Regional Integration, Trade and Conflict in Southern Africa

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Regional Trade, Conflict and Peace: Background

Regional trade integration, in the strict sense of the concept, is a relatively new development in Southern Africa, although Africa's post-colonial leaders had, in the early 1960s, called for integration of Africa's political and economic structures. The story of regionalism in Sub-Saharan Africa has always been occasioned by failure, with lack of political will as an oft-cited reason. There are, however, a number of other challenges that the sub-continent has had to contend with in the process of regional integration and cooperation. This paper will examine these, focusing on the intersection of trade and security in the Southern African context.

The Southern African region emerged as a formal and institutional structure principally as a function of political construction and, more specifically, as a reaction against apartheid South Africa. Since a number of countries had obtained their independence from colonial powers, and South Africa was seen as the last bastion of colonialism in the continent, the political environment in Southern Africa was fraught with security tensions. The formation of the region took place against the backdrop of apartheid South Africa and heightened Cold War tensions that sometimes played themselves out in Southern Africa.

Given the focused nature of this paper we will not get into the detail of this history, but only stress that it was political rather than economic considerations that set in motion the process of regionalization in Southern Africa. The trade or strongly economic agenda surfaced only four years after the re-casting of SADCC (Southern African Development and Coordinating Conference) into the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in 1992. In this paper we will refer to the latter.

This paper sets out to discuss the nature of political and economic relations amongst SADC country members, looking specifically at the intersection between trade and security. The existing literature on Southern Africa tends to treat various dimensions of regional integration and cooperation in an isolated manner; limited work has been done discussing the relationships between different components such as trade, security and development. Yet Southern Africa is a good example of a region that captures and manifests the contradictory dynamics of trade and security. The security aspect, in particular, has been salient both before democracy and after apartheid, whereas the trade dimension is relatively new and took on some prominence after South Africa was integrated into the formal structures of the region.

The discussion of trade and security issues in this paper draws both on academic and policy research. It should be underlined from the outset that on both fronts – trade and security – progress in the region has moved very slowly and much of this reflects the weak institutional capacity of SADC member countries. The strengths and weaknesses of the organization mirror the relative strengths of the member countries. Nevertheless, in relation to more developed regions, Southern Africa is going through interesting times both in regards to intra-regional developments and external relations. There is a large space for its institutions and policy architecture to improve. This is especially so with respect to institutional linkages within SADC countries between the trade (economic) and (political) security dimensions. For both components there are nascent institutions in place.

However, as mentioned before, there is currently very limited interaction between the trade and security agenda. This paper seeks to close this gap, at least at the conceptual level, and highlight the potentially positive relationship between these areas. In so doing it will set this discussion within the broader debate on the relationship between trade and security. This case study experience could open up interesting avenues of conceptualization for the study of trade and conflict in the regional context, but most crucially it seeks to make a meaningful contribution to policy discourse in the region by shedding light on the positive relationship between trade and security.

The study is divided into five sections. Section two provides a critical theoretical overview of the broader debate on trade and security, focusing mainly on the implications for the study of regions. The argument this paper seeks to develop is that regional relations on issues of trade and security cannot be understood in isolation from domestic level challenges, including the nature of institutions, the political culture and the relationships between various societal actors, especially the state-society nexus. The experience and expectations of state actors who facilitate political and economic relations at regional and international level are heavily shaped by their domestic political context, institutional experiences and the nature of social relations and networks at the domestic level. Hence this study also considers the impact of intra-state experiences on regional level interactions as well as the impact of the latter on the former.

The third section highlights some of the tensions that exist within the region, and the nature of regional organizations, including their overlapping memberships in the wider Southern Africa region. This will serve as background for the study. The fourth section considers pertinent issues of trade integration and security cooperation in SADC. The discussion centres on the two most critical areas: the SADC Protocol on Trade, and the Organ for Politics, Security and Defence (OPSD). Areas of tensions and cooperation in the two institutional processes highlighted above are discussed.

Regarding the SADC Protocol on Trade, the paper considers both the structure of trade complementarities and the nature of Rules of Origin as examples of how trade can generate tensions within the region. This questions the standard liberal-trade assumption that trade relations foster harmonious social relations that could automatically generate peace. On the OPSD, this paper draws examples from the Great Lakes conflict to demonstrate how institutional weaknesses at domestic and regional levels can create fertile conditions for conflict.

Related to this point is the fact that even though trade relations existed amongst all of the countries that were part of the conflict, this did not stem the tide of violent conflict, and perhaps even promoted it via resource competition. In examining this case, the countries involved and the institutional mechanisms that were in place, the question that we pose – and seek to answer – is what is the appropriate institutional design that could help foster deeper trade relations and ensure sustained peace in regions that were previously mired in violent (inter-state) conflict?

The last section draws summary conclusions from the study and points to some of the policy considerations that could improve our understanding of the relationship between trade and

security and the institutional designs that could be explored to create a strong positive association between trade and security in a regional context. This section will also question the assumptions that have been made in the past in studying this area.

Trade and Security: A Critical Review of Theory

The case for a positive relationship between trade and security gained strong currency in the liberal-trade paradigm, propounded strongly by Mansfield and Pevehouse. These scholars have made a remarkable contribution in taking the trade-security debate away from generalities and broad conceptualization to more specific context of preferential trading partners – bilaterally and regionally. Mansfield-Pevehouse's proposition is that the 'conflict-inhibiting' effect of preferential trade will grow larger and stronger as trade flows rise, and that 'heightened commerce will be more likely to dampen hostilities between PTA members than between other states.'[1]

The assumption is that increased commercial relations create a climate for peaceful co-existence or, simply put, that the more countries trade the more peaceful towards one another they become. This is hardly a novel proposition. Since the late 17th century, liberal philosophers such as Montesquieu, John Stuart Mill and Jean-Francois Melon drew a close association between the expansion of commerce, the spread of gentleness or civilization and taming of violent passions.[2] Montesquieu[3] argued that, 'the natural effect of commerce is to lead to peace. Two nations that trade together become mutually dependent…'

In further expounding this theoretical proposition, Albert Hirschman[4] points out that, '…international commerce, being a transaction between nations, could conceivably have also a direct impact on the likelihood of peace and war: once again the interests might overcome the passions, especially the passion for conquest.' Following on this argument, peace can thus be regarded as an outcome or dividend of good commercial behaviour. In this respect, today's proponents of the thesis that trade equals the absence of conflict draw a conclusion that, with increasing interdependence among nations, bound together by common commercial interests or balance of interests, conflict is levelled out.

This view is deeply rooted in the European intellectual tradition as it was there that the rise of commerce and the formation of nation-states were co-reinforcing. Ironically, this was also the region that gave rise to the most destructive (global) conflicts in recent history. Indeed, the late Nineteen Century was a time of great optimism for liberal theorists but this gave way to the carnage of the First and Second World Wars. Arguably a major factor underlying this history was the lack of formal institutional mechanisms for regulating resource competition amongst industrializing nation states – states built on mercantilist notions of state-craft. It was not until after the Second World War that such institutional mechanisms were put in place (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade; the European Union) and with great success. This recent historical experience lends substantial weight to the liberal proposition,

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[1] Edward D Mansfield and John C Pevehouse, International Organization 54 (4) Autumn 2000, p.781.
[2] This theme is explored in greater detail in Albert O. Hirschmann, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before its Triumph*, (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1977).
[3] Quoted in ibid, p.80.
[4] *ibid*, p.79.

at least from the standpoint of Western history.

However, applied to other contexts where the state was more an external imposition than an organic development, this perspective is deeply unconvincing. For example, in most instances states in Sub-Saharan Africa were forged through the crucible of conflict and, according to Buzan and Weaver, 'without exception based on inter-state rivalry, and many of them were born into war.'[5] In contrast, during Europe's transition from feudal societies to modern nation-states, the political elite used taxation in the process of state-building and socio-political change; most of Sub-Saharan Africa's elite, by and large, failed to build cohesion with citizens using fiscal policy instruments.[6]

The forceful argument made by Mansfield and Pevehouse regarding the relationship between commercial transactions and peace is supported by another assertion: that 'military conflict imperils economic relations between combatants and any PTA in which they participate, placing the future gains from membership at risk and threatening to exact a particularly heavy toll of PTA members that trade extensively.'[7] Their argument rests on two other assumptions. The first is that free trade fosters a sense of community, development of mutual respect and harmonious relations. The second is that unfettered commerce promotes economic interdependence and reduces tensions. According to this perspective, the cost of war is a disincentive, while enhanced economic welfare generated through trade is an incentive.

