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**THE ABSENCE OF COMMON VALUES AND  
FAILURE OF COMMON SECURITY  
IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, 1992-2003**

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## Crisis States Programme

### **The absence of common values and failure of common security in Southern Africa, 1992-2003\***

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*This paper seeks to contribute to an inquiry into the factors that affect the viability and efficacy of regional organisations in Africa as peacemaking and security forums. The main aim of the paper is to explain the Southern African Development Community's limited success in peacemaking and in its efforts to establish a common security regime. Three major problems are discussed: the absence of common values among member states, which inhibits the development of trust, institutional cohesion, common policies and unified responses to crises; the reluctance of states to surrender sovereignty to a security regime that encompasses binding rules and decision-making; and the economic and administrative weakness of states. These are all national problems that cannot be solved at the regional level. Paradoxically, the challenge of common security in Southern Africa is less a regional than a national challenge.*

#### **Introduction**

The United Nations (UN) encourages the involvement of regional organisations in preventing and resolving violent conflict.<sup>1</sup> The assumption is that these organisations build trust and common values among member states and are well placed to deal with conflict in their own neighbourhood. This assumption is not justified by the African experience. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have struggled to develop common values and to prevent and resolve inter- and intra-state conflict. This case study of SADC seeks to contribute to an inquiry into the factors that affect their viability and efficacy as peacemaking and security forums.<sup>2</sup> The paper also seeks to fill a gap in the academic literature on international security, which frequently ignores Southern Africa.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Article 52 of the Charter of the United Nations; Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace*, New York: United Nations, 1992, paras 64-65; United Nations, 'Prevention of Armed Conflict. Report of the Secretary-General', United Nations document A/55/985-S/2001/574, 7 June, 2001, paras 137-142; and United Nations, *The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa. Report of the United Nations Secretary-General to the Security Council*, New York: United Nations, 1998, paras 20-21.

<sup>2</sup> For a critical review of ECOWAS, see Clement E. Adibe, 'Muddling Through: An Analysis of the ECOWAS Experience in Conflict Management in West Africa', in Laakso (2002), pp.103-169. For a critical review of the OAU, see Monde Muyangwa & Margaret A. Voigt, *An Assessment of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, 1993-2000*, New York: International Peace Academy, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> For example, between 1998 and 2003 no articles on regional security arrangements in Southern Africa appeared in the journals *International Security*, *Survival* or *Security Dialogue*.

In 1992 SADC was established as a regional organisation<sup>4</sup> with a mandate to promote economic integration, poverty alleviation, peace, security and the evolution of common political values and institutions.<sup>5</sup> There were great expectations that the demise of apartheid and the Cold War would usher in a period of sustained stability and development at national and regional levels. Yet over the subsequent decade the SADC region remained wracked by a high level of conflict that included civil wars in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Angola, state repression in Zimbabwe, and violence in a number of other countries. SADC was largely ineffectual in these situations, distinguished less by its peacemaking efforts than by its fractious internal quarrels. The formation of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security – a common security regime whose stipulated functions include the prevention and resolution of inter- and intra-state conflict – was itself bedevilled by acrimonious disputes among member states over a ten-year period. Perversely, a vehicle intended to promote confidence had exactly the opposite effect.

Many analysts attribute the difficulty in establishing the Organ to disagreements over its status and structure or to competition and animosity between South Africa and Zimbabwe.<sup>6</sup> These diagnoses are superficial and incomplete because they focus only on the manifestations of deeper problems. The primary aim of this case study is to identify and explore the underlying problems that have inhibited the development of the Organ and prevented SADC from playing a useful peacemaking role. It is relevant in this regard that the newly formed African Union views SADC and other sub-regional mechanisms for conflict resolution on the continent as an integral part of its security architecture.<sup>7</sup> A secondary aim of the paper is to refute the claim that Southern Africa is moving in the direction of a “security community”.<sup>8</sup>

Three substantial problems have inhibited the creation of an effective security regime. First and most importantly, there is an absence of common values among member states. There are two key lines of division in this regard: between democratic and authoritarian tendencies in the domestic policies of states, and between pacific and militarist orientations in their foreign policies. As in the case of Europe, a viable regional organisation with a political and security mandate (hereafter “regional organisation”) can institutionalise the common values of its members, develop common policies and contribute to peace and stability.<sup>9</sup> The main

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<sup>4</sup> In the terminology of the UN, SADC is a “sub-regional organisation”. It describes itself as a “regional organisation”, the term used in this paper.

<sup>5</sup> In 2003 the members of SADC were Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Mark Malan, ‘Regional Power Politics under Cover of SADC – Running Amok with a Mythical Organ’, *Institute for Security Studies Paper*, 35 (October 1998); Asher Walter Tapfumaneyi (Lt. Col.), ‘Regional Security Cooperation in Southern Africa: A View from Zimbabwe’, *Global Dialogue*, 4:2 (August 1999), pp.23-26; Balefi Tsie, ‘Regional Security in Southern Africa: Whither the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security?’, *Global Dialogue*, 3:3 (December 1998), pp.8-10; and Cedric de Conig, ‘Breaking the SADC Organ Impasse: Report of a Seminar on the Operationalisation of the SADC Organ’, *ACCORD (African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes) Occasional Paper*, 6 (1999).

<sup>7</sup> See Article 16 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, 2002.

<sup>8</sup> Writers who make this claim include Naison Ngoma, ‘SADC: Towards a Security Community?’, *African Security Review*, 12:3 (2003), pp.17-28; Maxi van Aardt, ‘The Emerging Security Framework in Southern Africa: Regime or Community?’, *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 19:1 (May 1997), pp.1-30; and Fredrik Söderbaum, ‘The New Regionalism in Southern Africa’, *Politeia*, 17:3 (1998), pp.79-80. Söderbaum limits his claim to inter-governmental relations.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Sten Rynning, ‘Providing Relief or Promoting Democracy? The European Union and Crisis Management’, *Security Dialogue*, 32:1 (2001), pp.87-101; and Connie Peck, ‘The Role of Regional Organizations in Preventing and Resolving Conflict’, in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson & Pamela Aall (eds.), *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, Washington, DC: United States

argument of this paper, however, is that the viability of such organisations depends in the first instance on the existence of common values. In developing this argument I distinguish between the external and internal logic of a regional organisation. The external logic, which is strong in Southern Africa, refers to the objective conditions that make the organisation a beneficial venture in the assessment of member states. The internal logic, which is absent in the case of SADC, refers to the normative congruence in the policies of member states that enables these states to engage in close political and security co-operation. In the absence of sufficient congruence, states are unable to resolve or transcend their major disputes, achieve cohesion and act with common purpose in crisis situations.

The second major problem is that SADC states are loathe to surrender a measure of sovereignty to a security regime that encompasses binding rules and the possibility of interference in domestic affairs. This reluctance stems from the political weakness of states and the lack of common values, mutual trust and a shared vision of the regime. The third critical problem is that the region is characterised by small economies, underdevelopment and weak administrative capacity, which undermine the effectiveness of all SADC's forums and programmes. I conclude that the problems relating to common values, sovereignty and weak states cannot be solved at the regional level. The capacity and orientation of a regional organisation derive from the capacity and orientation of its members. The challenge of common security in Southern Africa is thus less a regional than a national challenge.

In the discourse of SADC, "security" has different meanings depending on the context. It refers variously to stability within and between states, the security of states and of people, and the military and non-military dimensions of security. "Common security" is the conceptual platform of the Organ and reflects the Palme Commission's thesis that states are interdependent and more likely to obtain security through political co-operation than military competition.<sup>10</sup> A "security regime" can be defined as a set of principles, rules, norms and decision-making procedures that constitute institutionalised co-operation and permit states to exercise restraint in the belief that others will reciprocate.<sup>11</sup> According to Karl Deutsch and his colleagues, a "security community" exists where a group has attained a level of integration and sense of community strong enough for its members to enjoy a "real assurance" that their disputes will be settled other than through fighting.<sup>12</sup>

The paper is organised as follows: Section 2 presents the key institutional developments relating to SADC's focus on peace and security between 1992 and 2003; Section 3 examines SADC's response to high-intensity conflict; and Section 4 explores the reasons for the impasse around the Organ. It should be noted that research on the Organ is constrained by the paucity and uninformative nature of official documents in the public domain. SADC states place a premium on maintaining a posture of unity and solidarity, and they are overly sensitive about the confidentiality of security and defence issues. They are therefore

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Institute of Peace Press, 2001, pp.561-583. For a general assessment of the efforts of regional organisations to develop institutionalised norms and maintain peace and security, see Peck (2001).

<sup>10</sup> Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, *Common Security: A Programme for Disarmament*, London: Pan, 1982. For a review of the literature on common security, see Andrew Butfoy, *Common Security and Strategic Reform: A Critical Analysis*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997.

<sup>11</sup> See Robert Jervis, 'Security Regimes', in Stephen D. Krasner (ed.), *International Regimes*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983, pp.173-194; and Stephen D. Krasner, 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables', in Krasner (1983), pp. 1-21.

