

SOUTH AFRICA AND SECONDARY POWERS: CONTESTATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

SÖREN SCHOLVIN

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PROGRAMME MANAGER Aditi Lalbahadur, aditi.lalbahadur@wits.ac.za

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ABSTRACT

The second most powerful states in regional hierarchies – or secondary powers – can be expected to contest against hegemons. Angola and Nigeria, and to a lesser extent Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan, can be considered secondary powers in sub-Saharan Africa. This paper assesses the policies that these states pursue in terms of regional economics and security, and shows how these affect South Africa. Whereas contestation is commonly defined as counter-policies of secondary states that seek to contain or even end hegemony through competitive or conflictive means, findings show that contestation in sub-Saharan Africa is often unintended. This means that policies pursued by secondary powers might undermine South Africa's position but they are not specifically designed for that purpose. For example, Angola's foreign policy has shifted from unintended contestation to a strategy of soft balancing owing to the country's growing economic influence and its reluctance to join the SADC free trade area. Ethiopia, in turn, cooperates economically with some of its neighbouring countries and has deployed armed forces to countries in the region that are gripped by violent internal conflicts. However, given the lack of overlap between Ethiopia's objectives and South Africa's, there is no evidence of contestation. Kenya, meanwhile, may contest against South Africa at an economic level but has not done so yet. The potential for contestation is linked to disagreements between the two countries over the role of the Tripartite Free Trade Area and the fact that both compete for markets in East Africa. Nigerian–South African relations have been tainted by incidents of diplomatic friction but these fall short of a deliberate strategy of contestation. Yet unintended contestation in an economic sense is evident owing to Nigeria's economic diplomacy. Sudan does not pursue an active policy on sub-Saharan Africa. It mostly reacts to security problems resulting from its own instability. This means that Sudan does not, in any way, contest against South Africa.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SÖREN SCHOLVIN is a post-doctoral Research Fellow at the Institute of Economic and Cultural Geography, University of Hanover, and an Associated Researcher at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies. He has research interests in emerging powers and secondary powers, with a particular focus on South America and sub-Saharan Africa. He has published the books *The Geopolitics of Regional Power: Geography, Economics and Politics in Southern Africa* and *A New Scramble for Africa? The Rush for Energy Resources in Sub-Saharan Africa* with Ashgate.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AMISOM	AU Mission in Somalia
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
EAC	East African Community
EASF	Eastern Africa Standby Force
GDP	gross domestic product
MINUSMA	Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola)
TFTA	Tripartite Free Trade Area
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola)

INTRODUCTION

Over the last two decades, economists, geographers and political scientists have engaged in intense debate about emerging powers. In addition to being featured in numerous publications that deal with global issues, emerging economies, including South Africa, have often been perceived as regional hegemons that advance projects of regional leadership.¹ In spite of frequent claims that not only leaders but also potential followers are the subject of scrutiny,² research on how other states react to the leadership projects of emerging powers remains thin. For sub-Saharan Africa, even general studies of the foreign policies of what Ebert, Flandes and Strüver call secondary powers – ie, the second most powerful states in regional hierarchies – are scarce.³

From the perspective of the realist school of international relations (or IR realism), secondary powers can be expected to pursue competitive or even confrontational policies vis-à-vis the hegemons in their respective regions. The concept of contestation captures this interaction between hegemons and secondary powers. Contestation is defined as ‘counter policies of secondary states that seek to achieve the goal of maintaining external security vis-à-vis the primary power through competitive or conflictive means’.⁴ Flandes and Seith have made inroads in applying this concept to sub-Saharan Africa. They argue that the growing economic and military power of Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya and Nigeria has enabled these states to pursue subregional leadership projects that are not necessarily

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- 1 Adekeye A, Adebayo A & C Landsberg (eds), *South Africa in Africa: The Post-Apartheid Era*. Scottsville: KwaZulu-Natal University Press, 2007; Flandes D, ‘Regional power South Africa: Co-operative hegemony constrained by historical legacy’, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 27, 2, 2009, pp. 153–78; Schoeman M, ‘South Africa as an emerging middle power, 1994–2003’, in Daniel J *et al.* (eds), *State of the Nation: South Africa 2003–2004*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2003, pp. 349–67; Schoeman M & C Alden, ‘The hegemon that wasn’t: South Africa’s foreign policy towards Zimbabwe’, *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 25, 1, 2003; Scholvin S, ‘From rejection to acceptance: The conditions of regional contestation and followership to post-apartheid South Africa’, *African Security*, 6, 2, 2013, pp. 133–52; Turner T, ‘Angola’s role in the Congo war’, in Clark JF (ed.), *The African Stakes of the Congo War*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, pp. 75–92; Simon D (ed.), *South Africa in Southern Africa: Reconfiguring the Region*. Oxford: Currey, 1998.
 - 2 Cooper AF, Higgott RA & KR Nossal, ‘Bound to follow? Leadership and followership in the Gulf conflict’, *Political Science Quarterly*, 106, 3, 1991, pp. 391–410.
 - 3 Ebert H, Flandes D & G Strüver, ‘The politics of contestation in Asia: How Japan and Pakistan deal with their rising neighbors’, *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 7, 2, 2014, pp. 221–60. The paper identifies Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and Sudan as secondary powers. The number of publications on Nigeria’s foreign policy has somewhat increased during the last few years. In particular, the topic of economic diplomacy and the question of how Nigeria can benefit from its foreign political commitments have been studied. Few studies have been carried out on Angola’s and Kenya’s foreign policies. There is practically no associated research on Ethiopia and Sudan.
 - 4 Ebert H, Flandes D & G Strüver, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

compatible with South Africa's objectives.⁵ The regional hegemon, meanwhile, has been overtaken by Nigeria as the largest economy in sub-Saharan Africa. The success of South Africa's diplomatic and military interventions in intra-state conflicts has been limited at best.⁶ South Africa's influence appears to be waning, not only in absolute terms but also relative to the influence that secondary powers wield.

This paper provides an analysis of contestation against South Africa or, more broadly, the foreign policies of secondary powers. It first elaborates on the concept of contestation, stressing that contestation may also occur even if it is not intended by the secondary powers. It then assesses the economic and military power of sub-Saharan African states as well as their respective capacities to transform power into influence, concluding that Angola and Nigeria – and to a lesser extent Kenya and arguably also Ethiopia and Sudan – qualify as secondary powers. The third part of this paper assesses the foreign policies of these secondary powers to determine whether they not only have the potential to contest against South Africa but actually do so. It finds that Angola has shifted from unintended contestation to a strategy of soft balancing. Kenya may contest against South Africa in economic affairs but has not yet done so. Nigeria qualifies as a source of unintended contestation that is limited to economics. In addition, the Nigerian–South African relationship has been tarnished by incidents of diplomatic friction, but these fall short of a grand and deliberate strategy of contestation. Ethiopia's foreign policy agenda, meanwhile, does not overlap with South Africa's, while Sudan's policy on sub-Saharan Africa is passive. These two states do not contest against South Africa in any way.

CONTESTATION AS A CONCEPT AND ITS APPLICATION TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

'No state considers itself a pure follower of another state,' Flesmes and Castro argue.⁷ Hence one should expect the second most powerful states – actually all states – to somehow contest against the hegemon so as to preserve their autonomy and self-determination. From the perspective of IR realism, contestation is an almost self-suggesting strategy because a hegemon poses a potentially deadly threat in an international arena supported by the principle of anarchy. Contestation is similar but not identical to balancing. Waltz distinguished between internal and external balancing: the former aims to increase national economic and military power; the latter is about forming alliances. States

5 Flesmes D & E Seith, 'Südafrikas regionale Herausforderer', German Institute of Global and Area Studies, 2014, https://www.giga-hamburg.de/de/system/files/publications/gf_afrika_1407.pdf, accessed 16 January 2017.

6 Rupiya M, 'South Africa's security interventions in Africa, Libya, Côte d'Ivoire and Zimbabwe', in Pillay U *et al.* (eds), *The State of the Nation: South Africa 2012–2013*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2013, pp. 626–42; Van Nieuwkerk A, 'South Africa and the African peace and security architecture', in Tjønneland EN (ed.), *Rising Powers and the African Security Landscape*. Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2014, pp. 27–47.

7 Flesmes D & R Castro, 'Institutional contestation: Colombia in the Pacific alliance', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 35, 1, 2016, p. 78.

refer to internal and external balancing so as to reduce the power gap vis-à-vis others.⁸ In the defensive variant of IR realism, balancing usually means ‘allying with others against the prevailing threat’.⁹ In the offensive variant, which is more sceptical about whether balancing occurs at all, balancing is seen as a strategy implemented by the global hegemon against potential regional hegemons or, more broadly, by the most powerful states against rivals that are on the rise.¹⁰

The alternative to balancing is bandwagoning. Bandwagoning has received much less scholarly attention than balancing, arguably because it has been misunderstood as a strategy adopted by weak states that lack the means or the will to balance and thus give in to more powerful opponents, as exemplified in relevant sections of the seminal works of Walt and Waltz.¹¹ States that bandwagon accept unequal relationships, making ‘asymmetric concessions to the dominant power and [accepting] a subordinate role’.¹² Schweller suggests, however, that there is more to bandwagoning. States that pursue offensive strategies, seeking to change the status quo, may bandwagon with more powerful revisionists in an attempt to achieve their objectives in unequal yet mutually beneficial partnerships.¹³ Schweller’s observations are certainly insightful but they do not apply to the relationship between secondary powers and regional hegemons. Secondary powers that bandwagon with the hegemon in their respective regions are status quo-oriented because they accept the regional hierarchy of power. Bandwagoning for profit only comes into play when tertiary powers partner with secondary powers in pursuit of a revisionist agenda.

When analysing secondary powers, it matters more that the dualism of balancing and bandwagoning is too simplistic to fully capture the diversity of foreign policy strategies and the practically limitless means used to apply them in practice. As noted, it can be expected that no secondary power follows the hegemon in its region in a pure sense; yet precisely how secondary powers react to regional hegemony ought to be captured conceptually. Some scholars have advanced more complex conceptualisations of foreign policy strategy. Jesse *et al.*, for instance, propose a continuum of responses to hegemony: (1) opposition includes hard and soft balancing; (2) balking and blackmailing mean resistance; (3) leash-slipping and neutrality suggest a neutral attitude towards the

8 Waltz K, *Theory of International Politics*. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979.

9 Walt SM, *The Origins of Alliances*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987, p. 17. As a side note, Walt refined Waltz’s understanding of balancing insofar as he suggested that states balance against the greatest threat, not necessarily against the greatest power.

10 Mearsheimer JJ, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: Norton, 2011.

11 Walt SM, *op. cit.*; Waltz K, *op. cit.*

12 Walt S, ‘Alliance formation in Southwest Asia: Balancing and bandwagoning in Cold War competition’, in Jervis R & JL Snyder (eds), *Dominoes and Bandwagons: Strategic Beliefs and Great Power Competition in the Eurasian Rimland*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 55.

13 Schweller RL, ‘Bandwagoning for profit: Bringing the Revisionist state back in’, *International Security*, 19, 1, 1994, pp. 72–107.

