our officials who run the machinery of elections. You*

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*must observe them. You also observe the monitors, the observers themselves, whether they do what they are expected to do. You observe the security forces whether in terms of their electoral role they are doing what they are supposed to do. So we observe the whole operation.*

*We are just all over and we must know what we are looking for to be able to intervene at the right time and sometimes you must be ready to risk your life to save the situation. There are times where you have to say no, not necessarily that you interrupt the electoral process, but you say, "If you continue in this fashion you are now creating problems for the elections, the results can be compromised". So it is my task at that moment to phone the IEC and have them talk to the supervisor of the polling station who is actually messing up things. That is how we operate. We are always on the phone talking to the IEC, giving them feedback on how things are developing.*

*With many hours passing since the opening of the station, people sometimes get relaxed. When they immediately start to relax there could be flaws in the process. That is the time for us to be vigilant as conflict management teams to make sure that people don't relax at the expense of systems that could collapse. So you must always be vigilant.*

*I will have my schedule of the polling stations I have to visit because during the process we get information from intelligence saying, "These are the areas of potential conflicts". Those are areas that I must visit. I find in a day I can cover 25 polling stations in the area I'm assigned to. Sometimes I even cross to other areas after I have covered my areas. The police officers know me and have my numbers. They can call and send a cab to pick me up if I've crossed my line of operation to another area that I've identified during the course of the day that might erupt into conflict. So you should have the heart, as a mediator, to work 24 hours. It is just like that. It is that spirit of determination that has made us respected, because we are there even when the tent falls. You are there to say, "Let's re-erect this tent". So people see that you care about their being able to vote for the party of their choice. So they will always support you in what you do.*

*When they know me they always say, "A peacemaker has arrived." So they know during the election I am a peacemaker, that's my role. I'm not saying this as an ANC man, as a PAC (Pan-African Congress). No. I say, "In terms of the code of conduct, this is how you must behave, end of the story. If you misbehave I have the responsibility to report you".*

JACKSON: I see. So did you find after the experience of 1994 there the level of violence and conflict in the 1999 elections as people expected or was it better than people expected?

MOERANE: *As I say, each year we see improvement. From 1994 upwards we have seen improvement in terms of tolerance and understanding. Now with our programs of civil education on the Electoral Commission itself, how it operates, how it assists us. The Council of Churches has also done civil education. As you can see we are going to have a seminar with the Human Rights Commission. So we keep on doing these programs throughout preparing communities to respect the rights of other people. It helps that we don't wait for elections but we work throughout the year, throughout the electoral cycle to prepare people in time for the next election. So that is how we work, we don't rest until the next election.*

JACKSON: So you have been a mediator in South African elections for over a decade now.

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MOERANE: Yes.

JACKSON:

My understanding is that the Conflict Management Mediation Panels weren't established until one month before the '99 elections. Did that impact your ability as a mediator to deal with a lot of these conflicts?

MOERANE:

*Not at all.*

*The thought is that I was picked up because of my background as a person who has been involved in peace work. So that actually was an add-on skill to the training that I received at the IEC and then my own daily routine that is the work that I am doing in the community. So it broadened my scope on addressing issues that create or cause peacelessness in communities. So it was an added on skill for me actually and also an opportunity to learn more and to be able to interact with more people. It was like a career for me to be now involved in elections addressing issues of normalizing, leveling the playing field for political parties. It is something that I really enjoy to be involved in. So that it was done only a month before the election was not a challenge for me because it is a field that I am acquainted with very well.*

JACKSON:

Do you think that there were problems between political parties prior to the establishment of the mediation panel that needed to be dealt with?

MOERANE:

*There was or is. That was one of the main reasons for IEC to establish the panel because of the conflict that existed at that time between major political players who were contesting for space. You look at the PAC, you look at the ANC, IFP, the National Party and the newly formed DA (Democratic Alliance) that became one of the contesting parties at that time. It was new in the township. So there were issues actually, especially for members who belonged to the DA in particular because it was like a no-go area for them to be in the townships.*

JACKSON:

I see. So I wanted to ask, do you recall a specific conflict from 1999 that would have escalated had you as a mediator not been able to intervene?

