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Defending the State or Protecting the People?

SADC Security Integration
at a Crossroads

Anne Hammerstad

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Defending the State or Protecting the People? SADC Security Integration at a Crossroads

Anne Hammerstad¹

Introduction and Summary

The Treaty and protocols that constitute the basic policy guidelines of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) paint a picture of a deep and comprehensive project of regional integration between the organisation's 14 (soon to be 13) member states.² Not only are SADC states meant to create a free trade area by 2008, a customs union by 2012,³ and a Common Market by 2015,⁴ they have also signed up to a protocol committing them to close political and security integration.⁵ On paper, then, SADC is a significant force in the economic, political and security dynamics of the Southern African region.

In reality the picture is different. As critics have pointed out almost since the birth of SADC in 1992, the gap between protocols signed and their

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² The Seychelles gave the required one-year notice that it would leave SADC in July 2003, and did not participate at the Dar es Salaam Summit the following month. Although it became a SADC member in 1998, the country never paid its membership dues.

³ According to SADC's *Amendment Protocol on Trade*, which entered into force on 7 August 2000.

⁴ According to SADC's *Regional Indicative Strategic Development plan* (2nd draft, March 2003), section 4.5.5.

⁵ SADC, *Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation*, signed in Blantyre on 14 August 2001, and not yet entered into force (as of August 2003).

implementation is big and widening, creating a credibility problem for the organisation. This report looks at SADC's security dimension only. It asks: Now that the blueprint for security integration has been established, in the form of the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation and the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, does the organisation have the building blocks with which to start the construction of these ambitious security structures?

A lot of interest has been shown in the SADC Organ in recent years, and many research papers have been published on what should be done to achieve closer security integration in the region. Common to all these interventions is the assumption that regional security integration is inherently good for the countries and the peoples of the region. But is this assumption correct? Is an ambitious programme for security integration between Southern African countries, such as the one outlined in the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation, actually desirable for the individual members of this regional organisation?

While the answer on the whole is a qualified yes, this is an important question to ask, since it clarifies what sort of results one should expect from regional integration. Even more importantly, it makes it clear what results one should *not* expect this process to yield. Regionalism is not the panacea to every security challenge facing SADC countries, but in certain areas and in certain ways it can be a useful process that can contribute to peace, security and stability in Southern Africa. I will therefore begin by asking what level of security integration SADC can expect to achieve in the medium to long term (the short term being an inappropriate time frame for a study of security integration), based on the experiences of other regions and the particular conditions in Southern Africa.

This report argues that it is not realistic to expect deep security integration in the SADC region any time soon. The process is likely to be a slow and tortuous one. It also argues that, depending on the route taken, there is a risk that SADC states may integrate their security policies in a way that does not prove conducive to lasting peace and security in this region. If they create a regional security architecture designed primarily to protect elites from external criticism and internal challenges to their legitimacy, the long-term result is likely to be a less, not more, stable Southern Africa.

The argument is structured as follows: The first part gives an account of the goals set up by SADC Heads of State in the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation and charts the implementation of these goals so far. I then move on to focus on the main obstacles to security integration in the SADC area. There are two basic conditions that must be sufficiently met if security integration is to take off. These are mutual trust and a common value basis. I ask why these two factors are so important, and continue with a discussion of the degree to which they are present between Southern African states today.⁶ The report refers to the efforts of other regions to create, nurture and bolster mutual trust and common values in order to come up with suggestions for what strategy the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security should pursue in the coming years, and concludes by revisiting the question: How salient is the regional level for dealing with the security challenges facing Southern African countries and their populations?

SADC's Security Goals

Before discussing how SADC can achieve its security goals, it is necessary to have a look at both the goals themselves and the institution established to further them. SADC created its security arm, the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, in 1996, after recognising that the organisation could not achieve its main goal of eradicating poverty through economic integration while the region was riddled with instability and political conflict. The relationship between economic growth and peace and security had already been recognised in the 1992 Declaration establishing SADC, which stated that 'a climate of peace, security and stability' was a prerequisite 'for development, and for the improvement of the standard and quality of life of the peoples of the region'.⁷

⁶ This discussion is based on a regional workshop for SADC policy makers and civil society representatives at SAIIA on 4 June 2003, titled *Creating the Foundation for SADC Regional Security Integration: Developing Shared Values and Ideas*.

⁷ SADC, *Towards the Southern African Development Community: A Declaration by the Heads of State or Government of Southern African States*. (Windhoek: 17 August 1992, p.2. Both the original and amended Treaty include security as a main objective. SADC, *Consolidated Text of the Treaty of the Southern African Development Community as Amended*. Windhoek: 17 August 1992, amended, Blantyre: 14 August 2001.

However, the Organ was established too hastily, without a clear agreement on how it would function. As a result it quickly became caught in a deadlock between different camps within SADC. This struggle has been thoroughly studied elsewhere, so I will not describe in detail the short and turbulent history of the Organ here.⁸ For the purpose of this study, it is enough to note that the deadlock was broken at the Blantyre Summit in August 2001, when the SADC Heads of State signed the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation, and reached an agreement on several central issues concerning the Organ's leadership structure and its relationship with the SADC Summit.

Among the issues resolved were, first, that the Organ should be integrated into the SADC structure and should report to the SADC Summit, rather than remain an independent institution in the tradition of its predecessor, the Frontline States (FLS). Second, it was agreed that the chairmanship of the Organ should rotate annually according to the same troika model as for SADC as a whole, with the proviso that the same country cannot be a member of both troikas at the same time. Finally, with the signing of the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation,⁹ the Summit agreed on broad guidelines for the work of the restructured Organ. A working group was soon set up to prepare a Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO)¹⁰ in order to come up with an agenda for implementing

⁸ See instead Nathan L, "'Organ failure': A review of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security' in Laakso L (ed.), *Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa: Europe, SADC and Ecowas*. Helsinki: Department of Political Science, University of Helsinki, 2002; Breytenbach W, 'Failure of security co-operation in SADC: The suspension of the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security' in *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 7, 1, Summer 2000; Isaksen H & E Tjønneland, *Assessing the Restructuring of SADC — Positions, Policies and Progress*, R2001:6. Bergen: Christian Michelsen's Institute, 2001; and Meyns P, 'The ongoing search for a security structure in the SADC region: The re-establishment of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security' in Hansohm et al, *Monitoring Regional Integration in Southern Africa Yearbook*. Windhoek: Gamsberg MacMillan, 2001.

⁹ Hereby referred to as the Protocol. The SADC Treaty and all protocols are on the SADC website, www.sadc.int.

¹⁰ The decision was taken at the Organ Ministerial Committee meeting in Luanda in December 2001.

the goals of the Protocol. This plan was endorsed at the SADC Summit in Dar es Salaam in August 2003.

The SADC Heads of State also signed another element of the region's security architecture at the Dar Summit, the Mutual Defence Pact.¹¹ The pact had been provided for in the Protocol's article two, paragraph 2(h), and had since the signing of the Protocol been the object of difficult negotiations between member governments. In the end they signed a significantly watered-down version of the pact, wherein SADC countries do not commit themselves to the principle of 'an attack on one is an attack on all', as is the case for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Instead the pact leaves it open for each member to decide how to respond if a fellow member is attacked militarily by external or internal forces. This means that the defence pact does not actually add much depth to SADC's integration effort. The Protocol already has among its objectives to 'prevent, contain and resolve inter- and intra-state conflict by peaceful means' and to 'consider enforcement action in accordance with international law and as a matter of last resort where peaceful means have failed'.¹² In other words, the Protocol has already anticipated the need for states to deal with military attacks and conflicts in the SADC region, and the defence pact does not go further towards legally committing members to military enforcement action than the Protocol.

