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One Step Forward, Two Steps Back:

**Reflections on SADC's Organ
on Politics, Defence and
Security Co-operation**

**Hussein Solomon
and Senzo Ngubane**

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One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Reflections on the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-Operation

Hussein Solomon and Senzo Ngubane¹

Introduction

Confronted by security threats with no respect for national frontiers, policymakers around the world have responded with transnational solutions. The result has been the establishment of regional security groupings such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean) and the African Union (AU). At subregional level, too, similar multilateral organisations have proved popular. In West Africa there was the formation of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas), with its security wing Ecomog. In the Horn of Africa, the Inter-Governmental Agency for Development (IGAD) has come to play a key role in the search for peace in both civil war-ravaged Sudan and strife-torn Somalia. In Southern Africa, the principal security grouping has been the Southern African Development Community (SADC), established in 1992.

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Apart from transnational security threats, another factor spurring the development of these organisations in Africa has been the continent's growing need to rely on its own resources to resolve problems. This has been influenced by two inter-related factors. The first is the growing geo-strategic marginalisation of the African continent, exacerbated by the events of 9/11 that focused world attention on South East Asia and the Middle East. The second is an increasing reluctance on the part of the United Nations to get involved in peacemaking and peacekeeping activities in Africa. This is a result of both resource constraints and a lack of political will on the part of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council following the botched humanitarian intervention in Somalia in 1992 — ironically named Operation Restore Hope. A consequence of this has been that individual African states, such as South Africa, are playing an increasingly influential role in other parts of the continent, such as brokering peace agreements between belligerents in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and sending troops to enforce and consolidate peace in the DRC, in Burundi and on the Ethiopian-Eritrean border.

The purpose of this paper is to critically examine one subregional security structure — SADC's Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation. Although emphasis will be placed on the institutional structure of the Organ, the geo-strategic context in which this structure exists will also be discussed. The paper will end with some policy recommendations. In seeking to arrive at recommendations to strengthen SADC Organ, the paper will also draw lessons from other subregional groupings in the developing and developed world.

The SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security

On 28 June 1996, SADC decided to establish the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS) in accordance with Article 4 of SADC Treaty.² However, plagued by a variety of problems, the OPDS never became properly operational. First there was the issue of the chair of the OPDS, which was supposed to be rotated on an annual basis among member country leaders. However, the first appointee, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, managed to secure the position for himself for a full five years — until 2001 when SADC Heads of State forced him to give it up.³ Secondly, a problem arose over the OPDS functioning independently of SADC. This allowed President Mugabe to use his chairpersonship of the OPDS to justify his country's military intervention in the DRC conflict as an SADC force — along with his allies Angola and Namibia. A third set of problems confronting the OPDS revolved around a weak organisational structure, compounded by a shortage of financial resources, poor political direction and a dearth of skilled professionals. By March 2001, a critical SADC review of all operations and structures was finalised.⁴

² *Communique establishing SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security*. 28 June 1996, Gaborone, Botswana. SADC.

³ 'SADC to wrest security organ from Mugabe', *The Zimbabwe Independent*, 10 August 2001.

⁴ SADC. *Report on the Review of Operations of SADC Institutions*. March 2001. Gaborone, Botswana. SADC. The new SADC structure is reflected in Appendix 1.

Structures of the new SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation (OPDSC)

At SADC Heads of State Summit in Blantyre, Malawi, in August 2001, many of the recommendations of SADC review were incorporated into the new organisational structure of the re-named SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation (OPDSC).⁵

Important changes included the OPDSC losing its erstwhile independence and formally becoming an integral part of SADC.⁶ This is laid down in Article 3(1) of the Protocol⁷ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation, which states that the OPDSC is an institution of SADC and shall report to the Summit. This is a positive development for two reasons. Firstly, it reinforces notions of a holistic, expanded and integrated security set-up — emphasising that questions relating to peace and development cannot be separated. Secondly, on a more practical level, it prevents abuse by one state of the Organ for national — or even personal — reasons, as was evident in the decision to intervene in the DRC.

