CHAPTER **6**

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SOUTH AFRICA'S PEACE AND
SECURITY INTERESTS
BEYOND THE CONTINENT

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1   Introduction

The future management of South Africa's peace and security agenda will have to confront a fundamentally changed and changing global context. Therefore, a range of systemic matters will have to be carefully weighed and considered with respect to the continuum and constraints of diplomatic means and ends. The challenges for the country come into stark relief in view of South Africa's status as a middle-income country which continues to undergo a difficult and daunting transition, rendered more intractable by the triple scourge of poverty, inequality, and unemployment. Quite crucially, at a time when multilateralism faces its own crisis of legitimacy, South Africa's global stature and standing were compromised during the Zuma years where it lost much of its influence, image, and authority in multilateral circuits of activity.[1] For example, South Africa has long been accused of grossly deviating from the guiding pillars of its foreign policy that were an integral part of its transition to democracy, particularly as far as human rights are concerned.

Since 1994, such influence and authority were built on South Africa's robust and active norm and value promotion. We argue that this 'norm entrepreneurship' still retains great strategic relevance in the complex global peace and security agenda; and therefore, should be reclaimed by the Ramaphosa administration as the stock-in-trade of its diplomatic toolkit as, for example, Canada, France, and Japan have managed to do. This must be coupled with the desire to develop its reserves of soft power so that South Africa can project itself as a critical and important player

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1   Le Pere G, 'Ubuntu as foreign policy: The ambiguities of South Africa's brand image and identity', *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 39, 1, 2017, pp. 93–115.

in global affairs as well as a go-to partner and trusted interlocutor in the affairs of the African continent.[2]

The white paper on foreign policy[3] places great emphasis on the role that South Africa should play in strengthening the foundations of the multilateral system and global governance. This will require much better strategic literacy and tactical intelligence than is currently the case. In other words, given the complexity of the global peace and security agenda, there is an imperative for South Africa to cut its diplomatic coat according to its resource cloth and trim its priorities to what is manageable and what comports with the art of the possible. We thus suggest a conceptual reorientation of foreign policy based on a normative and pragmatic calculus that is carefully balanced in the context of a moral infrastructure that is Afro-centric. In that regard, we offer some indicative policy considerations towards the end of this chapter.

Beyond the continent, South Africa's participation in peace and security issues essentially takes place in two categories: platform-based engagement and issues-based engagement which include leadership against nuclear proliferation and landmines, where it stood up to the US. More recently, South Africa's voice has been prominent in climate change and maritime matters. South Africa has been an active member of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) since its return to the international community following decades of international isolation as a pariah state.[4] It has served two terms on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) – the body with the foremost global responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.[5] Importantly, it took up a third term on the Council in January 2019. South Africa has also been party to the Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court (ICC).

South Africa will, therefore, need to seriously review or redefine the broad contours of its foreign policy to remain a strategically relevant participant. This will surely be a task that will come with manifold challenges. It would be useful to next examine key issues that are germane to the global security landscape. This will help to impose some analytical

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2   Otto L, 'South Africa and anti-piracy: Pragmatic foreign policy or misguided intervention?', *African Armed Forces Journal*, November 2014, p. 34.

3   South Africa, DIRCO (Department of International Relations and Cooperation), 'Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu, White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy', 2011, https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_ document/201409/foreignpolicy0.pdf (accessed 2 April 2020).

4   Graham S, 'Gold star or bottom of the class: Is South Africa a good international citizen?', *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 15, 1, 2008, p. 94.

5   UN, *Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice*. San Francisco: UN, 1945, pp. 6–7.

order on those contextual parameters that could have an impact on future thinking and revision about the nature and purpose of security principles in its foreign policy.

2 Key issues arising on the contemporary security agenda

South Africa's own transition was broadly coterminous with tectonic shifts that have fundamentally altered the global security environment. Since the end of the Cold War together with its unsteady equilibrium of political and military deterrence between the United States and former Soviet Union, this is an environment that is now subject to greater volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.[6] Such is more the case since the election of Donald Trump in 2016 as US president. In dealing with this environment, South Africa's diplomacy should concentrate on promoting the letter and spirit of global peace and security as defined in the UN Charter and participating in like-minded coalitions within the UN institutional architecture.

The big challenge for South Africa in defining its strategic calculus for the future is the inadequacy of multilateral instruments and institutions through which it could become a stronger and more influential norm entrepreneur. The principle of norm promotion has been an important underpinning of South Africa's foreign policy and will become even more so as it must seek to re-establish its credentials as a good global citizen: '[norm promotion] involves missionary activity of sorts, proclaiming the indispensability and universality of particular norms of behaviour, and thus trying to persuade other countries and multilateral organisations to embrace those standards … norm advocates would typically elevate the international promotion of norms to a major foreign policy priority'.[7]

Such norm entrepreneurship will come up against evolving trends that converge in an ever expanding but elastic agenda of global problems and concerns which will require South Africa to move beyond mere prosaic pronouncements. The transnational magnitude and scope of disease, terrorism, poverty, food crises, organised crime, involuntary migration, ecological degradation, arms control, and peacekeeping are such that no country has the ability to address these concerns and problems on its

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6   Kupchan C, *No One's World: The West, the Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

7   Geldenhuys D, 'South Africa's role as norm entrepreneur', in Carlsnaes W & P Nel (eds), *In Full Flight: South Africa's Foreign Policy after Apartheid*. Midrand: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2006, p. 95.

own. Hence, appropriate responses require intensive global cooperation and more substantive forms of global governance. In this regard it is the human security elements that require urgent redress and these typically take the form of promoting sustainable development as a normative goal as expressed in global compacts such as the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals.