Interpreting the Protocol

The Protocol is thus the foundation for SADC security integration. As such it warrants a closer look. While overall it is a sound document whose objectives, if implemented, would certainly lead to a more stable and secure region, the Protocol has some flaws. First of all, it does not explicitly define what security means. This is a serious omission considering the great disagreements not only in the academic debate, but also between different states and international organisations, on how inclusive our understanding of security should be. Some still adhere to a traditional or 'realist' understanding of security as a question of military power and armed conflict only. Realism usually focuses on states and the 'national security'

¹¹ With the exception of the Seychelles, which is due to leave SADC in 2004.

¹² *Protocol*, Article 2, 'Objectives', paragraph 2 (e) and (f).

strategies their regimes adopt to deter or repel armed attack from without or within their borders. At the extreme other end of the spectrum are the proponents of human security, who include in this amorphous concept problems such as the 'cultural threat' against communities of Coca Cola or tourism,¹³ and even issues such as workplace and traffic accidents.¹⁴ More rigorous attempts at defining 'human security' have been more fruitful.¹⁵ These have tended to focus on individuals who are *extremely vulnerable*, for instance caught in the midst of war or a humanitarian catastrophe, or finding their lives and freedom threatened by the policies and abuses of repressive and violent regimes.

'Human security' has been a very useful concept with which to induce state leaders to focus on the well-being of people rather than assessing security as solely a question of military capabilities and coercive power. It provides a new, more human and humanitarian context within which to debate and construct a country's or a region's security policies, particularly in the developing world. However, it is crucial to avoid the trap of labelling every social, economic or political problem a 'human security threat', since this robs the concept of security of its more fundamental elements of urgency and survival. Thus, only a narrower conception of human security can provide the Organ with practical guidelines as to what should be its policy priorities.

Only once the Organ is clear about how it understands security can it begin to decide how to pursue the goals of the Protocol. The most important task in this context is how to balance traditional security concerns with those of human security (more narrowly defined). Elements of both notions of security are evident in the text of the Protocol. On the one hand, the emphasis on a mutual defence pact¹⁶ and a strong affirmation of sovereignty¹⁷ are signs of a traditional security mindset. On the other hand, the Protocol includes objectives such as to 'protect the people and

¹³ See e.g. Poku N & D Graham (eds.), *Redefining Security: Population Movements and National Security*. Westport: Praeger, 1998.

¹⁴ UNDP, *Human Development Report*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

¹⁵ Suhrke A, 'Human security and the interests of states', in *Security Dialogue*, 30, 3, 1999, pp.265–276.

¹⁶ *Protocol*, Article 2, 'Objectives', paragraph 2(h).

¹⁷ *Protocol*, 'Preamble' and article 11, paragraph 1(a).

safeguard the development of the Region against instability arising from the breakdown of law and order'; to 'promote the development of democratic institutions and practices within the territories of State Parties and encourage the observance of universal human rights'; and to 'enhance regional capacity in respect of disaster management'. These goals point to a human security agenda.

The potentially all-embracing nature of 'human security' means that it is not a concept that the Organ can take on without making choices and clarifications. Indeed, the objective of the SADC organisation as a whole is to eradicate poverty. This objective is usually included on the list of human security issues by most proponents of the concept. Thus, if a broad interpretation of human security were to be employed by SADC, most of SADC's activities would fall under the security sector and a separate Organ to deal with 'security issues' within the SADC organisation would become superfluous. The Organ therefore needs to narrow down the meaning of human security and ensure that the concept of security retains its association with urgency and survival. To provide coherence to its mandate it would furthermore be necessary for the Organ to limit its field of interest to problems that may potentially lead to the threat of widespread political violence — be it inter-state or civil war, oppression of opposition groups and activities, attacks on democratic institutions and the rule of law, or secessionist and rebel movements — that is, activities that affect the ability of a state to function as a single and uncontested political community. The link between traditional security issues and human insecurity must be recognised and taken seriously, since severe human insecurities in a country are likely to (eventually) have a negative effect on traditional security.

Thus, a security institution like the Organ should become directly concerned with human security problems when they are of a nature and severity that threaten to increase traditional security problems. For instance, if human rights abuses in a particular country are rapidly increasing and are moving towards a level where they threaten the breakdown of the rule of law, and may create a situation where a country's government is pitted against large parts of its population in a tug of war, then this should be an issue for the Organ. If it fails to take an interest in human rights matters until they reach a state of severe political crisis, then it deprives itself of an important pre-emptive tool. It is after all easier to deal with a political

problem *before* it becomes a full-blown crisis. The adoption of a broader security agenda will in other words enable the Organ to promote and sustain long-term peace and security in the region by allowing it to monitor and address human insecurities that may lead to full-blown political crises if they are left to simmer or to deteriorate. If the Organ is to take its preventive mandate¹⁸ seriously, it will have to adopt a broad security agenda and not be afraid to address internal problems in individual member states.

Which direction will the Organ take?

From the above discussion it becomes clear that a reading of the Protocol is not enough to determine in which direction the Organ is heading. The goals of the Protocol are broad and often vague, leaving wide space for interpretation by policymakers. Furthermore, the goals cover a wide spectrum of policy areas, leaving policymakers to choose which areas to prioritise. Due to human and financial capacity problems — SADC is made up of some of the poorest countries in the world, which have relatively few resources to spend on regional projects — there is little likelihood that SADC states will choose to implement all aspects of the Protocol simultaneously. Hard choices must therefore be made when operationalising and implementing the Protocol. It will be these choices that determine what SADC security integration is going to look like in the future.

Is it possible at the moment to discern which direction the Organ will take? Will it become a traditional defence alliance between political elites that leaves internal security problems outside the jurisdiction of the regional organisation in the name of national sovereignty? Or will it adopt a radical — and more demanding — human security agenda that takes into consideration the root causes of conflict? The art of prediction is never exact, but there are two ways in which to assess which direction the Organ is most likely to take. The first is to look at what the Organ has done so far, since its restructuring in 2001. The second is to look at the priorities of the

¹⁸ The Protocol states that an Organ objective shall be to '*prevent, contain and resolve inter- and intra-state conflict by peaceful means*'. Article 2, No. 2(e). Emphasis added.

SIPO, the Organ's implementation plan. The problem with the latter is that it is too early to determine how important this plan will become. It has only just been approved, and there is therefore no track record to indicate how seriously and determinedly SADC states will follow up on its recommendations. Therefore, an analysis of the Organ's actual activities will probably be more fruitful. Action speaks louder than words, and this is particularly true in the case of SADC, where the number of objectives agreed to on paper but not implemented is too large for all to be taken at face value. In addition, the SIPO does not make priorities among the many laudable objectives it sets out, and therefore does not provide a good basis for predicting the direction the Organ's activities will take.¹⁹

The ensuing analysis of the Organ's actual activities is divided into two parts. The first and shorter part will look at the Organ's *institutional* arrangements, such as the number and structure of committees and subcommittees. Such structural arrangements can already reveal much about where an institution is likely to focus its attention. The second part looks at the *contents* of the Organ's activities and asks what policies and issues have been at the forefront of its policy agenda.