The OPDSC now consists of the following structures:

- the Chairperson of the Organ;
- the Troika;
- a Ministerial Committee;
- an Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC);
- an Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC);
- and such structures as may be established by any of the ministerial committees.

⁵ This is reflected as Appendix 2.

⁶ See SADC's *Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation*. Gaborone, Botswana. 2001. SADC.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.6.

The Chairperson of the Organ

The Summit elects the Chairperson of the Organ for a one-year term of office. The elimination of the situation whereby President Mugabe was able to stay on as chair for five years is a positive development. The rotating chair promotes common ownership of SADC. The Protocol stipulates that whilst the Chairperson is responsible for overall policy direction and the achievement of the objectives of the Organ, this can only be done in consultation with the Troika of the Organ.⁸ This promotes collective decision-making and is aimed at preventing abuse of the position. Another important stipulation designed to curb abuse prevents the Chairperson of SADC simultaneously being Chairperson of the Organ.

The Troika

The Troika is made up of the Chairperson of the Organ, the incoming Chairperson and the outgoing Chairperson.⁹ The incoming Chairperson is elected by the SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government and serves as the Deputy Chairperson of the Organ. Currently, the Troika consists of President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique (Chairperson); President Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania (incoming Chairperson) and President Robert Mugabe (outgoing Chairperson).

Ministerial Committee

This committee comprises the Ministers responsible for foreign affairs, defence, public security and state security from each of the member states and is responsible for co-ordination of the work of the

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.7.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.6.

Organ and its structures. The Ministerial Committee is a positive development since it results in greater co-ordination between, and integration of, the state actors. In the process, it reinforces the vision of a holistic understanding of peace on the African continent being embedded in the concept of human security. The committee is chaired by a Minister from the same country as the Chairperson of the Organ,¹⁰ reinforcing continuity within structures of the Organ.

The Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC)

The ISPDC comprises the Ministers responsible for foreign affairs from each of the state parties and is supposed to perform functions necessary to achieve objectives of the Organ relating to politics and diplomacy. To maintain continuity, the ISPDC is chaired by a Minister from the same country as the Chairperson of the Organ. It reports to the Ministerial Committee,¹¹ and can establish any sub-structures it deems necessary to carry out its job.

The Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC)

The ISDSC consists of state party Ministers responsible for defence, public security and state security. The committee performs functions necessary to achieve objectives of the Organ relating to defence and security. As with the ISPDC, the ISDSC is chaired by a Minister from the same country as the Chairperson of the Organ and reports to the Ministerial Committee. Under the ISDSC are defence, state security and public security sub-committees. As with the ISPDC, the ISDSC is mandated to establish other structures necessary for it to perform its functions.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.8.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.9.

Lessons from other subregional groups

Before making recommendations relating to SADC Organ, it might be useful to review some other regional security arrangements in place around the world to see if SADC can learn from them. This will be a brief overview, focusing on specific issues, and without going into great detail about each of the structures referred to. Two regional security bodies that can provide lessons for the SADC Organ are the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (Ecomog) and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Lessons from Ecomog

In recent years, SADC has appeared to be in regression, with the Southern African subregion as a whole failing to capitalise on the positive sentiment it enjoyed almost a decade ago.¹² Evidence of this has been the regional structure failing to respond effectively to protracted conflicts, such as those in Angola and the DRC. This stands in contrast to the co-ordinated response seen in the West African subregion in recent times. Indeed, in West Africa, Ecomog has assumed the sort of security role that SADC was expected (but failed) to assume in Southern Africa.

Ecomog has clearly displayed strong leadership and shown how to intervene in errant countries in order to safeguard subregional stability. The world has seen the deployment of forces in countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone, to avert impending crises or to 'restore order'. Notwithstanding some of the difficulties associated with such Ecomog missions, SADC might want to draw

¹² Schoeman M, 'Regional security in Africa: Can SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security deliver peace and security in Southern Africa?', in Solomon H, (ed.), *Subregional Organisations and Conflict Management in Africa*, DPMF, IX, 3, June 2002, p.17.

inspiration from the timing of such interventions and the sheer ability to commit resources to achieve peace.

