SOUTH AFRICA'S SECURITY INTERESTS IN AFRICA: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2020S

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'… we must ensure that South Africa continues to be at the pinnacle of addressing and helping to resolve conflicts and wars, especially on the African continent'

Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Lindiwe Sisulu, 13 Feb 2019[1]

1   Introduction

Africa – especially Southern Africa – is considered central to South Africa's prosperity. This primacy has been consistently articulated in government documents since the advent of democracy in 1994. It is encapsulated as the idea that South Africa's prosperity is intrinsically linked to the prosperity of its region and continent.[2] The tenets of this belief are largely set out in a white paper on foreign policy, published in 2011, which also underscores the importance of economic diplomacy in achieving the country's development objectives.[3] Similarly, South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) launched in 2012 reiterates this sentiment about Africa's primacy and the centrality of economic diplomacy in foreign policy. All these draw inspiration from the South African Constitution which elaborates the rights and duties of citizens. It espouses, *inter alia,*

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1   DIRCO (Department of International Relations and Cooperation), 'Address by LN Sisulu, MP, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, at the occasion of the debate on the President's State of the Nation Address', 13 February 2019, http://www.dirco.gov.za/docs/speeches/2019/sisulu0213.htm (accessed 13 February 2019).

2   UN (United Nations), 'Statement by Thabo Mbeki the President of the Republic of South Africa at the opening of the World Summit for Sustainable Development', Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August 2002.

3   Government of South Africa, 'White Paper on South African Foreign Policy – Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu', https://www.gov.za/documents/white-paper-south-african-foreign-policy-building-better-world-diplomacy-ubuntu (accessed 10 March 2019).

equality, prosperity, the right to safety, to live free from fear and want – as well as the right to seek a better life.

Yet, there is no single policy document to date setting out South Africa's security interests in Africa nor linking these interests to South Africa's own national interest – leaving analysts to piece together a synthesis of what South Africa's 'security interests' in Africa might be.[4]

Despite this glaring policy gap, the country has managed to be actively involved in peace and security on the continent in the 25-year period since its first democratic election.[5] The complexities intrinsic to post-conflict peacebuilding, including political fragility brought about by conflict; the multiplicity of actors party to the conflict; the intervention of international organisations and sometimes external state and non-state actors; and the cyclical nature of conflicts make it untenable to gauge 'success'. Rather, we may be better served to consider the lessons that have emerged from such engagement, in order to improve performance in the next 25 years and beyond.

2   South Africa's strategic approach to Africa: human and national security

The South African government's approach to peacekeeping is characterised as a 'multi-dimensional intervention' where civilian, police and military interventions form component parts that operate in mutually reinforcing fashion. The White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions (adopted in 1998) highlighted the importance of multi-dimensional interventions for South Africa, and was an attempt to align the country with Chapters VI, VII and VIII of the Charter of the United Nations (UN) that deal with dispute resolution, threats to peace and regional arrangements.[6]

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4   The South African Defence Review, completed in 2014, is a document that tries to explain South African foreign policy within the framework of its national and security interests. See Government of South Africa, 'South African Defence Review 2014', https://www.gov.za/documents/south-african-defence-review-2014 (accessed 15 March 2019).

5   South Africa has spent time mediating conflicts in Burundi, the Central African Republic (CAR), Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), East Timor, Israel/Palestine, Côte d'Ivoire, Lesotho, Madagascar and Zimbabwe.

6   Government of South Africa, 'White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions', http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/peace missions_1.pdf (accessed 15 March 2019). It remains unclear whether this policy document has been updated and, if so, whether it is in use.

South Africa's alignment with multilateral institutions is not limited to the UN. In keeping with the importance of multilateralism in its foreign policy, the country's leadership spent much of the formative years of democracy transforming regional and continental institutions. For instance, it was at the helm transforming the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union; as well as the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) into the Southern African Development Community (SADC).[7] Both these formidable regional institutions are now equipped with peace and security instruments. The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) of the AU and the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation (OPDSC) of SADC boast conflict prevention, early warning and mediation capabilities – over and above rapid-response instruments overseeing the swift deployment of peacekeeping troops.[8]

2.1   Human security

The building of these continental and regional institutions was largely driven by President Mbeki (in concert with other African leaders), whose norm entrepreneurship, influenced by the dictum of the 'African Renaissance' led to critical paradigmatic shifts in how the AU and SADC conceived of security. The drive for African autonomy in issues of peace and security inspired pan-African leaders like Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria to collaborate with Mbeki to find 'African solutions to African problems'. In so doing, the subsequent continental peace and security architecture was posited on the notion of 'human security'.[9] While this concept, which espouses a holistic, people-centric approach to security is now quite ubiquitous, it was still in its infancy in policy circles in the early 2000s – further fuelling perceptions that this was a radical departure from established norms.

Another particularly historic achievement, embodying this shift towards human security was the principled move of the AU's Constitutive Act from a principle of 'non-intervention to non-indifference'.[10] This new

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7   A process that began with the signing of the Windhoek Treaty in 1992.

8   The failure to implement instruments like the African Standby Force and African Capacity for the Immediate Response to Crises is a matter of politicking by countries and will be addressed in more detail later in this chapter.

9   UN Trust Fund for Human Security, 'What is human security', https://www.un.org/humansecurity/what-is-human-security/(accessed 6 April 2020).

10   See Article 4 (h), which affords member states the right to 'intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity'. ACHPR (African Commission on

maxim inspired much hope that the newly-formulated AU was armed with the necessary tools to transform the continent's conflicts. Inconsistent and hesitant application in subsequent years has seen that hope wane. African conflict scholars like Paul Williams' prescient work suggested that an incongruity between the norm entrepreneurship of Africa's leaders and the continent's established security culture would be at the heart of this.[11] In other words, the sentiment suggests that the non-indifference norm was an ambitious normative leap for the continent, given its preference for non-interference espoused in the OAU. Historically non-indifference largely followed the genocide in Rwanda, borrowing from the notions of sovereignty as responsibility. Prior to this, non-interference was largely aimed at the external community after the end of colonialism. As such, each is a function of a particular historical circumstance.