The Organ's Institutional Arrangements

The Organ is still in its infancy as a functioning security institution. Its relationship with the SADC Secretariat in Gaborone is still in the process of being worked out, although the Protocol and amended Treaty assigned secretarial services for the Organ to the SADC Secretariat. Few human resources are assigned to the Organ (most of them from the Chair country, which was Mozambique until August 2003, and Lesotho after the Dar Summit). This problem may be alleviated in 2004, since there are plans to employ more staff at the SADC Secretariat in Gaborone to deal with Organ matters. According to these plans, a new *Department for Political, Defence and Security Affairs* will be established within the Secretariat, with two directorates, one working specifically for the Organ's Inter-state Defence

¹⁹ The official version of the SIPO has not yet been released, but there are reportedly few significant changes from the Second Maseru draft from March 2003.

and Security Committee (ISDSC) and the other for the Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC).²⁰

With more support staff at the Secretariat there is a better chance that the Organ will retain and build an institutional memory, through the maintenance of an Organ archive and an annotated agenda that keeps track of decisions taken and the progress made in implementing them. However, new hiring at the Secretariat awaits the findings of a job evaluation study, which is part of the organisation's overall restructuring process. This study has been delayed and is already subject to criticism (from within the Secretariat as well). It now looks as if it is reaching the stage of final approval,²¹ but the Secretariat will at the earliest be able to begin hiring long overdue staff to deal with its expanded responsibilities in April 2003.

Despite the extensive restructuring phase SADC has been, and still is, going through, the Organ has been able to maintain a relatively regular meeting schedule and achieve some progress in setting up sub-structures and developing a plan of action. However, without a strong secretariat to give the Organ's endeavours continuity and momentum, its productivity and zeal will remain overly dependent on the capacity and interest of its sitting chairman. The Mozambican chairman worked hard to push the strategic plan (the SIPO) forward, and did a good job keeping the Organ on track (albeit moving slowly). It remains to be seen whether the new chair, Lesotho, will be able to keep the momentum up, and whether its SADC colleagues and neighbours will chip in and offer support. The appointment at the Dar Summit meeting of South Africa as the incoming chair of the Organ (scheduled to take over the chairmanship from Lesotho in August 2004) is a good sign, since it provides an opportunity for South Africa to take an active role as a troika member in pushing the Organ agenda forward in the next three years.

A review of the institutional arrangements of the Organ in the two-year period since its restructuring at the 2001 Summit reveals a general bias

²⁰ SADC, *2nd Maseru Draft of the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ*. Maseru: SADC, March 2003.

²¹ The study was discussed at the Dar es Salaam Summit in August 2003, but was not unconditionally endorsed.

towards a traditional military security agenda. The Organ has a plenary Ministerial Committee, with two subcommittees (which again may create as many sub-subcommittees as deemed necessary). These are the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) — from now on referred to as the defence committee; and the Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC) — from now on called the politics committee. Created under the FLS and operating even during the period of controversy over the Organ from 1996 to 2001, the defence committee is a well-established and well-functioning body with a long history of practical co-operation. Its subcommittees, made up of military and defence officials, deal with traditional security issues such as military and intelligence co-operation, often at a relatively low and technical level. The actual practical security co-operation within SADC tends to take place in the defence committee (and its subcommittee).

In contrast, the politics committee (ISPDC) has so far had only two meetings²² and has yet to set up subcommittees. This is a worrying sign for those who wish the Organ to deal with 'softer' aspects of security co-operation, such as the peaceful resolution of conflicts through mediation, reconciliation and confidence-building activities. Such an agenda would not belong to the military officials of the defence committee, but to the diplomats and foreign office officials of the politics committee.

A final important aspect of the Organ's structure is its rules for decision-making. The Protocol stipulates that all decisions made by Organ institutions must be taken by consensus,²³ with a quorum of two-thirds of the member states necessary to make the decisions valid.²⁴ These rules strongly enforce the principle of national sovereignty. Since no decision can be made without the approval of all member governments present, the Organ has no supra-national mandate. As a consequence, it is left to the political will of each member government whether — or to what extent — they adhere to the goals and principles of the Protocol. Any suggestion that the Organ should criticise, or take enforcement action against, a member state can be effectively vetoed by the errant state in question. Due to the

²² In May 2002 and August 2003.

²³ SADC, *Protocol*, Article 8(c) states that 'decisions shall be taken by consensus'. The same is the case in the SADC *Treaty*, article 19.

²⁴ SADC, *Treaty*, article 18.

decision-making structure, then, the Organ has in practice no enforcement mandate and can become involved in the internal affairs of a member state only if invited by it to do so.

Most human security problems in the Southern African region are of an internal, not inter-state, nature. Except in the Democratic Republic of Congo, external military attack is at the moment an unlikely scenario for SADC members. The consolidation of democratic structures and good governance, on the other hand, is important for both individual security and political stability in many — if not most — SADC member states, all of which are relatively young as independent states. Several of these have only recently emerged from civil war or repressive white minority rule. Because the Organ can take an interest in the internal affairs of a member state only if invited by it to do so, the regional institution is left with very little leverage to deal with some of the most salient security threats currently facing Southern African states.

The Organ's Output and Activities

The above section argued that the institutional structures of the Organ are, so far, biased towards a traditional military and non-interventionist security frame of mind. The same trend is evident when looking at the activities taking place within these structures. The following discussion of the Organ's output is divided into two parts. The first is a general discussion of what trends can be discerned when looking at the topics debated and the decisions taken by the Organ and its subcommittees. The second part looks at the particular case of Zimbabwe, and asks what the Organ's handling of the internal crisis in this country means for the prospects of SADC security integration. The reason for the choice of Zimbabwe is simple: while Zimbabwe is not the only country in Southern Africa with internal governance problems (consider Angola, the DRC and Swaziland — and it is safe to argue that the DRC is worse off than Zimbabwe), the Organ has been more strongly seized with the Zimbabwe crisis than with the internal problems of any other member state in its history. This is a result not only of pressure from Western powers on Zimbabwe's neighbours to 'do something' to resolve the crisis, but is also owing to the fact that Zimbabwe is, and always has been, central to SADC's regional project — geographically, politically and economically. The country has been a leader

in the region and an important force behind all regional initiatives in Southern Africa. A political crisis in Zimbabwe therefore affects SADC's regional ambitions more severely than do the problems in more peripheral member states such as the DRC and Swaziland.

Organ matters: agreeing on the Mutual Defence Pact and the SIPO

The main activity of the Organ since its restructuring in August 2001 has revolved around getting agreement on two documents: the Mutual Defence Pact and the strategic plan for implementing the protocol, the SIPO. This section will focus on their genesis. The approval of the defence pact and the SIPO at the Dar Summit in 2003 heralded a new phase in the Organ's history, that of implementing the Protocol's goals. It would, however, be premature for this report to speculate on how this implementation phase will work out.

The SIPO was developed by a task force, which comprised representatives from the two leadership troikas of SADC and the Organ. The task force held a string of meetings, some of them including SADC members who did not have a seat on either of the troikas but who had a strong interest in Organ matters. Although approved at the August 2003 Summit, the final document was yet to be published at the time of the writing of this report.²⁵ But according to earlier drafts, the SIPO sticks closely to the goals and principles set out in the Protocol. It is divided into four sections, the Political, Defence, State Security and Public Security sectors. Within each of these, the plan includes both traditional and human security goals. Among these are the goal to protect democracy and good governance; strengthen relations with civil society; disarm and demobilise ex-combatants; develop a disaster management mechanism; protect the people of the region against intra-state and inter-state conflict, and many more objectives that, if achieved, would certainly improve both state and human security in the SADC region.

However, while the SIPO takes a step further than the Protocol, it is still not an *implementation* plan. In many cases the activities it proposes are phrased

²⁵ November 2003.

in vague terms. Thus, the plan promises to 'promote' or 'encourage' certain policies and conduct workshops and seminars on particular themes. In the case of the more concrete proposals, such as the promise to establish common electoral standards for the region, no plan of action is given for how to accomplish them. Furthermore, the plan does not provide a hierarchy of priorities between the many suggested activities. Considering the scarce resources at SADC's disposal, and its member countries' weak implementation capacity, this is a serious problem.

It should be emphasised that despite these shortcomings the SIPO constitutes a promising starting point for the Organ's implementation activities. It now remains for the Organ to follow it up with an agenda for implementation that sets out priorities and targets, and then to start working towards achieving these targets.

