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**The University of Cape Town**

**The Role of the Southern African Development Community Organ on Politics,  
Defence and Security**

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A dissertation submitted to

The Faculty of Humanities Department of Political Studies

The University of Cape Town in satisfaction of the requirements for

The degree of Masters of Social Science in International Relations

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September 2003

### Map of SADC Countries



Source: <http://www.schoemans.com.na/sadc/map.asp>

**Declaration**

**I the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.**

**Signature.....**

**Date.....**

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### **Acknowledgements**

The author would like to thank the following people for their contribution and unwavering support in this study:

My supervisor Professor Robert Schrire for his tireless efforts, encouragement, inspiration, guidance and constructive criticism as well as for numerous hours spent in assisting the author to produce this product. The immense sacrifice of personal time and energy is greatly appreciated. God Bless.

For the Graduate Convener, Professor Annette Seegers, and DR John Akokpari for their consistent encouragement and support.

To my best friends Professor Francis Makoala, DRs Nqosa Mahao, Makoala Marake, Motlatsi Thabane and Mr. Sehoai Santho from the National University of Lesotho for their unwavering support and encouragement.

I also want to thank greatly my wife 'Mathuso and our two daughters, Palesa and Mosa and son Thuso for their support and assistance. You mean the world to me.

Finally, I also like to extend my profound gratitude to the Lord Almighty for giving me the strength and perseverance to complete this dissertation.

Thanks to all of you and God Bless.

### **Abstract**

The Southern African countries colonial struggles and South African apartheid destabilization policies in the mid 1960s to 1980s compelled Southern African states to establish a Security Organ. This was to assist them to formulate the common defence policy.

This Organ became known as the Front Line States (FLS). However, as more countries attained independence and joined FLS, the grouping established the Southern African Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) that was later renamed the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It was SADC, which decided to establish another arm, which deals with Politics Defence and Security known as the Organ on Politics Defence and Security. The OPDS has experienced major problems in achieving its goals since its inception in June 1996. Member states had become suspicious of this body and as a result some members decided to operate outside the confines of this body. The main aim of this dissertation has been to trace the circumstances and the origin of this Security Organ and to evaluate its achievements. However, in August 2001, OPDS was renamed Organ of Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation (OPDSC). This Organ became accountable to the Summit not to the chair country, as was the case before.

The protocol of this Organ is analysed in order to evaluate the roles of this Organ in relations to SADC member states. The dissertation also indicated the success and limitations of this Organ; the political trends of the region are also discussed. Finally, the dissertation deals with the unfinished question, which focuses on the future prospects and challenges of the OPDS as a policy implementation institution of SADC.

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## Glossary

AU:	African Unity
BDF:	Botswana Defence Force
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU:	European Union
FLS:	Front Line States
HEWS:	Humanitarian Early Warning System
IPI:	International Press Institute
ISPDC:	Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee
ISDSC:	Inter-State Defence and Security Committee
JMC:	Joint Military Commission
MPLA:	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organisations
OAU:	Organisation of African Unity
OPDS:	Organ on Politics, Defence and Security
OPDSC:	Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation.
SA:	Republic of South Africa
SADB:	Southern African Democracy Barometer
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
SADCC:	Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference
SANDF:	South African National Defence Force
SARPPCO:	Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation
UN:	United Nations
UNITA:	Union of Total Independence of Angola

## Introduction

By the mid 1960s several Southern African countries were confronted with major security problems. These countries were engaged in a struggle to dislodge colonial forces from the region. They had to align themselves with the policies of the Organization of African Union (OAU). However towards the end of the 1960s and up to the 1980s, the character of their struggle changed. They were now facing another struggle as a result of apartheid in South African. The question was how to deal with a militarily powerful South Africa, the hegemon in the region. What exacerbated their problems was the fact that they were all economically dependent on South African robust economy for the employment of a high proportion of their labour.

South Africa, on the other hand, was determined to use its leverage to protect its interests. It intensified its policies of destabilization, which was later known as “total strategy”. South Africa threatened these countries with the use of force and sanctions. As a response to these threats, some Southern African countries namely, Botswana, Tanzania, Zambia and Zaire conceived a collective strategy in 1974 that was intended to alleviate this insecurity. They decided to form the first regional body which functions as both Security Organ and an economic Organ known as the Front Line States (FLS). These grouping were later joined by other regional members and went on to form the Southern Africa Coordination Conference and then Southern Africa development Community which gave birth to the Organ of Politics Defence and Security in 1996. FLS run concurrently with both SADCC and SADC.