In the current discourse this is usually expressed in three dimensions: 'freedom from want' which includes economic and social security dimensions and this would, for example, entail implementing and achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals; 'freedom from fear' which includes political and military dimensions with an emphasis on human rights and reducing the probability of people, especially women and children, becoming victims of war, violence, and conflict; and 'freedom from hazards and natural disasters' which focuses on the environmental dimensions that protect vulnerable societies from natural and human-induced hazards and disasters by enhancing climate resilience and preparedness.[8]

Promoting these freedoms comes up against a tense nexus: one is Neo-Malthusian whose concerns centre around the finite carrying capacity of the planet to sustain growing populations, particularly in developing countries with exploding demographies and scarce resources; the other is Neo-Kantian which is grounded in the belief that the increase in knowledge, human progress and breakthroughs in science and technology are capable of addressing global justice, equity, and prosperity issues.[9] Whether a compromise can be found between these binaries will depend on how the threats to the three freedoms are addressed since this nexus has profound implications not only for the global security order but also for joint problem-solving and collective action.

3   Evolving security dilemmas

The conceptual scope and vocabulary of 'securitisation' have changed quite fundamentally since the end of the Cold War.[10] As early as 1995, the Commission on Global Governance called for a broadened definition of global security to encompass states, people, and the planet.[11] This logic

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8   Annan K, *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights*. New York: UN, 2005; Brauch HG, *Threats, Challenges, Vulnerabilities and Risks in Environmental and Human Security*. Bonn: UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security, 2005.

9   Giddens A, *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990.

10 Waever O, Buzan B & J de Wilde, *Securitisation*. Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 2006.

11 Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood: The Report of the Commission on Global Governance*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

drew a causal linkage between environmental deterioration, poverty, and underdevelopment as drivers of conflict and instability and insisted that the socio-political consequences of 'securitisation' be put squarely on the agenda of the UN and associated multilateral bodies. The prescient findings of the Commission still have powerful resonance today and South Africa would do well to incorporate these into its security thinking.

3.1 Shifts in geopolitical power

In the world of geopolitics, the liberal international order is increasingly subject to stress and strain as global norms erode amid growing cleavages of power and interests in an avowed multipolar world. The application of nostrums such as rule of law, democracy, human rights, and sustainable development are therefore subject to divergent interpretations, while pledges of international cooperation and partnership have become platitudinous in a fractious and fatigued multilateral system. Rather, we are witnessing rising military tensions, disruptive trade and commercial relations, abuse of cyber sources of hard and soft power, corrosive identity nativisms, charismatic strongman politics, and difficult proxy conflicts. What emerges from this portrait 'is not simply a multipolarity of power but a world of increasingly contradictory realities'.[12]

Developing countries, especially those of Africa, are particularly vulnerable and exposed to these geopolitical shifts since they have benefited from the predictability that comes with international rules, conventions, and norms. Besides weakening security alliances, developing countries feel the effects of refugee and migration flows with greater intensity, become theatres of proxy wars and will face the brunt of climate-induced challenges. These geopolitical shifts provide a growth and development opportunity for African countries to pursue continental integration and more intensive South-South cooperation with greater vigour and determination.[13] Such goals broadly coincide with South Africa's Africa and South-South agenda and its ability to forge a more substantive eco-system of mutual cooperation among developing countries.

3.2 Growing environmental challenges

The gravity of environmental risks is well known and these express themselves in extreme weather events and temperatures; the loss of

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12   Kissinger H, *World Order*. New York: Penguin Press, 2014, p. 365.
13   Frankopan P, *The New Silk Roads: The Present and Future of the World*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.

biodiversity; pollution of air, soil, and water; and the failure of mitigation and adaptation strategies to deal with climate change. The world faces an 'ecological Armageddon' as rising temperatures and frequent heatwaves affect agricultural production and thereby food security, causing widespread famine, hunger and malnutrition.

Climate diplomacy now demands a problem-solving focus on the potential social costs and economic challenges that will accompany transitions to low-carbon regimes and a more environmentally secure world. For example, climate-related transitions will entail large-scale changes in energy production as well as disruptions of labour markets. Without adequate policy, institutional, and financial support the burdens on developing countries will be especially onerous.

The old adage that foreign policy reflects domestic imperatives applies to South Africa. The domestic demands of moving away from the high carbon dependence on coal must be replaced by climate resilience based on a mix of alternate energy sources. Environmental and ecological security and how this is promoted through global climate diplomacy must form a major plank in South Africa's foreign policy. For example, the destructive and tragic consequences of cyclone Idai in Mozambique and Zimbabwe in 2019 were a test of South Africa's responsiveness to such a calamity. In both cases, South Africa provided humanitarian aid and despatched both civilian and military rescue missions which saved many lives. The lesson here is that the unpredictable nature of environmental calamities in Africa will demand a reskilled and more agile defence force as well as improved air carrying capacity.

3.3   The problem of cybersecurity

According to the 2018 World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report, cyber-attacks and huge data fraud have become prevalent and have disruptive potential.[14] There has been a resurgence of malware goods and services in 'dark net' markets as well as the purchase of 'banking trojans'. Such 'trojans' target the websites of financial institutions by disguising themselves as a genuine app and thereby can fraudulently gain access to login information and banking details. Meanwhile cloud services have accelerated and it is estimated there will be a vast expansion of the Internet of Things in terms of the number of devices in circulation, from 8.4 billion in 2017 to 20.4 billion in 2020. Cyberattacks come with rising financial costs and the cost of cybercrime to business over the next five

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14   WEF (World Economic Forum), *The Global Risks Report*, 13th edition. Geneva: WEF, 2018.

years is estimated to be US$8 trillion. According to the South African Banking Risk Information Centre, South Africa has the third highest number of cybercrime victims in the world. Their losses are estimated to be R2.2 billion each year.

South Africa has legislation against cybercrime embodied in Chapter XIII of the Electronic Communication and Transactions Act of 2002. However, this needs to be considerably sharpened in terms of the fast-expanding ambit of cybercrime to include offences related to computers, the internet, information, communication, and technology. This also has implications for foreign policy since cybercrime now has global reach and requires a coordinated international response. The articulation of combating cybercrime should be included as a foreign policy goal. For instance, South Africa could actively support the work of the UN Global Programme on Cybercrime and more specifically, participate in the Cybercrime Repository of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime which collates information on national legislation, case law, and lessons learned.

