Assessing Changing Relations Between the Russian Federation and South Africa Since the End of the Cold War

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: Signed Date: 30/10/2015

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Acronyms

ACIRC	African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (AU)
AfDB	African Development Bank
Afrocom	Coordinating Committee for Economic Cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa (Russia)
ANC	African National Congress (South Africa)
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India, and China
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CSO	Central Selling Organisation
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation (South Africa)
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry (South Africa)
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FDI	foreign direct investment
FSB	Federalnaya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti (Russia)
G8	Group of Eight
G20	Group of Twenty
GDP	gross domestic product
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICC	International Criminal Court
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund

ITEC	Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Co-operation (Russia and South Africa)
KGB	Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (USSR)
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe (South Africa)
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MPLA	Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDB	New Development Bank (BRICS)
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NNPC	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation
NP	National Party (South Africa)
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
P5	five permanent members of the UN Security Council
PGM	platinum group metals
PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (AU)
R2P	responsibility to protect
RSFSR	Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation (Namibia)
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNITA	Union for the Total Independence of Angola
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWII	Second World War

Chapter One: Introduction and Methodology

1.1. Background and rationale

While a great deal has been written on the Soviet Union in Southern Africa during the Cold War,[1] relations between Russia and post-apartheid South Africa after the Cold War have not been as widely covered. As Russian historian Irina Filatova notes, the history of relations between Russia and Africa is important for two main reasons: Russia and Africa are geographically and politically very different; and Russia was not a coloniser in Africa and therefore has not had the same chance of influencing events on the continent as have former European colonisers such as Britain, France, Portugal, and Belgium.[2] Contemporary relations between Russia and Africa are significant mainly due to Russia's interest in Africa's mineral and energy resources and the ideological influence that the Soviet Union had on African countries, particularly on South Africa.[3] Russia is still preoccupied with its role on the global stage, and seeks to be a major actor in a multipolar world, resisting the notion of a unipolar system. The literature suggests that contemporary Russian-African relations provide a means of shaping this shift to multipolarity.

By all accounts, the Russian Federation's engagement with African countries is pragmatic in nature and is used mainly to attain its international objectives. Much of Russia's Africa policy is designed around seeking a support base at the United Nations (UN), and also focuses on trade and economic goals.[4] The idea that "Russia is returning to Africa" has been promoted since 2007, and through a study of Russia's relations with South Africa, this dissertation will seek to contribute to the discussion. Much has been written on relations with countries such as Angola,

[1] Eminent Russian scholars include Apollon Davidson, Irina Filatova, and Vladimir Shubin.
[2] Irina Filatova, "New Insights on Relations between Russia and Africa," *South African Historical Journal* 42 (2000), 341.
[3] This point is based on correspondence between the author and Irina Filatova in August 2014.
[4] Ian Taylor and Paul Williams, "Introduction: Understanding Africa's Place in World Politics," in *Africa in International Politics: External Involvement on the Continent,* eds. Ian Taylor and Paul Williams (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 13.

with which Russia has considerable business interests in the mining and military sectors, but there are gaps in the literature around relations with South Africa after the Cold War.

This study is not a comparison between the two countries, but seeks rather to examine how Moscow has engaged with Pretoria in the global arena in the last two decades, and what significance this may have for international relations in general, and relations between two "emerging powers" in particular.[5] Both Russia and South Africa have adopted high-profile roles regionally and internationally since the end of the Cold War, although Russia was a superpower during the Cold War.

With the rise of emerging powers in general, and in Africa, in particular, and the subsequent discourse around building a polycentric world, a study of Russia and South Africa is of interest in the field of International Relations. Both Moscow and Pretoria claim to aspire to create a more equitable and multipolar global order. South Africa's inclusion in what became the Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) group in April 2011 provides opportunities for increased cooperation between the two countries and for working together to end the hierarchy that exists in global cooperation structures.[6]

Between 1956 and the 1990s, there were no formal relations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the Republic of South Africa.[7] However, the Soviet Union provided assistance to the armed struggle (Umkhonto we Sizwe [MK]) of the African National Congress (ANC) between the 1960s and the 1980s and MK cadres were trained in the USSR,

[5] As a member of international fora such as the G20 and the BRICS, Russia is an emerging power, but it is also re-emerging in the sense that it still has "power credentials" (such as nuclear weapons and a permanent seat on the UN Security Council) that are legacies of the Soviet era. However, its over reliance on oil revenues means that its economy is not protected from the shocks of the international global economy and is therefore in danger of stagnating.

[6] South Africa was invited to join the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) group in December 2010, and attended the Sanya Summit in China in April 2011.

[7] Apollon Davidson and Irina Filatova, eds., *Russia in the Contemporary World: Proceedings of the First Symposium in South Africa, Centre for Russian Studies, University of Cape Town, 17-19 August 1994* (Cape Town: Centre for Russian Studies, University of Cape Town, 1995), 105. The Union of South Africa (the historic predecessor of the Republic of South Africa) came to an end in 1961.

which also provided diplomatic and political support for the cause of the anti-apartheid struggle at the UN and other international institutions.[8]

Russia is an important economy and a global player, with a gross domestic product (GDP) of $1.861 trillion in 2014, and $318,661 million in foreign exchange reserves in 2015, despite losing its ranking as the eighth largest global economy in 2014.[9] As the second largest and most industrialised economy in Africa, and boasting impressive economic and strategic engagements with the rest of the continent and on the international stage, South Africa should be an obvious choice for bilateral and multilateral cooperation with Russia. South Africa's credentials, which include membership of various international organisations in the continent; a strategic partnership with the European Union (EU); and membership of economic blocs such as the Group of Twenty (G20), provide Russia with many opportunities for collaboration.

The Russian Federation is distinctive as both an "emerging" (or strictly speaking re-emerging) economy and part of the rich world – demonstrated by its memberships of the G20, BRICS, and the erstwhile Group of Eight (G8).[10] Russia assumed the G20 presidency for the first time in December 2012, and hosted the G20 summit in St Petersburg in September 2013. In discussions since May 2007, Russia is also moving towards joining the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which will help it to secure an economic future for itself globally. As Anna Brezhneva and Daria Ukhova note, Russia is in many ways a "middle ground" between the rich "North" and the poorer "South": while aspiring to be part of the developed

[8] Vladimir Shubin, *The Hot "Cold War": The USSR in Southern Africa* (Scottsville and London: Pluto Press and University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008), 248.

[9] *Russian Federation*, The World Bank, accessed September 18, 2015, http://data.worldbank.org/country/russian-federation; and *International Reserves of the Russian Federation*, Central Bank of the Russian Federation, accessed September 18, 2015, http://cbr.ru/eng/hd_base/default.aspx?Prtid=mrrf_m. Falling oil prices, US and European sanctions as a result of Russia's annexation of Ukraine, and the subsequent collapse of the rouble sunk the Russian economy in 2014.

[10] Russia was due to host the G8 summit in Sochi in June 2014. However, Moscow's deployment of troops in the Crimean peninsula in Ukraine, which began on 4 March 2014, ostensibly to protect ethnic Russian speakers in the area, resulted in the leaders of the G7 countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States) declaring that they would not participate in preparations for the summit in Sochi. On 24 March 2014, Russia was suspended from the G8 following its annexation of Crimea on 18 March 2014. Relations with the West are once again strained, and various sanctions have been placed on individuals over the Ukrainian crisis by both the US and the EU. The G7 hosted its summit without Russia in Brussels on 4-5 June 2014.

camp of the North, it cannot deny its ties with the less developed South. Indeed, it sees itself as a "metaphorical bridge" between the countries of the G8 and those of the global South.[11]

Although it could be argued that Russia's overall place in the post-Cold War international arena is yet to be defined, Moscow has emerged as somewhat of a balancing force in international affairs; a "counterbalance to the most aggressive US policies", according to Aleksey Pushkov.[12] Another view is that the imperial entity that was the Soviet Union has been downsized to what Russian analyst Dmitri Trenin calls "post-imperium",[13] or a modern state in transition seeking to hold on to, and protect the assets of, its "near abroad"; act as a counterbalance to the US; and explore national interests globally.[14] Whichever perspective one takes, as Bobo Lo notes, Russia still has many of the characteristics that contributed to its Soviet-era might. With an estimated population of 143.8 million in 2014;[15] bordered by 14 countries and occupying most of eastern Europe and north Asia, Russia spans a vast geographic area; is still the second nuclear power, as well as a major energy and petroleum exporter; and, as the USSR's "continuing state", is one of the five veto-wielding permanent members (P5) of the UN Security Council.[16]

1.2. Research aims

The study will discuss how Russia's relations with South Africa have developed since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and will also seek to answer why these relations have changed. To this end, the study will consider the foreign policy objectives of Russia from 1991

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[11] Anna Brezhneva and Daria Ukhova, "Russia as a Humanitarian Aid Donor," Oxfam Discussion Paper (2013), 20.
[12] Aleksey Pushkov, "Russia as a Balancing Force in International Affairs," *Security Index: A Russian Journal on International Security* 19, no. 4 (2013): 7, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/19934270.2013.851894. Pushkov is Chairman of the Russian State Duma Committee on Foreign Affairs.
[13] Yulia Fetisova, "Contradictions of Russia's Post-Imperial Age," *Security Index: A Russian Journal on International Security* 18, no. 4 (2012), 113, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/19934270.2012.714620.
[14] Russia refers to the countries of the former Soviet Union as its near abroad, with which it sees itself as having a special relationship.
[15] *Russian Federation – Country at a Glance*, The World Bank, accessed September 18, 2015, http://data.worldbank.org/country/russian-federation.
[16] Mark Webber, *The International Politics of Russia and the Successor States* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1996), 3. See also, Bobo Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy* (London: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2003), 8. The other members of the P5 are the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and China.

when the Soviet Union collapsed, including political and institutional changes in the Russian Federation which led to Africa no longer being perceived as a priority area. Moscow's current intentions towards the broader African continent will be discussed briefly in order to provide a context for its engagement with South Africa in particular. Russia's contemporary relations with the rest of Africa are therefore important for this study in light of the history of its interaction with the continent as a whole. Key time periods in Russia's foreign policy will be discussed with a view to identifying possible correlations between changes in Moscow's foreign policy and its relations with South Africa. Russia's foreign policy objectives will be explored through political scientist Richard Sakwa's four phases of post-Soviet Russian foreign policy: liberal internationalism under foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev (1990-1996); competitive pragmatism under foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov (1996-2000); new realism under President Vladimir Putin (2000-2007); and neo-revisionism, also under Putin (2007-2012).[17] The current phase that began in 2012 is characterised by a more aggressive and independent foreign policy stance.

In considering present-day relations between Russia and South Africa, the study will examine bilateral and multilateral engagements between the two countries through specific examples in an effort to narrow the focus of the research. These examples will, at the same time, serve to provide a fuller understanding of relations between Moscow and Pretoria, and shed light on general features of Russia's bilateral and multilateral engagements with South Africa. They will serve, firstly, to document the process of engagement, and then to analyse and generalise about them.[18] Bilateral engagements between Russia and South Africa will be examined through a study of cooperation in the mining and energy sector: mining because the two countries are the world's first and second richest in terms of global commodity wealth, and energy because of: 1) Russia's long history of nuclear capability; and 2) South Africa's current energy crisis. The study will next review multilateral engagements between Russia and South Africa within global institutions. The discussion will focus on Russia's acceptance of South Africa's membership of the BRICS group in April 2011; engagement between the two countries within the forum; and

[17] Richard Sakwa, "Russia and Europe: Whose Society?" *Journal of European Integration* 33, no. 2 (2011): 200-202, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2011.543526.
[18] John S. Odell, "Case Study Methods in International Political Economy," *International Studies Perspectives* 2, no. 2 (2001): 170, http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1528-3577.00047/abstract.

whether Russia's conduct within BRICS changed following South Africa joining. The motivation for voting positions by the two countries in the UN Security Council in 2007-2008 and 2011-2012 (when South Africa served as a non-permanent member) as well as on the current Ukraine conflict will also be discussed. Multilateral relations between the two countries pose some questions, including: "Do Russia and South Africa vote along similar lines when they sit on the UN Security Council?"; and "Do Russia's positions on issues such as development and investment in Africa, and reform of the UN Security Council – priority issues for Pretoria's foreign policy – align with those of South Africa?" While the title of this dissertation refers to changing relations between Russia and South Africa, the focus is on Russia's relations with South Africa, with an emphasis on the Russian approach.

1.3. Research methodology

The study will seek to examine, by means of a literature review and analysis, how bilateral and multilateral relations between Russia and South Africa have developed since the end of the Cold War. The research will rely on secondary sources; published books; journal and newspaper articles; internet sources, including state and official documents; and informal conversations with eminent Russian scholars. The research will be primarily an exploratory study that will seek to describe how historical and contemporary events between Russia and South Africa have occurred, and are connected and further, to link the effects of the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 with *how* and *why* relations have changed between Russia and South Africa since that time.[19]

1.4. Theoretical framework

Neorealists and neoliberals both agree that the state is a self-interested entity and the dominant actor in the international system.[20] Both approaches assume that international patterns of

[19] Search for Common Ground, "Case Study Module," http://www.dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/2.2%20Case%20Study.pdf.

[20] Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organisation,* 46, no. 2 (1992): 392, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706858.

behaviour are explained by material forces.[21] However, a focus purely on the material will not explain why states act as they do. For example, neither neorealism nor neoliberalism can explain why the US should view North Korean missiles as any more threatening than British missiles, since a nuclear attack on the US would cause the same devastation regardless of whether it came from North Korea or Britain. A purely materialist focus does not therefore account fully for why some states are deemed friends and others foes.[22] This limitation in neorealist and liberal theories paved the way for the constructivist approach in International Relations after the Cold War.[23]

Constructivism holds that ideas and social interaction are what allow power and state interests to have the effect that they do. Constructivists acknowledge the structure of the system, but argue that beliefs and ideas are important when considering what contributes to a state's interests and actions, as "material power and state interest are fundamentally formed by ideas and social interaction."[24] Furthermore, state interests are driven by identity, specifically "the intersubjectively constituted structure of identities and interests in the system."[25] As Ian Hurd notes, both realism and constructivism can be used as approaches to examine power relations, but where the two differ is in realism's focus on material power, while constructivism emphasises the social meaning that is attached to objects or practices. Meaning is therefore socially constructed in the constructivist approach.[26] For constructivists, the international system does not exist on its own, but is part of a common understanding or set of ideas among actors.[27] Although the structure of the system constrains actors, if thoughts and ideas change between these actors, so too can the structure, causing Alexander Wendt to state that "anarchy is what states make of it".[28]

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[21] Ian Hurd, "Constructivism," in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, eds. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 300.
[22] Ibid., 301.
[23] Robert Jackson and Georg Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 161.
[24] Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 169, 171.
[25] Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it," 393, 401.
[26] Hurd, "Constructivism," 299-300.
[27] Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 160.
[28] Ibid., 160, 162.

Following this line of reasoning, the realist security dilemma between Moscow and Washington is not an inevitable consequence of an anarchic international system. From a constructivist perspective, it has evolved due to history, beliefs, and interaction, which, as Wendt argues, can become institutionalised and therefore hard to change.[29] As a former superpower rival and a state that often appears isolationist, a negative identification is thus associated with Russia on the part of Western powers such as the US.

Meaning is assigned to actions, and a core part of Russia's post-Soviet identity in the international system is that of a great power that wants to be recognised and treated as an equal partner. Arguably, this quest for recognition and the ability to shape the global order are the main drivers of Russian foreign policy, and of its economic and political actions. Africa (and specifically South Africa whose relations with Russia are the focus of this study) represents an opportunity for Russia to help it to achieve these international objectives. Power and national interests are obviously important, making realism useful for considering Russia's overall foreign policy in light of the Kremlin's emphasis on power politics and relations and national security, and its continued quest to counterbalance US hegemony. Indeed, Russia is not unique in this as all states can be said to seek power and to dominate in some way in their quest for survival. However, realism – with its focus on the material and its assumption that national interests are a given – is insufficient as a theoretical framework. A broadly constructivist framework is more appropriate due to 1) the importance in Russian foreign policy of the role of ideas, discourse, self-perception, identity, and the way that Russia is perceived by other states, and 2) because the inclusion of culture and identity are "important causal factors that help define the interests and constitute the actors that shape national security policies and global insecurities."[30] Constructivism asserts that ideational structures (shared ideas, values, and beliefs) hold as much importance as material structures and explores how ideas affect the material world. Furthermore, it makes the assumption that "the study of international relations must focus on the ideas and beliefs that inform the actors on the international scene as well as the shared understandings

[29] Ibid., 407.
[30] Peter J. Katzenstein, "Conclusion: National Security in a Changing World," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 537.

between them."[31] This study does not seek to apply or test theory; rather, in view of the central role given to identity and status, it will follow a broadly constructivist approach in discussing Russian foreign policy.

1.5. Limitations and delimitations

The discussion is limited to the end of the Cold War era, starting from the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, to the present day. A possible limitation of the study may be trying to find a balance between the Western, versus the Russian, viewpoint, with perhaps an initial over-reliance upon literature sources that have a predominantly pro-Western bias. Another limitation is the lack of use of Russian source language texts, and lack of reliable statistical and economic data from first-hand sources. Finding a sizeable number of African sources on contemporary Russia may pose another challenge, as is the general paucity of a wide range of post-Cold War literature on Russia's relations with South Africa.

1.6. Chapter outline

Chapter Two will use levels of analysis to discuss Russia's foreign policy since the end of the Cold War. Chapter Three will contextualise Russia-South Africa ties by examining historical and contemporary Russia-Africa relations, while Chapter Four will explore historical and contemporary bilateral ties with a study of mineral and energy resource collaboration. Multilateral relations between Russia and South Africa will be discussed in Chapter Five using two examples. The first study will consider Russia's reaction to South Africa joining the BRICS in 2011 and engagement between the two within the grouping, while the second will discuss Russia's and South Africa's positions in the UN Security Council in 2007-2008 and 2011-2012. The concluding chapter will provide an analysis of Russia's changing bilateral and multilateral relations with South Africa, linking it back to developments in the relationship since the end of the Cold War. Finally, it will consider the issues that have been raised by the study and their implications for further study in the area of Russia-South Africa relations.

[31] Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 162.

Chapter Two: Russian Foreign Policy since the End of the Cold War

> "*I don't deny that the powers of the president in the draft constitution are considerable, but what do you expect in a country that is used to tsars and strong leaders?*"[32] – Boris Yeltsin

This chapter will begin by examining Russian foreign policy with an overview of Kenneth Waltz's three levels of analysis, and will then consider the country's foreign policy within the framework of each level of analysis. In *Man, the State, and War*,[33] Waltz assumes three different levels of analysis: the individual; the state; and the system. The systemic level examines characteristics of the international system such as power distribution among states and their economic and political interdependence. The nation-state level concerns the internal structure of states such as type of government and the relationship between state and society. The individual level focuses on the basic beliefs, thinking, and perceptions of the world of the individual decision-maker.[34] Waltz's levels of analysis are relevant since identity and domestic politics are two foci of constructivism,[35] and they also set the context for the discussion on Russia's foreign policy. The role of the systemic level provides a macro appreciation, but a better understanding of Russia's actions on the international stage is one which takes into account how internal factors shape international behaviour[36] due to the nature of the Russian state and the constitutional power vested in individuals such as the president.

The discussion on Russia's foreign policy will use Richard Sakwa's four phases to illustrate the changing nature of Russia's actions on the international stage, and the divergence between how Moscow views itself and the way in which it is perceived on the international stage. Sakwa's

[32] Statement by Boris Yeltsin to *Izvestiya*, November 15, 1993, p. 4, cited in Stephen White, *Understanding Russian Politics* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 72.
[33] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).
[34] Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 230-231.
[35] Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory", *International Security* 23, no. 1 (1998): 172.
[36] Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 171.

four phases encompass constructivist notions such as identity that are central to shaping international behaviour and also highlight the fluctuations in Russia's quest for global recognition, which, as stated earlier, is central to its post-1991 identity. Although any examination of post-Soviet Russia will need to consider its other two twentieth-century expressions – that of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union[37] – this chapter will, however, be confined to a study of post-Soviet Russian foreign policy.

2.1. The systemic level

The Russian Federation has an assertive and ambitious foreign policy, the guiding principles of which are contained in the National Security Concept of 2000; the National Security Strategy to 2020 of 2009; and the Foreign Policy Concept (hereinafter referred to as the "Concept") of 2008 and 2013. The 2008 Concept, published after Vladimir Putin's more assertive second term as president, emphasises the strong self-recognition of Russia's place in the world. Contemporary Russia views itself as autonomous and independent in the foreign policy sphere: this foreign policy focuses on the concept of "multipolarity" in the sense of the existence of a number of states of more or less equal stature, in their "entitlement to shape the international order."[38] The 2013 Concept describes Russia's foreign policy as "pragmatic... [reflecting] the unique role [Russia] has been playing over centuries as a counterbalance in international affairs and the development of global civilization."[39]

The Russian Federation is not challenging the existing global order – what it *is* challenging, however, is the place given to it in this order. For this reason, Sakwa views Russia as a neo-revisionist power which is benefitting from the international system as the inheritor of the USSR,

[37] Alastair Kocho-Williams, *Russia's International Relations in the Twentieth Century* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 1.
[38] Jeffrey Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 12, 13, 15.
[39] *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, Approved by President of the Russian Federation V. Putin on 12 February 2013*, Para. 25, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 18 February 2013, accessed November 1, 2014, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/76389FEC168189ED44257B2E0039B16D.

but which seeks a more prominent place.[40] Russia under Putin sees itself as a country which anticipates and leads events, while the West sees Russia as a nation in decline, given its lack of economic and political reforms, domestic upheavals, and dependent oil economy.[41] Although Putin has succeeded in restoring Russia's domestic and international prestige, the country is by no means the global force that was the USSR, which is apparent in its political, economic, and strategic decline, with the country lacking the resources to back its global ambitions.[42] Nevertheless, despite being weaker than its predecessor, the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation is still a centre of power in terms of nuclear capability, energy, natural resources, and membership of the UN Security Council.