The concept of contestation brings order to the conceptual muddle of foreign policy strategy

hegemon; and (4) binding, bonding and bandwagoning are accommodative strategies.¹⁴ Still other types of strategies fit in between the extremes of balancing and bandwagoning: Gries uses the term buffering to describe China's efforts to cooperate economically with East and South-East Asian countries so as to reduce its vulnerability vis-à-vis the US;¹⁵ Ikenberry defines binding as a strategy aimed at embedding a hegemon in institutions that channel and limit the ways in which power is exercised.¹⁶

The concept of contestation brings order to the conceptual muddle of foreign policy strategy. As a first step, Ebert *et al.* distinguish between revisionism and non-revisionism.¹⁷ Revisionism aims to change the existing regional order – ie, the hierarchy of powers, interstate institutions and, as far as they exist, norms that guide interstate relations. Revisionist secondary powers seek to end hegemony, at least in its present form, and sometimes try to become the primary power themselves. The struggle waged by the Frontline States against South Africa during the era of white minority rule exemplifies revisionist contestation in sub-Saharan Africa. Zimbabwe and its allies sought to end South Africa's hegemony. They supported the armed wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe, intensified their economic cooperation, objected to the regional organisations favoured by South Africa – most importantly, the Constellation of Southern African States – and reversed interstate norms, thereby delegitimising the apartheid regime internationally.¹⁸ Conversely, non-revisionist contestation means accepting the existing regional order and looking for changes from within. The aforementioned strategies of binding and buffering characterise non-revisionist contestation. Ebert *et al.* combine the distinction made

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- 14 Jesse NG *et al.*, 'The leaders can't lead when the followers won't follow: The limits of hegemony', in Jesse NG, Lobell SE & KP Williams (eds), *Beyond Great Powers and Hegemons: Why Secondary States Support, Follow or Challenge*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012, pp. 1–31. Balking is about states refusing to submit to the wishes of a hegemon. They hope that many states will do so, making it impossible for the hegemon to punish every balking state. This strategy was pursued by Russia and others in the context of US sanctions imposed against Iran because of the nuclear programme. States that leash-slip do not fear being attacked by the hegemon. This applies to France in its bilateral relations with the US. France expands its national power in order to pursue an independent foreign policy, not as an action against the US. Switzerland pursues a strategy of neutrality, not allying itself with others. Great Britain has bonded with the US, using personal relationships of leading politicians to influence the hegemon. The other strategies are defined throughout this paper.
- 15 Gries PH, 'China eyes the hegemon', *Orbis*, 49, 3, 2005, pp. 401–12.
- 16 Ikenberry GJ, 'Strategic reactions to American pre-eminence: Great power politics in the age of unipolarity', National Intelligence Council, 2003, https://permanent.access.gpo.gov/websites/www.cia.gov/www.cia.gov/nic/confreports_stratreact.html, accessed 26 May 2017.
- 17 Ebert H, Flandes D & G Strüver, *op. cit.*
- 18 Geldenhuys D, *The Constellation of Southern African States and the Southern African Development Coordination Council: Towards a New Regional Stalemate?* SAIIA (South African Institute of International Affairs) Special Study. Johannesburg: SAIIA, 1981; Plaut, M, Unterhalter E & D Ward, *The Struggle for Southern Africa: Can the Frontline States Escape Apartheid's Strangle Hold?* London: Liberation, 1981; Uys S, 'The short and unhappy life of CONSAS', *South Africa International*, 18, 4, 1981, pp. 242–8.

between revisionism and non-revisionism with an additional distinction between direct and indirect means. Table 1 shows the resulting matrix.

	Direct means	Indirect means
Revisionist goals	Hard balancing	Soft balancing
Non-revisionist goals	Reformism	Resignation

Source: Ebert H, Flemes D & G Strüver, 'The politics of contestation in Asia: How Japan and Pakistan deal with their rising neighbors', *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 7, 2, 2014, p. 234

There are four types of contestation. First, hard balancing constitutes a direct challenge to the hegemon. Secondary powers that pursue a strategy of hard balancing are willing to engage in overt confrontation. This type of contestation is, most importantly, evidenced in economic sanctions (imposed against flows of goods, services and business people) and military threats, including alliances with extra- and intra-regional partners as well as collaboration with armed, non-state organisations that confront the hegemon. As noted earlier, hard balancing was exemplified in the struggle initiated by the Frontline States against apartheid South Africa. Arguably the military intervention staged by Angola and Zimbabwe in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2002 also falls into this category because it undermined the mediation efforts of South Africa. However, the Angolan–Zimbabwean intervention had motivations other than a desire to balance against South Africa (more on this later). At best, it amounted to 'collateral hard balancing' – a term coined by Flemes and Castro in relation to Colombia's foreign policy in the first decade of this century.¹⁹

Secondly, Ebert *et al.* suggest that indirect revisionism – ie, soft balancing – works through formal and informal institutions and constitutive principles, such as legitimacy. By focusing on institutions and legitimacy, they apparently leave the narrowly defined realm of IR realism. More generally, one might argue that soft balancing aims to reshape the regional order step by step and in a way that does not lead to open confrontation. Pape, who examines the reactions of major powers to US unilateralism during the presidency of George W Bush, defines soft balancing as a strategy that challenges a hegemon's military preponderance through non-military means: diplomatic arrangements, international institutions and economic statecraft.²⁰ Flemes and Wehner trace the path of soft balancing in the foreign policies of South American secondary powers, which have formed diplomatic

One might argue that soft balancing aims to reshape the regional order step by step and in a way that does not lead to open confrontation

19 Flemes D & R Castro, *op. cit.*

20 Pape RA, 'Soft balancing against the United States', *International Security*, 30, 1, 2005, pp. 7–45.

and economic alliances so as to contest against Brazil, the regional hegemon.²¹ In particular, economic cooperation among the South American states – sometimes including extra-regional partners – is meant to eventually reduce the gap between the hegemon and the secondary powers.

Ebert *et al.* elaborate less on reformism and resignation – the two non-revisionist types of contestation. Reformism is a somewhat misleading term because, according to Ebert *et al.*, it includes buck-passing and buffering. Buck-passing means that states hope to free-ride on the balancing efforts of others.²² Hence it is revisionist. Buffering is status quo-oriented but it does not aim to reform the regional order in any way. Secondary powers that resign pursue even less confrontational policies, such as binding. Strategies of blackmailing also fall into the category of resignation. Secondary powers that blackmail let the hegemon know that threatening their interests will have undesirable consequences.²³ Such threats do not change anything about regional hegemony; neither does binding.

The first step in an empirical assessment of contestation in any given region entails identifying the hegemon and the secondary powers. The region's power structure leads, first, to a hypothesis on contestation: a huge power gap between the hegemon and the secondary powers and a small number of secondary powers suggests non-revisionist contestation or, at most, soft balancing because the secondary powers would be too weak to sustain a prolonged and overt confrontation. If the power gap is rather small and/or if there are many secondary powers, these secondary powers will be able to risk revisionism, perhaps even direct confrontation.

The second analytical step addresses interests – ie, whether the hegemon and the secondary powers share common goals. If they do, reformism and resignation will probably dominate. Flesmes and Wojczewski conclude from the relationship between Brazil and Venezuela that the provision of public goods by the hegemon and the creation of institutions that engage the regional states also push contestation from revisionism towards non-revisionism.²⁴ Pape similarly suggests that anti-US soft balancing results from US unilateralism. Cooperative and multilateral policies do not induce soft balancing.²⁵ Extra-regional powers, which Flesmes and Wojczewski see as another factor influencing contestation, are not relevant to contemporary sub-Saharan Africa. Although extra-regional powers pursue economic and security interests across the region, they do not compete for influence in

21 Flesmes D & L Wehner, 'Reacciones estratégicas en Sudamérica ante el ascenso de Brasil', *Foreign Affairs Latinoamérica*, 13, 4, 2013, pp. 107–14; Flesmes D & L Wehner, 'Drivers of strategic contestation: The case of South America', *International Politics*, 52, 2, 2015, pp. 163–77. In contrast to the US, Brazil has not used military power that would have induced soft balancing by its neighbouring states.

22 Mearsheimer JJ, *op. cit.*

23 Walt SM, 'Taming American power', *Foreign Affairs*, 84, 5, 2005, pp. 105–20.

24 Flesmes D & T Wojczewski, 'Contested leadership in comparative perspective: Power strategies in South Asia and South America', *Asian Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24, 1, 2011, pp. 1–27.

25 Pape RA, *op. cit.*

sub-Saharan Africa by using proxies like the Soviet Union and the US did during the Cold War. The ideational capabilities of South Africa and its potential challengers do not matter either, because the leadership claims of these states have mostly been rejected within the region.²⁶

To analyse the policies pursued by the secondary powers, it is important to address an analytical hurdle that accompanies the concept of contestation: secondary powers may cooperate with extra-regional partners on security and trade, or promote a regional integration project that constitutes an alternative to organisations dominated by the regional hegemon. Yet are these policies necessarily driven by an intention to contest against the hegemon? Might they not, in fact, be serving interests that have little or nothing to do with the hegemon? Linked to this, do single incidents of friction between a hegemon and secondary powers or even a series of such incidents prove the existence of a strategy of contestation? To use more academic terminology, the mere co-occurrence of two factors does not mean that these factors are causally related. There is a major difference between causality and coincident. It would also be incorrect to argue that any alternative explanation and contestation are ‘complementary and synergic’, as Flemes and Castro do.²⁷ For example, Kenya’s military intervention in Somalia is due to security concerns over Islamist militancy in Somalia (and in Kenya itself).²⁸ This explanation does not exclude the possibility that Kenya intervened in Somalia so as to contest against South Africa, but merely pointing out that this possibility exists is not a way to prove causality.

The answer to this conundrum is that contestation exists and matters, even if secondary powers do not contest intentionally. As long as one is interested in the consequences of foreign policy, recognising unintended contestation makes sense because intended contestation and unintended contestation have the same effect on regional relations: they cause friction between the hegemon and the secondary powers, diminishing the prospects of cooperation and increasing the risk of more intense contestation. Somewhat confusing, however, are efforts to identify the drivers or triggers of contestation if contestation is unintended. Doing so implies an untenable assumption of a causal relationship between, on the one hand, contestation and, on the other hand, the behaviour of the regional hegemon, the historical legacy of the relationship between the hegemon and the secondary powers and the power structure of the region under consideration.²⁹

Intended contestation and unintended contestation have the same effect on regional relations: they cause friction between the hegemon and the secondary powers

26 Flesmes D, ‘Regional power South Africa: Co-operative hegemony constrained by historical legacy’, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 27, 2, 2009, pp. 153–78.

27 Flesmes D & R Castro, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

28 Anderson DM & J McKnight, ‘Kenya at war, al-Shabaab and its enemies in Eastern Africa’, *African Affairs*, 454, 2015, pp. 1–27; ICG (International Crisis Group), *The Kenyan Military Intervention in Somalia*, ICG Africa Report 184. Brussels: ICG, 2012; Miyandazi L, ‘Kenya’s military intervention in Somalia: An intricate process’, Accord, 2012, <http://www.accord.org.za/publication/kenya-s-military-intervention-in-somalia>, accessed 25 May 2015.

