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US-SOUTH AFRICA RELATIONS AND THE "PARIASH" STATES

by

Greg Mills
Thomas J. Callahan
Deon Geldenhuys
Peter Fabricius



THE SOUTH AFRICAN
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Jan Smuts House, Braamfontein, Johannesburg, South Africa
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PREFACE

The storm of controversy that followed the announcement of South African arms sales to Syria in January 1997 raised a number of questions about South Africa's foreign policy and, specifically, its relations with the United States (US) and so-called "pariah" states. *First*, nearly three years after the advent of democracy, the strategic purpose of Pretoria's foreign policy appeared to vacillate between a principal concern over human rights, a need to offset the direction of apartheid South Africa's foreign relations, and a desire to pursue the national interest above all else. In this, the notion of the national interest, too, was unclear.

Second, a lack of clarity over the strategic purpose of South Africa's policy has, at times, led to a welter of confusing signals and opinions from government. As the Syrian episode illustrated, there appeared to be no clearly defined chain of command in the foreign policy making and articulation process, at the expense of South Africa's relations with the US. *Third*, there appeared to be a fundamental misunderstanding of the goals and aspirations of US foreign policy, particularly with regard to third party relations with pariah states. However, there is a lack of clarity as to what exactly constitutes a "pariah" state and what would be appropriate guidelines to follow.

Against this background, with the support of South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) convened a workshop on 5 March 1997 to examine these and related issues. This Report is a compilation of the talks presented at the workshop.

I would like to thank Caroline de Pelet of SAIIA for organising the workshop, and to Anne Katz, Pippa Lange and Alan Begg for their assistance in the production of this Report. Finally, the financial assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs is gratefully acknowledged. It should be noted, however, that the views expressed herein should not be construed as representing the opinions of the SAIIA and the DFA.

Greg Mills
Johannesburg, May 1997

SOUTH AFRICA'S FOREIGN POLICY: ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

Greg Mills

South Africa's foreign relations have, over the past six months, illustrated some of the at times contradictory strains which influence the formulation and implementation of policy. Three examples underscore this point. *First*, in November last year President Mandela made the long-anticipated shift to recognising the People's Republic of China (PRC) at the expense of diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Although this was apparently an inevitable move, given the impending transfer of Hong Kong and China's burgeoning economic might, it came only months after he had promised such a shift would *not* be made and would, in the eyes of some observers, have contradicted South Africa's expressed views on human rights issues.

Second, the public furore in January 1997 over proposed South African arms sales to Syria and America's reaction to this raised, once more, fundamental questions about the guiding principles behind South Africa's foreign relations and also the manner in which policy is both formulated and articulated.

Third, against this stream, recent events over South Africa's facilitating role in Zaire and the apparent success of President Mandela's visit to Asia give some hint that a constructive, less benign foreign and regional policy is taking shape. Our so far unsuccessful role in achieving a peaceful settlement in Zaire does, however, still raise questions about whether South Africa has the resources (in finance and personnel) and the political will, in the face of regional sensitivities, to conduct the job of "continental crisis manager". It also raises an awareness of the need, as Dr Conrad Strauss has pointed out, for South Africa to take care to balance regional sensitivities over its size and international status against the need to "assume a leadership role" where its vital interests so dictate.¹

In the light of these and other actions in the foreign realm, critics have argued that South Africa has essentially a "*twin track*" foreign policy: that, on the one hand, it pursues the national interest above all else, including human rights. Yet on the other hand, perhaps mindful of the success of its own recent transition, Pretoria has displayed concern over human rights and democratisation elsewhere. As President Mandela announced in 1993 before taking power, "Human rights will be the light that guides our foreign

¹ Strauss C, 'South African Foreign Policy: From Rejection to Respectability'. Presented at the Annual National Council Meeting of the South African Institute of International Affairs, 17 April 1997.

policy".² Although morality is a contested principle of foreign relations, South Africa - and the President in particular - has claimed the moral high ground, and it is this facet beyond all else which gives the country such international stature. Since the 1994 elections, this position has notably manifested itself in stricter control over the export of South African manufactured arms, but not, however, in an end to arms sales.

Many countries would, of course, agree publicly with this stance on human rights (if they cared about democracy), though few would actually be prepared to express such sentiments, in contrast with President Mandela's blast at Nigeria at the 1995 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) at Millbrook in Auckland. But as the outcry over the execution of Nigeria's Ogoni activists indicated, there is a difficulty in rigorously trying to follow the human rights line in foreign policy. This is a difficulty that not only South Africa has had to deal with. As Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad put it late last year, "We start from the premise that South Africa is committed to human rights. The problem we face in this regard is the issue of possibilities and limitations on South Africa in the real world. How do we get human rights enforced and implemented in the international environment? There must be a possible contradiction between South-South co-operation and the values which we may want to project. There has to be interaction between theory and practice".³

Yet from the African National Congress' (ANC) background, it would be expected that discriminating against countries that support terrorism is a pretty easy call in terms both of human rights and national interest, and discriminating against terrorist groups an even easier one. For the ANC spent decades appealing to the world's conscience to work to end the morally repugnant system of apartheid. Now in power, to many they appear to be incapable of making any moral judgements about whom they should deal with and whom they should not - instead preferring to treat all comers equally. Of course, it is no easy task defining what exactly a "pariah" or "rogue" or an "outcast" state is. Does one use a purely legalistic definition, or does the definition include more imprecise considerations, such as a commitment to international norms of behaviour?

To confuse the issue even further, a *third foreign policy "track"* to all of this can be identified. Since 1994, Pretoria would appear to have attempted to redress the foreign policy imbalances of the apartheid era (and the National Party) by a shift towards the opposite direction, without going all the way. Hence its policy stance towards the Middle East, which could be said to have

² Mandela N, 'South African Foreign Policy', *Foreign Affairs*, 72, 5, November/December 1993, p.88.

³ Summary of concluding remarks, *DFA Foreign Policy Workshop*, Randburg, 9-10 September 1996, pp.8-9.

shifted from being pro-Israeli to pro-Arab; or changes in its policy towards the United States and Cuba.

Here it is necessary to recall from whence South Africa has come in the foreign domain. In 1990, the South African government was extremely isolated, with only 30 overseas representations. At that time, the efforts of the ANC's 28 diplomatic offices abroad were focused on increasing that isolation. As a point of record, it may interest you to know that South Africa now has relations with all but 22 of the 180 or so countries holding diplomatic status, as well as 108 residential accreditations abroad and 44 non-residential accreditations, as opposed to 167 foreign accreditations in Pretoria.⁴ A parallel rise in the number of memberships of multilateral organisations has added further to the burden on the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), itself involved in a process of integration of personnel.

The development of the new South Africa's diplomatic and international relations has therefore involved bringing in different parties with markedly opposing styles and contrasting ideological baggage. As a result, Pretoria has, up until now, followed a foreign policy underscored by the principle of "universality" - essentially the opening of diplomatic doors to any state that *cares to apply*. This has sufficed in an environment where there has arguably been no common national vision of South Africa's place in the world and the purpose of its foreign ties. However, as a result, foreign policy has become a highly personalised affair, with President Mandela's international superstar status overshadowing all else.

