Common security and economic integration: the case of southern african development community (SADC)

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Introduction

Between the world of nation-states and the global community of people lie various manifestations of regionalism. Organizations for regime cooperation of varying capacity and effectiveness now cover most parts of the world and regional economic collaboration remains a strong aspiration world-wide. The spectacular success of regionalism in Europe and in North and Southern America is inspiration to all who strive towards a world system beyond frontiers. This trend, needless to say, takes into account matters relating to economic integration common foreign poli-

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cies matters as important integration factors.

The global context of African economic cooperation and regional security came into sharp relief with the last decade of the 1980s and the unfolding mega-trends in world affairs. The menacing approach of Europe 21st Century, other emerging regional economic blocks, the deepening crisis of the Bretton Woods international economic and financial system, the collapse of the Soviet System and the demise of the ideological cold-war and the new security arrangement for Europe with the re-organisation of NATO, all had profound implications for Africa. Correspondingly, Africa's growing marginalization in World affairs has brought home the enormous geological dimensions of these deve-

lopments. The profound consequence of these transformations compels urgent initiatives for Africa's collective economic integration and common security arrangements and integrative strategy.

The challenges posed by these enormous developments require more than adjusting to the consequence of Europe of the 21ˢᵗ Century and must involve the re-conceptualisation and revamping of regional integration within the broader context of a co-ordinated African Security Plan. African co-operation in this context, therefore, includes concerted efforts both for the socio-economic integration of the continent and for ensuring collective regional security. The dialectal interrelationship between economic integration and regional security thus has to be widely grasped and pursued effectively (Onimode, 1993: 153).

This contribution looks at opportunities for regional economic integration in areas relating to security arrangements, foreign policies and economic integration. Joint regional efforts have taken place already to common security arrangements as joint regional efforts have taken place already in many areas like trade, thereby forming a framework of cooperation in other areas. The transformation of SADC (Southern African Development Community) from a co-coordinating Conference into a development Community meant that its strategies and priorities have been upgraded to respond to positively to new challenges in areas relating to common security, common foreign policies in the Southern African region through economic integration.

1. NATIONAL SELF DETERMINATION AND FORMALIZATION OF ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

The origins, norms, values and evolution of SADC have to be understood in the context of the time. Various factors shaped its design, objectives, norms, principles and decision making structures. Among these are the geographic contingency, common history, colonial experience, the corrosive force of apartheid and racism, the ideology of nationalism with emphasis on the seizure and consolidation of own power, and its relationship to national independence, national-building and decolonization. The popular and charismatic leadership of the first presidents of Zambia (Keneth Kaunda), Tanzania (Julius Nyerere), Mozambique (Samora Machel) and Zimbabwe (Robert Mugabe), stood in sharp contrast with the unpopular, racist and apartheid regime of white South Africa.

These and other factors contributed towards giving the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADC) a distinct institutional identity, which on the analysis of Mandaza and Tostensen (1994:3) "underpinned first, political solidarity and latter, economic cooperation" (Andre du Pisani,1996: 254)

The 1980s, for political and economic reasons, witnessed a marked resurgence of interest in regional economic integration. In July 1980, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) agreed on the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and signed the Final Act at Lagos. The LPA envisaged the resuscitation of earlier attempts at regional integration and the creation of an African Common Market by the year 2001 – a target subsequently moved forward to

2025. Following the ratification of the LPA, in April 1980, Southern African witnessed the birth of SADCC and, soon after, the establishment of the Preferential Trade Area of Eastern and Southern African States (PTA) in December the following year (Pisani, op. cit.: 253).