<sup>12</sup> Karl W. Deutsch, *et al.*, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957, pp.5-7. See further Emanuel Adler & Michael Barnett (eds.), *Security Communities*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

disinclined to disclose their decisions and disagreements on these issues. SADC communiqués on the Organ and on conflicts in the region consequently tend to be sanitised and misleading.<sup>13</sup> The ensuing research difficulties are mitigated to some extent by my involvement in official efforts to set up a common security regime in Southern Africa.<sup>14</sup>

## **Institutional Developments on Peace and Security**

### ***The era of promise, 1992-1994***

In 1980 the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) was formed with the objectives of promoting regional co-operation through joint development projects, mobilising development assistance and reducing the economic dependence of member states on apartheid South Africa.<sup>15</sup> In August 1992, as the era of apartheid and the Cold War drew to a close, the members of SADCC dissolved the organisation and concluded a treaty establishing SADC as an international body with a legal persona. SADC differs from SADCC in three major respects: it includes the regional power, South Africa; its primary goal goes beyond economic co-ordination to encompass regional integration; and its mandate extends to the political and security spheres.

The decision to replace SADCC with SADC and broaden the organisation's mandate and goal was based on four considerations.<sup>16</sup> First, there was deep concern about the growing marginalisation of sub-Saharan Africa. In light of the emerging global trend towards regional integration, it was hoped that a process of this kind would strengthen the position of SADC states in international trade and political affairs. Second, Southern Africa was stricken by a host of socio-economic problems that transcended borders, afflicted all states and could not be addressed adequately at the national level. Third, the ending of the Cold War had led to the cessation of Superpower contestation in the region, an attenuation of ideology as a source of tension between and within states, and widespread acceptance of multi-party political systems. Many of the protracted historical conflicts had consequently been resolved or were in the process of being settled: Namibia had attained independence; Cuban and South African troops had withdrawn from Angola; a cease-fire had been reached in Mozambique; and democratic elections were held for the first time in several countries. Most importantly, the demise of apartheid in South Africa had removed the major source of regional strife and created the possibility of an inclusive regional body.<sup>17</sup> Fourth, these positive trends had not obviated the need for a forum for conflict prevention and resolution. The civil war in Angola resumed in 1992 and other transitions to democracy were still fragile. At its inception, SADC declared that institutional arrangements were required to ensure political stability and mutual security as critical components of regional co-operation and integration.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> For examples of this tendency, see Asher Walter Tapfumaneyi (Lt. Col.), 'The SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security: Interpreting the Decision of the Maputo 1997 SADC Summit', *ACCORD Occasional Paper*, 9 (1999).

<sup>14</sup> I served as a part-time advisor on regional security to the SADC Executive Secretary in 1994-6; the South African Deputy Minister of Defence in 1994-1999; and the Foreign Minister of Swaziland in 1999-2000.

<sup>15</sup> See Kato Lambrechts, 'The SADC's Origins', in *The IGD Guide to the Southern African Development Community*, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2001, pp. 22-27.

<sup>16</sup> See SADCC, *Theme Document of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference*, Maputo, January 1992; and *Towards the Southern African Development Community: A Declaration by the Heads of State or Government of Southern African States*, Windhoek, 1992.

<sup>17</sup> On the destruction wrought by South Africa's policy of regional destabilisation in the 1980s, see Joseph Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbours*, London: Catholic Institute for International Relations & David Curry, 1986.

<sup>18</sup> *Towards the Southern African Development Community*, pp. 9-10.

Article 5 of the Treaty of the Southern African Development Community of 1992 (hereafter the “SADC Treaty”) provides that the organisation’s objectives include self-sustaining development, economic growth and poverty alleviation; the evolution of common political values and institutions; the promotion and defence of peace and security; complementarity between national and regional strategies and programmes; the maximisation of productive employment and utilisation of resources; and sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment. Article 4 of the Treaty stipulates that SADC and its members must act in accordance with the principles of sovereign equality of member states; solidarity, peace and security; human rights, democracy and the rule of law; equity, balance and mutual benefit; and peaceful settlement of disputes.

The highest decision-making body of SADC is the Summit, comprising heads of state or government. The Chair of the Summit rotates among member states. The Treaty also provides for a Council of Ministers to advise the Summit on overall policy and oversee the functioning of the organisation; a Tribunal to adjudicate disputes; an Executive Secretary appointed by the Summit; and a Secretariat that is located in Gaborone, Botswana. Article 22 of the Treaty requires member states to conclude protocols spelling out the objectives, scope and institutional means of co-operation and integration in seven designated sectors, one of which deals with peace and security.<sup>19</sup> Following approval by the Summit, the protocols must be ratified by member states. Up until 2001 co-ordination of the sectors, other than in the case of peace and security, was undertaken by individual states on a decentralised basis.

Between 1992 and 1994 the formulation of regional policy on peace and security was driven by the Secretariat. SADC’s 1993 *Framework and Strategy* document, prepared by the Secretariat, called for the forging of common political values based on democratic norms, the creation of a “non-militaristic security order” and the establishment of procedures for conflict avoidance, management and resolution. The document highlighted the need to address non-military sources of conflict and threats to human security, such as underdevelopment and abuse of human rights. The proposed strategies and mechanisms included a forum for mediation and arbitration; the ratification by states of key principles of international law; a non-aggression treaty; non-offensive defence doctrines; democratic civil-military relations; and reductions in military force levels and spending.<sup>20</sup>

The key event in this period was the Ministerial Workshop on Democracy, Peace and Security, convened by the Secretariat in July 1994 in Windhoek, Namibia. The workshop was attended by ministers, officials, parliamentarians and members of non-governmental organisations. It recommended to the Summit the adoption of the anti-militarist agenda outlined above, the preparation of a protocol on peace, security and political co-operation, the establishment of a SADC Sector on Conflict Resolution and Political Co-operation, and the creation of an independent human rights commission.<sup>21</sup> Subsequent to this workshop, parliamentarians and non-governmental organisations were excluded from official deliberations on regional security and in 1999 the Secretariat itself was excluded from the finalisation of the protocol governing the Organ.

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<sup>19</sup> Article 21 of the Treaty lists these sectors as food security, land and agriculture; infrastructure and services; industry, trade, investment and finance; human resources development, science and technology; natural resources and environment; social welfare, information and culture; and politics, diplomacy, international relations, peace and security.

<sup>20</sup> SADC, *Southern Africa: A Framework and Strategy for Building the Community*, Harare, January 1993, pp. 24-26.

<sup>21</sup> SADC Secretariat, ‘Workshop on Democracy, Peace and Security. Workshop Resolutions. Windhoek, Namibia, 11-16 July 1994’, unpublished document.

Unhappy with the Windhoek recommendations, the Frontline States coalition proposed the formation of a new entity, the Association of Southern African States (ASAS), to serve as the regional security body.<sup>22</sup> Whereas the SADC Sector was envisaged as a formal structure linked to the Secretariat, ASAS would function independently of the Secretariat and have an informal and flexible *modus operandi*.<sup>23</sup> In August 1994 the Summit approved the creation of a Sector on Politics, Diplomacy, International Relations, Defence and Security, and requested foreign ministers to harmonise the proposals of the Frontline States and the Windhoek workshop.<sup>24</sup> It appeared at the time that a consensus prevailed on the principles, objectives and strategies of the security forum and that the issues in contention were limited to its status, structure and procedures. In retrospect it is clear that consensus on the core values and methods had not been achieved. As discussed further below, many states did not in truth support the anti-militarist stance of the Secretariat and the democratic norms espoused in the SADC Treaty. Although the ASAS option was eventually rejected, antagonistic and recriminatory debates around the security body's status and structure persisted over the next seven years as manifestations of underlying political and strategic differences among member states.

In 1994 the Frontline States was dissolved and its Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) was reconstituted to include all the SADC countries. In the post-apartheid period the ISDSC's mandate has been to promote security and defence co-operation through sub-committees comprising ministers and officials responsible for defence, policing and intelligence.<sup>25</sup> The ISDSC has pursued this mandate mainly in respect of the armed forces and at a technical rather than a political level. Police collaboration has occurred principally through the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Co-operation Organisation (SARPPCO), which has functioned independently of SADC and the ISDSC.<sup>26</sup> The intelligence agencies prefer bilateral co-operation to multilateral forums.<sup>27</sup>

### ***The era of institutional conflict, 1995-2003***

At its annual meeting in 1995 the Summit was unable to resolve the disputes around the regional security forum. The deadlock was linked to Zimbabwe's insistence that ASAS should follow the tradition of the Frontline States and be chaired on a permanent basis by the longest-serving head of state in the region, namely President Mugabe; other countries preferred the option of a rotating chair.<sup>28</sup> Mugabe was reportedly piqued that his seniority and leading role in regional politics was being undercut by the emerging dominance of post-apartheid South Africa and the international stature of its new president, Nelson Mandela.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> The Frontline States coalition was established in 1976 with the initial aim of securing the liberation of Zimbabwe and a subsequent focus on Namibian independence and regional destabilisation by Pretoria. By the early 1990s its members included Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

<sup>23</sup> See Aziz Pahad, 'Regional Security in Southern Africa', *ISSUP (Institute for Strategic Studies, University of Pretoria) Bulletin*, 5/95 (1995).

<sup>24</sup> Pahad (1995), p.3.

<sup>25</sup> See Jakkie Cilliers, 'The Evolving Security Architecture in Southern Africa', *African Security Review*, 4:5 (1995), pp.41-45.

<sup>26</sup> See D.J.M. Bruce, 'The Role and Achievements of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Co-operation Organisation', *ISSUP Bulletin*, 4/98 (1998).

<sup>27</sup> Author's informal discussions with South African intelligence officers in 2000.

<sup>28</sup> Cilliers (1995), p.41.

<sup>29</sup> Cilliers (1995), p.41. See also Agostinho Zacarias, 'Redefining Security', in Mwesiga Baregu & Christopher Landsberg (eds.), *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges*, Boulder & London: Lynne Rienner, 2003, p.37.