With this backdrop in mind, I would like to comment briefly today on four fundamental questions concerning South Africa's foreign relations, which I believe require some clarity if South Africa is to develop a foreign policy with a clear strategic purpose. The questions are:

1. What is the overriding objective of South Africa's foreign policy?
2. What strategies should be adopted to achieve this objective?
3. What tactics should be utilised to ensure the correct strategies are adopted and followed?
4. What factors will shape South Africa's pursuit of its foreign policy?

⁴ See *Business Day*, 10 and 13 January 1997. South Africa currently has 75 embassies or high commissions in foreign countries, while there are 96 embassies or high commissions in South Africa. South Africa also has consulates in 18 countries, and 57 countries have consulates in South Africa. Pretoria has accredited a nearby embassy to cover 44 countries, while seven countries have non-residential accreditation in South Africa.

1. What is the overriding objective of South Africa's foreign policy?

A move from South Africa's current foreign *profile* - as epitomised by President Mandela's international stature - to a reasonable and nuanced foreign *policy*, requires a prioritisation of goals and the creation of an orderly and systematic manner of achieving these, which is mindful of domestic personnel and resource limitations. *Foreign policy and diplomacy should thus be based on an understanding of its self-interest in this global village.*

As we know, the DFA has attempted to redress a perceived lack of policy consistency and co-ordination through the formulation of the *South African Foreign Policy Discussion Document* - a sort of draft White Paper - which was released in June 1996. Once comments on this paper have been absorbed, a foreign policy framework will apparently be formulated, based, in the words of Minister Nzo, "on national consensus".⁵ Whether such a consensus is achievable or even desirable is moot (and is possibly an issue for discussion itself,) for not only is consensus seeking a difficult, almost impossible task, but it could take foreign policy issues out of the hands of the professionals, thereby diverting the focus from key priorities.

Undoubtedly, it is desirable for South Africa's foreign policy experts to establish a general understanding of the values on which decisions and standpoints are based. It is also important to establish a clear hierarchy of command (which was notably absent in the Syrian affairs - probably on both sides, in which at every level there would be an acceptance of South Africa's role in the international community, and of the evolving nature of that community.

2. What strategies should be adopted to achieve this objective?

Clearly, the national interest is underscored by the general values enshrined in the constitution, and encompasses also the security of the state and its citizens and the promotion of their social and economic well-being, as well as the encouragement of global peace, regional stability and development. This national interest can in turn be served by a focus on two areas of foreign relations:

- *First:* To encourage stability and development in southern Africa; and,
- *Second:* To secure incremental improvements in investment and trade links world-wide.

⁵ Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo, DFA Foreign Policy Workshop, *op cit.*

3. *What tactics should be utilised?*

These two strategic pillars of foreign policy involve, tactically, in turn:

- keeping SA's established trading and investment partners on-side;
- encouraging new links with emerging markets elsewhere;
- representing the interests of southern Africa in international fora; and
- extending assistance to the region where necessary, in the interests of stability and development.

4. *What other factors will shape the pursuit of policy?*

Pretoria's policies and the manner in which it interacts with the outside world will be shaped by a number of factors. These include:

- **The Role of Personalities:** This is a crucial factor. As noted, President Mandela's stature in the international domain has meant that South Africa's image (and its foreign policy) tends to be equated with the President's profile. As a result, policy has often followed his public statements, rather than the other way around. His successor(s) will have to co-ordinate responsibility, and learn to rely on those involved in the process of policy formulation to make the right decisions, which s/he will then articulate to greater extent than at present. Of course, given the nature of modern diplomacy, a head of state cannot be expected to be a mere microphone and will, from time to time, take a prominent foreign policy role.
- **Familial Ties:** Obviously, these will help to define relations with Europe and Southern Africa, especially with the United Kingdom, given the preponderance of UK passport holders (1.1 million) in South Africa as well as the Commonwealth ties. Portugal (600,000 passport holders) and the Southern African states also have large communities resident in South Africa.
- **The Success of the South African "Experiment":** The success of South Africa's transition to democracy and the extent of external involvement in the country over the long term, hinges on the success of its economy, the existence of economic opportunities, and its stabilising role in Southern Africa. This, in turn, depends on the role of leadership, the implementation of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution macro-economic strategy (GEAR), levels of interaction with the global economy, regional stability, socio-political stability (including crime), as well as its image as a responsible, reliable international partner.
- **The World Around Us:** Southern Africa's and, further afield, Africa's

transition to economic, political and security normalcy will have a profound effect on South Africa's image and fortunes, given especially our increased business interaction with the sub-continent. South Africa could also stand to profit in the role of a bridgehead for international trade with the region.

- **Resources:** These relate to the availability of personnel (leadership especially), natural and financial resources, and also South Africa's technical attributes and skills. In this regard, the allocation of diplomatic resources and the focus of external business activity will in the future be determined by a number of criteria, including:
 - Levels of trade and investment (both ways), and rates of growth;
 - Sustainability of this growth, which relates to: the size of the population (market); population growth and demography; population wealth; and GDP/manufacturing ratios;
 - And, obviously, the availability of South African resources, diplomatic or otherwise, including personnel and finances.

Conclusion

In conclusion, as the recent announcement of a ban on anti-personnel landmines by South Africa showed, there are several areas of foreign policy where the Republic can, to use Douglas Hurd's phrase, "punch above its weight". This ability relates directly to President Mandela's stature on human rights issues, and South Africa's role as a bridgehead into Southern Africa and further afield on the sub-continent. Conversely, its moral voice will inevitably be undermined or strengthened by the nature of the company it keeps on the international stage, particularly since the ANC spent decades appealing to the world's conscience over its work to end apartheid.

Foreign policy is clearly not an "all or nothing" affair, but rather one that requires an attitude of "give and take". It requires a balanced view of the world and an understanding of both what South Africa's national interests are in this world, and the costs and benefits of pursuing such interests. Of course there will be difficulties in attempting to define the notion of national interest in the fast-evolving post-Cold War world. There is also the problem of achieving consensus in a country where there is a multiplicity of interests (as the Congress of South African Trade Unions [COSATU] showed in its actions against Swaziland in February-March 1997), and the further problem that South Africa has recently been more notable for the absence of a national vision than its presence.

It is clear then that South Africa requires a flexible foreign policy which is capable of coping with global change. To do this, however, there is a need

for South Africa to prioritise its foreign policy goals in this continuously shifting global order. At the same time, while inevitably South Africa will have to take on external views and issues in pursuing its national interests, given its relatively small clout in the global (and not regional) arena, there will also be a need for South Africa to take care on four issues:

1. To avoid following the line or argument of external actors blindly, like lemmings;
2. To consider the tangible effects on South Africa of external actions (for example on its trade and investment relations);
3. To consider the (less tangible) effects on its image of such actions;
4. And finally, in doing this, to identify and utilise a clear chain of command in its foreign policy.

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY: PROCESS AND PRIORITIES

Thomas J. Callahan

In preparing remarks for this panel, I did my best to come up with some juicy quotes from highly placed American foreign policy gurus to the effect that relations between the United States and South Africa were on the brink of disaster. After all, that seems to be what sells the newspapers, and why should this audience be deprived of such rich fare?