The above reflections, how they are expressed in global security terms as well as their attendant challenges provide an interesting base from which we can interrogate South Africa's past and current conduct that essentially will draw on the analytical categories of platform and issues engagements. The matters raised above as non-military threats should receive greater policy attention over the next ten years. The record of South Africa's conduct in the two categories will help us to think through some of the key implications for South Africa's foreign policy with reference to global peace and security interests beyond Africa, mindful that as a middle power there are limitations of resources, options, capacity, and influence.[15]

4   Platform-based engagement

An important platform to consider with respect to South Africa's engagement in peace and security beyond the continent is of course the UN. Once South Africa achieved its democratic status, it was quick to reassert its 'rightful place' in the international community and placed great focus in this regard on the UN, taking up the country's seat at the General Assembly again.[16]

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15   Hurrell A, 'Hegemony, liberalism and global order: What space for would-be great powers?', *International Affairs*, 82, 1, 2006, pp. 1–19.

16   Schraeder PJ, 'South Africa's foreign policy: From international pariah to leader of the African renaissance', *The Round Table*, 90, 359, 2001, p. 235.

According to Graham,[17] there have been four overlapping issues that have served as strategic themes for South Africa in its participation at the UN. These are: promoting the principles of human rights and democracy; advancing the agenda of disarmament and non-proliferation; advancing 'African interests within the context of North-South relations'; and seeking meaningful reform of the UN in order to render a more equitable system of global governance.

South Africa has long championed the idea of UN reform by promoting the Ezulwini Consensus, which constitutes the African position on the matter. South Africa has used its platform at the UN to voice this position consistently.[18] The Ezulwini Consensus holds that since Africa is the subject of a substantial proportion of UN affairs, the continent should be afforded two additional non-permanent and two permanent seats, with veto powers. Any reform of the UNSC should therefore accord the continent permanent and consistent representation.[19]

While it has been something of South Africa's clarion call at the UN, it is generally accepted especially by major powers such as Germany and Japan and the community of developing countries in the General Assembly that reform of the UN system, particularly the UNSC, is unlikely to materialise.[20] Maseng and Lekaba[21] note that given 'hegemonic battles' between dominant African states to lead the African agenda at the UNSC and to reinforce their suitability for these prospective African permanent seats, the debate on reform has become one that 'has the potential to further disintegrate an already fragmented continent'. Otto[22] argues that 'seeking Security Council reform is akin to fighting a losing battle because the very nature of the permanent seats and veto power stymie any action … [and] incremental reform is likely the most practical approach'.

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17   Graham S, *Democratic South Africa's Foreign Policy: Voting Behaviour in the United Nations*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, p. 35.

18   Bowland C, 'Coming Into Our Own: An Analysis of South Africa's Voting Patterns and the Achievements of its Foreign Policy Goals in the United Nations Security Council', SAIIA (South African Institute of International Affairs), 7 May 2012, p. 2, https://saiia.org.za/research/coming-into-its-own-an-analysis-of-south-africas-voting-patterns-and-the-achievement-of-its-foreign-policy-goals-in-the-unsc/# (accessed 2 April 2020); Melber H, 'Engagement matters: South Africa, the United Nations and rights-based foreign policy', *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 21, 1, 2014, p. 136.

19   Maseng JO & FG Lekaba, 'United Nations Security Council reform and the dilemmas of African continental integration', *African Security Review*, 23, 4, 2014, pp. 395–96.

20   Weiss TG, 'The illusion of UN Security Council reform', *The Washington Quarterly*, 26, 4, 2003, p. 147.

21   Maseng JO & FG Lekaba, *op. cit.*, pp. 398, 402.

22   Otto L, 'The key to Security Council reform', *City Press*, 16 September 2012, https://saiia.org.za/research/the-question-south-african-foreign-policy-is-grappling-with-security-council-reform/ (accessed 2 April 2020).

At the continental level, South Africa may thus consider whether the Ezulwini Consensus has reached its sell-by date even though the principle might enjoy a level of moral rectitude. Africa's proposal would need to be altered in such a way that it would require African powers to relinquish a demand for veto power to make reform more palatable to those five permanent members in the UNSC with veto power.

South Africa has worked to keep itself in the spotlight by repeatedly bidding for a non-permanent seat at the UNSC. This forms part of its ambition to fill one of the two permanent seats on the UNSC proposed by the Ezulwini Consensus, its commitment to be a responsible member of the international community through multilateral diplomacy, and its desire to maintain the 'darling' status that it had acquired after the fall of apartheid. Thus far, it has been successful in this endeavour on three occasions, holding two terms from 2007-2008 and 2011-2012, with its third term running from 2019-2020.

The late Ambassador Tom Wheeler[23] took a critical view of South Africa's first term at the UNSC, which contributed to eroding South Africa's stated human rights based foreign policy and 'undermined the moral high ground the country had occupied since the adoption of its constitution'. Indeed, South Africa made several controversial decisions such as its vote against motions condemning human rights abuses in Myanmar and Zimbabwe.[24] With respect to the case of Myanmar, South Africa voted against a UNSC resolution that sought to improve conditions in that country, which was then under military rule. The resolution sought to secure unhindered access for human rights organisations, cooperation with the International Labour Organisation, concrete progress toward democracy, the release of political prisoners, and support for the secretary-general's good offices mission.[25]

South Africa explained its vote by arguing that the resolution would hamper the work of the secretary-general, and that other UN bodies, such as the Human Rights Council (UNHRC), were better placed to deal with

23   Wheeler T, 'South Africa's Second Term in the United Nations Security Council', SAIIA, 10 January 2011, https://saiia.org.za/research/south-africa-s-second-term-in-the-united-nations-security-council/ (accessed 25 July 2018).

24   Serrão O, *South Africa in the UN Security Council 2011–2012*, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, June 2011, https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/08166.pdf (accessed 2 April 2020).