In June 1996 the Summit launched the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. The official communiqué listed the body's principles and objectives, which were later included with only a few changes in the Organ protocol (see section 2.3 below).<sup>30</sup> The organisational arrangements were presented as follows: the Organ will operate at summit, ministerial and technical levels; it will function independently of other SADC structures; it will incorporate the ISDSC; its Chair will rotate annually among member states; and the Chair will serve on a Troika basis, meaning that he or she must act in consultation with the outgoing Chair and the incoming Chair for the following year. The Summit appointed Mugabe as the first Chair of the Organ.

The Summit's decisions generated a great deal of confusion and tension in subsequent years. This was partly because the launch of the Organ was premature. The *de jure* establishment of this body required a protocol approved by the Summit and ratified by two-thirds of the SADC states, a process that had not been completed by 2003. Nor, for some years, did the body exist *de facto*: none of its envisaged structures was set up, the ISDSC remained an independent forum, and the Organ Chair did not rotate annually and function on a Troika basis. Further, the decision that the Organ would operate at a summit level but independently of other SADC structures gave rise to the anomalous prospect of two separate entities at the level of heads of state being responsible for addressing conflict. South Africa argued that while this responsibility fell within the Organ's mandate, in terms of the SADC Treaty it was also a core function of SADC and therefore of the Summit.<sup>31</sup> During his tenure as the SADC Chair, Mandela became so exasperated with Mugabe's rival authority as the Chair of the Organ that he threatened to resign if the Organ were not made accountable to the Summit.<sup>32</sup>

A Zimbabwean official outlined the counter-argument as follows. The leaders of SADC had clearly intended to "create a parallel and independent structure from the SADC economic forum". It was therefore "mischievous to engage in superfluous legalese in a bid to imprison the SADC Organ in the SADC Treaty". Given South Africa's history, moreover, it was "morally incompetent to challenge the substance of the Treaty, or to invoke it in a manner that defeats its spirit and purpose".<sup>33</sup> The anomaly of two summits reflected Harare's view that SADC should focus on economic issues and that a revamped version of the Frontline States should be responsible for politics, defence and security. SADC was considered an inappropriate body to preside over sensitive security matters since it was funded by foreign donors.<sup>34</sup>

By the late 1990s it was also evident that SADC was polarised around incompatible pacific and militarist visions of the Organ. One camp, comprising Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Tanzania, viewed the Organ as a common security regime whose primary basis for multilateral co-operation and peacemaking would be political rather than military.<sup>35</sup> The other camp, comprising Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe, favoured a mutual defence pact and prioritised military co-operation and responses to conflict.<sup>36</sup> Mugabe stated that he foresaw

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<sup>30</sup> SADC, 'Communiqué: Summit of Heads of State or Governments of the Southern African Development Community (SADC)', Gaborone, 28 June 1996.

<sup>31</sup> See Horst Brammer, 'In Search of an Effective Regional Security Mechanism for Southern Africa', *Global Dialogue*, 4:2 (August 1999), pp.21-22.

<sup>32</sup> See Iden Wetherell, 'SADC Security Split Threatens', *Mail and Guardian*, 17-23 July 1998.

<sup>33</sup> Tapfumaneyi (1999a), pp.25-26.

<sup>34</sup> Tapfumaneyi (1999a), p.26.

<sup>35</sup> See Brammer (1999).

<sup>36</sup> See Tapfumaneyi (1999a).



the Organ developing into a “kind of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation for the region”.<sup>37</sup> In April 1999 Angola, the DRC, Namibia and Zimbabwe concluded a mutual defence pact without official notice to SADC.<sup>38</sup>

The Summit remained unable to resolve the Organ disputes at its meetings in 1998 and 1999.<sup>39</sup> In late 1999 Albert Shabangu, the Foreign Minister of Swaziland which held the rotating Chair of the ISDSC at the time, pursued the matter with a sense of purpose that had previously been lacking. In October 1999 and May 2000 he convened two extra-ordinary meetings of ISDSC ministers and SADC foreign ministers in order to finalise the Organ Protocol. The controversy around the status of the Organ was resolved in favour of this body being a SADC structure, subordinate and accountable to the SADC Summit. The pacific camp prevailed in the debate on the Organ’s strategic orientation but it was agreed that states would later conclude a regional defence pact.

In May 2000 the King of Swaziland presented the draft Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation to Mugabe in the latter’s capacity as the Chair of the Organ. In August 2001, after a further fifteen months of procrastination and behind-the-scenes wrangling, the Summit approved the Protocol at its meeting in Blantyre, Malawi, and appointed President Chissano of Mozambique as the new Chair of the Organ. The Summit also consolidated a far-reaching plan to restructure SADC by centralising its operations in the Secretariat.<sup>40</sup> The approval of the plan led to the amendment of the SADC Treaty. The revised Treaty reformulates SADC’s objectives, which are described as the Common Agenda of the organisation and include the promotion of “common political values, systems and other shared values which are transmitted through institutions which are democratic, legitimate and effective”.<sup>41</sup> The amended Treaty also provides for the Organ as an institution of SADC.<sup>42</sup> By the end of 2003, however, the Organ Protocol had not been ratified by a sufficient number of states to come into force.<sup>43</sup> In August 2003 the Summit approved the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ and the SADC Mutual Defence Pact. The Pact provides for defence co-operation and for collective action in response to an armed attack.

### ***The Organ Protocol***

The Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation stipulates the objectives and other features of the SADC Organ. It asserts that peace, security and strong political relations are critical factors in creating a conducive environment for regional co-operation and integration. Their achievement must be pursued through close co-operation on matters of politics, defence and security. Such co-operation must at all times promote the peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, conciliation, mediation or arbitration

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<sup>37</sup> Quoted in ‘Congo Wins Membership in Sudden Expansion of SADC’, *SouthScan*, 12:33, 12 September 1997, p.258.

<sup>38</sup> See Iden Wetherell, ‘Mugabe Forms New Defence Pact’, *Mail and Guardian*, 16-22 April 1999.

<sup>39</sup> For further details on the developments described thus far, see the articles cited in note 6 above.

<sup>40</sup> See Jan Isaksen & Elling N. Tjonneland, *Assessing the Restructuring of SADC – Positions, Policies and Progress*, Report of the Chr. Michelsen Institute, R 2001:6, December 2001.

<sup>41</sup> Article 5 of the Agreement Amending the Treaty of the Southern African Development Community, 2001.

<sup>42</sup> See Articles 9, 10 and 12 of the Agreement Amending the Treaty (2001).

<sup>43</sup> Article 21 of the Agreement Amending the Treaty (2001) provides that SADC protocols come into force after the deposit of the instruments of ratification by two-thirds of the member states. According to the website of the Institute for Security Studies ([www.iss.co.za](http://www.iss.co.za)) on 22 March 2004, as at 15 December 2003 the Protocol had been ratified by eight states and required one additional ratification to come into force.

Article 2 provides that the Organ's general objective is to promote peace and security in the region and that its specific objectives are as follows:

- protect the people and safeguard the development of the region against instability arising from the breakdown of law and order, intra- and inter-state conflict, and aggression;
- promote political co-operation among the State Parties and the evolution of common political values and institutions;
- develop common foreign policy approaches on issues of mutual concern and advance such policy collectively in international forums;
- promote regional co-ordination and co-operation on matters related to security and defence and establish appropriate mechanisms to this end;
- prevent, contain and resolve inter-and intra-state conflict by peaceful means;
- consider enforcement action in accordance with international law and as a matter of last resort where peaceful means have failed;
- promote the development of democratic institutions and practices within the territories of the State Parties and encourage the observance of universal human rights as provided for in the charters and conventions of the UN and the OAU;
- consider the development of a collective security capacity and conclude a Mutual Defence Pact to respond to external military threats;
- develop close co-operation between police and intelligence services in order to address cross border crime and promote a community based approach to domestic security;
- observe and encourage the State Parties to implement UN, African Union and other international conventions and treaties on arms control, disarmament and peaceful relations between states;
- develop the peacekeeping capacity of national defence forces and co-ordinate the participation of the State Parties in peacekeeping operations; and
- enhance regional capacity in respect of disaster management and co-ordination of international humanitarian assistance.

Articles 3 to 9 deal with structural arrangements. The Organ is an institution of SADC and will report to the Summit. There will be a Troika consisting of the Chair of the Organ, the outgoing Chair and the incoming Chair for the following year. The Summit will elect the Chair from among its members on a rotating basis and for a period of one year, provided that neither the Chair nor the Deputy Chair of the Summit may simultaneously be the Chair of the Organ. The Organ Chair will report to the Summit, consult with the Troika and be responsible for the overall policy direction of the Organ and the achievement of its objectives.

There will be a Ministerial Committee comprising ministers responsible for foreign affairs, defence, policing and intelligence from each of the State Parties. It will report to the Organ Chair and co-ordinate the work of the Organ. Reporting to the committee will be an Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee comprising foreign ministers, and an Inter-State Defence and Security Committee comprising ministers responsible for defence, policing and intelligence. The latter committee will assume the objectives, functions and structures of the pre-existing ISDSC. Each committee will be chaired by a minister from the same country as the Chair of the Organ. The SADC Secretariat will provide secretariat services to the Organ.

Article 11 deals with the Organ's international obligations and its functions, jurisdiction, methods and procedures. The State Parties must refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, other than for the legitimate purpose of individual or collective self-defence against an armed attack. The Organ and all parties to a dispute must manage and seek to resolve conflict by peaceful means. Where peaceful means of conflict resolution are unsuccessful, the Chair acting on the advice of the Ministerial Committee may recommend to the Summit that enforcement action be taken against one or more of the disputant parties. The Summit will resort to enforcement action only as a matter of last resort and only with the authorisation of the UN Security Council.