There is a need within SADC to understand the obstacles preventing the subregion from coming up with coherent responses. This point can best be illustrated by reference to the two interventions that have taken place in Southern Africa, namely in Lesotho and the DRC. In the case of Lesotho, it was never clear, for instance, at what level the decision to intervene was taken and what mandate was given. In the case of the DRC, it was never clear whether the countries that intervened did so on behalf of SADC or themselves. This lack of clarity scuppered the possibility of more comprehensive subregional co-operation in those situations. By contrast, Ecomog has managed to create a mechanism (within the parameters and structures set up for the subregion) that allows its member states to take swift action whenever a need arise. SADC has not been able to master the concept of security through intervention, as espoused by the likes of Ecomog and the OSCE. In all its interventions, SADC has clearly shown that it lacks proper co-ordination.

Closely related to the above is the issue of an early warning mechanism for Southern Africa. This is not only relevant to conflicts such as those in Angola and the DRC, but also to environmental and political challenges, for instance. The weaknesses of the subregion were exposed, for example, when an impending environmental problem could not be predicted before the Mozambican flooding. The notion of an early warning system is often focused on large-scale conflicts or wars, but shouldn't be.

In this context, Southern Africa could draw inspiration from the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) decision to establish an early warning mechanism to assist it in dealing with the plethora of challenges confronting the Horn of Africa.

Lessons from the OSCE

The manner in which the OSCE has evolved over time also has relevance for an appraisal of SADC Organ. Given European history, the OSCE decided that the best way to approach the issue of subregional peace and stability was by ensuring that all member states could come together to discuss issues deemed to be of regional importance. Confidence-building measures between the different states are very important in this context.¹³ They allowed states with very different and divergent political backgrounds to start to engage each other on security related issues. This did not only open up space for dialogue but it also gave the member states an opportunity to identify common threads in their approach to security and thus gave rise to a common subregional approach.

Among the challenges facing SADC in its quest for security co-operation and integration is the fact that different member states respond in different ways to their domestic and national situations. This wide range of approaches at the national level tends to cripple attempts to formulate a co-ordinated response to any impending challenge at the subregional level. A vivid example of such a situation has been the haphazard manner in which SADC has responded to the Zimbabwe crisis. The fact that the government of President Mugabe has been given room to subvert important democratic principles observed by other SADC states indicates an absence of subregional conformity. The reluctance of some member states to engage the government of Zimbabwe is also an indication of the need for the building of shared ideas and norms on what the basic criteria are for good governance within SADC, to assist it to arrive at a co-ordinated response to such crises.

It is noteworthy that the OSCE has sought to achieve security through the key related aspects of 'integration, co-operation and

¹³ Moeller, B, 'Subregional organisations and conflict management: Can Africa learn from Europe?', in Solomon H, *op. cit.*, p.4.

intervention'. Security through integration is informed by a view that, in order to avoid war or conflict between member states, it is necessary to forge subregional economic co-operation.¹⁴ The idea is that greater economic integration serves as a deterrent for conflict as each member country knows that waging war damages its own economic well-being.

While an inter-state war between SADC member countries does not seem likely in the near future, this approach by the OSCE of using economic integration as a vehicle for stability and peace still has relevance for Southern Africa. Given the close correlation between poverty and conflict,¹⁵ economic integration — and consequent economic growth — could be a powerful conflict preventive measure, not only between states, but within them as well.

It appears that SADC has already taken some lessons from the OSCE.¹⁶ SADC decided to adopt the OSCE's troika leadership model as a way of dealing with tensions that were apparent between the SADC leadership and the leadership of the OPDS. However, it has not resulted in a unified SADC characterised by a common orientation or purpose. This points to weakness in the institutional collective memory of SADC and underlines the fact that it remains a disparate collection of states pursuing their own national interests irrespective of the institutional structure of SADC.

This perception is reinforced even as one examines the 'successes' of SADC. Consider the success of Operation Rachel in curbing light weapons proliferation in the region through successful co-operation

¹⁴ Graer N, *Security Organisations in Europe — Lessons Learned from the European Experiences*, Occasional Paper No. 7, 1999, Durban: ACCORD, pp.3-4.