The theoretical coherence and explanatory power of this view cannot be easily assailed. Indeed, in a general sense it holds strong ground, even though it would be difficult to establish empirically a direct causality between increased trade and reduction of hostilities especially in non-Western contexts. Nevertheless, the association between the two should be assumed, in the first instance, to be positive, if only to serve as a starting point in constructing an analytical framework for comparative study of regional trade and security across different contexts.

While increased trade might not have a direct bearing on peace or lessening of hostilities, it should not be pre-supposed that there is an inevitably positive relationship between trade integration and conflict: there is a possibility that in certain contexts trade integration could generate resentment that might or might not lead to actual conflict. Such resentment could be a function of skewed distribution of material power in a regional context, which in turn could establish grounds for the emergence of hostilities or lead to strained relations, especially if there are no compensatory measures extended by the hegemon. If the regionalization process is seen to proceed in a way that reduces gains for other countries and

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[5] Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 17.

[6] On the usefulness of taxation, fiscal policy and public finance in state-building in Europe, see Rudolf Braun, 'Taxation, Sociopolitical Structure, and State-building', In Charles Tilly, *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp.243-244; on the failure of political leaders in Sub-Saharan Africa to evolve similar instruments, see Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*, (Oxford: James Currey, 1999), p.8; Jeffrey Herbst, *State Power in Africa*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[7] ibid., p.776.

creates a space for hegemonic assertion by a strong country, resentment is likely to arise amongst countries that perceive themselves to be in a position of disadvantage and vulnerability in relation to the dominant country.[8]

Limitations of the liberal-trade-peace thesis extend beyond general issues of socio-political cohesion to issues of perceived gains from trade relations. Arguably, one of the key reasons for the failure of the East Africa Community integration project in the late 1960s was Kenya's perceived domineering role. Kenya was seen as benefiting disproportionately from the customs union at the expense of the other two countries (Tanzania and Uganda). Other political factors also came into play, including tensions between Tanzania's Julius Nyerere and Uganda's Idi Amin, which saw the former engineering a coup that edged Amin out of power. The fact that commercial relations existed between these countries did not restrain political actors from engaging in violent conflict. It would however be facile to suggest that these tensions resulted from acrimonious economic relations; but the powerful point this demonstrates is that economic relations are on their own insufficient for forging harmonious relations.

There are certain conditions that would be necessary to complement and indeed harness the positive dimensions of trade to create conditions conducive to peace. In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, such conditions or complementary measures could include strong agency of restraint, and this could be in the form of increased role of external core countries in the continent; anchoring regional integration processes on the leadership of certain core or pivotal states; building socio-political cohesion between the state and civil society; and establishing or strengthening infrastructure of governance at the domestic level.

Weaver and Buzan[9] suggest that a region made up of weak states will be different from one made up of fairly strong states: weak and strong states are defined based on the degree of internal cohesion of the state and the degree of socio-political cohesion between the state and civil society. While, as they suggest, 'Sub-Saharan Africa contains predominantly pre-modern states'[10], there is a degree of differentiation and signs of 'modern' state construction in some cases in Southern Africa (see below). Without doubt, most of the continent's states conform to the image of pre-modernity, with weak institutionalization and relations with civil society constituted in neo-patrimonial terms.[11]

At the risk of generalization, at first glance states that could be regarded as internally cohesive and relatively strong include, to varying degrees, those that are in South Africa's immediate sphere of influence: Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and, to a limited extent, Swaziland; as well as Mozambique, Mauritius, Zambia and Tanzania. These states have regularized political processes and strong infrastructure of governance, albeit to varying

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[8] See a survey of different perspectives on the post-War security order, Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver, *op.cit.,*9.

[9] *ibid.,* p.22.

[10] *ibid.*

[11] Neo-patrimonial relations are characterized by distribution of patronage by state elites to certain powerful societal groups as a tool to consolidate authority. See Catherine Boone, 'States and Ruling Classes in Post-Colonial Africa', In Joel S. Migdal, Atul Kohli and Vienne Shue (eds.), *State Power and Social Forces,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp.120-124; Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*, (Oxford: James Currey, 1999), pp.4-16,

degrees. In essence, these are states where, with the exception of Swaziland, the Western model of democracy is organically taking shape rather than forced from outside. As such, there is less resistance to dis-embedding the state from pre-modern neo-patrimonial relations, and institutionalising it.

The region's weaker states include Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zimbabwe. These states exhibit thin layers of institutions, weak socio-political cohesion and high militarization. DRC existed for years under a kleptocratic military rule; Angola had the misfortune of living both under colonial administration and experiencing civil war in the colonial aftermath; and Zimbabwe has witnessed the rapid erosion of bureaucratic norms and increased informalization of politics by the political elite in the post-colonial era.[12]

Thus in understanding the relationship between trade and security it would be important to recognize different sets of circumstances within which different state structures have evolved, and the security challenges they confront. In this sense, it is insufficient to look at the limited variable of trade in explaining conflict or security arrangements in Southern Africa; other non-trade factors should be brought into the analysis.

While in some contexts a positive relationship can be assumed between trade relations and peace-building, this should not be generalized. Moreover, proving the direct impact of trade integration on security, as this paper later demonstrates, is a very difficult, if not impossible, undertaking. Indeed, as Barbieri points out, 'It is unclear how one would identify the true cause of peace in trading relationships.'[13] Similarly, on the reverse side of the question, causality between trade relations and conflict would, indeed, be difficult to prove.

Alternative Perspectives

The liberal free-trade-peace thesis has been heavily contested by some scholars, who argue that interdependence can also increase the risk of militarized disputes.[14] They suggest that asymmetric dependence in trade relations can create conditions that could give rise to conflict. Indeed, it is possible that such unequal trade arrangements, where benefits are seen as accruing disproportionately to one member or a select group of countries (as the East Africa Community case demonstrated), without compensatory mechanisms to assuage the sense of deprivation, can create resentment and cause strains in regional relations. At the heart of Barbieri and Schneider's argument is that symmetric ties may promote peace while asymmetric trade dependence could lead to conflict.[15]

This then brings up an important question for policy thinking: in view of the fact that trade is most often seen by policy makers as a zero-sum game (creating winners and losers) what appropriate compensatory instruments should be explored by policy makers involved in the business of trade integration and that of managing regional security challenges? Although the

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[12] *ibid*, p.16.
[13] Katherine Barbieri, 'A Recommitment to Social Sciences: Assessing the Hurdles in the Trade Conflict Debates', p.5.
[14] Katherine Barbieri and Gerald Schneider, 'Globalization and Peace: Assessing New Directions in the Study of Trade and Conflict', *Journal of Peace Research,* 36 (4) 1999, pp.387-404.
[15] *ibid.*, p.390.

question is not an easy one to answer, it is nevertheless important to consider. The last section of this paper reflects on some policy recommendations in this regard.

Barbieri criticizes the liberal view, expressed by Polachek (1980, 1992), that 'leaders are deterred from engaging in conflict with important trading partners for fear of losing the welfare gains associated with trade'. It is not always the case that the economic welfare trade generates outweighs the benefits of engaging in conflict. Such a linkage assumes a universal or standard conceptualization of benefits, and this fails to take into account the composition of the state and the nature of the relationship it has with civil society in different contexts.

There are other important factors that need to be taken into consideration to understand the relationship between trade and security, and how the former can enhance peace. These include statistical reliability and limited data availability to measure the extent of trade between various countries and how this has contributed to a deeper integration that sufficiently creates a buffer against the forces of conflict.

Secondly, much of the studies do not consider the impact of informal and illegal trade activities that often by-pass, and sometimes channelled through, formal processes. There is very limited policy and academic research on this relationship. Where this has been discussed it has mainly been in generalities[16], or studies have looked narrowly at the relationship between globalization, war economies and informal trade, with little attempt to make a linkage with formal, institution-driven processes.[17] The prevalence of informal trade – which arguably forms the bulk of trade flows in some African countries – is also linked to the nature of the state system found in much of the continent.