25   UN, 'Security Council fails to adopt draft resolution on Myanmar, owing to negative votes by China, Russian Federation', Press Release, 12 January 2007, https://www.un.org/press/en/2007/sc8939.doc.htm (accessed 19 January 2019).

the matter.[26] Bischoff,[27] however, notes that South Africa never referred the matter to the UNHRC, and despite public pressure mounting, Pretoria's resolve did not buckle when France attempted to invoke the responsibility to protect (R2P).

Concerning Zimbabwe, the governing ANC has had a long-standing relationship with the ruling ZANU-PF elites which predates the democratic dispensation. Consequently, as a government-in-power, the ANC has found it difficult to hold the ZANU-PF leadership to account in instances where human right abuses have been perpetrated or where democratic conventions have not been respected. Of course, South Africa's policy of 'quiet diplomacy' in Zimbabwe has become infamous as was demonstrated in its UNSC votes. This has also most recently been seen in its soft-touch approach to the Zimbabwean government's response to protests following fuel price hikes in January 2019, which led to reports of wide-ranging abuses and the killing of innocent civilians. There have even been attempts to muzzle these reports via the blocking of social media.

In this regard and during its first term, Bowland[28] asserts that South Africa emphasised its policy of promoting and supporting regional mechanisms, particularly with respect to matters involving African countries, over upholding the principles of human rights. While these priorities are not in themselves incompatible, the reality is that even when deferring human rights issues to regional mechanisms, these are often weak and ineffective in nature and face challenges in strengthening the principles of good governance.

With respect to its second term, South Africa's controversial position on Libya with UNSC Resolution 1973 could be considered the decision that defined its tenure. This was the resolution in 2011 that authorised military action against Libya, which South Africa voted in favour of but later bemoaned as being abused by Western powers, with the deputy minister of international relations and cooperation, Ebrahim Ebrahim, going so far as to suggest that Pretoria had been 'taken for a ride'. The decision led to a backlash from African states with some, like Zimbabwe, expressing the view that South Africa had allowed 'foreign powers to attack a fellow African state'.[29]

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26   South Africa, DIRCO, 'South Africa's vote on Myanmar: Frequently asked questions and answers', 2007, http://www.dirco.gov.za/docs/2007/myan0206.htm (accessed 19 January 2019).

27   Bischoff P, 'Reform in defence of sovereignty: South Africa in the UN Security Council, 2007–2008', *Africa Spectrum*, 44, 2, 2009, p. 104.

28   Bowland C, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

29   Fabricius P, 'SA returns to the UN Security Council with a new leader', *ISS Today*, 22 February 2018, https://issafrica.org/iss-today/sa-returns-to-the-un-security-council-with-a-new-leader (accessed 7 August 2018).

While South Africa's third tenure on the Council has commenced, Graham's[30] appraisal is likely to continue to hold. She argues that South Africa typically takes a position in the UNSC that intends to demonstrate that 'it is not a pushover … [and] that it can and will represent the African continent as a powerful voice'. Fabricius, however, notes that 'the tricky thing about being on the UN Security Council, as South Africa discovered before, is that the decisions that need to be taken are not always thematically manageable'.[31] Nevertheless, this is where South Africa could promote improved dialogue in the Council and via informal sessions as the issue may dictate or require. Pretoria should attempt to strengthen its influence by strengthening norms relating to matters such as disarmament, disaster management, refugees, and humanitarian protection.

Early indications are that South Africa might be carving out a new direction with respect to human rights diplomacy. In December 2018, it voted at the UNGA to condemn Myanmar for abuses perpetrated against the minority Muslim Rohingya, thus reversing its previous abstention in November of the same year. [32] While this is certainly a symbolic move which signals a reversal of its previous position with respect to Myanmar, South Africa could and should use its third term to reclaim its heritage of a human rights-based foreign policy.

South Africa's engagement at the UN, particularly via the promotion of the Ezulwini Consensus, ultimately demonstrates a failure to manage the inherent tension between idealism and pragmatism. Pretoria would fare better by striking a middle path, but this requires a much more strategically focused foreign policy. The time has come for South Africa to rethink the general contours of its foreign policy through a fresh white paper process. Hence, a return to human rights diplomacy could be a cornerstone of such a process as a matter of principle and practice, especially with respect to human security issues which can be promoted through the regional order alongside the UN system, including platforms such as the UN Human Rights Council.

5   Issues-based engagement

Regarding key issues pertaining to South Africa's involvement on the international stage, there are several that could be examined. However, given the space constraints of a single chapter, this section will highlight

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30   Graham S, 2008, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
31   Fabricius P, *op. cit*.
32   South Africa, DIRCO, 'Minister Sisulu's statement on South Africa's vote on the situation of human rights in Myanmar', Media Statement, 22 November 2018, http://www.dirco.gov.za/docs/2018/myan1122.htm (accessed 26 March 2019).

three issues. Firstly, there is nuclear non-proliferation for which South Africa's campaign is well-known, particularly the voluntary abdication of its weapons capacity prior to its transition to democracy, and the symbolism that informed its future policy positions. Secondly, concerning environmental security, this has been a threat that has gained increasing global prominence and for which South Africa has attempted to stake a leadership position, especially by hosting the UN Climate Change Conference in Durban in November/December 2011. Thirdly, the growing challenge of maritime security has become a major concern with the rise of Somali piracy in the late 2000s, and which continues to evolve in its complexity as threats in the maritime domain merge with environmental concerns, and thus have a transnational impact.