Ratified on 12 February 2013 by President Putin, the latest Russian Foreign Policy Concept cites four foreign policy priorities: 1) continuation of conditions that promote economic development and external trade; 2) advancing international law and the UN framework; 3) multilateral diplomacy; and 4) countering global challenges such as terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and Islamic extremism.[43] As Andrew Monaghan notes, the document is useful for clearing up misunderstandings about Russia's foreign policy activities in that it provides the rationale or background for why Moscow acts as it does on the international stage.[44] While Russia is often thought of as having isolationist tendencies, Monaghan asserts that the 2013 Concept suggests otherwise and points to Russia taking a more active role in international affairs.[45] Engagement with regional groupings is given more prominence in the 2013 Concept: increased participation and development cooperation with blocs such as the G8, G20, and BRICS is cited, and Russia also has a separate concept on its participation in the BRICS bloc; more of which in Chapter Five.[46]

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[40] Sakwa, "Russia and Europe," 199.
[41] Andrew Monaghan, "The New Russian Foreign Policy Concept: Evolving Continuity," Chatham House Programme Paper (April 2013): 7-8.
[42] Bobo Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 8.
[43] Vyacheslav Nikonov, "A Global Power that Has no Global Goals," *Security Index: A Russian Journal on International Security*, 19, no, 4 (2013): 9, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/19934270.2013.854534. The Concept was also published in 2000 and 2008.
[44] Monaghan, "The New Russian Foreign Policy Concept," 2.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid., 5; and Alexandra Arkhangelskaya and Vladimir Shubin, "Russia's Africa Policy," SAIIA Occasional Paper No. 157 (2013): 10.

Despite the end of superpower rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States (US) after the Cold War, relations between Moscow and Washington continue to "ebb and flow", in the words of Vladimir Putin. This is due, in large part, to perceptions of identity of the "other", as well as historical grievances. Among policymakers and elites in Moscow, the habit still applies from Soviet times of measuring Russia's success or failure in relation to the US.[47] For their part, US policymakers continue to view Russia through a Cold War lens. For example, in spite of the assertion by those who would argue that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) seeks to promote regional security, as a historically hostile entity, the alliance's expansion eastward is seen as a direct threat to Russia's national security. As far as Moscow is concerned, continued NATO enlargement amounts to ignoring Russia's concerns which it has voiced, sending a message that the West does not take it seriously.[48] This illustrates how Russia views itself and how it is viewed by Western powers, and speaks to the importance constructivists attach to the notion of intersubjective beliefs that are shared among groups and that can then be used to rationalise actions.[49] While continued rivalry with the US is a critical variable in Russia's foreign policy environment, broadly speaking, with its dependence on oil, the global economy is a more significant variable for Russia's domestic and foreign policy.[50] EU and US sanctions over the conflict in Ukraine in 2014 (more of which later) also demonstrate the importance of international political economy when considering interaction between states.

Foreign policy is "an instrument primarily for enhancing national wealth", and this has been more so after the end of the Cold War, when the threat of direct military confrontation between East and West dissipated.[51] With a belief in the need to reform global governance structures and Moscow's geostrategic pursuit of economic opportunities, Russian foreign policy combines elements of constructivism and interest-based *realpolitik.* The contemporary global focus is on economic concerns, which, according to Trenin, extractive elites in Russia have embraced,

[47] Andrew C. Kuchins and Igor A. Zevelev, "Russian Foreign Policy: Continuity in Change," *The Washington Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (2012), 152; and Vladimir Putin, "Foreign Policy: Russia and the Changing World," Valdai Discussion Club, February 27, 2012, accessed February 1, 2015, http://valdaiclub.com/politics/39300.html.
[48] Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 83.
[49] Ibid., 164.
[50] Kuchins and Zevelev, "Russian Foreign Policy," 159-160.
[51] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 51.

seeking to make money rather than spend it, as did their Soviet-era counterparts in the area of foreign policy.[52] Outside of the government, big business exerts the most influence on foreign economic policy, and includes oil, gas, and mineral resources monopolies.[53] As will be explored in Chapter Four, Russia and South Africa share a common development trajectory which includes mitigation against natural resource depletion, the strategic geopolitical need to seek closer ties in the areas of energy resources and trade, and a shared notion of "special affinity" stemming from relations with the ANC in the Soviet era.[54] These and other factors play a role in Russia's foreign policy engagement with Africa.

2.1.1. International law, the UN framework, and multilateral diplomacy

A foreign policy priority for Russia is collaboration in the UN with African countries within the framework of international law and multilateral diplomacy. Accounting for nearly one quarter of the voting bloc at the UN, Africa's 54 countries represent an important support base for Moscow-led initiatives, which Russia needs in order not to appear isolated on the global arena.[55] (This point will be discussed further in Chapters Three and Five). Developing a partnership with the African Union (AU) is also an important long-term foreign policy strategy and Russia has accredited member status with the AU, along with 72 other non-African states, regional bodies, and organisations.[56] Furthermore, in the steps leading up to, and including, the Iraq invasion by the US in 2003, only "four or five" of the then 53 AU member states agreed with the political decision of the US, Britain, and Australia, thus sharing Russia's views on the Iraq war.[57] Russia, in turn, supports African countries in the UN Security Council; including voting (along with China) against imposing sanctions and arms embargos on Zimbabwe following post-election

[52] Fetisova, "Contradictions of Russia's Post-Imperial Age," 113.
[53] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 39.
[54] This argument is partly based on Pamela A. Jordan, "A Bridge Between the Global North and Africa? Putin's Russia and G8 Development Commitments," *African Studies Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (2010): 88, http://asq.africa.ufl.edu/files/Jordan-Vol11Is4.pdf.
[55] Keir Giles, "Russian Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa," The Letort Papers, Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) and US Army War College (USAWC) Press (2013): 12-13.
[56] Hakan Fidan and Bülent Aras, "The Return of Russia-Africa Relations," *bilig* 52 (2010): 61; and http://www.au.int/en/partnerships/others.
[57] Vladimir Shubin, "Russia and Africa: Moving in the right direction?" in *Africa in International Politics: External involvement on the continent*, eds. Ian Taylor and Paul Williams (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 113.

run-off violence in June 2008, citing the lack of a threat to international peace and security, which will be discussed in Chapter Five.[58] As outlined in the 2013 Concept, permanent membership of the UN Security Council, as well as participation in influential international fora, provides Russia with the opportunity to pursue its foreign policy goal of contributing to the development of global peace and security through promoting inter-state dialogue and cooperation, as well as exploiting the potential of international and regional economic and financial institutions.[59]

One such forum, the BRICS group, will be discussed in Chapter Five, while another, the erstwhile G8, offered Putin the opportunity during Russia's presidency of the bloc in 2006, to improve political and trade ties with Africa's elites. G8 membership required Russia to contribute to debt relief, and by 2007, Moscow had written off more than $20 billion of African debt.[60] As mentioned previously, Russia was suspended from the G8 following its annexation of Crimea in March 2014. The idea of Russia as an international aid donor is welcomed by many Russians as it brings with it a certain "world power" status, although analysts point to the need for Russian government domestic spending as a possible reason why, in time, the population may not be supportive of increased global aid spending.[61] Furthermore, the G8 provided Moscow with a platform from which to advance the rhetoric (although not explicitly stated in its Foreign Policy Concept) that it is a "metaphorical bridge" between the global North and South, and can act as a representative of commodity-rich African states, according to Pamela A. Jordan.[62]

There is arguably merit to Hakan Fidan's and Bülent Aras' stance that Russia has had to look to Africa after attempts at rapprochement with the West were not as successful as envisaged.[63] While it may champion itself as a friend to Africa, Jordan suggests that, much like its Western

[58] Giles, "Russian Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa," 12-13.
[59] *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation 2013,* Para. 4 and 23.
[60] Jordan, "A Bridge Between the Global North and Africa," 87. Russia joined the G8 in 1998. Since the 2008 global financial crisis, the G8 has largely been superseded by the G20 as the foremost international economic grouping. The G20 brings together industrialised and developing economies to discuss key global economic issues and both Russia and South Africa are members.
[61] "Russian Soft Power 2.0," Russia Direct Quarterly Report No. 1 (2013): 28.
[62] Jordan, "A Bridge Between the Global North and Africa," 89.
[63] Fidan and Aras, "The Return of Russia-Africa Relations," 61.

counterparts, Russia follows a *realpolitik* approach to foreign policy with regard to the continent.[64] However, elements of constructivism are evident in its foreign policymaking. For example, the assertion by Ian Taylor and Paul Williams that Africa is used by external powers to "define and re-define their own identity and self-image"[65] is reflected in the admission by Russia's former finance minister, Alexei Kudrin, and foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, that initiatives such as debt relief help to open up economic opportunities with African nations and lend to Russia a creditor nation cachet which it seeks in its great power manoeuvring.[66]

2.2. The nation-state: Post-Soviet Russia's domestic situation[67]

Russia's expression of its identity domestically will help in understanding how it defines its national interests and foreign policy.[68] Russia's economic decline began in the mid-1980s despite unsuccessful attempts by Mikhail Gorbachev to curtail it through "new thinking" reforms comprising *glasnost* ("openness") and *perestroika* ("restructuring"). Indeed, the Soviet Union's economic and political situation meant that Gorbachev had to bring an end to the Cold War around 1989.[69] Boris Yeltsin was elected president of the Russian Federation – then known as the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (RSFSR) – in June 1991, after he persuaded a majority of deputies in the Russian parliament to change the constitution.[70] With Belarus also choosing to opt out, Yeltsin decided to break up the Soviet Union officially after the majority of Ukrainians voted to secede from the USSR in a referendum on 1 December 1991. The last day of the Soviet Union was 31 December 1991, with no consensus on Russia's national purpose. Moscow now had to assert its own independent future – with its own territory and state[71] – and

[64] Jordan, "A Bridge Between the Global North and Africa," 84.
[65] Taylor and Williams, "Understanding Africa's Place in World Politics," 18.
[66] Jordan, "A Bridge Between the Global North and Africa," 91. Both Kudrin and Lavrov held office during Putin's first two presidential terms.
[67] Much of the discussion in this section is based on the author's 2011 Honours Research Project entitled "Is Russia a Superpower Today?"
[68] This idea is based on Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 174-175.
[69] Mark Galeotti, *Gorbachev and His Revolution* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1997), 60.
[70] Jonathan Steele, "Obituary: Boris Yeltsin," *The Guardian*, April 23, 2007, accessed August 28, 2011, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/apr/23/russia.guardianobituaries.
[71] Robert Service, *Russia: Experiment with a People from 1991 to the Present* (London: Macmillan, 2002), 9.

carve out its identity apart from the Russia that had been one of the fifteen Socialist republics of the USSR.

The Russian Federation was established in 1991-1993 to the accompaniment of electoral fraud and political violence; with the majority of Russians having reacted unfavourably to the economic reforms of the 1990s. In an effort to strengthen his hold on power and protect his position, Yeltsin soon dispensed with, or slowed down, reforms if they interfered with his pursuit of power.[72] Five years after the collapse of the USSR, the Russian economy had shrunk to about half its former size; trading links with the countries of the former Soviet Union were disrupted; unemployment and underemployment rose; and the rouble collapsed, decimating people's savings.[73] There was thus much hostility to the USSR's abolition, particularly from ordinary people who were most affected by the social and economic crisis in Russia.[74]

Yeltsin faced the overwhelming task of creating a democracy in a country with a long tradition of authoritarianism, and Western governments, fearing a return to communist rule and confusing "personality with process", supported him in this endeavour.[75] Under the terms of the new constitution which had been ratified in a December 1993 referendum, as president, Yeltsin could appoint the prime minister, conduct foreign policy, and make his own decrees.[76] Through political power games, Yeltsin returned Russia to what was effectively an "elected monarchy" operating as "monolithic, undivided personal rule." This is the Russian way, according to political expert Lilia Shevtsova; is what Vladimir Putin inherited; and upon which he has been able to thrive (more of which in the next section).[77]

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[72] Lilia Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003), 61.
[73] Neil MacFarlane, "The 'R' in BRICs: Is Russia an Emerging Power?" *International Affairs* 82, no. 1 (2006):43, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3569129.
[74] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia,* 8.
[75] Steele, "Obituary: Boris Yeltsin."
[76] Robert Service, *A History of Twentieth-Century Russia* (London: Penguin Books, 1997), 531. The discussion in this paragraph is partly based on the author's 2011 Honours Research Project entitled "Is Russia a Superpower Today?"
[77] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia,* 61.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation places foreign policy, international relations, international treaties and agreements, issues of war and peace, and foreign economic relations under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation. The Russian President represents the Russian Federation in international relations; guides Russian foreign policy; and addresses the Federal Assembly (consisting of the Council of the Federation and the State Duma) on the guidelines of internal and foreign policy. The Government of the Russian Federation is tasked with implementing foreign policy,[78] while the Federal Assembly pursues legislation designed to support Russia's foreign policy, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs implements foreign policy which has been approved by the president.[79] Russia's political system thus relies on the president who is given a great deal of power constitutionally and who is the principle decision-maker in the area of foreign policy. What post-Soviet Russia needed to move forward and away from the traditional Russian System of "power personified"[80] was liberalisation and democratisation, according to Shevtsova. Instead, upon assuming office, Vladimir Putin chose the "leash" model of governance whereby, rather than opting for a cabinet with a strong prime minister responsible for economic policy (leaving the president to concentrate on internal stability and foreign policy) the president makes all the rules, but the cabinet pays for them if they prove unpopular or untenable.[81]

2.3. The individual decision-maker

The relatively unknown Putin first came to national prominence when he was chosen as prime minister by an ailing Boris Yeltsin. Putin had no ties to any political group, although as a former officer of the Committee for State Security (*Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* or KGB), he did have ties to the political structures or *siloviki* that comprised the army, navy, intelligence services, and internal affairs.[82] Putin had also served as deputy in 1994 to the first post-Soviet elected mayor of St. Petersburg, Anatoly Sobchak; and, in 1998, had been appointed director of

[78] *The Constitution of the Russian Federation of 25.12.1993 with amends of 30.12.2008,* Articles 71, 80, 84, 86, and 114, accessed October 25, 2014, http://www.constitution.ru/en/10003000-01.htm.
[79] *The Constitution of the Russian Federation,* Article 94; and *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation 2013,* Para. 99.
[80] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 96.
[81] Ibid., 87-88.
[82] Ibid., 15, 34.

the Federal Security Service (*Federalnaya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti* [FSB], a successor agency to the KGB). His appointment was confirmed by the Duma on 16 August 1999, and, following his sudden resignation on 31 December 1999, Yeltsin named Putin acting president. He proceeded to win over 50 percent of the vote in the March 2000 presidential elections, and won a second term in March 2004.[83] Unable to stand again, in 2008 Putin had nominated Dmitry Medvedev as his successor, who subsequently nominated Putin as his prime minister hours after taking office in May 2008.[84] With Vladimir Putin winning the May 2012 election, he could conceivably serve as president till 2024, in what Pierre Hassner calls Russia's "virtual" or "imitation" democracy.[85]

"Personalities and personal loyalties" are important in foreign policy-making according to Bobo Lo.[86] Where Yeltsin had been more spontaneous, Putin was bland, but calm and decisive under pressure, which the Russian people welcomed after years of Yeltsin's inconsistent behaviour.[87] For example, Yeltsin changed prime ministers seven times and foreign ministers three times in his eight years as president.[88] Putin's popularity rose after his firm handling of the Chechen war in 1999, when he called in the army to quell an invasion of neighbouring Dagestan by Chechen fundamentalists.[89] The new president represented a "staggering mix of continuity and change": for some, Putin embodied a pre-Yeltsin era; for others, a break from it.[90] Favouring "subordination and loyalty",[91] Putin is what Shevtsova calls a "champion of verticality of authority" – the term Russia's elite use for a top-down system of governance with a domineering executive branch.[92] Unlike Yeltsin who seemed to pursue power for its own sake, Putin has

[83] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 31, 54; and 74.
[84] "Vladimir Putin," *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*.
[85] Pierre Hassner, "Russia's Transition to Autocracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 19, no. 2 (April 2008): 10, doi: 10.1353/jod.2008.002210.
[86] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 35.
[87] Steele, "Obituary: Boris Yeltsin" and Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 4.
[88] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 17-18.
[89] Steele, "Obituary: Boris Yeltsin." See also http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/484357/Vladimir-Putin. Yeltsin had first sent Russian troops, most of whom were conscripts, to try to quell a rebellion in Chechnya, led by Zhokar Dudayev, in December 1994.
[90] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 3-4.
[91] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 4.
[92] Ibid., 7.

transcended this by also pursuing it to promote his domestic and foreign policy agenda.[93] An example of this is Putin's retaliation against media criticism of Russia's foreign policy, when journalist Andrei Babitsky was accused of spying for Chechen rebels after criticising Russia's policy on Chechnya in 1990 and 2000.[94]

2.3.1. The Ideology of "Putinism"

Current foreign policy-making in Russia is dominated by the individual, with authority given to personalities rather than institutions,[95] part of which stems from Yeltsin vesting a considerable amount of power in the presidency in the 1993 constitution. Analysts have termed Russia under Vladimir Putin a "managed democracy" or a system of "corporate capitalism", while Anne Applebaum considers the current iteration of the Russian System of governance an ideology – that of "Putinism."[96] For Sakwa, Putinism came of age in 2013 as a global political phenomenon, during which Russia was able to steer the US away from intervening in Syria in the search for weapons of mass destruction; helped negotiate a deal to curb Iran's nuclear programme; and, for all intents and purposes, announced Russia's return as a global actor that could not be ignored.[97] For Bobo Lo, in his constitutional role as president, "Putin *is* Russian foreign policy",[98] although as an individual, Putin takes considerable interest in the minutiae of foreign policy and has deep concern about foreign influence in Russia's internal affairs.[99]

From a foreign policy point of view, and as the basis for foreign policy under Vladimir Putin, Putinism seeks to restore Russia to its position of strength and awe, and to protect the power and wealth of the Federation's current ruling class.[100] Understanding Putin's character and

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[93] See Lilia Shevtsova, "Mezhdu stabilizatsiei i proryvom: promezhutochnye itogi pravleniya Vladimira Putina," *Brifing Moskovskogo Tsentra Karnegi*, January 2002, p. 2, cited in Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 2.
[94] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 83.
[95] Anne Applebaum, "Putinism: The Ideology," LSE Strategic Update 13.2 (2013): 1.
[96] Ibid., 3.
[97] Richard Sakwa, "Can Putinism solve its contradictions?" 27 December 2013, openDemocracy http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/richard-sakwa/can-putinism-solve-its-contradictions.
[98] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 43.
[99] Ibid., 43; and Applebaum, "Putinism: The Ideology," 3.
[100] Applebaum, "Putinism: The Ideology," 4.

personality is important for insight into the nature of the state he has built.[101] Although he has advisors, Putin represents the "personalization of Russian foreign policy"; delegating to trusted individuals rather than to institutions as do his Western counterparts, which as Lo contends, is understandable, given the weakness of government institutions.[102] While Russian foreign policy is now more "centralized, disciplined and efficient" than it was in Yeltsin's days, it is "dysfunctional and unstable", primarily because it depends so much on the President and his political circumstances rather than on a common concept of Russia's national interest.[103]

As Lo, maintains, to a large degree, Russian foreign policy is "a product of political accommodation and calculation",[104] implying some degree of negotiation with the political elite, as Putin is not able practically to conduct foreign policy alone.[105] Trenin argues that, as an individual statesman, Putin may well be "the most powerful and most experienced leader" today, and has contributed to the reality of Russia as an independent player in international relations, for which he should be commended.[106] Shevtsova describes Putin's psychology as one of: "not betting everything on one card, avoiding direct confrontation especially with powerful foes, and gradually weakening everyone by slowly narrowing their space for manoeuvring."[107] The direct effect of the beliefs and ideas of individuals on Russian foreign policy-making will now be explored using the framework of Richard Sakwa's phases of foreign policy.

2.4. Four phases of post-Soviet Russian foreign policy[108]

Sakwa's four phases of Russia's foreign policy encompass Waltz's three levels of analysis as they touch upon Russia's role in the international system, its internal structural system, and the role of the individual decision-maker. Writing in 2011, Sakwa identified four phases of post-

[101] Ibid., 3.
[102] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 43-44.
[103] Ibid., 46
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid., 43.
[106] Dmitri Trenin, "Russia's Great-Power Problem," The National Interest, accessed December 17, 2014, http://nationalinterest.org/feature/russias-great-power-problem-11553.
[107] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 100.
[108] The following section is based on Sakwa, "Russia and Europe," 200-202.