One positive aspect of the SIPO is its strong emphasis on creating a SADC peacekeeping capacity, in order to fulfil the subregional commitment to the African Union's new security structure (which is meant to rest on subregional building blocks). If peacekeeping is indeed to be a core focus of SADC's implementation activities in the coming months and years, this would be a good and useful compromise between the traditional militaristic and the radical human security agendas contained within the Protocol.

On the one hand, peacekeeping missions do not violate national sovereignty, since they are never deployed without the approval of the government (and usually of the other warring factions too). A joint peacekeeping capacity will also contribute to the closer military integration between SADC member states. This will happen in several ways: through joint training; through the demands for compatibility of military equipment; and through encouraging the development of common strategic outlooks.

On the other hand, peacekeeping activities are also a step towards building human security, since they create a political space in which warring factions may find a negotiated end to hostilities. The particular training necessary to make soldiers into peacekeepers is also positive from a human security perspective. A properly trained peacekeeper is a soldier with a thorough knowledge of the Geneva Conventions (the laws of war), who has learnt how to use minimum force and interact amicably with the civilian

population. A peacekeeping soldier will also have learnt that not all commands given to him by his officers are necessarily legal, and that it is his own responsibility not to follow orders to commit war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide. In other words, peacekeeping training will contribute to ensuring that the armed forces of Southern African countries consist of well-trained, disciplined, restrained and responsible soldiers.

The strategic plan went through several drafts before it was finally approved at the 2003 SADC Summit. One of the stumbling blocks delaying work on the SIFO was the Mutual Defence Pact, since several SADC members were unwilling to commit to a pact that would legally oblige them to come to the military aid of a fellow SADC member in the event of a military attack by internal or external forces.

According to the draft version of the defence pact, '[a]n armed attack against a State Party shall be considered a threat to regional peace and security and such an attack shall be met with immediate collective action by State Parties'.²⁶ There are obvious reasons why several SADC member states hesitated over committing themselves to this formulation. Would the pact commit SADC neighbours to propping up a delegitimised government faced by a popular revolt? Or would, in a not too unlikely scenario, the inherently unstable situation in the DRC oblige the Southern African regional power, South Africa, to be drawn into war with the two Great Lakes powers, Rwanda and Uganda? In the absence of a 'clear and present' common threat, it is difficult to see what interest the more stable and democratic countries in the SADC region would have in committing themselves to such a mutual defence pact. In the end they did not, with the result that the SADC Mutual Defence Pact signed at the Dar Summit is not a defence pact in the traditional meaning of the word. Rather it is a declaration that SADC states pledge to help each other to the best of their ability, and according to their own convictions and principles. The signing of the defence pact can therefore not be seen as evidence of a lurch of SADC's security co-operation in a more militaristic direction.

Because of the reasons given above, the watering down of the defence pact was a good thing. The region is not yet ready for a NATO-type alliance. Furthermore, the creation of such an alliance should not be a first priority in

²⁶ *Draft SADC Mutual Defence Pact*, Article 6(1). Maputo: 23 August 2002.

the Southern African region: it would be costly and would not address the more immediate threats facing most of SADC's member states. That the question of a defence pact is for the time being out of the way is a positive development. It frees the Organ to focus on more immediate threats — most of which revolve around issues of internal legitimacy and governance, not military attack. I will now turn to the Organ's involvement in one such crisis.

How to handle internal political crisis in member states: The case of Zimbabwe

An important test of the Organ's commitment to human security values is its approach to Zimbabwe — a country suffering from a deep political and economic crisis. The political insecurity of the regime has fuelled the human insecurity of ordinary citizens and vice versa in a downward spiral. There has been some strong criticism of the Organ's approach to the Zimbabwe crisis. However, it should not be forgotten that a Zimbabwe task force was created by the SADC Summit in 2001 and subsequently subsumed under the Organ. The creation of this task force — an initiative to deal with the internal problems of a member state — is an unprecedented and positive development in SADC's history. For instance, the Organ had no role in the resolution in 2002 of the long-lasting civil war in Angola, and was deeply divided over issues such as the South African and Botswanan intervention in Lesotho in 1998 and that of Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe in the DRC the same year. Thus, the crisis in Zimbabwe is the first example of the Organ dealing in a unified manner with a serious political crisis within a member state.

But have the Organ's policies on Zimbabwe been effective? The answer depends on the perspective one takes. It seems that the Organ has contributed little towards achieving a solution to the internal crisis in Zimbabwe. There has also been a clear slant in the Organ's statements towards support for Zimbabwe's sitting government, led by President Robert Mugabe. Both the Organ and the SADC Summit of Heads of State have issued a string of supportive and relatively upbeat communiqués on Zimbabwe's policies, often implicitly or explicitly blaming foreign interference for creating the economic crisis and inciting the political conflict. For instance, the 23rd Session of the defence committee (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'.²⁷

Of the official Organ statements on Zimbabwe, the one that possibly raised the deepest concern for human security advocates resulted from the third session of the Ministerial Committee, held in Harare on 3 April 2003. At this meeting the ministers again refrained from criticising the Zimbabwe government, and instead 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', leaving the impression that the human security issues of governance and human rights are not priorities for the Organ.²⁸

Based on a review of the Organ's official statements, then, it seems clear that the conservative norm of non-interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign member government has a stronger foothold in this body than does any notion of human security. The emphasis on the national sovereignty of Zimbabwe's government does not bode well for the prospects of a more interventionist approach towards resolving internal crises in member countries in the future, despite that in general terms, some SADC leaders speak warmly about the need to understand that the security of one state is deeply connected with that of its neighbours. As Benjamin Mkapa, Tanzania's President and SADC's incoming chairman, eloquently put it at the 2003 Summit:²⁹

We must also take a keener interest in the affairs and well being of neighbouring member countries. If your neighbour is not stable, you

²⁷ SADC, *23rd 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: 7–9 August 2002, para 11.

²⁸ SADC, *Communiqué of the Third Session of the Committee of Ministers of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation*. Harare: 3 April 2003, para. 12.

²⁹ Mkapa B, *Speech by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and Chairperson of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), His Excellency Benjamin William Mkapa, At the Closing Ceremony of the 2003 SADC Summit*. Dar es Salaam, Diamond Jubilee Hall, 26 August 2003.

cannot be stable for too long. If your neighbour prospers, that prosperity will sooner, rather than later, rub-off on to you. If your neighbour collapses, the fallout will not respect the boundary between you.

It remains to be seen whether this 'keener interest' will transform into a more interventionist agenda under the SADC chairmanship of Tanzania. It would be a positive development if the Organ were to become an increasingly relevant part of internal conflict resolution and prevention across the SADC region. While the crisis in Zimbabwe is undoubtedly difficult for any outside party to resolve, there are other problems in the region more amenable to regional pressures. Foremost among these is the deteriorating governance in the monarchy of Swaziland. There have been some initiatives to put pressure on King Mswati, such as the recent visit to Mbabane by Mozambique's president, Joaquim Chissano, to hold informal talks with the king on the proposed new constitution.³⁰ However, there is as yet no sign of a concerted effort by the Organ (Chissano was not acting on its behalf, but as chairman of the African Union) to push the government of Swaziland into adopting a new constitution that guarantees the rule of law rather than the rule by royal decree. Yet such a push would very much be in the spirit of the Protocol. It would, first, further the Protocol's human security aims of fostering human rights and democracy.³¹ And second, it would contribute to preventing a more traditional politico-military security problem in the longer term, by addressing the democracy deficit in Swaziland before political relations in that country deteriorate to the point where violence and instability ensue. The violent suppression by the police of trade union protests in Mbabane in August 2003 was a dire warning, a sign to the Organ that it is time for the region to become involved.³²

I will finish the section on the Organ's response to the Zimbabwe crisis by discussing an interesting 'side effect' of this crisis on regional co-operation. From the perspective of closer regional security integration, the one

³⁰ *IRIN News*, 'Swaziland: Regional leaders meet with King Mswati', 18 August 2003.