¹⁵ See Abiodun A & F Olonisakin, 'Economic fragility and political fluidity: explaining natural resources and conflicts, in Adekeye A & CL Sriram (eds.), *Managing Armed Conflicts in the 21st Century*. London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001, pp.23-36.

¹⁶ Graer N, *op. cit.*, p.2.

between the South African Police Services and their Mozambican counterparts. This success was more the result of effective bilateralism between Pretoria and Maputo than of the multilateralism of SADC. Similarly, the recent strides towards peace in the Great Lakes Region have more to do with the unilateral dogged determination of South Africa's diplomats than effective multilateral intervention on the part of SADC in the DRC.

Within the OSCE is an Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). This office is tasked with, amongst other things, monitoring elections and assisting in developing national human rights and electoral institutions. The Office helps train OSCE human rights officers and election monitors and assists civil society in capacity development initiatives.¹⁷

A similar office may be a valuable contribution to SADC's security co-operation. Recent election-related crises in Southern Africa (Lesotho, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Tanzania) are proof that the subregion has failed to deal effectively with issues relating to human rights and democratic practice. This is despite the existence of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, which is meant to expedite such matters.

The only way the Forum can have an impact in the region will be by becoming proactive, rather than reacting to electoral challenges once they occur. Being proactive implies the existence of a well-developed early warning system within SADC — which is a theme we will return to below. Given how conflict-prone recent elections in SADC states have been, it may be useful to consider some sort of relationship between the SADC Organ and the Parliamentary Forum.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p.2.

Shortcomings and recommendations

- The first problem confronting SADC, and consequently the SADC Organ, is a shortage of funds. SADC is reliant on the international donor community for 80% of its operational costs.¹⁸ The dearth of funds not only undermines the operations of the organisation but also prevents SADC Organ from attracting highly skilled professionals. As a result, the question of membership contributions needs to be revisited.
- Second, duplication within the SADC Organ is costly and undesirable in terms of the required integrated nature of security mechanisms. There does not seem to be a need for both an ISDSC and an ISPDC when all the Ministers involved in them are already brought together in the Ministerial Committee. The issue of preventative diplomacy, for example, cuts across both the ISDSC and the ISPDC functions and needs to be discussed at the level of the Ministerial Committee. Likewise, issues of terrorism and ethnic conflict need the attention of both committees and therefore the Ministerial Committee is the ideal vehicle to deal with such issues comprehensively. It is furthermore recommended that the various sub-committees of the ISDSC become part of the Ministerial Committee.
- Third, Article 9 of the Protocol¹⁹ stipulates that the SADC Secretariat shall provide secretariat services to the Organ. This is a departure from previous practice where the Chairperson of the SADC Organ provided the secretariat. Whilst this move is welcome in that it builds institutional capacity and firmly locates the Organ within broader SADC structures, there are practical problems. The existing SADC secretariat is already overstretched and is currently undergoing rationalisation to reduce costs. In addition, the needs of the Organ are such that a specialised secretariat, properly

¹⁸ SADC, *Report on the Review of Operations of SADC Institutions*. Gaborone, Botswana: SADC, March 2001, p.31.

¹⁹ *Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation*. Gaborone, Botswana. SADC, p.11.

trained in security matters, is necessary to provide adequate support. Financial resources are needed to expand the current secretariat by recruiting specialists in security issues. In the absence of such funding, and as an interim measure, member states could look at the possibility of seconding some of their own staff to the Organ secretariat.

- Fourth, Article 8 (c) of the Protocol²⁰ stipulates that decisions of the Ministerial Committee shall be taken by consensus. This is problematic. Consider the following scenario: a SADC member state engages in gross human rights violations and hangs on to power by means of fraudulent elections. Should other member states on the Ministerial Committee believe intervention is needed, the offending country can avert any action by simply voting against it. Recalcitrant members hold the SADC Organ hostage, with 'decision by consensus' effectively meaning the right of veto. It is therefore recommended that the SADC Organ follow the example set by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in its latter years that decisions be reached by consensus minus one.
- Fifth, there is the question of sovereignty. In an increasingly interdependent world where sovereignty is challenged daily, the Organ has chosen to interpret sovereignty in an absolute sense. Consider the following statement in the Protocol,²¹

Recognising and re-affirming the principles of strict respect for sovereignty, sovereign equality, territorial integrity, political independence, good neighbourliness, interdependence, non-aggression and non-interference in internal affairs of other State.

