



CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA



REGION-BUILDING AND PEACEBUILDING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Gaborone, Botswana

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Introduction

The Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR), Cape Town, South Africa, and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) office in Gaborone, Botswana, hosted a two-day policy advisory group seminar in Gaborone, from 19 to 20 September 2015, on “Region-Building and Peacebuilding in Southern Africa”.

The Botswana seminar assessed key issues on region-building and peacebuilding in Southern Africa, while analysing South Africa’s leadership role in the sub-region. The seminar was convened with about 30 mostly African policymakers, scholars, and civil society actors. Senior officials participated from the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), and from the SADC region and donor governments.

1. Strengthening Southern Africa’s Security Architecture

In November 2012, SADC’s Organ on Politics Defence and Security Cooperation (OPDSC) launched its new peace and security structure – a five-year plan to implement its Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO) II. The plan was expanded from four sectors in SIPO I (politics, defence, state security, and public security) to five in SIPO II with the separation of the police sector from the public sector, in which it had previously been incorporated. In order to strengthen Southern Africa’s peacekeeping capacity, training for the SADC brigade is being organised through its Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre (RPTC) and the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (SARPCCO), both based in Zimbabwe. This support has led to some progress in the operations of the RPTC and its future expansion plans will require that it increases its human resources and curriculum development.

Although SADC states – South Africa, Tanzania, and Malawi – led a 3,000-strong intervention into the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in March 2013, the organisation still lacks the necessary resources and technical expertise to undertake comprehensive peacebuilding on its own. SADC will have to devise effective, locally-driven strategies with key international actors such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank to ensure that the root causes of conflicts are tackled timeously, and that fragile countries do not slide back into conflict in the future as a result of ineffective peacebuilding.

2. SADC: Obstacles to Regional Integration

The change from the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) in 1980 to SADC in 1992 was influenced by both regional and international forces. Although SADC has since made progress in formulating a regional industrial development strategy, the organisation is

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THE SADC SECRETARIAT HEADQUARTERS IN GABORONE, BOTSWANA.

Image source - flickr
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/52584579@N05/5153136825>

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still confronted with the task of implementing it and achieving coherence in the industrial policies of its individual member states. The Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), adopted in 2003, is SADC's blueprint for deepening regional integration in Southern Africa. The plan provides a broad strategy for implementing the organisation's policies over a 15-year timeframe (2005-2020). Two RISDP reviews have been undertaken to date. The first was a desk assessment conducted by the Botswana-based SADC secretariat reviewing implementation from 2005 to 2010. This was followed by an external mid-term review between 2012 and 2013, culminating in a proposed revised RISDP from 2015 to 2020.

The RISDP reviews between 2005 and 2013 noted that the link between member states and the SADC secretariat was weak. Not all member states had established national committees, and those that had, had not equipped them with the capacity to fulfil their mandate. As of 2013, of the 15 SADC member states, functional SNCs existed in only four countries – Angola, Mauritius, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

Implementation of regional integration decisions often takes place at the national level through key ministries. Issues of industrialisation, beneficiation, and value addition have not been effectively addressed by SADC. Limited regional integration has thus occurred in Southern Africa, with intra-regional trade being less than 20 percent. SADC also needs greater community outreach projects to ensure that its work reaches the grassroots and is not just elite-driven.

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DELEGATES OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PARLIAMENTARY FORUM AT ITS 38TH PLENARY SESSION IN NOVEMBER 2015, SWAKOPMUND, NAMIBIA.

Image source - The Southern Times
<http://southernafrican.news/2015/12/01/the-southern-african-development-community-parliamentary-forum/>

3. Governance, the Role of Civil Society, and the SADC Parliamentary Forum

In the past two and a half decades, Southern Africa has experienced a wave of political change, moving from protracted civil war and colonial or authoritarian rule towards peace and more democratic modes of governance characterised by political pluralism, openness, and the holding of regular elections. This growth of more democratic rule has formed part of the “third wave” of democratisation, which accelerated in Africa with the end of the Cold War by 1990.

Though often weak and poorly organised, civil society in Southern Africa has grown increasingly vocal, and a critical media has emerged in many parts of the sub-region. Democratic institutions such as parliaments, electoral bodies, and judiciaries, too, have become more assertive in challenging domestic abuses of power. Local communities can be empowered through decentralisation to respond to the immediate needs of voters. Created in 1997, the SADC Parliamentary Forum has long played only an advisory role in the sub-region. There is some support for transforming the forum into a full-fledged regional parliament. However, this idea has not yet been embraced by all SADC members.

Several SACU members have complained that South Africa has obstructed their industrialisation ambitions, and dumped cheaper goods on their markets



(FROM LEFT), SOUTH AFRICAN PRESIDENT AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CUSTOMS UNION (SACU), JACOB ZUMA; NAMIBIA'S PRESIDENT HAGE GEINGOB; BOTSWANA'S PRESIDENT SERETSE KHAMA IAN KHAMA; SWAZILAND'S PRIME MINISTER BARNABAS SIBUSISO DLAMINI; AND LESOTHO'S DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, MOTHETJOA METSING CUT THE RIBBON SYMBOLISING THE OFFICIAL INAUGURATION OF THE SACU HEADQUARTERS IN WINDHOEK IN NOVEMBER 2015.