National self-determination during the colonial period and supra-nationalism of the Pan-African Movement promoted unity and solidarity among a wider and diverse groups of people in eastern and southern Africa. Both forms of nationalisms combined to be potent mobilising agents and served as a common denominator for the struggle for independence. After the fall of the Portuguese empire and the success of Angola and Mozambique to attain their independence, the Conference was transformed into the Frontline States (FLS) of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. The FLS maintained the nationalist and Pan-Africanist objective of aiding the liberation movements in the remaining white minority-ruled areas of Southern Africa and acted under a common approach and banner. After five years (1974 – 1979), the FLS extended an invitation to Lesotho, Swaziland and Malawi and upon their independence – Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The enlarged FLS advocated unity in the region and had a common foreign policy approach on external issues. The members reaffirmed their interest in promoting the liberation of the three remaining minority led governments, since they realised that political independence would mean little without economic growth and security. This development plan transformed the FLS

into the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC in 1980). The event was complemented by the momentous occasion of Zimbabwe independence in April 1980. This further strengthened a common regional approach in foreign policy formulation in the Southern African region (Lee, 1989: 6).

The Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) was established on 1st April 1980 in order to promote co-operation and economic integration in the Southern African region by lessening dependence on the aprtheid Republic of South Africa, before it became independent. However, over time and with positive political developments taking place in South Africa, the focus of SADCC underwent significant changes to the extent that the main emphasis was mainly on Economic Integration.

SADCC operated as an informal organization based mainly on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Even through this worked very well, some operational differences were experienced which needed to be addressed if Economic Integration was to be realized. It was against this background that the Heads of States and Government at their meeting in Harare in August 1989 decided to formalize SADC by giving it an appropriate legal status by replacing the MOU with a Treaty. The Treaty addressed economic integration, while the MOU was addressed economic cooperation or development cooperation. It was this treaty that gave rise to the change of name from Southern African Development Coordination conference (SADCC) to Southern African Development Com-

munity (SADC) in order to reflect the new focus on Economic Integration. The Treaty establishing SADC was signed in Windhoek, Namibia in August 1992.

The Treaty spells out broad areas of cooperation, and provides for protocols under which cooperation in specific areas would be pursued by and among member states. Building the community passed through several stages, starting with ratification of the Treaty and Protocol on Immunities and Privileges. All the member states have since ratified both the Treaty and the Protocol on Immunities and Privileges.

This development marked a critical point, philosophically and strategically, in the pursuit of regional co-operation in Southern Africa. It marked a departure from SADCC, the co-ordination Conference, to SADC the Development Community; it was a departure from regional arrangements that primarily sought the reduction of members apartheid-ruled South Africa to a framework that would pursue deeper economic co-operation and integration. While the SADC was decidedly conceived to pursue primarily economic goals, there was clear acceptance that "peace and mutual security are critical components of the total environment for regional co-operation and integration". In that Declaration of 17 August 1992, the regional leaders were categorical that the region needs, therefore, to establish a framework and mechanism to strengthen regional solidarity, and provide for mutual peace and security.

The main objectives of SADC included the forging of links to create a genuine and equitable regional integration,the mobilisation of resources to promote the implementation of national, inter-state and regional policies, and the concerted action to secure international co-operation within the framework of the strategy for economic liberation. In August 1989 the SADCC Heads of State decided to formalise SADC and forge a common regional foreign policy by giving it an appropriate legal status by replacing the MOU with a treaty. The Treaty addressed economic integration, while the MOU was addressing economic co-operation or development co-operation. It was this Treaty that gave rise to the change of the name from Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) to Southern African Development Community (SADC) in order to reflect the new focus on Economic Integration.