Soviet Russian foreign policy: liberal internationalism, competitive pragmatism, new realism, and neo-revisionism. A fifth phase, which Sakwa characterises as being more aggressive, reflects Russia's resurgence on the international stage. "Liberal internationalism" (1990-1996), under the presidency of Boris Yeltsin (with Andrei Kozyrev – seen as a "slavishly Westernizing liberal"[109] – as foreign minister) witnessed a Russia that was seeking to be a democracy with continued closer ties with the West. It was also encouraged by the West to adopt a lesser global position and role.[110] In the first year of Yeltsin's presidency (1992), a core foreign policy goal as advocated by pro-Western liberals was integration with, and assimilation on the terms of, the West. Yeltsin's goals at the beginning of his term had been to integrate Russia into Europe and turn it into a powerful democracy that would cooperate with the West.[111] However, this expectation that Russia would become a fully Western state did not align with the traditional Russian view of itself as a great power.[112] Even while most Russians accepted the end of the bipolar reality following the collapse of the Soviet Union, they could not conceive of their country as simply another ordinary regional power at best, and this liberal ideal soon gave way to the emergence of *derzhavnost* ('great power-ness') as a foreign policy ideology in the Yeltsin era.[113] Thus, there is a divergence between Russia's perception of itself and that of the West which sought to assign it a junior partner role during the Yeltsin/Kozyrev phase.

Where the Kozyrev period had been marked by cooperation, "competitive pragmatism" under foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov (1996-2000) was shaped by a strong Communist and populist result in the December 1995 parliamentary elections, as well as concern over Russia's international decline, which was evident in 1994 by NATO's enlargement policy into Central and Eastern Europe under US president Bill Clinton.[114] Primakov was the architect of a "multipolar" foreign policy designed to reflect Russia's perception of itself as a Eurasian and

[109] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 33.
[110] Shubin, "Russia and Africa," 103.
[111] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 61.
[112] Kuchins and Zevelev, "Russian Foreign Policy," 149.
[113] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 13. This point is partly based on the author's 2011 Honours Research Project entitled "Is Russia a Superpower Today?"
[114] Sakwa, "Russia and Europe," 200.

global power, protecting its strategic and other interests,[115] with a conviction about its "near abroad" (countries of the former Soviet Union) remaining within its "sphere of influence."[116] Thus, in this environment of great power balancing – a school of thought founded by Primakov[117] – there was still competition with the West, but one without the threat of nuclear weapons as in the Cold War era.[118] The Western-centric foreign policy of liberal internationalism (which ended in 1996) had born minimal gains and Yeltsin had been able to stabilise his power in the Kremlin, and consequently no longer needed the same degree of support from Western states as before.[119]

In summary, Yeltsin's foreign policy between 1991 and 2000 vacillated between what Lo calls "cooperation and confrontation";[120] a mixture of rapprochement towards the West and a "competitive vision of multipolarity";[121] with competition between the legislature and the executive during this period creating a foreign policy environment that was difficult to manage.[122] The financial collapse of the rouble in 1998 heralded the end of the notion of liberal democratic transformation in Russia and ushered in the realist domination of Russian foreign policy.[123]

"New realism" under President Vladimir Putin (2000-2007) sought to go beyond Primakov's competitive pragmatism and also to surpass Kozyrev's contradictory liberal internationalism. Sakwa argues that Putin's new realism approach was based on the pursuit of Russian national interest along with establishing the Russian Federation as an equal partner in European and global integration. At the beginning of his presidency, Putin cautiously espoused the rhetoric of multipolarity which Primakov had championed.[124] However, he then went on to pursue a more

[115] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 15.
[116] Ibid., 13.
[117] Kuchins and Zevelev, "Russian Foreign Policy," 150.
[118] Sakwa, "Russia and Europe," 200.
[119]Shubin, "Russia and Africa," 104.
[120] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 14.
[121] Ibid., 19.
[122] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 18.
[123] Kuchins and Zevelev, "Russian Foreign Policy," 154.
[124] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 98.

"multi-vectored" foreign policy, using a multifaceted approach to restoring Moscow's credibility on the international stage through increasing Russian involvement in regional structures including the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF); and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).[125]

Putin also understood that he needed to draw nearer to the West in order to solve Russia's economic problems, and, as part of this effort, revived relations with NATO following the alliance's enlargement after the spring of 1999 and the NATO bombing of Kosovo which began in March 1999.[126] Putin also sought to "reset" US-Russia relations in the aftermath of the 9/11 bombings, but was clearly disappointed when despite his assistance to the US following the attacks, the George W. Bush administration did not share his belief that Chechen rebels were terrorists. This contributed to souring relations between Russia and the US, ushering in the end of the era of new realism. Moscow now sought an autonomous foreign policy that emphasised its political sovereignty, bolstered by paying off its Paris Club debt in 2006, and continued to try to balance and even contain US hegemony, but without any notions of alternative geopolitics or ideology as in the Soviet era.[127]

According to Sakwa, Russia's fourth phase of "neo-revisionist" foreign policy began in 2007. Internally, Putin had continued with a system characterised by a strong state – an inherited mindset from the Soviet era[128] – while Dmitry Medvedev as president (2008-2012) was more liberal,[129] and sought a process of "democratic modernization", which was never fully realised.[130] In general terms, this might have included structural economic reform designed to increase productivity and diversify Russia's oil and gas-dependent economy – a lesson learned

[125] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 17.
[126] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 97-98.
[127] Sakwa, "Russia and Europe," 201; Kuchins and Zevelev, "Russian Foreign Policy," 154-155; and *Talking Point: The Logic of Russian Foreign Policy. Marie Mendras and Fyodor Lukyanov Join oDRussia Editor Oliver Carroll for a Debate in Paris*, Russia in Global Affairs, 13 December 2012, accessed November 1, 2014, http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/event/Talking-point-the-logic-of-Russian-foreign-policy-Marie-Mendras-and-Fyodor-Lukyanov-join-oDRussia-ed.
[128] Gordon M. Hahn, "Medvedev, Putin, and Perestroika 2.0," *Demokratizatsiya* 18, no. 3 (2010): 242.
[129] Ibid., 231.
[130] Ibid., 242.

during the 2008-2009 global economic meltdown when oil prices plummeted from a high of nearly $150 to $33 dollars a barrel.[131] Medvedev and Putin worked in tandem during the former's presidency, and sought to modernise the now-stable Russia with minimal internal changes.[132] According to Filatova, by choosing Medvedev (viewed as a technocrat) as his successor, Putin intended to create a new agenda, which was to move closer to the West, and this included finalising Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).[133] Both believed in the Russian Federation as a great power,[134] and sought a more influential Russia, but where they diverged was in their style of leadership.

Medvedev believed that what Russia needed on the domestic front was reform and democratisation with less state intervention in the economy in some instances[135] and increased economic efficiency. These domestic developments are relevant to foreign policy because economic stability allows for greater assertiveness in international political economy. Closer ties and cooperation with Europe and the US were required on the international front[136] within the context of Russia's multi-vectored foreign policy as initiated by Prime Minister Putin during his first two terms as President.[137] Putin, on the other hand, was more authoritarian, and believed in a centralised political system[138] and integration of, and building Russia's influence in, the post-Soviet space.[139] Due to the structure of the Russian political system, there was not a fundamental change in foreign policy during Medvedev's term as President, but he did succeed in improving

[131] Kuchins and Zevelev, "Russian Foreign Policy," 158; and Jim O'Neill, "Why the 'R' Belongs in BRIC," *The Moscow Times*, June 20, 2011, accessed June 27, 2011, http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/why-the-r-belongs-in-bric/439128.html.
[132] Nadia Alexandrova-Arbatova, "Russia after the Presidential Elections: Foreign Policy Orientations," in *Russian Foreign Policy*, The EU-Russia Centre Review, Issue Eight, (2008): 15.
[133] Irina Filatova, "The Putin Phenomenon: A Resurgent Russia in the Twenty-First Century," Presentation at the University of Cape Town Summer School 2015, January 27, 2015. Russia has been a member of the WTO since 22 August 2012. See, http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/countries_e/russia_e.htm.
[134] Peter J. S. Duncan, "Batman and Robin? Exploring Foreign Policy Differences between Putin and Medvedev during the Medvedev Presidency," Centre for European Politics, Security & Integration (CEPSI) Working paper (2013-03): 19.
[135] Hahn, "Medvedev, Putin, and Perestroika 2.0," 233.
[136] Duncan, "Batman and Robin," 17.
[137] Ibid., 252.
[138] Ibid., 242.
[139] Duncan, "Batman and Robin," 17.

relations with the West, which he recognised was necessary for modernisation.[140] Medvedev also succeeded in maintaining a strategic partnership with China, whose economic power has been growing in both Central Asia and the wider post-Soviet space, as well as in Africa; all regions in which Russia has historically wielded influence or with which it has cooperated.[141] Peter J.S. Duncan sums up Russia's foreign policy as being reactive under Medvedev,[142] while it is arguably more proactive under Putin.

Putin's current and third term (2012-2018) has witnessed what Sakwa calls "a more aggressive and possibly bellicose approach" to advancing Russia's self-perceived interests, which has, on the one hand, achieved significant results in maintaining peace in international affairs in the 2013 aversion of a US attack on Syria, and in negotiating a deal on Iran's nuclear weapons programme.[143] On the other hand, the annexation of Crimea from Ukraine in March 2014, as well as Putin's refusal to engage with pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine to bring about a peaceful settlement to the war in that country, is a demonstration of the other side of this belligerent foreign policy. Russia's stance on Ukraine stems in part from history, but also from its compatriots' policy, a soft power principle contained in the 2013 Concept. This policy is centred on the Russian language, the Russian Diaspora, and ethnic Russian speakers, thereby transcending Russian national and ethnic boundaries.[144] For example, in Donetsk and Crimea, for

[140] Ibid., 1. Under Medvedev, NATO enlargement was curbed, and closer relations with Western states included closer ties with the EU after the cessation of gas supplies to and through Ukraine by Russia resulted in 11 weather-related deaths in January 2009 in several EU countries, as well as the proposed 'reset' in Russia-US relations by US Vice President Joe Biden in February 2009.
[141] Kuchins and Zevelev, "Russian Foreign Policy," 156.
[142] Duncan, "Batman and Robin," 19.
[143] Sakwa, "Can Putinism solve its contradictions?"
[144] Andis Kudors, "'Russian World' – Russia's Soft Power Approach to Compatriots Policy," *Russian Analytical Digest* 81 (2010): 3; and Heather Conley, Theodore Gerber, and Olga Shymylo-Tapiola, "Russian Soft Power: The Evolution of a Strategy," Transcript, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Brussels, Belgium, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/2011-9-08-Russian_Soft Power.pdf. See also, *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation 2013*, Para. 4, 39, 45, 100. About half of Russia's thirty-five million expatriates live in the states of the former Soviet Union. This discussion on Russia's soft power is partly based on the author's 2011 Honours Research Project entitled "Is Russia a Superpower Today?"

historical reasons, between 92-97 percent of the population speak *only* Russian, even if people living there may have identified themselves as Ukrainians prior to the present conflict.[145]

Filatova notes that, for Russia – which had conquered Ottoman Crimea in the eighteenth century and for which *Rus* or the Russian state began in Kiev – Ukraine is not a separate country, but a "fake state" created by Russia. Ukraine as an independent state emerged only on 8 December 1991 as a result of the Belavezha Accords, signed between Belorussia, Russia, and Ukraine. For those seeking to justify Russia's actions in Crimea, from a legal standpoint, the creation of Ukraine in 1991 could be viewed as a *coup d'état* since there was no discussion with the other Soviet republics before the union was dissolved.[146] Thus, history and beliefs can explain how it is that the "annexation" of Crimea and Sevastopol in 2014 is viewed – in the words of Vladimir Putin, and, significantly, in the mindset of the majority of Russians – as more of a "reunification."[147]

Concluding reflections

Although material factors are important (such as Russia as a successor state to the USSR in the UN Security Council, the presence of nuclear weapons, and its influence in its near abroad), ideas and beliefs provide a better understanding of Russia's foreign policy, as seen in the actions internationally of presidents and/or foreign ministers post-1991. Using Waltz's levels of analysis and Sakwa's phases of foreign policy, this chapter has explored how Russia's foreign policy behaviour is defined by identity and interests, which in turn are driven primarily by domestic, rather than international, factors. The Russian system is characterised by a strong state which seeks to preserve order and stability internally and to protect the country's interests abroad. Key

[145] Julian Peter, "Donetsk Should Not Be Separated From Ukraine - We Are One Country!" One Europe, June 20, 2014, accessed November 8, 2014, http://one-europe.info/donetsk-should-not-be-separated-from-ukraine-we-are-one-country; and http://www.csmuedu.net/languages-in-ukraine/.

[146] Irina Filatova, "Ukraine and Russia: The Anatomy of the Present Crisis," Presentation at the University of Stellenbosch, August 12, 2014. The term *Rus* came to refer to Slavic-speaking people. *Kieven Rus* spanned the ninth to the eleventh century and, as far as Russians are concerned, has continued throughout history. Ukrainians claim the Russian state started in Muscovy in the 13th century. The Belavezha Accords dissolved the Soviet Union and established the Commonwealth of Independent States.

[147] *Putin Delivers Keynote Speech on Economy, Ukraine*, Reuters, December 4, 2014 , accessed December 11, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/04/us-russia-putin-highlights-idUSKCN0JI0WB20141204.

decision-makers in post-Soviet Russia are the ones who express state identity, which, on the foreign policy front, has seen periods of cooperation and confrontation with the West, driven by the perceived role that Russia should be playing. These include periods of acquiescence as a junior partner to the West as well as assertiveness in shedding this role and reassuming that of global power with the ability to influence events as seen in Syria, Crimea, and Iran.

Historical grievances and identity are social constructs that influence relations among states, and are given expression in the social meaning (that of threat) that Russia assigns to NATO enlargement eastwards, which is at odds with that assigned by the US and the West (that of promotion of regional security). Similarly, if the historical meaning ascribed to Ukraine is that of a "non-state" or a part of Russia, then annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol may be viewed as reunification rather than annexation. The top-down system of governance which has prevailed throughout Russia's history and the strong ethos of personal rule under Yeltsin, and subsequently Putin, illustrate the extent to which the personal beliefs of Russia's president or those tasked with foreign policy-making will have a considerable effect on its actions internationally. Russia's focus on constructing a post-Communist national identity vis-à-vis Europe and the West can help in understanding how it defines its national interests and conducts its foreign policy.[148] Having outlined the main characteristics of post-Cold War Russian foreign policy, the following chapter will discuss historical and contemporary relations between Russia and Africa that will form the context for further discussion on Russo-South Africa relations.

[148] This idea is based on Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities & Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 & 1999* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2002), 16.

Chapter Three: Historical and Contemporary Russia-Africa Relations

> "*Work with our African partners should have been started earlier... Africa is waiting for our support*."[149] – Dmitry Medvedev

While there is undeniably a historical bond between Russia and Africa spanning over 300 years, a comprehensive historical account of Russia-Africa relations does not fall within the scope of this thesis, but it is important to provide some background to contemporary relations, which is the focus. As context for a discussion in the following chapter on Russia's historical and contemporary ties with South Africa, this chapter commences with an overview of Russia's engagement with Africa from the days of Tsar Peter the Great when Africans were brought to Russia as slaves or servants. The chapter then considers Soviet social and cultural engagement with Africa during the Cold War, and ends with an overview of current diplomatic relations with African nations. In seeking therefore to understand changing relations between Russia and South Africa since the end of the Cold War, this chapter's focus on Africa serves as a historical introduction to Russia's relations with South Africa.

3.1. Early history of Russia's relations with Africa

Russian engagement with Africa stems back to the early eighteenth century. In 1713, the first Russian map of Africa, which was based on a Dutch version from 1671, was published in Moscow, and the early nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of translations into Russian of many works on Africa. Literature emerging in the late eighteenth century also made frequent mention of Africa. In addition, the upper classes in Russia were quite knowledgeable about Africa, and many employed black servants – either as slaves or freeman – as "status symbols" once Russia began to participate in world trade in the tsarist period (1547-1721).[150]

[149] "*Africa is Waiting for our Support" – Dmitry Medvedev*, Russia Today (RT), June 28, 2009, accessed August 4, 2014, http://rt.com/news/africa-is-waiting-for-our-support-dmitry-medvedev/.
[150] Allison Blakely, "African Imprints on Russia: An Historical Overview," in *Africa in Russia, Russia in Africa: Three Centuries of Encounters*, ed. Maxim Matusevich (Trenton, NJ, and Asmara, Eritrea: Africa World Press, Inc., 2007), 37.

Russians were present in the late nineteenth century in the court of Orthodox Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia. The Orthodox Church of both Russia and Ethiopia shared many similarities, including embracing seven sacraments, veneration of icons depicting Biblical scenes or stories, and a mystical form of meditative prayer. Russian volunteers formed part of a Red Cross contingent providing medical assistance, while Russian advisors provided military assistance to Ethiopia during the first Italo-Ethiopian war of 1895-1896, which Ethiopia won. Volunteers from Russia also fought alongside the Boers against the British in the Anglo-Boer War in South Africa from 1899-1902.[151] Russia's greatest poet, Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin (1799-1837), was the maternal great-grandson of Abram Hannibal, an Abyssinian who was taken as a slave to the court of Tsar Peter the Great in 1705, and who would eventually rise to become a major-general in the Russian army engineers.[152] As Allison Blakely notes, Pushkin "represents an incomparable imprint of Africa on Russian society and culture."[153]

Prior to the twentieth century, most blacks who went to Russia were from the African Diaspora, whereas those arriving in the twentieth century hailed from Africa itself. For many Africans, the Marxist ideals of the Soviet Union after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution (which targeted oppressed people of the world and developing nations) provided an alternative to Western imperialism, with a focus on "class-based internationalism" rather than race.[154] Having said this though, for most Africans, the allure of the USSR was not necessarily an ideological one, and was based more on the search for a better life and an affordable education.[155]

[151] Maxim Matusevich, "Introduction: Africa and Russia: An Invisible Link," in *Africa in Russia, Russia in Africa: Three Centuries of Encounters*, ed. Maxim Matusevich (Trenton, NJ and Asmara, Eritrea: Africa World Press, Inc., 2007), 3.
[152] Blakely, "African Imprints on Russia," 39. Blakely notes that since 1995, there has been an alternative theory that Hannibal may have been born in the city of Lagon in 1696 on the border of what is today Chad and Cameroon.
[153] Ibid., 40.
[154] Matusevich, "Africa and Russia," 4.
[155] Ibid., 5.

3.2. Cold War Russia-Africa relations

Soviet engagement with Africa during the Cold War was designed around establishing social and cultural ties intended to strengthen the ideological struggle against Western imperialism.[156] Africans were encouraged to study in the USSR through the provision of scholarships beginning in the late 1950s designed to influence the "hearts and minds" of young Africans.[157] Indeed, future leaders of African nations, including President José Eduardo dos Santos of Angola; former presidents Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, and Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, studied in the Soviet Union.[158] The focus of Soviet Russia on an ideological fight against Western imperialism meant that many Africans and black Americans were encouraged to come to the USSR as visitors, students, or workers, and some were even enticed to settle.[159] Professional specialists on Africa were trained,[160] and thousands of Soviet citizens travelled to newly-independent African states such as Algeria, Ghana, Guinea, Egypt, Mali, and later Angola and Mozambique, to provide technical and military advice. They also provided support to liberation movements in Southern Africa.[161]

By the mid 1980s, about 53,000 African students were trained in Soviet universities and colleges, including the Patrice Lumumba University (also known as the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, and other Soviet institutions). By 2013, about 8,000 students were studying in Russia.[162] For the majority of Soviet citizens, Africans and Africa remained "distant and strange"[163] and something different. The author's own recollection of life as an African in the Soviet Union in 1991 was one of many extremes with outright racism and ignorance experienced in Moscow, as well as copious stares and a kind of fascination at this "other" in the city of Saransk, about 630 kilometres southeast of Moscow. With the disappearance after the fall of

[156] Segey Mazov, "Soviet Policy in West Africa: An Episode of the Cold War, 1956-1964," in *Africa in Russia, Russia in Africa: Three Centuries of Encounters*, ed. Maxim Matusevich (Trenton, NJ, and Asmara, Eritrea: Africa World Press, Inc., 2007), 295.
[157] Matusevich, "Africa and Russia," 4.
[158] Shubin, "Russia and Africa," 102.
[159] Blakely, "African Imprints on Russia," 38.
[160] Mazov, "Soviet Policy in West Africa," 295.
[161] Matusevich, "Africa and Russia," 4.
[162] Shubin, "Russia and Africa," 102; and Arkhangelskaya and Shubin, "Russia's Africa Policy," 20.
[163] Matusevich, "Africa and Russia," 6.