The major purpose of this dissertation is to evaluate the performance of this Organ since its inception. The circumstances that led to the establishment of this Organ will also be evaluated. The dissertation will argue that while the establishment of the Organ was motivated by noble intentions it could not achieve much because realism is the dominant regional paradigm on issues of Security and Common Defence policies. The dissertation will furthermore argue that the prevailing mistrust between these countries had been detrimental to the success of this Organ.

### **Research Methodology**

In undertaking this study qualitative method will be used. This will include a combination of policy documents and policy analysis relating to relevant protocols, which were instrumental in establishing the Organ on Politics Defence and Security. A literature review will be undertaken and other documentary sources related to Southern African development Community would also be explored.

### **Chapter Outline**

The structure of the study presents a variable-based analysis, which focuses on Southern African Development Community countries and the role of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. The first chapter examines the origin of the first Security Organ in the region and its evolution. It also analyses the circumstances, which led to the establishment of this Organ.

In the second chapter we examine what the Organ on Politics Defence and Security was established to achieve and to what extent it has achieved its objectives. We also evaluate the first two military interventions in the region and explore the role of the Organ in these conflicts.

Chapter Three analyses several factors such as the institutional confusion, different levels of development and lack of collective conflict management and resolution strategy and argue that these were some of the factors, which led to the Organ failure.

Chapter Four discusses the values the Organ was designed to protect, examine problem cases and analyses the Organ responses these problems. Chapter Five is an evaluation of the Organ in relations to its principles, objectives and its entire performance. This chapter argues that the goals of the Organ were too ambitious and could not be achieved under the current high lever of mistrust between member states. The chapter goes further to analyse why the Organ could not perform effectively and efficiently as it was expected.

In the final chapter, we focus on the unfinished question. What should be done for the Organ to be successful and what role should SADC as a whole assume in conflict management and resolution? The chapter put forward structures that could ameliorate the prevailing situation and thus assist both the Organ and the Summit to carryout their functions efficiently and effectively.

## **Chapter One: The Origin and Evolution of SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The evolution and origin of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS) can be traced back to the period of Southern African countries colonial struggles and the apartheid regime policies of destabilisation in the region. These major events in the region were instrumental in uniting several of the Southern African countries. They became aware that they were confronted by the same enemy-South Africa; hence logic dictated that they cooperate to defend themselves.

It was at this juncture that these countries, Botswana, Tanzania, Zambia and Zaire conceived the idea of forming a security grouping to confront these forces. They engaged in concerted efforts to establish the first Military Organ that was going to serve as a catalyst to these security threats. Suffice it to say that these efforts culminated in the establishment of Southern African Development Community itself. It was after the establishment of this regional body that OPDS came into being.

However, the demise of apartheid as the major security threat in the region, following democratically elected government in South Africa, may have been expected to usher peace in the region as it was assumed in some quarters. This belief may have been strengthened by the expansion of regional developments and security mechanism, thereby facilitating former adversaries to work together. In many respects however, the instability in the region continued. The armed conflict and other security threats did not end, as it was perceived. The conflicts in Angola continued and so was the instability in the Democratic Republic of Congo and political instability in Lesotho.

Furthermore, security in the region was redefined to include not only the military but non-military threats to security as well. In fact external threats to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states has been replaced by threats such as unemployment, poverty, HIV/Aids, economic decline, human rights abuses, and good governance. The establishment of OPDS was aimed at addressing these regional issues as well.