³¹ See *Protocol*, Article Two, 'Objectives', paragraph 2 (g).

³² *IRIN News*, 'Swaziland: Soul-searching after police attack protestors', 14 August 2003.

positive result, if that term is appropriate, of the situation in Zimbabwe is that SADC members seem to have found one common voice with which to speak on this issue. The closing of ranks among SADC governments in the face of harsh criticism from both the outside (particularly from the EU, Australia and the US) and from within (for instance from the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, human rights groups and the independent media in Zimbabwe itself) is impressive from the point of view of realpolitik. SADC has been able to undermine the sanctions placed on Zimbabwean politicians by, for example, refusing to go to international meetings if Zimbabwe is barred from attending. The SADC–EU ministerial meeting in November 2002 was thus moved from Copenhagen to Maputo so that Zimbabwe could attend, and the SADC members refused to sign a joint statement with the EU expressing ‘concern at the plight of the people of Zimbabwe’.³³

The Organ has been quite effective in deflecting criticism from outsiders such as the EU by vehemently arguing that this is a problem for Zimbabwe itself to solve, with the help and support of its African neighbours. For instance, in the news release from the Organ’s Fourth Ministerial Committee meeting, held in Maputo in August 2003, the ministers ‘noted with concern the continued imposition of sanctions against Zimbabwe and reiterated its commitment to work with Zimbabwe in addressing the political and economic situation in the country’.³⁴

Thus, from the point of view of organisational cohesion and unity, Zimbabwe has had a significant impact. The Organ has managed to unify members around this important foreign policy issue, and SADC governments have come very close to speaking with one voice on Zimbabwe. This is no mean achievement when compared to, for instance, the EU’s many fillings-out over core foreign policy issues such as the war in the Balkans in the 1990s and the Iraq war in 2003.

³³ Southern African Documentation and Co-operation Centre, *Zimbabwe: SADC/EU Meeting Ends without Agreement on Zimbabwe*. SADOCC: <http://www.sadocc.at/news2002/2002-340.shtml>, 8 November 2003.

³⁴ SADC, *News Release of the Fourth Session of the Ministerial Committee of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation*. Maputo: 7 August 2003.

However, while unity in foreign and security policy matters is an admirable achievement, it is not a goal in itself. The *purpose* for which SADC members unite must be one that is conducive to lasting peace and security in the region. Considering the major political problems and potential security threats arising from internal conditions in SADC countries such as Angola, the DRC, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, it is questionable whether the Organ can be efficient in achieving its goal of lasting security if it does not sometimes concern itself with — and sometimes criticises — the internal affairs of specific member countries. In the case of Zimbabwe, the economic conditions have continued to deteriorate to the point of collapse, turning the country from a motor of economic growth to a hindrance to both economic and political integration in the SADC region. This is clearly an obstacle to achieving the goals of the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation, which, as mentioned earlier, include creating the foundations for good governance, human rights and democracy *within* SADC member states. Instead of attempting to work together with its donors (or International Co-operating Partners, as SADC prefers to call them), the hard-line stance taken by SADC on Zimbabwe against the ‘interference’ from outsiders has not aided any attempts at solving the political and economic crisis in that country.

It is impossible to know how well a more interventionist approach would have worked in the case of the complicated political situation in Zimbabwe, but such an approach would have had three advantages. First, it would have shown that SADC members take the human security goals of the Protocol as seriously as they do its traditional military security goals. This would have strengthened the status of the Protocol, and given greater credibility to SADC members’ promises to implement it. Second, and connected to the previous point, it would have placed SADC member states in a less ambivalent ethical light, in view of the international obligations they have entered into. SADC members have not only signed up to their own Treaty and Protocol, but also to the United Nations Human Rights Conventions, the AU Treaty, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (Nepad) goals and a host of other binding and non-binding international agreements that would — or should — warrant a more outspoken stance against the governance crisis in Zimbabwe. At the moment, SADC’s ambivalence towards the Zimbabwe crisis tends to overshadow the Southern African region’s other efforts at fulfilling these international legal and moral obligations. The valid argument that Western powers have been

disproportionately preoccupied with the fate of white Zimbabwean farmers does not provide SADC governments with any justification for ignoring the fate of ordinary Zimbabweans. To counteract the claim that to place Zimbabwe at the top of the regional agenda is to cave in to a neo-colonialist agenda, SADC has only to apply its new commitment to interventionism³⁵ in a consistent manner: not only to 'interfere' in Zimbabwe, but also to do so in Swaziland or wherever else in the region a crisis of governance and human security occurs.

Third and lastly, Zimbabwe has now fallen so far into economic collapse that even if quiet diplomacy and leadership solidarity in the end provide a solution to the political crisis in the country, so much damage has by now been done to the Zimbabwean economy and polity that it would be difficult to claim that this approach was a success. Considering the depth of the crisis, a more interventionist approach would have been unlikely to worsen the situation in Zimbabwe. At the same time it would have improved SADC's credibility by showing its will to enforce the obligations of its own Treaty and Protocol.

Confidence-Building: The Cornerstone of SADC Security Integration

Having set out the Organ's stated goals and assessed its past and future priorities, the next step is to ask: What are the chances of SADC achieving them? In the introduction to this report I argued that SADC countries do not sufficiently share a sense of common values and mutual trust to embark on a rapid and deep security integration project as outlined in the Protocol. But how does this assertion fit with the discussion above of SADC countries' common stance on the Zimbabwe question?

³⁵ Interventionism does not have to imply a *military* intervention, but includes all policies constructed with the aim of affecting the internal affairs of another sovereign state. Thus 'quiet diplomacy' is also a form of interventionism, which can be strong or weak depending on the sort of carrots and sticks offered in the process. Military intervention is always the very last resort, and is not suggested or advocated in this paper as a suitable strategy to deal with any of the current internal problems of SADC member states.

As the discussion above probably revealed, the unity of SADC governments against the political pressure of the EU and US is a lowest-common-denominator sort of unity. It is an unofficial agreement between SADC members to respect each other's sovereignty and not comment negatively on each other's internal problems. This may be a starting point for security integration, since it is important for state leaders to respect each other if they are to co-operate closely. However, it is not necessarily a sign that they share the same political values or the same beliefs as to what constitute good and appropriate economic and political policies, and what the rights and duties of governments are vis-à-vis their citizens. Furthermore, if the values of elite solidarity and co-operation become the dominant element underlying SADC security integration, the likelihood that the inter-state organisation will contribute to achieving lasting peace and security in the region is slim. This approach would mean that SADC is not allowed a role in helping member states to deal with their internal security problems.