'Human security' also lies at the heart of the transformed SADC and its Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation – stemming from the SADC Treaty signed in 1992 in Windhoek, Namibia. [12] Although it is principally an instrument for facilitating regional integration, SADC architects saw the need for regional cooperation on peace and security issues as a necessary precondition for economic integration. In the past 25 years, South Africa has been at the forefront of facilitating and mediating disputes in Burundi, the DRC, Lesotho, Madagascar and Zimbabwe through the mechanisms set out in the SADC and the AU. Once these institutions were established, South Africa's reliance on them to inform its positions on issues served to consolidate them as part of the security culture of the continent. However, Zondi, like Williams cited earlier – has argued that a growing chasm between praxis and theory has shown a failure to harness the holistic elements of 'human security' – and in particular, elements that speak to human empowerment that is so intrinsically linked to the concept.[13]

Human and Peoples' Rights), 'Constitutive Act of the African Union', https://www.achpr.org/legalinstruments/detail?id=43 (accessed 9 March 2020).

11   Williams PD, 'From non-intervention to non-indifference: The origins and development of the African Union's security culture', *African Affairs*, 106, 423, 2007, pp. 253–279.

12   Bah AMS, 'Toward a Regional Approach to Human Security in Southern Africa', Queen's University, Centre for International Relations, 2004, p. 2, https://www.queensu.ca/cidp/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.cidpwww/files/files/publications/Martellos/Martello26.pdf (accessed 25 February 2019).

13   Zondi S, 'Comprehensive and holistic human security for a post-colonial Southern Africa: A conceptual framework', *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 39, 1, May 2017, pp. 185–210.

2.2   National security

The same critique levelled at SADC and the AU can be extended to South Africa and the way it has positioned itself on issues of peace and security that constitute threats to its 'national security'.[14] When working off realist definitions, the term refers to protection against military attack. In that regard, the Southern African region has been regarded as one of the more stable regions on the continent. However, a broader understanding of the term 'national security' is now widely recognised to include non-military dimensions. Potential causes of national insecurity include actions by other states (e.g. military or cyber-attacks), violent non-state actors (e.g. terrorist attacks), organised criminal groups such as narcotic cartels, and also the effects of natural disasters (e.g. flooding, earthquakes).[15] Systemic drivers of insecurity, which may be transnational, include climate change, economic inequality and marginalisation, political exclusion, and militarisation.[16] Given the limits of this chapter, the authors focus their analysis on more traditional security issues.

Increasingly, governments organise their security policies into a National Security Strategy (NSS); as of 2017, most BRICS members and G7 members have done so. Some states also appoint a national security council and/or a national security adviser to oversee security strategy.

A country's 'national interest' complements its conceptions of national security. By the former, we mean a country's goals and ambitions, whether economic, military, or cultural. A former DIRCO minister noted that government has a classified version of 'the national interest' but fortunately explained it thus:

> At the domestic level, the South African government seeks to provide a better life for all through addressing key national priorities, such as education; health; the fight against crime and corruption; land reform and development and creating decent jobs. At the international level, South Africa seeks to work in concert with other states through focus on the African Agenda; South-South

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14   National security refers to the security of a nation state, including its citizens, economy, and institutions, and is regarded as a duty of government.

15   See, for example, the excellent overview articles on this theme by Shaw M, 'New networks of power: Why organised crime is the greatest long-term threat to security in the SADC region', in Van Nieuwkerk A & C Moat (eds), *Southern African Review 2015.* Maputo: Wits (University of the Witwatersrand) & FES (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung), 2015; Du Pisani A, 'Perspectives on the political economy of conflicts in SADC', in Khadiagala G & D Deleglise (eds), *Southern African Security Review 2017.* Maputo: Wits & FES, 2018; Iroanya R, 'The threat of international terrorism to the SADC region', in Khadiagala G & D Deleglise (eds), op. cit.

16   For a continental perspective, see African Union and African Peer Review Mechanism, *The Africa Governance Report: Promoting African Union Shared Values.* n.p: AU and APRM, pp.41-48, January 2019.

Cooperation; North-South Dialogue; Global Governance issues; as well as, through strengthening bilateral political and economic relations to achieve this objective.[17]

According to the South African constitution, 'national security must reflect the resolve of South Africans, as individuals and as a nation, to live as equals, to live in peace and harmony, to be free from fear and want and to seek a better life'.[18]

Against this background, we concur with the International Working Group on National Security that national security is the first and most important obligation of government. It involves not just the safety and security of the country and its citizens. It is a matter of guarding national values and interests against both internal and external dangers – threats that have the potential to undermine the security of the state, society and citizens. Arguably, values include respect for the rule of law, democracy, human rights, a market-economy and the environment – which are central to the quality of life in a modern state.[19]

3   The quest for a strategic approach to conflict management

The dilemma we seek to analyse is how South Africa responds to simultaneous demands for appropriate policy and strategy refinement in the security, diplomacy and trade cluster domestically, while addressing immediate peace and security challenges in the region and further afield. To what extent can the country engage Africa without firm strategies in place? To what extent should its engagements be directed by national interest, national security, defence, foreign policy, trade and economic policies and strategies? To what extent can it formulate and implement an integrated approach to Africa? What is or should be South Africa's Africa policy, and what are the chances of having it developed and implemented under current political conditions?

In 2014 the *Journal of Public Policy in Africa* published a special issue entitled 'National security policy and practice: case studies from Southern

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17   DIRCO, 'Budget vote speech of the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Honourable Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, to the National Assembly, Wednesday 25 April, 2012', http://www.dirco.gov.za/docs/speeches/2012/mash0425.html (accessed 26 February 2019).

18   South African Constitution of 1996, clause 198(a).

19   Cited in Cawthra G, National Security and the right to information: The case of South Africa. N.p.: Southern African Consultative Conference on National Security and Right to Information Principles Graduate School of Public and Development Management, University of the Witwatersrand, p.3, 26 February 2013.

Africa'. South Africa as one of the cases represents a bleak analysis. Its author concluded:

> Current and intended legislative and administrative arrangements and national security practices appear to satisfy no one – not the intelligence agencies, not government, not parliament, not the media, not opposition parties nor NGOs – although for very different reasons.[20]

He added that there must be concern that the state is seeking to cover up what appears to be a gold rush of corruption.

Remarkably, the only recent policy document to address 'national security', 'foreign policy' and 'the national interest' in a coherent manner, is the 2014 Defence Review. It notes that:

> The world in which we now find ourselves is becoming increasingly complex and more unstable, with increased risks to both international and domestic security.[21]

For example, setting domestic security aside for a moment, what was the purpose of the 15 soldiers who died in the CAR in 2013? To advance the national interest? Or security? Another example: what is South Africa's role in SADC, BRICS, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), the Commonwealth, G20, or the UN Security Council? To advance national interests? Protect security? Whose interests and security? Who determines?