Communism of the "controls" offered by the Kremlin and its state-sanctioned embrace of oppressed people from developing nations, Russians were able to be more open in their display of racism and nationalism. As Vladimir Shubin notes, Africans became the scapegoat for Russia's ills. Today, many Africans in Russia experience racism on a daily basis.[164]

As part of its Cold War security competition with the United States, the Soviet Union provided diplomatic, economic, and military assistance to various African countries through "alliances of convenience."[165] As stated earlier, Russia's relationship with Africa was unique in that the Soviet Union was not a coloniser, but instead contributed to decolonisation efforts on the continent,[166] with support for national liberation struggles one of the foreign policy objectives of the Soviet Constitution.[167] The basic premise behind Soviet aid for liberation movements in Southern Africa was one of Moscow providing arms and financial aid, while the movements themselves conducted the fighting. This meant that the East-West security competition in the region did not incur undue risks.[168] Despite the views of various Western academics and politicians, Segey Mazov maintains that there is no evidence of any special Africa strategy on the part of the Soviet Union. In the specific case of Southern Africa, Sam C. Nolutshungu argues that Moscow recognised that changes in the sub-region would occur through long-term processes and that transformation would occur "through global developments and local struggles rather than by energetic Soviet action."[169]

Cold War intervention in Africa by the USSR was largely driven by ideology and the Kremlin's anti-imperialist stance. However, as time progressed, Soviet policy came to be underscored more by pragmatism than ideology, as few African countries tended to embrace Communism

[164] Shubin, "Russia and Africa," 103; and Blakely, "African Imprints on Russia," 53.
[165] Taylor and Williams, "Understanding Africa's Place in World Politics," 6. This argument is taken from the author's 2011 Honours Research Project entitled "Is Russia a Superpower Today?"
[166] Vladimir Shubin, "Russia and Africa: Coming Back?" *Russian Analytical Digest* 83 (2010), 4.
[167] Arkhangelskaya and Shubin, "Russia's Africa Policy," 6.
[168] Sam C. Nolutshungu, "Soviet Involvement in Southern Africa," *American Academy of Political and Social Science* 481 (1985): 141, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1045141.
[169] Mazov, "Soviet Policy in West Africa," 295; and Nolutshungu, "Soviet Involvement in Southern Africa," 141, 144-145.

directly.[170] Moreover, part of the allure during the Cold War for newly-independent states as well as liberation movements in Africa was that, in the space of about twenty years, the USSR had gone from a backward and predominantly agricultural country, to an industrial giant, thereby representing an alternative development model for countries of the "Third World".[171] Mazov describes the interest of Africans in the Soviet turnaround "utilitarian in nature", with African countries wanting to draw lessons from the Soviet experience for their own development.[172] The relationship with developing countries changed after the introduction of *perestroika* in the mid-1980s, when the Soviet Union began to seek closer ties with the West and distance itself from the "Third World."

3.3. Post-Cold War Russia-Africa relations

The collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 and Russia's attendant economic crisis, which included declaring bankruptcy in August 1998 and the granting of credit of $22 billion by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, brought an end to Moscow providing economic assistance to African countries.[173] This assistance included supplying arms and military equipment through a system of bartering, as well as of low-interest, long repayment credit deals which resulted in billions of dollars owed to the Soviet Union upon its collapse by developing countries.[174] Many, prior to this time, had blamed the USSR's economic problems on its external commitments in the "Third World."[175]

The end of the Cold War brought with it the demise of the bipolar international system and a disinterest in Africa on the part of Moscow as well as Washington. The main reasons for

[170] Matusevich, "Africa and Russia," 5.
[171] Maxim Matusevich, "Visions of Grandeur … Interrupted: The Soviet Union through Nigerian Eyes," in *Africa in Russia, Russia in Africa: Three Centuries of Encounters*, ed. Maxim Matusevich (Trenton, NJ and Asmara, Eritrea: Africa World Press, Inc., 2007), 356, 368.
[172] Mazov, "Soviet Policy in West Africa," 301.
[173] Stephen Neil MacFarlane, "Russia, Africa, and the End of the Cold War," in *Russia and the Third World in the Post-Soviet Era*, ed. Mohiaddin Mesbahi (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994), 235; and Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 10, 12.
[174] Paul Holtom, "Russia," in *Security Activities of External Actors in Africa*, eds. Olawale Ismail and Elisabeth Sköns (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 61.
[175] Matusevich, "Africa and Russia," 6.

Russia's disengagement from Africa during its liberal internationalism phase (1990-1996) were its own internal situation; the end of competition with the US in Africa; and the desire for *rapprochement* with the West.[176] The global status of Russia continued to decline and there was a tendency to write the country off following the end of the Cold War. Russia closed nine embassies and three consulates in Africa in the 1990s, as well as numerous trade missions and cultural centres, and also terminated Soviet-era aid projects. Some politicians in Russia, as well as the pro-Western media (which tends to report with an anti-African slant) used Africa as a scapegoat for Russia's economic woes. This contributed to manifestations of xenophobia towards Africans living and studying in Russia.[177] Thus, the actual relationship between Russia and Africa also underwent its own restructuring as a result of *perestroika*.

Writing in 1994, Stephen Neil MacFarlane's assertion that post-Soviet Russia's Africa policy would focus on "strategic, economic, and diplomatic interests" rather than on any universal continent-wide ambition has proved prescient.[178] Self-preservation is one of the structures of identity and interest that exists in the international anarchical system,[179] and Russia's new realist post-ideological post-Soviet foreign policy seeks to foster a global environment that will facilitate its modernisation, and focuses on the geostrategic pursuit of national interests, particularly in the areas of the economy and energy.[180] Essentially, Russia seeks to grow its economy and become more competitive in the global arena, and its strategy for economic growth includes building partnerships in the exploitation and production of mineral resources in Africa.[181] The cost of accessing minerals is lower in Africa than in Russia's remote regions and also offers higher profit margins. With over 30 major Russian enterprises involved in natural resource development projects in Africa, the continent is strategically important for Russia, not only as a source for resource extraction but also as a market for energy-related products such as nuclear reactors. However, Russia has to compete for Africa's resources with stakeholders such

[176] MacFarlane, "Russia, Africa, and the End of the Cold War," 243.
[177] Arkhangelskaya and Shubin, "Russia's Africa Policy," 6, 7.
[178] MacFarlane, "Russia, Africa, and the End of the Cold War," 245.
[179] Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it," 399.
[180] Rainer Lindner, "New Realism: The Making of Russia's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet World," in *Russian Foreign Policy*, The EU-Russia Centre Review, Issue Eight, (2008): 31. See also, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 6.
[181] Charles Malize, "Russia and Africa Part: It was all Business for President Medvedev," *African Renaissance* 6, no. 2 (2009): 81, http://reference.sabinet.co.za/sa_epublication_article/aa_afren_v6_n2_a7.

as the US and the EU, as well as with fellow emerging economy – and BRICS partner – China.[182]

By the beginning of the twentieth-first century, the process of reforms in Russia and the end of the Cold War led to a re-evaluation of the priority areas of Russian foreign policy and resource acquisition.[183] In the 2000 Foreign Policy Concept, economic priorities are cited as important for Russia, both in North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. The Concept cites the need for early settlement of regional military conflicts in Africa; dialogue with the Organisation of African Union (OAU) – now the African Union – and sub-regional organisations, with the aim of helping Russia to forge multilateral economic partnerships with African countries.[184] Although Russia had historical ties with many African countries through assisting anti-colonial movements during the Cold War,[185] countries such as China took advantage of its absence from African affairs in the 1990s, and by the time Moscow was ready to re-engage, Beijing had already started investing on a considerable scale in the continent.[186]

After Vladimir Putin became president in 2000, part of Russia's multi-vectored foreign policy and self-proclaimed intention to shape a multipolar world included re-engaging with Africa. To this end, Putin held meetings in Moscow in 2001 with African leaders comprising Algeria's Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Gabon's Omar Bongo, Guinea's Lansana Conté, Egypt's Hosni Mubarak,

[182] Ivetta Gerasimchuk, "Re-think Russian Investment in Southern Africa," Munich Personal RePEc Archive (MPRA) Paper No. 15151 (2009): 30 and Alexandra Arkhangelskaya and Vladimir Shubin, "Is Russia Back? Realities of Russian Engagement in Africa," in *Emerging Powers in Africa*, Special Report 16, London School of Economics (2013): 24, accessed December 17, 2014, http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR016/SR-016-ArkanghelShubin.pdf.

[183] *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, Approved by the President of the Russian Federation V. Putin June 28 2000*, Section I: General Principles, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, accessed January 28, 2015, http://www.mid.ru/Bl.nsf/arh/1EC8DC08180306614325699C003B5FF0?OpenDocument.

[184] *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation 2000*, Section IV: Regional Priorities.

[185] J. Peter Pham, "Russia's Return to Africa: Two Decades After Pullback, Russia Chases Gas Resources, Minerals and UN Votes," *Atlantic Council*, March 13, 2014, accessed September 4, 2014, http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/publications/articles/russia-s-return-to-africa.

[186] Gregory Chin and Anton Malkin, "Russia as a Re-Emerging Donor: Catching Up in Africa," Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), March 8, 2012, quoted in Giles, "Russian Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa," 7.

Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo, and Ethiopia's Meles Zenawi.[187] In line with the new realism phase of its foreign policy (2000-2007), which as previously mentioned was based on the pursuit of national interests, the Kremlin began to pursue a more proactive foreign policy designed to promote peace and advance economic concerns on the continent.[188] It also helped that Moscow had been able to accumulate substantial gold and currency reserves, settle the majority of its state debts, and no longer needed the IMF to oversee its market reform processes.[189]

However, China's presence in Africa caused President Medvedev to conclude, after a four-day trip to Egypt, Nigeria, Namibia, and Angola in June 2009, that Russia was "almost too late in engaging with Africa." Accompanied by a trade delegation of 400 people, including the heads of Russian energy giant, Gazprom, and Alrosa, a group of Russian diamond mining companies, Medvedev's trip signalled the beginning of a more pragmatic approach. This entailed concerted efforts by the Russian Federation to re-establish economic relations with African countries, which had been neglected during the Yeltsin years between 1991 and 1999.[190] Notwithstanding the strategic use of delegations, summits, and bilateral talks, it is clear that Russia's Africa policy needs to be more systematic. Compared with other emerging economies such as China and major powers such as the US and the EU, Russia's influence in Africa remains marginal, according to former South African Ambassador to Russia, Gerrit Olivier. Moscow will need to continue its efforts to change this and to turn what Olivier calls "paper diplomacy" into more concrete outcomes.[191] For example, with Russia failing to fulfil any of the six agreements signed by President Medvedev during his visit to Nigeria in 2009, as Alexandra Arkhangelskaya and Vladimir Shubin note, the signing of an agreement does not necessarily translate into realisation.[192]

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[187] Shubin, "Russia and Africa," 104. Although Vladimir Shubin maintains that this change towards Africa began in 1996 when Evgeny Primakov became Yeltsin's foreign minister, the change became more visible with Putin's ascension to the presidency.

[188] Taylor and Williams, "Understanding Africa's Place in World Politics," 13.

[189] Arkhangelskaya and Shubin, "Russia's Africa Policy," 7.

[190] "*Africa is Waiting for our Support"*. See also, Thomas Wheeler, "Russian President Medvedev's Visit to Africa, June 2009," South African Institute of International Affairs, July 8, 2009, accessed August 4, 2014, http://www.saiia.org.za/opinion-analysis/russian-president-medvedevs-visit-to-africa-june-2009.

[191] Kester Kenn Klomegah, "Russia's Investment in Africa: New Challenges and Prospects," August 13, 2014, Pambazuka News, accessed December 5, 2014, http://www.pambazuka.net/en/category/features/92812.

[192] Arkhangelskaya and Shubin, "Is Russia Back?," 23.

While the 2000 Russian Foreign Policy Concept mentions Sub-Saharan Africa briefly in the context of regional and sub-regional cooperation, the 2013 Concept devotes a short paragraph to engagement with Africa, with content on bilateral cooperation a crucial addition. Paragraph 94 (out of 104) of the 2013 Concept states:

> "*Russia will enhance multifaceted interaction with African states on a bilateral and multilateral basis with a focus on improving political dialogue and promoting mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation and contribute to settling and preventing regional conflicts and crises in Africa. Developing partnership with the African Union and other regional organizations is an important element of this policy*."[193]

One aspect of this multifaceted interaction with African states is in the sphere of aid allocation by the Russian Ministry of Finance, which in 2012, amounted to about $458 million; 60 percent of which was assigned to bilateral aid packages while 40 percent was assigned to multilateral aid. However, the reversal over the space of three years in the bilateral/multilateral ratio – 40/60 in 2011, 60/40 in 2012, and 40/60 in 2013 – suggests a lack of consistency in Russia's allocation of aid.[194] In spite of this, President Medvedev's appointment in 2011 of Mikhail Margelov as Special Representative of the Russian President for Cooperation with African States, speaks to the importance that Russia attaches to strengthening relations with African countries.[195]

The 2013 Concept cites the continuation of conditions that promote economic development and external trade as one of Russia's four foreign policy priorities. Russia is interested in Africa for various strategic reasons. These include economic expansion through the pursuit of energy and natural resources, and political concessions such as numbers in voting blocs (the AU crucially has 54 member states) within international fora like the United Nations, especially in instances when Moscow's position differs to that of Western countries. For their part, African leaders also benefit from this relationship with Russia. Apart from a sense of the familiar in having historical

[193] *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation 2013*, Para. 18, 94.
[194] "Russian Soft Power 2.0," 24; and Andrey Makarychev and Licína Simão, "Russia's Development Assistance, with a Focus on Africa," Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF), Policy Brief (2014): 2.
[195] *South Africa's Zuma to Meet Putin in Sochi May 16*, TASS Russian News Agency, May 14, 2013, accessed November 21, 2014, http://en.itar-tass.com/russia/693455. Margelov is head of the foreign relations committee in Russia's Federation Council.

ties, reiterated by Putin's statement that "there is still sincere goodwill [in Africa] toward Russia,"[196] Moscow provides an alternative to dependence on actors such as the US, France, China, and Britain. Furthermore, it often comes without political provisos imposed by European and American governments.[197] Multilateral relations and Russia's partnerships with regional organisations will be discussed in Chapter Five in the context of the UN and BRICS.

Recognition of the geopolitical and economic role that Africa can play in furthering Russia's national interests has meant that Moscow has shown persistence in pursuing relations with African countries. Although Russia lacks a consistent Africa strategy, its return to the continent since Putin became president in 2000 has been slow, yet steady, and more proactive – if somewhat uneven.[198] Russia has reacted to increased competition and economic influence from other states on the continent by intensifying invitations to delegations from African countries, with Africa an obvious choice given Russia's deteriorating relations with the EU and the US over the conflict in Ukraine, which began in 2014.[199] While Russia champions the normative goal of seeking a more multipolar world, it is clear that, as with its Western and Southern counterparts, its foreign economic policy in relation to Africa is both "interest-based and business-oriented."[200] However, Africa's growth and resources place the continent in a good position to bargain with international business and government partners, and its leaders need to ensure that agreements benefit ordinary citizens and not just elites.[201] Opportunities for strengthening cooperation with African states include the Coordinating Committee for Economic Cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa (Afrocom), which was created in 2009, and seeks to assist in promoting Russian business interests on the continent. Another formal framework for cooperation that should be encouraged is the Urals-Africa economic forum, whose first meeting was held in Yekaterinburg in July 2013, and which was attended by delegations from about 40

[196] Putin, "Russia and the Changing World".
[197] Pham, "Russia's Return to Africa".
[198] Ibid.
[199] Klomegah, "Russia's Investment in Africa".
[200] Makarychev and Simão, "Russia's Development Assistance," 2.
[201] Alexandra Arkhangelskaya and Ian Taylor, "What Africa Needs," Valdai Papers #05 (November 2014): 8, accessed December 17, 2014, http://vid-1.rian.ru/ig/valdai/Paper05_eng.pdf.

African countries.[202] Such initiatives could contribute towards reversing the trend of a mutual lack of knowledge of how the business community operates in both Russia and South Africa.[203]

3.3.1. Promoting economic development and external trade with Africa

As with other major powers, Russia's Africa policy seeks primarily to enhance national wealth, and economic re-engagement with the continent forms part of Moscow's efforts to reclaim its global and strategic role.[204] Russo-African trade is low compared to that of other countries, although it increased tenfold between 2000 and 2012. According to the African Development Bank (AfDB), about $20 billion was invested in Africa by Russian companies in 2012 in areas such as mining, energy production, infrastructure, and fisheries.[205] Many of these companies are state owned enterprises.

Russia is the world's third biggest oil producer after the US and Saudi Arabia and ranks second in the world (after the US) in terms of natural gas reserves.[206] While the Russian Federation has its own vast energy resources and thus may not need new supplies of energy from Africa, what it does seek is to increase its control of global energy resources in order to strengthen its own economic and political power through controlling the supply of oil and natural gas to European countries.[207] The oil, gas, and natural resources sectors have contributed significantly to Russia's

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[202] *Article by the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov "Russia and Sub-Saharan Africa: Time-proven Relations" published in the magazine "Russian View,*" The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, May 21, 2014, accessed December 17, 2014, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/9C84B93B0DE3A2C844257CE0005688BD; and Arkhangelskaya and Shubin, "Is Russia Back?," 25.

[203] *Russian Companies' Operations In Africa Far Below Export Capabilities,* TASS Russian News Agency, July 11, 2013, accessed December 17, 2014, http://itar-tass.com/en/economy/696945.

[204] Malize, "Russia and Africa Part," 82.

[205] The African Development Bank Group, "Russia's Economic Engagement with Africa," *Africa Economic Brief* 2, no. 7 (2011): 3, http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Russia%27s_Economic_Engagement_with_Africa.pdf.

[206] Grant Smith, "U.S. Seen as Biggest Oil Producer After Overtaking Saudi Arabia," *Bloomberg,* July 4, 2014, accessed November 24, 2014, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-07-04/u-s-seen-as-biggest-oil-producer-after-overtaking-saudi.html; and *Mining in Russia – An Outlook of the Current State and Development Prospects*, Minex Russia 2014, accessed December 13, 2014, http://www.minexrussia.com/2014/point-of-view/.

[207] Pham, "Russia's Return to Africa".

economic boom and account for most of its outward investment, with oil prices in particular crucial to Russia's economic stability.[208] Energy deals with African countries include a $2.5 billion joint venture between Gazprom and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) which created the NiGaz Energy Company in June 2009 to build gas pipelines and power stations in Nigeria.[209] Moscow has also pursued oil investments in North and West Africa. Diamond extraction is carried out by Alrosa in Angola, Namibia, Sierra Leone, and South Africa, while the Renova Group, a Russian asset and financial and resource management company, has invested in manganese reserves in South Africa.[210]

The Russian Federation enjoys diplomatic relations with all 55 African countries, has 40 embassies on the continent, while 35 African countries have embassies in Moscow. In addition, Russia has representatives to the AU, as well as to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the East African Community (EAC), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).[211]

Concluding reflections

The promotion by the Soviet Union of an alternative to Western liberalism was attractive to Africans who tended not to embrace Communism directly, but in going to the Soviet Union sought, rather, to learn from a development model which propelled the USSR from an agriculture- to an industry-based economy in the space of two decades. Thus, it was an opportunity to learn from the Soviet Union's successful development experience. After 1991, the

[208] The African Development Bank Group, "Russia's Economic Engagement with Africa," 4; and Irina Mironova, "How Sinking Oil Prices Could Sink Russia's Economy," Russia Direct, December 5, 2014, accessed December 11, 2014, http://www.russia-direct.org/opinion/sinking-oil-prices-could-sink-russias-economy. Increasingly in 2014, Russia's woes hinged on the economic repercussions of Western sanctions over the conflict in Ukraine, low oil prices, and the depreciated rouble, which plummeted from 34 roubles to one US dollar in June 2014 to 54 roubles by early December 2014.

[209] *Nigeria*, Gazprom, accessed August 2, 2014, http://gazprom-international.com/en/operations/country/nigeria; and *Gazprom Seals $2.5bn Nigeria Deal*, BBC News, 25 June 2009; accessed August 2, 2014, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8118721.stm.

[210] Fidan and Aras, "The Return of Russia-Africa Relations," 57; and http://www.renova.ru/en/about/.

[211] Arkhangelskaya and Shubin, "Russia's Africa Policy," 14.

narrative began to change with Africa no longer seen as an actor with whom Russia shared beliefs and ideas, but as a scapegoat for Russia's economic woes.

From 2000, with Putin in charge, Russia's pursuit of its global identity involved actively engaging with Africa leaders in a bid to promote peace on the continent and to pursue its economic concerns. Thus, for Russia, Africa provided an opportunity to achieve its overall international objectives, and became a catalyst for pursuing its geostrategic national interests in the face of a changing world. The pursuit of African leaders is therefore important for Moscow in order to create conditions for economic development and external trade as stated in the 2013 Concept.

Russia has returned to Africa, but time will tell whether it has joined the latest scramble for Africa's natural resources based on the model of extract, deplete, and exit, or whether it seeks to adopt the Soviet model based on more mutually beneficial cooperation with Africa.[212] Russia favours bilateral diplomatic meetings which serve to smooth the way for political paths to pragmatic, carefully selected economic involvement,[213] and with Russia and South Africa sharing political and economic similarities, various opportunities exist for cooperation, which the following chapter will discuss.

[212] Gerasimchuk, "Re-think Russian Investment in Southern Africa," 10.
[213] Giles, "Russian Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa," 10.

Chapter Four: Bilateral Relations between Russia and South Africa

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> "*Russia is still learning how to systematically and consistently promote its economic interests in the world*." – Vladimir Putin[214]

This chapter will examine historical Russia-South Africa relations, starting with a discussion on Moscow's support for the Boers in the Anglo-Boer war; the deterioration of relations following the National Party (NP) coming to power in March 1948; support for the ANC in the struggle against white minority rule in South Africa; and the effect of internal political events on the relationship between the USSR and the ANC. The chapter will next use two sector studies – energy and mineral resources – as the basis for its discussion on contemporary Russia-South Africa bilateral relations. Though political relations are stronger, the focus will be on economic ties because of the view by Moscow and Pretoria that economic growth is crucial for development.