The point about the disjuncture between theory and the empirical is also made by Barbieri when she points out that the study of the relationship between trade and conflict in international relations lacks empirical investigation, yet this question has significant relevance for both theory and policy.[18] Even though Mansfield and Pevehouse, moving from a liberal trade paradigm, make an extensive examination of contending views on the relationship between regional trade agreements and conflict[19], their study does not consider the relationship of this with informal trade networks and personal gains derived by elites from conflicts.

Even with formal trade activities, in measuring the level of integration between two countries what trade variables are important to observe? Are there certain product lines that would be important to note? And how do we measure the new generation trade issues such as services, especially in light of the varied legal and illegal activities that constitute services?

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[16] See for example, Edward Mansfield, *Power, Trade and War*, (Princeton; Princeton University Press, 1994); John R. Oneal, Bruce Russett, and Michael L. Berbaum, 'Causes of Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations, 1885-1992', *International Studies Quarterly,* Volume 47, pp.371-393.

[17] See for example an edited volume by Mats Berdal and David M. Malone (eds.), *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*, (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

[18] Katherine Barbieri, 'Economic Interdependence: A Path to Peace or a Source of Interstate Conflict?', *Journal of Peace Research,* Volume 33, No. 1, 1996, p.29.

[19] Edward D. Mansfield and John C. Pevehouse, 'Trade Blocs, Trade Flows, and International Conflict', *International Organization*, Volume 54 No. 4, Autumn 2000, pp.775-808.

Related to this question, are there 'new' services sectors that could be observed, including cross-border flows of 'non-professional' workers, militias and criminal elements that could loosely be grafted onto the chains of commodity or illegal trade activities? Before taking up a detailed discussion on the pertinent issues of trade and security in Southern Africa it would be helpful to look at the region's political geography.

Regional Political Geography Before 1994

Western European state-systems failed to take root in Sub-Saharan Africa[20]. As Chabal and Daloz argue, the state in Sub-Saharan African has an edifice that conforms to the Western template, yet its workings derive from patrimonial dynamics, characterized by a lack of 'emancipation' of the state from clientelistic social networks, informalization of politics, and personalization of public service.[21]

Much of Southern Africa mirrors the failure of nation-state building and the lack of rules-based socio-political cohesion between the state and civil society. The new political elite in the region, after achieving independence, inherited state structures that were largely under-developed. Even the formation of a regional institutional entity which responded to the security challenges posed by apartheid South Africa in the 1970s – the Southern African Development and Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) – took place fitfully well into the 1980s.

The organization was a politically directed effort aimed at dealing with essentially non-economic challenges. As such it was less demanding of its members and accorded greater weight to the sovereignty of national governments, relative to supranational structures.[22] This sovereignty did not go far in defining the precise form the relationship between the state and civil society would take and, because the Western bureaucratic state model was relatively new, had the political elite as its primary security referent point rather than the citizens. As Anglin noted, 'national sovereignty was fundamental to SADCC's *modus operandi*.'[23] This logic, especially in its preoccupation with national interests and economic autonomy, is still pervasive even though SADCC evolved into SADC in 1992.

It is this form of sovereignty – characterized by Jackson as 'negative sovereignty'[24] – that state elites in Southern Africa are bent on defending. This form of sovereignty is deliberately limited to the legality of state's existence and does not confer responsibility or obligation to state elites towards their subjects; the 'liberty' possessed by the state is in relation to former colonial state and is especially articulated with respect to independence from external

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[20] Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver, *op.cit.,* p.219.

[21] Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *op.cit.,* p.8.

[22] Anglin DG, 'Economic liberation and regional co-operation in Southern Africa: SADCC and PTA', *International Organization*, 37, 4, Autumn 1983, p.709.

[23] *ibid.*, p.692.

[24] Robert H. Jackson, p.11. In Jackson elaboration of this concept he suggests that 'negative sovereignty' is a condition of juridical (legal) statehood without empirical statehood or the institutional foundation including the socio-cultural support for such a form of statehood. States resting on negative sovereignty are thus defined as 'quasi-states'.

interference.[25]

Lal observes that, 'While paying lip service to the ideal of liberty in their relations with their subjects, their actions belied their commitment to this norm.'[26] This point also features in Jackson's observation of quasi-states when, paraphrasing JS Mill, he suggests that '…an independent government who is responsible to other sovereigns can still harm his subjects either deliberately or through negligence or incompetence.'[27] Supranational entities such as SADC are not deserving of such designation since on this score they are vacuous – their *modus operandi* does not protect individuals from the excesses of state.

In more specific terms, SADCC's core objectives were framed around political initiatives designed to reduce dependence on South Africa and to achieve collective self-reliance and balanced development among member countries. But in reality the region was structured as a security complex in which states were singularly concerned with their survival and sought to maximize their aggregate power through regional cooperation.

Following the Realist perspective, security was considered a derivative of power; the raison d'etre of the state was seen in terms of maximization of its security vis-à-vis other states in the region. This political orientation blends well with economic nationalism or – more narrowly – neo-mercantilism, where each state is fixated with maximising its aggregate economic power in relation to other states. These two dynamics are still very entrenched in Southern Africa's political and economic thinking. In the realm of politics, this is expressed in the form of a regional security complex.

Buzan defines a security complex as involving 'a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another.'[28] This suggests both interdependence of rivalries and interdependence of interests. It is a form of containment of potential conflicts amongst contiguous states, and this can be both positive and negative.[29] Furthermore, as Mohamed Ayoob notes, 'The Third World state elites' major concern – indeed, obsession – is with security at the level of both state structures and governing regimes.'[30]

The fact that SADCC members saw Apartheid South Africa as a common enemy and a threat to their political and economic well-being strengthened the basis for co-operation and sustained the regional body for another decade, until its transformation into the SADC. South Africa had since the 1970s engaged in systematic destabilising campaigns using its military force against neighbouring countries suspected of harbouring members of the African National Congress – then a liberation movement – and its military wing. Evidently,

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[25] See Deepak Lal, *The Case for Unshackling Economic Markets: Against Dirigisme*, (San Fransisco, California: International Center for Economic Growth, 1994), p.81.

[26] *ibid.*

[27] Robert J. Jackson, *op.cit.,* p.28.

[28] Barry Buzan (2nd Ed), *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in Post-Cold War era*, (London: Harvester: Wheatsheaf, 1991), p.190.

[29] *ibid.,* p.194.

[30] Mohamed Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament: State-making, Regional Conflict, and the International System*, (London: Lynne Rienner, 1995), p.6.

the character of the security complex that existed in the region at that time was negative and shaped the contours of future relations between South Africa and regional partners post-apartheid.

Post-Apartheid Relations in Southern Africa

As the apartheid era ended in the early 1990s it was widely expected that regional relations would be re-constituted in ways that would accelerate political modernization and economic growth. In a fit of optimism, it was hoped that post-apartheid South Africa would play the role of a pivotal or hegemonic state as well as an engine of growth for the entire region (see below). However, more than ten years since apartheid ended, and with it overtly adversarial relations between South Africa and countries in the region, Southern Africa remains fraught with political (especially security) and economic challenges.

On the security dimension, there remain latent tensions on many fronts, including those between the ruling elite and civil society within various countries, resulting from the incomplete process of state building, lack of socio-political cohesion, and the organizational weakness of state bureaucracy. Tensions also exist, broadly, between other countries in the region and South Africa because of its hegemonic image, as well as perceptions around the division of spoils in trade relations. Another line of tension exist between different groups and alliance structures in the region, and this witnessed a military intervention by three SADC member countries (Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe), ostensibly, to defend the DRC from attacks by Rwanda and Uganda, with the involvement of rebel movements. Given the complexity of the issues involved they will not be examined in any lengthy detailed.

There are two crucial factors explaining the uneasy relationship between South Africa and its regional partners. The first has to do with perceptions and envy; and the second, which is discussed in detail later in the chapter, concerns the character of its trading relationship with regional partners. It is here that questions bearing on the relationship between trade and security may have relevance.

Part of this tension suggests the existence of an apartheid legacy in the structuring of regional relations as a negative security complex. Part of it is rooted in a deep sense of resentment that some elites in the region harbour towards South Africa, while another part is simply generated by the envy of witnessing a prospering South Africa amidst an almost generalized state of regional poverty and underdevelopment – a situation to which South Africa contributed during the apartheid era.