Moving away from historical animosities

SADC countries have in many ways made good progress in rendering inter-state relations in the region more amicable. In the 1970s and 1980s, the region was characterised by several civil wars and by hostility between apartheid South Africa and the Frontline States. The region suffered greatly from South Africa's destabilisation policy. Therefore the transition of South Africa from an apartheid system to a democratic state in 1994 contributed greatly to improving peace and stability in the region. In addition, the end of the civil wars in Mozambique in the early 1990s and in Angola in 2002 reduced tensions between these states and their neighbours on issues such as refugees, weapons smuggling and other cross-border transgressions. The deteriorating relationship in recent months between Botswana and Zimbabwe over such matters as the spread of foot and mouth disease and the influx of Zimbabwean refugees and illegal migrants³⁶ into Botswana shows how important political and economic stability within countries is for the relationship between them. As a potent symbol of this worsening

³⁶ 'According to Botswana's Department of Immigration, 26,717 Zimbabwean illegal immigrants were apprehended and repatriated from Botswana last year alone'. *IRIN News*, 'Botswana: Concern over Zimbabwe illegal immigrants', 17 July 2003.

relationship, Botswana is building a 2.4 metre high fence across 500 kilometres of its border with Zimbabwe.³⁷

The general trend in Southern Africa is nevertheless towards increasingly good relations between states, and — with significant exceptions, mentioned earlier — generally positive (or at least not negative) developments when it comes to internal stability as well.³⁸ SADC as an organisation must take some of the credit for this positive trend. The institutionalised system of summits and other meetings that bind SADC members together has made their relationship more predictable, and created a forum in which problems can be raised before they become so serious that they create inter-state tension. The relatively well-functioning Interstate Defence and Security Committee and its subcommittees, with their focus on practical, sometimes mundane, co-operation on cross-border problems, have been important in this regard. The fact that both top foreign policy and defence politicians (at the Summit and ministerial meetings) and medium-level bureaucrats in defence departments and armed forces (in the subcommittees) meet regularly and develop personal relationships means that the channels of communication between SADC countries have steadily improved, leading to less risk of misunderstandings or unnecessary conflict.

Lacking a strong common vision and mutual trust

However, despite improvements and the public display of elite solidarity, there are still strong differences in opinion between SADC governments on what SADC should be about. While there is certainly less hostility between Southern African governments today compared with the 1980s, there is not yet a strong sense of mutual trust between them. The lack of both common vision and mutual confidence can be seen in the turbulent history of

³⁷ *IRIN News*, 'Botswana: Tensions Rise over Gaborone's New Border Fence', 8 September 2003.

³⁸ Although the HIV/AIDS pandemic casts a deep shadow over prospects for human development in the region, as the last few years' Human Development Index, published annually by the United Nations Development Programme, shows. Only Botswana and Mozambique, with their impressive economic growth rates, have kept their place on the index, while the rest of the region has fallen. Zimbabwe's drcp has been the most dramatic, changing from a country of 'Medium' to one of 'Low Human Development' in 2003.

SADC's attempts at building a security arm. The creation of the Organ and its subsequent deadlock brought into the open two distinct — and conflicting — views of what a SADC security structure should look like.³⁹ These opposed views come out in the often significantly varying accounts that policymakers from different SADC countries give of the security problems the region is facing, in their sometimes widely different interpretations of what happened at Organ meetings, and of what agreements these meetings reached. The disagreements were exposed in stark relief at a regional workshop for SADC policymakers and civil society representatives held at SAIIA in June 2003.⁴⁰

The first of the two visions is a militaristic and traditional one. Proponents of this view argue that the SADC region should continue to take the threat of external aggression seriously, and that member countries should protect each other from this threat by concluding a mutual defence pact. They argue that military might is necessary to solve some problems, and that peace negotiations often achieve the best and most lasting results when conducted from a position of military strength or victory.⁴¹ The example most often offered in this regard is that of the Rwandan and Ugandan military attack on the DRC, a SADC member since 1998. Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe, also SADC members, came to the aid of the DRC government, and prevented the invaders and their Congolese allies from taking the capital Kinshasa.

The second is a wider, human security-oriented vision based on the governance goals of Nepad: democracy, human rights, minority rights, negotiation, mediation and other means to resolve conflict peacefully. This view is based on the belief that disputes can be settled peacefully through

³⁹ For an excellent account of these two visions, see Nathan L, *op. cit.* The paper is also published in Laakso L (ed.), *op. cit.*

⁴⁰ *Creating the Foundation for SADC Regional Security Integration: Developing Shared Values and Ideas*. Johannesburg: SAIIA, 4 June 2003.

⁴¹ Angolan representatives seem to be the foremost proponents of this view. Their point of view is coloured by their history of civil war, and by the heavy interference during the Cold War period of outside powers on the side of the Unita rebels. The belief in military strength as the primary security tool is also influenced by the fact that the ruling MPLA party won the civil war in the end through the military defeat of Unita.

dialogue and diplomacy, and that the best way of achieving peace between states is to achieve peace *within* them. Stable, united and prospering states are more likely to have good relations with their neighbours than deeply divided ones. Furthermore, states riddled with internal problems tend to export these problems to neighbouring countries through refugees, rebel movements establishing themselves in border areas, and disrupted regional trade and infrastructure patterns.

According to this line of thought, the DRC will not be safe from outside aggression until it has sorted out its internal conflict. The Inter-Congolese Dialogue in 2002 was an example of this multilateral, multidimensional view on security. A wide range of Congolese stakeholders from government, rebel groups, militias, political parties and civil society representatives were brought together to find a comprehensive and negotiated way out of the civil war through compromise and power sharing. At the same time, Rwanda's and Uganda's security fears were attended to in separate negotiations. The result was a complex array of agreements and conditionalities, but one that led to both countries pulling out (at least most of) their troops towards the end of 2002, and brought the main rebel groups into a fragile power-sharing arrangement. Whether this arrangement will last remains to be seen. South Africa, the host of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, is the foremost proponent within SADC of this multilateral and co-operative approach to security. It does not shy away from sending troops to other parts of the African continent, but insists on sending them as peacekeepers rather than war fighters. It has an unflinching belief, based on the experiences of its own transition to democracy, in negotiation and power-sharing as the foremost tools of conflict resolution. The deployment of peacekeeping troops is accordingly seen as the means to create the stability on the ground necessary to allow for negotiations to start.

The existence of two different visions on where the Organ should be heading does not mean that there is no common value foundation among state elites in Southern Africa. SADC leaders do indeed share a sense of solidarity, created by a common history of struggle against colonialism and apartheid. It is also safe to say that there is a shared suspicion of the motives and intentions of Western powers in the subregion, a correspondingly strong commitment to sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and a wish to solve problems in the region

internally, without the intervention of outside powers. This is particularly obvious in the statements of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ deploring the sanctions imposed by the US and EU on Zimbabwe.⁴²

There is furthermore a common feeling of unease among SADC governments about working with civil society and bringing non-governmental organisations (NGOs), whether activists or research institutions, into the consultation processes of the 'high politics' sphere of national and regional security. While some SADC countries have a stronger civil society than others, and some SADC governments co-operate better with the NGO sector, it is still the case that the SADC region as a whole suffers from a weak civil society and a lack of sympathy and co-operation between civil society actors and governments.

This lack of trust and common vision — externally between states, and internally between governments and their civil society constituents — is a serious impediment to the long-term peace and stability of the SADC region. The final section of this paper will therefore look at first, why trust and shared values are so important for regional integration projects; and second, why they are an issue not only between states but also between governments and civil society within states. Finally, I suggest a strategy for building mutual trust and common values in the SADC region.

Building a Southern African Security Community

Regional security integration between sovereign states is a slow and thorny project, wherever one is in the world. In an inter-state system based on the norms of sovereignty and non-interference, and where the realist paradigm of power competition and 'security dilemmas' (the more secure one state makes itself, the less secure its neighbours become) has been dominant,

⁴² See e.g. SADC, *News Release of the Fourth Session of the Ministerial Committee of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation*. Maputo: SADC, 7 August 2003. SADC also tends to ignore the fact that the EU sanctions are smart sanctions imposed on members of the Zimbabwe political *elite*, and instead deplores the sanctions as harming the *people* of Zimbabwe. This misinterpretation by SADC of EU policy, deliberate or not, has not helped relations between the two regional organisations.

states have tended not to trust their security to anyone but themselves. The most common dynamic behind the creation or strengthening of regional security organisations has been a sense of necessity in the face of a common (perceived) enemy. Thus, NATO was created to protect its members from the threat of the Soviet Union, and was to an important degree held together by a strong hegemon, the US. The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), a much weaker organisation, is retaining its relevance partly because of its members' common concern over the military strength of China.⁴³

Seen from this realist perspective, there are great impediments to security integration in the Southern African region. First, SADC member states received their independence relatively recently — some after armed struggle — and are accordingly particularly jealous of their sovereignty and suspicious of 'interference' by other states in their affairs, particularly in the 'high politics' sphere of national security. This can be seen in the region's reaction to Western pressure on Zimbabwe.