The Organ may seek to resolve any significant inter-state conflict between the State Parties or between a State Party and another state. Such conflict includes a conflict over territorial borders or natural resources; a conflict in which an act of aggression or other form of military force has occurred or been threatened; and a conflict that threatens peace and security in the region or in the territory of a State Party that is not a party to the conflict. The Organ may also seek to resolve any significant intra-state conflict within the territory of a State Party. Such conflict includes large-scale violence between sections of the population or between the state and sections of the population, including genocide, ethnic cleansing and gross violation of human rights; a military coup or other threat to the legitimate authority of a state; a condition of civil war or insurgency; and a conflict that threatens peace and security in the region or in the territory of another State Party.

### **SADC's Response to Conflict, 1995-2003**

#### ***Overview***

Between 1995 and 2003 there were a number of violent conflicts in the SADC region. They included the long-running civil war in Angola that ended in 2002 when the leader of Unita, Jonas Savimbi, was killed; a rebellion and full-blown war with state belligerents that began in the DRC in 1998; election disputes, a mutiny and an external military intervention in Lesotho in 1998; a failed secessionist bid in Namibia in 1998/1999; election disputes in Malawi in 1999; a constitutional crisis in Zambia in 2001; election disputes on the Zanzibar island of Tanzania in 2001; and, continuously from early 2000, state repression and violence in Zimbabwe.<sup>44</sup> In 1998 Angola threatened to invade Zambia in order to halt supplies to Unita,<sup>45</sup> and in May 2000 Zambia accused Angola of conducting military attacks on its territory.

In addition to its inability to prevent such conflicts, SADC does not have a record of successful peacemaking. In many of the intra-state conflicts it refrained from critical comment and diplomatic engagement, treating violence and crises in governance as purely domestic affairs. There were several reasons for this. First, states are keen to avoid adversarial relations that might jeopardise regional trade and functional co-operation. Second, governments that are not fully democratic are naturally unwilling to speak out against neighbouring states that engage in undemocratic practices. Third, SADC is determined to maintain a posture of unity and solidarity. Forged in the heat of the struggles against colonialism and apartheid, this posture militates against public criticism of member states. Most states view criticism as a

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<sup>44</sup> Reports on these and other conflicts can be found in the bi-weekly publication *SouthScan: A Bulletin of Southern African Affairs* (<http://southscan.gn.apc.org>).

<sup>45</sup> This crisis was resolved through the mediation efforts of Albert Shabangu, the Foreign Minister of Swaziland, when his country held the chair of the ISDSC. No independent research on the mediation has been published but see Albert H.N. Shabangu, 'Reflections on the Mediation Process on the Conflict between Angola and Zambia: Are There Any Practical Lessons for Mediators?', unpublished paper presented at the Mediation and Negotiation Seminar, Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town, 2 October 2002.

violation of sovereignty. The imperative of solidarity is greatest when foreign powers raise concerns that are perceived or can be portrayed as reflecting a “neo-colonial” agenda.

These dynamics were evident *in extremis* in the case of state repression and abrogation of the rule of law in Zimbabwe.<sup>46</sup> Here, far from remaining silent, SADC repeatedly expressed solidarity with the Zimbabwe government and condemned the sanctions imposed on it by the United States and the European Union (EU).<sup>47</sup> In addition to its systematic drive to crush domestic opposition, Harare’s efforts to address the gross inequities in land ownership resulting from colonial rule were characterised by its flouting of judicial rulings, violence perpetrated by state-sponsored militia, the accumulation of farms by the ruling elite, and disregard for the plight of dislocated farm workers.<sup>48</sup> Reacting to international protests against these developments, the ISDSC “expressed serious concern on the continued foreign interference in the internal affairs of some Member States, especially in Zimbabwe which has embarked on an agrarian reform programme aimed at addressing the problem of poverty”.<sup>49</sup> In 2003 the Ministerial Committee of the Organ “took note that those opposed to Zimbabwe have tried to shift the agenda from the core issue of land by selective diversion of attention on governance and human rights issues”.<sup>50</sup>

The incongruity of SADC’s position was highlighted by its short-lived departure from support for Harare in late 2001. In September that year the heads of state comprising the SADC task group that had been set up to address the Zimbabwe crisis denounced the decline in the rule of law and insisted that the crisis was due to government’s approach to land reform rather than to the need for land reform.<sup>51</sup> At the Summit meeting in 2002 Mugabe was replaced as the Deputy Chair of SADC, preventing him from assuming the Chair the following year.<sup>52</sup> At the African Union’s Summit meeting in July 2003, however, Mugabe was elected to represent Southern Africa as one the Union’s five regional vice-chairpersons.

SADC’s poor record of peacemaking is also attributable to the impasse around the Organ. The absence of an agreed set of norms, strategies and procedures for addressing high-intensity conflict contributed to collective inertia, divergent and parochial approaches by individual states, ill-conceived interventions of doubtful legality, and a confused mixture of peacemaking and peace enforcement. Most of these problems were apparent during the crises in Lesotho and the DRC in 1998.

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<sup>46</sup> On repression and state-sponsored violence in Zimbabwe, see the reports of the International Crisis Group and Amnesty International on their respective websites, [www.crisisweb.org](http://www.crisisweb.org) and [web.amnesty.org](http://web.amnesty.org).

<sup>47</sup> See, for example, SADC, ‘SADC Heads of State and Government support Zimbabwe’, Windhoek, 7 August 2000; SADC, ‘Final Communiqué. January 2002 SADC Extra-Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government’, Blantyre, 14 January 2002, para 19; and SADC, ‘2003 SADC Summit Final Communiqué’, Dar es Salaam, 26 August 2003, paras 24 and 25.

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, Human Rights Watch, ‘Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe’, *Human Rights Watch Report*, 14:1(A) (March 2002). On the history of land struggles and inequity in the pre- and post-colonial periods, see Tapera Knox Chitiyo, ‘Land Violence and Compensation: Reconceptualising Zimbabwe’s Land and War Veterans’ Debate’, *Track Two*, 9:1 (May 2000).

<sup>49</sup> ISDSC, ‘Final Communiqué. 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Inter State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation’, Luanda, 9 August 2002.

<sup>50</sup> SADC Organ, ‘Communiqué of the Third Session of the Committee of Ministers of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation’, Harare, 3 April 2003, para 12.

<sup>51</sup> See Marco Granelli, ‘SADC Heads Read Riot Act to Mugabe’, *Cape Times*, 11 September 2001.

<sup>52</sup> See Manoah Esipisu, ‘Zimbabwe Dropped as Host of 2003 SADC Summit’, Reuters news release, 3 October 2002.

### *Lesotho and the DRC*

In September 1998 the Prime Minister of Lesotho requested neighbouring states to take military action aimed at stabilising a domestic crisis. Against the backdrop of mounting dissent over the results of a national election, there were fears of an imminent coup when a group of junior officers deposed and imprisoned the commander and other senior members of the Lesotho Defence Force. In consultation with Mozambique and Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana deployed troops in Lesotho on 22 September. The deployment met with unanticipated resistance from sections of the Lesotho army. Eight South African soldiers and an estimated 58 Basotho soldiers were killed in battles over several days. Anarchy and public demonstrations against the intervention ensued, leading to the virtual sacking of the capital city, Maseru. The operation was riddled with strategic and tactical errors and was viewed by many, including South African army officers, as a military and political disaster.<sup>53</sup>

In response to widespread criticism, Pretoria insisted that the deployment had been requested by the head of a legitimate government facing a potential coup and that the operation had only been authorised after efforts to end the mutiny through negotiations had failed.<sup>54</sup> South Africa based the legality of the intervention on the following factors: the operation took place under SADC auspices; it flowed from a SADC decision to not permit *coups d'état* and other unconstitutional changes of government in Southern Africa; and it was based on a 1994 agreement that South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana would be guarantors of stability in Lesotho.<sup>55</sup> A senior defence official in South Africa noted several flaws in this argument: the "SADC decision" to not allow coups in the region had in fact been a proposal from the ISDSC to the SADC Summit; the proposal had included the proviso that UN, OAU and SADC approval be obtained prior to any military intervention; the Summit had neither endorsed the ISDSC's proposal nor authorised military action in Lesotho; and, in the absence of Summit approval, the deployment did not comply with SADC's decision-making rules.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, in the absence of UN Security Council authorisation, the operation was arguably in breach of Article 53(1) of the UN Charter.

In 1996 a rebellion in Zaire led to the fall of President Mobuto Sese Seko and the assumption of the presidency by Laurent Kabila. The country was renamed the Democratic Republic of Congo and became a member of SADC. On 2 August 1998 the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie* (Congolese Rally for Democracy) launched a rebellion against Kabila with the support of Rwanda and Uganda which had helped to bring him to power. Kabila appealed to SADC for military and political assistance. On 8 August Mugabe convened a meeting in Victoria Falls of heads of state from a number of African countries. Zimbabwe excluded South Africa, which held the chair of SADC at the time, because of the tension between Mandela and Mugabe over the Organ.<sup>57</sup> On 18 August Mugabe referred the recommendations of a task group set up in Victoria Falls to an ISDSC meeting in Harare, at the conclusion of which he declared that SADC had decided unanimously to meet Kabila's

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<sup>53</sup> See, for example, Malan (1998), pp. 7-8; Francis K. Makoa, 'Foreign Military Intervention in Lesotho's Elections Dispute: Whose Project?', *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 21:1 (June 1999), pp.66-87; and 'Army Top Brass Slam Incursion into Lesotho', *Star*, 1 October 1998.