Try as I might, however, there was no one that I spoke to in the White House, the State Department or the Congress who seemed to feel that way. In fact, by all accounts, the US-South Africa relationship appears to be quite good.

Nevertheless, there *have* been some rough patches, and it is worth taking a look at those to determine whether the relationship could not be further improved. I believe that there are two underlying sets of factors that exacerbate areas of disagreement, and particularly those connected with the so-called pariah states. Some of these are structural factors, and apply mainly but not entirely to the United States. The others are attitudinal, and they apply primarily but not exclusively to South Africa.

The structure of the US foreign policy-making establishment is highly diffuse, with many voices in foreign policy that speak at once and sometimes in contradictory terms. It can be confusing to even the most astute America watchers. Given the fact that many new and relatively inexperienced officials have been incorporated into South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs, misinterpretation is almost inevitable.

Within the executive branch alone, there are numerous actors in the US foreign policy process, including the State Department, the Defense Department, the National Security Council, domestic policy advisers, the Commerce Department, the Labour Department, the Agency for International Development, the US Information Agency, the intelligence community (an advisory role but one that can nonetheless shape policy), the Treasury Department, the Agriculture Department, and the Justice Department.

In the legislative branch, there are 435 members of the House of Representatives and 100 senators, any one of whom can have a significant impact on particular issues. The most relevant committees are the Foreign Relations and Appropriations committees, but on particular issues the Armed Services, Agriculture, Finance, or Judiciary Committees can become critically important.

Although chairmen and ranking members of subcommittees generally take their assignments seriously, they are all elected politicians who answer to domestic constituencies. These constituencies can dramatically affect their positions on foreign policy matters.

In the last Congress, for example, the chairman of the House subcommittee on African Affairs was Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Republican from Florida. Her mostly Cuban-American constituents wish to see a change of government in Cuba. As one might expect, she has fairly definite views regarding South Africa's close relations with Cuba - views which she did not hesitate to share with visiting South African delegations.¹

Ros-Lehtinen's views regarding the Cuba-South Africa relationship did not necessarily reflect "official" US policy, but the State Department simply cannot silence a member of Congress. An experienced foreign affairs ministry will not overreact to such pronouncements. It will, however, consider them carefully and estimate their strength so that it may foresee emerging issues or trends.

The other set of factors that contributes to policy conflict between the two countries is attitudinal. In his seminal article "The Clash of Civilizations",² Samuel Huntington described what he called "torn" countries. These are countries which are divided over whether their society belongs to one civilisation or another. Although South Africa is, in Huntington's terms, part of the African civilisation, it is oriented toward the West in its policies. Despite that generally western course, South African policy makers sometimes appear suspicious of the West and particularly of the United States. It seems to be a conflict of heart *versus* mind.

The "mind" recognises the benefits of a Western orientation - democratic values, majority rule, protection of individual liberties, and - compelling from a practical standpoint - the wealth that can be generated only by tapping into the global free market economy.

But the "heart" has its suspicions. Some of the old guard still feel resentment at the years of international isolation and rejection. More importantly, some members of the new political élite received the full bore of Cold War anti-Western, anti-US propaganda in places like East Germany, the Soviet Union and Libya during periods in exile. Even those who stayed in South Africa or lived nearby may feel a certain sense of embarrassment today at the high

¹ Cubaphiles in South Africa were probably relieved when she left the Africa subcommittee at the beginning of this Congress. Ironically, however, the new top ranking Democrat on the sub-committee, Robert Menendez of New Jersey, is a Cuban American who is as anti-Castro as Ros-Lehtinen.

² *Foreign Affairs*, 72, 3, Summer 1993, pp.22-49.

level of attention shown toward South Africa by western countries, while the old frontline states seem to be kept somewhat at arm's length. The rational mind enjoys the opportunities such goodwill provides; the emotional heart wishes to maintain a reasonable distance.

The heart/mind phenomenon has been most noticeable during controversies involving "pariah" states. In April of last year, Foreign Minister Nzo issued a joint communique with Libya which seemed to express South Africa's support for lifting UN sanctions and to dispute US allegations that Libya was building a chemical weapons manufacturing facility. More recently, it was revealed that South Africa was considering the sale of lethal military equipment to Syria, a critical state in the turbulent Middle East and, like Libya, a state that the US claims sponsors terrorist activities.

Predictably, both events provoked responses from the far flung US foreign policy establishment. In both cases, South Africa's vehement response to the US went beyond the immediate issue and included sweeping declarations of foreign policy independence. Many observers were slightly surprised by the passion and depth of the response.

That kind of reaction is far less surprising if one recognises that concerns expressed by the US - and the way in which they are expressed - may play upon a pre-existing suspicion that the US is a behemoth whose imperialistic tendencies could subvert South Africa's long-awaited popular sovereignty.

A western orientation, or "associate membership" to use Huntington's term, makes sense for South Africa on many levels - political, economic, and strategic. But it does not require South Africa to subsume its interests to those of the US or any other country. South Africa can remain an independent sovereign nation with its roots in Africa and still adopt a western orientation to its own advantage. It can make good use of its embassy team in Washington, both as a predictor of US reactions and, when a course of action is taken that will ruffle some US feathers, as a shield to blunt the negative reaction.

For its part, the US cannot shed its superpower status, end the continuing spread of its popular culture, or even reduce by much the obtrusiveness of a vice presidential motorcade. But it can stay alert to these feelings of ambivalence on the part of South African policy makers and take care to express its concerns in terms of specific interests and without the terminology of threat.

In the zero sum world of some Cold War strategists, the enemy of my friend was my friend, and the friend of my enemy must be my enemy. That simplistic paradigm must be firmly set aside. South Africa and the US will mutually benefit from a nuanced bilateral relationship with a long term vision of economic and diplomatic collaboration.

PARIAH STATES IN THE POST-COLD WAR WORLD: A CONCEPTUAL EXPLORATION

Deon Geldenhuys

In October 1995 the United Nations celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. To mark the occasion, President Bill Clinton hosted a reception in New York to which all 185 UN member states were invited - except for eight of them. Those blacklisted by the Americans were Burma, Cuba, Iraq, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Somalia. The latter was omitted from the guest list because it did not have a central authority that could pass as a government. The other seven were regarded by Washington as rogue states, not fit to appear in respectable international company.

Two surprising omissions from the blacklist were the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Nigeria, countries that the Americans otherwise also tended to regard as outcasts.

Many other states share the US' low opinion of these eight countries (anarchical Somalia falling in a different category), viewing them likewise as pariahs or outlaws. Yet there are numerous countries that do not follow this line and refuse to treat the eight - or at least the majority of them - as rogues that need to be kept at arm's length, if not forced into isolation.

Several questions immediately arise: What sins have the so-called pariah or outcast states committed? Who decides on what constitutes offensive, punishable behaviour? What kinds of action are taken against offending states, and by whom? How do target states respond to such international pressures? Finally, how could or should countries (such as South Africa) not in the proverbial frontline of the offensive against pariahs treat this group of states?