2. Organ for Peace, Defence and Security

Pursuant to the establishment of a democratic order in Southern Africa in 1994, several regional meetings were held at both, officials and Ministerial levels to consider successor arrangements to the Frontline States Organisation. A meeting of SADC Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security held in Gaborone on 18 January 1996 recommended to the SADC Summit the establishment of a SADC Organ that would allow more flexibility and timely response, at the highest level to sensitive and potentially explosive situations. Thus was born the SADC

Organ on Politics, Defense and Security, which was formally confirmed by the SADC Heads of State in the Communiqué they issued on 28th June 1996 in Gaborone, Botswana (Hamadziripi, 2000: 86). The concept of the frontline States (FLS) had its genesis in the Liberation Committee of the organization of African Unity (OAU), and was constructed around Tanzania as the first and principal rear base of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. While a history of the diplomacy and politics of the FLS falls outside the scope of this paper, it can be argued that FLS gave a distinct political, personal and state-centric character to SADCC, especially in terms of its domain norms, principles and values. In this aspect, various analysts have for example, pointed to the Lusaka Manifesto of 1969 and its influence on the regional diplomacy of the FLS (Pisani. Op. Cit: 252).

The challenge the region has faced in establishing a mechanism for conflict management in the post apartheid era, has been how to translate or transform the historical relations between the leaders in the region into organic, sustainable institutions that would enhance regional cooperation on peace and security issues and maintain a common foreign policy. The tensions, controversy and difficulties experienced thus far in trying to operationalise the SADC Organ can partly be attributed to the region's history of conflicts and patterns of political solidarity and co-operation in managing these conflicts. However, there have been initiatives to redress these problems.

The security of people extends beyond the protection of borders, the ruling elite and exclusive state interests. It must include first and foremost the protection of people. Thus, like the rest of the international community, SADC accepts that the old state-centric conceptions of security are no longer adequate. The corollary of this is that security be planned for as a regional rather than state-centred objective, if it is to be sustainable. For one thing, security in most of Africa's sub-regions is inevitably linked to the domestic security of a number of the states, if only because of their sharing geographical borders, ethno-cultural interconnections, and similar economic environmental conditions.

3. Interdependence Versus National Economic Security

Which main trends have a direct or indirect influence on international security? An analysis leads to the conclusion that the evolution of the contemporary world is characterised by four megatrends: globalisation, regionalisation, nationalism and democratisation. However, for the purpose of this paper, we will only deal with economic regionalisation. SADC Regionalism strengthens regional security and economic integration by increasing co-operation, by establishing common regional objectives and interests and by creating precedents concerning limitations of national sovereignty in the search for common goals. In this sense SADC regionalisation brings about so-called "security communities" in which intra organisational links, a high degree of co-operation and a common interest seriously limit the possibility that a

member state acts to the detriment of the security of others. SADC Regionalisation, already well integrated in globalisation process, may reinforce it and thus bring about additional positive consequences for regional security and foreign policy.

3. 1. Positive Trends In SADC

SADC regionalisation, according to the (SADC Regional Human Development Report 2000: 96), has had so far three major achievements in furthering political integration in the SADC region include the establishment of: The SADC Parliamentary Forum; The SADC Electoral Commission's Forum; and The SADC Organ of Politics, Defence and Security.

Obviously a co-ordinated foreign policy is necessary for the cited organs to function effectively. The SADC Parliamentary Forum was established in 1997 and its objectives are: strengthen the implementation capacity of SADC by involving parliamentarians in SADC activities; promote peace, democracy, security and stability on the basis of collective responsibility by supporting the development of permanent conflict resolution mechanisms in the SADC sub-region; regional solidarity and build a sense of common destiny among the people of SADC (SADC Regional Report, 2000: 96).

The SADC Electoral Commission Forum was established in 1998 to strengthen regional co-operation among electoral management bodies in the SADC countries with a view to: strengthen democratic electoral processes and a democratic culture; establish mechanisms of co-operation and

assistance in a range of electoral matters; and to develop a code of conduct for officials, political parties, electoral commissions and observers (SADC Regional Report, 2000). One of the principles embraced by Article 4 of the SADC Treaty to which member states have to adhere to is that of "solidarity, peace and security." To realise this principle, Article 5 of the Treaty sets out one of the objectives of SADC as to "promote and defend peace and security" while Article 21 obliges member states to co-operate in the areas of "politics, diplomacy, international relations, peace and security."