<sup>54</sup> See Ronnie Mamoepe, 'Stalemate in Peace Process Led to SADC Intervention', *Sunday Independent*, 27 September 1998.

<sup>55</sup> Mamuepa (1998). See also 'The SADC Intervention in Lesotho: A Military Perspective', *Salut*, South African National Defence Force, July 1999, pp.22-29.

<sup>56</sup> Rocky Williams, 'From Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding? South African Policy and Practice in Peace Missions', *International Peacekeeping*, 7:3 (2000), pp.99-101.

<sup>57</sup> See 'Foreign Affairs Tries to Deny Mugabe's Snub', *Southern Africa Report*, 16:32 (14 August 1998), pp.4-5.

appeal. The following day Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia announced that they would deploy troops in the DRC on behalf of SADC.<sup>58</sup>

The intervening states justified the deployment as an act of collective defence against the alleged invasion of the DRC by Rwanda and Uganda. They also claimed that the deployment had been authorised by the Organ and the ISDSC. However, the Organ was not operational, the ISDSC had no mandate to initiate military action, and only a handful of SADC states were present at the meetings convened by Mugabe. Mandela's spokesperson stated emphatically that "there is no way that the people who met at Victoria Falls and Harare can have met under the auspices of the SADC".<sup>59</sup> When Mandela challenged Mugabe's authority to send troops on behalf of SADC, the latter responded with a thinly veiled insult: "No one is compelled within SADC to go into a campaign of assisting a country beset by conflict. Those who want to keep out, fine. Let them keep out, but let them be silent about those who want to help".<sup>60</sup>

Supported by Botswana, Mozambique and Tanzania, South Africa pursued a diplomatic solution to the DRC crisis. On 23 August Mandela called an emergency meeting of the SADC Summit in Pretoria. Mugabe declined to attend, insisting that "we must now enlist the OAU which has an organ for conflict resolution. It is not possible for us to resolve [the crisis] as SADC because we are divided".<sup>61</sup> The Summit declared that military action was an unacceptable way of addressing the problems that had given rise to the war. It called for an immediate cease-fire and process of dialogue to solve these problems.<sup>62</sup> At the Non-Aligned Movement's Summit hosted by South Africa in September, Mandela declared unexpectedly that SADC supported the military intervention. The apparent turnabout was intended to ease the tension with Mugabe and restore a semblance of unity to SADC;<sup>63</sup> for months thereafter, South African cabinet ministers insisted that Pretoria would only deploy troops in the DRC under UN auspices.<sup>64</sup> The SADC Summit meeting in mid-September 1998 also sought to present a united front, endorsing the positions represented by both South Africa and Zimbabwe.<sup>65</sup> President Chiluba of Zambia was mandated to broker a cease-fire and former President Masire of Botswana was charged with facilitating an internal dialogue process in the DRC. In July 1999 the state belligerents signed the Lusaka Peace Accord, which shifted responsibility from SADC to the OAU and the UN. Nevertheless, President Mbeki of South Africa played a pivotal role in facilitating the state belligerents' withdrawal from the DRC in 2002 and the formation of a transitional government of national unity in that country in June 2003.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> The details here and in the following paragraph are drawn from Eric G. Berman & Katie S. Sams, *Peacekeeping in Africa: Capabilities and Culpabilities*, Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2000, pp.175-180.

<sup>59</sup> Quoted in 'The Last Days of Laurent Kabila?', *Mail and Guardian*, 21-27 August 1998.

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'DRC: Zimbabwean, Angolan Troops Arrive to Back Kabila', Integrated Regional Information Network bulletin, 21 August 1998.

<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Berman & Sams, (2000), p.178.

<sup>62</sup> SADC, 'Communiqué of the Summit Meeting of the SADC on the Democratic Republic of the Congo', Pretoria, 23 August 1998.

<sup>63</sup> See Berman & Sams, (2000), p.179; and 'SA Seeks to Recoup Its Diplomatic Losses on Congo Intervention at Peace Summit', *SouthScan*, 13:18 (4 September 1998), pp.137-138.

<sup>64</sup> See, for example, the comments of the Defence Minister in South African Press Association, 'Briefing of MPs – Safety and Security', 12 August 1999.

<sup>65</sup> SADC, 'Communiqué. Mauritius – Grand Bay: 13-14<sup>th</sup> September, 1998'.

<sup>66</sup> On the fragile peace process and on-going violence in 2003, see Gerrie Swart, 'Towards Peace in the DRC', *Conflict Trends*, 2/2003 (2003), pp. 37-42.

## Explaining the failure of the Organ

Although the tension between South Africa and Zimbabwe undoubtedly contributed to the impasse around the Organ, the problems lay much deeper than this. I argue below that SADC's failure to establish a viable security regime was a consequence of fundamental political and strategic differences between member states; their reluctance to surrender a measure of sovereignty to a security regime; and their economic and administrative weakness.

### *The internal and external logic of regional organisations*

As noted previously, the UN emphasises the importance of regional organisations in maintaining peace within their geographical domains. The core assumption is that these bodies can promote trust and develop common values among their members in a fashion that mitigates tensions and reduces the possibility of violent conflict. The evolution of common values in the interests of peace and security is one of SADC's primary goals and was part of the rationale for its establishment.<sup>67</sup> According to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan:

Regional organisations can contribute to conflict prevention in a number of specific ways. Such organisations build trust among States through the frequency of interaction, and have a greater grasp of the historical background of a conflict. Because of their proximity, regional organisations could, for example, provide a local forum for efforts to decrease tensions and promote and facilitate a comprehensive regional approach to cross-border issues.<sup>68</sup>

The core assumption is not justified in the case of Southern Africa. A viable regional organisation might be able to develop common policies and perform a range of security and cross-border functions but its members must have sufficient commonality in values if the body is to be at all viable. Frequent interaction between member states will not in itself overcome divisions and mistrust that derive from incompatible national policies. Common values are the *foundation* rather than the outcome of close political and security co-operation. In the absence of political congruence and trust, proximity can be an impediment to peacemaking where member states are themselves parties to a conflict. In these situations, as has occurred frequently in Africa, the regional body is an arena of disputation rather than conflict resolution.<sup>69</sup> In extreme cases, as with SADC and the DRC crisis of 1998, adversarial relations between member states can render conflict resolution forums inoperable. The ramifications of the argument about common values are explored further below.

In analysing the Organ impasse, it is necessary to distinguish between the internal and external logic of a regional organisation as separate requirements for cohesion and effectiveness. The external logic refers to the objective conditions that make the organisation a beneficial venture in the assessment of member states. These states must believe that their interests will be served through institutionalised co-operation and co-ordination in respect of one or more problems and goals. The problems and goals naturally differ from one organisation to another.

The external logic of SADC has been articulated clearly in official documents and encompasses the following concerns and incentives: regionalism as a response to

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<sup>67</sup> See Article 5(1)(b) of the SADC Treaty (1992); and *Towards the Southern African Development Community* (1992), p.5.

<sup>68</sup> United Nations (2001), para.137.

<sup>69</sup> See Laurie Nathan, 'When Push Comes to Shove: The Failure of International Mediation in African Civil Wars', *Track Two*, 8:2 (November 1999).

globalisation and Africa's marginalisation in international trade and politics; the promotion of development and economic growth through regional projects and trade; the many socio-economic problems, including a devastating HIV/Aids pandemic, that transcend national borders and require a co-ordinated response; the benefits of co-operation in sectors like water, energy, policing, health and transport; the prevalence of domestic conflict that impacts on neighbouring states; the utility of a regional forum for conflict resolution; and the peacekeeping and confidence-building benefits of defence co-operation.<sup>70</sup> In short, SADC's external logic is captured by its overarching goals of regional integration, economic and social development, and peace and stability. More specifically in relation to security, the underlying logic is that Southern Africa is a "security complex", defined by Barry Buzan as "a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another".<sup>71</sup>

The internal logic of a regional organisation refers to the normative congruence in the domestic and foreign policies of member states that makes these states willing and able to engage in close political and security co-operation. A high level of normative congruence engenders the affinity and trust that are essential prerequisites for states to develop common policies on a range of sensitive issues, adopt a set of binding principles and rules, and accept the resultant constraints on their decision-making and behaviour.

The internal logic is a relative rather than an absolute condition. The members of a regional organisation may be willing to accept a set of rules based on common values but they do not surrender sovereign decision-making lightly and completely. They invariably encounter serious differences of opinion and experience difficulty in collective decision-making on policy matters and in crisis situations, leading at times to independent and divergent courses of action. Some member states might also deviate occasionally from the agreed rules and policies. For the organisation to withstand these differences and deviations, there must be *sufficient* political commonality and trust among its members. In other words, there is a minimum threshold of political congruence for a successful regional organisation, below which the organisation lacks cohesion and its members are unable to adopt common policies.

The internal logic is also relative in the sense that the degree of congruence required for success varies according to the focus, type and form of multilateral engagement. The Southern African experience confirms what might be expected in this regard: the threshold is lower in non-sensitive areas than in the realm of high politics; it rises in the progression from co-operation to co-ordination to integration; and it is higher in a formal regime than in an informal association. SADC states have sufficient affinity and trust to co-operate in sectors that have political dimensions but are relatively uncontroversial, a good example being their functional co-operation on military and police matters through the ISDSC and SARPPCO.<sup>72</sup> In the 1980s the Frontline States coalition achieved cohesion on the basis of its members' common opposition to apartheid and colonialism but it did not seek to regulate their conduct through binding rules.