4.1. Russia's historical ties with South Africa

Although there are instances of Russians sailing to the Cape Colony and the translation of a travel book about South Africa (the first of its kind) into Russian by Frenchman François Le Vaillant in 1793, the roots of Soviet foreign policy in South Africa date back to the 1899-1902 Anglo-Boer War.[215] While Edward Wilson suggests that support for the Boers was predicated more on the fact that they were the underdogs (citing the "poor brave Boers") than to any official policy on Russia's part on which side to take in the conflict, Sovietologist Kurt Campbell takes a more nuanced view in his belief that the Russians were seeking to prevent British colonial expansion in fighting alongside Paul Kruger's troops in the war.[216]

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[214] Putin, "Russia and the Changing World".
[215] Filatova and Davidson, *The Hidden Thread,* 12.
[216] See Olayiwola Abegunrin, "The Soviet Involvement in Southern African Liberation Struggles, 1960-1990," quoted in ed. Maxim Matusevich (Trenton, NJ, and Asmara, Eritrea: Africa World Press, Inc., 2007), 323.

The Union of South Africa and the Soviet Union were allies in the Second World War (WWII) from 12 July 1941, when Britain and the USSR signed a mutual aid and cooperation agreement against Germany. Britain's integrated war effort involved Australians, Canadians, South Africans, New Zealanders, and others. Generally, South Africans and Soviets fought on different fronts during WWII, but they did interact as part of convoys delivering ammunition, food, and weapons from Britain to the port cities of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk, located in the Arctic region in the extreme north of Russia.[217]

Relations between Moscow and Pretoria steadily deteriorated after the National Party's victory in the March 1948 elections. Prior to this, NP leader D.F. Malan had expressed the opinion that the Soviet Union had plans to export Communism to South Africa and to incite the non-white population to revolution. On 1 February 1956, the Soviet Consulate-General in Pretoria was forced to close by the South African government,[218] and from 1975 onwards, Pretoria began to develop its nuclear bomb programme, as a deterrent to expanding Soviet influence in Southern Africa, and to pressure the West to guarantee the safety of South Africa. This was following a US Senate decision in December 1975 to ban financing of covert operations in Angola, which would have included cooperation with South Africa.[219] From the late 1970s, South African government discourse on the Soviet Union revolved around the "Soviet menace" and the "Communist onslaught" with Moscow perceived to be working on "encirclement" of South Africa by neighbouring states with which it had friendly relations.[220] However, the notion of a Communist threat is somewhat exaggerated, as Moscow was seeking neither to dictate to the

[217] Filatova and Davidson, *The Hidden Thread*, 159-160.
[218] Ibid., 190, 194-195.
[219] Ibid., 204. The US and USSR were both involved in the Angolan liberation struggle and subsequent civil war, providing weapons in the conflict: Moscow, to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), and Washington, to the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). See also, http://archives.democrats.rules.house.gov/Archives/jcoc2ar.htm. Under the Hughes-Ryan Amendment (Public Law 93-559) of 1974, the US President essentially now had to report to Congress on the relevance of covert operations to US national security. In 1975, Congress cut off funding for military and paramilitary operations in Angola, and the ban remained in force for ten years. As far as the South African government was concerned, the US had left it alone in its fight against the Soviet Union and the threat of Communism in Angola.
[220] Filatova and Davidson, *The Hidden Thread*, 205.

ANC what a post-apartheid South Africa should look like, nor to impose on it a strategy for the liberation of the black majority in the country.[221]

4.1.1. Soviet policy towards South Africa and the African National Congress

In general, ideology formed the basis for Soviet foreign policy. South Africa – the most important and powerful regional player that was of interest to both the US and China as a source for obtaining control of strategic raw materials – also featured in Soviet foreign policy.[222] Up until the late 1980s, Soviet policy in Southern Africa was to regard South Africa as a racist, imperialist regime, and a client of the US, and supporting the ANC meant working towards weakening the West.[223] Soviet policy towards South Africa was thus based on trying to weaken and isolate the apartheid government, as well as to support and strengthen its main opponents, the ANC and the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), which was fighting apartheid forces for independence for South West Africa (now Namibia). This strategy was pursued in such a way as not to incur military confrontation with South Africa or any serious altercation with Washington on the issue of South Africa.[224]

The African National Congress, with the participation of the South African Communist Party (SACP) began its struggle for the liberation of the majority in South Africa in the 1950s. Moscow had established bilateral relations with the SACP in July 1960, shortly after the Sharpeville shooting in March 1960, and the banning of the ANC.[225] Allocation of Soviet financial support to the SACP began towards the end of 1960, and was followed by a visit to Moscow in October 1961 by the chairman of the South African Communist Party, Yusuf Dadoo, and the general secretary, Moses Kotane.[226] The relationship between the Soviet Union and the African National Congress began in earnest after Oliver Tambo, the ANC's deputy president general and head of its external mission, paid his first visit to the USSR in April 1963 with

[221] Nolutshungu, "Soviet Involvement in Southern Africa," 144.
[222] Filatova and Davidson, *The Hidden Thread*, 228.
[223] Ibid., 229.
[224] Ibid.
[225] Shubin, *The Hot "Cold War"*, 239. Sixty-nine unarmed Africans died at Sharpeville.
[226] Ibid., 240.

Kotane, who was also the ANC treasurer.[227] That year marked the first time that financial aid was given to the ANC: a sum of US$300,000 – over 40 percent of ANC needs – was provided, as well as the year in which Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) became the ANC's military wing.[228]

The Kremlin had agreed to provide training to MK in 1961, but it took some years before this was actually realised due to the ambivalence of various African governments.[229] After the ANC's visit to Moscow in April 1963, MK cadres began to arrive for training in Moscow and Odessa, as well as in other cities in the USSR.[230] In July 1969, in large part due to pressure from the apartheid regime, the authorities in Tanzania essentially forced the ANC camp in Kongwa to shut down, thereby compelling the cadres in the camp to look for alternative venues. That same year, MK was evacuated to the Soviet Union: thereafter, training had to be conducted in the USSR.[231] From 1963-1965, 328 MK fighters were trained in Odessa in the Soviet Union, and hundreds more were trained over the next two decades in various cities across the USSR.[232] Soviet instructors began to train MK cadres in ANC camps in Angola in 1979, which proved invaluable in raising the readiness of ANC armed units for combat, and also of the organisers of the armed underground movement.[233]

4.1.2. Soviet propaganda war against apartheid

According to Filatova and Davidson, not all Soviet organisations or individuals believed in the inevitability of the ANC taking power in South Africa, but it was important to support the organisation as part of the Soviet anti-Western, anti-imperialist propaganda war.[234] One way of waging this war against apartheid on the international level was through the UN, whose African and Asian membership comprised more than two thirds of countries, and with whom the USSR

[227] Ibid., 242.
[228] Ibid., and Filatova and Davidson, *The Hidden Thread*, 310.
[229] Vladimir Shubin, "Beyond the Fairy Tales: The Reality of Soviet Involvement in the Liberation of Southern Africa," in *Africa in Russia, Russia in Africa: Three Centuries of Encounters*, ed. Maxim Matusevich (Trenton, NJ, and Asmara, Eritrea: Africa World Press, Inc., 2007), 341.
[230] Shubin, *The Hot "Cold War"*, 243-244.
[231] Vladimir Shubin, *ANC: A View from Moscow* 2nd revised edition (Auckland Park: Jacana Media, 2008), 78-79.
[232] Shubin, *The Hot "Cold War"*, 243-244.
[233] Shubin, "Beyond the Fairy Tales," 341.
[234] Filatova and Davidson, *The Hidden Thread*, 229.

often voted as a bloc. Resolutions aimed directly or indirectly against the apartheid government in South Africa and authored or seconded by the Kremlin included those on the arms embargo; trade; academic and cultural boycotts, and labelling apartheid a crime against humanity. On the opposing side were Western countries which often voted against such resolutions in the UN General Assembly or vetoed them in the Security Council.[235]

In spite of these resolutions, as Filatova and Davidson point out, not all of the measures proposed in November 1962 by the UN General Assembly to end apartheid policies could be implemented by Moscow. Some of them, such as closing all ports to South African vessels, or boycotting goods from South Africa as well as exporting goods – including arms and ammunition – to South Africa, could have caused considerable damage to both Western and African economies, and also to the Soviet economy. The USSR's "secret deals" with the South African government would have ceased in the event of the collapse of the apartheid regime due to damage to its economy, and this could have resulted in the complete cessation of the gold trade, thereby affecting the global economy.[236]

These deals included the marketing of diamonds through the Central Selling Organisation (CSO), which was a cartel controlled by De Beers Ltd of South Africa. Cooperation with De Beers had started in the late 1950s just after the closing of the Soviet Consulate in Pretoria in February 1956. Marketing of diamonds had brought in more than half a billion dollars annually (estimated as the third largest source of hard currency for Moscow) to the Soviet Union since 1976, with the CSO selling almost all of Moscow's rough diamonds sold outside the Soviet bloc. Ironically, much of the proceeds from Soviet-South Africa cooperation in the sale of chrome, platinum, and gold (although no official cartels existed) were used against the apartheid regime in Moscow's efforts to isolate and destabilise the white minority government.[237]

Although ideological similarities between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and the ANC meant that South Africa enjoyed a "special place in Soviet policy" in Southern Africa,

[235] Ibid., 230.
[236] Ibid., 231.
[237] Ibid., 232, 242.

the country was just one of many fronts for Moscow's anti-imperialist struggle.[238] The Soviet anti-apartheid strategy also involved providing monetary and other assistance to numerous events, campaigns, and conferences organised by international organisations in connection with liberation movements in various countries. This assistance also came from other socialist countries.[239] Military support to MK cadres was measured in the sense that the USSR did not wish to see the situation in South Africa escalate to one of civil war, forcing it to have to commit to one of the sides. Full-scale military confrontation with the apartheid regime (a political ally of the West) was to be avoided and would need therefore to be considered in all its dealings with the ANC.[240]

By 1986, the apartheid government was seeking bilateral relations with the Soviet Union in relation to the approaching political settlement in South Africa. In turn, as part of his new thinking, Gorbachev was trying to counter Soviet isolation through cooperation with states in order to improve the USSR's international standing and to bolster economic ties.[241] In spite of overtures at this time towards the government in Pretoria, according to Shubin, the high point of relations between the USSR and the ANC was reached in 1987-1988 – about halfway through *perestroika.* This period witnessed strengthened political and practical assistance to the ANC, helping to pave the way for political settlement to take place, and close cooperation between Moscow and the ANC continued through 1989. At the same time, though, Moscow was reducing its military commitments in other parts of the world. Gorbachev played a key role in the negotiated settlement, concluded in December 1988, which involved South Africa withdrawing its troops from Angola and Namibia in exchange for phased Cuban troop withdrawal from Angola. The settlement also resulted in Namibia's independence in March 1990 as well as political transformation in Southern Africa, helping to smooth relations between the Soviet Union and the South African government.[242]

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[238] Ibid., 237.
[239] Ibid., 233.
[240] Ibid., 234, 235, 237, 246.
[241] Mike Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy and the End of the Cold War* (Aldershot and Vermont: Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, 1997), 111-112.
[242] Martin Meredith, *The State of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence* (Jeppestown: Jonathan Ball Publishers (PTY) Limited, 2006), 435; Alvin Z. Rubenstein, "The Dynamics of U.S.-Russian Interaction in the

The ANC also began to move closer to the West and covert talks between the apartheid government and ANC leaders such as Nelson Mandela had started in 1985.[243] However, as the likelihood of a political settlement in South Africa became more apparent, and as the Soviet regime became weaker, so too did Moscow's support for the ANC; and there was a new approach by the Kremlin towards Southern Africa in general in the last years of the Cold War.[244] Ideology had given way to economic and security priorities, and Gorbachev's overtures to the apartheid government and cooling of relations with the ANC after decades of support reflected Moscow's need for foreign capital to build its economy, as well as a recognition of the necessity of building South Africa's economy after liberation.[245] With constitutional changes in the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1990, bilateral relations between the ANC and the USSR were no longer handled by the CPSU, but by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose officials were not fully conversant with the intricacies of the situation in South Africa.[246]

In late 1991, Moscow discontinued all political and practical assistance to the ANC, and consular relations between Russia and the government of South Africa were re-established on 9 November 1991 through a protocol signed between the South African Foreign Minister, Pik Botha, and his Soviet counterpart, Boris Pankin. The re-establishment of diplomatic relations followed in February 1992, and President F.W. de Klerk was invited to the Kremlin in May 1992.[247] Because of these internal political events in Russia, recently-freed after 27 years in prison, Nelson Mandela, the head of the ANC was unable to meet the last president of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev, before its collapse in December 1991. This is ironic given that the USSR had provided so much military and political support to the ANC over the preceding three decades.[248]

Third World during the Gorbachev Era and Beyond," in *Russia and the Third World in the Post-Soviet Era*, ed. Mohiaddin Mesbahi (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994), 164; and Filatova, *The Hidden Thread,* 426.

[243] Vladimir Shubin, "Were the Soviets "Selling Out"? in *The End of the Cold War and the Third World,* eds. Artemy M. Kalinovsky and Sergey Radchenko (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 251, 255.

[244] Shubin, "Beyond the Fairy Tales," 344; and Shubin, "Were the Soviets "Selling Out," 245.

[245] Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 125 and Christopher Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation: International Politics and South Africa's Transition* (Johannesburg: Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd., 2004), 48.

[246] Shubin, "Were the Soviets "Selling Out," 257.

[247] Ibid., 259-260.

[248] Abegunrin, "Southern African Liberation Struggles," 328.

4.2. Post-Cold War bilateral relations between Russia and South Africa

In the last decade of the twentieth century, within the space of three years of one another, both Russia and South Africa experienced political transitions from non-democratic highly centralised systems to less regulated functional democracies. The disintegration of the Soviet Union in December 1991 was followed by the first democratic elections in April 1994 in South Africa. In the economic sphere, growth for both Moscow and Pretoria relies heavily on the extraction and beneficiation of mineral resources,[249] and leaders of both countries view economic growth as a crucial component of development.[250] Furthermore, Russia and South Africa are both heavyweights in their respective regions, and both are considered emerging economies.[251]

Russian President Boris Yeltsin made overtures to South Africa's National Party even while it was clear that the days of apartheid were numbered. This reflected the 1990-1996 phase of liberal internationalism in Russia's foreign policy which sought closer ties with the West (or in the case of South Africa, a political ally of the West). Full diplomatic relations between Moscow and Pretoria were re-established on 28 February 1992 – two years before the formal end of apartheid – with the signing of a joint statement to this effect in Pretoria by Russia's first foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev and South African counterpart Roelof Frederik "Pik" Botha. In June 1992, President F.W. de Klerk visited Moscow and all of these developments, along with Yeltsin distancing Russia from the African National Congress and its allies, whom the Soviet Union had openly supported, represented an affront to the ANC.[252] The future ruling party was displeased by Yeltsin's decision to establish diplomatic relations with Pretoria before the conclusion of the negotiated settlement in South Africa. While the ANC understood Russia's need to pursue economic interests in South Africa, the party felt that the move was premature and that the new policy towards South Africa was at the expense of Russia-ANC relations.[253]

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[249] Gerasimchuk, "Re-think Russian Investment in Southern Africa," 10.
[250] Ibid., 20.
[251] Ibid., 10.
[252] Greg Mills and Sara Pienaar, "Nazdorovya? Russian-South African Defense and Technology Ties," *Defense Analysis* 17, no. 1 (2001): 9, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/ 10.1080/07430170120041776. The ANC's alliance partners have historically been the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).
[253] Filatova, *The Hidden Thread,* 454-455.

As noted earlier, ideological interests were no longer relevant, and the ANC was not a priority. To a certain extent, Kozyrev's initial foreign policy path was a continuation of Gorbachev's new thinking, but with more of an emphasis on Russian national interests, rather than on any idea of a new global system. [254] As a pro-Western idealist, Kozyrev sought integration with the West and Western assistance to transform Russia's economy and political system.[255] The need to rebuild Russia's economy meant that national interests would include closer ties with the white South African government which held the economic power.

Several state visits to Moscow were announced and subsequently cancelled between 1994 and 1998, reflecting the ambivalence with which the new South Africa viewed the new Russia. Russia has much to offer South Africa, including technology and manufacturing capability; practical experience in extracting energy resources; and advanced nuclear expertise. However, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, South Africa was more inclined towards cooperation with Europe and the US, and neither Russia nor South Africa viewed one another as a crucial partner.[256] It was not until November 1998 that Deputy President Thabo Mbeki visited Moscow with five cabinet members and signed several framework agreements on scientific and technical cooperation.[257]

Nelson Mandela finally visited Moscow in April 1999 on his last official tour as president – nine years after his release from prison in 1990 when he had announced his intention to visit the Soviet Union to thank Moscow for its support during the struggle years.[258] Mandela signed the Declaration on Principles of Friendly Relations and Partnership between Russia and South Africa during this visit, although the text of the Treaty of Friendship and Partnership, which was based on the Declaration, was only signed seven years later during Vladimir Putin's presidential visit to

[254] Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 207.
[255] Michael McFaul, "What Are Russian Foreign Policy Objectives?", Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 1, 1999, accessed September 29, 2015, http://carnegieendowment.org/1999/05/01/what-are-russian-foreign-policy-objectives.
[256] This argument is based on Mills and Pienaar, "Nazdorovya". See also, Giles, "Russian Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa," 26.
[257] Mills and Pienaar, "Nazdorovya," 10.
[258] Ibid., 9.

South Africa in September 2006.[259] Occurring six years after he assumed the presidency, Putin's 2006 visit to South Africa made him the first Russian leader to visit Sub-Saharan Africa. Putin and his South African counterpart, Thabo Mbeki, signed agreements aimed at deepening political engagement and expansion and diversification in the areas of trade, technology, and investment, among others.[260] Accompanied by a business delegation of about 100 people, Putin also pledged billions of dollars by Russian companies in investments in South Africa's oil and gas, nuclear power, military technology, and metal extraction and processing industries.[261]

4.2.1. Economic cooperation between Russia and South Africa

Established in 1993 through the Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement signed between South Africa and Russia, the Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Co-operation (ITEC) is an important platform for the governments of the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Africa to strengthen economic relations.[262] ITEC meets annually and provides a forum for enhancing the strategic partnership between Russia and South Africa. Political cooperation between Moscow and Pretoria is stronger than commercial and cultural ties, with bilateral trade amounting to only R7.5 billion (about $648 million) in 2013, according to data from South Africa's Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).[263] This represents about three percent of total trade (R270 billion or $23 billion) in the same year between South Africa and its largest bilateral trade partner on the continent, China,[264] which as mentioned earlier, had taken advantage of Russia's disengagement from the continent after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

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[259] Alexandra Arkhangelskaya and Vladimir Shubin, "Russia-South Africa Relations: Beyond Revival," SAIIA Policy Briefing 75 (2013): 1.

[260] Jordan, "A Bridge Between the Global North and Africa," 89.

[261] "From Russia with Money," *The finWEEK*, September 14, 2006, 9; and SouthAfrica.info, "New Era for SA, Russian Business," September 11, 2006, accessed April 3, 2014, http://www.southafrica.info/news/international/sa_russia070906.htm.

[262] *Russia Presents a Wealth of Business Opportunities for South African Goods and Services*, Media statement, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), accessed December 4, 2014, http://www.dti.gov.za/editmedia.jsp?id=2931. ITEC is co-chaired by Russia's Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Sergei Donskoi, and South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane.

[263] *SA Import Value HS8 (Yearly)* and *SA Export Value HS8 (Yearly)*, DTI, http://tradestats.thedti.gov.za, cited in *South Africa and the BRICS: Progress, Problems, and Prospects*, Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) Seminar Report No. 50 (2014): 16.

[264] *SA Import Value HS8 (Yearly)* and *SA Export Value HS8 (Yearly)*, cited in *South Africa and the BRICS*,13.

According to the Russian Embassy in South Africa, bilateral trade between Russia and South Africa amounted to $998 million in 2013 – a 22 percent increase from 2012 figures. Russian exports to South Africa stood at $260.5 million in 2013 (up 59 percent from $163.7 million in 2012) and include mineral products, precious and base metals, chemical and agro-industrial products, and machinery. Imports from South Africa which include mineral products, machinery, precious and base metals, and fruits increased to $737.5 million (up from $653.3 million in 2012). Russian investments in South Africa reached over $1 billion, while South African investments in Russia amounted to over $75 million in 2013.[265]

Although trade figures provided by the two governments may differ, what is evident is that there is still room for strengthened economic cooperation with potential for trade gains in the food, citrus, agro processing, automotive, and mining sectors. The export of agricultural produce from South Africa to Russia is especially important in light of Russia's agricultural sanctions against the EU and the US, offering another possibility for increasing bilateral trade turnover. ITEC is an important trade tool to facilitate such cooperation.[266] Another forum for strengthening trade and economic ties is the Russia-South Africa Business Council, a technical joint sub-committee of ITEC, which was established in September 2006, and whose 2014 meeting brought together about 30 Russian and 70 South African companies.[267]

Mutual investment projects are primarily in the mineral resources sector with Russian companies such as the Renova Group of Companies (manganese and alloys), Norilsk Nickel (nickel and associated metals), Evraz Group S.A. (alloys, steel, and vanadium), and OAO Severstal (steel) operating in South Africa.[268] In April 2014, Russia's third largest bank, Gazprombank, became

[265] *Russian-South African Economic Cooperation*, Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of South Africa, accessed October 20, 2014, http://www.russianembassy.org.za/economic/Coop.html.
[266] *ITEC An Important Trade Tool*, South African Government News Agency, November 7, 2014, accessed November 17, 2014, http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/itec-important-trade-tool.
[267] Keith Campbell, "Trade Between South Africa and Russia is Beginning to Take Off," Engineering News, September 29, 2011, accessed December 31, 2014, http://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/trade-between-south-africa-and-russia-is-beginning-to-take-off-2011-09-29. ITEC's nine other technical joint sub-committees are in the areas of: agriculture and forestry, aviation and maritime transport, education, energy, justice, minerals resources, science and technology, trade and investment and banking, and water affairs.
[268] *Russian-South African Economic Cooperation.*

the first commercial Russian bank to open an office in South Africa. Gazprombank will use South Africa as a base from which to carry out operations in the SADC region and eastern Africa, and will focus on oil and gas and energy sectors, as well as infrastructure.[269] This use of South Africa as a launch pad for operations in other parts of Africa is important and reflects Russia's perception of South Africa as a "gateway" to the rest of Africa (which will be discussed in the context of the BRICS bloc in the following chapter).