The present paper deals with this set of questions in a conceptual fashion, proposing merely an analytical framework for a separate empirical study of today's outcast countries. The proposed framework is not altogether original, drawing on an existing analytical device; pariah states are, after all, no new phenomenon in world politics.¹

¹ Geldenhuys D, *Isolated States: A Comparative Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

The Targets: What Defines a Pariah State?

A pariah (or outcast) country is one whose domestic or international behaviour seriously offends the world community or at least a significant group of states. Other countries resort to various punitive measures against the outcast in an effort to change its offensive conduct.

The behaviour considered offensive or unacceptable is associated with the government of the country involved, or specifically with the head of that government, who becomes the primary target of punishment from abroad, and is expected to mend his or her ways. Supporters of such a government - for example, particular parties, interest groups or communities - could represent secondary targets of punitive action from abroad.

Turning to the specifics of objectionable conduct, five principal sins are readily apparent in the post-Cold War world. Of course, not all of these are committed by each pariah country.

- * *The absence of Western-style democracy.* Today's pariah states typically have highly authoritarian forms of government, as in Iraq, North Korea, Burma and Cuba, among others. A repressive state apparatus exercises strict control over society at large, preventing the emergence of a true civil society.² These countries have also been branded as "backlash states" for their "assault" on the basic values of the family of democratic nations.³
- * *The promotion of radical ideologies at home and even abroad.* This second sin merely compounds the first, as witness Iran's Islamic revolution.⁴ Cuba used to be another example of a state exporting revolution.
- * *The possession of weapons of mass destruction.* Nuclear, chemical or biological weapons in the hands of outcast states, it is widely feared, may threaten regional and even global security. The "weapon states",⁵ as they have also been depicted, include Iraq, Iran, Libya and North Korea. All four of them are suspected by the Americans of developing or aspiring to a military nuclear capability, even though

² Krauthammer C, 'The Unipolar Moment', *Foreign Affairs*, 70, 1, 1991, p.31.

³ Lake A, 'Confronting Backlash States', *Foreign Affairs*, 73, 2, 1994, p.45.

⁴ Lake A, 'Confronting Backlash States', *ibid*, p.112.

⁵ Krauthammer C, 'The Unipolar Moment', *op cit*, p.30.

each has signed the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.⁶ Depending on a variety of factors, other states, such as Pakistan and some former Soviet republics, may in due course also turn into nuclear rogues.⁷

- * *Involvement in international terrorism.* Libya, Sudan, Iran and Iraq are prime examples of states committing this fourth sin, while the US alleges that Syria also belongs in the same league. Their targets are usually Western or pro-Western institutions and individuals.⁸ In some cases support for international terrorism may be a means of exporting revolution to other parts of the world.

- * *Committing acts of military aggression abroad.* Yugoslavia (specifically its dominant component, Serbia) and Iraq are cases in point.

There are already indications that a sixth sin may soon join the list, namely *state involvement in international drug trafficking*. Nigeria and Burma are widely suspected of such practices, whether through acts of omission or commission.

Pariah states are characterised not only by their sins against the world outside. A number of additional features not related to their misdemeanours are to be found among the outcasts.

The *first* is that several of them are not strong nation-states in terms of popular identification with the state and the nation. Sudan, racked by a protracted civil war between its northern and southern regions, is one example. Another is *Iraq*, a fairly recent creation with artificial borders. Its ruling party denies that Iraqis form a nation; they are considered part of the larger Arab nation.⁹

Second, no pariah can be regarded as a major power in global terms. None of them carries enough weight in world politics and the global economy to render it virtually untouchable. (It is this status that protects the People's Republic of China against being condemned to the league of outcasts, however appalling its human rights record.) It would, on the other hand, be

⁶ Deutch JM, 'The New Nuclear Threat', *Foreign Affairs*, 71, 1, 1992, pp.124-132, and Kapur A, 'Rogue States and the International Nuclear Order', *International Journal*, 51, 3, 1996, pp.425-439.

⁷ Kapur A, *ibid*, p.432, and Gizewski P, 'From Winning Weapon to Destroyer of Worlds: The Nuclear Taboo in International Politics', *International Journal*, 51, 3, 1996, p.416.

⁸ Sancton T, 'Iran's State of Terror', *Time*, 11 November 1996, pp.77-82.

⁹ Krauthammer C, 'The Unipolar Moment', *op cit*, pp.30 & 31.

an exaggeration to say that most pariahs are "relatively small, peripheral and backward states".¹⁰ Perhaps Burma and Sudan fall into this category, but Iran and Nigeria are regional powers. The other five outcasts under consideration fall somewhere between these two classes.

Being internationally ostracised and labouring under sanctions, pariah countries in the *third* place tend to develop a siege mentality. This may in turn lead them to embark on costly and ambitious armaments programmes.¹¹

Finally, pariahs are inclined to nurse deep grievances against the West and the kind of world order created and maintained by Western powers. They are accordingly revisionist states bent on subverting the international *status quo*.¹²

The Actors: Who Punishes the Pariahs?

In the co-operative spirit of the post-Cold War world, states place a high premium on collective action against offending countries. The United Nations, a truly global body, is the major institution for condemning a state to pariahhood and for ordering punitive measures against it. Countries thus branded by the UN may be regarded as the principal pariahs. One example is Libya, against which the Security Council imposed an air and arms embargo (in 1992) over Tripoli's alleged involvement in terrorist bombings in 1988 and 1989. Iraq has been subjected to far more severe punishment by the UN because of its aggression against Kuwait, its development of weapons of mass destruction and the persecution of its own Kurdish and Shiite communities.

At a sub-global level, a variety of inter-governmental organisations can act against pariah countries. The European Union, for instance, has considered punitive measures against Burma. The Commonwealth, in turn, has been active against Nigeria.

Particular states may also play critical roles in punishing offending countries whose domestic or international conduct is found unbecoming. Here the United States is undoubtedly the prime mover and shaker. It has a long tradition of punishing what it considers errant states. Its present status as the world's sole superpower merely encourages the US in this role.

¹⁰ Krauthammer C, 'The Unipolar Moment', *ibid*, p.30.

¹¹ Lake A, 'Confronting Backlash States', *op cit*, p.46.

¹² Krauthammer C, 'The Unipolar Moment', *op cit*, p.31.

So-called weapon states are of particular concern to the Americans. "There is no alternative to confronting, deterring and, if necessary, disarming states that brandish and use weapons of mass destruction", one US commentator asserted. In today's unipolar world the US is keenly aware that there is no one else to do the job, supported by as many of its allies as are prepared to join the endeavour.¹³ Iraq and North Korea have been targeted for such enterprises.

A similar argument has been made by a senior official in the Clinton administration with regard to authoritarian states challenging Western values. The US, he maintained, "has a special responsibility for developing a strategy to neutralize, contain and, through selective pressure, perhaps eventually transform these backlash states into constructive members of the international community".¹⁴ The Americans have long been discharging this self-imposed duty towards Cuba. The US has also resorted to legal mechanisms (such as the Helms-Burton law) in trying to compel other countries to join the crusade against the Castro regime.

A variety of non-governmental organisations may also take punitive actions against pariah states. National and transnational business corporations could, for example, sever trade links with such countries.

Against the above background, one could distinguish different classes of pariah states.