Defining the national interest – an exercise reserved for the ruling elite – became messy under the Zuma administration. The National Development Plan – closest to the idea of the national interest – suffered awkwardness when the chapter on foreign policy (South Africa in the world) was questioned by experts and the governing party. Overall the NDP has not lived up to expectation as a macro-guide for government and the state, did not provide for the country to pursue a national economic strategy, is now outdated, and needs a reset.[22] As for political context, Jacques Pauw's book entitled *The President's Keepers*, the Public Protector's report entitled *State of Capture* and the Zondo Commission of Inquiry into State Capture suggest the subversion of the national interest by a few for personal gain, and in light of this dynamic, little became of rational thinking and policy-making to advance national security.[23]

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20   Cawthra G, 'South Africa', *Journal of Public Policy in Africa Special Issue*, 1, 2, 2014.
21   Government of South Africa, 'South African Defence Review 2014', *op. cit*.
22   Van Nieuwkerk A, 'South Africa's National Development Plan and its Foreign Policy: Exploring the Interface', Wits School of Governance, Tambo Debate Series, November 2014, p. 16, http://www.tambofoundation.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/FIN AL_Position_Paper_NDP_debate-3_Anthoni_15Nov14.pdf (accessed 22 February 2019.
23   Pauw J, *The President's Keepers*. Cape Town: NB Publishers, October 2017.

Yet, in her budget vote speech in 2018, the then Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Lindiwe Sisulu, prefaced the government's plans for that upcoming year by stating:

> [o]ur track record of keeping peace on the African Continent is unchallenged by any one country. Our efforts in creating dialogue are a hallmark of our foreign policy. We have had great successes in the past on the Continent and we will continue to put this at the apex of our interventions.[24]

To what extent is South Africa therefore able to apply policy, strategy and resources to undertake African peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction and development, in the process enhancing its national security and promoting its national interests?

4   Lessons from the South African experience with conflict management: three case studies

Indeed, moving from concepts to application, we note that there is continuing instability in almost all the countries where South Africa has been involved – including in Burundi, the DRC, Lesotho and Zimbabwe. This raises questions about the efficacy of its approach in maintaining peace. These cases illustrate South Africa's continued struggle to reconcile the principles of international solidarity and respect for the sovereignty of nations with the stated foreign policy objective to be a champion for democracy, human rights, equality and dignity – very real values that are entrenched in its constitution.[25] This is indicative of the fact that South Africa's approach through implementation has been to seek short-term solutions, aimed at stabilising rather than transforming conflicts. This in turn reflects the reality that it is difficult for external actors to readily impact upon the deep drivers of instability, and that the only way to do this is through the extended deployment of multidimensional peace missions for many years – and at great expense – which is increasingly beyond South Africa's means.

Democratic South Africa's peace-making efforts have been undertaken throughout the world – in as far-flung places as East Timor and in as ambitious settings as the Israel/Palestine conflict. To better identify the

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24   DIRCO, 'Speech by LN Sisulu, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation on the occasion of the budget vote of the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, 15 May 2018, parliament', http://www.dirco.gov.za/docs/speeches/2018/sisu0515a.htm.

25   Government of South Africa, 'White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy – Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu', *op. cit*.

lessons that can be learnt from South Africa's peace efforts, three case studies involving South Africa's interventions have been selected. These are the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from 1997; Zimbabwe from 2001; and the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2012/2013. These country case studies represent key peace efforts linked to the Mandela, Mbeki and Zuma administrations and open the space to discuss differences in the personal approaches of each president. They also exemplify key lessons in South Africa's approach that can inform the future.

4.1   Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Political instability in the former Zaïre grew when Mobutu Sese-Seko was unseated in a coup orchestrated by Laurént Kabila, leader of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL) in 1997 with help from neighbouring countries. At the same time the eastern parts of the country had also become the unwilling host of multiple armed groups as a result of spill-over from the ethnic conflict in Rwanda and Burundi.[26]

Shortly after the DRC was admitted into SADC South Africa went about fulfilling its goal of resolving conflicts and promoting peace and security, participating in peace missions and talks from as early as 1998 in Lusaka and Gaborone. The involvement of high-level South African officials in peace processes continued through to 1999, leading up to the signing of the Lusaka Peace Accords that year, which facilitated a ceasefire.[27] To support the 1999 Lusaka ceasefire agreement the UN authorised the deployment of a force of 5,537 military personnel to monitor the ceasefire, with the political support and troop contribution of South Africa.[28]

South Africa's assistance may have remained in peacekeeping, had attempts to mediate the dispute failed in Addis Ababa in October 2001. Bentley and Southall posit that the impetus for South Africa stepping in to facilitate the Sun City dialogues was driven by a fear that 'continued prevarication' by parties would damage South Africa's African Renaissance

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26   Kanyangara P, 'Conflict in the Great Lakes Region: Root Causes, Dynamics and Effects', Accord, 5 May 2016, http://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/conflict-great-lakes-region/ (accessed 15 June 2019).

27   Kasanda P, 'Letter dated 23 July 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council', UN, 1999, http://www.un.org/Docs/s815_25.pdf (accessed 21 April 2019).

28   Bellamy AJ & PD Williams, *Providing Peacekeepers: The Politics, Challenges, and Future of United Nations Peacekeeping Contributions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 385–386; MONUC (UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo), 'MONUC Mandate', 2000, https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/monuc/mandate.shtml (accessed 12 October 2016).

ambitions.[29] There were also other geopolitical reasons – not least of which was that South Africa could not afford accommodating an influx of refugees fleeing the chaos. When talks renewed in 2002, the South African government spared no expense in hosting a diverse range of stakeholders for the peace talks.[30] Throughout the Sun City talks, President Mbeki played a crucial role balancing the interests of Congolese stakeholders, as well as those of established Western powers (such as Belgium, France, and the US, among others).[31]

In Sun City, South Africa drew on the experience of its own negotiated settlement. This is evidenced by the DRC's Transitional Constitution, Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and Truth and Reconciliation Commission which the then Department of Foreign Affairs saw as essential components to the transformation of societies to peace.[32]

South Africa's commitment to the peace process in the DRC did not end with the signing of the Sun City Accord. In 2005 South Africa sent a team of observers to monitor the parliamentary vote for the adoption of a new constitution which paved the way for elections to take place the following year.[33] Then in 2006 South Africa sent an observer mission of 118 individuals to assist DRC public servants as they carried out elections.[34] In addition to the deployment of this delegation, the biggest such deployment funded by the South African government, President Mbeki personally visited election front-runners Jean-Pierre Bemba and Joseph Kabila.[35] The South African Police Services trained 200 Congolese police members in crowd management, and South Africa printed all of the election ballots and transported them to remote areas in the DRC with the

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29   Bentley, KA & R Southall, *An African Peace Process: Mandela, South Africa and Burundi*. Pretoria: HSRC Press, 2005, p 17.