5.1   Nuclear non-proliferation

South Africa has shown robust moral leadership in the contentious area of nuclear non-proliferation; this is an area that Schoeman[33] describes as one of its most prominent achievements in the 1990s. The country acceded to the Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1991, voluntarily denuclearising by 1993, and then was instrumental in negotiating the Pelindaba Treaty to create a nuclear-free zone in Africa.[34] This makes South Africa one of only a handful of countries that have voluntarily given up their nuclear weapons.[35]

According to Babbage,[36] there are three critical reasons why South Africa destroyed its arsenal: firstly, the threat-removal argument, namely, that following the end of the Cold War the very purpose of nuclear weapons to protect the apartheid regime was no longer necessary; secondly, that the arsenal served as 'part of a blackmail strategy to force the United States to come to South Africa's aid should its territories come under attack', was obviated once the democratisation process started and thirdly, that nuclear weapons were relinquished in order to ensure that the ANC would not inherit these weapons of mass destruction when they came to power; and

33   Schoeman M, 'South Africa as an emerging middle power', *African Security Review*, 9, 3, 2000, p. 51.

34   Van Wyk J, 'No nukes in Africa: South Africa, the denuclearisation of Africa and the Pelindaba Treaty', *Historia*, 57, 2, 2012, pp. 265, 270; Purkitt HE & SF Burgess, *South Africa's Weapons of Mass Destruction*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005, p. 178.

35   Ashraf S, 'Four fast facts on denuclearisation', *The Global Observatory*, 14 June 2018, https://theglobalobservatory.org/2018/06/four-fast-facts-denuclearization/ (accessed 31 July 2018).

36   Babbage M, 'White elephants: Why South Africa gave up the bomb and the implications for nuclear non-proliferation policy', *Journal of Public and International Affairs*, 15, Spring 2004, pp. 2–3.

thereby preventing what the de Klerk government feared might be their 'irrational use'.[37]

Since the advent of the democratic dispensation, South Africa has often restated its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation, with the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) declaring in its 15-year review in 2009 that it had played a 'distinguished' role in the area of disarmament and arms control.[38] Graham[39] notes that South Africa certainly was actively engaged through its membership of and participation in several non-proliferation and disarmament forums, but that the results of its participation are somewhat mixed. For example, it has faced criticism for abstaining from votes at the UN on international arrangements to protect non-nuclear weapons states against the use or threat of nuclear weapons for a seven-year period; and consistently supporting the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation countries against Israel.

5.2   Environmental security

Environmental security may not have been considered a threat under traditional security agendas. However, it is now receiving growing attention on the international stage, given the interrelationship between environmental security and human security, and therefore ultimately also national security. Environmental degradation and its impacts raise domestic concerns, but there is also well-founded unease over the potential of environmental risks to lead to resource scarcity, which, in turn, could cause violence between states.[40]

South Africa's engagement in environmental security concerns has notably occurred around climate change. This has been predicated on its recourse to mega-events which strategically enables it to move itself from the periphery to the centre of key issues on the climate agenda. The rationale was to score quick foreign policy wins through the positive public relations of hosting the event, with the added benefit of generating income. In 2011, Durban played host to the 17th annual Conference of Parties (COP) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. This became known as the African COP, due to the location but also

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37   Purkitt HE, Burgess SF & P Liberman, 'South Africa's nuclear decisions', *International Security*, 27, 1, Summer 2002, p. 190.

38   Graham S, 2016, *op. cit.*, pp. 122, 128.

39   *Ibid.*, pp. 129, 131, 156–58.

40   Stolz A, 'Official Views on the Environment and Security in South Africa, 2007–2012: A Case of Securitisation?', unpublished MSS mini-dissertation, University of Pretoria, 2014, pp. 23–4.

because of the potential for Africa, under South Africa's leadership, 'to steer the debate on a global climate change regime',[41] despite the country curiously opposing the inclusion of climate change on the UNSC's agenda during its 2007-2008 term.[42]

South Africa again argued that other bodies would be better suited to address this challenge by taking the view that climate change does not fall within the mandate of the UNSC,[43] which sadly, is a short-sighted outlook. Environmental challenges are 'threat multipliers' and are increasingly being viewed as having grave consequences for global peace and security. As such, these fall within the purview of the Security Council. However, Bischoff[44] notes that South Africa again sided with China and Russia in opposing including climate change on the UNSC agenda, despite having supported the fight against climate change at a G8 summit earlier in the same year.

South Africa's support for exclusion of these issues seems like a strategic mistake; it has effectively let the developing world down which faces the brunt of climate change related impacts. Climate change has caused migration and competition over ever-scarcer resources, while also facilitating the spread of disease. The rise in ongoing extreme weather events alongside warnings from the scientific community offer South Africa the evidence it needs to argue these are issues that the 'permanent-five' cannot ignore. It is encouraging, therefore, that the Security Council hosted an open debate in January 2019 to examine the concrete impact of climate change on global peace and security, where the focus was on practical steps required to diminish the effects of climate change on global warming.[45] The debate, attended by 70 member countries, resolved to focus on three areas:

- developing stronger analytical capacity to promote integrated risk assessment frameworks;
- collecting stronger and better evidence for good practices on climate risk prevention and management; and
- building and reinforcing partnerships to leverage existing capacities within and outside the UN system.

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41   Otto L, 'The African COP: What is the significance of its outcome for Africa?', *African Security Review*, 21, 2, 2012, p. 88.

42   Serrão O, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

43   UN, 'Security Council holds first-ever debate on impact of climate change on peace, security, hearing over 50 speakers', Press Release, 17 April 2007, https://www.un.org/press/en/2007/sc9000.doc.htm (accessed 19 January 2019).

44   Bischoff P, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

45   Deen T, 'How devastating is climate change for world peace and security?', *Inter Press Service*, 13 February 2019.

However, South Africa's movement on issues around climate and sustainability are slow if considered in terms of implementing policy that takes account of concerns expressed through platforms such as the regular COPs. Despite the lauded successes of South Africa's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme, some suggest that its embrace of renewable energies has been more platitudinous than real.[46] South Africa has been slow to mandate recycling under law; has a poor record of water management, despite the original progressive character of South African water law; and still relies heavily on 'dirty' industries such as mining.[47] Indeed, South Africa's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions are coming under increasing scrutiny since it is one of the worst performers under the Paris Convention's benchmarks.