29 These are three of the four causes of contestation variance identified by Ebert, Flesmes and Strüver, *op. cit.* The fourth cause – domestic factors – is less problematic because it relates to events and forces that may change the foreign policy of secondary powers, leaving open what the motivation of such a change is.

IDENTIFYING SECONDARY POWERS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Research on regional hegemony and secondary powers is marked by efforts to bring together the major IR schools and hence different interpretations of national power. Therefore, not only the material but also the discursive and institutional, power of regional hegemony and secondary powers have been assessed.³⁰ However, as explained earlier, the concept of contestation is grounded in IR realism. While discursive power and institutional power are not irrelevant, material capabilities appear to be decisive in the case of contemporary sub-Saharan Africa. The crucial issues on the regional agenda are infrastructure (a pillar of economic development) and security interventions, notably in the Central African Republic, the DRC, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan. Regional organisations remain of little relevance and all major decisions are taken unanimously by the heads of the respective member states.³¹ Discourses on legitimate regional leadership, advanced by South Africa and some secondary powers alike, occur but have failed to generate significant followership. In this paper the assessment of the power of sub-Saharan African states is thus limited to material capabilities.

Assessments of national power often start with population and territorial size.³² Yet in sub-Saharan Africa in particular, but also elsewhere, such indicators are hardly useful. The vast deserts of Mali and the seemingly endless rainforest of the DRC do not make these two states more powerful than Ghana or Rwanda, for example. It would also not make much sense to argue that Madagascar and Niger are superior to Namibia because the former have populations of 23.1 million and 18.9 million respectively, whereas the population of Namibia is only 2.3 million.

A standard indicator of national power, which is more useful, is defence spending. It allows the drawing of conclusions about which states are able to extend military power to their

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- 30 Flesmes D (ed.), *Regional Leadership in the Global System: Ideas, Interests and Strategies of Regional Powers*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010; Flesmes D, Nabers D & D Nolte (eds), *Macht, Führung und Regionale Ordnung: Theorien und Forschungsperspektiven*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2012; Nolte D, 'How to compare regional powers: Analytical concepts and research topics', *Review of International Studies*, 36, 4, 2010, pp. 881–901; Godehardt N & D Nabers (eds), *Regional Powers and Regional Orders*. London: Routledge, 2011.
- 31 Hartzenberg T, 'Regional integration in Africa', WTO (World Trade Organization), 2011, https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/reser_e/ersd201114_e.pdf, accessed 25 May 2017; Mair S, *East African Co-operation (EAC): Regionale Integration und Kooperation in Afrika südlich der Sahara I*, SWP Studie 14/2001. Berlin: SWP, 2001a; Mair S, *Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS): Regionale Integration und Kooperation in Afrika südlich der Sahara II*, SWP Studie 15/2001. Berlin: SWP, 2001b; Peters-Berries C, *Southern African Development Community (SADC): Regionale Integration und Kooperation in Afrika südlich der Sahara III*, SWP Studie 16/2001. Berlin: SWP, 2001; Plenck S, *Regionale Integration im sub-saharischen Afrika: Eine Analyse von EAC, SADC und ECOWAS*. Wiesbaden: Springer, 2015.
- 32 Cline RS, *World Power Assessment 1977: A Calculus of Strategic Drift*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1977; Treverton G & SG Jones, *Measuring National Power*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2005.

wider neighbourhood. Table 2 shows that Angola and South Africa spend by far the most on national defence among all sub-Saharan African states, followed by Kenya and Nigeria, which reached 26% and 59% respectively of South Africa's defence spending in 2015.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Angola	4 777	4 473	4 694	6 411	6 842	3 994
South Africa	3 516	3 643	3 810	3 897	3 893	3 881
Nigeria	2 750	3 062	2 697	2 593	2 358	2 298
Kenya	790	807	913	901	819	1 002
Namibia	334	352	347	365	546	622
Tanzania	361	388	394	455	496	585
Côte d'Ivoire	425	356	434	432	521	548
DRC	234	267	339	376	341	487
Zambia	286	300	334	361	444	487
Botswana	340	335	313	292	379	436
Cameroon	391	355	380	400	402	415
Ethiopia	422	407	383	382	394	405
Zimbabwe	107	209	323	356	368	383
Mali	160	163	154	155	218	361
Uganda	759	739	373	311	326	340

Note: States that spent less than \$300 million in 2015 are not shown.

* Considering that there are 48 independent states in sub-Saharan Africa, the tables on the following pages do not include all of them. They show the top performers up to a point where it becomes impossible to contest significantly against South Africa. For example, Lesotho and Swaziland may dislike South African hegemony. Yet defence spending that amounts to 1.3% and 2.1% of South Africa's and a gross domestic product (GDP) of 0.8% and 1.3% of South Africa's make it doubtful that Lesotho and Swaziland can meaningfully oppose the hegemon.

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 'Military Expenditure Database', <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>, 2016, accessed 18 January 2017

As depicted in Table 2, Angola spent more than South Africa – the presumed hegemon – each year, reaching 176% and 103% of South Africa's defence spending in 2014 and 2015

Economic power is crucial to sub-Saharan Africa because large parts of the region are relatively peaceful and stable, meaning that military force is often unsuitable for implementing a project of regional leadership or contesting against it

respectively.³³ There are a large group of states that reached somewhere between 4% and 16% of South Africa's defence spending in 2015. These countries should be considered tertiary powers, meaning states whose power is inferior to that of South Africa by a vast margin but which might nevertheless play a certain role, particularly if they participate in anti-hegemonic alliances. Within the group of tertiary powers, only Ethiopia constitutes a different case because its military power is boosted by military assistance from the US. Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa are the other main beneficiaries of US military assistance. Ghana and Senegal are smaller but steady recipients.³⁴

Prominent representatives of IR realism regard military power as 'the ultima ratio of international politics' and 'not only ... the ultima ratio, but indeed ... the first and constant one'.³⁵ Yet even they include economics in their assessments of national power, as exemplified by Waltz's aforementioned definition of internal balancing. This is not the right place to revive the debate on whether economic or military power matters more and under which conditions states should focus on each one.³⁶ It is sufficient to point out that economic power is crucial to sub-Saharan Africa because large parts of the region are relatively peaceful and stable, meaning that military force is often unsuitable for implementing a project of regional leadership or contesting against it.

The paper measures national economic power by the respective gross domestic product (GDP) of the regional states. It then uses GDP growth rates and inflation rates to assess tendencies of economic development and macro-economic stability. Table 3 shows that South Africa's GDP is smaller than Nigeria's.³⁷ Both countries are far ahead of Angola and Sudan, and even more so of other relatively large economies in sub-Saharan Africa. Drawing a distinction between secondary and tertiary powers is not easy, but this suggests that Angola and Nigeria – and to a lesser extent Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan – should be considered secondary powers. In 2015 Angola's GDP was roughly one-third of South Africa's GDP, while Nigeria's GDP stood at 153% of South Africa's GDP. The respective GDPs of Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan were between 20% and 30% of South Africa's GDP that year.

33 Strictly speaking, this means that Angola is the regional hegemon concerning military power. South Africa is the most powerful secondary power. Considering that a hierarchy of powers should involve numerous interrelated factors, I will stick to my view of South Africa as the hegemon and others, including Angola, as secondary powers.

34 US Department of State, 'Foreign Military Financing Account Summary', 2016, <https://www.state.gov/t/pm/ppa/sat/c14560.htm>, accessed 18 January 2017.

35 Mearsheimer JJ, *op. cit.*, p. 56; Waltz K, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

36 Baldwin DA, 'Power analysis and world politics: New trends versus old tendencies', *World Politics*, 31, 2, 1979, pp. 161–94; Baldwin DA, 'Power and international relations', in Carlsnaes W, Risse T & BA Simmons (eds), *Handbook of International Relations*. London: Sage, 2002, pp. 177–91.

37 One would have to conclude that Nigeria is the hegemon in terms of economic power, followed by South Africa as the strongest secondary power. The simple size of a state's economy is, of course, only a very rough indicator of national power.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nigeria	369 062	411 744	460 954	514 966	568 499	481 066
South Africa	375 349	416 419	396 342	367 594	351 305	314 572
Angola	82 471	104 116	115 398	124 912	126 777	102 627
Sudan	65 634	67 327	68 126	72 066	82 152	97 156
Kenya	40 000	41 953	50 410	55 101	61 395	63 398
Ethiopia	29 934	31 953	43 311	47 648	55 612	61 540
Tanzania	31 408	33 879	39 088	44 333	48 197	45 628
Ghana	32 175	39 566	41 940	47 805	38 616	37 543
DRC	20 523	23 849	27 463	30 015	32 782	35 238
Côte d'Ivoire	24 885	25 382	27 041	31 264	34 218	31 759
Cameroon	23 622	26 587	26 472	29 567	32 050	28 416
Uganda	20 186	20 471	23 506	24 992	27 761	27 529
Zambia	20 266	23 460	25 503	28 045	27 151	21 154

Note: Countries with a GDP of less than \$20 billion in 2015 are not shown.

Source: World Bank, 'World Databank', 2017, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx>, accessed 18 January 2017

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nigeria	7.8	4.9	4.3	5.4	6.3	2.7
South Africa	4.3	5.0	5.7	5.4	6.4	4.6
Angola	14.5	13.5	10.3	8.8	7.3	10.3
Sudan	13.2	22.1	37.4	30.0	36.9	16.9
Kenya	8.4	6.1	4.6	5.7	5.3	5.6
Ethiopia	12.6	11.2	8.6	10.6	10.3	9.6
Tanzania	6.4	7.9	5.1	7.3	7.0	7.0
Ghana	7.9	14.0	9.3	11.6	15.5	17.1
DRC	7.1	6.9	7.2	8.5	9.0	6.9
Côte d'Ivoire	2.0	-4.4	10.7	8.9	8.5	9.2
Cameroon	3.3	4.1	4.6	5.6	5.9	5.8
Uganda	5.7	9.4	3.8	3.6	5.2	5.1
Zambia	8.5	6.4	6.6	7.0	7.8	10.1

Note: The countries are listed in the order appearing in Table 3.

Source: World Bank, 'World Databank', 2017, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx>, accessed 18 January 2017

Tables 4 and 5 reveal that the countries listed in Table 3 are characterised by high GDP growth rates. The fastest-growing economies – especially Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana and Sudan – have also been gripped by very high inflation rates but (even though Sudan was one of the worst performers worldwide in 2015) these have remained below the hyperinflation levels experienced by, for instance, Zimbabwe in the late 2000s. South Africa's inflation rate is modest. Although data on GDP growth and inflation shows important differences between the secondary and tertiary powers in sub-Saharan Africa, these differences do not warrant the exclusion of any of the secondary powers (or the inclusion of a tertiary power in the group of secondary powers).