Second, the region consists of relatively weak states, both economically and politically. Economically, this means that there are limited resources at the disposal of regional projects. Politically, it means that states are often too inward-gazing and immersed in their internal problems to have time to spare for regional co-operation. Some governments are still struggling to retain their *internal* sovereignty — that is, they are having a hard time keeping political control over the whole of the national territory in the face of domestic challenges to the legitimacy of their regime. This makes the prospect of giving away sovereignty to a regional body harder to stomach. Thirdly, and most salient from a realist perspective, SADC member states do not face a common external enemy, and therefore do not have a strong material incentive to co-operate rather than compete in the security sphere. Neither is there a strong hegemon in the region, which has taken it upon itself to keep a security alliance together and push the integration process forward. South Africa, by far the most dominant economic power in the region, has not shown the will to take on this role. This is probably for good

⁴³ See da Cunha D, 'Asia-Pacific security: The strengths and weaknesses of ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum'. Paper delivered at the SAIIA workshop *Creating the Foundation for SADC Regional Security Integration: Developing Shared Values and Ideas*, Johannesburg: SAIIA, 4 June 2003.

reasons, since if it had tried to do so, it would have aroused suspicion and hostility in many of its SADC colleagues.⁴⁴

To point out the difficulties and obstacles in the way of SADC security integration is not to attempt to dishearten the government policymakers and civil society stakeholders who are working to transform SADC into a security community — that is, a community of states ‘whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful change’.⁴⁵ Many critics are disillusioned with the Organ because it has not yet made good the promises of the Protocol. It has been an aim of this report to explain why one should not expect too much in the near future, and to show that there is no reason to give up on the Organ yet. This does not mean, however, that SADC and its member governments are let off the hook. That the process will be slow makes it even more urgent that it should get started. It is crucial that the Organ begins implementing the goals of the Protocol, but for it to be able to do so it needs to know where to start. The creation of complex and impressive-looking but empty security institutions is not the way forward. Instead it is necessary to begin with the very foundations of security integration: common values and mutual trust.

Common values and trust: The foundation of a security community

The realist paradigm is not suitable for understanding the need for security integration in Southern Africa, since the common external military threats that realists believe are necessary to force states into serious security cooperation do not at the moment exist in this region. However, while realism helps us to understand why it will be difficult to get policymakers in Southern Africa to prioritise the regional level out of a sense of national security, this does not mean that SADC members would not benefit greatly from security integration. Realism is not the only paradigm within which to

⁴⁴ On regional resentment against South Africa, see Adebajo A & C Landsberg, ‘South Africa and Nigeria as regional hegemons’ in Baregu M & C Landsberg (eds), *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2003, pp.186–87 and 192.

⁴⁵ Adler E & M Barnett, ‘A framework for the study of security communities’ in Adler E & M Barnett (eds), *Security Communities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p31.

understand the dynamics of inter-state relations. Particularly after the end of the Cold War's bipolar security rivalry, a wider and more co-operative concept of security has emerged. Consequently, security institutions that are based on this new understanding of security have been strengthened. The foremost example is the Organisation for Security Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and its impressive growth in scope and significance after the end of the Cold War. The OSCE began as the Conference on Security Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in the early 1970s. The CSCE was founded on an understanding that security is achieved through co-operation rather than rivalry. During the Cold War years its attempts to warm the relations between the superpowers gave it a relatively peripheral role in the European security architecture. But after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the emergence of a host of former Eastern Bloc countries from the shadow of the Soviet Union the CSCE's emphases on confidence building between states and the prevention and solution of political crises *within* states acquired a new urgency. In 1994, the CSCE was changed into the OSCE, an organisation with its own headquarters and permanent structures. This was a clear sign that a shift had taken place in policymakers' thinking about security, and highlighted the new emphasis placed on co-operative security models in the post-Cold War world.

It is to the efforts of the OSCE rather than NATO that SADC should look for its model of security integration. Considering the nature of the threats facing SADC countries, they will benefit much more from a regional security arrangement based on a comprehensive (broad) and co-operative understanding of security and with a practical, on-the-ground focus than they will from a militarily focused and statist common defence organisation on the model of NATO. There are three major reasons for this. The first is the lack of resources — both economic and human — available for creating and maintaining a strong, centralised regional security institution. SADC countries have limited funds available and immense problems to deal with domestically, such as of poverty, education and health. They therefore have an obligation to choose the form of regional co-operation that is the most efficient — that is, one that provides the most benefit with the least expense.

The second reason is that SADC should learn to crawl before it tries to walk: the world's most successful regional integration project, the EU, has been a slow and incremental one that started out 50 years ago as a modest

European Coal and Steel Community between six countries. Likewise, NATO is the world's strongest and most successful common defence alliance because it is able to build on a sense of common destiny and a shared set of values and mutual sympathy among its members. This is based on a common identity deriving from the sense of belonging to 'the West'.⁴⁶ The threat of the Soviet Union and the power of the US held the alliance together in the beginning, but NATO continued to exist after the end of the Cold War because these common values and mutual sympathies continue to keep the alliance together (despite brawls over the US' and Britain's war against Iraq). SADC does not have this strong political, social and cultural foundation, nor does it have a sufficiently strong hegemon on the inside or a sufficiently threatening common enemy on the outside to keep a common defence alliance together despite this lack.

The third reason is related to the two above: SADC should not embark on a project that will fail due to a lack of commitment from member states that are still not ready to trust their security interests in each others' hands. Giving up hard-earned sovereignty to a common institution requires a strong sense of mutual trust, common identity and a vision of a shared future. These qualities are hard to find in interstate relations; and in the places where they are found, such as in the Nordic region or the EU, they have been built and nurtured over a long period. For SADC to take one step at a time is crucial, then, if an ever-closer relationship between its members is to be achieved.

The sympathy or solidarity between SADC's political elites described in this report is the bare minimum necessary for starting on the road towards a Southern African security community. Any study of security communities and how to achieve them usually describes this quest as a slow, difficult and incremental process that takes place over several stages. Elite solidarity is a starting point, where 'states begin to orient themselves in each other's direction and desire to coordinate their relations' to their mutual benefit.⁴⁷ This stage has clearly been reached in the SADC region.

⁴⁶ Turkey is the anomaly here, but its strategic position both during the Cold War and in the post-9/11 War on Terror ensures its central place in the alliance.

⁴⁷ Adler & Barnett, *op. cit.*, pp.37–38.

The second stage begins when the many social interactions entered into by a group of states begin to transform the regional environment. This happens because member states are increasingly bound into common agreements and structures, which foster better knowledge about each other. The creation of a regional organisation like SADC is part of the strengthening and deepening of interaction among states, and is therefore an important stage on the road to a security community. The frequency of interaction and the sharing of the structures provided by a regional organisation facilitate the development of a common understanding between states on what the problems of the region are, and how best to solve them. It is important to emphasise that this common understanding cannot exclude the internal affairs of states if the aim of a security community is to be attained.⁴⁸ A regional community — unlike a regional system — consists of states that share the same values and social ideals. Without each member state ensuring that its domestic behaviour is consistent with the community's values, inter-state relations will be fraught with tensions and suspicion rather than eased by a mutual understanding and trust.