First-order or global pariahs are those countries that have been given this status by the UN. It means that they have been condemned and punished by the UN; the effort to change their conduct is a truly universal one. Of the nine case studies under consideration, only Iraq still qualifies as a first-order rogue state. Serbia, before the conclusion of the Dayton peace accord on Bosnia-Herzegovina, could probably be placed in the same camp.

Second-order or regional pariahs are states that are seriously at odds with others in their respective regions, rather than with the world community in general. Failing to mobilise global support for its campaign against Cuba, the US has long tried to get Cuba condemned to at least a second-order pariah (in the Latin American region).

Cuba can in some ways also be regarded as a third-order pariah state. That is a country finding itself in serious conflict with only a handful of other states - with a great power typically among them - over the former's conduct at home or abroad.

¹³ Krauthammer C, 'The Unipolar Moment', *ibid*, p.32.

¹⁴ Lake, A, 'Confronting Backlash States', *op cit*, p.46.

The Objectives: What Do the Actors Hope to Achieve?

The simple answer to this question is that foreign actors wish the target to change its objectionable behaviour. This response, however, fails to convey anything of the scope of the "change" required. Does the change merely involve abandoning a particular action or policy, or does it call the very existence of the pariah state's government and political structure into question?

It may therefore be useful to distinguish between three types of objectives that could be pursued by actors.

The most ambitious could be depicted as a regime-directed objective. Here the external actors require far-reaching changes in what David Easton would describe as the norms, values and authority structures of an offending state. This is what the US wishes to see in Cuba.

A government-directed objective means that outside actors demand the resignation of the government of the target country. The actors would typically argue that the government in question is so unrepresentative and repressive that it cannot reform or rehabilitate itself, but should make way for a popularly elected civilian government. Regime change, it should be explained, necessarily involves a change of government, but not *vice versa*. International action against Nigeria falls in this category.

In the case of policy-directed isolation, foreign states compel a pariah country to change or abandon specific actions they find unacceptable. The survival of neither the regime nor the government is at issue. External pressure on Serbia - over its involvement in the Bosnian civil war - serves as an illustration.

The Means: What Action Can be Taken Against Pariahs?

Outside parties can choose from a wide range of actions that can be undertaken either multilaterally or bilaterally against pariah countries.

- * *Launch a military attack* against the pariah to stop its objectionable behaviour at home or abroad. This extreme measure was used against Iraq in the Gulf War.
- * *Place it under international supervision*, either with regard to all government functions or in critical areas such as armaments. Iraq, where the UN is overseeing the destruction of its weapons of mass destruction, is again a case in point.
- * *Isolate* the pariah by cutting or curtailing its international links in the

diplomatic, economic, military and socio-cultural realms. Iraq has been subjected to extensive UN-imposed sanctions, while milder UN measures have been imposed on Libya and Serbia.

- * *Contain* the pariah state, or prevent it from mischief-making abroad. This could be done by, for instance, bolstering its potential victims' military capabilities and restricting the pariah's own access to weapons. Iraq is being contained in these ways.
- * *Offer it incentives*, such as foreign aid, for complying with actors' demands. This is evidently the approach many Western powers favour in the Nigerian case.
- * *Engage* the pariah country diplomatically - what the US used to call *constructive engagement vis-à-vis* white-ruled South Africa - in the hope of persuading it to change its conduct. Again, several states follow this line with Nigeria.

Responses: How Could Pariahs React to Pressure?

Pariah states could respond in a number of ways to international pressure being exerted on them in order to change their behaviour. At the one extreme a pariah could simply capitulate to outsiders' demands, whether these concern a change of policy, government or regime. (One would normally expect a pariah state to submit more readily to a minimalist demand - a change of policy - than to a maximalist demand involving a change of government or regime.) At the other end of the spectrum a pariah could resist pressures for change to the point of taking up arms against its perceived enemies abroad. Between these two extreme responses, pariah states could try to bargain with foreign actors or to procrastinate (in other words, "play for time").

Another familiar response for states in such a situation - and this is really a form of defiance - is to establish a "gang of rogues". It has been suggested that there are growing ties between today's pariah states "as they seek to thwart or quarantine themselves from a global trend [notably democracy] to which they seem incapable of adapting".¹⁵ This would resemble the "lonely hearts club" of the Cold War era, in which the likes of South Africa, Israel, Taiwan and Chile found themselves.

¹⁵ Lake A, 'Confronting Backlash States', *ibid*, p.45.

South Africa: Some Policy Considerations

By way of conclusion, a few policy issues for South Africa - raised by the preceding analysis - are considered briefly.

With the exception of the diplomatic offensive against Nigeria's military dictatorship, South Africa has not been in the forefront of any of the campaigns against the pariah countries mentioned here. Yet, as a full-fledged and respected member of the society of states, South Africa cannot avoid becoming involved in issues relating to these pariah countries.

How, then, could or should South Africa respond? Some guidelines are suggested.

First, South Africa should remember that some outcast countries are more "outcast" than others. South Africa is duty bound to co-operate with punitive measures against first-order pariahs and would be under a strong moral obligation to act also against second-order pariah states. It would, however, have wide discretion in the case of third-order pariah countries. The critical consideration is therefore the role of the UN Security Council: if it banishes a state from the world community, South Africa should join in a sanctions offensive.

It follows, in the *second* place, that South Africa has a range of options in dealing with pariah countries. It is therefore not a case of "all" or "nothing", of acting against all pariahs or none at all. Nor is it a case of either severing all ties with a pariah or maintaining "business as usual". Nuanced responses are called for, determined by the merits of each particular situation and by South Africa's own interests. Even where South Africa is under no formal obligation to ostracise another country, it may wish to keep the latter at arm's length because its domestic or foreign behaviour offends states that are important partners of South Africa. This may not necessarily require restrictions on trade, but would certainly exclude state visits, treaties of co-operation, naval visits and the like. This is how some observers would want South Africa to treat Iran, a country whose internal repression, export of Islamic revolution and involvement in state terrorism are deeply offensive to a great many states.

Finally, South Africa must have a clear conception of its own interests when dealing with pariah states. This involves more than *ad hoc* calculations of costs and benefits, of the implications of joining forces with others in a sanctions offensive or of refusing to go along with them. At issue are the central driving forces behind South African foreign policy. One of these is no doubt to promote economic interaction far and wide, as a means of improving South Africans' socio-economic welfare. But what about an interest in improving the fate of mankind by encouraging democracy across the globe? Apart from the intrinsic value of democracy, the spread of this

form of authority may enhance world peace, for democracies are not known to fight democracies. By championing the cause of democracy abroad, South Africa would, moreover, be helping to shape an external environment favourable to its own domestic political values. If the ANC's familiar commitment to the promotion of democracy elsewhere is still regarded by the Mandela government as a national interest, it would necessarily influence the way South Africa deals with pariah states. A clear understanding of national interests would also lend consistency and predictability to South Africa's foreign policy - qualities presently in rather short supply.

US-SOUTH AFRICA RELATIONS: A VIEW FROM BOTH SIDES

Peter Fabricius

The title I have been given to tackle - *US-South Africa Relations: A View from Both Sides* - perhaps credits me with greater binocular vision than I really have. Nevertheless I suppose I can use the title as an excuse for being wishy-washy, or what we newspaper journalists prefer to call impartial and balanced.