30   South Africa, Department of Defence, 'Operation Mistral: Democratic Republic of Congo', http://www.dod.mil.za/operations/international/Mistral.htm (accessed 12 September 2018).

31   Miti K, 'South Africa and conflict resolution in Africa: From Mandela to Zuma', *Southern African Peace and Security Studies*, 1, 1, 2012, pp. 26–42.

32   South Africa, National Treasury, 'Vote 3: Foreign Affairs', 2003, http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/national%20budget/2003/ene/vote_03.pdf (accessed 13 October 2018).

33   Government of South Africa, 'International Relations, Peace & Security Cluster', 2006a, http://www.gov.za/about-government/international-relations-peace-security-cluster-1 (accessed 21 April 2019).

34   Government of South Africa, 'A Pahad: Briefing notes on international affairs', 2006c, http://www.gov.za/pahad-briefing-notes-international-affairs-4 (accessed 2 October 2016).

35   Government of South Africa, 'Foreign Affairs on SA Observer Mission departure to DRC elections, 19Jul', 2006b, http://www.gov.za/foreign-affairs-sa-observer-mission-departure-drc-elections-19-jul (accessed 21 April 2019); Government of South Africa, 2006a, *op. cit*.

help of the South African National Defence Force.[36] Overall, South Africa spent at least R 666 million supporting the 2006 elections.[37]

In 2007, when forces loyal to Bemba clashed with those loyal to Kabila, South Africa used its position within SADC as well as its seat on the Security Council to restore peace in the DRC. It hosted continued reconciliation talks for DRC stakeholders,[38] all the while also continuing to support the strengthening of democratic institutions in the DRC. Not only did it facilitate the reshuffling of cabinet, it also carried out a number of human resource training projects aimed at skills transference to Congolese political, diplomatic corps and civil servants.[39]

As fighting in the eastern parts of the country continued South Africa remained committed to its military involvement by sending increased numbers of peacekeepers to the country.[40] At the height of its engagement in the DRC, South Africa was spending up to a billion Rand a year in deploying troops and equipment in the UN-mandated Operation Mistral.[41]

Political developments following the 2011 election in the DRC led to a mutiny by March 23 Movement (M23) rebels.[42] This led to the establishment of the UN's Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) – to which

36   Government of South Africa, 2006c, *op. cit.*; Government of South Africa, 'C Nqakula: Monitoring and evaluation media briefing May 2007', 2007a, http://www.gov.za/c-nqakula-monitoring-and-evaluation-media-briefing-may-2007 (accessed 21 April 2019).

37   Besharati N & C Rawhani, 'South Africa and the DRC: Evaluating a South–South Partnership for Peace, Governance and Development', *SAIIA Occasional Paper* 235, July 2016.

38   Government of South Africa, 'A Pahad: South African Institute of International Affairs', 2007c, http://www.gov.za/pahad-south-african-institute-international-affairs (accessed 21 April 2019); Government of South Africa, 'Foreign Affairs on United Nations Security Council visit Africa', 2007d, http://www.gov.za/foreign-affairs-united-nations-security-council-visit-africa (accessed 21 April 2019).

39   Besharati NA & C Rawhani, *op. cit.*; Government of South Africa, 'Foreign Affairs to facilitate reconciliation processes in Democratic Republic of Congo, 14 to 16 Dec', 2007e, http://www.gov.za/foreign-affairs-facilitate-reconciliation-processes-democratic-republic-congo-14-16-dec (accessed 21 April 2016); Government of South Africa, 'Public administration', http://www.gov.za/about-government/government-system/public-administration (accessed 21 April 2019); Dlomo M, 'South Africa's post-conflict and transitional diplomatic efforts in the DRC lessons learnt: 1990–2009', unpublished Masters thesis, University of Pretoria, 2010.

40   Government of South Africa, 'International Relations, Peace & Security cluster', 2008, http://www.gov.za/about-government/international-relations-peace-security-cluster (accessed 2 October 2016).

41   Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 'International peacekeeping operations: SANDF and DIRCO briefing', 2 March 2018, https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/25896/ (accessed 15 July 2019).

42   Kanyangara P, *op. cit.*

South Africa was a significant contributor.[43] While the FIB was successful in quelling the violence sparked by the M23, it has however been less successful in addressing the insecurity caused by other militia groups and enthusiasm for the FIB has since waned. South Africa has remained seized with regional efforts to bring peace in the region. In 2014 it participated in a joint SADC-ICGLR (International Conference on the Great Lakes Region) ministerial meeting on the matter.[44] South Africa is also part of a tripartite agreement with Angola, and the DRC to promote peace and security in the entire Great Lakes region.[45] And in 2015 its peacekeeping efforts were acknowledged by its appointment to head the UN Mission in the DRC (known as MONUSCO).[46]

Under the Zuma administration, South Africa's engagements in the DRC took on more economic characteristics with the two countries signing agreements to initiate the Grand Inga Dam project, which was set to introduce 40 000MW of electricity by the construction of the world's largest hydroelectric generation facility. Other projects included the Bas Congo corridor which would link Kinshasa to ports in the west; and the restructuring of the Kasumbalesa (DRC-Zambia) border by the Development Bank of Southern Africa.[47] These economic linkages were informed by the greater emphasis on 'economic diplomacy' in the NDP of the Zuma administration. However, South Africa's relations with the DRC were also coloured by allegations of impropriety between Zuma and Kabila because of business dealings between the two families.[48]

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43   Government of South Africa, 'State of the Nation Address by His Excellency Jacob G Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa on the occasion of the Joint Sitting of Parliament, Cape Town', 14 February 2013, http://www.gov.za/state-nation-address-his-excellency-jacob-g-zuma-president-republic-south-africa-occasion-joint-6 (accessed 21 April 2016).

44   Government of South Africa, 'Statement by International Relations and Cooperation Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane on international developments in OR Tambo Building, Pretoria', 8 July 2014, http://www.gov.za/statement-international-relations-and-cooperation-minister-maite-nkoana-mashabane-international (accessed 21 April 2019).