Both Russia and South Africa encourage foreign direct investment (FDI) to emanate from joint investment ventures with local partners rather than through projects owned by foreign nationals.[270] South African investment in Russia includes Anglo American Corporation; its subsidiary Mondi; media and e-commerce group Naspers; and until January 2014, South African Breweries – through a strategic alliance with Turkish brewer Anadolu Efes.[271] In November 2014, following its ban on most Western food imports as a result of US and European sanctions due to Moscow's perceived role in the conflict in Ukraine, Russia granted 12 South African companies the right to export canned and frozen fish to Russia for the first time since the Yeltsin era in the late 1990s.[272] Necessity has therefore prompted this change, speaking to economic pragmatism and the enhancement of national wealth.

Membership of the BRICS bloc by Russia and South Africa has provided the opportunity for promotion of bilateral relations between the two countries. Presidents Putin and Zuma held bilateral talks during the fifth BRICS summit in Durban from 26-27 March 2013, when the two discussed Russian support to South Africa in the field of nuclear energy, specifically in areas such as resource extraction and the construction of a nuclear power plant. The March 2013 Durban meetings resulted in the signing of eight agreements in the fields of energy, mineral resources, defence, fisheries, education, transport, and science and technology.[273] The energy

[269] *Gazprombank Becomes Russia's First Commercial Bank To Open Its Office In South Africa*, TASS Russian News Agency, April 25, 2014, accessed January 7, 2015, http://itar-tass.com/en/economy/729522.
[270] Gerasimchuk, "Re-think Russian Investment in Southern Africa," 21.
[271] Ibid., 24.
[272] *SA to Resume Seafood Exports to Russia*, Fin24, November 11, 2014, accessed December 4, 2014, http://www.fin24.com/Companies/Agribusiness/SA-to-resume-seafood-exports-to-Russia-20141111.
[273] *South Africa's Zuma to Meet Putin in Sochi.*

agreement, signed on 26 March 2013, includes cooperation in oil and gas; electrical power; coal; energy efficiency; and renewable energy sources, as well as joint ventures on power generation and energy exports and imports.[274] In addition, business contracts between South African and Russian companies included the signing of four strategic cooperation agreements in mining, alternative energy, telecommunications, and construction of marine ports with partners in South Africa by Russia's Renova Group.[275]

Presidents Putin and Zuma also met in Sochi, Russia, in May 2013, when Zuma was accompanied by a delegation of Cabinet ministers in the areas of defence, international relations, tourism, state security, police, and energy.[276] By August 2014, Jacob Zuma had visited Russia five times, with media reports suggesting that the South African president is one of Vladimir Putin's most frequent visitors.[277] These meetings undoubtedly speak to the importance of bilateral relations between the two countries, and provide a stark contrast to Boris Yeltsin's mismanagement of relations with South Africa in the 1990s, which, as noted earlier, focused on national interests and economic gain, perhaps at the expense of relations with the ANC. Vladimir Putin has been methodical in his quest for influence in sub-Saharan Africa, which offers numerous opportunities for economic cooperation with Russia, and in this regard, has also been persistent in pursuing Russian economic interests with South Africa, a fellow member of BRICS.[278] However, a challenge for both Russia and South Africa is the gulf that exists between policy formulation and development and actual implementation.[279] This might include moving beyond signing agreements to actually ratifying and implementing them in Russia's case, and for South Africa, ensuring that laudable goals such as upholding human rights are followed through

[274] Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the Field of Energy, Art. 2, No. (2); and Art. 3, No. (b) and (c), Durban, 26 March 2013.
[275] Renova Group of Companies, accessed November 21, 2014, http://www.renova.ru/press-center/releases/21/4782/?sphrase_id=29651; and "Putin Offers Help to S. Africa in Creation Of Nuclear Energy Industry," *Interfax*, March 26, 2013.
[276] "Putin Says Russian Companies Interested in South Africa, South African in Russia," *Interfax*, May 16, 2013; and *South Africa's Zuma to Meet Putin in Sochi*.
[277] *Jacob Zuma's Mysterious Mission to Russia*, City Press, August 31, 2014, accessed 17 November 2014, http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Politics/Jacob-Zumas-mysterious-mission-to-Russia-20140831.
[278] Pham, "Russia's Return to Africa".
[279] This idea is based on Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 5.

when it comes to holding countries accountable for their human rights conduct – to be explored later.

4.2.2. Russo-South African cooperation in the energy sector

South Africa's economy is extremely energy-intensive, resulting in an acute energy crisis which is further exacerbated by under investment in energy generating capacity. Electricity giant Eskom's main source of energy for South Africa is coal with coal-fired power stations using 90 million tons of coal annually to produce about 90 percent of the country's electricity.[280] In Russia, coal-fired energy amounts to 16 percent.[281] A low-carbon alternative to coal is that of the Eskom-operated Koeberg nuclear power station located in South Africa's Western Cape Province. With Koeberg's two 900 MW reactors supplying only 6 percent of the country's energy,[282] there is potential to help to meet energy demand and to strengthen the nuclear energy sector.

Russia has been seeking investment in nuclear power stations and uranium mining ventures in South Africa since Putin's 2006 visit to Pretoria.[283] To this end, Putin took the opportunity to discuss providing assistance to South Africa's nuclear industry during a Russia-South Africa meeting at the BRICS summit in Durban in March 2013.[284] Russia's nuclear power aspirations in South Africa finally bore fruit with the signing of a $50 billion nuclear framework agreement between the two countries on the sidelines of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) conference in Vienna, Austria, on 22 September 2014.[285]

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[280] *Electricity Technologies*, Eskom, accessed September 4, 2014, http://www.eskom.co.za/AboutElectricity/ElectricityTechnologies/Pages/Electricity_Technologies.aspx.

[281] See Barry Naughton, *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2007), 336, cited in Uwe Becker, ed., *The BRICs and Emerging Economies in Comparative Perspective: Political Economy, Liberalisation and Institutional Change* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 14.

[282] *The Koeberg Experience*, Eskom, accessed September 4, 2014, http://www.eskom.co.za/Whatweredoing/ElectricityGeneration/KoebergNuclearPowerStation/TheKoebergExperience/Pages/The_Koeberg_Experience.aspx.

[283] See Financial Times, "Russian Deal?" February 23, 2007, cited in *Africa Research Bulletin* (Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007).

[284] *Putin Offers Help to SA Nuclear Industry*, The Chemical Engineer, May 2013.

[285] *SA, Russia Agree to $50-Billion Nuclear Deal*, Mail and Guardian, September 23, 2014, cited in *South Africa and the BRICS*,16.

The framework agreement signifies a reversal of fortune for Russian national nuclear energy corporation Rosatom that was excluded in 2008 by the South African government from a shortlist for a tender to construct a nuclear reactor. Should Russia win the contract, Rosatom will build eight new nuclear power plants with as much as 9,600 MW of nuclear energy by 2030, and could offer South Africa a 15-20 year State loan to pay for the plants, according to media reports. The announcement of the nuclear framework agreement first by Rosatom and then confirmed by South Africa's Department of Energy has raised suspicions about a lack of transparency and corrupt procurement processes. Criticism in South Africa has also centred on the cost and appropriateness of the nuclear energy agreement, as well as whether the best deal for the country was negotiated. The South African Department of Energy has, however, downplayed these allegations, stating that the agreement with Russia is the first step in the procurement process, and that a number of framework agreements will be signed with other countries before a final decision is made. The actual content of the framework agreement is also unknown, adding to the controversy.[286] Russia seeks not only to build the plants but also to contribute to developing South Africa's entire nuclear industry, including technology development, resource production, and the manufacture of nuclear power equipment.[287]

The September 2014 nuclear framework agreement demonstrates what appears to be Russia's determined pursuit of its economic goals with critics in South Africa questioning both the appropriateness of the deal, and how it can benefit South Africa as much as it apparently will Russia. The South African government should therefore ensure that it negotiates a competitive

[286] *SA Denies Corruption in Russia Nuclear Deal*, Fin24, October 1, 2014, accessed November 20, 2014, http://www.fin24.com/Economy/SA-denies-corruption-in-Russia-nuclear-deal-20141001. South Africa and France signed a nuclear framework agreement in October 2014.

[287] This paragraph is based on Terence Creamer, "Rosatom Says State Loan an Option for Funding SA Nuclear Plants," *Polity.org.za*, December 4, 2014, accessed December 10, 2014, http://www.polity.org.za/article/rosatom-says-state-loan-an-option-for-funding-sa-nuclear-plants-2014-12-04; Qaanitah Hunter, "Vladimir Putin's Quest for a Nuclear Monopoly," *Mail & Guardian*, October 17, 2014, accessed November 17, 2014, http://mg.co.za/article/2014-10-16-vladimir-putins-quest-for-a-nuclear-monopoly; Paul Burkhardt, "South Africa to Sign More Pacts Before Nuclear Partner Bids," *Bloomberg*, October 1, 2014, accessed November 20, 2014, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-10-01/south-africa-to-sign-more-pacts-before-choosing-nuclear-partners.html; Chris Shone, "Constitution Demands That Russian Deal Be Made Public," *Business Day*, October 14, 2014, accessed November 20, 2014, http://www.bdlive.co.za/opinion/2014/10/14/constitution-demands-that-russian-deal-be-made-public; and *SA Denies Corruption in Russia Nuclear Deal*. South Africa and France signed a nuclear framework agreement in October 2014.

nuclear deal that will be beneficial to the entire country and that any loans required for the agreement are secured with favourable terms and economic incentives.[288] While membership of the BRICS bloc by both Russia and South Africa creates a natural forum for engaging in strengthening economic relations, the challenge remains of how to translate these efforts into tangible outcomes that benefit both countries.

4.2.3. Russo-South African cooperation in the mineral resources sector

Russia and South Africa signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on cooperation in the platinum group metals (PGMs) on 26 March 2013 during the BRICS Summit in Durban. Both countries have a rich endowment of mineral and metal resources and a long history of development in the mining sector. Russia's mineral resources complex accounts for about one-fifth of total global mineral potential and is a key sector contributing to the development of the country's national economy.[289] However, as mentioned earlier, it is economically expedient for Moscow to look to Africa as a source of foreign mineral reserves. This is because much of Russia's Soviet-era resources are now located either outside of its borders or in Siberia, and thus not easily accessible, making it more cost effective to seek to develop these resources in Africa.[290] As an example, Russia currently imports 100 percent of its manganese requirements; 80 percent of its chrome; and 60 percent of its bauxite, and its reserves of copper, nickel, tin, and zinc are near depletion.[291] According to a 2011 report by the African Development Bank, all reserves of manganese ores; chromium ores; and platinum-group metals in Russia are projected to be depleted beyond 2025.[292] South Africa has the largest resources of chromium (72.4 percent of the global total); manganese (80 percent); and platinum group metals (87.7 percent), and its mining industry is one of the world's largest exporters of platinum group metals and vanadium,

[288] This argument is based on Klomegah, "Russia's Investment in Africa".
[289] *Mining in Russia*.
[290] Arkhangelskaya and Shubin, "Russia's Africa Policy," 5, 16.
[291] Pham, "Russia's Return to Africa".
[292] The African Development Bank Group, "Russia's Economic Engagement with Africa," 5. South Africa also has reserves of the following minerals projected to be depleted in the same time span: lead; diamonds; tin; uranium; gold; copper; nickel; coal; phosphate; iron ores; natural gas; vanadium; and salt.

as well as a significant exporter of manganese ore.[293] South Africa is therefore an obvious choice for cooperation with Russia in the minerals sector as it has the reserves that Russia needs for economic growth.

South Africa has more than $3.3 trillion in mineral reserves, and is the world's richest nation in terms of commodity wealth, with Russia in second place with about $1.1 trillion.[294] The two countries hold about 80 percent of global reserves of PGMs.[295] Since 2007, Russian company Norilsk Nickel, the world's largest producer of nickel and palladium, has owned a 50 percent interest in South Africa's Nkomati nickel mine, a joint venture with African Rainbow Minerals, Africa's largest mining holding. Norilsk Nickel is involved in metallurgical processing of minerals, mineral prospecting, exploration, extraction, and refining, as well as the production, marketing and sale of base and precious metals.[296] In addition, the Renova group has invested $300 million in South Africa for the development of a manganese mine as well as a project which involves modernising a $250 million ferroalloy plant to increase one-hundred fold the production of silicomanganese to 360k tons as from 2015.[297]

Global prices of platinum group metals have fallen more than 20 percent since March 2013 when representatives of the two countries discussed ways of buoying the market. In this regard, a meeting was held in Pretoria in November 2014 to consider ways to increase demand for PMGs. A conference is also planned for the second half of 2015 which will seek to find ways of achieving stability and sustainable growth in the PMG sector. Challenges faced in this sector by both Russian (Norilsk Nickel) and South African (Lonmin, Impala Platinum, and Anglo

[293] *Mineral Resources*, Department of Communications, Republic of South Africa, accessed November 21, 2014, http://www.gcis.gov.za/sites/www.gcis.gov.za/files/docs/resourcecentre/pocketguide/2012/15%20Mineral%20Resources.pdf.
[294] Kevin Crowley and Andre Janse van Vuuren, "Investors Shunning the World's Richest Mineral Deposits," *Bloomberg*, October 9, 2014, accessed November 21, 2014, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-10-08/investors-shunning-the-world-s-richest-mineral-deposits.html.
[295] Andre Janse van Vuuren and Yuliya Fedorinova, "Russia, SA Plan Platinum-Industry Talks," November 12, 2014, Mineweb, accessed November 20, 2014, http://www.mineweb.com/russia-sa-plan-platinum-industry-talks/.
[296] *Nkomati*, Norilsk Nickel Group, accessed November 21, 2014, http://www.nornik.ru/en/about-norilsk-nickel/operations/norilsk-nickel-africa1/nkomati.
[297] *Renova Group Signs a Number of Strategic Agreements with South African Partners*, Renova Group of Companies, March 28, 2013, accessed November 21, 2014, http://www.renova.ru/press-center/releases/21/4782/?sphrase_id=29651; and *Putin Offers Help to S. Africa*.

American Platinum) mining companies include theft of refined metal and the illegal sale of precious metals.[298]

Mineral resources are Russia's most important economic asset, both from the point of view of resource potential and the production of minerals. However, Russia's economy is overly dependent on natural resources, and South Africa's economy is overly dependent on extractive industries. In the short term, over reliance on extractive industries for both countries is problematic as economic growth is impacted by the volatility of global commodity prices, and is unsustainable in the long-term because depletion will eventually occur.[299] Both Russia and South Africa therefore need to diversify resources for economic growth. The diamond sector is one of the few sectors in which Russia and South Africa are in direct competition – in many other resource sectors such as manganese ores, platinum group metals, chromium ores, and nickel, complementarities exist.[300] Russia has joined other traditional and emerging powers in vying for economic space with regard to South Africa's natural resources. Nevertheless, mitigation against depletion of commercially viable deposit reserves and economic expediency provide many opportunities for perhaps more mutually beneficial investment in the mineral resources sector in South Africa.[301]

Concluding reflections

The Cold War competition in Africa between Washington and Moscow was based primarily on achieving political gain. Ideological similarities and shared beliefs between the SACP and the CPSU saw the Soviet Union providing support to the armed struggle of the ANC from the 1960s. However, even as the Cold War was ending, Moscow was also mindful of its economic interests, thereby heralding a shift from a foreign policy based on ideology to one based on pragmatism.

[298] Janse van Vuuren and Fedorinova, "Russia, SA Plan Platinum-Industry Talks".
[299] Gerasimchuk, "Re-think Russian Investment in Southern Africa," 27.
[300] Ibid., 20.
[301] This argument is based on Evgeny Korendiasov, "Russian-African Relations in Ten Years: A New Start," Valdai Club, June 24, 2013, accessed 5 December 2014, http://valdaiclub.com/africa/59520.html.

Thus national interests and economic gain superseded ideology, and this included improving economic ties with the apartheid government in South Africa.[302]

The new policy of the Soviet Union at the end of the Cold War and that of Russia under Yeltsin seemed to be based on the belief that South Africa could help to build Russia's disintegrating economy, prompting the Russian government to engage with the outgoing NP government which held the economic power in South Africa.[303] This was troubling for the ANC which felt the move was premature, and which may have also contributed to the newly-freed Mandela postponing several visits to Moscow.

While the Putin and Zuma presidencies have witnessed closer ties between Russia and South Africa, trade between the two countries has traditionally been low, even with the various bilateral agreements signed; resulting in high expectations that have largely not been met.[304] Other hindrances to disappointing trade between Moscow and Pretoria include Russia's uneven Africa strategy, with numerous changes in foreign ministers under Yeltsin in the 1990s. Furthermore, the two countries are competitors for African markets: with Russia pursuing a national interest driven foreign policy, and South Africa following what Landsberg calls a "utilitarian interest-maximising foreign policy",[305] both countries are likely to go where there are most gains. Russia also has a lot of catching up to do in Africa when compared with countries such as China, which is South Africa's largest bilateral trading partner on the continent. However, an area in which Russia and South Africa can reap mutually beneficial rewards is in multilateral fora such as the BRICS and the UN, which is the topic of the next chapter.

[302] This argument is based on Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 128.
[303] Filatova, *The Hidden Thread,* 436.
[304] Ibid, 462.
[305] Chris Landsberg, "South Africa's Foreign and Economic Policy after Two Decades," Public dialogue podcast, Centre for Conflict Resolution, August 29, 2014, accessed September 29, 2015. http://www.ccr.org.za/phocadownload/safp_dialogue_pretoria_clandsberg.mp3.

Chapter Five: Multilateral Relations between Russia and South Africa

> "*We will strive to ensure a new world order, one that meets current geopolitical realities.*" – Vladimir Putin[306]

The National Security Strategy to 2020 of 2009 emphasises the importance to Russia of international institutions and multilateral fora such as the G20 and the BRICS. The BRICS group provides the opportunity to promote development and trade relationships based on comparative advantages. To a large extent, it represents an "intermediate negotiation ground"[307] between the interests of individual BRICS countries and the G20. Russia engages with South Africa in the BRICS and the UN Security Council according to the norms of reciprocity, collaborating for mutual advantage.[308] The focus of this chapter on the BRICS and the UN Security Council stems from the BRICS group providing an outlet for collaboration between the two "emerging" economies, while the UN Security Council is a central part of Russia's attempts to counter US hegemony. In this regard, South Africa, which is viewed by some as a "gateway" to the rest of Africa, can help Moscow in constraining Washington. Both fora also bestow a level of international prestige on the two countries. The discussion will focus on South Africa's value to Russia as a member of the Brazil, Russia, India, and China (BRIC) group, followed by how Russia and South Africa have used membership of the BRICS to meet at the bilateral level and to strengthen economic ties. (The scope of the study allows for comparisons with Brazil, India, and China only where relevant.) The discussion on the UN will explore the extent to which the voting positions of Russia and South Africa aligned in 2007-2008 and 2011-2012 when South Africa held a seat as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.

[306] Putin, "Russia and the Changing World".
[307] Natalya Volchkova and Maria Ryabtseva, "Russia-South Africa Relations: Collaboration in BRICS and the G-20," SAIIA Occasional Paper No. 135 (2013): 13.
[308] Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 26.

5.1. The role of the BRICS group in Russia's foreign policy

Russia's foreign policy course, especially under Putin, the country's leading politician since his election as president in 2000, has been focused on rectifying the perception of Russia on the decline in the international arena, with a strong belief in Moscow's entitlement to play a greater role in global affairs.[309] This self-confident foreign policy has seen Russia conducting "soft or constrained balancing"[310] on the international stage, with its activities in international institutions and fora used to attain geopolitical clout as a significant actor globally. In seeking a more equitable global order and more inclusion in relevant global decision-making processes, Chris Landsberg and Candice Moore argue that the BRICS group follows a liberal institutionalist (in seeking to engage with and reform the globalisation process) and multilateralist (in seeking to play an active role in global institutions) approach.[311] However, as Fabiano Mielniczuk asserts, the group also displays social constructivist elements. This is due to the changing group identity from ideal economies for foreign investment to advocates for more representative global structures,[312] and the call for a different model of development based on mutual benefits and lack of conditionalities in exchange for aid.

Originally coined in 2001 as an acronym by Goldman Sachs analyst Jim O'Neill to describe the fastest growing economies in the world, Brazil, Russia, India, and China first met as an informal group at the 61st General Assembly of the UN in 2006 to discuss how to improve economic, financial, and trade cooperation among themselves, as well as how to boost their influence on international affairs. Ministerial discussions at the G8 summit in St. Petersburg, Russia, in July 2006, and the first G20 summit in Washington, D.C., in November 2008, were followed by a diplomatic meeting in Yekaterinburg, Russia, in 2008. The first BRIC summit was subsequently

[309] Andrew Hurrell, "Hegemony, Liberalism and Global Order: What Space for Would-Be Great Powers?" *International Affairs* 82, no. 1 (2006): 2, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3569127.
[310] Ibid., 15.
[311] Becker, *The BRICS and Emerging Economies*, 9; and Chris Landsberg and Candice Moore, "BRICS, South-South Cooperation and the Durban Summit: What's In It for South Africa?" *Portuguese Journal of International Affairs* (2013): 4.
[312] Fabiano Mielniczuk, "BRICS in the Contemporary World: Changing Identities, Converging Interests," *Third World Quarterly* 34, no. 6 (2013), http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01436597.2013.802506.

held in Yekaterinburg in June 2009.[313] South Africa was invited to join the group in December 2010 and attended its first BRICS summit in Sanya, China, in April 2011.