For illustrative purposes, between 1980 and 1988 the total cost to the region of Apartheid South Africa's destabilization programme amounted to U$60 billion, measured in losses to gross domestic product, with about one million deaths and millions of people displaced.[31] This purportedly amounted to three times the gross external resource inflows in the form of grants, soft loans, export credits and commercial loans over the nine-year period.[32] These

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[31] Ostergaard T, *SADC: A Political and Economic Survey.* Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark, 1990, p.51; Lee MC, *The Political Economy of Regionalism in Southern Africa.* Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner, 2003, p.46.

[32] Ostergaard T, *op. cit.,* p.51.

costs were unevenly distributed, with a large proportion shouldered by Angola and Mozambique. About 1.5 million people in these countries were displaced as refugees in other countries.[33]

As Ahwireng-Obeng and McGowan have suggested, state elites in the region had some expectations that the new South Africa would have a moral obligation to 'engage Southern Africa in a positive manner.'[34] Given the huge cost of South Africa's destabilization project in the region in the past, the sense of entitlement that regional elites have with respect to South Africa's largesse is not entirely misplaced, especially since South Africa's dominance of economic (trade) relations continued post-apartheid. As Table 1 below shows, the trade complementarity within the region is heavily weighted in favour of South Africa.

Table 1: Bilateral complementarity indices in SADC

Importing countries											
	Bots	**Mal**	**Maur**	**Moz**	**Namib**	**RSA**	**Swaz**	**Tanz**	**Zamb**	**Zimb**	**Average**
Exporting Country											
Botswana	...	7.5	11.3	17.8	9.6	13.0	9.7	7.4	7.8	8.9	13.0
Malawi	13.7	...	9.3	18.4	11.6	11.6	13.0	9.3	8.1	6.6	11.3
Mauritius	16.8	11.3	...	21.3	14.6	15.3	15.8	12.0	10.3	8.9	14.0
Mozambique	23.2	21.8	**26.7**	...	23.9	24.6	**26.2**	20.8	19.5	19.1	22.9
Namibia	22.8	14.0	20.5	24.8	...	17.1	18.8	11.5	21.0	11.3	18.0
South Africa	**53.9**	**48.5**	**54.1**	**59.4**	**54.1**	...	**55.1**	**51.3**	**51.0**	**49.9**	**53.0**
Swaziland	**27.9**	20.4	23.5	**30.0**	**29.9**	22.0	...	20.6	19.0	17.6	23.4
Tanzania	16.4	13.1	20.2	20.2	13.4	13.2	13.3	...	8.9	7.1	14.0
Zambia	19.0	12.9	19.3	23.2	14.9	16.6	14.2	12.8	...	11.9	16.1
Zimbabwe	13.7	14.0	18.4	20.4	10.6	11.5	11.5	10.6	9.1	...	13.3

Source: From IMF Working Paper, WP/04/227; IMF Staff Calculations using UN COMTRADE data. Angola, DRC and Lesotho were excluded due to lack of data. Seychelles, even though included here, left SADC towards the end of 2004.

The indices reflected in the table above reveal asymmetric complementarity between South Africa and the majority of SADC countries. An IMF Working Paper by Khandelwal on Regional Integration in Southern Africa also reveals that the extent of product complementarity within SADC is very low. In its measurement, the product complementarity index ranges from 0 (which signifies no complementarity) to 100 (which express full complementarity). According to Khandelwal's calculation, using UN-COMTRADE database, '...there is complementarity between South Africa's exports and the imports of the rest of the region, but not vice versa.'[35]

On observation, this suggests two things. First, it could be that the structure of trade in the region follows a mercantilist framework, where the gains of trade are seen as generated solely through exports, and because South Africa is a structurally dominant economy such an arrangement serves its interests. Far from being a product of malevolent intentions on the part of South Africa, this is largely a reflection of structural realities. Second, this could also

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[33] *ibid.*

[34] Ahwireng-Obeng F & PJ McGowan, 'Partner or hegemon? South Africa in Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 16, 1, 1998, p.12.

[35] Padamja Khandelwal, 'COMESA and SADC: Prospects and Challenges for Regional Trade Integration', *IMF Working Paper* WP/04/227, (Washington D.C; International Monetary Fund, 2004)*,* p. 16.

mean that, in spite of the prevailing mercantilistic manner in which trade relations between two or more countries are structured, South Africa is able to find markets for its products in the neighbouring region while the reverse is not the case as a result of supply-side constraints (structural limitations) in other countries. Or it could be both.

Nevertheless, as Khandelwal suggests, this situation raises concerns regarding polarization as '...investment may be attracted towards the larger and more industrially diversified economies in the region.'[36] This also clearly demonstrates that the level of integration within the region is quite shallow and, as such, extant trade integration is a weak basis for creating strong conditions for sustained peace in the region. Indeed, trade relations understood as a zero-sum game as is the case in the region do not augur well for harmonious relations or sustained peace.

Alluding to the dangers of mercantilism, Douglas Irwin points out that concern with zero-sum gains in the context of Anglo-Dutch rivalry for the East India trade routes generated militarized disputes in Europe in the 17th Century.[37] The *raison d'etre* of state during this period, Irwin suggests, was to maximize its aggregate welfare and relative power *vis-à-vis* other states.[38] As we observed earlier, this nationalistic mindset and approach towards economic relations has persisted in Southern Africa well into the establishment of SADC in 1992 and beyond. In part this was influenced by then prevailing Pan-Africanism and the quest for political independence and economic self-sufficiency in the colonial aftermath.

Nonetheless, the establishment of SADC in 1992 marked an important phase for regionalism in Southern Africa, and portended a gradual shift away from old, exclusively politically-driven, regionalism, which had been defined largely by excessive state interventionism and the suffocation of markets within the context of the Cold War and apartheid in South Africa. As by far the largest economy in the region, with relatively well-developed institutions and sophisticated productive forces, South Africa was initially welcomed as a member of SADC by most regional governments. This prompted some African scholars to predict the dawn of a new era for the region, characterized by political and economic modernization. Asante observed that 'Southern Africa can look forward to the closer integration of the dominant economy of the subcontinent into the economic and political structures of the region'.[39]

In his take, Azam suggested that South Africa's regional role could propel growth in Southern Africa in pretty much the same way that the Asian tigers (Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan) led the way for Malaysia and Southern China.[40] Azam further suggested that, because of South Africa's future role in Southern Africa, the region '…might become the main pole of Africa's development in the medium-term.'[41] Similarly, western

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[36] *ibid.,* p.17.
[37] Douglas Irwin, 'Mercantilism as Strategic Trade Policy: The Anglo-Dutch Rivalry for the East India Trade', *Journal of Political Economy*, Volume 1999 (6), p.1296.
[38] *ibid.,* p.1297.
[39] Asante SKB, *Regionalism and Africa's Development*. Macmillan: London, 1997, p.12.
[40] Azam P, 'Development Policy for Africa: A Research Agenda', in Berthelemy J (ed.), *Wither African Economies?* Paris: OECD, 1995, p.84.
[41] *ibid.*

countries hailed South Africa's enhanced participation in the regional economy as an important development that would help stem the tide of economic decline and poor governance and anchor regional economies on a sustainable growth path.[42]

South Africa's reintegration into the region heralded the evolution of regional ties from the minimalist project coordination type towards regional economic integration, especially in trade. This was initially seen in a positive light, and it was hoped that it would facilitate the development of neighbouring economies – which the previous apartheid government stifled – through developmental transfers and enhanced access to South Africa's relatively large market. The bilateral deficits which these countries had with South Africa gave more force to such expectations.

Trade relations in Southern Africa were formalized through the signing of the SADC Trade Protocol, which most countries in the region initially expected to be an instrument that would equalize economic gains in the region. In this respect, trade relations and the benefits associated with them were not seen from the point of view of a fully liberalized trade regime in the region, but through mercantilist lenses. As such there was reluctance amongst most countries in taking major liberalization obligations, and South Africa was generally expected to make generous offers in its liberalization schedule in order to address the existing developmental asymmetries in the region, which it later did, albeit under a generally protectionist and defensive climate (see below).