The threshold of political congruence for successful co-operation is much higher in the case of a security regime which encompasses principles and rules that are intended to constrain

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<sup>70</sup> See SADC (1992), and numerous statements by SADC and its leaders on the SADC website at [www.sadc.int](http://www.sadc.int).

<sup>71</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), Harlow: Longman, 1991, p.190.

<sup>72</sup> See Berman & Sams (2000), pp.167-172.



state behaviour and decision-making. If the domestic and/or foreign policies of member states are essentially incompatible, the regime is unlikely to be effective for a host of reasons: there are no common values on which to base the rules, develop common policies and achieve cohesion; the institution will instead be wracked by divisions that inhibit collective decision-making and action; its members will frequently breach the declared norms that are inconsistent with their national policies; and members that are authoritarian will not fulfil a mandate to promote democracy and respect for human rights. These factors constitute a summary description and explanation of the Organ stalemate and SADC's poor record in relation to peacemaking and democratic governance.

The EU illustrates the significance of the internal logic and the proposition that common values are the foundation rather than the result of institutionalised political and security co-operation. Article 6(1) of the Treaty on European Union states that “the Union is *founded* on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, *principles which are common to the Member States*” (emphasis added). Precisely because these assertions are true, the EU has been able to adopt binding rules and decisions, establish bodies with supranational authority, and develop policy on numerous issues. The organisation draws a crucial distinction between the negotiability of common policies and the non-negotiability of the common values that underlie them.<sup>73</sup> Article 49(1) of the Treaty thus provides that admission to the Union is only open to European states that respect the principles set out in Article 6(1). Central and eastern European states would consequently not gain admission to the EU on the grounds that they might thereby come to accept democratic norms; they would only be admitted if they already adhered to these norms.<sup>74</sup>

By contrast, in 1997 the SADC Summit decided that the DRC satisfied the criteria for admission to the organisation.<sup>75</sup> These criteria were not specified in the Summit communiqué but they were patently inconsistent with the democratic principles espoused in the SADC Treaty and absent in the DRC. The admission decision related instead to the external logic of political stability, the DRC's mineral, water and other natural resources, and the regional benefits of its potential hydroelectric power and infrastructural projects.<sup>76</sup> Within a year of the DRC joining SADC, the crisis in that country had rent the organisation asunder.

Unlike the EU, SADC was not founded on common values. In the realm of domestic policy there is no consensus on the basic principles of political governance. In addition to Swaziland and the DRC, which are not democratic, there are many *de jure* democracies whose executives are intolerant of dissent, hardly accountable to parliament and insufficiently committed to respect for human rights and the rule of law. The SADC Parliamentary Forum, an autonomous body comprising parliamentarians from all the SADC states, observes that politicians in the region “talk democracy but use undemocratic means to stay in power”.<sup>77</sup> According to Jonathan Moyo prior to his becoming Zimbabwe's Minister of Information in 2000, “the assertion that the majority of African governments are now democratic... has no empirical basis. It is true that multiparty elections are now common in Africa but this truth

<sup>73</sup> See Marise Cremona, ‘Variable Geometry and Setting Membership Conditionalities: A Viable Strategy?’, in Christopher Clapham, Greg Mills, Anna Morner & Elizabeth Sidiropoulos (eds.), *Regional Integration in Southern Africa: Comparative International Perspectives*, Johannesburg: South African Institute for International Affairs, 2001, p.196.

<sup>74</sup> Cremona (2001).

<sup>75</sup> SADC, ‘1997 SADC Summit Communiqué’, Blantyre, 8 September 1997.

<sup>76</sup> SADC (1997), para.15; and ‘Congo Wins Membership’ (1997).

<sup>77</sup> Quoted in South African Press Association, ‘Leaders Should Practice Democracy’, 15 October 2000.

does not describe a fundamental development. The change is strategic, not substantive. ...Just look at Zambia and Malawi since the fall of Kenneth Kaunda and the late Kamuzu Banda. Zimbabwe is following suit with reckless abandon”.<sup>78</sup> Freedom House surveys of civil and political liberties indicate that in 2002 Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa were “free”; Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Seychelles, Tanzania and Zambia were “partly free”; and Angola, the DRC, Swaziland and Zimbabwe were “not free”.<sup>79</sup>

In the realm of foreign policy there is a division between militarist and pacific camps. The DRC war revealed the strategic import of this rift, with South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique and Tanzania promoting a diplomatic solution while Namibia, Zimbabwe and Angola formed a military alliance with Kabila. Although South Africa and Botswana intervened militarily in Lesotho in 1998, the intervention was not indicative of their foreign policies. The dispute around the DRC rebellion, on the other hand, reflected general tendencies, crippled the Organ and gave rise to the notion of “two SADCs”.<sup>80</sup> As Walter Tapfumaneyi puts it, “the two camps have clearly worked at cross-purposes resulting in either divergent action or no action at all in the face of an increasing number of crises”.<sup>81</sup>

At an institutional level, the militarist camp emphasises defence co-operation and collective security through a mutual defence pact that would lead in time to a Nato-type organisation. The pacific camp prioritises political co-operation and diplomatic means of peacemaking through a common security regime. More specifically in relation to the Organ, the pacific camp wanted foreign ministers to have primary responsibility for peacemaking and the militarist camp wanted defence ministers to have equal responsibility and status.<sup>82</sup> In a frank acknowledgement of the foreign policy division, a Zimbabwean defence official claims that a major reason for the Organ impasse was Pretoria’s opposition to the use of armed force in peacemaking. He argues that collective military force has been required as a catalyst for political solutions in all the conflicts in Southern Africa and “it is therefore superfluous and hypocritical for the South African government and its apologists to advocate a strict adherence to early warning and diplomatic solutions to SADC conflicts”.<sup>83</sup>

In 1999 Angola, the DRC, Namibia and Zimbabwe concluded a defence treaty, which provides that an armed attack against one of the signatories will be considered an attack against the others and that each of them will assist a signatory under attack through such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to repel the attack and restore peace and security.<sup>84</sup> The treaty reflects the high level of political congruence and trust attained by Namibia, Angola and Zimbabwe as a result of their alliance in the Frontline States and similar post-liberation policies. Lacking such affinity and unity as a regional body, SADC repeatedly deferred and then watered down the regional defence pact. The pact approved by

<sup>78</sup> Jonathan Moyo, ‘The African Renaissance: A Critical Assessment’, *Southern African Political and Economic Monthly*, 11:7 (May 1998), pp.9-12.

<sup>79</sup> Cited in Willie Breytenbach, ‘Democracy in the SADC Region: A Comparative Overview’, *African Security Review*, 11:4 (2002), pp.93-94. For a variety of democracy indicators compiled by different organisations and applied to all the countries in the world, see United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2002: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*, New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, pp.37-45.

<sup>80</sup> Williams (2000), p.97.

<sup>81</sup> Tapfumaneyi (1999a), p.23.

<sup>82</sup> This dispute led to the clumsy arrangement of ministerial committees in the Organ Protocol (see section 2.3 above). On the problems that might emanate from this arrangement, see De Conig (1999).

<sup>83</sup> Tapfumaneyi (1999a), pp.23 & 26.

<sup>84</sup> Article 4 of the Defence Treaty among the Republic of Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Namibia and the Republic of Zimbabwe, Luanda, 8 April 1999.

the Summit in 2003 falls short of a collective defence commitment. It provides that an armed attack against one of the state parties shall be considered a threat to regional peace and security (rather than an attack on all them), that such attack shall be met with immediate collective action as mandated by the Summit, but that each state party shall participate in collective action in any manner it deems appropriate.<sup>85</sup>

Principles of solidarity and anti-imperialism, welded by history, ideology, vulnerability and national pride, cut across the regional cleavages described above and are sometimes brought strongly into play. Reiterating its opposition to international sanctions against Zimbabwe, for example, the Summit “re-affirmed the indivisibility of SADC and solidarity with Zimbabwe”.<sup>86</sup> Breaking ranks in these circumstances can lead to dramatic vilification. When Mbeki issued mild criticisms of Mugabe in late 2001, the state-owned newspaper in Harare, the *Herald*, claimed that he had betrayed the ruling party and joined the “neo-colonialist plot” to overthrow it.<sup>87</sup> In 2003 Botswana, the SADC country most openly critical of Harare, felt obliged to denounce media reports in the region that it was conspiring with the US and Britain to launch a military attack on Zimbabwe.<sup>88</sup> The principle of solidarity enhances state security at the expense of human security, masks rather than transcends the substantive disputes between states, and does not constitute a foundation for a common security regime.

Philip Gordon argues that the EU failed to develop an effective and unified security and foreign policy in the 1990s because state interests had not converged sufficiently to either justify a loss of sovereignty or entail little loss of sovereignty.<sup>89</sup> I have ascribed SADC’s failure in this sphere to a divergence of values rather than interests. There is no discernable evidence that the pacific and militarist camps in Southern Africa derive from interests common to their respective members and different from those of their rivals. SADC countries vary markedly in terms of resource, geographic, demographic, economic and security factors, giving rise to varying interests, but the variations are much greater within the blocs than between them. In the case of the Organ stalemate, states agreed that their interests would be served by a security regime but they disagreed for normative reasons on the strategic orientation and methods of the regime. In the case of the DRC crisis, Zimbabwe’s militarist approach and South Africa’s pacific approach were motivated by a similar combination of economic interests and strategic concerns.