I spent just over three years in the US as Washington correspondent of the Independent Newspaper Group, and was thus able to observe the birth of relations between the US and the New South Africa and the early formative years. Without wishing to extend the metaphor too far, I think one can say, roughly, that the relationship began with much oohing and aahing of adoration at the wonderful new creation of a democratic state in April 1994, proceeded through a fair amount of turbulence and trauma as the adolescent South Africa asserted itself, rebelled and started falling into some "bad company", and reached a point where I think we may now be seeing the glimmerings of a maturing relationship in which each side accepts the limitations of the other and tries to work out a *modus vivendi* around them.

With so much discussion on this subject, I would like to confine myself to two interrelated themes which I think do throw quite a lot of light on the relationship. The first is how the US from the start took the lead in the relationship and left South Africa straggling behind. The second is the influence on US-South Africa relations of South Africa's relationship with its friends in the South, from the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Organization for African Unity (OAU), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the G-77, and so on. In a certain sense, South Africa has defined its relations with the US relative to these other states. I will suggest that it is not a coincidence that as South Africa has begun, admittedly rather tentatively, to assert its independence of SADC and the OAU, it has also begun to enter into a more co-operative relationship with the US.

On the first theme, it was clear from the start that the US knew what it wanted from this relationship and went out to get it. It wanted South Africa to become a successful free market democracy, to provide markets for US goods in South Africa, and to become the agent for stability and the engine for growth in the region so as to expand those markets and to diminish US responsibility for dealing with humanitarian crises. A related objective was the non-proliferation of arms. These aims were explicit. Viewed a bit more cynically, perhaps, there was a wish for South Africa to put its own house

in order and then to do the same for those countries immediately around it, leaving the rest of the world to America.

South Africa, on the other hand, had but a vague idea of what it wanted; certainly aid, on the scale of a Marshall Plan if possible; certainly trade and therefore opening of markets. But beyond that it didn't really know how to deal with the US. On the one hand it was flattered by all the attention from the world's greatest power. On the other hand, it was rather overwhelmed by all the energy and effort of American diplomatic overtures. Lingering South African Communist Party (SACP) ideological influences as well as a strong anxiety that its Third World allies might disapprove of too close a friendship, added to the reticence.

It was as though having been singled out as the bright boy in the Third World class, it felt embarrassed lest its fellow-pupils accuse it of being teacher's pet, as some sort of collaborator, or sell-out to the West (or the "North"). I was struck by how often Pretoria seemed to be looking over its left shoulder and saying "What will SADC think of this?" whenever an issue in US relations was debated.

A prime example was the Armscor issue, which blew up just two months after the inauguration of the new government. The question of who South Africa sold arms to, and when, became the *leitmotif* of South African-American relations. Its resolution last week, after three years, is one of the events which marks something of a turning point in relations.

The South African Embassy in Washington was continually concerned that if it relented on the Armscor issue, it would be seen by its Third World allies as having given in to American bullying and having created a dangerous precedent for other Third World states. So Pretoria was seen by some as the Third World's champion while the US saw South Africa as a voice and force for introducing sanity and western values into the "South".

It was clear that Washington also saw South Africa as being tugged between the US and the Third World, as revealed by this telling question from one US diplomat when South Africa was being "difficult" on the Armscor issue: "Does South Africa want to become just another one of the NAM lemmings?" With no clear idea of what it wanted from the US, the South African government's response to sometimes aggressive US initiatives was perhaps bound to be emotional and irrational rather than deliberate and purposeful. Again the Armscor case illustrates the point; still somewhat bedazzled by all the heady stuff of the elections and the world's applause, Pretoria appeared to be shocked when it ran into the well-oiled train of blindfolded US judicial bureaucracy, simply running along its usual rails, regardless of who was on the tracks.

Despite close observation, I never did fathom completely the American

motives in the Armscor case. The diplomats always claimed that their hands were tied by the sacred doctrine of not interfering with the judiciary. I suspect that might have been true at the start, when relatively junior officials simply followed the correct procedures. At that stage perhaps high-level political intervention could have solved the case, and this might be an example - there were more to come - when the US was just too efficient and sure of itself and its institutions for its own good. Former Republican Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger called the Armscor case a "dreadful abuse of prosecutorial power". That may have put it too strongly, but there was some truth in his suggestion that the Clinton Administration could have explored the possibility of conceding the Armscor case as a gift to the new South Africa in May-June 1994, and that its fears of a political backlash for doing so might have been ungrounded.

Nevertheless later, when the Americans saw that Pretoria was determined to maintain ties with its old friends, whom the US regarded as pariahs, a more strategic aim took over - that of using the Armscor case to maintain control of US arms sales to South Africa so as to prevent them being diverted to Cuba, Iran, etc. It is probable that such episodes as the Yemen arms affair (when Armscor weapons were mysteriously diverted to a secret end-user) and the arrival of South Africa's chemical weapons expert Wouter Basson in Libya - while South Africa was annoying the US by supporting Gaddafi's stance on Lockerbie - also entered this calculus. Pretoria, on the other hand, simply took America's stance as an affront and a betrayal of friendship and it genuinely soured relations, planting the seeds of a palpable anti-American sentiment in the Washington embassy.

South Africa's uncertain goals and objectives in relation to the US were apparent in its changing approach to the Armscor case. At first it merely sought to lower fines and to ensure that no further inquiries were made into Armscor's past conduct. But later it decided to "go for broke" and make this a test case of its very sovereignty. In doing so it was setting itself up for a big fall at home and it was only through the line of communication opened up between Gore and Mbeki on the Bi-National Commission (BNC) that this was prevented.

Though the BNC was the converse of the Armscor case, in that it formed the official centrepiece of relations while Armscor was its unofficial counterpart, it presented some of the same problems for South Africa. It was very clear that the US did most of the running on the BNC from the start. Armed with a much larger bureaucracy and a clearer sense of purpose, it set most of the agenda and defined most of the projects. I recall Thabo Mbeki coming to Washington for the first BNC meeting in March 1994 all by himself, and looking rather forlorn and embarrassed at meeting a phalanx of US Cabinet secretaries, all ready and eager to parley.

The US made no bones about its objectives, which included the integration

of South Africa into the global economy. The South Africans were, and to some extent still are, unsure what to make of it. Many South African officials viewed it in rather sinister terms as a sort of Trojan Horse primed to breach the ramparts of trade protectionism under the guise of aid. Here, too, concern was felt about what SADC would think about this special treatment. In any case it has taken the South African side a long time to get up to speed and to try to use the BNC to its full potential, which it is now starting to do.

The BNC and the Armscor case battled for supremacy in defining relations between the US and South Africa. At the end of 1995, possibly the lowest point in relations to date - the Syrian arms deal notwithstanding - Ambassador Franklin Sonn and/or a legal official in Mbeki's office, speaking to US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa George Moose, threatened that South Africa would dissolve the BNC if the US pursued the Armscor prosecution. This was how high South Africa had set the Armscor stakes. The hotline between Gore and Mbeki ran red-hot to diffuse that crisis.