3. 2. Dual Membership and Economic Integration

Most members of SADC are also members of the Preferential Trade Area (PTA), Community of East and Southern Africa (COMESA), an overlapping and broader economic organisation (albeit a very weak one) aimed at establishing a free trade area. In principle, this should not be a problem. In Southern Africa, sub-regional institutions are still new and weak, and there has been a tussle for survival between SADC and COMESA, in which SADC has gained greater strength. Dual membership by some SADC states has so far not contradicted a common SADC foreign policy approach. SADC's practice to base regional economic integration on the perceived interest of each member provided the rationale for the allocation of sectors for co-ordination by each member country. Thus, each member state was allocated a sector to co-ordinate. Such co-ordination involved proposing sector policies,

strategies and priorities for discussion and adoption by the decision making structures of the regime, and processing projects for inclusion in the sectoral programme, as well as monitoring progress and reporting to the Council of Ministers. The underlying assumption for allocating sectors is that a member is more likely to successfully co-ordinate and promote activity in an issue area if that issue area is also important to it nationally.

3. 3. The Interdependence Between Foreign Policies, Security and Economic Integration

The interrelationship between foreign policies, security and economic integration which alone can ensure regional stability cannot be overemphasised. Only through convergence of the three can we dispel an environment of escalating hostility since acute disparities in human conditions unleash uncontrollable tensions that can only lead to conflict. Against the backdrop of uneven resource endowment among the SADC states, there is always a likelihood that, if not monitored, tension that arises from basic issues of interdependence could impact negatively on regional security. Recognition of this possibility has led SADC to place a premium on economic integration. The economic debate in SADC is anchored on the adage that 'cooperation is better than competition.' The rationale here is that the removal of barriers encourages trade amongst the SADC members which stimulates economic growth. Because transnational cooperation structures help to prevent conflicts by providing frameworks for

managing conflicts of interest and creating common norms and values, there is realisation that intra-regional trade contributes to both economic development and stability. In other words, the SADC member states realise that engaging each other in cooperative economic ventures helps to build regional security and common foreign policy so necessary in reducing the incidence of conflict.

The enhancement of democratic institutions and their functions is a necessary precondition for the consolidation of peace. Although SADC member states are committed to the principles of sovereign equality, balance and mutual benefit, and the peaceful settlement of disputes among member states, Article 4 of the SADC Treaty underscores that the objectives of regional economic cooperation and development can only be realised within a political framework which guarantees solidarity, peace and security of all the people and respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

SADC has engaged in efforts at evolving common political values that provide constitutionalism as a method of rule and respect for the democratic values of civilian control of the military, while frowning in particular on the phenomenon of coup d'etat as a form of governmental change. The objectives of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security emphasises the need to promote political cooperation among member states and the evolution of common political value systems and institutions.

Conclusion

The paper deals with the dialectical interrelationship between economic regional integration and regional security and common foreign policies in the SADC region and traces the evolution of Common Security arrangements and regional economic Integration efforts by the Southern African states since the time of the national liberation struggles in the region.

The paper's conclusion is that regional economic integration and common foreign policies approach is the way-forward for SADC as opposed to uncoordinated activities by individual states.

Given the common history of SADC States and their geographical proximity, effective regional integration in areas concerning economic development, conflict prevention and resolution can be pursued through active and collaboration among SADC States. This applies to Common Security and Defense arrangements. The profound consequences of the global transformations compel urgent initiatives for not only SADC but Africa's collective security and integrative strategy. Regional economic integration with all its different components is no longer an option but a must if it has to survive in this globalizing world.

Lastly, interrelationship between security and economic integration which alone can ensure regional stability cannot be over-emphasized. Only through convergence of the two can we dispel an environment of escalating hostility since acute in human conditions unleash uncontrollable tension that can lead to conflict. Against the backdrop uneven resource endowment among the SADC states, there is always a likelihood that if not monitored, tension that arises from basic issues of interdependence that could impact negatively on regional security.

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