### ***Weak states***

African states are weak in various respects and their weakness contributes significantly to insecurity and violence at national and regional levels. At the national level, for example, resort to violence may be pervasive where the state is unable to meet the basic security needs of citizens and manage normal social and political conflict fairly and competently.<sup>90</sup> The following discussion focuses on the ways in which the political, economic and administrative weakness of SADC states has hindered the creation of a viable security regime.

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<sup>85</sup> Article 6 of the SADC Mutual Defence Pact of 2003.

<sup>86</sup> SADC (2003), para.24.

<sup>87</sup> See Pule Molebeledi, ‘Harare’s Herald Swipes at Mbeki’, *Business Day*, 4 December 2001.

<sup>88</sup> Press release issued by the Botswana Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gaborone, 8 August 2003.

<sup>89</sup> See Philip H. Gordon, 1997/8. “Europe’s Uncommon Foreign Policy”, *International Security*, 22:3 (Winter 1997/98), pp.74-100.

<sup>90</sup> See Laurie Nathan, ‘The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: The Structural Causes of Crisis and Violence in Africa’, *Track Two*, 10:2 (August 2001). On weak states and insecurity more generally, see Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, chapters 2-4.

States do not surrender sovereign decision-making lightly in any circumstances. There are three additional factors that make Southern African states especially cautious and sensitive. First, they guard their sovereignty jealously because many of them attained it relatively recently and at great cost through liberation wars. Second, most of them do not enjoy full sovereignty in any event: they do not have a monopoly of violence within their territories; they do not have adequate control of movement across their borders; their administrative reach in rural areas is weak; and their ability to mobilise resources and collect taxes is limited. Their national authority is further undermined by the economic and financial dimensions of globalisation and by the structural adjustment programmes and other prescriptive policies of international financial organisations and foreign donors. States that have weak *de facto* sovereignty are understandably resistant to regional mechanisms that would dilute it further through binding rules and decision-making that limit their discretion and heighten the possibility of interference in their domestic affairs. Third, however compelling the external logic of a regional organisation, it is improbable that states will agree to be bound by rules and decision-making in the political and security spheres if they do not support the underlying norms and trust each other.

Although SADC has not debated the principle of sovereignty, the views of member states can be discerned from official documents. The SADC Treaty, which was concluded in an era of emerging democracy and optimism, presents the principle simply as sovereign equality of states.<sup>91</sup> The Organ Protocol, which was concluded in an era of inter- and intra-state conflict, includes in the Preamble the principles of “strict respect for sovereignty”, sovereign equality, political independence and non-interference in domestic affairs. The SADC Mutual Defence Pact, which was finalised in the midst of the Zimbabwe crisis, contains three substantive provisions on non-interference in domestic affairs.<sup>92</sup>

By way of further example, in 1996 the SADC Secretariat proposed that the Organ be mandated to monitor the performance of member states in the fields of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.<sup>93</sup> The ministers responsible for preparing the Organ’s terms of reference rejected this proposal.<sup>94</sup> They were willing though to permit the Organ to monitor the ratification by states of UN, OAU and other international conventions and treaties on human rights, arms control and disarmament.<sup>95</sup> During the finalisation of the Organ Protocol in 2000, monitoring even in relation to state ratification of international treaties was deemed too intrusive and all references to monitoring were excluded from the provisions dealing with these topics. The Summit does not appear to have ever discussed the independent human rights commission proposed by the ministerial workshop in Windhoek in 1994. It has also delayed the establishment of a supranational Tribunal that might constitute a significant challenge to sovereignty. The SADC Treaty of 1992 provides that the Tribunal will not only adjudicate upon disputes between states but will also ensure adherence to the provisions of the Treaty. The Summit only approved the *Protocol on Tribunal and the Rules of Procedure Thereof* in August 2000, and the body had not been set up by the end of 2003.

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<sup>91</sup> Article 4(a) of the Treaty.

<sup>92</sup> Articles 7 and 8 of the Pact.

<sup>93</sup> SADC Secretariat, ‘Terms of Reference for the SADC Sector on Political Cooperation, Democracy, Peace and Security. Meeting of SADC Ministers Responsible for Foreign Affairs, Defence and SADC Affairs. Gaborone, Botswana. 18-19 January, 1996’, unpublished document, 1996a, para 2.2.1(i).

<sup>94</sup> See SADC Secretariat, ‘The SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. Meeting of SADC Ministers Responsible for Foreign Affairs, Defence and SADC Affairs. Gaborone, Botswana. 18 January, 1996’, unpublished minute of the ministerial meeting, 1996b.

<sup>95</sup> SADC Secretariat (1996b), p.2.

In addition to these political factors, Southern Africa is characterised by small economies,<sup>96</sup> underdevelopment and weak capacity in the public sector. Governments lack the resources and the technical and managerial skills to perform the functions of the state in a satisfactory manner. Their weakness undermines SADC in three ways: states that cannot affect proper co-ordination between their own departments struggle to meet the vastly more complicated challenge of co-ordination between countries; states that are unable to attend adequately to their domestic priorities devote scant attention and resources to regional projects; and the skills deficit impairs the efficacy of all multilateral programmes and forums. Southern African leaders are acutely aware of these problems. In 1992 they noted that “the most binding constraint to development of the region is inadequate professionally and technically qualified and experienced personnel to plan and manage the development process efficiently and effectively”.<sup>97</sup> In 1995 the Council of Ministers described the region’s capacity constraints as follows: “shortages of skilled manpower; poor policy environment; low level of expertise; weak institutional capacity; inability for the retention of skills and expertise; [and] lack of incentives”.<sup>98</sup> The potential to achieve synergy through regional projects is consequently low.

The problems arising from weak state capacity have been compounded by a long-standing aversion to centralised structures at the regional level. In 1981 the SADCC Summit proclaimed that it had “eschewed the creation of a large and unwieldy bureaucracy in favour of a system which places responsibility for the implementation of its programmes on the Governments of Member States”.<sup>99</sup> Despite the manifest failures of decentralisation, the Council of Ministers reiterated this position in 1995.<sup>100</sup> Two years earlier SADC’s *Framework and Strategy* document had identified clearly the difficulties associated with a decentralised integration strategy: unclear lines of authority and accountability; different standards, qualifications and performance criteria for government officials involved in managing regional programmes; and insufficient provision of staff and other resources for co-ordinating these programmes.<sup>101</sup> Ten years after its formation, SADC estimated that only twenty per cent of its 470 projects met the criteria for properly integrated regional projects, the rest being essentially national projects.<sup>102</sup> Following a major organisational review, in 2001 the Summit finally decided to centralise planning, co-ordination and implementation functions in the Secretariat. Significantly, though, it did not increase the powers and authority of the Executive Secretary in relation to the governing structures of the organisation.<sup>103</sup>

The general aversion to centralisation is probably linked to state concerns about loss of sovereignty. These concerns might also explain the specific resistance to centralised structures and the strong preference for informality in the areas of politics, defence and security: the ISDSC had no constitution and its secretariat rotated annually among member states; in 1996 the ministers responsible for foreign affairs and defence proposed that the Organ should

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<sup>96</sup> In 1999 the combined GDP of SADC states was US\$180.1 billion and the combined GDP excluding South Africa was US\$46.9 billion. In 2000 the per capita income of SADC states combined was US\$1 650, and eight out of fourteen states had a per capita income of less than US\$600. All figures are drawn from Breytenbach (2002), p.95.

<sup>97</sup> *Towards the Southern African Development Community* (1992), p.6.

<sup>98</sup> SADC, ‘1995 Annual Consultative Conference: Communiqué’, Malawi, 4 February 1995, para 5.2.1.

<sup>99</sup> SADCC, ‘SADCC Heads of State and Government Summit Communiqué’, Salisbury (Zimbabwe), 20 July 1981.

<sup>100</sup> SADC (1995), para. 5.3.3.

<sup>101</sup> SADC (1993), p.3.

<sup>102</sup> See Isaksen & Tjonneland (2001), p.3.

<sup>103</sup> Isaksen & Tjonneland (2001), p.12.

operate in a flexible and informal manner;<sup>104</sup> and the ministers who drafted the Organ Protocol decided that the Organ should not have a permanent secretariat and should not be linked to the SADC Secretariat.<sup>105</sup> The preference for informality was motivated on the grounds that states should have freedom of action in political and security affairs and in crisis situations in particular. It was argued that the benefits of informal and flexible arrangements had been demonstrated by the Frontline States, whose presidents were able to communicate freely and quickly with each other in the absence of excessive bureaucracy and protocol.

SADC's objectives relating to security, defence and peacemaking are considerably more complex than the goals of the Frontline States. The absence of procedural and structural formality in these areas has contributed to an acute lack of organisational cohesion and continuity, confusion and disagreements over responsibilities and accountability, a failure to implement decisions and, at the most banal level, disputes over what was decided at previous meetings. In 1995 the author and a colleague argued that SADC's informal arrangements on peace and security had serious shortcomings: they were not binding on states; they did not regulate state behaviour and responses to conflict in an agreed, consistent and predictable manner; and they might consequently break down in crises when they were needed most.<sup>106</sup> These concerns were justified by events in subsequent years. The Organ Protocol is intended to eliminate the problems but the extent to which it will do so is an open question.