### **1.1 The Circumstances Which Led to the Formation of SADC Organ**

The impetus for the creation of SADC, by Southern African countries, which in turn gave birth to SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, lay in several different circumstances prominent from 1969. Firstly, Southern African countries were involved in collective armed struggles against colonial rule and white minority government in South Africa. These struggles led to the development of a collective identity, forged in the heat of conflict. These countries were involved in the struggle for independence whereby they sought to achieve self-determination. Secondly, from the middle 1960s, their struggles intensified. This led to the development of deeply rooted bonds between member states as a result of their similar violent political history in the region. Because of these experiences, they shared analogous moral and ideological affinities. Thirdly, their identities were strengthened further by the ferocity of the onslaught mounted by the South African regime in the middle 70s until the late 80s. Finally, all these countries were economically dependent on the robust South African economy for the employment of the masses of their population, as well as trade, communication, and migrant labour that was centred on the industries the economy of South Africa. These were the circumstances, which motivated the establishment of a Security Organ of their own. Such an Organ would guard against threats, especially those engineered by South Africa.

### **1.2 The Formation of Front Line State (FLS)**

The formation of the first Military Organ within this region dates back to the consultations between these countries that started in 1969. During this period, several countries of Southern Africa held their first meeting in Lusaka, Zambia. This meeting adopted the Lusaka Manifesto, which was intended to assist the regional liberation struggles in tandem with the Organisation of African Union (OAU). This proclamation also established a regional grouping, the Frontline States (FLS).<sup>1</sup> Pitso<sup>2</sup> argued that these efforts culminated in the establishment of the above interstate security co-operation in

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges*; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003).

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<sup>2</sup> Major General G.L. Pitso "Southern African Regional Security" in <http://www.mil.za/CSANDF/CJSupp/TrainingFormation/DefenceCollege/Researchpapers...> 3. (2003/08/06)

1974, when Botswana, Zaire, Tanzania and Zambia formed the Front Line States to coordinate their efforts for the liberation of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. As more Southern African countries received independence, they joined FLS in its concerted efforts to resist colonial rule and white minority rule in South Africa. While FLS was formed formally in 1975 to advance the liberation struggle among countries in Southern Africa, it also “created a security substructure called the inter-state Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC), which met regularly, yet informally, at both Ministerial and Official Levels.”<sup>3</sup> It also functioned on an informal basis with the longest serving statesman serving as a chairman.

The formation of FLS as the first Security Organ in Southern Africa stem from the fact that “for almost half a century the South African apartheid state was the main source of insecurity and instability in Southern Africa, and on the continent”.<sup>4</sup>

FLS was a Security Organ formed to exclude the apartheid regime and promote further cooperation with member states in the political and economic spheres. In the 1970s and throughout the following decade, South Africa used threats of force and economic sanctions as its major policy instruments in the region. FLS was therefore geared towards protecting the region against these policies. It was these events that led to the above countries spearheading the formation of FLS. In 1975 the collapse of the Portuguese regime in Mozambique altered the regional balance and Zaire left the FLS. Similarly South Africa intensified its efforts to ensure that other Southern African countries did not escape its dominance.

The then Prime Minister of South Africa, Johannes Voster, proposed the establishment of a constellation of Southern African States in 1975. This was an aggression-based model, which encompassed both military and economic measures. His successor P.W. Botha expanded this model in 1977. This became a major security problem in the whole sub-region. He proposed a policy of “total strategy”.<sup>5</sup> Most independent countries in the

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<sup>3</sup>Anthoni Van Nieuwkerk, “Regionalism into Globalism? War into Peace? SADC and Ecowas compared” in *African Security Review*, Vol.10 No2 (2001), 11.

<sup>4</sup>Tandeka C. Nkiwane, “The Quest for Good Governance’ in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges; A project of the International Peace Academy*, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 58.

<sup>5</sup> Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges; A project of the International Peace Academy*, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 34.

region were receiving military support from the Eastern Block. Pretoria perceived this action by the Communist countries as a major threat to its national security and interests. Therefore, it defined these threats as “total onslaught” and it responded swiftly with a policy of “total strategy,” designed to protect its national interests, which it argued were threatened by communists.<sup>6</sup> This threat brought about different security conceptions in the region. For instance, “security was then seen in zero-sum terms: the security of one meant the insecurity of the other, a view that deepened even further as the conflict gained a regional character”.<sup>7</sup> Political instability within the Region was therefore associated with apartheid destabilising policies. Therefore,

the concept of total strategy was based on South Africa’s claim of a right to intervene in any African state south of the equator, and South Africa’s perception that it was surrounded by a “total onslaught” of liberation forces.<sup>8</sup>