MOERANE:

*I remember the case around Captain Park, a candidate belonging to the DA, whose house was threatened with some kind of attack by some comrades in the area. They were refusing actually to have public meetings because they were labeling such people as people who were betraying their struggle by bringing the white parties into the townships.*

*I was deployed to go to mediate that problem with local activists to say in terms of the electoral law no one should prohibit another person belonging to a different party to contest for the election. It took me almost one and a half days to try to sort out that, trying to make sure to get the right people. During this process you must make sure that you talk to the right people, the real perpetrators don't come to the table, they hide. Only the moderates will be the ones who come forward to make their case, to defend the situation that has been created by those who are hardliners.*

*So to make sure to come to a proper settlement I had to go to the leaders of the organizations that were identified as the cause of the problem in that area to ask, "Can you bring the most senior people who can come to answer questions on why are you doing these things because you know the process of electioneering. Every party has the right to contest for elections".*

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*So one of my advantages is that I am a well-known person in this province wherever I go. That is why for the most difficult cases, IEC would always ask me to go there because they know I can try to talk to leaders and because I'm clergy the leaders sometimes will listen when I say this is wrong what you are doing. So it assisted me actually.*

*The first time the IEC introduced this panel of mediators we were using our own style and tactics to win over people who were acting like surrogates. We have to make sure that we win them over. We don't make them try to operate from the periphery but make sure that they become part of the process, of the solution.*

*Fortunately, I remember, the ANC leader said, "No, we will deal with these people. Don't worry, we will continue. So the lady from the DA was allowed to run. The threat was finally dealt with. The election went through without any of the harm that had been anticipated to happen. It was not taking place because leadership was running around making sure that nothing serious happened to her because they knew now that IEC was aware of who were the culprits in this thing and they knew a penalty would come.*

*You also have to show these people that if they are going to do this criminal activity, there is a special court that deals with elections that will deal with you directly. We don't have to go through the normal criminal procedures. You will just be taken straight to the electoral court. They will punish you. You know this center. So when you read to the people the Electoral Act and explain to them the implication of the elections and realizing that you mean what you say, they will always listen and change their position.*

JACKSON: I see. So were many of the tense conflicts you dealt with this sort of issue where one party's supporters were threatening the candidate of another party?

MOERANE: *There were quite a number of cases, even beyond that first election. I had quite a number of incidents. IEC deployed me in Midvaal that is in the south of Johannesburg. It is an area that is under DA. The ANC activists were really not happy with it and they're still not happy that DA has taken over that municipality. When they went out there to mobilize, to solicit support from potential voters, there were always tensions. You find that ANC posters were removed from where they were and I had to go to talk to the white community because much of that area is white Afrikaner. To tell them that it is illegal. Even if ANC comes and hangs a poster on a tree next to or close to your house, just ignore it. You know the party that you are going to vote for so ignore that poster. But you know, human nature always tells you that I don't want these people, therefore if it is anything that relates to them, I don't want it. Those are the kinds of things you have to mediate between black and white now. Historically it's a very problematic kind of mediation where you have to say to these people, you don't have to take the route of coming to court, because this party can take you to court because you have torn their poster. They would know that in terms of the Electoral Act if you deface a poster belonging to another party, that is a criminal act.*

*So how can we settle these things? I always had to talk to the police to try to maintain public order, to try to talk to the leaders of all the participating parties to say, "Please, make sure that you remember what you have signed at the party alliance committee. You have signed in this code of conduct that you will never do the following things".*

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*I consider it important to have been able to hear both sides. You may find that you can be arrested or your party can face any kind of prosecution that the Electoral Court can come up with. No one wants to lose during that period.*

*At the same time one of the challenges when one intervenes in this kind of criminal activities that always happen during elections, you find out mostly it will be the very people who know you well. I remember in Midvaal I had to operate like a police person, following them what ever they were doing, whenever they were conversing together. It is like you are betraying the struggle for them. "You know we just won this country back and now you are monitoring us whether we want to consolidate". "But it is not consolidation you are disrupting", I say, "It's your actions that are disruptive. Do your things orderly".*

*Because I am a mediator I must be there on the ground to follow them when they do their rallies, note everything that they do and their occurrences and so on and so on and go to the person and say, "Are you aware that here you are breaking the law"? This is a person who was close to you during the time of the struggle and now today you must say to that person, in terms of the electoral code of conduct, this is wrong. So that is the kind of challenge that one always faces when you have to engage with people who seek to win the elections fairly or by crook.*

JACKSON: I see. So I wanted to ask, were there certain types of issues that you think the mediation system in general is not as well equipped to handle?

MOERANE: *I don't know for other people, but on my side there is no single case that went through the legal process. All the cases that I handled or were assigned to me I managed to resolve them through discussions. So I have never—maybe that is one reason IEC still uses me because I have never actually had a case where they will say this matter is so difficult that we cannot solve it, it must go through another legal process. All the cases I had I managed to reach an amicable settlement with those protagonists. But I know other people that used to try cases that had to be listened to by other senior people like the chairperson and so forth. But in areas where I'm operating people will try to be nasty, but because of my persistence they will end up and try to agree that we were making a mistake.*

JACKSON: I see. I wanted to ask, if there is an issue that involves a serious crime like someone has been assaulted or there is major property damage and the police are also involved, does that make it very difficult?

MOERANE: *There are cases that are criminal in nature so you don't even have to worry about them.*

JACKSON: So you wouldn't be involved.