In essence, there was not much reflection on what exactly countries were committing to and what the implications of regional economic integration would be in their national economies. The old SADCC structure (including the Summit of Heads of State and Government, the Council of Ministers, Sectoral Commissions, the Standing Committee of Officials, and the Secretariat) became the institutional edifice of the new SADC.[43] It was an attempt to modernize SADC without having to re-think its purpose or take a long-term view of its role in the region and in international relations.

There was also no substantial transformation of regional relations as they existed pre-apartheid and during the Cold War era. It is therefore fair to conclude that the security-complex milieu was not decisively shifted for the region to conform to new global economic challenges, which required, amongst other things, liberalization of trade and close integration into global markets. That the intended trade liberalization process in the region was not genuinely driven from below by private economic agents posed major difficulties for the project. Indeed, political considerations overshadowed economic exigencies.

The SADC Trade Protocol

The SADC Trade Protocol was thus signed in 1996 against the backdrop of political changes in South Africa's relations with its neighbouring region, and as the basis on which the region would ensure its economic growth and development as well as positive integration into the

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[42] See Stepanie B and Horst B, 'A turning Point for Southern Africa', *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Oberserver, April/May 1994*. Paris: OECD, 1994.

[43] See TRALAC, 'SADC/COMESA/EAC and EPA Negotiations', TRALAC Study, 25 May 2005.

global economy. The SADC trade protocol was aimed at liberalising intra-regional trade in goods and services with the ultimate view of establishing a free trade area for SADC through an asymmetric tariff phase-down process. The protocol came into force in September 2000, after the necessary number of signatories was achieved. The DRC is the only country that has not acceded to the trade protocol, although Angola has yet to put forward a tariff offer. Yet these are the countries that have had the most frequent incidence of conflict in the region.

Since ratification, the implementation process has moved tortuously slowly. Apart from the fact that neighbouring countries were far less prepared to engage in deeper and meaningful liberalization of their trade, at the heart of the hiatus in the SADC trade protocol has been South Africa's lack of positive leadership in the early phase. It is believed by other SADC member countries as having been preoccupied with its own short-term interests in the region and demonstrated very limited sensitivity towards its neighbours, even though in the end the tariff-phase-down is asymmetric in favour of poor countries in the region.

Some of the often cited examples of South Africa's lack of leadership include stringent rules of origin, especially in textiles and clothing, the automotive sector and other manufacturing sub-sectors, which some studies have pointed to as having created a gridlock in the liberalization process; the existence of other non-tariff barriers; and other forms of protective barriers, including high tariffs in certain product lines such as tobacco and sugar, and tariff escalation in others, for example wood products. The view that South Africa's approach has been somewhat mercantilistic cannot be understood in isolation from the sense of grievance other countries in the region and beyond have towards South Africa.

South Africa's approach during the negotiations on the SADC Trade Protocol played strongly to domestic groups – and was motivated by its domestic growth concerns and anxieties regarding the competitiveness of its domestic industry. In this sense, instead of taking a lead in opening its borders, it fostered relations of rivalry by stringently insisting on protectionist measures. This has, however, aggravated political sensitivities in the region, with potentially corrosive effects on the political influence that South Africa could hope to exert in future.

Disconcertingly, in a climate charged with political insecurity and anxieties regarding the role of the regional power, this could significantly weaken the platform for fostering long-term peace and security. Although, conceptually, the linkage between regional trade and security is not a solidly grounded one, it should not be an impossible task to examine the prospects, or lack thereof, of peace dividends in an integrating area based on empirical observation. In Southern Africa, such an examination should entail the extent to which the design of the regional trade agreement (trade protocol) facilitates deeper integration amongst various countries, fosters harmonious relations and contributes positively in creating a general climate of peace on a sustained basis rather than generating possibilities for reversal.

South Africa's claim to the status of 'security manager' in Southern Africa, although not officially pronounced, is not uncontested, especially by countries such as Zimbabwe who have previously enjoyed a status of a regional hegemon before South Africa was re-integrated into SADC (see discussion below). While regional power centres or pivotal states can give coherence to regional security, as Ayoob suggests, they also have the potential to

increase the conflict level if their legitimacy is not accepted or their claims for primacy are under dispute.[44]

Some SADC countries have, as a way of counter-vailing South Africa's dominance, opted for an alternative centre through which to formalize their commercial relations. Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mauritius and Malawi, all SADC members, are simultaneously participating in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) FTA arrangement in a move that is viewed as a snub to a South African-centred SADC.[45]

Furthermore, these countries are currently negotiating Economic Partnership Agreements with the EU under a different regional configuration, which does not include any of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) members[46]. In a study conducted amongst business actors in the region there was a strong view that Tanzania, an SADC member country also active in efforts to establish an East African Community Customs Union and political federation, should integrate closely with COMESA.[47] While politically it may make sense for Tanzania to plug itself into SADC processes, business actors in the country are conscious of the fact that greater benefits could be realized elsewhere – COMESA specifically. It has not escaped private economic agents that regional trade integration scheme has to open more opportunities for commerce – something that SADC is struggling to achieve – rather than creating a gridlocked enclave.

One of the crucial moot points in SADC trade protocol regards rules of origin. For example, the initial rule, which required a change of tariff heading was replaced by rules that required detailed technical processes, much higher domestic value-added and lower permitted import content.[48] This was done without any evidence that existing rules were ineffective and needed to be tightened. There are two major reasons advanced by South Africa in particular: the first is a barely veiled mercantilist one and emphasizes the need to curtail trans-shipment through customs loopholes; and the second is ostensibly utilitarian, and views these as instruments to force industrial development in the region. These have been heavily criticized by trade practitioners and independent studies in the region.[49]

This exotic protectionist instrument did not only reveal the extent to which South Africa has at times thrown around its weight in the region to benefit its interests, but also the general lack of commitment to liberalization. A recent World Bank study on *Trade, Regionalism and Development,* has noted that, 'Specifying rules of origin on a product by product basis offers opportunities for sectoral interests to influence the specification of the rules in a protectionist way.'[50]

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[44] Ayoob, Mohamed, *op.cit.,* p.59.
[45] Margaret C. Lee, *The Political Economy of Regionalism in Southern Africa*, (London: Lynne Rienner), p.2003.
[46] SACU includes: South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and Swaziland.
[47] Nick Charalambides, 'Perspectives, Priorities, and Role of the Private Sector in Regional Integration and Implications for Regional Trade Arrangements', *ECDPM Discussion Paper,* July 2005.
[48] World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects 2005*, (Washington DC: World Bank, 2005), p.65.
[49] Frank Flatters, *SADC Rules of Origin: Undermining Regional Free Trade*, A paper presented at the USAID-funded Trade Policy Workshop, Johannesburg, August 2004. Also the SADC Trade Protocol has expressed a strong view that these were harming trade in the region.
[50] World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects 2005*, (Washington DC: World Bank, 2005), p.70.

The design of these rules of origin creates variation along product lines. For example, in some products, the requirement would be a simple change of tariff heading; in others it would be a change of tariff chapter; and in others it would be specification for a particular technical process or requirement for levels of value addition in order to qualify for preferential treatment.[51] This creates confusion for already incapacitated customs officials, and also holds the potential to slow down momentum in regional trade integration and give force to mistrust and tensions in the region. Given the political sensitivities that already existed in the region, the design of the existing trade arrangement in SADC is far from promoting harmonious relations and creates unnecessary political strains in a region already racked by tensions.

Apart from these complex rules of origin, there are other deeper problems in the region, whose roots lie in the institutional domestic setting and structural shape of the economies. Some of these problems include a lack of will by political principals who are obsessed with short-term gains, poor support given to technocrats, weak institutional instruments to implement agreed-upon policies both at the national and regional levels, and overlapping membership and competition between various regional integration schemes with geographical contiguity. Table 2 shows the extent of overlapping membership – a situation that represents a resource drain on poor countries as they have to participate actively in various structures, pay membership dues, and implement agreements.

Table 2: Overlapping membership

	SACU	COMESA	EAC	SADC
Botswana	X			X
Lesotho	X			X
Madagascar		X		X
Malawi				X
Mauritius		X		
Mozambique				X
Namibia	X			X
South Africa	X			X
Swaziland	X	X		X
Tanzania			X	X
Zambia		X		X
Zimbabwe		X		X

Adapted from a TSG Report on the SADC Protocol Mid-Term Review, 2005.