This notion of sovereignty is extremely problematic if regional integration is to be successful in Southern Africa. According to Haas, international integration involves²²

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.11.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.2.

²² Haas EB, *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social and Economic Forces 1950 — 1957*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1958, p. 16.

...the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new and larger centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing states.

In this way, one of the most fundamental principles of SADC Organ, that of sovereignty, will undermine its primary objective — that of regional integration at the levels of peace and security in Southern Africa.

- Sixth, modalities of co-operation need to be worked out between the SADC Organ and the conflict prevention mechanism of the African Union (AU). Who is responsible for what? How can the SADC Organ reinforce the objectives of the AU and vice-versa? These are crucial questions that need to be speedily resolved. The reason for this urgency stems from the existence of conflicts, such as those in the Great Lakes Region, which involve both SADC and non- SADC states.
- Seventh, the relationship between the SADC Organ and the peace and security cluster of the New Partnership for African Development (Nepad), as well as the Nepad peer review mechanism, need to be worked out.
- Eighth, modalities of the relationship between the SADC Organ and the United Nations under Chapter 8 of the UN Charter also need to be worked out. This is especially important in terms of prior authorisation by the UN Security Council for SADC forces to intervene in any state. It should be noted here that neither the intervention of Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe in the DRC nor the intervention of Botswana and South Africa in Lesotho in 1998 was mandated by a UN Security Council resolution.²³ Such Security Council resolutions are important if SADC wants the UN to bear the costs of such peace support operations.
- Ninth, the internal modalities of a viable SADC peacekeeping force still have to be determined by member states. Here the questions of common command and control, a common logistics framework,

²³ This was not necessary since they were invited by recognised governments.

uniform training, compatible armaments, common military doctrine and common defence budgeting need to be factored in.

Some concluding insights

From June 1996, with the Gaborone Communiqué establishing the SADC Organ, to the SADC Summit in Malawi in 2001, there has been progress on some fronts. But, as indicated, there are also problems and these have unfortunately overshadowed the progress made. Implementation of the recommendations above would help overcome some of the more visible problems, but others within the SADC Organ are so deeply ingrained it will require deeper and more penetrating questions to be asked about the nature and substance of SADC itself.

The first of these is whether it is possible for SADC to become a strong entity when its component member states are weak. This is an important question as it points to what each member brings to the organisation. For example, consider what the region's strongest power, South Africa, brings to SADC peacekeeping. At a recent briefing at the Saldhana military base, members of South Africa's parliamentary portfolio committee on defence heard that:

- More than half of the country's 76 000 soldiers are medically unfit.
- Many of the country's servicemen are regarded as too old for deployment on active service.
- Lack of funds means the army can deploy only one operational brigade of 3 000 and it is 'impossible' to deploy 19 regular army companies and 23 reserve platoons.
- Training has virtually come to a halt. Army reservists, for instance, have not been deployed on training exercises since 1996.
- Equipment is in a deplorable state with only 20 out of 168 Olifant tanks and 16 out of 242 Rooikat armoured cars being deployed due to budget constraints.

- The South African National Defence Force is seriously top-heavy, with a ratio of one general for every 293 men, compared with a general for every 2 000 men in the United States Army.²⁴

Under such circumstances of weakness of component states, how strong can SADC be?