It was during this period that the region witnessed South Africa’s flagrant violation of and refusal to adhere to accepted norms of international law. The regime engaged in series of military incursions and destabilisation in neighbouring countries such as Mozambique, Lesotho, Angola, Zimbabwe and Botswana.<sup>9</sup> In order to carry out these incursions, between 1975 and 1985, South African defence expenditure rose dramatically from 692 million to 4.27 billion rands.<sup>10</sup>

From 1977, active consultations were undertaken by representatives of the Frontline States, culminating in a meeting of Foreign Ministries of the Frontline States in Gaborone, in May 1979. Another meeting of Ministers responsible for economic development was subsequently convened in Arusha, Tanzania, in July 1979. The above meetings focused on security issues facing the region. The Arusha meeting led to the birth of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) a year

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 34.

<sup>8</sup> Tandeka C. Nkiwane, “The Quest for Good Governance’ in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges*; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 59-60.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 60.

later.<sup>11</sup> The founding members were Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. These countries were later joined by Namibia after attaining her independence in 1990.

### **1.3 Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC)**

The formation of this body was a direct response to the South African proposal to establish a constellation of Southern African states. The SADCC was formed with four principal objectives, namely:

- a) to reduce Member States dependence, particularly, but not only, on apartheid South Africa
- b) to implement programmes and projects with national and regional impact;
- c) to mobilise Member States' resources in the quest for collective self-reliance; and
- d) to secure international understanding and support.<sup>12</sup>

Through SADCC, the founding fathers sought first to demonstrate the tangible benefits of working together, and to cultivate a climate of confidence and trust among member States. SADCC was finally constituted in April 1980. The founding fathers made a declaration in Lusaka, Zambia about the regional economic liberalisation, which conforms to the above objectives. However, the

key objectives of the SADCC were to harmonize developments among the countries of Southern Africa (excluding South Africa and South West Africa/Namibia) and to reduce economic dependence on South Africa, while simultaneously supporting the liberation struggles through FLS.<sup>13</sup>

During this period, the geostrategic focus of all Southern African states on military security and destabilisation was diametrically opposed to the “total strategy” of the South African regime.

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<sup>11</sup> History, Evolution and Current Status,

<http://www.sadc.int/index.php?&lang=english&path=about/background&page=history> (accessed 8-8-2003)

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Tandeka C. Nkiwane, “The Quest for Good Governance’ in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges; A project of the International Peace Academy*, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 61.

These countries foreign policies advocated military confrontation with South Africa (SA) from the 1970s up to 1990. The FLS argued that the defeat of apartheid would bring about the removal of the security threat posed by SA and a new level of cooperation and economic development. However, some members proposed the creation of a new political organisation to run parallel to the FLS. This new organisation was to be known as Southern African Development Community (SADC). The 1992 treaty subsequently embraced this position.

#### **1.4 Southern African Development Community (SADC)**

In 1990 after four years of consultations, Southern African states decided to formalise SADCC by giving it an appropriate legal status in the Summit of Heads of States and Governments in Harare, Zimbabwe. It was at this stage that democratisation in SA was imminent and

the Summit articulated its confidence that those events (in SA leading towards democratisation) would... take the region out of an era of conflict and confrontation, to one of co-operation; in a climate of peace, security and stability.<sup>14</sup>

In January 1992, the Windhoek Treaty, which changed SADCC to Southern African Development Community (SADC) was signed in Windhoek Namibia.<sup>15</sup>

The origin of SADC therefore, lies in the SADCC. According to Van Nieuwkerk, SADC was formed “as part of the strategy of FLS to counter apartheid destabilisation in the Southern African region.”<sup>16</sup> Therefore, SADCC motivation was to reduce its member’s economic dependence on the racist South African regime and co-ordinate foreign aid and investment in the region.

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<sup>14</sup> Major General G.L. Pitso “Southern African Regional Security” in <http://www.mil.za/CSANDF/CJSupp/TrainingFormation/DefenceCollege/Researchpapers...3>. (2003/08/06).

<sup>15</sup> Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges*; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003

<sup>16</sup> Anthoni Van Nieuwkerk, “Regionalism into Globalism? War into Peace? SADC and Ecowas compared” in *African Security Review*, Vol.10 No2 (2001), 11.