SADC Protocol Mid-term Review

The failure of regional trade integration has been a subject of interest amongst African scholars and political economists since the early 1980s. From the outset such efforts were directed through political means and geared towards political objectives – creating Africa's economic and political union. This was ideologically centred on Pan-Africanism. It was only late in the 1990s that a serious effort to integrate into the global economy was undertaken,

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[51] *ibid.,* p.70.

and regional integration schemes began to take a more outward shape. Even so, there are still strong shades of ideology in the integration processes across the Sub-Saharan sub-continent, with economic rationale heavily subjected to political expediency. Regionalism in Southern Africa is still struggling to make a decisive shift from inward orientation to external integration.

It is doubtful that Europe's functionalist and unilinear model of integration and security arrangements – epitomized in the European Union – are appropriate for Africa's circumstances. Africa's state forms and the shape of its institutions do not provide propitious conditions for such complex systems. It should not be supposed that these states can achieve at the regional level what they have failed or been unwilling to achieve at the domestic setting: institutionalization. As Lal observes, 'It is unlikely that that third world nation-states are going to give up their adherence to this principle [sovereignty] and to the extent system of nation-states for some more cosmopolitan or supranational form of international society.'[52]

In early 2004 SADC leaders adopted a Regional Indicative Strategic Development Programme (RISDP) which, unrealistically, aims at achieving an SADC customs union by 2010, despite the generally slow pace of implementation of SADC trade protocol.

SADC's RISDP views the attainment of an FTA in 2008 'as a step towards achieving a Customs Union and subsequently a Common Market.'[53] This objective, as the RISDP points out, would be achieved on the basis of greater commitment to the implementation of the SACU protocol on trade, appropriately designed rules of origin, and greater harmonization of customs rules and procedures, including standards. The RISDP sets out ambitious targets – very much along the lines of the EU model – for achieving deeper integration:[54]

• completion of negotiations for the SADC customs union: 2010;
• completion of negotiations for the SADC common market: 2015;
• diversification of industrial structure and exports with emphasis on value-addition: 2015; and
• establishment of a SADC monetary union: 2016.

This strategy does not seem to have taken into account the realities on the ground: for example, the existence of multiple integration schemes and overlapping membership; the new SACU Agreement finalized in 2002; and the continuing EU EPA negotiations, the outcome of which could significantly alter the nature of integration in southern Africa. Furthermore, there is no mooted institutional mechanism to speed the integration process set out in the RISDP.

The SADC trade protocol's mid-term review took place during the latter half of 2004 and was meant to infuse momentum in the liberalization process. This review was essentially designed to be a stock-taking exercise, focusing mainly on market access, trade flows, tariff

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[52] Deepak Lal, *op.cit.,* p.82.
[53] SADC, *Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan* 2004, Gaborone: SADC, 2004. *http://www.sadc.int.*
[54] *ibid.*

phase-down schedules, and non-tariff barriers, and the pattern of trade flows since 2000. It was meant to look at the progress made so far in these dimensions and propose ways of fast-tracking liberalization in the sub-region.[55]

Without getting into fine detail on the outcomes of the review, a number of concerns were raised by the report, including what the report calls a situation where 'a much larger degree of implementation existed.' Countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia have substantially delayed implementation of their tariff phase-down schedules; in some instances there have been difficulties with implementing revised, product-specific rules of origin; and in some cases there is poor communication with the private sector.

There are ongoing debates in the region as to the logic of deeper trade integration in an area with so little in common with respect to economic interests, and whether other forms of cooperation focusing on development projects, political cooperation, and harmonization of regulatory systems would not be more appropriate. For example, SADC has more than 10 other protocols to foster cooperation in other areas, including mining, infrastructure, energy, environment, and on politics, security and defence.

Since there is a lack of both conceptual and institutional linkage between various protocols – especially related to trade and economic integration on the one hand, and politics and security on the other – it would be difficult to test empirically the liberal-trade-peace assumption that increased trade could generate peaceful outcomes. Even though the level of intra-regional trade is much lower than what one would find in developed countries, still there are trade flows between different countries in Southern Africa, both formally and informally, and it does not appear that this has any direct bearing on the state of politics or security.

As suggested in this paper, more indirectly, trade relations that are fashioned along neo-mercantilist lines have heightened political tensions, but this has not led to actual conflict. This could also be attributed to the fact that there is an institutional arrangement in place, to which politicians have given more attention, to manage issues related to politics, security and defence in the region.

The Organ of Politics, Defence and Security

The history of the Southern African region is coloured by political tensions that later took on a very strong security or military dimension. This was evident from the early efforts in establishing SADCC, the same year that apartheid South Africa announced its *Total Strategy*, designed primarily to maintain white rule in South Africa, but also: to erode external support for the liberation movements; to secure recognition of South Africa's hegemony in the region; to thwart attempts by SADCC countries to lessen their economic dependence on South Africa; and to destroy the image of non-racial states in the SADCC region as a model for South Africa.[56] To counter such efforts, the governing elite in the region's countries that

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[55] Interview with Kennedy Mbekeani, Senior Research Fellow with Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA), Gaborone, 24 July 2004.
[56] Tom Ostergaard, *op.cit.,* p.52.

had achieved political freedom from colonial powers – notably Tanzania, Botswana, Zambia, Lesotho and Malawi – established themselves as Front-line States (FSL).

This collective show of unity was to later culminate in the establishment of SADC with a strong security dimension. Apart from South Africa's destabilization agenda, issuing from its *Total Strategy,* there were also Cold War interplays that further moulded a particular security environment in the region, forcing the elite to be singularly concerned with preservation of territorial integrity and staying alert to external threats.

Even after the collapse of the Cold War and apartheid South Africa, hostilities continued to run deep within the region. During the Cold War this situation was made all the more septic by persisting internal conflicts in Angola and Mozambique – both taking more than two decades to abate – with apartheid South Africa playing a major role in fuelling these wars. However, in the post-apartheid and post-Cold War era, the region has, by and large, remained frozen in time. The outbreak of conflict in the Great Lakes in 1998 brought out sharply the complexities of inter-state security and demonstrated quite emphatically that regional integration has a long way to go before creating sustained peace in Southern Africa.

As we noted earlier, the conception of security in SADC and in most of Africa is generally informed by the traditional Realist view that regards state survival as supreme, and in which the pursuit of power lies at the core of defining relations between states.[57] By implication, this de-emphasizes, if not invalidates, the place of individuals or non-state actors as referent objects for security.[58] The political tensions in Zimbabwe and SADC's inability to play any meaningful role is one example where conflict affecting individuals is trivialized compared to conflict between different states. This is the mindset that still dominates SADC today. SADC countries that participated in the Great Lakes conflict did so ostensibly to defend a fellow SADC country facing external aggression, and using the ambiguously constructed *mutual defence pact[59]* as a justification.

The notion of 'existential threat' and what Buzan and Weaver characterize as '…the continued prominence of territoriality in the domain of security'[60] has been the obsession of political actors in the region for many years, and moving away from this narrow view remains an important challenge in Southern Africa.[61] The thinking behind this approach is

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[57] See Tim Dunne and C B. Schmidt, 'Realism'. In John Baylis and Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.152; Chris Brown, *Understanding International Relations*, (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp.87-105; Anthony Leysens and Lisa Thompson, 'Emancipating the Dead? Changing Notions of Human Security in Southern Africa', In Nana Poku (eds.), *Security and Development in Southern Africa,* (London: Praeger, 2001), p.53; see also Anne Hammerstad, Defending the State or Protecting the People? SADC Security Integration at a Crossroads, (South African Institute of International Affairs: Johannesburg, 2003), pp.1-36.

[58] see Gina van Schlkwyk and Jakkie Cilliers, *Civil Society and the SADC Security Agenda*, A Draft Mimeo (Pretoria: Institute of Security Studies, 2004), pp.6-10.

[59] The mutual defence pact is now an annexure to Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ. It seeks to maintain collective self-defence and foster mutual cooperation in defence and security matters. Article 16 (1) of the pact is key: it states that an attack on one member shall be met with immediate collective action.

[60] Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, '*Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security'*, p.11.