A second question, posed by Schoeman,²⁵ is whether the OPDSC ‘... will be used by heads of state and governments to protect each other, or whether, in the spirit of SADC Treaty, it will be used to protect the people of the region’. Simply put, is security about citizens or the political elites? Time and time again, the SADC leadership’s de facto answer to this question has been the latter. Consider the case of Malawi where political violence is on the rise as President Bakili Muluzi attempts to change the constitution to allow himself to serve an unconstitutional third term in office. Militants from the ruling United Democratic Front — the ‘Young Democrats’ — have been held responsible for much of the current violence, with those opposed to a constitutional amendment being attacked. One recent high-profile case was an attack on Brown Mpinganjira, the leader of the opposition pressure group NDA. He was ambushed at a police roadblock just outside the capital Lilongwe in August 2002. Even more ominously, the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) has also been implicated in such attacks on the opposition.²⁶ Despite these developments, Muluzi continues to serve as Chairperson of SADC and SADC Summit continues to issue statements such as the following: ‘On the political situation, Summit expressed satisfaction that the region generally continues to enjoy political stability and the consolidation of democracy, respect for the rule of law, respect for human rights, peace and stability’.²⁷

²⁴ *Reader’s Digest*, November 2002, pp.109–110.

²⁵ Schoeman M, *op. cit.*, p.20.

²⁶ ‘Malawi: Fear over rising political violence’, *IRIN Report*, 23 August 2002, pp.1–2. Online at www.irinnews.org,

²⁷ *Final Communiqué of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community*. Blantyre, Malawi. 12–14 August 2001, p.4.

SADC goes beyond ignoring human rights abuses. It even congratulates abusers. It sent congratulations to President Robert Mugabe on a successful election in Zimbabwe — an election most observers categorised as neither free nor fair.²⁸ SADC has even sought to shield Mugabe from any external action as a result of his actions. Consider the following statement from SADC's ISDSC:²⁹

The Committee expressed 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.

Statements such as these do SADC irreparable harm, with much of its rhetoric being divorced from reality. It is small wonder that SADC suffers from a credibility crisis arising from the gap between promise and performance.

The above leads us to ask what common values are shared by SADC states. According to Jones,³⁰ value sharing is one of the pre-conditions for a viable political community to come into existence. This issue was raised by the recent *Review of Operations of SADC Institutions* which argued for the '... promotion of common political values, systems and other shared values which are transmitted through institutions which are democratic, legitimate and effective...'.³¹

²⁸ *Press Release: Second Meeting of the Ministerial Committee of SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation*, 20–23 August 2002. Maputo, Mozambique, p.3.

²⁹ *Final Communiqué: 23rd Session of the Interstate Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation*. Luanda, Angola, 7–9 August 2002, p.2.

³⁰ Jones WS, *The Logic of International Relations*. 6th edition. Boston, US: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1988, pp.635–638.

³¹ *Report on the Review of Operations of SADC Institutions*. Gaborone: SADC, March 2001, p.8.

Shared values are something of an intangible that nonetheless exercises a decisive influence on approaches to issues. Two examples bear this out.

With the exception of Swaziland and the DRC, most SADC states are now formal democracies in the sense that they have governments chosen in multiparty elections. However, Isaksen and Tjonneland³² note that the reality is that not more than half the regional states can be said to have all their democratic credentials intact. South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Mauritius and Seychelles are the 'most democratic' of SADC states. Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia and the DRC may be viewed as least democratic. Since 1998, SADC has been split into two regional blocs — roughly along the lines of 'democratic' states versus 'non-democratic' states. In 1998, Zimbabwe, together with Angola and Namibia, deployed military forces to assist the regime of President Laurent Kabila in the DRC. These four states subsequently adopted a collective security agreement. On the other hand, South Africa, together with Botswana and Mozambique, pushed for the resolution of the DRC conflict by political and diplomatic means.³³

The contest between these two blocs also surfaced on the issue of a proposed Mutual Defence Pact in the run-up to the Blantyre Summit in August 2001. Here,³⁴

Angola and Zimbabwe wanted a defence pact obliging SADC countries to also assist member countries in internal conflicts while the South Africa-dominated group wanted to limit the defence pact to external threats.

The underlying point is that different value systems result in differing approaches to the same issue. There is therefore a

³² Isaksen J & EN Tjonneland, *Assessing the Restructuring of SADC: Positions, Policies and Progress*. Bergen, Norway: Crh. Michelsen Institute, 2001, p.43.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.43.