TABLE 5 INFLATION RATES OF MAJOR POWERS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (%)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nigeria	13.7	10.8	12.2	8.5	8.1	9.0
South Africa	4.3	5.0	5.7	5.4	6.4	4.6
Angola	14.5	13.5	10.3	8.8	7.3	10.3
Sudan	13.2	22.1	37.4	30.0	36.9	16.9
Kenya	4.0	14.0	9.4	5.7	6.9	6.6
Ethiopia	8.1	33.2	22.8	8.1	7.4	10.1
Tanzania	6.2	12.7	16.0	7.9	6.1	5.6
Ghana	10.7	8.7	9.2	11.6	15.5	17.1
DRC	7.1	15.3	9.7	1.6	n.a.	n.a.
Côte d'Ivoire	1.2	4.9	1.3	2.6	0.5	1.2
Cameroon	1.3	2.9	2.9	1.9	1.9	2.7
Uganda	4.0	18.7	14.0	5.5	4.3	5.2
Zambia	8.5	6.4	6.6	7.0	7.8	10.1

Note: Inflation is measured in consumer prices. The countries are listed in the order appearing in Table 3.

Source: World Bank, 'World Databank', 2017, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx>, accessed 18 January 2017

In sum, in the economic arena South Africa faces one potential challenger that is arguably superior and a small number of clearly inferior secondary powers – just as in the military arena. The potential challenge to South Africa is further limited by the fact that Angola might be superior to South Africa in military terms but it has a much smaller economy, suggesting that it would have difficulty succeeding in situations that require non-military power. Nigeria, meanwhile, might rival South Africa economically but is much weaker in military terms, which is particularly problematic considering the frequency of violent conflicts in Central and West Africa, including in Nigeria itself.

An assessment of national power should not stop at this point. The aforementioned indicators neglect the fact that economic power and military power have to be transformed into influence. This transformation process is marked by high losses in states whose political systems are not functioning properly – such states do not reach their full potential because of corruption and ineffective governments. Castellano da Silva argues that although Angola's military played a decisive role in the DRC in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Angola's political institutions at that time remained archaic, preventing this secondary power from assuming a role of subregional leadership.³⁸ Malaquias similarly suggests that Angola's foreign policy was, at least until the beginning of this century, often dysfunctional owing to the absence of a viable governance framework.³⁹ Ogunnubi and Okeke-Uzodike point out that Nigeria has not been able to realise its full potential either. They view Nigeria's limited regional influence as stemming from the country's inability to use power meaningfully, its rather poor international reputation and the on-going insurgency waged by Boko Haram.⁴⁰

This assessment of national power therefore adds two indexes from the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators: control of corruption and government effectiveness.⁴¹ These indexes operate on a scale from -2.50 (worst) to 2.50 (best). As Tables 6 and 7 show, the secondary powers – in particular Sudan but also Angola and Nigeria – suffer from high levels of corruption and government ineffectiveness. South Africa does not come close to outstanding performance by global standards but it performs much better than its potential challengers in sub-Saharan Africa. This means that contestation against South Africa is limited not only by the rather small number of secondary powers and the wide

Contestation against South Africa is limited not only by the rather small number of secondary powers and the wide gap in power between the hegemon and these secondary powers, but also because the secondary powers are unlikely to efficiently transform their economic and military power into influence which would translate into effective contestation against South Africa

- 38 Castellano da Silva I, 'Angola's regional foreign policy: Changes facing the systemic order (1975–2010)', *Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy and International Relations*, 4, 7, 2015, pp. 132–64.
- 39 Malaquias A, 'Angola's foreign policy since independence: The search for domestic security', *African Security Review*, 9, 3, 2000, pp. 34–46; Malaquias A, 'Dysfunctional foreign policy: Angola's unsuccessful quest for security since independence', in Adar KG & R Ajulu (eds), *Globalization and Emerging Trends in African States' Foreign Policy-Making Process: A Comparative Perspective of Southern Africa*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002, pp. 13–33.
- 40 Ogunnubi O & U Okeke-Uzodike, 'Can Nigeria be Africa's hegemon?', *African Security Review*, 25, 2, 2016, pp. 110–28. To provide a very illustrative example, an audit of the state of Nigeria's armed forces by a US firm reported in 2000 that 75% of army equipment was 'damaged or completely out of commission'. Only 10 out of the 52 navy vessels could be considered seaworthy and 'perhaps' five air force jets could still fly out of a total of 90 (quoted in Bach DC, 'Nigeria's "manifest destiny" in West Africa: Dominance without power', *Africa Spectrum*, 42, 2, 2007, p. 311).
- 41 Control of corruption refers to the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption. Government effectiveness is about the quality of public services and the degree of their independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation as well as the government's commitment to such policies. Both indexes are based on several sources and measure the perception of the associated phenomena. For more information see World Bank, 'World Governance Indicators', <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#doc>, accessed 7 September 2017.

gap in power between the hegemon and these secondary powers, but also because the secondary powers are unlikely to efficiently transform their economic and military power into influence which would translate into effective contestation against South Africa.

TABLE 6 CONTROL OF CORRUPTION IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY POWERS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Angola	-1.32	-1.34	-1.29	-1.33	-1.45	-1.40
Ethiopia	-0.60	-0.68	-0.61	-0.51	-0.43	-0.41
Kenya	-0.60	-0.95	-1.10	-1.06	-0.94	-1.01
Nigeria	-0.60	-1.13	-1.15	-1.21	-1.27	-1.10
South Africa	-0.60	0.03	-0.16	-0.11	-0.11	-0.04
Sudan	-0.60	-1.23	-1.51	-1.50	-1.45	-1.50

Source: World Bank, 'Worldwide Governance Indicators', 2017, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home>, accessed 18 January 2017

TABLE 7 GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY POWERS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Angola	-1.13	-1.15	-1.00	-1.22	-1.13	-1.01
Ethiopia	-0.42	-0.47	-0.42	-0.61	-0.42	-0.64
Kenya	-0.54	-0.57	-0.52	-0.46	-0.32	-0.29
Nigeria	-1.15	-1.08	-0.99	-0.99	-1.18	-0.95
South Africa	0.39	0.41	0.35	0.44	0.34	0.27
Sudan	-1.37	-1.39	-1.44	-1.51	-1.56	-1.48

Source: World Bank, 'World Databank', 2017, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx>, accessed 18 January 2017

FOREIGN POLICIES OF ANGOLA, ETHIOPIA, KENYA, NIGERIA AND SUDAN VIS-À-VIS SOUTH AFRICA

ANGOLA

Since the end of white minority rule in South Africa, Angola's relations with South Africa have not been overly conflictive but Angola, as a secondary power, has opposed South Africa's influence. Angola's present contestation against South Africa has been shaped by a major re-orientation of its foreign policy, which began in 2002 with the end of the war against the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (União Nacional para

a Independência Total de Angola, or UNITA). Until the end of that war Angola's foreign policy had been directed at easing the hostilities with UNITA. Other objectives were of marginal relevance, if of any consequence at all. This is not surprising considering that UNITA posed an existential threat to the survival of the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola, or MPLA). To support the efforts of domestic warfare, Angola sought to reshape its direct neighbourhood by intervening militarily in the DRC in 1996 and in 2002 and, in the 1970s and 1980s, by supporting the struggle against the apartheid regime in South Africa and the South African occupation of Namibia.⁴²

Angola's military intervention – along with Namibia and Zimbabwe – in the DRC in 2002, which thwarted attempts to overthrow the Congolese government, was the first major incident of friction. It occurred at a time when South Africa's president, Thabo Mbeki, was pushing for a diplomatic solution. Yet Angola's intervention was – just like its earlier intervention in the DRC in 1996 – a key component in its fight against UNITA, especially UNITA's supply lines in the neighbouring country and the need to protect oil installations in the enclave of Cabinda, which financed the domestic war efforts of the MPLA. In addition, the Angolan government apparently hoped that, as a consequence of its intervention, the DRC would become less inclined to allow UNITA access to Congolese territory.⁴³

For South Africa, meanwhile, the DRC and the whole of Central Africa was (and still is) a source of economic opportunities, which could only be exploited if violent conflicts in the region ended. From the perspective of the Mbeki government, the best way to achieve this objective was to mediate between the Congolese government and the insurgents.⁴⁴ The purpose of Angola's intervention in the DRC was not to confront South Africa. South Africa's economic objectives in Central Africa were at that time irrelevant to policymakers in Luanda. Yet Angola's actions worked against South Africa's chosen course, meaning that the 2002 intervention in the DRC was a case of unintended contestation and – given that South Africa had clearly voiced its preference for how the conflict should be tackled – a grave disregard for South Africa's regional leadership.

In recent years, the Zuma government has tried to improve Angolan–South African relations, mostly to make the Angolan market more accessible to South African companies. Jacob Zuma's first bilateral state visit as South African president took him to Luanda, where he underlined the strategic importance of Angola in the region and recalled Angola's support for the ANC during the struggle against the apartheid regime.⁴⁵ Still, Angola has remained a reluctant participant in regional economic integration initiatives. Most

Angola has remained a reluctant participant in regional economic integration initiatives. Most importantly, the secondary power has not joined the free trade area established by SADC

42 Malaquias A, 2000, 2002, *op. cit.*

43 Scholvin S, 2013, *op. cit.*; Turner T, *op. cit.*

44 Landsberg C, 'An African "concert of powers": Nigeria and South Africa's construction of the AU and NEPAD', in Adebajo A & M Abdul Raufu (eds), *Gulliver's Troubles: Nigeria's Foreign Policy after the Cold War*. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008, pp. 203–19; Adebajo A, Adedeji A & C Landsberg, *op. cit.*

45 Schubert J, 'Angola', in Mehler A, Melber H & K van Walraven (eds), *Africa Yearbook: Politics, Economy and Society South of the Sahara in 2009*. Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 431–42.

importantly, the secondary power has not joined the free trade area established by SADC. Exporting to Angola and investing there remain difficult for South African enterprises. While the Angolan government argues that it cannot join the SADC free trade area because its post-war economy is in a process of restructuring, Redvers points out that this argument appears to apply only to South African competition: Brazilian, Chinese and Portuguese firms have been granted relatively easy market access.⁴⁶

By objecting to integration on terms mostly set by South Africa, Angola is pursuing a strategy of soft balancing. If one believes the declarations made by the Angolan government, this strategy is aimed at reducing the economic gap with South Africa. Redvers, however, argues that those who benefit from market protection are mostly so-called *empresários de confiança* – business people who have close personal links to the Angolan government, military and ruling party. This has negative effects on the availability of products in the Angolan market, as demonstrated by the hundreds of wealthy Angolan shopping tourists travelling to Namibia's capital, Windhoek, every week. Furthermore, the presumably positive effects on national development are doubtful. What is more, Angola is not only a member of SADC. It also participates in the Economic Community of Central African States. This organisation has made almost no progress in creating a customs union and free trade area since its formation in 1964 and hardly represents a means of contestation against South Africa; yet it offers a possible path towards such an outcome, which Angola may one day pursue.