Realistically, South Africa cannot be expected to rapidly change its policies with respect to its energy matrix or placing limits on its extractive industries. This is because of the vested interest of political elites in these rent-seeking industries as well as South Africa's economic reliance on its mining sector and fossil dependence. In this regard, domestic realities are reflected in foreign policy positions. The increasing climate-induced vulnerability of the SADC region and various areas across Africa and other developing countries provide compelling reasons for South Africa to rethink its approach to mitigation and adaptation as a matter of urgency. Ironically, the country has some of the best technologies in meteorology and for anticipating changes in climate patterns. This could be put to better service as part of South Africa's contribution to developing a continental early warning mechanism.

5.3   Maritime security

As a critical part of the environmental mix, maritime security concerns have gained momentum over the last two decades, notably because of the threat of maritime terrorism following the 9/11 attacks.[48] However, these issues were properly thrust onto the international security agenda when Somali piracy began to threaten sea lines of communication, and thus the trade that traverses the Red Sea. This led to a coordinated response to diminish this menace by several world powers, including the United

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46   Altieri K & S Keen, 'The cost of air pollution in South Africa', IGC (International Growth Centre), https://www.theigc.org/blog/the-cost-of-air-pollution-in-south-africa/ (accessed 6 August 2018).

47   Smith B, 'South Africa: Environmental issues, policies and clean technology', AZoCleantech, 30 July 2015, https://www.azocleantech.com/article.aspx?ArticleID =561 (accessed 6 August 2018).

48   Amirell SE, 'Global maritime security studies: The rise of a geopolitical area of policy and research', *Security Journal*, 29, 2, 2016, p. 283.

States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, China and India, with focus later shifting to West Africa and Southeast Asia.

It was the threat of Somali pirates 'ballooning' southwards toward the Mozambique Channel that propelled South Africa into action beyond its previous involvement, which was limited to statements of support for those who were battling piracy. In 2012 South Africa entered into a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mozambique and Tanzania under the auspices of SADC, to cooperate through joint patrolling, information-sharing, surveillance and so on. In April 2012, the trio thwarted a pirate attack off the coast of Tanzania. This has been the most concrete action in the realm of maritime security, aside from the usual naval exercises and training efforts that navies habitually participate in.[49] Its participation in the IBSAMAR Exercise which is a maritime cooperation component within the India-Brazil-South Africa grouping (IBSA) falls into this category.

But, it has become evident that maritime security extends far beyond piracy and involves a plethora of issues that dovetail with economic development trajectories and concerns for the environment, many of which play out in some way at sea. This is perhaps best reflected at a platform level, where South Africa has been involved in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), becoming its chair in October 2017. Its key priorities for its term included: maritime safety and security in the region; improving resilience and responses for disaster risk management; and promoting sustainable and responsible fisheries management and development.[50] Benkenstein[51] argues that, since South Africa has the hard and soft naval infrastructure of fleets and skills, these priority areas 'play to the country's strengths and provide opportunities to leverage existing capacity and expertise' but adds that the real value-add for South Africa would have been the opportunity to reinforce the organisation's institutional structure and procedures. Walker[52] adds that South Africa needs to work to generate regional buy-in in the Indian Ocean region to be able to improve the IORA's policy and operational architecture, especially since the Indian Ocean has become an area of increasing geopolitical interest by the major powers.

This agenda hints at areas in which South Africa's foreign policy can bloom, and where Pretoria can slot itself into a continental and sub-

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49   Otto L, 2014, *op. cit.*, pp. 30–31.
50   Benkenstein A, 'South Africa's Indian Ocean Rim Association Legacy: A More Inclusive and Open IORA', Policy Briefing 175. Johannesburg: SAIIA, 2018, pp. 1, 3.
51   *Ibid.*, p. 3.
52   Walker T, 'New links to Indian Ocean Rim can bolster Africa's blue economy', *ISS Africa*, 24 October 2017, https://issafrica.org/iss-today/new-links-to-indian-ocean-rim-can-bolster-africas-blue-economy (accessed 7 August 2018).

regional leadership position on a multifaceted policy area with international implications. Such maritime activism could have direct benefits for South Africa's domestic imperatives of growth and development through developing opportunities in the blue economy.

6   Implications for foreign policy

South Africa's main challenge going forward is to restore its international credentials as a trusted interlocutor and good citizen in the context of a depreciating foreign policy currency, especially as this became much more pronounced during the Zuma years. This takes on added urgency since the country has to now strategically navigate its way between the modern world of geopolitics *and* the post-modern world of images and influence.[53] Consequently, the complexity of the terrain referred to here will require that it continues to play an influential and consequential leadership role on the global stage that is normatively defined and ethically driven. However, this must be balanced by a healthy dose of pragmatism, especially with regard to: a careful definition and understanding of its capacity to influence global security concerns; where and with whom it can strike appropriate alliances concerning issue- and platform-based engagements; and crucially, what kinds of human and material resources it has at its disposal to do so. This endeavour is rendered even more difficult by the increase in the number of international institutions; growth in the scope, range and intrusiveness of global rules and norms; and greater demands for collective action placed on the UN to deal with an expanding raft of global problems and concerns.

South Africa's 2011 white paper on foreign policy is titled *Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu.* As part of its own nation-building and democratic transformation processes, the white paper underscores the importance of meeting international expectations for 'South Africa to play a leading role in championing the values of human rights, democracy, reconciliation and the eradication of poverty and underdevelopment'.[54] However, under the Zuma presidency (and some may argue this was the case under the Mbeki presidency also) there was a drift away from the normative foundations of foreign policy into a crude instrumentalism characterised by diplomatic ceremonialism and unprincipled pragmatism while on the domestic front we have witnessed a descent into a patrimonial and predatory type of politics that has severely damaged the fabric of its nascent democracy.[55]

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53   Le Pere G, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–115.
54   South Africa, DIRCO, 2011, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
55   Le Pere G, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–115.