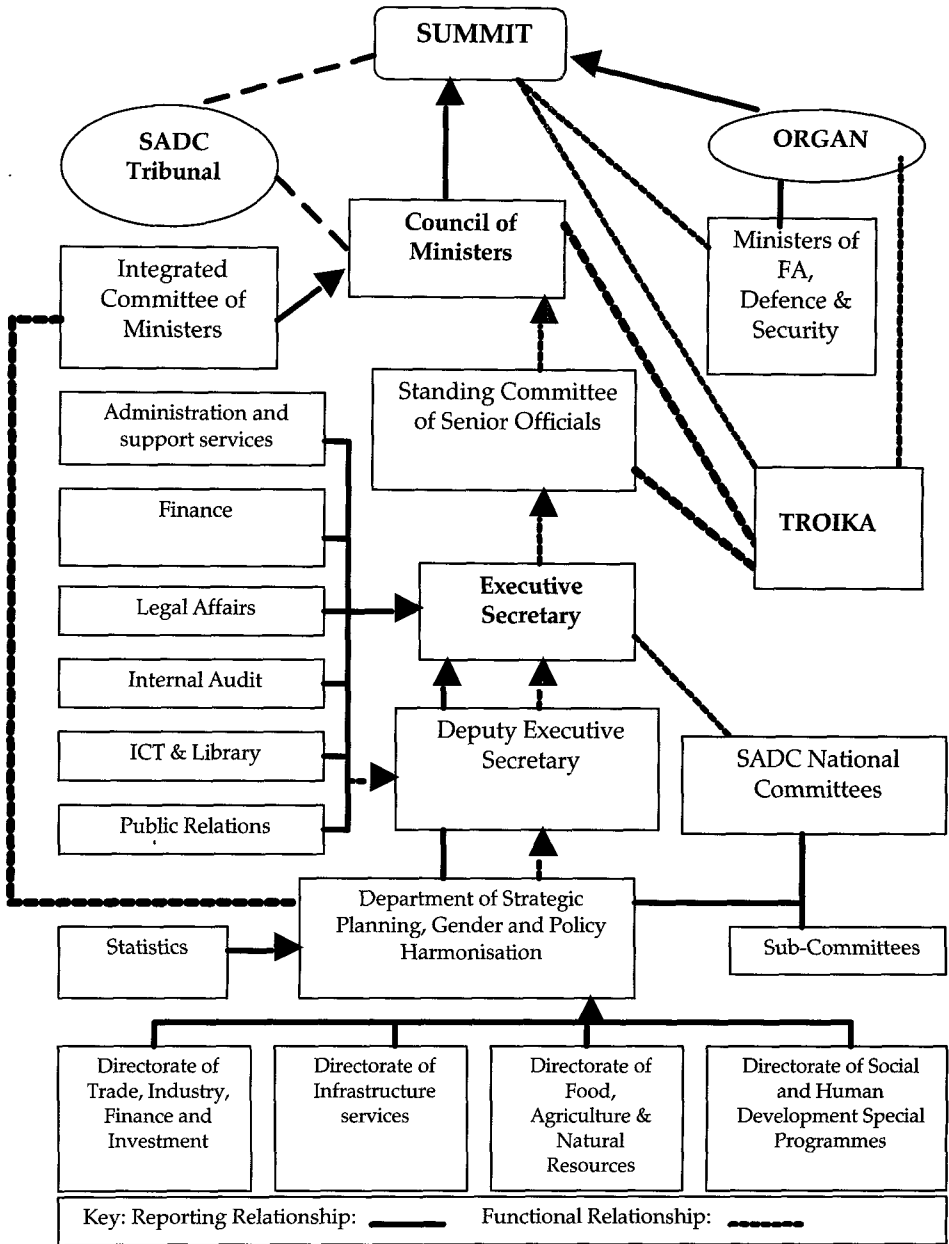
³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.43.

tremendous need for the development of shared or common values. This, in turn, raises the question of who drives this process of achieving value sharing. According to the epigenesis theory of political community put forth by Amitai Etzioni,³⁵ it is the most powerful nation in a regional grouping that 'guides' such a process. Within SADC, that nation is South Africa. However, the failure of South African 'quiet diplomacy' in Zimbabwe, as well as the weakness of the South African state itself (as alluded to above), would suggest that leadership is unlikely to emanate from Pretoria on this crucial issue.