Although BRICS is often criticised for being an artificial grouping of countries having little in common, an important common denominator is the bloc's belief in the need to play a more prominent role in determining the course of future global events and what Pádraig Carmody calls "rebalancing the global geography of power."[314] The rise of the BRICS has been challenging the hegemony of Western-dominated financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF in Africa – an example of which is the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB), which was officially launched in July 2015. The NDB seeks to mobilise resources for greater financial and development cooperation among the BRICS countries and in other developing economies. As Carmody notes, pragmatism in economic policymaking in groups such as the BRICS is rising, while Western neoliberalism is on the wane.[315] The 2008-2009 global economic meltdown did not affect Sub-Saharan Africa to the extent that it did developed economies, and heralded a dissipation of the Washington Consensus, with the US no longer necessarily viewed as "the fount of economic wisdom", according to Stephen M. Walt.[316] The BRICS members have become important partners to developed economies and crucial development partners for developing countries in their context of emerging donors.[317]

Cooperation in the BRICS grouping is an important aspect of Russia's long-term foreign policy objectives, and the country's engagement in BRICS is overseen primarily by Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[318] As reflected in the eThekwini Declaration adopted by the Durban Summit in 2013, Russia views the BRICS as a forum for dialogue and for coordination of positions on

[313] Ivo Vegter, "Four Big Brics and a Little One," *Mail & Guardian*, October 30, 2012, accessed 8 January 2015, http://mg.co.za/article/2012-10-30-four-big-brics-and-a-little-one.
[314] Pádraig Carmody, *The Rise of the BRICS in Africa: The Geopolitics of South-South Relations* (London: Zed Books, 2013), 1. This point is partially based on an essay by the author entitled "Understanding development: Are the BRICS really an economic force?" submitted for the course POL5032F – International Political Economy in April 2014.
[315] Carmody, *The Rise of the BRICS in Africa*, 9.
[316] Stephen M. Walt, "The Bad Old Days Are Back," *Foreign Policy*, May 2, 2014, accessed January 5, 2015, http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/05/02/the-bad-old-days-are-back/.
[317] Niu Haibin, "BRICS in Global Governance: A Progressive Force?" Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (2012): 1.
[318] Volchkova and Ryabtseva, "Russia-South Africa Relations," 6.

key global economic and political issues.[319] Article 4 of the Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS (hereafter referred to as the "BRICS Concept") states that:

> "*The establishment of BRICS reflects an objective trend in the global development... towards the formation of a polycentric system of international relations, which is increasingly characterized by the use of non-institutionalized mechanisms of global governance and network-based diplomacy, and the growing economic interdependence of states*."[320]

The following four key objectives of Russia's participation in BRICS are shared by South Africa: 1) to reform the international monetary and financial system so that it is more "equitable, stable and effective"; 2) to build on the common commitment to uphold the primacy of international law and to expand cooperation with BRICS partners while recognising the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other states, as well as the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states; 3) to strengthen Russia's multi-vectored foreign policy leading to reinforcing its international position; and 4) to strengthen bilateral relations with BRICS partners and to take advantage of opportunities for cooperation that are mutually beneficial.[321] Instances of collaboration between Russia and South Africa in the sphere of foreign economic policy include signed agreements in the trade, investment, and technology sectors; joint investment ventures with local partners; a platform to enhance economic and trade cooperation; and investment projects in the mineral resources and energy sectors.

5.2. Russo-South African relations within BRICS

South Africa's admission into the BRIC group, at the invitation of China, speaks to the importance of Africa in the international system, and was largely based on the recognition by

[319] Mikhail Petrakov, "Working Visit of the President of the Russian Federation H.E. Mr. Vladimir V.Putin to the Republic of South Africa," Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of South Africa, April 29, 2013, accessed January 5, 2015, http://www.russianembassy.org.za/billaterial/Visit1.html.
[320] *Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS, approved by President Vladimir V. Putin on 9 February 2013*, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, accessed January 5, 2014, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/58404FEA180B30AD44257B35002871F3.
[321] Ibid.

existing members of the need for African representation in the group. It also reflected the desire of the group to engage more with Africa.[322] In January 2011, just after South Africa had been invited to join the BRIC bloc, *The Economist* reported that seven of the 10 projected fastest growing economies for the period 2011-2015 were in Sub-Saharan Africa.[323] With annual average growth of only 3.5 percent in the first decade of the 2000s – compared with Angola at the top of the list with 11.1 percent and Nigeria fourth with 8.9 percent annual average growth – South Africa was not on the list, but it was Africa's biggest economy at the time.[324]

At the time of South Africa's accession to the BRIC forum, Brazil, Russia, India, and China boasted a combined GDP of over $15 trillion (about one fifth of the global total), and received nearly 20 percent of total global FDI flows in the amount of about $281 billion.[325] Today, the BRICS grouping accounts collectively for about 40 percent of the world's population and 25 percent of global GDP. Each of the BRICS countries plays a leading economic role in their individual regions and most have established strong political ties with the rest of their region.[326] South Africa's inclusion in the bloc was questioned by some analysts (including O'Neill), but, as the most industrialised economy in Africa, and the only African strategic partner of the European Union and the only African country in the G20, its membership is warranted.[327]

President Putin's visit to South Africa in September 2006 was reciprocated in August 2010 with President Jacob Zuma's first state visit to Russia. Accompanied by cabinet ministers and a delegation of more than 100 business people, Zuma successfully lobbied Russia for South Africa's inclusion in BRIC, citing the need for Africa to be represented, as well as South Africa's record as a champion of Africa's interests.[328] The South African government regarded Russia as

[322] Haibin, "BRICS in Global Governance," 2.
[323] *A More Hopeful Continent: The Lion Kings?*, The Economist, January 6, 2011, accessed January 8, 2015, http://www.economist.com/node/17853324.
[324] Ibid. Nigeria overtook South Africa as the continent's largest economy in 2014.
[325] United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, "Africa-BRICS Cooperation: Implications for Growth, Employment and Structural Transformation in Africa," (2013): 5.
[326] Haibin, "BRICS in Global Governance," 1.
[327] This discussion is based on an essay by the author entitled "Understanding development: Are the BRICS really an economic force?" submitted for the course POL5032F International Political Economy in April 2014.
[328] *Bua Briefs 9 of 2010*, South African Government News Agency, August 6, 2010, accessed January 9, 2015, http://www.gcis.gov.za/content/resourcecentre/newsletters-magazines/buabriefs/6Aug2010; Oliver Stuenkel, "South

an economic power on the rise and made a deliberate decision at the time to accelerate relations with Moscow.[329] For Russia, South Africa's value to the BRIC grouping was its ability to serve as a "gateway" to the rest of Africa, even though this notion is contested. In addition, Russia stood to gain increased trade and investment opportunities from Pretoria's membership, as South Africa has the largest energy production capacity in Southern Africa and is the global leader in the production of precious metals. South Africa's inclusion in the group was mutually beneficial, and Russia and South Africa have been able to use the opportunities provided by the latter's membership to strengthen bilateral relations. To quote Oliver Stuenkel, the process of transforming BRIC into BRICS in 2011, along with the creation of the G20, signified the most noteworthy restyling of global governance since the end of the Cold War and the beginning of post-apartheid and post-Soviet Russia.[330]

An important potential economic benefit that membership of the BRICS group provides is access to African markets. The BRICS Concept encourages more active participation by the Russian business community in BRICS business forums. The statement by Georgy Petrov, vice president of the Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, on the Durban summit that "... Russian business is returning to Africa, and South Africa is becoming a gateway to the African continent for Russian people",[331] speaks to the acceptance by Russian business of Pretoria's role as an entry point for economic engagement with Africa. Economically and politically, with a

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[329] *Department of International Relations and Cooperation Media Briefing by the Director General, Dr Ayanda Ntsaluba, at the O R Tambo Building, Pretoria,2010-08-05 at 12h30,* Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), August 7, 2010, accessed January 9, 2015, http://www.dfa.gov.za/docs/speeches/2010/ntsh0805.html.

[330] Stuenkel, "South Africa's BRICS Membership," 310.

[331] Bambina Wise, "BRICS Summit Talks Trade, Africa Potential," *Women's Wear Daily*, Academic OneFile, March 27, 2013, accessed 28 June 2014, http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/86658024/brics-summit-talks-trade-africa-potential.

population of 1.1 billion people, Africa matters as an aggregate.[332] Petrov's statement also corroborates the underlying argument of this study that Russian engagement with South Africa is primarily driven by economic factors: South Africa is ranked as the twenty-ninth largest global economy and is ninth in the index of global economic power.[333] Although the Durban summit had an Africa-wide focus, most of the commercial agreements emanating from the meeting were on a bilateral basis, with for example, Russia and South Africa signing several agreements, as discussed in Chapter Four.[334] This is in line with Article 13 of Russia's BRICS Concept which states that cooperation on specific issues within the BRICS should not take precedence over established bilateral relations between member states.[335]

As previously discussed, Russia's absence from Africa during the Yeltsin years had consequences which included China and South Africa exerting the greatest governance influence in Africa in terms of investment. Indeed, South Africa's interests on the continent are more aligned with those of Beijing (its largest bilateral trading partner) than Moscow.[336] Russia finds itself in competition with South Africa in terms of trade with the rest of Africa: in 2012, South Africa-Africa trade amounted to $25.7 billion as opposed to Russo-Africa trade at only R9.4 billion.[337] However, relations between Russia and South Africa within the BRICS grouping have been progressing steadily, with BRICS increasingly being used as a channel for communication. Both Putin and Zuma acknowledge the importance of interaction within BRICS which has facilitated new opportunities for cooperation – not only between Russia and South Africa, but also undoubtedly with other African countries.[338] Examples of cooperation within the context of BRICS include an expression of providing material support by Russia and China in helping to

[332] Maxi Schoeman, "Of BRICs and Mortar: The Growing Relations between Africa and the Global South," *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, 46, no. 1 (2011): 48, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/03932729.2011.549753.
[333] Carmody, *The Rise of the BRICS in Africa*, 4.
[334] Memory Dube, "BRICS and the World Order: Update BRICS Summit 2013," SAIIA and GegAfrica (2014): 10, accessed January 10, 2015, http://www.gegafrica.org/memory-dube/brics-guide-summary.
[335] *Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS*.
[336] Carmody, *The Rise of the BRICS in Africa*, 139.
[337] *BRICS-Africa Trade Update*, Standard Bank, Africa EM10 & Africa, October 8, 2013, p. 1, accessed January 5, 2015, https://research.standardbank.com/api/asset/PrintPDF?docId=1671-CA85B4636AE742A0A4AE11505DA97E22. Total BRICS trade with Africa stood at $301 billion in the same year.
[338] *Russian, South African Presidents to Discuss Strategic Partnership*, TASS Russian News Agency, August 27, 2014, accessed January 7, 2015, http://itar-tass.com/en/russia/746896.

create the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC), an AU initiative put forward by South African President Jacob Zuma in 2013. The ACIRC will serve as an interim measure to protect civilians in Africa until the 15,000-strong African Standby Force (ASF) can be established.[339]

In addition, South Africa hosted a BRICS Leaders-Africa Dialogue Forum retreat on the sidelines of the 2013 Durban summit which was attended by 15 African leaders; the AU and AU Commission chairs; representatives from the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Discussions centred on supporting Africa's socio-economic development with an emphasis on developing BRICS-Africa cooperation in the areas of infrastructure development and industrialisation.[340] Thus, interaction with South Africa within BRICS and the various regional economic contacts that the Durban summit retreat provided have contributed, in the words of Vladimir Putin, to "promot[ing] the growth of authority of our association."[341] This access to African countries also reinforces Russia's quest for economic opportunities on the continent, and supports its decision to consent to South Africa's inclusion in the BRICS as a link to the rest of Africa.

Russia was set to focus its efforts on expanding further intra-BRICS cooperation when it assumed the rotating presidency of the bloc in April 2015, and to draft a strategy for economic partnership and a road map for investment cooperation ahead of the seventh BRICS summit in Ufa, Russia, from 8-9 July 2015.[342] Summits such as the BRICS and the G20 provide an

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[339] *Russia, China to Help Create African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises*, TASS Russian News Agency, December 9, 2014, accessed January 7, 2015, http://itar-tass.com/en/world/766003; and *South Africa and the BRICS*, 23. Intended originally to be operational by 2010, the establishment of the African Standby Force has been postponed several times.

[340] *South Africa and the BRICS*, 9-10. An estimated $368 billion is needed for continent-wide initiatives such as the AU Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) of 2011-2040 which was adopted in July 2012.

[341] *BRICS Summit Ends its Work on Wednesday*, TASS Russian News Agency, July 16, 2014, accessed January 7, 2015, http://itar-tass.com/en/economy/740795. The Russian delegation to the Durban summit comprised over 120 people. See also, Interfax - Russia & CIS Business & Financial Newswire, "Putin Arrives in Durban South Africa to Negotiate with South African Authorities, for BRICS Summit," March 26, 2013, accessed 28 June 2014, http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/86404628/putin-arrives-durban-south-africa-negotiate-south-african-authorities-brics-summit.

[342] *Russia to Focus Efforts on Expanding Cooperation Within BRICS - Putin*, TASS Russian News Agency, November 15, 2014, accessed January 7, 2015, http://itar-tass.com/en/economy/759846.

opportunity for discussing bilateral relations among BRICS members as well as for developing a road map for future joint collaboration and issuing joint statements. However, institutionalisation of the BRICS group and achieving consensus on key global issues is crucial if the five countries are to translate economic power into political power. In this regard, the BRICS could be said to encompass a political *response* to global economic challenges.[343] Nevertheless, rather than being a political grouping, to a large extent, they constitute a coming together of rivals in international markets (especially African markets) with a view to meeting their individual national interests.[344] Along with other BRICS partners, Russia and South Africa have both engaged in what Carmody calls an "economization of relations" with Africa, which has a geopolitical dimension since the focus of globalisation is more on economics than security.[345] Putin acknowledged in 2012 that the BRICS partners "are still getting used to working together in this format, ... have to coordinate better on foreign policy matters and work together more closely at the UN."[346]

5.3. Russo-South African relations within the UN

For Russia, power and national interests are crucial, and the UN Security Council, as the primary body responsible for maintaining international peace and security, embodies the reality of power among states.[347] Designed to promote great power unity and originally envisioned to be used infrequently, the veto grants unequal power to the P5, giving each member the means to protect its interests.[348] Historically, the veto was important to the USSR, and specifically the broadest interpretation possible of the veto since it was on the opposing ideological side of international relations. The veto is still important to the Russian Federation which often finds itself isolated

[343] Landsberg and Moore, "BRICS, South-South Cooperation," 7.
[344] Hany Besada and Evren Tok, "South Africa in the BRICS: Soft Power Balancing and Instrumentalization," *Journal of International and Global Studies* 5, no. 2 (2014): 80, http://www.lindenwood.edu/jigs/docs/volume5Issue2/essays/76-95.pdf. An example of the challenges the BRICS forum experiences in acting as a political group was evident in the inability of the five countries to agree on a common candidate for the posts of head of the IMF in 2011 and the World Bank in 2012.
[345] Carmody, *The Rise of the BRICS in Africa*, 98.
[346] Putin, "Russia and the Changing World".
[347] The Security Council comprises 15 members: five of which are permanent members with veto power (China, France, the Russian Federation, the UK, and the US) while 10 are non-permanent members, elected by the 193-member General Assembly for a period of two years.
[348] Nick Bisley, *Great Powers in Changing International Order* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012), 71-72.

and viewed with mistrust by other major powers.[349] Power is thus available to Russia at the system level through the United Nations.

South Africa ran uncontested for its seat in the Security Council in 2007-2008, and its candidacy for the African seat in 2011-2012 was endorsed by the AU in February 2010.[350] This endorsement bolsters Russia's recognition of South Africa as a link to the rest of Africa, even if Pretoria's ability to speak for the continent of Africa remains itself a contested notion. South Africa's membership of the Council was guided by the "premise that multilateralism and respect for international law are the most appropriate means of achieving global political and economic stability and security"; a principle shared by Russia.[351] However, the two countries differ in their view on reform of the Security Council. Russia's 2013 Concept refers to "reasonable reforms" in the Council, and Russia (and China) is unwilling to have its influence diluted through reform of the Security Council. South Africa is restricted by the AU's 2005 Ezulwini Consensus which calls for two additional veto-wielding African permanent members in the Council; a clause it favours dropping.[352]

The new South Africa post-1994 and the new Russia post-1991 had a tendency to be critical of human rights abuses, as was the practice among many Western states. This changed, however, as from 2000, with Presidents Putin and Mbeki. Foreign policy under Putin sought increasingly to distance Russia from the West to try to balance US hegemony, and Mbeki's "African Renaissance" project, which sought a more prosperous continent and a strengthened leadership role for South Africa in Africa, meant that criticism of human rights records on the part of both

[349] Ibid., 72. See also, *Voting System and Records*, United Nations Security Council, accessed January 19, 2015, http://www.un.org/en/sc/meetings/voting.shtml. A negative vote by one of the P5 amounts to an effective veto as it prevents the adoption of a resolution, while an abstention will allow a resolution to be adopted if nine affirmative votes have been obtained.

[350] *Special Research Report No. 3: Security Council Elections 2010,* Security Council Report, September 17, 2010; and *Special Research Report No. 4: Security Council Elections 2006*, August 14, 2006, accessed January 19, 2015, http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/special-research-report/lookup-c-glKWLeMTIsG-b-6238577.php and http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/special-research-report/lookup-c-glKWLeMTIsG-b-2013021.php.

[351] *South Africa in the United Nations Security Council (2007-2008)*, Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic of South Africa (2009): 1, accessed January 5, 2015, http://www.southafrica-newyork.net/pmun/PDF/bookletb5.indd.pdf.

[352] Haibin, "BRICS in Global Governance," 4; *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation 2013,* Para. 29b; and *South Africa and the BRICS,* 26-27.

countries ceased.[353] In line with their shared principle of non-interference, Russia and South Africa, along with their BRICS partners, have been reluctant to use the UN to censure the human rights records of other countries.[354]

5.4. Positions adopted in the UN Security Council (2007-2008)

Between 2007 and 2008, the majority of Security Council resolutions were adopted unanimously with Russia and South Africa voting in favour in 118 out of 122 resolutions adopted. In 2007, Russia and South Africa both voted "Yes" in 52 of 56 resolutions, while in 2008, both voted "Yes" in all 66 resolutions adopted in the Security Council.[355] The two countries thus displayed similar voting positions in the Security Council, which aligned with those of the rest of the Council members. Divergence from the prevailing position in the Council was primarily due to shared concern about the politicisation of international law and the Security Council overstepping its mandate in the execution of its duties. In addition, the wording of Security Council resolutions has been important in explanations provided by Moscow and Pretoria for their voting patterns, with the two countries citing, for example, Myanmar and Zimbabwe as situations which did not constitute a threat to international peace and security. Both the Russian and South African governments have stressed the need for dialogue and multilateral diplomacy to be employed before resorting to sanctions, and, while their positions have been criticised, their voting actions have tended to coincide with the stated objectives of foreign policy documents.

Russia is not a member of NATO, which was set up in 1949 as an anti-Soviet defence bloc, and does not share its objectives. This makes its seat on the UN Security Council all the more important.[356] This position of power can be used as leverage to influence events on the global

[353] Peter Ferdinand, "Rising Powers at the UN: An Analysis of the Voting Behaviour of BRICS in the General Assembly," *Third World Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (May 2014): 385-386, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01436597.2014.893483; and Centre for Conflict Resolution, Proposal on "South Africa and the African Union," June 2014.
[354] Ferdinand, "Rising Powers at the UN," 386.
[355] National Library of South Africa, Data from "Index to Proceedings of the Security Council: Sixty-second year – 2007"; and "Index to Proceedings of the Security Council: Sixty-third year – 2008".
[356] Andrew Monaghan, "'An Enemy at the Gates' or 'From Victory to Victory'? Russian Foreign Policy," *International Affairs 84*, no. 4 (2008): 725, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25144873.

stage, and some observers suggest that Russia is doing just that in the "spoiler" role it has adopted in thwarting the objectives of the US.[357] Russia and South Africa worked together to prevent Security Council resolutions on Myanmar, Zimbabwe, condemnation of rape as a military and political weapon, and sanctions on Iran for nuclear non-proliferation violations during South Africa's first term on the Security Council. The reason given for these positions was violation of UN rules by European countries and the US which also targeted countries they viewed as hostile,[358] thereby effectively politicising the system of resolutions. The following sections will explore shared voting positions that may not have aligned with the ideals of those of Western powers.

5.4.1. The Middle East

Both Russia and South Africa abstained on Resolution 1757 of 30 May 2007 which was adopted and made binding under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and which authorised the establishment of a special tribunal to try suspects in the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. The head of the Russian delegation Vitaly Churkin and his South African counterpart Dumisani Kumalo both cited the legal shortcomings of invoking Chapter VII to adopt the resolution. Russia argued that, while appropriate for establishing the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Chapter VII was not so for Lebanon, as the issue did not pertain to international crimes against humanity and genocide. For its part, South Africa maintained that the Security Council was contravening its own mandate under the Charter, and that adopting the resolution might result in politicizing international law, thus setting a bad precedent.[359]

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[357] Thomas Graham, Jr., "World without Russia?" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 9, 1999, accessed August 13, 2011, http://carnegieendowment.org/1999/06/09/world-without-russia/eup.