45   Government of South Africa, 'International Cooperation, Trade and Security cluster', http://www.gov.za/about-government/international-cooperation-trade-and-security-cluster (accessed 21 April 2016); Government of South Africa, 'International relations', 2015b, http://www.gov.za/about-sa/international-relations (accessed 21 April 2019).

46   Government of South Africa, 2016b, *op. cit*.

47   Besharati N & C Rawhani, *op. cit.*; The Presidency, 'President Zuma strengthens economic cooperation with DRC', 17 October 2015, http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/content/president-zuma-strengthens-economic-cooperation-drc (accessed 12 October 2018).

48   *News24*, 'Khulubuse's R100bn oil deal', 18 May 2014, https://www.news24.com/Archives/City-Press/Khulubuse-Zumas-R100bn-oil-deal-20150430-2 (accessed 15 July 2019).

Despite these strong economic ties (or perhaps because of it), South Africa played an underwhelming role in assisting to navigate the DRC through the election crisis that began in 2016. The elections, which were due to be held in December 2016 were delayed, ostensibly for administrative and financial reasons. However, these reasons were strongly criticised by political opposition, civil society organisations and the international community as delaying tactics by Kabila, in a bid to hold on to power. While elections were eventually held at the end of December 2018, Kabila's commitment to keeping to this date was always regarded with circumspection. The SADC region and South Africa came under scrutiny for not putting enough pressure on Kabila to commit to the election process.[49]

South Africa's largely hands-off approach to the most recent election crisis stands in stark contrast to its history of active engagement in the transition history of the country. Its distanced approach increased perceptions of regional insecurity as many analysts braced for the outbreak of war in the DRC.[50] This tenor of South Africa's engagement continued in the aftermath of the election, which resulted in the unexpected victory of Félix Tshisekedi, leader of the Union for Democratic and Social Progress. The outcome was contested by Martin Fayulu, thought to be the rightful winner by a parallel vote count conducted by the Catholic Church.

Intriguingly, the idea of a South African envoy to the DRC to assist with peacemaking, was rejected by the Kabila government in December 2018, weeks before the controversial election. The incoming government of Félix Tshisekedi invited President Ramaphosa to appoint an envoy to the DRC 'to assist with the transition' (to an inclusive government). However, the South Africa government requested terms of reference from the Congolese government, which were never sent. Thus no envoy was appointed.

South Africa's interventions in the DRC offer interesting insights into how the country was able to adapt its interventions in response to the way in which the conflict evolved. Convinced of its own successful transition, South Africa sought to infuse aspects of its own democratic model in the facilitated outcomes in Sun City – as evidenced in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the TRC and constitution.

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49   Lalbahadur A, 'Improving SADC Responses to Bring Peace to the DRC', SAIIA (South African Institute of International Affairs) Policy Briefing, 166, October 2017, https://saiia.org.za/research/improving-sadc-responses-to-bring-peace-to-the-drc/ (accessed 25 June 2019).

50   Mendick S, 'Will DRC go to the polls – or war?', *Foreign Policy*, 3 August 2018, https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/03/will-congo-go-to-the-polls-or-go-to-war-kabila-drc-rwanda-kivu/ (accessed 25 June 2019).

What began as an attempt to mediate an initial transfer of power to a democratic government modelled on South Africa's experiences, then evolved into peacekeeping operations in the eastern parts of the country. While troops continued to keep the peace and prevent the escalation of a regional war in the Great Lakes region, South Africa embarked on several post-conflict reconstruction efforts with the Congolese government. Waning involvement in the Zuma years stands in stark contrast to the intensive engagements in the early 2000s. It highlights that South Africa has been unable to maintain consistent involvement in the DRC. This may be attributed to dwindling state resources on the back of declining defence budgets. A lack of coherence and strategy for what South Africa seeks to gain from its interventions in the DRC is evident in its engagement over the long term.

The stretched capacity of the South African military was highlighted in the 2014 Defence Review and concerns once again reared their heads when in 2018 it was announced that the Department of Defence was receiving a budget cut.[51] South Africa has deployed troops as part of MONUSCO in the DRC, but increasingly, problems with military equipment that is not fit for purpose and the costs of deployment pose serious challenges, calling into question the viability of South Africa's troop deployment.[52] This, in addition to *Why* DRC and CAR? The absence of a policy that explains deployment, provides parameters for engagement and provides the ability to assess failures and successes, continues to be a problem.

4.2   Zimbabwe

South Africa's handling of the protracted crisis in Zimbabwe further illustrates the country's preference to prioritise dialogue over military intervention and may have also been influenced by the ANC's relationship with ZANU-PF. Despite consistent popular calls for increased defence deployment to mitigate the flow of Zimbabwean migrants, South Africa has limited its engagement to facilitation and dialogue under the rubric of 'quiet diplomacy'. The latter term, reaching infamy under the Mbeki administration, refers to the preference for South Africa to work behind the scenes in facilitating dialogue and finding political solutions. South Africa

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51   South Africa, National Treasury, '2018 Budget: Estimates of National Expenditure – Vote 19 Defence and Military Veterans', http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/ national%20budget/2018/enebooklets/Vote%2019%20Defence%20and%20 Military%20Veterans.pdf (accessed 23 February 2019).

52   *DefenceWeb,* 'South Africa to take up FIB restructuring with UN Department of Peacekeeping', 16 August 2018, https://www.defenceweb.co.za/joint/diplomacy-a-peace/south-africa-to-take-up-fib-restructuring-with-un-department-of-peacekeeping/ (accessed 23 February 2019).

has displayed a preference for this kind of diplomacy and as such, rarely takes strong public positions. It almost always maintains a consistency with the public statements issued by SADC and the AU – on issues even beyond Zimbabwe.

While the Zimbabwean crisis began when the economy started to lag in 1997, it was only in 2001 with the accelerated land reform policies that resulted in the frequently violent eviction of mostly white farmers from commercial farmland, that the crisis is thought to have escalated. This coupled with the kind of political brinkmanship that contributed to Mugabe's infamy resulted in South Africa playing a significant interlocutory role – managing the demands of Western interests for regime change, with Mugabe's expressions for Zimbabwe's sovereignty to be respected.[53]

In Zimbabwe, South Africa's peace intervention reached its zenith in 2008, when following the contested presidential election results, South African officials, at the behest of SADC, facilitated the formation of a power-sharing government, a 'Government of National Unity' (GNU), following the signing of a Global Political Agreement. A 'roadmap' outlined the reforms that were necessary to ensure the full implementation of the GPA to the 2013 elections and was agreed upon and endorsed by SADC. The GNU paved the way for the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) to occupy, for the first time, key positions in cabinet, alongside ZANU-PF.