Of other defining disputes, the one that stands out is the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) affair when the US Trade Representative slapped South Africa onto his watchlist of countries at risk of facing trade sanctions, because the country was not protecting US intellectual property rights by taking action against a local company's attempt to usurp the corporate name and identity of McDonald's. The response of the South African ambassador to the US was to accuse the otherwise well-disposed African director of the US Trade Representative to his face of "imperialism", thus alienating another erstwhile friend.

Again, South Africa had taken too personally what was just another example of the wheels of US bureaucracy running on automatic. Pretoria ignored the fact that just about every US trading partner is on the watchlist and none has ever suffered sanctions. In the epithet "imperialism" which Sonn slung at the US one could again hear the voices of the NAM, and SADC angels sitting on the government's left shoulder. And perhaps too the US was too officious in simply following bureaucratic procedures regardless of the political consequences.

There were also the periodic outbursts over Cuba, such as when South Africa opened its embassy there. But this reaction was mainly confined to congressional Republicans, and the administration stood back. In the same way, the proposed deal to store Iranian oil at Saldanha really only exercised the Republicans. The administration had been concerned that nuclear co-operation with Iran might lead to some transfer of weapons capability to them, but seemed to believe South Africa's assurance that this would not happen.

One could cite several lesser examples of such disputes, but those already mentioned should suffice.

In the middle of a series of rather fraught episodes came the conference in New York to renew the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which in retrospect can be seen as a precursor of a more mature relationship. Though there were some suspicions that the US engaged in brow-beating, this does not negate the fact that South Africa co-operated with the US in pursuit of what Pretoria regarded as the best possible outcome - the safest attainable nuclear environment *via* an extension of the treaty. In doing so, South Africa played a mediating role between the US and the NAM countries, putting the US case to NAM for extending the treaty but also advancing the NAM case by inserting some conditions to hold the great nuclear powers to tighter commitment to a test ban and to destruction of their weapons. In this case, South Africa weathered the accusations directed at it by its Third World allies that it had sold out to the US and created a model for future co-operation.

This new vision of South Africa playing a bridging role between the North and the South was articulated by Nzo in a speech to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs: "South Africa has features both of the developed and developing worlds. It is truly at the point of intersection between both worlds - an industrialised state of the South which can communicate with the North on equal terms to articulate the needs, the concerns and the fears of the developing world. Conversely we can interpret the concerns and the fears of the developed world".¹

The NAM countries were apparently not very happy with this special role that South Africa had assigned for itself and it was not publicly re-stated, but I suspect it remains central to the government's sense of identity and may be re-emerging now.

1997 began with another skirmish over the Syrian arms fiasco. But without wishing to minimise the importance of this incident, I would like to suggest that it was in a sense an anachronism. What emerged this year was a decision by the National Conventional Arms Control Committee (NCACC), taken some time before. Although there was clearly some obfuscation in government departments about how advanced the deal was, it was surely not insignificant that the Cabinet had decided to delegate the decision to Mbeki, who was in the best position to decide whether it was acceptable to the Americans. That indicated a sensitivity to US concerns that had not always been apparent.

The crisis also seemed to have been aggravated by more clumsy diplomacy from both presidential offices. The responses of both the State Department and the Department of Foreign Affairs' (DFA) were measured and restrained. Conversely both the White House response - emanating perhaps from a too-enthusiastic presidential adviser - and the angry response from Mandela's

¹ Statement by Minister Nzo before the Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs, 14 March 1995.

spokesman, set the tone for the exchanges. It was notable that Mandela's senior communications adviser tried hard to defuse the crisis with a placatory statement.

In any case, both sides went to great lengths to avoid causing offence during the Bi-National Commission (BNC) meeting in February this year. Gore would not even admit that the crisis had been discussed at all, so hard was he trying to insist that the matter should be dealt with privately. It clearly was discussed however, and in all likelihood dealt with. In fact, I believe that the Syrian arms crisis came at a time of slightly warming and maturing relations.

This BNC meeting shortly after the incident was also the most successful so far, by most accounts, with the South African side at last beginning to participate actively, and to take advantage of what the forum had to offer. Though the achievements of the meeting were once again rather esoteric matters, Agriculture Minister Derek Hanekom perhaps spoke for all the South African ministers involved when he said that the commission was providing South Africa with a unique opportunity which many countries would envy, to pick up a phone and call a US cabinet secretary directly to resolve a problem.

The BNC had also justified itself in creating a hot line between Gore and Mbeki which was relied on heavily to resolve the Armscor dispute. Despite the official US position that the Armscor case was a purely legal matter outside the political realm, Gore and Mbeki deliberated long and hard to find a deal which both satisfied US legal requirements and yet was politically saleable by Pretoria to its own constituents and to the SADC/OAU gallery.

These included a "no contest" plea which would allow South Africa to argue, with some credibility, that it had never surrendered its sovereignty, which meant a large decrease in the fines and the diversion of much of them back into a compliance programme. And the major burden of the fines was borne by the private company Fuchs rather than the parastatals Armscor and Kentron, thus allowing the government to tell its supporters that it had got off relatively lightly.

When South Africa was finally convicted in a Philadelphia court, Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad, as predicted, told reporters that South Africa had not surrendered its sovereignty - because of the no contest plea. The deal between Gore and Mbeki seemed to have worked. Though Ambassador Sonn had feared huge adverse publicity and negative reaction from ANC supporters for paying a fine for the sins of PW Botha, the announcement of the settlement virtually escaped notice.

Though no doubt some resentment lingers, the resolution of the Armscor case was perhaps the clearest a sign of a growing ability to seek mutually-acceptable compromises. Both sides budged (though South Africa budged

more than the US), the US from its insistence on maintaining strict judicial quarantine from politics and South Africa on its rigid stance on defending its sovereignty.

Another example of this was the resolution of the McDonald dispute, which shows evidence of some US willingness to depart from bureaucratic procedures for the sake of political advantage. South Africa was removed from the watchlist last September after the McDonald's case had been resolved - despite South Africa's not having satisfied the original insistence that it should introduce adequate legislation to protect intellectual property rights.

It was not co-incidence, I believe, that this more realistic and mature relationship with the US began emerging at the time Pretoria was also maturing its relationship with its neighbours and revising the unofficial policy that it should be humble and stay at home to avoid being branded as "Big Brother".

At a discussion during the Foreign Policy Workshop in Randburg in September 1996, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aziz Pahad, said: "the former president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, and the OAU have indeed warned that if South Africa continues to hide behind the rhetoric of not wanting to play a leadership role, Africa would indeed suspect a hidden agenda". He then noted that those who had just participated in the BNC meeting were "astounded by the unanimous message from Clinton, Gore and the State Department that if South Africa does not get involved in the OAU it will be a dramatic failure".² He said he had received the same message from France, Germany, the United Kingdom and Scandinavia.

It was ironic that very shortly after this statement, US Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Africa bearing his blueprint for an African Crisis Response Force (ACRF), equipped and trained by the US and its allies and manned by Africans. Mandela gave Christopher's plan the cold shoulder noting that "Africa would like to feel that they are handling things themselves ... not acting in response to suggestions that come from outside the continent".³ But I believe this was largely a hiccup in relations due to the rather clumsy way the US proposed the idea - in a diplomatic "blitzkrieg", as one diplomat put it - rather than through quiet diplomacy in the OAU or the UN.