Angola's contestation strategy is not only defensive. The state-owned oil company, Sonangol, has played a crucial role in Angola's foreign policy, investing abroad and thus sometimes taking critical positions in the economies of African, European and Latin American countries. In the regional neighbourhood, Sonangol has invested in infrastructure and mining, including oil and minerals, as summarised by Roque.⁴⁷ For example, Sonangol has carried out joint oil exploration projects with Congo-Brazzaville, a move facilitated by the signing of tax and trade agreements in 2011. The company will probably also venture into Zambia if oil is found in the country's Western Province. Plans are already in place for an extension of the Benguela Corridor, a railway line from the Angolan coast to the Congolese–Zambian Copperbelt. The Angolan government is looking to rehabilitate the port of Lobito at the end of that corridor to facilitate the export of minerals. Moreover, Sonangol has obtained concessions on the main port in São Tomé e Príncipe and on the expansion and modernisation of the country's airport. It is partnering with the local power and water company and the local oil company, the latter already being 70% owned by Sonangol.

Another major infrastructure project in which Angola is involved is the Trans-Cunene Corridor from southern Angola to Namibia, part of the ANSA Spatial Development Initiative, which aims to provide better connections among Angola, Namibia and South Africa. High-voltage transmission lines are envisaged to connect the Inga Power Station

46 Redvers L, 'Angola, the Reluctant SADC Trader', SAIIA Occasional Paper, 152. Johannesburg: SAIIA, 2013.

47 Roque PC, *Angola's Crucial Foreign Policy Drive*, SWP Comments 15/2013. Berlin: SWP, 2013.

in the DRC to South Africa via Angola and Namibia. However, this project has so far remained a distant vision.⁴⁸ The port of Buba and the Boe bauxite mine in Guinea-Bissau are also of interest to Angola. They will be linked through an exploration project that will include the construction of processing facilities, a railway line and a hydroelectric facility on the Corubal River. The mining company Bauxite Angola, which is connected to Sonangol, plans to invest more than \$320 million in this project, which may be extended to include mines in neighbouring Guinea.

The Sonangol Group is thus much more than a mining company. It has become one of the most important enterprises in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition to its core activities – ie, exploration and exploitation of oil resources, including deep-water drilling and seismic studies – the group has diversified into air transport, banking, real estate, shipping and telecommunications. Its most successful subsidiaries include two full-service banks: MSTelcom and Sonair. These are also involved in Angola's economic expansion into the near cross-border region. In mid-2012 Sonair became the majority shareholder in the national air carrier of São Tomé e Príncipe, STP Airways. Furthermore, banks owned by the Sonangol Group are interested in securing stakes in banks in Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau. The DRC and Namibia are also being considered for future expansion. In São Tomé e Príncipe, Unitel International Holding, owned by Isabel dos Santos, who is the daughter of the Angolan president and Africa's first female dollar billionaire, won a tender for landline and mobile telecommunications in 2013.

By expanding its economic influence in sub-Saharan Africa, Angola is seeking to increase its own economic power, narrowing the economic gap with the regional hegemon. Contestation against South Africa is also the result of Angolan ports' being positioned as alternatives to South African ports: the minerals extracted in the Congolese–Zambian Copperbelt are, at present, mostly exported via Durban and Richards Bay, which are South Africa's largest harbours. Lobito, however, may become a vital alternative, as the think tank Stratfor suggests.⁴⁹ On top of that, Angolan and South African companies compete for markets in sub-Saharan Africa, with the status and position of Angolan companies being reinforced by the political support that they receive.

Angola's capacity to contest economically against South Africa has been given a boost by extra-regional partnerships. China, which is Angola's most important economic partner, is able and willing to provide the massive quantities of capital and specialised labour that Angola needs to undertake its ambitious reconstruction plans, including the aforementioned transport corridors. At the regional level, the China International Fund is

48 Maupin A, 'Energy and regional integration: The Grand Inga Project in the DR Congo', in Scholvin S (ed.), *A New Scramble for Africa? The Rush for Energy Resources in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015, pp. 53–70; Scholvin S, 'Energy from across the border: Explaining South Africa's regional energy policy', in Scholvin S (ed.), 2015, *op. cit.*, pp. 71–92.

49 Stratfor, 'The geopolitics of Angola: An exception to African geography', 2012, <http://www.stratfor.com/sample/analysis/geopolitics-angola-exception-african-geography>, accessed 8 August 2012.

partnering with Sonangol in several countries, including investing heavily in the diamond sector in Zimbabwe, iron mining in Guinea and other extractive industries in Madagascar, Mozambique and Tanzania.

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia's Foreign Policy and National Security Strategy, published in 2002, identifies economic backwardness and the desperate poverty in which the large majority of Ethiopian people live as critical threats. It argues that foreign policy should contribute to the acceleration of Ethiopia's economic development by promoting investment and trade, arguably together with the objective of advancing democracy.⁵⁰ Considering that Ethiopia is landlocked, rail and road corridors to Djibouti, Kenya and Sudan are a vital component of the country's economic strategy and foreign policy. Somaliland is another potential transit territory, given its relative stability in comparison with the rest of Somalia. Ethiopia's relations with these states are cooperative. South Sudan appears to be seen as a potential client state,⁵¹ particularly if it becomes dependent on Ethiopia as a source of security and as a transport hub.

Ethiopia has invested heavily in infrastructure, especially in relation to energy and transport. The airport of Addis Ababa, for example, has become one of the major hubs in sub-Saharan Africa. Following the opening of its new terminal in 2003, passenger capacity grew from 500 000 to 7 million a year, making the airport one of the largest in the region. Plans for the further expansion of the airport were announced in 2012. Rail and road corridors are also being upgraded, most importantly the LAPSET Corridor, which will connect Ethiopia, South Sudan and Uganda to the Kenyan port of Lamu by rail, road and pipeline (more on this later). Up to 27 new dams, with hydropower stations generating almost 25 000MW of electricity, are projected to become operational by 2027.⁵² Moreover, high-voltage transmission lines to Kenya are expected to generate additional export earnings of \$1 billion for Ethiopia by the end of the current decade.⁵³

Similar to the case of Angola, one might argue that Ethiopia appears to be pursuing a strategy of internal balancing against South Africa: by fostering domestic growth, the gap between Ethiopia and South Africa will shrink, thereby limiting the latter's chances of reinforcing its vision for sub-Saharan Africa against Ethiopia's will. However, contestation against South Africa does not appear to be the motivation driving Ethiopian policymakers.

50 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy*. Addis Ababa: Ministry of Information, 2002.

51 Abbink J, 'Ethiopia', in Mehler A, Melber H & K van Walraven (eds), *Africa Yearbook: Politics, Economy and Society South of the Sahara in 2012*. Leiden: Brill, 2013, pp. 325–36.

52 Cuesta Fernández I, 'Mammoth dams, lean neighbours: Assessing the bid to turn Ethiopia into East Africa's powerhouse', in Scholvin S (ed.), 2015, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–110.

53 African Development Bank, 'Ethiopia–Kenya electricity highway: Project appraisal report', 2012, https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/Ethiopia-Kenya_-_Ethiopia-Kenya_Electricity_Highway_-_Project_Appraisal_Report_.pdf, accessed 26 May 2017.

Unlike in the case of Angola, Ethiopia's cross-border projection of economic power does not create competition for South Africa. Competition between Ethiopian and South African firms in regional markets is marginal and Ethiopia's regional trade remains extremely low.⁵⁴ The transport corridors that Ethiopia seeks to build will not divert traffic from South African ports and the export of electricity does not work against South African interests either. On the contrary, Ethiopia may one day, on the strengths of a very optimistic prognosis, supply electricity to South Africa.⁵⁵

Ethiopia has also exerted considerable military influence in its neighbourhood. Its troops have been deployed to Somalia, where they are fighting al-Shabaab. Almost 4 500 of the 22 000 troops that comprise the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) are Ethiopian. The respective contingents deployed by Burundi and Uganda are slightly larger. The Ethiopian troops are in charge of the Bakool, Bay and Gedo regions, which border Ethiopia.⁵⁶ Furthermore, Ethiopian troops are involved in considerable numbers in peacekeeping missions in Darfur (Sudan), in South Sudan and along the disputed border of South Sudan and Sudan. This commitment to regional security does not, however, mean contestation against South Africa. Ethiopia projects its influence – both economically and militarily – mostly into a subregion that is distant from, and of limited interest to, South Africa. Table 8 provides an overview of Ethiopia's participation in regional security interventions.

Ethiopia's cross-border projection of economic power does not create competition for South Africa. Competition between Ethiopian and South African firms in regional markets is marginal and Ethiopia's regional trade remains extremely low

TABLE 8 ETHIOPIA'S PARTICIPATION IN UN SECURITY INTERVENTIONS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Name		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Nationality of present mission leadership
MINURCAT	Central Africa and Chad	13	–	–	–	–	–	–
UNAMID	Darfur, Sudan	1 907	2 287	2 404	2 579	2 581	2 548	Nigeria (political), Rwanda (military)
UNISFA	Abyei, South Sudan/Sudan	–	–	3 796	3 892	4 014	3 998	Ethiopia
UNMIL	Liberia	158	12	12	13	13	13	Afghanistan (political), Nigeria (military)
UNMISS	South Sudan	10	10	9	12	8	1 284	New Zealand
UNOCI	Côte d'Ivoire	2	2	2	2	2	2	Niger (political), France (military)

Source: UN, 'Troops and police contributors archive (1990–2016)', 2017, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors_archive.shtml, accessed 16 February 2017

54 Scholvin S & J Wrana, 'From the Cape to Cairo? The Potential of the Tripartite Free Trade Area', SAIIA Occasional Paper, 221. Johannesburg: SAIIA, 2015.

55 Cuesta Fernández I, *op. cit.*

56 For further information on AMISOM, see AMISOM, <http://amisom-au.org>, accessed 7 September 2017.

The minimal overlap between Ethiopia's and South Africa's key foreign policy interests is probably best demonstrated by the key topic on Ethiopia's foreign policy agenda: the right to use the water of the Nile River and its confluents. The river's basin is shared by Burundi, the DRC, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The area in question has a combined population of 160 million people. The 1929 Nile River Treaty – signed by Britain, being the colonial power at that time, and Egypt – has not been replaced and remains a contentious issue for the riparian countries because it means that they cannot use the waters of Lake Victoria and the Nile without the acquiescence of Egypt. Other privileges were granted to Egypt: most importantly, it is able to monitor the river flow in the riparian countries and veto upstream engineering projects that would affect the flow of the river. This apparently limits opportunities to use water for agriculture, industrial production and (especially) electricity generation in Egypt.⁵⁷

Ethiopia's relations with Egypt reached a low point when the Ethiopian president, Meles Zenawi, suggested in 2010 that Egypt was backing rebels in Ethiopia because of the dispute over access to the Nile. He added that 'if Egypt went to war with upstream countries over this issue, it would lose'.⁵⁸ The following year an Egyptian delegation went to Ethiopia to discuss cooperation in terms of dams under construction in Ethiopia, apparently easing tensions. The dispute over the Nile is a serious matter for Ethiopia but it does not affect or involve South Africa in any way. In other words, Ethiopia might have sufficient economic and military power to contest against South Africa, but considering its interests there are no particular South African policies or projects that would trigger contestation. Hence Ethiopia's foreign policy does not even constitute unintended contestation because it simply does not encroach on South Africa's objectives and position in sub-Saharan Africa.