South Africa has not played the role of a regional hegemon and driven the integration project as many observers expected in light of its economic and military strength in the region. Thabo Mbeki has championed continental integration and institution-building through the African Union but devoted little attention to political and security integration in Southern Africa. Pretoria's political efforts in the region have focused more on conflict resolution than on the strengthening of multilateral forums and programmes. Its lack of assertiveness might be due to its tensions with Zimbabwe, limited sway over its neighbours and sensitivity to fears that it would bully them, all of which factors are influenced by the apartheid regime's regional aggression in the 1980s. Viewed objectively, moreover, South Africa is a developing country with a small economy and a relatively weak state.<sup>107</sup> Given its regional strength and objective weakness, South Africa might believe that it has more to gain from economic and development co-operation with industrialised countries than with its neighbours.<sup>108</sup>

## Conclusion

Some scholars in the realist school of international relations are wholly pessimistic about the utility of security regimes. John Mearsheimer, for example, insists that institutions (or

<sup>104</sup> SADC Secretariat (1996b), p.3.

<sup>105</sup> Article 9 of the draft Protocol of 26 May 2000 stated that the Organ secretariat would rotate annually with the rotating Chair of the Organ. The Summit amended this article to state that the SADC Secretariat would provide secretariat services to the Organ.

<sup>106</sup> Laurie Nathan & Joao Honwana, 'After the Storm: Common Security and Conflict Resolution in Southern Africa', *The Arusha Papers: A Working Series on Southern African Security*, 3 (February 1995), Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape and Centre for Foreign Relations, Dar es Salaam, p.14.

<sup>107</sup> On weak state capacity in South Africa see, for example, John Bardill, 'The Presidential Review Commission and the Dilemmas of Administrative Reform in South Africa', *Governance in Southern Africa: An Occasional Paper Series*, 8 (1998), School of Government, University of the Western Cape.

<sup>108</sup> Space constraints preclude a more extensive exploration of the critical question of South Africa's actual and potential role in the region. On this question see, for example, Maxi Schoeman & Chris Alden, 'The Hegemon That Wasn't: South Africa's Foreign Policy towards Zimbabwe', *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 25:1 (May 2003), pp.1-28; and Adekeye Adebajo & Christopher Landsberg, 2003. "South Africa and Nigeria as Regional Hegemons", in Baregu & Landsberg (2003), pp.171-203.

regimes) can do little if anything to enhance stability in an international system characterised by anarchy and a relentless competition for power and security among states; there is no evidence that regimes have an independent effect on state behaviour and constitute an important cause of peace.<sup>109</sup> If this were true, why do states put so much effort into regional and global institutions whose goals include peace and stability? Mearsheimer addresses the puzzle only with respect to the US,<sup>110</sup> shedding no light on the rationale of other states engaged in regime formation and development.<sup>111</sup> One of the striking features of the Southern African case is that states persisted in their mission to create a security regime when there were good reasons to abandon it: they not only devoted scarce funds and much time to the Organ with little positive result, but their disputes over its status and orientation seriously damaged their relations. Their perseverance signifies their conviction that their interests would be served by a security regime.

Driven by shared interests, SADC's endeavour to create a security regime was constrained and undermined by the weakness of member states, their fear of diluting sovereignty and, most importantly, their lack of shared values. These interlinked and deep-rooted structural and political dynamics also inhibited effective peacemaking and are likely to impair the functioning of the Organ in the future. The optimistic prognosis of SADC's security project in the early 1990s relied too much on the compelling external logic of a common security regime and paid too little attention to the internal logic of the regime. It overestimated the durability of the bonds forged during the liberation struggles and underestimated the import of the normative differences between states. The Southern African experience supports the general observation that common values, their codification into well-developed norms, and adherence by member states to these values and norms are key determinants in the success or otherwise of regional organisations.<sup>112</sup>

Analysts who attribute the Organ impasse to the disagreements over its organisational status have focused on manifestations of the underlying problems. Rocky Williams argues that the preoccupation with security architecture is misplaced because the problem lies at the level of strategy.<sup>113</sup> He notes correctly that "structure should follow strategy" but this is only part of a broader equation: structure follows strategy; strategy follows objectives; objectives are shaped by values as well as interests; and the Organ breakdown occurred at the level of foundational values. This line of argument corresponds to the distinction drawn by Stephen Krasner between the principles and norms of an international regime on the one hand, and its rules and procedures on the other. Whereas the latter are components of a regime and can change without altering its essence, the former provide the basic defining characteristics of a regime. Fundamental political disputes among states over the nature of a regime are thus more concerned with its norms and principles than with its rules and procedures.<sup>114</sup> This was true of the SADC Organ even if such disputes were not always expressed explicitly.

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<sup>109</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, 'The False Promise of International Institutions', *International Security*, 19:3 (Winter 1994/95), pp.5-49. For opposing perspectives, see the responses to Mearsheimer in *International Security*, 20:1 (Summer 1995); Krasner (1983); and Lisa L. Martin & Beth A. Simmons, 'Theories and Empirical Studies of International Institutions', *International Organization*, 52:4 (Autumn 1998), pp.729-757.

<sup>110</sup> His argument here is that realism's pessimistic outlook runs counter to American idealism and core beliefs. See Mearsheimer (1994/95), pp.47-49.

<sup>111</sup> On the motivation of states for establishing regimes, see Krasner (1983), pp.11-20.

<sup>112</sup> Peck (2001), pp.578-579.

<sup>113</sup> Rocky Williams, 2001. "From Collective Security to Peacebuilding? The Challenges of Managing Regional Security in Southern Africa", in Clapham *et al.* (2001), pp.105 & 109.

<sup>114</sup> Krasner (1983), pp.3-4.

Williams maintains that the Organ malaise could be solved by forging a political consensus on SADC's human security agenda and appropriate peacebuilding strategies; yet he also notes that SADC has already embraced this agenda in official documents.<sup>115</sup> The truth of the matter is that these documents do not reflect a genuine consensus. Moreover, the proposal that states should forge a political consensus underestimates the nature of their differences. These differences cannot be bridged through negotiations and compromise. They relate to cardinal issues that define the essential political character of Southern African states. Agostinho Zacarias accepts that common values will not be attained without the transformation of these states and suggests that the Organ should spearhead their transformation by adopting a structure that ensures the promotion of democratic order, good governance and the economic and social dimensions of security.<sup>116</sup> The Organ has no power or authority to do anything of the kind. It is a forum of states, none of which will permit it to drive their transformation. The emergence of a strong security regime has been inhibited precisely by their apprehension about diluted sovereignty and interference in domestic affairs.

The position held by Zacarias overstates what is possible at the regional level and understates what is required at the national level. This systemic tension lies at the heart of SADC's difficulties in all its programmes. Its agenda is generally too ambitious, which is to say that the agenda is based on unrealistic organisational and political expectations of states. The core dilemma is that regional integration is an endeavour intended to strengthen states in various ways but Southern African states are in various ways too weak to undertake this endeavour successfully. The specific difficulties relating to the absence of common values, the weakness of states and their fear of diluted sovereignty are national problems that cannot be solved at the regional level. As a result, the challenge of common security in Southern Africa is primarily a national rather than a regional challenge.

At conferences in Southern Africa it is often argued that political and security integration is a gradual process, which evolves over several decades, as in Europe, and that patience is therefore required in the relatively newer case of SADC. This argument neglects the salience of the internal logic of regional organisations. Common policies and mechanisms are only likely to evolve incrementally if member states are united around common values. Common values, on the other hand, depend on national policies that can change over time in the direction of either convergence or divergence. The OAU made little progress towards convergence over four decades, a period comparable with the development of the EU.

Some degree of convergence in Southern Africa could occur in the future. The prevailing divisions are not immutable and national policies could change substantially as new governments are elected. The Organ might become more effective if it were driven energetically by a core group of democratic states that were willing to devote adequate resources to it, provide incentives for compliance with its norms, and put pressure on other states when required. The necessary composition and size of such a group is a matter of debate but it would have to include, at the very least, South Africa and a democratic Zimbabwe working with common purpose.

The emergence of a security community is not on the horizon, however, and writers who claim that Southern Africa is moving in this direction are mistaken. They ignore or downplay the significance of the disputes around the Organ, the lack of trust among states and the extent

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<sup>115</sup> Williams (2001), pp.109-112.

<sup>116</sup> Zacarias (2003), pp.47-48. See also De Conig (1999); and Mwesiga Baregu & Christopher Landsberg, 'Southern Africa's Security Architecture: Challenges and Prospects', in Baregu & Landsberg (2003), p.353.



to which states deviate from the democratic and pacific norms espoused in official documents. More obviously, the claim is not sustainable in the light of extant and potential violence. In many Southern African countries there is no assurance that domestic conflict will be managed peacefully. Nor is there any assurance that inter-state conflict will be managed without resort to force. Indeed, the Organ Protocol indicates SADC's acute awareness of the possibility of violence within and between states. Southern Africa is wracked by insecurity and it is struggling to become a political and security community.

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The aim of the Crisis States Programme (CSP) at DESTIN's Development Research Centre is to provide new understanding of the causes of crisis and breakdown in the developing world and the processes of avoiding or overcoming them. We want to know why some political systems and communities, in what can be called the "fragile states" found in many of the poor and middle income countries, have broken down even to the point of violent conflict while others have not. Our work asks whether processes of globalisation have precipitated or helped to avoid crisis and social breakdown.

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### Research Objectives

- 1 We will assess how constellations of power at local, national and global levels drive processes of institutional change, collapse and reconstruction and in doing so will challenge simplistic paradigms about the beneficial effects of economic and political liberalisation.
- 2 We will examine the effects of international interventions promoting democratic reform, human rights and market competition on the 'conflict management capacity' and production and distributional systems of existing polities.
- 3 We will analyse how communities have responded to crisis, and the incentives and moral frameworks that have led either toward violent or non-violent outcomes.
- 4 We will examine what kinds of formal and informal institutional arrangements poor communities have constructed to deal with economic survival and local order.



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