[61] Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis,* (London: Lynne Rienner), p.21. notes that the notion of security as an emergency is invoked by a state representative to justify using whatever means to block a threatening development.

still reminiscent of the Cold War milieu. State actors expend most of their energies on security cooperation rather than economic integration. The two most critical facets of SADC's work are kept apart both conceptually and institutionally, with little effort to integrate the two or to treat them symmetrically.

The main instrument for dealing with politics, security and defence in the region (the Organ for Peace, Security and Defence) was established on the recommendations of a SADC Workshop on Democracy, Peace, and Security held in Windhoek on July 11–16, 1994. In this workshop SADC's commitment to a greater role in areas of security coordination, conflict mediation, and military cooperation became glaringly evident.[62] It must be emphasized though, as Hammerstad has pointed out, that the Organ was established rather too hastily[63], and lacked a solid basis for evolving common values and shared understanding on the future of regional security as well as the precise meaning of security in the context of new regional relations.

Lack of a strong common vision and mutual trust has been emphasized by commentators on security in the region.[64] The Organ, as Van Nieuwkerk pointed out, was 'characterized by inappropriate design, the suffocating arrogant state elites, and lack of resources'.[65] The seeds of its failure were very much sown in its beginnings. Robert Mugabe, the president of Zimbabwe, presided over the newly established body in August 1996, in part as a way of repositioning himself vis-à-vis South Africa's entry into SADC. He insisted on the independence of this structure from the SADC which was chaired by Nelson Mandela, then president of South Africa. This immediately brought to the surface tensions between Zimbabwe and South Africa.

The existence of two potentially rival Summits – both supreme decision-making structures – in the SADC created a situation that was bound to unravel the pretence of post-apartheid regional unity. This tension has also played itself out on a number of occasions in other SADC processes, including trade relations. This counter-tendency is also reflected in the overlapping membership between two competing regional integration schemes – SADC and COMESA.

In its first few years of existence, the Organ lacked a clear direction, and its work was characterized by acrimony and discord. The first signs of fragility were evident in 1996 when SADC refused to endorse Mandela's criticism of human rights violations in Nigeria.[66] Given the undemocratic nature of many SADC leaders, this was to be expected. However, Mandela also protested at the manner in which the Organ functioned and the way Mugabe ran it as

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[62] Mark Malan, 'Prospects for Keeping the Peace, In Robert I. Rotberg and Greg Mills (eds.), *War and Peace in Southern Africa: Crime, Drugs, Armies and trade,* (Cambridge: Brookings Institution Press, 1998), p.267.

[63] Anne Hammerstad, *Defending the State or Protecting the People? SADC Security Integration at a Crossroads*, p.4.

[64] see Laurie Nathan, 'Organ Failure: A review of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security' in L Laakso (ed.), *Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa: Europe, SADC and Ecowas.* Helsinki: Department of Political Science, University of Helskinki, 2002; Anne Hammerstad, *Defending the State or Protecting the People? SADC Security Integration at a Crossroads*, pp.1-36.

[65] Anthoni van Nieuwkerk, 'Subregional Collaborative Security: Lessons from the OAU and SADC', In *South African Journal of International Affairs, Volume 8, No. 2, Winter (2001).*

[66] Anthony Leysens and Lisa Thompson, 'Emancipating the Dead? Changing Notions of Human Security in Southern Africa', p.58.

his prized power base in SADC, and threatened to resign if it remained structurally de-linked from the SADC body.[67] The mutual hatred generated by these sets of events continued to shape political relations in the region and emphasized the limits South Africa had in using its political clout to achieve certain outcomes..

Although the instruments of economic integration and political and security cooperation existed separately, developments in one area could feed into the other. However, the lack of institutional and policy coherence in dealing with economic and security challenges render the potentially positive association between the two weak. These are both important initiatives that suffer from poor institutional design.

Although the idea of the Organ was initially a laudable attempt at creating a security regime,[68] the complexity of regional power politics rapidly undermined its effectiveness. The rivalry between South Africa and Zimbabwe did not help build sustainable foundations for a security framework and, in fact, the Organ's agenda dominated SADC and over-shadowed other concerns related to human security, collectively referred to as development security: water, food, gender issues, and health.[69]

The Organ and the Great Lakes Conflict

The weaknesses of the Organ's operating modalities under Mugabe were tested and exposed during the DRC conflict when Laurent Kabila, the DRC's 'President', faced internal and external threats to his rule. Having joined SADC (something which SADC has since bitterly regretted), the DRC issue soon rose to prominence and would for a considerable amount of time dominate regional relations.

The war in the DRC started in 1998 when Uganda and Rwanda sent their armies to help various rebel movements to topple Kabila's government, which they had helped put in power the previous year.[70] In response to Kabila's call for aid, Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia (the so-called 'SADC allies') deployed troops to the DRC, ostensibly to 'protect' a SADC member against foreign invasion. There is no doubt that Mugabe also saw this as an opportunity to reinforce his regional authority, which was slowly evaporating with South Africa increasingly gaining a leadership foothold in regional affairs

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[67] ibid, p.59.
[68] Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver, and J de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis,* p.12, define a security regime as where states still treat each other as potential threats but have made reassurance arrangements to reduce the security dilemma among them. This is contrasted with conflict formation characterized by fear and rivalry, and pluralistic security communities in which states no longer expect or are prepared to use force in their relations with each other.
[69] See Andre du Pisani, 'New Sites of Governance: Regimes and the Future of Southern Africa.' In Peter Vale, Larry Swatuk, and Bertil Orden, *Theory, Change and Southern Africa's Future.* (London: Palgrave, 2001), p.212; and Lisa Thompson, 'Feminist Theory and Security Studies in Southern Africa: Yet Another Faddish Trend?' In Peter Vale, et.al, p258.
[70] The two main rebel movements: Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) and the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC). The MLC is led by Jean-Pierre Bemba and backed by Uganda. The RCD split into two factions. RCD-Goma is based in the northeast, led by Emile Ilunga, and backed by Rwanda; and the RCD-ML is led by the original leader of the RCD Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, backed by Uganda.

Yet, as one Lesotho diplomat noted,[71] the DRC was another South African creation in SADC; its application for membership was sponsored by South Africa when Mandela made a persuasive point about the space SADC would have in influencing political developments in the DRC. This was despite the opposition from the majority of SADC countries who had argued that it would not be viable to accept a new member when meaningful integration amongst existing members had not been achieved. Having accepted the DRC into SADC, there was a sense of obligation amongst some SADC countries to come to its defence.

Curiously, South Africa was excluded from participating in a meeting hosted by Mugabe at Lake Victoria in August 1998, where the decision to commit troops to the Great Lakes was taken.[72] This again exposed the cracks that lay underneath the surface of unity in the SADC structure, as well as the weaknesses of the security arrangement, especially the fact that there were no enduring common values that bound various actors together. Tensions between the Zimbabwe-led group, including Namibia and Angola on the one hand, and South Africa on the other were all too apparent. The Great Lakes conflict lasted for over two years and was temporarily abated when a diplomatic solution was explored, with Zambia initially assuming the role of a neutral mediator.[73] The process initiated by Zambia led to the signing of a ceasefire agreement in Lusaka in 1999.

This did not last for very long. It was followed by South Africa's initiative, supported by Botswana and the United Nations, to broker a lasting peace accord known as the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in Gaborone, Botswana, in August 2001. As its name suggests, it was aimed at fostering a dialogue and pulling together a framework that would lead into a power-sharing arrangement. The shape of the power-sharing formula first emerged on July 30, 2002, in Sun City, South Africa, with the final peace-agreement, effectively ending formal hostilities between the belligerents, signed in April 2003.[74] This did not completely stem the conflict, as intermittent skirmishes along the eastern parts of the DRC continue. It is here that informal trade networks, linked to the looting of resources, including diamonds and other commodities, flourish. Such networks expand on the back of pre-existing informal and illegal trade processes that by-pass, and sometimes involve, state officials.

The weakness of regional integration and cooperation in Southern Africa is evident on two fronts: first with regards to low levels of formal trade amongst neighbouring countries, and second with respect to the tenuous security foundations in SADC, especially in view of the impending political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe and the fragile situation in the Great

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[71] Confidential Interview, 27 May 2004.

[72] James Barber, 'Mandela's World', (Oxford: James Currey, 2004), p194.