KENYA

Subregional integration in East Africa was given fresh momentum in 2000, when the East African Community (EAC), which had been dissolved in 1977, was relaunched. Burundi and Rwanda joined the founding members – Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda – in 2007. South Sudan joined in 2016. The EAC, which became a customs union in 2005, allows for the free movement of capital, goods and services, and labour. It is looking to establish a currency union by 2024. Kenya, which plays a central role in the EAC, promulgated its new Foreign Policy document in 2015, which set the tone for a markedly assertive turn in the conduct of the country's foreign relations. The new framework specifies that Kenya's foreign policy rests on five pillars: peace diplomacy with a focus on Africa; economic diplomacy, which means efforts to increase foreign investment and trade;

57 Arsano Y, 'Ethiopia and the Nile: Dilemma of National and Regional Hydropolitics', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Zurich; El-Fadel M *et al.*, 'The Nile River Basin: A case study in surface water conflict resolution', *Journal of Natural Resources and Life Science Education*, 32, 2003, pp. 107–17.

58 Quoted in Abbink J, 'Ethiopia', in Mehler A, Melber H & K van Walraven (eds), *Africa Yearbook: Politics, Economy and Society South of the Sahara in 2010*. Leiden: Brill, 2011, p. 337.

diaspora diplomacy, directed at contributions by Kenyans abroad to Kenya's development; environmental diplomacy; and cultural diplomacy.⁵⁹

The relevance of economic diplomacy for Kenya was also demonstrated by the conversion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in 2010. In a speech held during the 2013 election campaign, President Uhuru Kenyatta pledged to turn Kenya into a country with a highly favourable business environment so as to make it an 'African Lion economy'.⁶⁰ Maberera points out that this secondary power is intent on becoming a newly industrialising, middle-income country in accordance with its Vision 2030.⁶¹ The quest for economic diversification, infrastructure development and macro-economic stability, but also human capital and technological progress, has become the critical centrepiece of Kenyan politics. The present government has placed particular emphasis on economic development, which it associates with indigenous capital formation and indigenous control of the economy. This form of economic nationalism is linked to regionalism: Kenya attaches great importance to Africa and, even more so, East Africa. Projects linked to regional integration have been fast-tracked in a coalition of the willing with Rwanda and Uganda, creating rifts in Kenya's relations with Burundi and Tanzania. Cooperation with Ethiopia and South Sudan has also intensified – first in the context of the aforementioned LAPSSET Corridor but also in respect of the security policies of Somalia and South Sudan (more on this later).⁶²

The LAPSSET Corridor is a key project of Kenyan subregional leadership. It consists of the yet-to-be built harbour of Lamu; a yet-to-be-built oil refinery at that harbour; a rail, road and pipeline network from there to Ethiopia, South Sudan and Uganda; and agricultural growth zones and export processing zones along the corridor. However, there is no clear time frame for the completion of the corridor. In addition, as Browne notes, it appears that in various public forums officials from all participating countries focus on achievements from the past and have only a vague vision of what still needs to be done, instead of ensuring that concrete plans with measurable milestones are in place.⁶³ Considering the instability of South Sudan, it is unlikely that the LAPSSET Corridor will become a reality in the near future, at least not in the way it was initially envisaged. A more modest version of the corridor, focusing on Kenyan and Ugandan oil resources, may be pursued. Even this depends on oil prices recovering from their current low level. At present it appears that

59 Republic of Kenya, *Foreign Policy*, 2014, <http://www.mfa.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Kenya-Foreign-Policy.pdf>, accessed 26 May 2017.

60 *Kenya Today*, Jubilee Manifesto Launch: Uhuru Kenyatta Speech, 2013, <https://www.kenya-today.com/politics/uhuru-kenyatta-manifesto>, accessed 10 September 2017.

61 Maberera F, 'Kenya's foreign policy in context (1963–2015)', *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 23, 3, 2016, pp. 365–84. For more information see Vision 2030, <http://www.vision2030.go.ke>, accessed 7 September 2017.

62 Kagwanja P, *Kenya's Foreign Policy: The Return of Geopolitics and the Revenge of the Liberal Order*, Observatoire des grands lacs en Afrique note 2/2014. Nairobi: Observatoire des grands lacs en Afrique, 2014.

63 Browne AJ, *LAPSSET: The History and Politics of an Eastern African Megaproject*. London: Rift Valley Institute, 2015.

even Kenyan officials who are responsible for the corridor project cannot tell whether the project is dead or alive.⁶⁴

Beyond transport infrastructure, Kenya has been a driving force behind the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA), which aims to bring together the 26 countries of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the EAC and SADC in a commercial bloc. Market integration, infrastructure development and cooperation in industrial policies are the three pillars of the TFTA. Kenya's interest in the TFTA is economic development through trade. Speaking of this vision, former president Mwai Kibaki pointed out that 'countries with advanced levels of market integration trade more among themselves, produce more goods and services, and have well developed infrastructure. This leads to high economic growth and development as well as better living standards for the people'.⁶⁵ It appears, however, that Kenya's free trade approach has been constrained by South Africa's reluctance to embrace trade liberalisation. South Africa rather sees the TFTA as a means by which to export its trade-restrictive, import-substituting policies to a wider region or – in other words – to promote regional instead of global value chains.⁶⁶ Another key foreign policy issue for Kenya is the use of the waters of the Nile River,⁶⁷ which does not, as noted earlier, have any relevance for South Africa.

Economic nationalism of the Kenyatta government will lead to friction if Kenya fears that South African firms will out-compete Kenyan companies in East Africa, which is likely if economic integration between the EAC and SADC proceeds

Looking at Kenya's economic initiatives from the perspective of contestation, it is nevertheless plausible to argue that Kenya stands somewhere between Angola and Ethiopia. Boosting domestic economic development is motivated by domestic objectives. As noted, foreign policy has become subordinated to Kenya's economic development. The LAPSSET Corridor does not work against South African interests. Rather, it may even help South African enterprises to also access regional markets. Nonetheless, Kenya constitutes a counterweight to South Africa in a regional economic integration context, as conveyed in different opinions expressed about the TFTA. The economic nationalism of the Kenyatta government will lead to friction if Kenya fears that South African firms will out-compete Kenyan companies in East Africa, which is likely if economic integration between the EAC and SADC proceeds.⁶⁸ Unlike Ethiopia, Kenya is potentially prone to contestation against South Africa, which would be confined to soft balancing in the economic sphere. Compared with Angola, Kenya has not unleashed this potential yet.

The second factor that is shaping Kenya's foreign policy is its location in an insecure neighbourhood, with armed conflicts raging in the Great Lakes Region, Somalia and South Sudan. Humanitarian crises, including refugee movements, and cross-border hostilities by insurgents, pirates and terrorists all pose a threat to Kenya, which has reacted by participating in military interventions in neighbouring countries. In 2011 Kenya launched a military operation – involving 3 000 troops – into neighbouring Somalia, mainly in

64 *Ibid.*

65 Quoted in Scholvin S & J Wrana, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

66 *Ibid.*

67 Adar KG, 'Kenya's foreign policy and geopolitical interests: The case of the Nile River Basin', *African Sociological Review*, 11, 1, 2007, pp. 63–80.

68 Scholvin S & J Wrana, *op. cit.*

response to cross-border kidnappings by the Islamist militant organisation al-Shabaab. The operation, code-named Operation Linda Nchi, which means ‘protect the nation’ in Kiswahili, was aimed at creating a buffer zone of about 100km on the Somali side of the border to prevent any further incursions into Kenyan territory. Operation Linda Nchi was complemented by extensive swoops on districts in Kenyan towns suspected to have an al-Shabaab presence, especially Nairobi. The Kenyan government claimed that it had been asked by Somalia’s transitional government to deploy the troops but this claim was rejected by the Somalis.⁶⁹ The Kenyan troops were later incorporated into AMISOM.

Kenya has also deployed troops to South Sudan. As Table 9 shows, this deployment remains modest compared to that of Ethiopia. Furthermore, Kenya is involved in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which has played an important role in Somalia, and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, which serves as a forum for regional cooperation in stemming violent conflicts. The planning centre and secretariat of the multidimensional Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF) is located in Nairobi, demonstrating Kenya’s subregional leadership role in terms of security policy.

TABLE 9 KENYA’S PARTICIPATION IN UN SECURITY INTERVENTIONS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Name		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Nationality of present mission leadership
MINURCAT	Central Africa and Chad	4	–	–	–	–	–	–
MINUSCA	Central Africa	–	–	–	–	–	11	Gabon (political), Senegal (military)
MINUSMA	Mali	–	–	–	–	1	1	Chad (political), Denmark (military)
MONUC	DRC	24	–	–	–	–	–	–
MONUSCO	DRC	–	24	24	23	24	26	Niger (political), South Africa (military)
UNAMID	Darfur, Sudan	86	84	88	78	84	115	Nigeria (political), Rwanda (military)
UNMIL	Liberia	21	14	17	21	25	25	Afghanistan (political), Nigeria (military)
UNMISS	South Sudan	748	739	705	723	736	771	New Zealand

Source: UN, ‘Troops and police contributors archive (1990–2016)’, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors_archive.shtml, accessed 16 February 2017

69 Cheeseman N, ‘Kenya’, in Mehler A, Melber H & K van Walraven (eds), 2011, *op. cit.*, pp. 345–57.

Intervening in Somalia is not only a means of stopping the cross-border activities of al-Shabaab. It is also vital for building the LAPSSET Corridor and realising Kenya's Vision 2030. One might argue that the military presence in Somalia guarantees a central role for Kenya in international negotiations surrounding the future of that failed state.⁷⁰ However, unlike Angola's intervention in the DRC in 2002, Kenya's intervention in Somalia in 2011 did not constitute a case of unintended contestation against South Africa. South Africa does not play a major role in Somalia. Its reactions to the Kenyan intervention have been supportive: Zuma pledged his support to Kenya's policy on Somalia at a Commonwealth summit a few months after the intervention began. What can be observed in the case of Kenya, however, is a clear effort to assume a leading role in the management of security problems in the wider East African region. Hence Kenya seeks to strengthen its position as a subregional hegemon, as well as in the area of economic cooperation. This has not yet led to friction with South Africa but it gives Kenya more options to pursue a foreign policy that supports its own domestic development agenda.

NIGERIA

As reinforced over the years by successive governments, there is a strong conviction about Nigeria's manifest destiny as the champion of Africa.⁷¹ When Nigeria attained its independence, the first president, Tafawa Balewa, declared that 'we belong to Africa and Africa must claim first attention in our external affairs'.⁷² As Fawole argues, early Nigerian nationalists had a sort of messianic conception of their country's role in Africa.⁷³ According to Agwu, they pursued an altruistic foreign policy because of their own experiences with colonial oppression.⁷⁴ By the mid-1980s Nigeria had advanced its version of the Monroe Doctrine, calling for an end to external powers interfering in Africa, especially France in West Africa.