The above Treaty, which established the Southern African Development Community (SADC), committed member States to the following fundamental principles:

- Sovereign equality of Member States
- Solidarity, peace and security
- Human rights, democracy and rule of law
- Equity, balance and mutual benefit<sup>17</sup>

The SADC treaty redefined security threats facing the region. It heralds a new phase in regional cooperation and security. This treaty was motivated by positive events in South Africa whereby the apartheid regime was ending. Member states committed themselves to “a framework and mechanism to strengthen regional solidarity and provide for mutual peace and security”<sup>18</sup> in the region. This new security framework addressed non-military areas and signalled the expansion of SADC focus on both politics and economic issues.

In 1994, a democratically elected South Africa joined the SADC. This meant that a long-standing military threat was removed.

However, the demise of apartheid replaced military threats with equally severe non-political and economic threats. Some of these were lack of political will towards democratisation exhibited by some member states, migration which triggered tension between SADC members, and escalating economic problems such as unemployment, weak regional economies and increasing crime rates. It was upon recognition of these problems that it was concluded that no single country in the region was capable of addressing these problems on its own. Therefore, “they require a transnational approach founded on cooperation and co-ordinated strategy that responsive to military, economic, political and social challenges”.<sup>19</sup>

In order to address these problems, a SADC Parliamentary forum was established. This body was to become a channel for the implementation of policies that facilitated regional

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<sup>17</sup> History, Evolution and Current Status, <http://www.sadc.int/index.php?&lang=english&path=about/background&page=history> (accessed 8-8-2003).

<sup>18</sup> Tandeka C. Nkiwane, “The Quest for Good Governance’ in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges; A project of the International Peace Academy*, ed. (London: Lynnc Rienner Publishers 2003), 61.

<sup>19</sup> Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges; A project of the International Peace Academy*, ed. (London: Lynnc Rienner Publishers 2003), 35.

integration. Some of these policies involved the forum's "promotion of peace, democracy, security, and stability on the basis of collective responsibility and its support for the development of permanent conflict resolution mechanisms in the sub- region".<sup>20</sup> This was in accordance with the 1992 SADC treaty objectives. Member states saw the opportunity of creating a common security regime, in keeping with the fifth objective of SADC, which advocated promotion of peace, common defence, and effective security policy in the region, as well as management of conflicts through peaceful means. It was envisaged that, in order to achieve mutual security "the region needs therefore to establish a framework and mechanism to strengthen regional solidarity and provide for mutual peace and security".<sup>21</sup>

SADC formal involvement in security co-ordination, conflict resolution and military co-operation was introduced at the SADC workshop on democracy, peace and security in Windhoek from 11 to 16 June 1994. The workshop recommended that conflict resolution and political cooperation should become an independent sector, which would be allocated to a member state to coordinate. The workshop also recommended that a protocol on peace, security and conflict resolution be formulated. On the 30<sup>th</sup> June 1994 FLS decided to dissolve and become the political and security wing of SADC. These initiatives culminated in a July 1994 workshop

which recommended SADC cooperation in political, human rights, and security spheres—a recommendation that formed the basis for the decision at the SADC Gaborone Summit in August 1994 to establish a formal SADC sector on political cooperation, democracy, peace and security.<sup>22</sup>

These recommendations were also endorsed by Southern African nongovernmental organisations (NGO's), which participated in Windhoek especially the proposal of SADC Human Rights Commission. The August 1994 Summit also agreed to disband the FLS

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Mwesiga Baregu 'Economic and Military Security' in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges; A project of the International Peace Academy*, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 36.

<sup>22</sup> Tandeka C. Nkiwane, "The Quest for Good Governance" in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges; A project of the International Peace Academy*, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 61.

and integrated all its operations into the SADC sector taking with it ISDSC (formerly part of FLS). Since most SADC sectors had been allocated to individual member states, Zimbabwe was designated to coordinate FLS security operations.