While the moral infrastructure of South Africa's foreign policy is an Afro-centric one, its third tenure on the UN Security Council is an opportunity for it to address pressing levels of human vulnerability which arise from this audit of security concerns, as well as others addressed in this volume. This was already expressed in the white paper on defence of 1996: 'security is an all-encompassing condition in which the individual citizens live in freedom, peace and safety; participate fully in the process of governance; enjoy the protection of fundamental rights; have access to resources and basic necessities of life; and inhabit an environment which is not detrimental to their health and well-being'.[56] The extent to which non-military threats have become 'securitised' provides South Africa with an opportunity to use the platform of the Security Council as an advocate for the human dimensions that are expressed in the 'freedoms' alluded to, and then build on that as part of a revitalised foreign policy once its third term at the UNSC concludes.

This clearly speaks to the R2P doctrine, which seems largely to have lost its value despite the unanimity with which it was adopted in 2005. Even though R2P has become controversial, the essential principles which underpin R2P still remain relevant, especially the freedom from fear, want, and natural hazards. For example, the UNSC passed Resolution 2417 in May 2018, condemning the starving of civilians and denial of humanitarian access as tactics of warfare. As such, South Africa could certainly work to reanimate the spirit of R2P, whether under that specific banner or not, as part of a foreign policy rooted in human rights concerns and the promotion of human security. South Africa has de facto promoted this principle by playing a major role in peacekeeping and supporting UN missions in Africa. It can certainly do more by ensuring that the R2P doctrine becomes more firmly embedded in the African Peace and Security Architecture. In this regard, Pretoria would do well to initiate another defence white paper process based on the changing global security threat complex and which consequently, should set out a principled logic of what it considers to be priority responses. This must include how it will act in concert with African and developing countries, partners of the North, and through relevant multilateral bodies, particularly the UN.

South Africa is the only African member of the G20 which is a mix of seven developed countries and 13 emerging powers with great convening authority. The G20 has recently become more concerned with matters of global security governance and how it can support the formal rules

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56   South Africa, Department of Defence, 'Defence in a Democracy: White Paper on National Defence for the Republic of South Africa', May 1996, p. 6, http://www. dod.mil.za/documents/WhitePaperonDef/whitepaper%20on%20defence1996.pdf (accessed 2 April 2020).

and norms of peace and security at the level of the UN.[57] This is another platform that South Africa can use to advance ideational agenda-setting on security matters, especially relating to terrorism, transnational crime, cybersecurity, and anti-corruption as far as these affect the stability and functioning of the global financial system. The comparative advantage of the G20 resides in its diversity of systemically significant countries which have the collective capacity to respond to the security dilemmas referred to above. In addition, there are also regional dimensions in East and Southern Africa which should be of concern to South Africa. These include the nexus between crime, commodities, and conflict; money and asset laundering; the growing transnational trade in narcotics; and the trafficking of small arms and light weapons.

As the only African member of the G20 and the BRICS grouping, South Africa can help to shape the security agenda of the Security Council where the bulk of its deliberations are taken up with African security issues. In addition, it is regularly invited to G7 summits such as that held in Biarritz, France in 2019; and is also the only African country which enjoys strategic partnerships with the EU and China. In this regard, South Africa could enhance the interface between the G20, the UN, and the African Peace and Security Architecture based on Chapter VII of the UN Charter which deals with the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security. This could be accomplished through informal caucusing with other African members on the UNSC to develop an issue-based agenda of common concerns. There is also synergy between the BRICS and formal management of global peace and security. For example, the 10th BRICS Summit held in South Africa in July 2018 affirmed the importance of strengthening multilateralism and reforming global governance as well as improving and consolidating BRICS cooperation in international peace and security.

There have been concerns about the retrenchment of multilateralism as an anchor of South Africa's foreign policy.[58] The white paper defines the terrain of active multilateralism based on the 'political will of countries to honour their obligations under international law and commitments agreed to in multilateral institutions'.[59] However, the decision to withdraw from the Rome Statute and the ICC directly contradicts these noble sentiments. This decision must come in for urgent review for two reasons: it would help restore South Africa's normative credentials in promoting human rights and would help to strengthen the shaky foundations of global governance of which the embryonic and evolving ICC has become an integral part.

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57   Kirton J, *G20 Governance for a Globalised World*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishers, 2013.
58   Le Pere G, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–115.
59   South Africa, DIRCO, 2011, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

However, we should not ignore the normative role that South Africa could play in addressing non-proliferation, weapons of mass destruction, transnational crime, climate resilience, and cybersecurity. This will require greater levels of activism in institutions where these multilateral concerns are addressed by using its convening authority and previous experience of building and participating in coalitions.

Maritime security should also be a major item on South Africa's foreign policy radar. Its participation in the IORA and IBSAMAR has been noted, but there is now more of an imperative to focus on the marine ecosystem, especially rising sea levels and the economy of the marine industry where it has a direct interest (referred to as the 'blue economy'). New frontiers of marine resource development are being explored, including bio-prospecting, seabed mineral mining, and 'blue energy' production from wind, waves, tidal, and thermal sources,[60] while maritime security can also be seen to intersect increasingly with environmental security and issues linked to climate change. Improved marine security thus becomes more important not only for advancing the socio-economic interests of developing countries but especially those small island developing states and coastal countries. The consequences of climate change and rising sea levels directly expose these countries to damage that is life threatening and irreversible.

In this regard, South Africa could certainly play a more proactive role in strengthening the application of the letter and spirit of a number of instruments related to maritime security, such as the International Ship and Port Facility Security (or ISPS) Code, which is an amendment to the Safety of Life at Sea Convention. This is a measure that provides guidance in terms of portside measures that authorities can put in place to ensure security on vessels at sea and in port; and in so doing prevent incidents of armed robbery, illegal migration, smuggling, and terrorism. South Africa has recently been cited as a transit point for illegal migrants who make their way to other destinations, often by stowing away,[61] while the country is also either an origin of or transit point from which a variety of illegal goods are smuggled, ranging from drugs to animal products such as rhino horn.