This is not the right place to examine whether Nigeria's pan-Africanism is altruistic or rather a legitimisation of the pursuit of Nigerian interests. What matters here is that the secondary power has been committed to regional affairs, arguably in a different form

70 As a side note, Kenya's projection of military power has not always been efficient. As reported in *The Star* on 12 November 2015, Kenyan troops in Somalia have been involved in the illegal trade in charcoal, a major source of revenue for al-Shabaab. Money made from this illegal trade is said to be channelled into the election campaigns of major political parties in Kenya (McEvoy C, *Shifting Priorities: Kenya's Changing Approach to Peacebuilding and Peacemaking*, Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre Report. Oslo: Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, 2013).

71 Bach DC, *op. cit.*

72 Quoted in Ubi EN & OO Akinkuotu, 'Nigerian foreign policy and economic development, 1999–2013', *International Area Studies Review*, 17, 4, 2014, p. 418.

73 Fawole AW, 'Nigerian foreign policy: The search for a new paradigm', in Imobighe TA & WO Alli (eds), *Perspectives on Nigeria's National and External Relations: Essays in Honour of Professor A. Bolaji Akinyemi*. Ibadan: University Press, 2012.

74 Agwu FA, *Themes and Perspectives on Africa's International Relations*. Ibadan: University Press, 2013.

to that demonstrated by Angola and Kenya and certainly to a greater extent than that displayed by Ethiopia and (as shown below) Sudan. Yet Nigerian policy advisers and scholars have lately suggested that Nigeria's foreign policy should serve domestic interests by first contributing to the welfare of the Nigerian people.⁷⁵ These often influential people argue that 'un-economic matters [should not] predominate in [Nigeria's] external calculations'.⁷⁶ Such recommendations are based on a critical interpretation of Nigerian security interventions in West Africa, which occurred mostly in the 1990s, and its earlier support for African states that were fighting apartheid and colonialism. These efforts are seen as benevolent acts from which others benefited – particularly other major powers in the region such as Angola and South Africa. Nigeria's economic presence in the countries that its military was purported to have stabilised has remained limited, as have economic benefits for Nigeria.⁷⁷

These various thoughts are reflected in Nigerian policy planning. The National Planning Commission now states that the effectiveness of the nation's foreign policy ought to be measured by foreign direct investment, foreign trade flows and the relocation to Nigeria of vital financial institutions.⁷⁸ Already in 2003 president Olusegun Obasanjo declared that 'our persistent drive to attract foreign investment has resulted in an increase in the number of foreign investors who have either invested in the country or are planning to do so'.⁷⁹ Vision 20:2020, which was proclaimed in 2008, aims to make Nigeria one of the world's 20 largest economies by 2020. The Transformation Agenda, formulated under the administration of president Goodluck Jonathan, draws on Vision 20:2020. It underlines the need to foster international ties that serve the economic development agenda of Nigeria, including trade as well as issues such as education and technological cooperation. Bi-national commissions have been established with Canada, Germany, South Africa and the US, while the steps involved in fostering business ties with China have been discussed at Nigerian foreign policy think tanks. Most of Nigeria's diplomatic representations abroad now have to justify their economic usefulness.⁸⁰

Nigerian policy advisers and scholars have lately suggested that Nigeria's foreign policy should serve domestic interests by first contributing to the welfare of the Nigerian people. These often influential people argue that 'un-economic matters [should not] predominate in [Nigeria's] external calculations'

75 Ubi EN & OO Akinkuotu, *op. cit.*

76 John I, 'Rethinking Nigeria's economic diplomacy', *Vanguard*, 6 May 2010, <http://community.vanguardngr.com/profiles/blogs/rethinking-nigerias-economic>, accessed 12 February 2017.

77 Ojeme V, 'Economic diplomacy: A paradigm shift in Nigeria's foreign policy', *Vanguard*, 21 August 2011, <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2011/08/economic-diplomacy-a-paradigm-shift-in-nigeria%E2%80%99s-foreign-policy>, accessed 12 February 2017.

78 National Planning Commission [of Nigeria], 'Annual Performance Monitoring Report', 2012, <http://www.nationalplanning.gov.ng/images/docs/MonitoringandEvaluation/NPCAnnualPerformanceMonitoringReport.pdf>, accessed 26 May 2017; National Planning Commission [of Nigeria], 'The Transformation Agenda: 2011–2015', <http://www.nationalplanning.gov.ng/images/docs/Transformation.pdf>, accessed 26 May 2017; National Planning Commission [of Nigeria], 'Vision 20: 2020', <http://www.nationalplanning.gov.ng/images/docs/NationalPlans/nigeria-vision-20-20-20.pdf>, accessed 26 May 2017.

79 Quoted in Ogwu UJ, Alli WO & A Ahmed-Hameed, *Years of Reconstruction: Selected Foreign Policy Speeches of Olusegun Obasanjo*. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, 2007, p. 28.

80 Ubi EN & OO Akinkuotu, *op. cit.*

Regional economic integration, meanwhile, remains very limited, with successful outcomes being particularly elusive. The ECOWAS customs union has been repeatedly postponed since it was first conceptualised in 1976. A common monetary zone, originally envisaged for 2005, still appears unrealistic.⁸¹ Regional infrastructure, despite having seen some improvements, is highly inadequate and poorly maintained.⁸² It is still too early to determine whether there will be spillover effects from the 1 000km offshore pipeline that is being built to supply Togo, Benin and Ghana with Nigerian natural gas.

The logic behind Nigeria's economic diplomacy is domestic economic development, particularly poverty reduction ... Nigeria's economic diplomacy qualifies, at best, as unintended soft balancing against South Africa

At first glance it is easy to conclude that the emphasis that Nigeria places on economic growth is linked to internal balancing (according to Waltz's definition of the term). However, the logic behind Nigeria's economic diplomacy is domestic economic development, particularly poverty reduction. This means that Nigeria's economic diplomacy qualifies, at best, as unintended soft balancing against South Africa. The extent of contestation remains rather modest, however, because Nigeria's economic diplomacy is focused at the global level and, arguably without much success, West Africa. South Africa does not compete with Nigeria in global markets because the two countries export different products. The hegemon's trade with West Africa remains marginal. This is in contrast to investment, where there are considerable opportunities in the region (and in Nigeria itself) for South African banks, retailers and telecommunications companies.⁸³ This means that Nigeria's economic diplomacy will probably not cause any friction with South Africa.

Nigeria's track record as a subregional leader in security policy is, at best, mixed. Although Nigeria intervened in several conflicts in West Africa in the 1990s, its ability to change the situation on the ground remained limited. This was not only owing to friction with the francophone regional states, which became increasingly opposed to Nigerian dominance.⁸⁴ Nigeria's army also did not manage to gain full control over the countries in which it intervened. Most importantly, the Nigerian-led ECOWAS Monitoring Group troops were unable to re-establish control over an estimated 85% of Liberia in the early 1990s. The rebellion, which the intervention was intended to bring to an end, thus went on.⁸⁵ As Table 10 shows, Nigeria participated in several, mostly West African, security interventions from 2010 to 2015. Except for Liberia, Mali and Sudan, its contributions were rather symbolic.

81 Mair S, 2001b, *op. cit.*; Plenk S, *op. cit.*

82 Ranganathan R & V Foster, *ECOWAS's Infrastructure: A Regional Perspective*, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, 5899. Washington: World Bank, 2011.

83 Draper P & S Scholvin, 'The Economic Gateway to Africa? Geography, Strategy and South Africa's Regional Economic Relations', SAIIA Occasional Paper, 121. Johannesburg: SAIIA, 2012.

84 Scholvin S, 'Nigeria and West Africa 1990–2003: A regional power without (many) followers', *World Affairs*, 18, 1, 2014, pp. 106–23.

85 Bach DJ, *op. cit.*

TABLE 10 NIGERIA'S PARTICIPATION IN UN SECURITY INTERVENTIONS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Name		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Nationality of present mission leadership
MINURCAT	Central Africa and Chad	17	–	–	–	–	–	–
MINURSO	Western Sahara	9	9	8	4	4	4	Canada (political), Pakistan (military)
MINUSMA *	Mali	–	–	–	–	265	321	Chad (political), Denmark (military)
MONUC	DRC	24	–	–	–	–	–	–
MONUSCO	DRC	–	25	34	22	24	20	Niger (political), South Africa (military)
UNAMID	Darfur, Sudan	3 810	3 856	3 694	3 716	2 902	998	Nigeria (political), Rwanda (military)
UNISFA	Abyei, South Sudan/Sudan	–	–	–	4	5	2	Ethiopia
UNMIL	Liberia	1 715	1 724	1 729	1 606	1 618	1 537	Afghanistan (political), Nigeria (military)
UNMISS	South Sudan	49	68	43	37	31	23	New Zealand
UNOCI	Côte d'Ivoire	6	7	79	69	9	7	Niger (political), France (military)

* The ECOWAS member states organised an intervention force that was deployed to Mali in January 2013. This force included 1 200 Nigerian soldiers, which constituted the second largest contingent after the one sent by Chad. The ECOWAS intervention was legitimised by the UN and integrated into MINUSMA in July 2013.

Source: UN, 'Troops and Police Contributors Archive (1990–2016)', 2017, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors_archive.shtml, accessed 16 February 2017

South Africa does not, in any way, play a major role in West African security policy, but there have been isolated cases of diplomatic friction between Nigeria and South Africa. Nelson Mandela's criticism of human rights violations in Nigeria – the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other civil society activists in 1995, to be precise – and the blunt rejection of this criticism by Nigeria have become major points of reference in studies on South Africa's post-1994 project of regional leadership.⁸⁶

During the Mbeki presidency, Nigeria and South Africa cooperated in major initiatives, especially the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Landsberg argues that Obasanjo and his South African counterpart managed to advance pan-Africanism jointly, in a

86 Schoeman M, *op. cit.*; Scholvin S, 2013, *op. cit.*

Nigerian–South African concert of powers. He quotes from confidential South African policy documents, thereby proving that policymakers in Pretoria were convinced that they needed Nigeria’s support to advance regional integration.⁸⁷ Landsberg suggests that Thabo Mbeki and Obasanjo realised that they had to contribute disproportionately to regional integration and ensure that other key players at that time – Egypt, Ghana, Libya and Senegal – also had some sort of say in initiatives and organisations.⁸⁸

This concert of powers did not last long. The election of South Africa’s former foreign minister, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, as chairperson of the AU Commission caused severe friction, because the most powerful member states of the AU do not usually nominate their own nationals as candidates for chairpersonship. Nigeria and South Africa furthermore disagreed on how to react to the crisis in Côte d’Ivoire in 2010. Nigeria backed the military intervention against President Laurent Gbagbo, whereas South Africa did not.⁸⁹ Nigeria also supported the introduction of a no-fly zone over Libya in 2011, which led to massive airstrikes that allowed rebel forces to topple the Ghaddafi regime. South Africa, meanwhile, sought a negotiated solution, using the framework of the AU.⁹⁰ It had initially voted in favour of UN Security Council Resolution 1973, which authorised the enforcement of a no-fly zone, but soon criticised Western powers for abusing that resolution and called for an end to military strikes. Nigeria, conversely, did not voice any such criticism. The secondary power hence undermined South Africa’s leadership, although its actual intentions, particularly in relation to contestation, remain unclear.