[358] Adam Habib, "South Africa's Foreign Policy: Hegemonic Aspirations, Neoliberal Orientations and Global Transformation," *South Africa Journal of International Affairs* 62, no. 2 (2009): 153, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/10220460903265857.

[359] *Security Council Authorizes Establishment Of Special Tribunal To Try Suspects In Assassination Of Rafiq Hariri*, Security Council Press Release, May 30, 2007, accessed January 19, 2015, http://www.un.org/press/en/2007/sc9029.doc.htm. The formal legal basis for peace enforcement operations is Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

5.4.2. Myanmar and Zimbabwe

In January 2007, Russia and China vetoed a draft resolution on the situation in Myanmar which criticised that government's human rights and humanitarian law violations. Russia vetoed on the grounds that the resolution was outside the domain of the Security Council since the Myanmar question was being considered by other UN bodies.[360] South Africa opposed the draft resolution on similar grounds, namely that the Security Council had no mandate to sanction Myanmar for abuses that occurred internally.[361] The following year, Russia and China vetoed a draft resolution on the humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe aggravated by violence and intimidation of political opponents following the 29 March 2008 elections. Russia stated its belief that the situation in Zimbabwe did not constitute a threat to international peace and security; was an internal matter; and that regional and sub-regional mediation efforts were under way in line with the call of regional states for a continued search for a solution to the Zimbabwe situation. South Africa was criticised for voting against the draft resolution, but cited regional efforts to bring about a political resolution to the situation, as well as the AU's position against sanctions which may have negatively impacted the possibility of dialogue.[362] As Eve Fairbanks argues, South Africa's vote against imposing sanctions on Zimbabwe was contrary to the country's general human rights position, and flew in the face of events in its own history when similar sanctions had contributed to bringing an end to apartheid in 1990.[363]

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[360] *Security Council Fails To Adopt Draft Resolution On Myanmar, Owing To Negative Votes By China, Russian Federation*, Security Council Press Release, January 12, 2007, accessed January 20, 2015, http://www.un.org/press/en/2007/sc8939.doc.htm.

[361] Colum Lynch, "Russia, China Veto Resolution On Burma: Security Council Action Blocks U.S. Human Rights Effort," *The Washington Post*, January 13, 2007, accessed January 20, 2015, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/12/AR2007011201115.html. The draft resolution was S/2007/14 of 12 January 2007.

[362] *Security Council Fails To Adopt Sanctions Against Zimbabwe Leadership As Two Permanent Members Cast Negative Votes*, Security Council Press Release, July 11, 2008, accessed January 20, 2015, http://www.un.org/press/en/2008/sc9396.doc.htm. Mediation efforts were being carried out by Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and Jose Eduardo dos Santos of Angola. The draft resolution was S/2008/447 of 11 July 2008.

[363] Eve Fairbanks, "South Africa's Awkward Teenage Years," *Foreign Policy*, January 3, 2012, accessed January 5, 2015, http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/01/03/south-africas-awkward-teenage-years/.

5.5. Positions adopted in the UN Security Council (2011-2012)

Between 2011 and 2012, the majority of Security Council resolutions were adopted unanimously with Russia and South Africa voting in favour in 113 out of 119 resolutions adopted. In 2011, Russia and South Africa both voted "Yes" in 63 out of 66 resolutions, while in 2012, both voted "Yes" in 50 out of 53 resolutions adopted in the Security Council. South Africa's inclusion in the BRICS meant that in 2011, all BRICS countries sat on the UN Security Council for the first time since the bloc came into being in 2009. (Brazil had a seat in the Council from 2010-2011 and India from 2011-2012).[364] However, the notion of added bargaining power was put to the test in 2011, and what could have been an opportunity for the group to find common ground for collaboration on issues such as reform of the UN or international security did not materialise. Indeed, the bloc's failure to agree on a common approach to the crises in Libya and Syria served only to highlight the differences in individual foreign policy agendas, with lingering doubts on the part of many about the group's ability to pursue a common approach to addressing global challenges.[365] Shared ideals therefore do not necessarily translate to shared behavior. In spite of these differences, the conflicts in Libya in 2011; Syria in 2011 and 2012; and Ukraine in 2014 provide instances of Russia and South Africa working together as "spoilers" to voting patterns of the Western P5 members.

5.5.1. Libya

Russia, South Africa, and the rest of the BRICS voted in favour of Resolution 1970 which referred the situation in Libya to the International Criminal Court (ICC); called on states to prevent the sale and transfer of arms to Libya; enforced a travel ban and assets freeze on select

[364] Data from "Index to Proceedings of the Security Council: Sixty-sixth year – 2011," Dag Hammarskjöld Library Bibliographic Series No. S. 48, 2012; and Data from "Index to Proceedings of the Security Council: Sixty-seventh year – 2012," Dag Hammarskjöld Library Bibliographic Series No. S. 49, 2013, accessed 5 August 2014, http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/deplib/docs/ITP/list.htm#SC.

[365] The argument for this paragraph is based on a Centre for Conflict Resolution February 2012 proposal entitled "Strengthening South Africa's Foreign Policy: Relations with Nigeria, Southern Africa, and the UN"; and Walter Ladwig, "An Artificial Bloc Built on a Catchphrase," New York Times, March 26, 2012, cited in *South Africa and the BRICS*, 7.

Libyan officials; and set up a Council sanctions committee.[366] Adopted on 17 March 2011 without a unanimous vote, Resolution 1973 included a call for the protection of civilians; enforcement of an arms embargo; approval of a no-fly zone over Libya (subsequently implemented by NATO); and the creation of a panel of experts.[367] Russia explained its abstention on the grounds that it wanted to protect the Libyan population and prevent an escalation of the conflict, and its decision to not use its veto power was because it did not consider the resolution to be wrong. President Medvedev also expressed concerns that military action had already begun.[368]

South Africa stated that its vote was based on the need to protect civilians; ensure the speedy delivery of humanitarian assistance in Libya; and to work to support an AU special mission to Libya, which sought to find a peaceful solution to the Libya conflict.[369] By 14 April 2011, the BRICS Sanya Declaration stated the group's shared belief that there should be no use of force in Libya. While South Africa was perhaps naïve in not considering the possibility of military action by NATO beyond the no-fly zone, its support of the Sanya Declaration is in line with its statement of 18 March 2011 that it had "supported the Resolution with the necessary caveats to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Libya; and rejecting any foreign occupation or unilateral military intervention under the pretext of protection of civilians".[370]

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[366] United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1970, S/RES/1970 (2011), adopted on February 26, 2011, accessed January 16, 2015, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1970%282011%29.

[367] United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1973, S/RES/1973 (2011), adopted on March 17, 2011, accessed January 16, 2015, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973%282011%29. Libya's "Arab Spring" had begun in February 2011 after security forces fired upon protestors in Benghazi.

[368] *Statement by Dmitry Medvedev on the Situation in Libya*, Website of the President of Russia, March 21, 2011, accessed January 16, 2015, http://eng.kremlin.ru/news/1933. Russia's abstention amounted effectively to a "Yes" vote, as a veto would have meant that the US could not have intervened under a UN mandate.

[369] *Security Council Approves 'No-Fly Zone' over Libya, Authorizing 'All Necessary Measures' to Protect Civilians, by Vote of 10 in Favour with 5 Abstentions*, Security Council Meetings Coverage, March 17, 2011, accessed January 16, 2015, http://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10200.doc.htm. South Africa's BRICS partners, along with Germany, had abstained on Resolution 1973.

[370] *Sanya Declaration*, Para. 9, April 14, 2011, accessed January 13, 2015, http://www.gov.cn/misc/2011-04/14/content_1844551.htm; and *Why SA voted for UN Resolution 1973 – DIRCO*, Politics Web, March 21, 2011, accessed January 16, 2015, http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/view/politicsweb/en/page71656?oid=227081&sn=Detail&pid=71656.

5.5.2. Syria

In 2011 and 2012, Russia and China vetoed three Security Council draft resolutions on violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Syrian people.[371] Both Russia and South Africa stressed the need for a non-military solution to the Syrian crisis, and both expressed a wariness of the geopolitical designs of Western P5 members who had effectively used sanctions against Libya as a prelude to regime change. South Africa abstained (with BRICS partners Brazil and India) in an apparent stance against the politicisation of Council resolutions while Russia expressed alarm that the solution to the Libyan situation could become a template for future actions that may include NATO.[372] The situation in Libya and Syria illustrate the contestation around the notion of responsibility to protect (R2P) which urges action by the international community to protect populations at risk from egregious human rights abuses. While South Africa has been more willing to support the principle, Russia's support of R2P has been rhetorical, and it has invoked the principle whenever its interests have been at stake.[373]

5.5.3. Ukraine

Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014 and its position on the ongoing conflict in Ukraine are ostensibly based on the notion of identity, as discussed earlier.[374] With regard to Ukraine, the July 2014 Fortaleza Declaration called for "dialogue, de-escalation ... and restraint from all the actors involved", and invoked "universally recognized human rights and fundamental

[371] The draft resolutions were: S/2011/612 of 4 October 2011; S/2012/77 of 4 February 2012; and S/2012/538 of 19 July 2012. By the time of the draft resolution in October 2011, the UN estimated that about 2,700 people had been killed in Syria since the protest movement in the country – part of the wider "Arab Spring" – had begun in mid-March 2011. Mention of diplomatic efforts by Russia and South Africa (along with Brazil, India, and Turkey among others) to address the human rights situation in Syria is made in draft resolution S/2011/612.

[372] *Security Council Fails To Adopt Draft Resolution Condemning Syria's Crackdown On Anti-Government Protestors, Owing To Veto By Russian Federation, China*, Security Council Meetings Coverage, October 4, 2011, accessed January 20, 2015, http://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10403.doc.htm. See also, http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39935#.VL4vJS6sbb5.

[373] *South Africa and the BRICS*, 21.

[374] This section is partly based on *Russia-Ukraine Conflict: A Constructivist's Critique of a Realist Perspective*, Applying International Relations Theory to the Real World, accessed February 4, 2015, http://ellad-ir-theory.blogspot.com/2014/04/russia-ukraine-conflict-constructivists.html.

freedoms".[375] Indeed, South Africa, the rest of the BRICS, and 26 other African countries had abstained in a March 2014 UN resolution calling on Member States not to recognise changes in the status of the Crimea region. The non-condemnation of Russia in the Fortaleza Declaration and the abstention in the UN resolution represent a geopolitical victory for Putin. As Oliver Stuenkel notes, emerging economies chose not to side with the US in declaring Russia a pariah state over the Ukraine conflict, showing that the West "can no longer co-opt emerging powers into adopting their positions".[376] While Russia can tout the importance of upholding rules such as international law or multilateral diplomacy, in true realist fashion, it can also set aside these principles if it believes that its national interests are being threatened, such as in the case of Georgia in 2008 and Crimea in 2014. Because Russia's security and survival is tantamount, any conflict between international obligations and national interests will see the latter win.[377] This of course is not unique to Russia, but it is striking because of Moscow's rhetoric of upholding international law. The annexation of Crimea in March 2014 and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine are important as they demonstrate the actions of a resurgent Russia on the international stage whose identity and shared beliefs define its behaviour in the international system.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation took significant steps to becoming a full partner in the world's international institutions. Russia inherited the permanent UN Security Council seat formerly held by the USSR in December 1991, and is also a member of the BRICS bloc, which was originally formed as BRIC in June 2009. Russia's membership of the P5 allows it to use its veto power as leverage to influence global events and to play a soft balancing role of thwarting US actions on the international stage. Membership of the BRICS group has proved beneficial to both Moscow and Pretoria. For its part, South Africa has acted as a fellow

[375] *Sixth BRICS Summit – Fortaleza Declaration*, Para. 44, accessed February 3, 2015, http://brics6.itamaraty.gov.br/media2/press-releases/214-sixth-brics-summit-fortaleza-declaration.
[376] Anthony Boadle, "BRICS Neutrality on Ukraine a Diplomatic Win for Putin," Reuters, July 15, 2014, accessed February 2, 2015, http://in.reuters.com/article/2014/07/14/us-brics-summit-putin-idINKBN0FJ2MV20140714. The Resolution on the "Territorial integrity of Ukraine" dated 24 March 2014 (draft A/68/L.39) was adopted at the 68th 193-member UN General Assembly on 27 March 2014. The non-binding resolution followed a referendum held on 16 March 2014 in which 97 percent of people in Crimea voted to secede from Ukraine and join Russia. See also, http://rt.com/news/crimea-referendum-results-official-250/
[377] Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 60, 151.

“spoiler” in the Security Council and also provides access to economic opportunities in the rest of Africa.

Concluding reflections

Both the UN Security Council and the BRICS lend a measure of international prestige to Russia and South Africa. Shared beliefs between the two – including recognition of the sovereignty of states, the principle of non-interference, the politicisation of international law, and the perceived mandate of the Security Council – have been reflected in similar voting behaviour in the Council between 2007 and 2008 and 2011 and 2012. Examples include decisions on Myanmar and Zimbabwe which did not align with norms of international society on human rights. In the case of membership of BRICS, Russia has attributed a certain identity to South Africa, that of a so-called “gateway” to Africa, which provides the impetus for it embracing Pretoria’s accession to the grouping; with the two countries using it as an opportunity to strengthen bilateral relations.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

> "*Putin is a product of the reaction to the national humiliation, collapse, and degradation that we saw [in Russia] in the 1990s.*"[378] – Mikhail Leontev, Russian TV Commentator

Russia's identity and status after the collapse of the Soviet Union changed from that of a superpower fighting proxy wars in Africa to a new state seeking to carve out a new identity for itself that was independent of the USSR. After the Cold War, Russia withdrew from Africa in the 1990s and sought closer ties with the West in an effort to concentrate on its domestic economic affairs. An inconsistent notion of how to recover economically from the collapse of the Soviet Union; build a democracy with no history of such; and gain a sense of dignity in the international arena translated into an indecisive foreign policy under Boris Yeltsin in the 1990s.

Russia's search for great power status and for recognition of its role in international politics (particularly evident under Vladimir Putin) is the basis for using a constructivist approach in this study of Russia's changing relations with South Africa since the end of the Cold War. Putin entered the political arena in 2000, and since then, has become the most prominent and influential person in Russia. Ideas matter for constructivists, and Putin has been able to reconstruct Russian social and political values. Putin's relatively anonymous background and lack of political experience allowed him to start his term in office with a blank slate.[379] In this way, he has been able to reconstruct Russia's national identity from its lowest point during Yeltsin's erratic administration to one of a resurgent power today. With Putin came a more measured, disciplined, and eventually assertive foreign policy backed up by Foreign Policy Concepts that clearly state Russia's intention to play a leading role on the international stage. As the individual responsible for Russia's actions in the international arena, Vladimir Putin has ushered in a resurgent Russia that is once again playing a more active role in international affairs, and for whom economic expedience has necessitated a return to Africa. Andrew

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[378] *Should We Be Scared of Russia*, BBC Panorama documentary, October 2008, accessed January 20, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cTw_eXySSo8.
[379] Lo, *Vladimir Putin*, 16; and Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, 70.

Monaghan points out that the different understanding of terms and issues by Western governments and Russia means that it will be hard for Russia to have true partnership with the West.[380] Moscow sees its relationship with the West (particularly the US) as a zero-sum game: if it resurges, America will decline.[381] Domestically, Putin's ideals promote the notion of great power (*derzhava*) [382] as being of primary importance to Russia, which means that Russians may have to make sacrifices due to current economic sanctions imposed as a result of the ongoing Ukraine conflict. This notion of great power also involves having an equal voice with Western states and no longer being dictated to as was the case in the early Yeltsin years. Western leaders however seek a political trajectory for Russia that aligns with their ideal of a well-managed and strong global economy,[383] which does not include the idea of Russia as a great power.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation has sought recognition as a major power globally and its foreign policy activities have stemmed from this objective. Russia does not have a consistent Africa strategy, but it has identified South Africa as a major partner with which to collaborate on the international stage, and South Africa, in turn, recognises Russia's strategic potential. Russia still has a "special relationship" with South Africa: the governments of the two countries share similar ideals and notions and speak the same political language (that of multipolarity, sovereignty, and non-interference). There is also a shared history of support by the Soviet Union for the South African ruling party's fight against apartheid. As the site of an ideological Cold War-era struggle between the Soviet Union and the US, South Africa was strategically, economically, and politically important in the Southern African sub-region, and remains so today. However, the relationship between Russia and South Africa has changed from the Soviet era, and this is due primarily to economic and geopolitical necessity.

The role that South Africa can play in advancing Russia's national interests forms a core part of how and why Russia interacts with South Africa in international relations. Putin, who is a

[380] Monaghan, "The New Russian Foreign Policy Concept," 7.
[381] Arkady Ostrovsky, "Enigma Variations: A Special Report on Russia," *The Economist* (2008): 3, accessed January 25, 2015, http://www.economist.com/sites/default/files/special-reports-pdfs/12629843.pdf.
[382] This idea is based on Carmody, *The Rise of the BRICS in Africa*, 91.
[383] This argument refers to Africa's political trajectory in the eyes of the West, but it is also valid for Russia. See Taylor and Williams, "Understanding Africa's Place in World Politics," 2.

pragmatic leader, has been consistent in his quest to strengthen ties with the ANC government, and the increasing number of visits between Putin and Zuma highlight the importance the two leaders attach to strengthening bilateral relations. Russia now has a new identity and a new development agenda which includes South Africa as a crucial partner in Africa. Ideology has been replaced with a business-oriented approach based on economic necessity, and South Africa has become a "place of opportunity" in business and political fora.[384] As president, Putin is vested with enormous power by the constitution and the juxtaposition of this particular man with his particular ideals and beliefs is important in how relations have developed with South Africa over the last decade and a half. Moscow and Pretoria have a strategic relationship with strong political ties, but economic and commercial relations need to be strengthened further, and both countries need to diversify in order to promote economic growth. Russia's considerable investments in South Africa's minerals sector reflect its pursuit of national wealth and economic growth in the global arena, and South Africa's large reserves of mineral resources and Russia's depleting resources represent opportunities to strengthen bilateral economic cooperation.

Russia's membership of international institutions is driven by *realpolitik* and the desire to establish itself once more as a great power in a multipolar international system. Nonetheless, under Putin, the country's interests are also driven by identity formation and a desire for recognition on the world stage. In this way, Russia's foreign policy constitutes a blend of interest-based *realpolitik* and social constructivism. Russia seeks "collective decision-making in addressing global issues",[385] and through membership of influential institutions such as the Security Council, the G20, and the BRICS, has been able to strengthen its global position. The Russian Federation has recovered from the indignities of the Yeltsin years and pursues a confident and autonomous foreign policy, often acting as a "spoiler" on the international stage. To this end, South Africa has proved to be an important collaborator in the UN Security Council and in the BRICS, through voting with Russia to block resolutions on Myanmar and Zimbabwe, and failing to condemn Russia on the issue of Ukraine. South Africa, as a significant economic and political voice in Africa, can therefore help Russia in its efforts at resurgence – both

[384] This point is based on Carmody, *The Rise of the BRICS in Africa*, 135.
[385] *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation 2013*, Para. 4, 30.

geopolitically and economically. It can also help Russia to counterbalance US hegemony, and score what the Kremlin sees as political victories in the game of power politics with Washington.

The USSR represented an alternative development model for the Third World. To a certain extent, history is repeating itself with Russia now using the BRICS forum to advocate an alternative development model for emerging economies and developing countries, and a more equitable global order. However, there is no longer any ideology attached: Russia's foreign policy is designed to maximise economic opportunities that stem from globalisation. In this regard, Russia welcomed South Africa's admission to the BRIC as a representative of Africa that could help it to shape an international system that is more inclusive and representative of contemporary geopolitics, and that would also provide possibilities for economic cooperation. South Africa's inclusion in the BRICS heralded a shift from mainly economic cooperation to development cooperation:[386] through its New Development Bank, the BRICS group is seeking to create an alternative dimension of power in providing resources that can be used to influence other states.[387]

In conclusion, this study has shown that, in much the same way as other external actors, Russia is pursuing a wider utilitarian Africa policy that is based on self-interest and economic and strategic considerations, but that is also entrenched in issues of identity. South Africa, as a major industrial and economic power in Africa, can help in this regard. In seeking to find an answer to why relations between Russia and South Africa have changed, the constructivist approach would argue that it is due largely to a change in Russia's identity and the way it regards South Africa. The Soviet-era negative identification of apartheid South Africa as a racist, imperialist, client of the West has changed. Moscow and Pretoria now form part of a cooperative security system in which they seek to advance their objectives (or what Wendt calls "power politics") through shared norms rather than relative power.[388] Issues that have been raised by the study and their implications for further research in the area of Russia-South Africa relations include: how can South Africa be a more equal partner in any Russia-South Africa collaboration; how can

[386] *South Africa and the BRICS*, 1.
[387] This argument is based on Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations*, 170.
[388] Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it," 401.

economic and commercial relations between Moscow and Pretoria be strengthened; how can Russia increase its participation in Africa given its current isolation from the US and the EU; and what is Russia's future role in BRICS, in Africa, and on the international stage given its current economic crisis and China's continued rise in Africa.

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