Key portfolios were even handed to the MDC – this included the ministry of finance under Tendai Biti, while MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai was appointed prime minister. This was supposed to ensure fiscal transparency and encourage international investments and was successful to some degree. However, much of the revenue generated from diamond sales did not end up in the Treasury coffers, deepening the 'shadow economy' that already existed prior to the GNU. This parallel economy was aimed at excluding the MDC from one of ZANU–PF's major rent-seeking activities. A vast portion of economic activity was excluded from official government revenue – effectively hamstringing the GNU's ability to affect a real developmental agenda in Zimbabwe and allowing ZANU–PF to continue its patronage-based rule.

The GNU period was characterised by constant disagreement, distrust and even accusations of intimidation of MDC by ZANU-PF. Analysts

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53   Lalbahadur A, 'South Africa's Economic Statecraft in Southern Africa: Non-existent or Nascent? An examination of Relations with Zimbabwe and Swaziland', SAIIA Occasional Paper, 187, May 2014, p. 13, https://saiia.org.za/research/south-africas-economic-statecraft-in-southern-africa-non-existent-or-nascent-an-examination-of-relations-with-zimbabwe-and-swaziland/ (accessed 26 February 2019).

have accused Mbeki and SADC of taking sides favouring ZANU-PF during this time.[54] Partiality towards Mugabe may be attributed to the 'solidarity politics' that has characterised the Southern African region, where former liberation movements have transformed to governments, but Mugabe's own personal appeal as an 'elder statesman' may have also contributed to this.

At the end of the power-sharing period in 2013, it became evident that the GPA was going to be selectively implemented. While a new constitution[55] was ratified by parliament on 9 May 2013 following a popular referendum approving it in March that same year, key judicial, legislative and political reforms were left ignored. This led to the holding of elections later in 2013 which saw Mugabe win an overwhelming majority over MDC. Even in the wake of strong accusations of vote-rigging, SADC and South Africa endorsed the election results, thereby effectively ending the power-sharing government and restoring power to ZANU-PF. With this reversion of power, ZANU-PF was free from the domestic pressure of undertaking the outstanding reforms. These outstanding reforms are the main reason that the EU and US continue to maintain sanctions on Zimbabwe – even after elections were held in July 2018.

The Zuma administration, which had taken a more hands-on approach to the predecessor, Mbeki, experienced first-hand the brinkmanship that Mugabe was infamous for. In 2013, Mugabe warned he would leave SADC if it continued to 'do stupid things' and proceeded to call President Zuma's international relations adviser, Lindiwe Zulu, 'a little streetwalker' and 'stupid idiotic woman'.[56] The 2013 elections also heralded an end to South Africa's facilitation in Zimbabwe, and by many accounts, this opportunity to step away was welcomed by the government as it had become 'fatigued' by the drawn-out process.[57]

The economic crisis that has subsequently hit the country has solicited political support from South Africa. In January 2018 it joined the Zimbabwean government in calling for the removal of sanctions by the US and EU in support of President Mnangagwa's new government, a call it has repeated subsequently. In the face of its own domestic challenges of rampant inequality and stagnating economy, South Africa appears more

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54   *Ibid.*, p. 13.

55   A copy of the 2013 Constitution can be found at Constitute Project, 'Zimbabwe's Constitution of 2013', 2018, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Zimbabwe_2013.pdf (accessed 26 February 2019).

56   *PoliticsWeb*, 'Lindiwe Zulu a "streetwalker" and "stupid idiotic woman" – Mugabe', 7 July 2013, https://www.politicsweb.co.za/news-and-analysis/lindiwe-zulu-a-streetwalker-and-stupid-idiotic-wom (accessed 15 July 2019).

57   Lalbahadur A, 2014, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

inwardly focused. Whether it is willing and able to assume a more active role in Zimbabwe remains to be seen.

4.3 Central African Republic

In March 2013, 13 South African soldiers were killed and 27 injured in a confrontation with rebels storming the capital of the Central African Republic (CAR). The Battle of Bangui which is what the incident is known as, was a confrontation between South African troops and rebels who were part of an orchestrated coup attempt to unseat President Francois Bozizé. Bozizé himself began his career a decade earlier along similar lines, when in 2003 he successfully led a coup against democratically elected Ange-Félix Patassé. Not long after, he suspended the National Assembly and the constitution – beginning his autocratic and dictatorial reign over the CAR.[58]

The CAR has been mired in insecurity since the 1960s. Its fragility has bred weak state institutions, leaving it vulnerable to intervention by foreign actors. France, South Africa and Chad have played important roles and France in particular has intervened on multiple occasions to assist the government against rebels. This intervention has been rationalised as a need to ensure broader regional security as the situation in CAR had deteriorated considerably.[59]

Public outrage following the announcement of the South African fatalities soon led to questions about why South African troops were deployed in the CAR in the first place. The deployment, which was sanctioned in accordance with a defence cooperation agreement between South Africa and CAR, nevertheless led to allegations that the soldiers were deployed to protect ANC and then President Zuma's business interests.[60]

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58 ICRtoP (International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect), 'Crisis in the Central African Republic', http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/crises/ crisis-in-the-central-african-republic (accessed 25 June 2019).

59 Darracq V, 'France in Central Africa: The reluctant interventionist', *Al Jazeera*, 11 February 2014, https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/02/france-central-africa-reluctant--20142975859862140.html (accessed 25 June 2019).

60 See South Africa, National Assembly, For Written Reply, Question No: 827 (Nw1044e), Published in Internal Question Paper No: 13-2013 Of 26 April 2013, http://www.dirco.gov.za/docs/2013pq/pq827.html (accessed 2 April 2020); *Mail & Guardian*, 'Central African Republic: Is this what our soldiers died for?', 28 March 2013, https://mg.co.za/article/2013-03-28-00-central-african-republic-is-this-what-our-soldiers-died-for (accessed 2 April 2020).

In truth, very little is known as to why SANDF troops were deployed in the CAR on a bilateral agreement. This decision also appears to be incongruent with South Africa's other approaches which have tended to rely upon decisions taken at multilateral bodies like the AU, UN or SADC. Vrey and Esterhuyse's analysis of policy statements and the broader literature on the matter conclude that the justification for deployment 'remains weakly explained by South African political decision-makers and a void in understanding how armed coercion ties in with policy decisions'.[61] They go on to conclude that the overall literature on the matter does not refer to strategy and that 'South Africa's military strategy in CAR is glaringly absent or somewhat fragmented …'[62] The outcry following the Battle of Bangui led South Africa to withdraw its presence in CAR – but the reputational damage had already been done.