What is more, in 2008 the Nigerian government and the national Parliament stated that Nigerians living in South Africa were victims of xenophobia, which also manifested as physical violence against them. President Umaru Yar’Adua raised this issue during a state visit to South Africa, reminding South Africa that Nigeria had been the country’s biggest donor in the fight against the apartheid regime. Despite this diplomatic effort, the deportations of Nigerians living illegally in South Africa continued.⁹¹ Tensions increased in 2012 when South Africa deported 125 Nigerians for allegedly failing to provide genuine yellow fever vaccination documents. The Nigerian authorities reacted by denying 126 South Africans entry into Nigeria on the same grounds a few days later. Eventually the South African government apologised for the incident, apparently fearing

87 Landsberg C, *op. cit.*

88 Landsberg C, ‘The impossible neutrality? South Africa’s policy in the Congo War’, in Clark JF (ed.), *The African Stakes of the Congo War*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, pp. 169–83.

89 Lynch C, ‘On Ivory Coast diplomacy, South Africa goes its own way’, *Foreign Policy*, 23 February 2011, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/02/23/on-ivory-coast-diplomacy-south-africa-goes-its-own-way>, accessed 26 May 2017.

90 Fabricius P, ‘What ended Zuma’s mediation in Libya?’, *ISS Today*, 28 May 2015, <https://iss.africa.org/iss-today/what-ended-zumas-mediation-in-libya>, accessed 26 May 2017.

91 Bergstresser H, ‘Nigeria’, in Mehler A, Melber H & K van Walraven (eds), *Africa Yearbook: Politics, Economy and Society South of the Sahara in 2008*. Leiden: Brill, 2009, pp. 145–60.

the loss of considerable investment opportunities in Nigeria's booming banking, retail and telecommunications sectors.⁹²

SUDAN

Sudan's foreign policy has for most of its history been reactive, vis-à-vis both extra-regional powers and the management of the cross-border dimension of its own internal conflicts. Scholars who studied Sudan's foreign policy after the country's independence in 1956 concluded that 'the main feature of [Sudan's] foreign policy has been the lack of one'.⁹³ The right to use the Nile River and unionism with Egypt became important issues for the newly independent country. In the mid-1960s Sudan also had to deal with the effects of Eritrean secessionism and uprisings in the DRC and, more importantly, of Ethiopia and the DRC supporting insurgents in what is today South Sudan. A troubled relationship with Ethiopia, Libya and Uganda – because of their support for the Sudan People's Liberation Army – characterised the following decades. Sudan lent its support to the Lord's Resistance Army, active in northern Uganda, in retaliation.⁹⁴

Through these decades Sudan has been rather more involved in the Arab world than in sub-Saharan Africa. The ascendance to power in 1989 of the National Islamic Front marked the beginning of a revolutionary phase in the country's foreign policy, a period in which the country was far more than merely reactive to external events. The grey eminence of political Islam in Sudan in the 1990s, Hassan al-Turabi, thought of his country as a key point of departure for an Islamic resurgence. Moreover, the presence of individuals such as Osama bin Laden demonstrated the new government's willingness to espouse an aggressive approach to foreign policy. The government provided support to Islamist movements, particularly in Afghanistan, Algeria, Bosnia, Chechnya, Eritrea and the Palestinian territories. Many Islamists obtained Sudanese diplomatic passports to facilitate their movements. One such individual was Omar Abdel-Rahman, the leader of the Egyptian terrorist organisation al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya, who is presently serving a life sentence in the US. Khartoum became a meeting point for Islamist organisations from all over the world and military training camps were created for organisations such as al-Qaeda. A major shift occurred in 1995 when Sudan was suspected of being involved in an assassination attempt on Egypt's president, Hosni Mubarak. Shortly afterwards, bin Laden was expelled and the country changed its citizen and immigration regulations to the disadvantage of Islamist militants.⁹⁵

Sudan's foreign policy has for most of its history been reactive, vis-à-vis both extra-regional powers and the management of the cross-border dimension of its own internal conflicts

92 Bergstresser H, 'Nigeria', in Mehler A, Melber H & K van Walraven (eds), 2013, *op. cit.*, pp. 157–73.

93 Howell J & MB Hamid, 'Sudan and the outside world, 1964–1968', *African Affairs*, 273, 1969, p. 299.

94 Woodward P, 'Sudan's foreign relations since independence', in Large D & LA Patey (eds), *Sudan Looks East: China, India & the Politics of Asian Alternatives*. Suffolk: Currey, 2011, pp. 35–51.

95 Sharfi MH, 'Sudan's radical foreign policy agenda in the 1990s: An overview of implications', *Contemporary Arab Affairs*, 8, 4, 2015, pp. 523–34.

With the decline in support for Islamist movements, Sudan returned to its reactive roots and today it is mostly regional politics that matter to Sudan, because many of its internal conflicts have cross-border effects. Relations with neighbouring Chad have been tense in the recent past due to the movements of rebel groups across the two countries' mutual border. The same applies to relations with Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. However, the most important issue remaining on Sudan's regional agenda is the right to use the waters of the Nile River, which makes relations with Egypt critical. In all these cases the secondary power is a source of concern for the neighbouring countries that are seeking to minimise threats originating in Sudan.

Sudan hardly pursues a regional agenda of its own, except for trying to convince African and Arab states to disregard the warrant for the arrest of President Omar al-Bashir issued by the UN International Criminal Court.⁹⁶ Important partners are extra-regional: China, India, Malaysia and South Korea, as Large and Patey show. Business people, the media and politicians from these countries often describe Sudan and South Sudan as lands of opportunity and their respective relations as examples of mutually beneficial South–South cooperation.⁹⁷

Considering Sudan's reactive character and its limitations vis-à-vis its direct neighbours, its foreign policy cannot be understood from the perspective of contestation. Even the category of resignation, at least in terms of how Ebert *et al.* define it, would be excessive because the secondary power is not seeking to bind or blackmail South Africa. Besides the mediation and peacekeeping efforts of the AU in Sudan, South African–Sudanese diplomatic interactions are limited to al-Bashir having been rushed out of South Africa to avoid being handed over to the UN, and South African Airways considering, apparently for political reasons, the introduction of direct flights between Johannesburg and Khartoum. With Sudan not having an active foreign policy agenda and South Africa adopting a friendly position in the few cases of bilateral interaction, there is no reason for Sudan to contest against South Africa.

CONCLUSION

There are few states in sub-Saharan Africa that possess sufficient economic and military power to contest against South Africa, the regional hegemon. The secondary powers – Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and Sudan – are marked by a considerable power gap vis-à-vis South Africa, with the potential conversion of their power into influence being hampered by poor governance. There is another factor limiting the probability of contestation, which the paper did not address: the fact that the secondary powers compete among themselves, as probably best exemplified by Nigerian reservations about Angola's

96 Woodward's contributions to the different volumes of the *Africa Yearbook* confirm this interpretation.

97 Large D & LA Patey, 'Sudan looks East: Introduction', in Large D & LA Patey (eds), *Sudan Looks East: China, India & the Politics of Asian Alternatives*. Suffolk: Currey, 2011, pp. 1–34.

efforts to build economic and security partnerships with West African countries.⁹⁸ Another example is the competition between Ethiopia and Kenya over the leadership of the EASF.⁹⁹ Consequently, it is unlikely that South Africa will soon face a coalition of secondary powers that balance (in a hard or soft way) against it. Moreover, from the individual perspectives of the secondary powers, contestation tends to be an exception.

Angola has been trying to boost its role as an important subregional power, particularly through the investments made by the state-owned Sonangol. It has also proved to be capable of intervening militarily in its neighbouring countries. However, Angola's refusal to join the SADC free trade area and Sonangol's activities abroad, especially those relating to transport infrastructure projects that could undermine South Africa's role as the region's transport hub, constitute soft balancing. Angola's intervention in the DRC, meanwhile, constituted unintended contestation.

Ethiopia's economic development plans relate to case-specific cooperation with regional states, especially in terms of infrastructure development in the energy and transport sectors. Accordingly, projects remain of a subregional nature, as does Ethiopia's security policy. There is no friction with South Africa, largely because South Africa is hardly involved in the economics and politics of the Horn of Africa. Thus, Ethiopia does not contest against South Africa, either intentionally or unintentionally.

Kenya has a subregional leadership role in the EAC. Since the beginning of this century, Kenya's economic and security policies have become relatively more ambitious, although the LAPSET Corridor reveals a sizeable gap between project objectives and outcomes. There is, however, potential for contestation against South Africa because Kenya's envisaged outcomes of the TFTA are hardly compatible with those of South Africa. Higher levels of investment by South African enterprises in East Africa may also create challenges for Kenya's economic development strategy. Kenya's intervention in Somalia, meanwhile, has been verbally supported by South Africa.

Whereas Nigeria was a key player in West Africa's security policy in the 1990s, its foreign policy has shifted towards economic diplomacy and its own domestic welfare. Global, instead of regional, partnerships matter for the secondary power. The potential for conflict between the hegemon and the secondary power is consequently low. Yet Nigeria's economic development may be counted as unintended contestation because it provides the secondary power with better opportunities to pursue a foreign policy that does not take into account South Africa's preferences. Sporadic incidents of diplomatic friction indicate that Nigeria does not accept a subordinate position vis-à-vis South Africa but they fall short of a grand strategy of contestation.

Sudan has never pursued an active foreign policy on sub-Saharan Africa. Its involvement with regional states is mostly limited to reacting to the effects of cross-border movements of armed groups. In the few cases where South Africa and Sudan have interacted, their

98 Roque PC, *op. cit.*; Schubert J, 'Angola', in Mehler A, Melber H & K van Walraven (eds), 2013, *op. cit.*, pp. 439–50.

99 McEvoy C, *op. cit.*

interests have been compatible. This explains why Sudan does not contest against the hegemon and there are no indications that it will do so in the foreseeable future.

What all cases studied in this paper suggest is that the need for contestation depends on the degree to which secondary powers are negatively affected by the leadership project of the hegemon. Considering that South Africa's ambitions and influence beyond Southern Africa remain modest, it is not surprising that Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and Sudan do not pursue strategies of contestation – ie, specifically intended contestation. Angola finds itself in a different situation. The analysis also suggests that research on contestation should acknowledge the often-limited foreign policy capacities of secondary powers.

Although convincing theories suggest that no state considers itself a pure follower of another state, secondary powers, at least in sub-Saharan Africa, have to deal with numerous issues that are of greater importance than improving their position vis-à-vis a regional hegemon.

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Jan Smuts House, East Campus, University of the Witwatersrand
PO Box 31596, Braamfontein 2017, Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel +27 (0)11 339-2021 • Fax +27 (0)11 339-2154
www.saiia.org.za • info@saiia.org.za