Image source - The Southern Times
Photo - Joseph Nekaya (NAMPA)
<http://southernafrican.news/2015/11/23/sacu-leaders-calls-for-economic-diversification/>

4. Strengthening the SADC Secretariat

SADC's Executive Secretary, Tanzania's Stergomena Lawrence Tax, oversees the secretariat and also directly manages the directorate of the Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation, as well as four units: gender, internal audit, macroeconomic convergence surveillance, and public relations. There are two deputy executive secretaries, South African, Thembinkosi Mhlongo, focuses on regional integration; while Congolese, Emilie Mushobekwa, oversees finance and administration. As currently constituted, SADC's secretariat is detached from its 15 member states, and has a difficult relationship with the organisation's external donors. The secretariat also suffers from human and financial resource constraints; weak internal controls and management systems; ineffective monitoring and evaluation systems; as well as a lack of strong oversight structures. Over the past two and a half decades, SADC has adopted over 40 protocols and declarations to harmonise policies and legislation.

5. Trade and Development

The Southern African Development Coordination Conference, created in 1980, was built on the basis of a decolonisation-driven regionalist project against apartheid South Africa. In 1992, SADCC reconstituted itself into SADC. At both national and regional levels, regional integration requires synergy to succeed, and therefore the organisation should consider how to align its integrationist aims with those of SACU, whose five members – South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and Swaziland - all belong to SADC.

Several SACU members have complained that South Africa has obstructed their industrialisation ambitions, and dumped cheaper goods on their markets. In contrast, some South African officials have argued that the other four SACU member states continue to benefit disproportionately from the agreement. In 2014, SACU's exports were 18.6 percent of total trade. A revised 2002 SACU agreement has encountered further challenges, with parallel processes of the organisation's trade-in-services agreement competing with SADC's free trade area. SADC has basically failed to diversify its manufacturing base, with 98 percent of trade in the sub-region concentrated in four broad sectors: unprocessed agricultural goods; food manufactures; textiles; and clothing.

6. South Africa's Leadership Role in Southern Africa

South Africa, which accounts for about 60 percent of Southern Africa's economy, was invited to join SADC in 1994. It has since contributed to peacemaking efforts in Lesotho, the DRC, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar. There were regional perceptions and fears that gains from regional integration would be uneven, with a powerful South Africa likely to benefit more from the integration process than other countries. Convergence among the economies of Southern Africa has remained slow, with South Africa seen by other SADC countries as a major threat to regional development given

the oligopolistic behaviour of some of its multinational corporations (MNCs). South Africa has a corporate sector running parallel with its foreign policy, which has sometimes complicated regional integration efforts. The country can be characterised by three Ms. First, South Africa is seen as mercantilist in the economic arena, having reportedly obstructed the building of a cement factory in Namibia, and a vehicle assembly plant in Botswana. South Africa is also seen as a messiah that can potentially drive development and peacemaking in the sub-region. The country is finally viewed as a model for the sub-region, given its "soft power" attributes of educating Southern Africa's elite at its universities and "exporting" South African popular culture abroad (such as through satellite television service DStv). South Africa has further provided sub-regional support for spatial development initiatives (SDIs) in the areas of energy, water, transport, and gas production.

6. The Role of External Actors: UNECA and the EU

The UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has sought to promote more effective regional integration policies in Southern Africa. UNECA established a separate Sub-regional Development Centre for Southern Africa in Lusaka, Zambia, in 1997, which now serves SADC governments. The three key objectives of the office are: first, to generate ideas that can catalyse regional integration and cooperation through technical support that promotes collective approaches working with SADC, SACU, and COMESA; second, to facilitate networking and information exchange among the sub-region's development partners; and third, to serve as a link between UNECA and its development partners by organising discussion fora and disseminating policy recommendations and technical publications produced by UNECA and other collaborators.

Another multilateral actor, the European Union (EU), is the world's only supranational entity in which sovereignty is pooled. Brussels has had a long-standing relationship with SADC since 1980, and has been a major funder of regional integration efforts in Southern Africa over the past three and a half decades, contributing €206 million to regional integration and infrastructure. The EU has further identified South Africa as one of its 10 strategic partners globally. EU funding to SADC offers support to the SADC secretariat's integration efforts. The partnership has also focused on poverty eradication. With up to 90 percent of regional trade volumes being transmitted by maritime transport, security is increasingly important to the facilitation of Europe's trade in goods by sea. Brussels has thus provided €37.5 million to both SADC and COMESA to fight piracy in the Indian Ocean.

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THE PORT AND RAILWAY COMPLEX AT MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE, MAKE THE CITY A KEY TRANSPORTATION HUB FOR SOUTHERN AND EAST AFRICA.