5   South Africa's declining power and influence

Enduring regional crises in Africa, especially in the areas that have enjoyed South African assistance in the past fuel a perception that there is a need to re-visit its approach to peace and security. This is compounded by the sense that there is a lack of strategy informing South Africa's peace and security engagements – particularly in the last decade under President Zuma.[63] Similarly, the deployment of Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma to the chairmanship of the AU for a four-year term in 2012 aggravated tensions in the AU and damaged South Africa's legitimacy to lead on the continent.[64] This overall decline in its soft power in Africa is perhaps most succinctly articulated in the country's repeated failure to garner the support necessary to deploy the African Standby Force and the African Capacity for the Immediate Response to Conflict (an interim rapid-response instrument introduced by South Africa in 2013).[65]

Some of the weaknesses surrounding South Africa's continental leadership may be explained by its own domestic politics but dwindling

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61   Vrey F & A Esterhuyse, 'South Africa and the search for strategic effect in the Central African Republic', *Scientia Militaria – South African Journal of Military Studies*, 44, 2, 2016, p. 3.

62   *Ibid*., p. 4.

63   Lalbahadur A, 'SAIIA South African Foreign Policy Perception Survey', 19 June 2014, https://saiia.org.za/research/moving-beyond-trophy-diplomacy-how-to-consolidate-south-africas-position-in-the-world/ (accessed 2 April 2020).

64   Lalbahadur A, 'Africa cannot afford "business as usual" under new AUC Chair', SAIIA Opinion & Analysis, 7 Feb 2017, https://saiia.org.za/research/africa-cannot-afford-business-as-usual-under-new-auc-chair/ (accessed 28 May 2019).

65   Brosig M & N Sempijja, 'From idea to practice to failure? Evaluating Rapid Response Mechanisms for African Crises', in Vrey F & T Mandrup (eds), *The African Standby Force: Quo Vadis?*. Stellenbosch: Sun Press, 2017.

resources for defence also play a role. Domestically, the Zuma presidency increasingly came to exemplify 'state capture', graft and deeply entrenched corruption, that detracted from its leadership on peace and security issues on the continent.[66] Budget cuts to the defence ministry is another contributing factor to the pervading sense of South Africa's declining peace and security interventions in Africa. Defence Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula previously highlighted that the budget allocation had declined in real terms for 20 years, by 5% a year to a mere 1% of GDP.[67] Analysts like Heitman have argued that the failure to properly equip the SANDF through deliberate underfunding while also expecting them to undertake a dangerous mission like the one in CAR, effectively set the soldiers up for failure.[68]

In 2014, the Department of Defence completed a review that highlighted the 'critical state of decline characterised by: force imbalance between capabilities; block obsolescence and unaffordability of many of its main operating systems…the inability to meet current standing defence commitments and the lack of critical mobility.'[69]

The reality of this was revealed when the country was called upon to respond to the humanitarian crisis resulting from Cyclone Idai in March 2019. The storm was recorded by the UN to be one of the deadliest to hit the southern hemisphere, killing over a thousand people and displacing hundreds of thousands more in Malawi, Mozambique (which was hardest hit) and Zimbabwe. The SANDF, which recorded prior success in 1999 in disaster alleviation in Mozambique, this time around, found itself unable and incapable of effectively deploying resources in time.

Even with its own challenges of capacity, South Africa has spearheaded regional response interventions to reduce the continent's dependence on external forces. By this we mean the SADC Standby Force and the AU Standby Force (and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises-ACIRC). However, ASF/ACIRC relevance is increasingly called into question. In 2015 Nigeria rejected South Africa's offer to deploy

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66   Allegations of the scope of state capture and corruption began to surface in late 2018 and early 2019 – principally through the Zondo Commission of Enquiry – and were still unfolding as we went to publication.

67   Polity, 'DMV: Nosiviwe Mapisa Nqakula: Address by Minister for Defence and Military Veterans, during the Defence and Military Veterans budget vote 2017, Parliament, Cape Town', 25 May 2017, https://www.polity.org.za/article/dmv-nosiviwe-mapisa-nqakula-address-by-minister-for-defence-and-military-veterans-during-the-defence-and-military-veterans-budget-vote-2017-parliament-cape-town-25052017-2017-05-25 (accessed 25 February 2019).

68   Heitman R, *The Battle in Bangui: The Untold Inside Story*. Johannesburg: Parktown Publishers, 2013.

69   Government of South Africa, 'South African Defence Review 2014', *op. cit.*, p. ix.

against Boko Haram;[70] and in 2016 the G5 Sahel countries opted for their own force intervention measure, bypassing the need for the AU. In addition to being plagued by 'command and control' concerns regarding the actual ability to deploy within 14 days, financial resourcing and political will remain at the heart of the problems of these instruments.[71] Until these issues are resolved, these instruments will remain good ideas, but lacking in implementation.

Political will is key. And South Africa's experiences in addressing regional conflicts illustrate just how important political will is. It is necessary to sustain engagement and ultimately determine the success or failure of interventions.

6   Looking forward

Over the next few years, the continental peace and security terrain will become more complex, requiring from policy-makers and implementers alike more sophisticated situational awareness, informed by credible research and analysis.

Indeed, despite the existence of detailed policy frameworks and comprehensive institutional mechanisms at continental and regional levels (the so-called African Peace and Security Architecture) to deal with conflict management, Africa remains overwhelmed by conflict and instability.

In 2018 the African Union Peace and Security Council noted '… most of the violent conflicts and crises … are rooted in governance deficits, which include mismanagement of diversity, manipulation of constitutions, marginalisation of the youth and mismanagement of natural resources'.[72]

In addition, the AU identifies six major causes of conflict and instability:

- A strong relationship between poverty and instability;
- Disruptive transitions from autocracy to democracy;

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70   Fabricius P, ' Business as unusual: Goodluck Jonathan privatises Nigerian relations with South Africa', ISS Today, 5 March 2015, https://issafrica.org/iss-today/business-as-unusual-goodluck-jonathan-privatises-nigerian-relations-with-south-africa (accessed 25 February 2019).

71   AU Peace Fund, 'Silencing the Guns: Securing Predictable and Sustainable Financing for Peace in Africa', August 2016, http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/auhr-progress-report-final-020916-with-annexes.pdf (accessed 23 February 2019).