Finally, much work must be done to ensure that DIRCO becomes the primary institutional steward for shaping and managing this strategic security agenda. A useful exercise could be revisiting the policy and

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60   Pauli G, *The Blue Economy Version 2.0*. New Delhi: Academic Foundation, 2017.
61   Senu AF, 'The Global Assemblage of Multi-Centred Stowaway Governance', unpublished thesis, Cardiff University, 2018, https://orca.cf.ac.uk/109156/2/ Senu%2C%20Amaha%202018.%20The%20Global%20Assemblage%20of%20Multi-Centred%20Stowaway%20Governance.pdf (accessed 2 April 2020).

operational terms of the international relations, peace and security cluster which involves coordinating the work of several departments and agencies at official and ministerial level in developing and implementing 'apex priorities'.

In recent years, DIRCO has suffered from a troubled institutional profile, weak managerial and political leadership, and deficient human and analytical capacity. The proposed establishment of the South African Diplomatic Academy under the auspices of the Foreign Service Act will go a long way to addressing these deficits. This is especially relevant since DIRCO projects itself in the white paper as 'the principal adviser on foreign policy, and lead coordinator and manager of South Africa's international relations and cooperation'.[62]

7   Policy considerations

Norm entrepreneurship: At a time of increasing turbulence in international relations and declining legitimacy of multilateral institutions, norms are becoming more and not less important in shaping rules and standards of behaviour as well as for defining requisite responses to global security threats, issues and problems. This normative orthodoxy has increasingly been taken up and supported by middle powers as developed countries have retreated from their international obligations. Since its transition for example, South Africa has focused its foreign policy priorities on human rights, democracy, peace and security, sustainable development, and multilateral cooperation. In the current age of interdependence, societies, countries, and regions have been drawn together more than ever before as 'communities of fate' where dealing with military and non-military threats to security has become a primary imperative. The normative integrity and legitimate social purpose of an eroding multilateral order must be restored if such threats are to be properly managed and addressed, especially regarding basic human welfare. This renewed emphasis on norms should be informed by the white paper with respect to South Africa playing a '… leading role in championing human rights, democracy, reconciliation and the eradication of poverty and underdevelopment'.[63]

Norm definition and promotion should become an essential component of South Africa's international peace and security diplomacy, bearing in mind the tension between what is ethical and what is practical.

High-level diplomatic skills: The complex and changing global security and institutional environment referred to will require great diplomatic

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62   South Africa, DIRCO, 2011, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
63   *Ibid.*, p. 4.

flexibility, adaptability, and agility which are compounded by a high quotient of risks and unforeseen circumstances. The practice of security diplomacy in an infinitely elastic context will require great responsibility in identifying and promoting opportunities for building and promoting certain norms as well as developing the resilience to meet the challenges that go with these. The ability to prioritise in terms of means and ends will be key in the conduct of foreign policy, especially in defining the balance between idealist aspirations and pragmatic imperatives in global security matters.

The conduct of South Africa's global peace and security diplomacy should draw on the 2019 report of the Foreign Policy Review Panel. Pertinent recommendations are made regarding developing a diplomatic corps that better understands the drivers of current international relations, with a focus on peace and security management at the levels of the AU and UN. There is an emphasis on diplomats' ability to interpret, adapt and innovate related to international norms and principles; their capacity to defend principles of multilateralism and international law; and knowledge of how to advance South Africa's national interest in Africa and globally.

Africa and South agenda: South Africa has located its key foreign policy principles and practices in its own neighbourhood of Southern Africa, the continent, and developing countries. The substantive matters addressed in this chapter have great relevance for this nexus and it is precisely at this interface where South Africa should carefully reflect how the issues identified in our considerations above will have an impact on its African and South agenda. An insecure environment has implications for growth and development; trade and market integration; regional stability and political unity; and the management and resolution of conflict.

South Africa's multilateral peace and security engagement and activity should be conducted in a manner that strengthens the representation, voice, and effectiveness of African and developing countries. Its background and experience on issues and platforms could be put into good effect by raising substantive concerns with greater clarity and conviction; and by providing stronger and better institutional leadership at the UN, the AU, and IORA.

Review process: The changing dynamics described above will require rethinking and reviewing the analytical, conceptual, and policy templates in South Africa's global peace and security focus beyond Africa since these are no longer fit-for-purpose. We have evaluated various dynamics arising in the global peace and security landscape, including evolving security dilemmas; and the issue and platform modalities which have informed South Africa's external peace and security engagements. Taken together, these constitute an inordinately complex 'eco-system' of cause and effect that is not static but rapidly changing. A review process can therefore

stimulate new ways of thinking and fresh appraisals for imposing order on this complexity in terms of South Africa's essential national interest, capacity, and resources as well as helping to develop priorities to scale and defining the necessary policy parameters.

DIRCO should initiate a fresh white paper process which takes account of the key issues identified in this chapter, but which could also be instructive for developing the framework for a review of defence and security related matters.

8   Conclusion

This chapter is suggestive of a fast-changing global peace and security landscape. There is a widening ambit of 'securitisation' which has eclipsed parochial definitions of military, economic, and political security to now include human, societal, and environmental dimensions. This consideration comes up against an anti-globalisation backlash as manifested in rising nationalist and primordial sentiments across many countries. Nevertheless, we argue that the 'de-borderisation' of security and its transnational character continues to reduce security as the *domaine résérve* of the nation state and hence, there remains an overwhelming need for approaches and methodologies that are truly regional and global in their scope, reach, and character.

South Africa has registered gains in both its platform and issue engagements but there has been a deviation from pressing these gains into greater normative advantage, especially in the Zuma years. It now has an opportunity to 'reset' its peace and security agenda, but within the purview of a stronger calculus of diplomatic engagement and norm representation that will bring the country back to the foundational principles of its foreign policy. In this chapter, we have presented an audit of issues and platforms where South Africa has been active and have set out elements of a threat complex that will have an impact on global peace and security. In the policy considerations, we have proposed how South Africa could possibly craft responsive and proactive positions arising from current and emerging peace and security dilemmas.

To repeat, the global environment for managing peace and security is more volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. To deal with this environment of 'increasingly contradictory realities' will require that South Africa have significantly sharpened diplomatic instruments and political tools if the country is to reclaim the normative internationalism for which it was once renowned at home and abroad.