Image source - Britannica Kids
Photo - Michel Huet/HOA QUI
<http://kids.britannica.com/elementary/art-24614/The-port-and-railway-complex-at-Maputo-Mozambique-make-the>

Policy Recommendations

The following 13 key policy recommendations emerged from the Gaborone policy advisory group seminar:

1. SADC needs to promote balanced and equitable development that has relevance to its 281 million citizens. The organisation must also return to implementation of community outreach projects. Member states must

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offer critical staff to improve the overall performance of implementation; monitoring and evaluation; and oversight, within the SADC secretariat. Such staff must be elite staff and not junior staff, and should educate their governments on the needs of regional integration on their return home.

2. SADC states need to develop a viable regional strategy for beneficiation, value addition, and industrialisation. The organisation should consider regional integration as a socio-economic priority, and incorporate factors of complementarity, inclusivity, and equality into its integration model. Creating conditions for the free exchange of goods is critical, rather than just declaring a free trade area into existence, as SADC did in 2008. Trade liberalisation and developmental regionalism also need to be more closely sequenced across Southern Africa.
3. A knowledge reference group should be established to integrate the main elements of SADC's RISDP and SIPO. A National Security Policy framework is also needed across SADC countries to promote security sector governance and to integrate security sectors to ensure accountability and enhance confidence-building. A regional School of Diplomacy – such as Tanzania's Centre for Foreign Relations – should be established to train SADC diplomats and other policymakers in order to pursue mutually beneficial sub-regional foreign policy goals.
4. SADC member states must fund their own peace and security programmes, and rely less on external donors who may have different priorities. A more equitable division of responsibility is required in regional peacekeeping to reduce dependence on South Africa. An effective division of labour must also be fostered between SADC, the AU, and the UN.
5. The research unit within the SADC secretariat needs to be strengthened to ensure effective policy planning, while the organisation should establish partnerships with centres of excellence and think tanks across the sub-region.
6. Coordination between the five directorates in the SADC secretariat needs urgent improvement, with the work-load shared proportionately within the organisation. SADC should consider increasing its permanent staffing within the secretariat, aligning staffing more effectively with programming, and establishing proper reporting systems.
7. The SADC secretariat should participate actively in the activities of the SADC Parliamentary Forum which its members must be encouraged to transform into a sub-regional parliament. SADC should also devise a monitoring mechanism to measure progress in the implementation of its regional integration schemes. Sanctions must be imposed for non-compliance of SADC decisions.

“SADC needs to promote balanced and equitable development that has relevance to its 281 million citizens”



SADC LEADERS DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 35TH ORDINARY SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN AUGUST 2015 IN GABORONE, BOTSWANA.

Image source - Lusakatimes.com
 Photo - Eddie Mwanaleza/State House
<https://www.lusakatimes.com/2015/08/18/president-lungu-leaves-botswana-for-zambia/>

“The South African government must develop a clear vision for regional integration, regulate the role of its corporate sector, and build domestic constituencies that promote regional integration in the sub-region”



SOUTH AFRICAN DEPUTY PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA PAYS KING LETSIE III A COURTESY CALL AT HIS PALACE IN MASERU, LESOTHO, IN FEBRUARY 2015.

Image source - The Citizen
Photo - DOC
<http://citizen.co.za/326074/ramaphosa-arrives-lesotho/>

8. SADC National Committees need to be reformulated to capacitate them in order to make them more relevant and effective. Political parties in SADC are in urgent need of internal democratisation, and also require accountability mechanisms in the areas of governance and funding.
9. Deepening of a democratic culture is required within SADC. Civil society activists should not adopt an instinctively confrontational approach towards national governments, and must find ways to cooperate with them, where appropriate. Decentralisation and strengthening of local governance is also essential to ensuring popular participation in governance and empowering local communities. SADC should develop a sense of regional identity and prioritise common values.
10. SACU members need to be capacitated to devise alternative domestic revenue streams, given their over-reliance on the organisation's customs-generated income. SACU should create a regional development fund rather than just transferring money through a revenue distribution process. There is also an urgent need to bridge the disparity of development and production capacities among SACU's members. Furthermore, a mechanism should be created for monitoring the implementation of agreements signed by sub-regional governments.
11. The South African government must develop a clear vision for regional integration, regulate the role of its corporate sector, and build domestic constituencies that promote regional integration in the sub-region. South Africa should use its strategic partnership with Angola to ensure a more effective SADC. Tshwane (Pretoria) must also be more active within SADC structures.
12. UNECA should share lessons from its monitoring system on regional integration with the SADC secretariat. It should help to harmonise the industrialisation plans of SADC and COMESA, which it is currently supporting separately. Southern Africa must also learn lessons from West African civil society engagement with ECOWAS in areas of early warning and governance.
13. The issue of migration – both within SADC and to Europe – needs urgent prioritisation. An evolving AU migration policy, which has adopted a developmental approach, could provide useful lessons. Obstacles to the free movement of people must also be removed if regional integration is to succeed. South Africa should subordinate its national interests to broader interests in areas such as immigration and industrialisation. South Africa and Lesotho should also consider establishing a future confederation, with South Africa removing border controls between the two countries.