The region continued to face other security threats, not least among them the mass inflow of refugees across borders. These threats made regional cooperation not only desirable but also necessary in the spheres of politics and security. The formation of a formal sector on Political Cooperation, Democracy, Peace and Security was to develop cooperation and commit member states to peaceful resolution of inter and intra-state conflicts in the short term, while in the long term the focus was to develop a common defence policy. The founding fathers of SADC envisaged it to be firstly an institutional approach towards cooperation in functional areas and secondly as an economic and political community whereby cooperation would lead to progress in the security sphere.

Another attempt was made by SADC to enhance this cooperation. The region envisaged the establishment of an Association of Southern African states (ASAS) as a successor to FLS in Zimbabwe on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1995. It was proposed that this Organ should have two committees, one serving political and the other defence matters. Like both its predecessors FLS and SADCC its chairmanship were to rotate according to seniority. The ASAS proposal was taken to the 1995 SADC Summit in Johannesburg where it was postponed indefinitely. The summit further decided that any final decision on security architecture would be made in the 1996 Maseru Summit.

### **1.5 Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS)**

It was as a result of these circumstances that the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security was created in Botswana in June 1996. In fact, significant initiatives within SADC were made since the 1992 treaty in Windhoek, Namibia. The region recognised and undertook collective security arrangements that were put in place in 1996. The Organ on Politics Defence and Security was established as the culmination of several discussions that began as early as the 1980s. Baregu and Landsberg argued that

the concept of an OPDS was proposed at a meeting of the SADC Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security, held in Gaborone, Botswana, on 18

January 1996. The SADC Heads of state and government then adopted and approved the concept on the 28 June 1996.<sup>23</sup>

The establishment of OPDS was motivated by several additional factors. SADC member states became aware that with the end of cold war, they had to develop common security policies. Contemporary society and modern technological age have made;

common problems to transcend national borders, thus states cannot protect their citizens through unilateral military means. They share an interest in joint survival and should therefore organise their security policies in co-operation with each other.<sup>24</sup>

These were some of the issues that informed the creation of OPDS within SADC.

These countries envisaged OPDS as an institutional mechanism that would coordinate their activities and policies in the areas of politics, defence, and security.

what was even more salient about this Organ was the fact that some of its principles envisaged the management of conflicts through “negotiations, mediation and arbitration; and military intervention will only be condoned after all possible alternatives have been pursued in accordance with the charter of the OAU and the United Nations.”<sup>25</sup>

It was clear that the member states were committed to respecting territorial integrity and the sovereignty of states. On the other hand, this pledge made it clear that the organ was not going to be an autonomous body from SADC.

Regional security in Southern Africa had motivated considerable debate since the end of the cold war. The debate accelerated after the end of apartheid in South Africa.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>24</sup> Heribert Dieter, Guy Lamb and Henning Melber, “Prospects for regional Co-operation in South Africa’ in *Regionalism and Regional Integration: a Debate of Current Aspects and Issues*, Discussion Paper 11 (Nordiska AfraInstitutet, Uppsala 2001), 64.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

What was most salient about this debate were several attempts made to redefine the meaning of security, de-emphasising traditional state centric definitions in favour of a broader definition. The traditional view of security was seen as too narrow and not developmental in nature. This new broader thinking about security derived from the fact that security, viewed through the military lens of threat perception, has often led to high defence expenditures and confrontation rather than negotiation. It has tended to be state-centric rather than people-centric.<sup>26</sup>

### **1.6 Non-Military Security Threats**

The new security thinking has become multifaceted and come to include various aspects that have a potential to transform themselves into security threats for both intra-and-interstate conflicts. Issues like bad governance, environmental degradation, poverty and disease have been added to the new security thinking. This security paradigm recognises military security as part of the development within the SADC region.

While the new security thinking has made its mark in several areas, including motivating the establishment of OPDS, its impact within SADC appears to be negligible as far as member states were concerned. For instance, civil society and academic sectors were never involved prior to the establishment of OPDS to participate in this challenging task. The exclusion of civil society in this area has been viewed as contrary to the new security thinking. This meant that an important input to the Organ policy making machinery had been left out. The new security thinking also requires shared values. This stresses the observance of human rights, democratic freedoms, and non-violent means of conflict resolution, justice and reconciliation. Therefore, SADC must conceptualise new security thinking which ascribes an active role to civil society in establishing a people-centred approach to security issues.

