



# Foreword

*Cedric de Coning*

This is the second volume of the AJCR in 2024, the year in which we celebrate the first 25 years of the journal's existence. In this issue we cover a range of African conflict experiences, including land conflicts, urban conflict, violent insurgencies and terrorism, and exclusionary politics and governance. We also look at a number of conflict resolution tools and approaches to manage and resolve these types of conflicts, including national dialogues, alternative dispute resolution, community peacebuilding, paradiplomacy and participatory democracy.

The first article by Edknowledge Mandikwaza, from the University of Pretoria's Centre for Mediation in Africa, explores the theoretical underpinnings and conceptualisations of national dialogues and their outcomes. The second article considers another form of mediation, namely alternative dispute resolution (ADR). In this article Theresia Nicholaus Kamoleka and Charles Lucian, from Ardhi University in Dar es Salaam, explore how ADR has been used in Ifakara county in Tanzania to manage land disputes, and what we can learn from that experience.

In the third article, Oluwole Ojewale, from the Institute for Security Studies in Dakar, explores the role of community peacebuilding in building the resilience needed to prevent violent conflict in urban contexts. The empirical context is Jos, Nigeria, and the study looks at indigenous conflict management, traditional justice systems, community policing, civic education, non-governmental interventions, and political and economic measures as factors that influence urban resilience to violent conflict. The fourth article explores the potential of paradiplomacy as an alternative approach to counter-terrorism in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique.

With paradiplomacy, Ndzalama Mathebula and Hope Moremi, from the University of Johannesburg, mean an approach that is people-centred and community orientated.

In our last article, Fabrice Nshimirimana from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, studies the post-Arusha peace agreement period in Burundi. He argues that one party has dominated post-Arusha democratic politics, and this has resulted in exclusionary governance practices that has eroded the democratic space and that poses a risk for sustaining peace in Burundi.

Each volume usually includes at least one book review, and in this edition Job Mwaura from the University of Witwatersrand, reviews *The Elgar Companion to War, Conflict and Peacebuilding in Africa (2024)*, edited by Geoff Harris. He finds that the book offers valuable insights into the root causes of conflict and provides a broad array of innovative peacebuilding approaches tailored for the African continent. One takeaway is that identity-based conflicts are complex and often deeply intertwined with political and economic inequalities rather than purely ethnic or religious differences. The book emphasises the potential of blending traditional methods with modern peacebuilding practices.

We hope that you enjoy reading and applying these articles in your research and practice as much as we did when we selected and prepared them for this edition. This edition adds five more articles to the rich data set of African conflict resolution experiences covered in the 25 years of the journal's existence, and we encourage you to also look back into this repository of knowledge when researching your next article or book. 