72   AUC (AU Commission), '766th Peace and Security Council meeting, PSC/PR/BR (DCCLXVI)'. Addis Ababa: AUC, 2018.

- Lack of democracy or democratic accountability;
- Population imbalance and socio-economic exclusion;
- The spread of large-scale violence across borders; and
- Self-serving leadership.[73]

To this we must add political violence – when a government uses violence to oppress popular uprisings, as well as the growing threat of violent extremism, as evident in the behaviour of Boko Haram in West Africa and Al Shabaab in the Horn of Africa.

From a macro-perspective, conflict and instability tend to occur in four major conflict zones, namely the Mano River region in West Africa; the Great Lakes region in Central and East Africa; the Horn of Africa region; and the Sahel and Maghreb regions.[74]

From a country perspective, research by Cilliers suggests several countries will continue to have high levels of armed violence: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan. Countries that will continue experiencing high levels of political protest and riots include South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria, Tunisia, Algeria, Kenya and Somalia.[75]

In a nutshell, the picture that emerges points to the Great Lakes region, the Horn of Africa, and the Sahel and Maghreb regions as the warring 'hotspots'. Apart from the DRC, the Southern African region appears relatively stable by comparison.

This complex peace and security map requires African governments and institutions to think hard about how to prepare for, fund and participate in stabilisation operations followed by peace processes with the aim to introduce democratic governance, enhanced economic growth, job creation and sustainable development, and the effective and efficient management of the security sector. Cross-border cooperation in pursuit of peace and security – via the regional economic communities – remains a key priority.

These are the challenges awaiting South Africa and its leaders as it contemplates and re-calibrates its place and role in Africa which by necessity, is a leading and transformational role informed by the abilities

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73   APRM (African Peer Review Mechanism), *The Africa Governance Report*. Johannesburg: APRM, 2019.

74   Aboagye F (ed.), *A Comprehensive Review of African Conflicts and Regional Interventions*. Addis Ababa: APSTA (AU Commission and African Peace Support Trainers Association), 2016.

75   Cilliers J, *Violence in Africa: Trends, Drivers and Prospects to 2023*, Africa Report 12. Pretoria: ISS (Institute for Security Studies), 2018.

and interests of a range of actors, from the government and the state, to civil society and the private sector. It should also be informed by the developmental needs and requirements of the nation: the very reason for formulating and implementing a foreign policy is to protect and enhance the country's national interests.

7   Recommendations

This chapter argues that South Africa needs to advance its national interests on the basis of a coherent and integrated set of policy frameworks and strategies whereby the nation can pursue its strategic objectives at home and abroad. Such an approach must be informed by a professional way of anticipating and responding to threats/opportunities facing our nation. South Africa has not done so properly in the past and establishing a national security policy and strategy is one way of doing so properly. Such an approach should be undertaken through African and developmental lenses and continue with the trend of attempting to provide 'African solutions' to the continent's woes.

Furthermore, South Africa's approach would benefit if it were more strategic. A reformulation, refinement and alignment of foreign and security policies and strategies (and practices) with each other and critically with a reinvigorated National Development Plan (NDP) is likely the first step towards achieving greater strategy. The envisaged National Security Council (NSC), announced at the 2019 State of the Nation address, is also a step in the right direction, even though it is largely focused on intelligence for now.

South Africa must ensure that it undertakes future interventions that are clearly aligned to the national interest. This requires the national security sector and foreign affairs to align its strategies with domestic imperatives (primarily poverty alleviation via economic growth and development). Again, a re-invigorated NDP and the envisaged NSC chaired by the president will be necessary vehicles. This national re-calibration ought to find expression in a vibrant new foreign policy framework and accompanying strategies, in harmony with a renewed national development plan, and backed up by an unambiguous national security policy framework.

Recalibration furthermore requires government to balance its commitments in setting and driving the agendas of SADC and the AU on the one hand, and multilateral alliances such as the UN, BRICS, IORA and the G20 on the other. Previously, South African diplomacy tended to be overwhelmed by multiple unprioritised commitments leading to

elegant yet shallow summitry. Together, Agenda 2063 of the AU and the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN offer an overarching political and policy context and framework within which meaningful, strategic commitments can be forged.

Implementation requires a cadre of experienced and well-trained diplomats, soldiers, trade negotiators, cultural attachés and presidential coordinators. Training and education, and skills development, are essential to the emergence of the new approach and government ought to consider an integrated and holistic approach to institutional partnerships to make it happen. Ideally, a revised national security policy framework and strategy should reflect on this and offer a way forward: operationalisation of such an approach can be based on the evolving architecture of the newly established National Security Council.[76]

These innovative arrangements collectively constitute the expression of the national interest, an approach without which South Africa will discover the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council – as well as continental and global trade negotiations – to be deep and turbulent waters to navigate.

Finally, South Africa would do well to develop clear and consistent policies that not only provide the rationale for an intervention, but also basic intervention guidelines so as to prevent 'mission creep' and over-extension. This requires a revision of its defence policy (including the white paper on peacekeeping) and strategy as well as a commitment to ensuring the defence forces are appropriately resourced.

Two decades of South Africa's security engagement has illustrated the extent to which the government battled to promote peace and security in the Southern African region and beyond. A once-vibrant 'African Renaissance' faded into a weak, un-coordinated and personalised posture. There is clearly a revived impetus by the administration of President Ramaphosa to recapture some of the lost lustre of the 'early years' of the country's engagements. However, the stark economic realities of South Africa's economic prospects, when set against the backdrop of its flagging

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76 This is in line with the recommendations of the High Level Review Panel on the SSA relating to the need for the urgent drafting of a national security policy. See SSA (State Security Agency), 'Report of the High-Level Review Panel on the SSA', December 2018, http://www.ssa.gov.za/Portals/0/SSA%20docs/Media%20Releases/2019/High-Level%20Review%20Panel%20on%20the%20SSA_2019.pdf. The establishment of the National Security Council was announced by President Ramaphosa in his 2019 State of the Nation address. See Herman P, 'Goodbye SSA? Ramaphosa to re-establish national security council', *News24*, 7 February 2019, https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/goodbye-ssa-ramaphosa-to-re-establish-national-security-council-20190207.

performance in addressing the developmental objectives it first set out to achieve in 1994, are indicative of the fact that the country is entering the next 25-year phase with considerably less optimism. Rather than demoralise, however, South Africa should use the opportunity to assess how it could promote and protect its security interests more smartly.