This was also one of several cases where the President acted in a flat-footed way on foreign policy matters, trampling on delicate DFA diplomacy. At the time Pahad was saying the ACRF idea was worth considering, and DFA

² *DFA Foreign Policy Workshop, Randburg, 9-10 September 1996.*

³ *Saturday Star, Johannesburg, 12 October 1996.*

officials have insisted subsequently that the ACRF idea is by no means dead and was discussed at the most recent BNC meeting between Deputy President Mbeki and Vice President Al Gore on 17 February 1997. Both sides have acknowledged that the matter was handled clumsily and both have learned from their mistakes.

Some evidence of this is perhaps apparent in the co-operation between US and South Africa on Mandela's bold diplomatic gambit to resolve the war in Zaire. This gambit is the most important of several initiatives that Pretoria has begun to solve problems in the region, as it at last begins to shrug off its fear of being branded the neighbourhood bully. Though the US involvement was perhaps co-incidental, since its officials were here for the BNC, there are suggestions that the US is more active in this diplomacy than has been acknowledged.

But the important thing is that the US seems to be trying hard to resist its natural tendency to take command and is allowing South Africa to play the lead. That indicates both a new sensitivity on the side of America, so as not to try to push the African agenda too hard or to grab the limelight, and on the South African side, perhaps a new confidence that if put in the right context, the clout and prestige of the US is something it can safely harness, without too much glancing over the left shoulder at SADC and Co.

It is possible that I may be reading too much into a few instances of US-SA co-operation. But I think the hopeful signs are there, and with the Armscor case now resolved, it is likely that the two sides will set up a defence committee, possibly within the BNC, to pursue other forms of military-security co-operation.

If one looks north, not just to Zaire but to the whole Great Lakes region, it is not hard to see other areas of common interest. It is obvious that the US is involved, in some form or another, in supporting Sudan's neighbours, including Uganda, to resist the Jihad that that country's extremist Islamic government is exporting into their territories.

Recent reports have alleged that South Africa has supplied weapons to Uganda which may or may not have found their way into the hands of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army fighting the hard-line government. Whether the South African government is deliberately involved in such geopolitics is hard to say. But it is clear that South Africa is now looking at Africa and America anew, within the framework of Aziz Pahad's observation that where South African and US interests intersect, "we can co-operate".

PROGRAMME

US-South Africa Relations and the "Pariah" States

SALLA, Jan Smuts House
East Campus, Wits University
Wednesday, 5 March 1997
14h00-17h15

Chair: Antoinette Handley
Director of Studies, SALLA

South Africa's Foreign Policy: Issues and Problems

Dr. Greg Mills, SALLA

American Foreign Policy: Process and Priorities

Tom Callahan, International Republican Institute

Questions and Discussion

Tea/Coffee

Pariah States in the Post-Cold War World: A Conceptual Exploration

Professor Deon Geldenhuys, RAU

US-South African Relations: A View from Both Sides

Peter Fabricius, Foreign Editor, Independent Newspaper Group

Questions and Discussion

Closing Remarks

Dr. Greg Mills

PARTICIPANTS

Mr. W. Baker, DFA
Mr. T. Ballard, DFA
Mr. Barnard, DFA
Mr. I. Basson, DFA
Mrs. A. Berry, US Embassy
Mr. Bezuidenhout, DFA
Ms. L. Boulden, SAIIA
Mr. J. Broderick, Wits, IR
Department
Mr. Bezuidenhout, DFA
Mr. G. Burford, Wits, IR Department
Mr. T. Callahan, IRI
Mr. M. Canning, US Information
Service
Mr. S. Cleary, Strategic Concepts
Mr. A. Creswell, British High
Commission
Mr. H. du Toit, DFA
Mr. Du Plessis, DFA
Mr. P. Fabricius, The Star
Professor D. Geldenhuys, RAU
Ms. M. Govender, DFA
Mr. B. Hanekom, Goldfields,
International Economist
Mr. R. Henwood, Pretoria University
Captain R. Higgs, SA Navy
Mr. K. Hillas, US Embassy
Captain F. Hugo, Defence
Headquarters
Ms. N. Human, DFA
Mr. A. Jaquet, DFA
Ms. L. Johnson, US Embassy
Mr. J. Katzenellenbogen, SAIIA
Mr. F. Kornegay, Africa-American
Institute
Dr. W. le Roux, ABSA Bank
Ms. M. Lesley, British High
Commission
Mr. G. Lion, Eskom
Captain I. Little, SA Navy
Mr. A. Maistry, DFA
Mr. V. Mashalele, DTI
Dr. G. Mills, SAIIA
Mr. S. Moulton, DFA
Ms. M. Muller, Pretoria University
Mr. K. Naidoo, Armscor
Mr. A. Omar, Armscor
Dr. S. Pienaar, SAIIA
Mr. J. Pretorius, Pretoria University
Colonel Reitz, SANDF
Mr. Saunders, DFA
Mr. C.B.N. Scholtz, DFA
Mr. Scunde, DFA
Dr. J. Seiler, SAIIA Member
Mr. J. Sequerira, American
Consulate
Dr. G. Shelton, Defence Secretariat
Mr. J. Snyman, Sanlam
Mr. I. Spence, Goldfields
Commodore Steyn, SAN
Colonel F. Weyers, Defence
Headquarters
Mr. B. Wharton, US Embassy

ABOUT THE SAIIA

The origins of the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) date back to the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. In this fragile post-war atmosphere many delegates expressed a strongly-felt need for the establishment of independent, non-governmental institutions to address relations between states on an ongoing basis.

Founded in Cape Town in 1934, in 1960 the Institute's National Office and Library, containing arguably the most comprehensive collection on Southern African international relations, were established at Jan Smuts House on the campus of the University of the Witwatersrand. SAIIA's six branches countrywide are run by locally-elected committees. The current National Chairman is Dr. Conrad Strauss and the National Director, Dr. Greg Mills. The SAIIA produces a wide range of publications including the *South African Yearbook of International Affairs*, *South African Journal of International Affairs*, *International Policy Update*, the *Occasional Paper* and *Bibliographical* series, as well as a number of specialised book projects.

The Institute has established a proud record of independence which has enabled it to forge important links with leaders of all shades of opinion both within South Africa and outside. It is widely respected for its integrity. The information, analysis and opinions emanating from its programmes often exercise an important influence on strategic decision-making in the corporate and political spheres.

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BRADLOW SERIES:

Barber J, *South Africa in the Post-Cold War World* (Bradlow Series No.8) (March 1996)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Greg Mills is the National Director of the South African Institute of International Affairs.

Thomas J. Callahan is the South African Programme Director of the International Republican Institute (IRI) based in Johannesburg.

Professor Deon Geldenhuys is Professor in the Department of Political Studies at Rand Afrikaans University.

Peter Fabricius is the Foreign Editor of the Independent Newspaper Group.



**THE SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

PO Box 31596

Braamfontein 2017

Tel: (011) 339-2021

Fax: (011) 339-2154

Email: saiiagen@global.co.za