MOERANE: *You just refer the case to the police. You beat up a person, that is a criminal offense. You cannot mediate that for someone who has assaulted a person. My role is more on the process to make sure that everybody understands the process and everybody attends the rule of law and everybody makes sure that you keep to the code of conduct. But when it comes to actual physical violence that is a case for the police and I don't come to that one.*

JACKSON: So if there had been violence you wouldn't go in afterwards and talk to the party leaders about it or—.

MOERANE: *When I go I go just to observe how the police handled the case.*

JACKSON: Do you think it was important to observe?

MOERANE: *It is important because the police can also contravene some electoral code of conduct in terms of the way they will push themselves over the perpetrators. So you need to make sure that even the intervention by the police is not disruptive. I mean you've heard stories in this country where police sometimes go beyond the limit of what they're supposed to do. So during elections then, whether during that time there is police intervention, you must make sure that you balance the forces that are operating in that environment. So the more that they know I am here, they know that I am also monitoring them on how they conduct themselves.*

JACKSON: I wanted to ask, especially in the 1999 elections, is there anything that if you could go back and be part of the process again that you would want to change about how the IEC administered the mediation system?

MOERANE: *No, I think the mediations honestly have worked well. It has helped IEC to maintain its credibility. There is absolutely no area where I can say to IEC, "This is a weakness in terms of mediation". They always make sure that they pick out people who can protect the integrity of this process. They did it well, to be honest. People who they realized could sacrifice the integrity of the entire electoral process were quickly removed. The IEC machinery is so good that it is run by people who know the environment very well and who can assess the quality and the personalities of people they are hiring. And that actually has helped IEC in South Africa to be rated as the best machinery to run the elections even in the SADC (Southern African Development Community) region of the continent. Many electoral commissions come to us. I'm going to Pakistan to share how we managed to rise above the violence of the past and made sure that our elections have limited incidents of disruptions.*

JACKSON: Actually that brings us to my next question. I wanted to ask you, when you're giving advice to another country who might be interested in implementing a similar mediation system, what do you think are the key pieces of advice or the key steps that are important to take?

MOERANE: *First is training. Training of the personnel, the way the recruitment of people that you want to form part of the machinery is very important; how you identify the kind of people you recruit, do they have the necessary capacity and capability and commitment to do the work, to take the risks. This is a very risky kind of operation, to venture into areas that you know you may not come out alive.*

*That commitment also makes you say that you serve your country. It is not just necessarily a prestigious kind of appointment. Yes you will be recognized but moreover on top of it is you serve your people. So you must have that kind of attitude that you are there to serve everybody equally so. So you need to pick up people who can rise above petty, party, political positions, people who won't compromise their values and ethos of their commissions in terms of how it should conduct itself during the election.*

*So you really need to make sure that the kind of people you recruit are very good. Then, people who can be innovative don't just get a person who says, "I was trained only to do this." You should be creative and innovative in terms of how to resolve problems because certain rules in the manual might not apply in certain areas. So you must be able to come with your own way of resolving problems with a complementary kind of approach. So it must be something in you.*

*If you are just a person who always refers to a text, a manual, you will find that events are running too fast for you to keep on checking what is the next step. You must internalize this program; it must be in you that you want to do these things. You should show creativity and passion for the work that you do. Don't do it for another dubious agenda. What I've realized in other countries is that people are given this responsibility but they have other agendas. In countries where I have gone out to observe I have seen that some conflicts arise because the people who are entrusted with these responsibilities are not always genuine with the process. They try to assist certain groups and that compromises the whole thing. And always the elections are not defined, actually, as not free and fair even the midst of the people who are there trying to monitor or to observe.*

*In South Africa of course we have learned the hard way. We don't want to repeat mistakes of the past. We don't want to see the violence that ravaged and destroyed our communities. We try by all means to make sure it can be prevented.*

JACKSON: Those are all the specific questions I have for you. Do you have any closing reflections on the benefit of the mediation system and anything else you'd like to say?

MOERANE: *I think for me mediation is part of the work that I do as clergy, that I am seen to be a person who brings peace where there is conflict. My background and the expectation by the community always makes me keep an eye on what I do and what I say, how I conduct myself. It has helped me a lot. But not all of us will be like that, even a pastor. Sometimes pastors will be called to order, "Your behavior is not acceptable". So it goes along with the character of the person. You must really keep to what you are expected to do, then you will succeed, but if you are not able to keep to that standard, always rise above it and make sure you improve. Know your weaknesses. When I know that I am weak in handling a situation, I withdraw. I withdraw immediately when I realize that I am going to cause problems and not bring solutions. I simply declare that I cannot get involved here because already I can see that there are things that can make me compromise my principles. So you just simply withdraw, you declare that in this situation you may end up favoring a side so you'd better not venture into it. So it assists you and your integrity remains intact.*

JACKSON: Well Reverend Moerane, thank you very much for your insight.