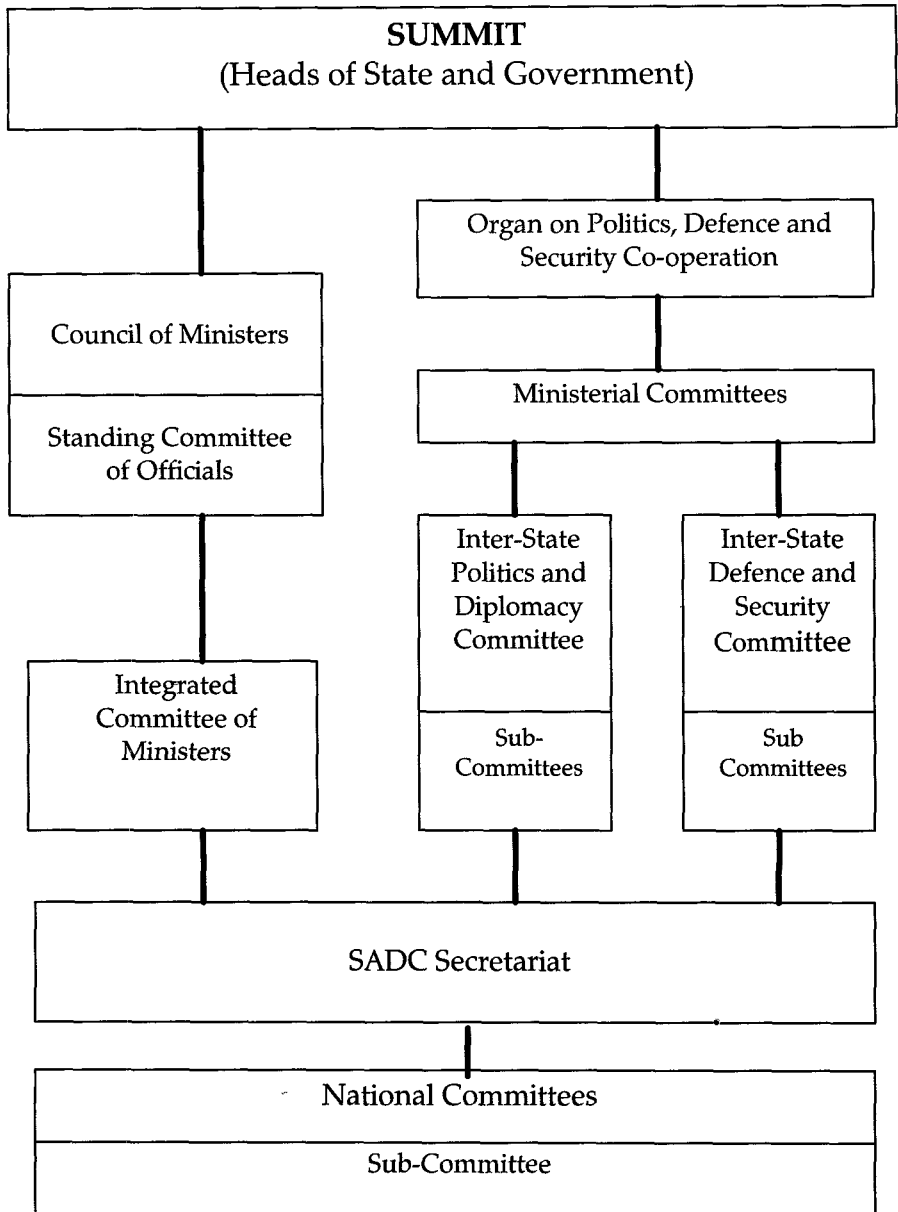
SADC is an institution that tries to project an image of cohesion but in reality has little substance. It functions at a rhetorical level and continues to be primarily a club to protect the excesses of its political elite, as opposed to being concerned with the true emancipation of its citizens.

³⁵ Etzioni A, 'The epigenesis of political communities at the international level,' in Rosenau JN (ed), *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory*. New York: The Free Press, 1969, p.348.

Appendix 1: The new SADC structure



Appendix 2: The new SADC structure at Summit level





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