Despite the end of the cold war and the demise of apartheid South Africa, the region had been consistently experiencing intra and inter-states conflicts, which threatened peace and security in the region. For instance, aside from the 25 year war in Angola and

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<sup>26</sup> France Komegay and Simon Chesterman, "Southern Africa's Evolving Security Architecture: Problems and Prospects" in Program on Developing Regional and Sub-Regional Security Mechanisms in Africa; Conference held by International Peace Academy in Partnership with the African Renaissance Institute the Southern African Regional Institute for Policy Studies and the Department of International Relations, University of the Witwatersrand, in Botswana, Gaborone (December 11-13- 2000), 1.

instability in Zimbabwe and Lesotho, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has involved seven states from Southern Africa and the Great Lakes region, Angola, Burundi; Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe, as well as Chad.<sup>27</sup>

In 1998, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola claimed that they had intervened in the Democratic Republic of Congo on behalf of the OPDS to assist the President of that country. Similarly, South Africa (SA) and Botswana also justified their intervention in Lesotho on the basis of the SADC, barely a month after declining to do so in the Democratic Republic of Congo. However, the same intervention was not extended to the protracted civil war in Angola, which only came to an end after the death of long time Guerrilla leader Jonas Savimbi in 2002.

In all these cases the SADC Organ on Politics Defence and Security was largely ineffectual. Furthermore, other factors within a broader security definition, like HIV/AIDS, poverty and extreme inequalities presented a major threat to security in Southern Africa. In addressing these challenges, SADC had delegated responsibility to OPDS as an Organ representing a common security regime in the region. However, this common security regime whose functions include the prevention and resolution of high intensity conflict-has itself been a source of considerable tension among member states and has yet to be constituted.<sup>28</sup>

The ten-year delay in establishing a common security vision has been attributed to animosity between the Republics of South Africa and Zimbabwe.

However, within OPDS there is another structure, inherited from the now defunct Front Line States (FLS), namely, the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC). This structure serves as another arm of OPDS in addressing some of the above challenges. The 1996 protocol had made conflict resolution through peaceful means its top priority. This means that OPDS must find means of addressing conflicts within the region by peaceful means and resorting to intervention as a last resort.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>28</sup> Nathan, Laurie (2002) "Organ Failure": A Review of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security: In *Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa*; ed. Laakso Liisa (Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and peace Building in Africa, Europe, SADC and ECOWAS. University of Helsinki, Department of Political Science 2002), 62.

The OPDS was established when member states were going through democratic transitions. Countries like Mozambique, Lesotho, Namibia, Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania aspired to become democracies. However, in these countries, democracy is imperfect unlike in South Africa where there are good signs of democratic consolidation. It was also during this period when some member states like Swaziland and the DRC, were increasingly unwilling to democratise, while ten other member states have democratised. The 2002 Zimbabwe elections created more controversy within the SADC region. There were several allegations by outside observers that the outcome was rigged. This exacerbated serious discontent and polarisation between the ruling party and the major opposition party. The country has since experienced acute lawlessness through shattering unrest, isolation from the international community including suspension from the Commonwealth, special/smart sanctions, rapid economic decline and the deterioration of its currency.

The origin and evolution of SADC Organ on Politics Defence and Security lay in initiatives taken by Southern African countries in response to insecurity emanating from South Africa, as well as the acknowledgement that in order to overcome their political, economic and security problems they must work together. Following some misunderstandings that arose within member states about the role of OPDS, this Security Organ was renamed the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation (OPDSC). This decision was ratified in Malawi, Blantyre Summit in August 2001. OPDS was established to mitigate these security problems. as will be analysed in the following chapter.

## **Chapter Two: The Goals of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security**

### **2.0 Introduction**

The creation of the Organ on Politics Defence and Security was a major milestone within the Southern African Development Community. This Organ was to mediate through peaceful means both intra-state and inter-states conflicts within the region. In order to perform these functions, the SADC Summit formulated a protocol, which paved the way for the OPDS to execute this enormous task. As such, appropriate bureaucratic institutions were also created which were to assist this Organ to implement its mandate. These institutions were also staffed by and responsible to SADC while on the other hand they were also responsible to the Organ, as the SADC implementing body. While OPDS was frequently successful in carrying out its mandate, in other cases it was not so successful.