The SADC region is at the moment at the very early part of stage two. Interaction is becoming increasingly frequent, and with the many regional plans of action just coming out, it looks as if it will deepen as well. However, the point has not yet been reached where the domestic policies of SADC governments can be said to be compatible. This is the most important obstacle at the moment for the SADC region, and it must be overcome to reach the third and final stage on the road to security community. This is a stage in which the dynamic and positive relationship between states across a range of activities and spheres of society provides the source for mutual trust and a sense of common identity between them.⁴⁹ In this fortunate state of affairs, these qualities become mutually reinforcing: trust strengthens the sense of identity and community, while the sense of belonging to the same community strengthens the sense of trust.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.36 and 39–45.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.45.

Internal affairs are key to regional integration

It may sound counter-intuitive, but the key to progress towards a security community lies in the domestic politics of SADC's member states. As this paper has shown, the regional level is important, but the national level is more so when it comes to which policies will have the greatest impact on stability, peace and security in Southern Africa. Most potential and actual security threats faced by SADC countries today are internal ones. They emanate from the economic policies of governments if these do not deliver acceptable returns in the form of job creation, economic growth, and health care, among other economic and social aims. And they arise from bad political governance practices that prevent people from protesting and seeking to change the government's policies through legitimate channels such as political parties, elections, trade unions or other organised forms of political activity. In the young and untested democracies of Southern Africa, these internal challenges and not inter-state war are likely to bring the most salient security problems of the future. The quest for a security community in Southern Africa is therefore not only to achieve a peaceful community of states but to strengthen the political, economic and social institutions that create and maintain a sense of community *within* states.

SADC member states should therefore ensure that the organisation is an additional support to national efforts instead of a regional juggernaut that slows down progress through cumbersome bureaucratic procedures or through spending precious time and resources on negotiating protocols that are then not implemented. This means that integration policies should be not too ambitiously aimed, and that the subsidiary principle should be the yardstick of SADC activities. In other words, the SADC organisation should stick to issues that it makes particular sense to deal with at the regional level (such as transnational organised criminal networks), while functioning as a facilitator and resource centre for the creation and development of policies that are better implemented nationally.

Again, it must be emphasised that regional security integration between Southern African states is not an aim in itself. The aim of integration must be to achieve a *particular* kind of regional political order. SADC states have agreed in their Treaty and protocols that this order should be based on democracy and human rights, and all the institutions, rights and obligations that go with a system of liberal democracy. This includes a multi-party

system; a vibrant civil society; transparency and accountability of governance; the separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers; and a free press as an independent watchdog keeping an eye on these powers. A well-functioning and well-established democratic system is thus much more than the periodical holding of elections — although elections are of course a crucial part of democracy.

The aim of regional security integration should therefore be to co-operate to obtain this liberal democratic political order within each and every member state. Security is not only about the survival and power of state elites and protecting the structures and borders of the state. If the concept is to have any moral value — that is, if security is to be a goal worth pursuing — then it must also include the security and well-being of the people ruled by these elites and living within those borders. This means that civil society organisations should play an important role in the planning and construction of SADC's regional security architecture. Of course, the task of determining security policies should fall squarely on the shoulders of state politicians and policymakers, but this still leaves space for hearings, consultations and other processes for gathering and making use of the views, suggestions and ideas of civil society stakeholders. The work on the SIPO could have provided a good chance to develop such a system of consultation. Sadly, non-state actors were given very little opportunity to participate in the process that created the SIPO. Since the negotiations on this document were conducted behind closed doors and very little information came out on the issues being discussed, there was little scope for civil society organisations to contribute.

An open and consultative process of policymaking, even in the security sector, would add many benefits to SADC's integration efforts. First, it would give over-worked policymakers (who have little time and resources to research what options they have at their disposal) a chance to receive fresh insights and consider innovative ways of solving problems. Furthermore, an open and consultative decision-making process will broaden the government's legitimacy and the electorate's sense of ownership of the policy decisions that come out at the end of the process. This will both strengthen the institutions of democracy and give the policies broader support, thereby increasing their chances of being successfully implemented.

Finally, a process of soliciting input and encouraging dialogue with non-state stakeholders would have the positive and much-needed side-effect of strengthening and professionalising civil society groups in the region. This is an important point, since the lack of trust and the reluctance to consult displayed by governments are partly due to problems within the civil society sector itself. In many SADC countries, NGOs are weak, and not always representative of larger constituencies. Government officials often complain, sometimes rightly, that the demands and criticisms they receive from civil society groups are not informed by knowledge of how government works. The demands are often seen as unrealistic, and are therefore ignored. Sometimes civil society groups weaken the impact they might have by not following their criticisms of government policies with practical suggestions as to how they could do things differently. On the other hand, in some SADC countries the main problem is not that civil society representatives are too remote or uninformed, but rather the opposite. Many so-called NGOs in the Southern African region are too closely linked to the state to claim real independence. They are an unofficial branch of government rather than representatives of civil society.

To strengthen civil society and enable NGOs to play their role in building democratic communities is not only the responsibility of the organisations themselves but also of governments. Without channels of consultation and with severely restricted access to information (for instance, on the contents of the SIPO), it is difficult for NGOs to contribute to the decision-making processes in ways that are useful for states. If left in the dark, suggestions from these organisations will have to rely on assumptions. And if treated with suspicion, NGOs will not gain insights into how government processes work, or a better understanding of where their contributions are likely to be more valuable. A virtuous cycle of social learning between government representatives and civil society stakeholders needs to be initiated, and governments are best placed to begin it. Then it is up to civil society organisations to retain a critical distance while coming up with practical and constructive policy suggestions.

Conclusion: Where To Now?

SADC has started on the road to a regional security community. It has notched up some important achievements in the last 10–15 years, especially in improving inter-state relations in the region. But having overcome the realist notion of security as a zero-sum game, where the security of one state is the insecurity of another, the Southern African region still has a long way to go before it becomes a strong, peaceful and stable community. So far the focus of SADC member governments has been agreeing on protocols and setting up joint institutions to facilitate inter-governmental communication. A regional dialogue between state elites is of course a necessary element of integration, but it cannot alone achieve the goal of a security community. Since the pursuit of lasting security for most Southern African countries means dealing with internal problems rather than external threats, a national dialogue in each member country on the goals of regional security integration is also necessary. An important part of SADC's strategy over the next few years should therefore be to ensure that civil society has a voice in how the integration project should unfold. NGOs on the other hand should ensure that they use this voice effectively and develop a practical agenda, within the respective fields of their expertise or interest, for how they believe SADC countries should pursue the goal of peace and security. Both SADC and the AU have provisions for ensuring inputs from civil society into the organisation's decisions and activities (for example in the African Peer Review Mechanism set up as part of the Nepad plan). It is therefore not necessary for SADC to make further commitments to including civil society, but it is crucial that it places more weight on following up these commitments with practical measures.

The next five to 10 years in SADC's history should be the age of implementation. A moratorium on more protocols may well be warranted, to ensure that the attention of policymakers is not again absorbed by the process of hammering out new agreements. The successes or failures of this implementation stage will be determined by the political will and initiative of governments. This report has argued that while many of SADC's security issues are conducive to being dealt with at the regional level, the national policies of each member state are still often the most efficient tool that SADC member states can use to deal with their own security challenges. The SADC region is an additional level in the quest for peace, prosperity and progress; it is not a substitute for national responsibility. However, if

SADC countries take a co-operative approach to security, they can help each other to find the right tools with which to deal more effectively and amicably with their own and each other's security challenges.

While there is no need, and it is indeed premature, to proclaim the SADC Organ a failure, there are some serious obstacles to progress ahead. Foremost of these are the holy cows of sovereignty, non-interference and elite solidarity. Since the major security challenges of the future in the Southern African region are most likely to arise from internal governance and legitimacy issues, the SADC organisation must find a way of dealing with these if it is to play a significant role in building a Southern African security community. For SADC to achieve this is a tall order, considering the present political climate, but it is not an impossible one.



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