[73] For some excellent analyses of the DRC conflict see, for example, Georges Nzongola-Ntalanja, 'The Crisis in the Great Lakes Region', In Malegapuru William Makgoba (ed.), *African Renaissance* (Johannesburg: Mafube Publishers, 1999), pp.62-76; Ian Taylor and Paul Williams, 'South African foreign policy and the Great Lakes crisis', *African Affairs*, Vol. 100 (2001), pp. 265-86; Rene Lermarchand, 'The Democratic Republic of Congo: From Failure to Potential Reconstruction', In Robert. I. Rotberg (ed.), *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror* (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution, 2003), pp.29-69; Chris Landsberg, 'The Impossible Neutrality? South Africa's Policy in the Congo War', in John F. Clark (ed.), *The African Stakes of the Congo War* (London: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 169-83; Emeric Rogier, 'The Inter-Congolese Dialogue: A Critical Overview', In Mark Malan and Joao Gomes Porto, *Challenges of Peace Implementation: The UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo*, (Institute for Security Studies: Pretoria, 2004); James Barber, *Mandela's world*, pp.193-195.

[74] see Emeric Rogier, 'The Inter-Congolese Dialogue: A Critical Overview', p.38.

Lakes. These have clearly shown how weak the institutional architecture of the regional organization is and the lack of appropriate and enduring policy instruments to deal with such security crises.

Institutional Restructuring of Security Relations

On the security front, efforts were made between 2000 and 2004 to restructure the institutional design and processes. The Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ on Politics, Security and Defence Cooperation (SIPO) was signed in 2001 and this sought to overhaul the previous security arrangement in the region by placing a strong emphasis on peace and security as a linchpin for socio-economic development. One of its key objectives is to encourage greater interdependence and shared interests in the region. There is recognition that '…the region still faces potential and actual military threats that include *inter-alia* armed conflicts in some Member States, unfinished demobilization, disarmament, re-integration, monitoring of former military personnel, and the prevalence of terrorism.'[75] SIPO is divided into two related policy instruments: the protocol on politics, security and defence, and a mutual defence pact.

The language used in crafting this policy framework adopts the rhetoric of democratization, institution-building, human rights, political pluralism and civil society quite liberally – something which is a far cry from observed practices on the ground, especially in countries such as Zimbabwe, Angola, Swaziland, and the DRC. The SIPO framework defines security along four sectors: the political sector, the defence sector, the state security sector and the public security sector. We will look at the objectives of the first three as these are pertinent to this paper.

The political sector objectives are structured along the theme of preventing, containing and resolving inter- and intra-state conflict through peaceful means. More specifically this would entail standardization of conflict indicators; developing early warning systems in member countries; enhancing capacity for conflict prevention, management and resolution; and a regular assessment of factors that have a potential to lead to conflict, including imbalances in welfare and poverty.

On the surface, it would be difficult to contend with these noble objectives, but the reality sharply diverges with the rhetoric: SADC has a limited capacity – both financially and in terms of human capital – to undertake some of these complex processes. The organization draws much of its financial resources from donor countries, without which it cannot exist as a viable structure.

The promotion of political cooperation among member states, the promotion of democratic institutions and practices and the encouragement of observation of universal human rights, and the protection of civilians against instability arising from the break-down of law and order, intra- and inter-state conflict and aggression are highlighted as some of the objectives. Again the recent practices in Zimbabwe, where the state has trampled human rights with no positive intervention from SADC to help affected citizens makes it difficult to take this

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[75] Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ on Politics, Security and Defence Cooperation, 2004.

formal policy process seriously.

It would be fair to observe that much of this is framed for the international (including donor) community who have historically played a significant role in shoring up SADC financially. Interestingly, the outlines of SADC's strategic plan for security mirror those of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) charters, with similar wording in some respects. SADC has sought to modernize its institutions when the constituents' state foundations are quite shaky, and with shallow democratic ethos and institutions.

There is little doubt that SADC is obsessed with its international image, as its life-line derives from international donors. Some of the *modern* practices that SADC is promoting include those related to peace missions, humanitarian efforts, disaster management and support for civilian authorities. In this respect, it has established a peace-keeping centre in Zimbabwe – a country that has so far shown little respect for human rights and the rule of law. Furthermore, there is also allusion to combating terrorism, exchanging intelligence, and confronting challenges related to organized crime, including drug trafficking, money laundering and human trafficking.

A lack of trust and a strong consensual platform of shared interests based on values that are rooted in democratic practices will continue to undermine SADC and any processes towards building a sustainable peace and security environment in the region. The institutionalization of peace and security in the region would derive weightier force from bottom-up processes, and this would be possible when democratic ideals with appropriate institutions have taken root at the domestic level.

Conclusion: Some Questions for Policy Consideration

Given the fact that SADC(C) was established in a climate fuelled by security tensions, it would have been expected that there would be volumes of studies examining the relationship between the security dimension and trade relations in a more specific context. At the policy level, there is an implicit linkage between the two. For example, SADC's Organ for Politics, Defence and Security has been an important leg alongside the economic integration agenda, and has in fact dominated much of the SADC's agenda after 1996, notwithstanding its severe limitations, as discussed earlier.[76]

One of the arguments that this paper has been making is that strong institution building and consolidation, both at the domestic and regional level, is a critical component in building a sustainable security community in the region. This will not simply be a function of increased commercial relations – as such relations already exist in an informal manner straddling both legal and illegal lines – but, most fundamentally, it will be the outcome of a maturing domestic polity.

Deepening democracy would entail, amongst other things, strong commitment to building

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[76] The Organ was established in 1996, officially replacing the Front-Line States. The establishment of the Organ followed a recommendation of the SADC Workshop on Democracy, Peace, and Security held in Windhoek on July 11 – 16, 1994.

strong institutions, recasting of state-society nexus in a manner that ensures institutional separation between the state and civil society, and with social movements given space to exist independently, and to participate meaningfully in political processes. Furthermore, rather than dealing with trade integration or developmental cooperation and security separately, it would be far more helpful, for policy coherence, to articulate these in tandem. There is therefore an important policy imperative to examine the intersection between trade and security in regional contexts.

One of the important questions that also needs further exploration deals with the distribution of material gains: where there are asymmetries of power and skewed distribution of gains, how can a 'core' or pivotal state within a region use its position of advantage positively to equalize benefits or off-set losses arising from asymmetrical transactional arrangements? Is there a room for making developmental transfers in order to incentivize greater commitment to regional integration, especially for countries that are likely to lose in the short-term?

This question is linked to questions related to the commitment of the pivotal state in the region to play a greater role and give meaningful leadership in integrating the region. There does not seem to be such a commitment or urge to play a positive leadership role by South Africa, partly due to resource limits imposed by its own domestic social challenges as well as awareness of hegemonic limits linked to the negative regional role that South Africa has played in the past. Redeeming itself, and thus salvaging the region, will either be a function of time or resource commitment.

In this regard, the Southern African Customs Union (SACU)[77] which has a very long history of integration and which is firmly anchored in South Africa's trade and industrial structure emerges as one important vehicle to drive integration in the region in the future. There is a possibility for SACU to expand in future. This would come on the back of its success in consolidating itself as a trade liberalization project and an instrument to achieve regulatory reforms and harmonization in the integrating area.

Furthermore, as SACU grows in its stature as a global actor, first structuring trade and developmental relations with the European Union (under South Africa's leadership – a process that is currently underway), and secondly concluding external trade linkages as a solid trade bloc, the epicentre of regional trade integration will fundamentally shift away from SADC. This would also help in overcoming the problems related to multiple and over-lapping membership in regional integration schemes.

South African policy makers have hinted that their attention will be turned towards building SACU structures and consolidating its international identity, which could effectively mean SADC would cease to be an instrument of trade integration, while retaining important developmental and security functions. This should then make it less difficult for South Africa to enlarge its developmental assistance to fewer SACU countries as it deepens its hegemony in the immediate sub-region. Much of this assistance can come from the EU

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[77] SACU's history dates back to 1910 during colonial times. Its agreement has undergone various phases of review, with the new post-apartheid agreement having entered into force on 13 July 2004.

itself. While it is not clear how the much-needed relationship would be structured between SACU (as a trade liberalization instrument) and SADC (as a developmental and security structure), with greater clarity of purpose in both structures defining the future of the region should be less difficult than it currently is.