For instance, two years after the OPDS was created there were two military interventions in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Kingdom of Lesotho. These interventions were followed in 2002 by the disputed elections in Zimbabwe. The region was faced with two major problems even before these interventions; the failure of Swaziland to democratise while most member states have done so including the newest member and regional power the Republic of South Africa (SA), as well as the continuing and protracted civil war in Angola. It is the task of this chapter to evaluate the performance of OPDS in addressing these challenges.

### **2.1 *The Establishment of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security***

On the 28<sup>th</sup> June 1996, the Heads of States and government of Southern African Development Community launched the protocol, which established the 'Organ on Politics, Defence and Security' (OPDS)<sup>29</sup>. According to Cilliers, the newly appointed South African Minister of Defence, Mosiuoa Lekota, in applauding the SADC initiatives of establishing this Organ, argued that it was a defence pact to protect countries from foreign aggression. He stated further that:

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<sup>29</sup> SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, in [http://www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity\\_to\\_union/pdfs/sadc/1Protocol\\_on\\_Defence\\_Organ.pdf](http://www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity_to_union/pdfs/sadc/1Protocol_on_Defence_Organ.pdf).

it was no longer appropriate for the region to have an ad hoc response to threats to national sovereignty in the region. Without an instrument that provides guidelines to protect legitimate governments in the region from foreign-armed aggression, peace cannot be guaranteed.<sup>30</sup>

This Organ was born out of several SADC Summits and Council meetings.<sup>31</sup> By launching the establishment of the OPDS, these leaders made a strong statement to the world about their commitment to principle of regionalism and democratisation. In this protocol, as will be discussed below, their commitment to peaceful resolution of both intra-state and inter-state conflicts was clear. They vowed to settle their internal problems through negotiations and consensus. In doing this Heads of states and government committed themselves to the promotion of peace through working together, assisting each other to create political stability in their countries. They envisaged that all things being equal, the Organ would for all intents and purposes address most of their democratic transition challenges. They were reaffirming their commitment to regional arrangements in terms of how to manage their politics, security and defence problems. The aim of member states in designing the structure of the Organ was to make it flexible and responsive to regional problems that might arise. Similarly, this security architecture was designed in such a way that it operates within the framework and in some cases the direction of the Summit. Article 3 of the Organ<sup>32</sup> clearly reflects this line of thinking. For instance section 1 illustrated that the Organ shall be an institution of SADC and shall report to the Summit. This means that the Organ is accountable to the Summit for its entire operations.

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<sup>30</sup> Jakkie Cilliers, <http://www.iss.co.za/PUBS?monographs?No43/Contents.html>, 14.

<sup>31</sup> The first workshop which recommended establishment of SADC Organ on politics, Defence and security was held at Windhoek from 11 to 16 July 1994. This workshop was known as workshop on Democracy, Peace and Security. The workshop set SADC on a course towards involvement in security co-ordination, conflict mediation, and even military co-operation at the state level. The recommendation was then passed to the Council of Ministers meeting in Botswana. However, the meeting decided to establish a wing for conflict mediation and prevention, as opposed to a sector. The breakthrough came on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1995 when SADC Foreign Ministers recommended the creation of Association of Southern African States (ASAS), under Chapter 7, Article 21 (3) (g) of the SADC Treaty. It was envisaged that ASAS would incorporate two specialized SADC sectors, one dealing with political affairs and the other with military security.

<sup>32</sup> SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, in [http://www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity\\_to\\_union/pdfs/sadc/1Protocol\\_on\\_Defence\\_Organ.pdf](http://www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity_to_union/pdfs/sadc/1Protocol_on_Defence_Organ.pdf).

In order to fulfil the above role, the Organ according to section 2 of the same Article, shall have its chairperson, the Troika, a Ministerial Committee, an Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC), an Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) and such other sub-structures as may be established by any of the ministerial committees. Section 3 of this Article, argues that the Troika shall consist of the Chairperson of the Troika, the incoming Chairperson who shall become Deputy Chairperson of the Organ and the outgoing Chairperson.<sup>33</sup> This structure offers the advantage of guaranteeing continuity, as the troika presiding over SADC remained unchanged for three consecutive years. This arrangement provides harmonisation of security policies.

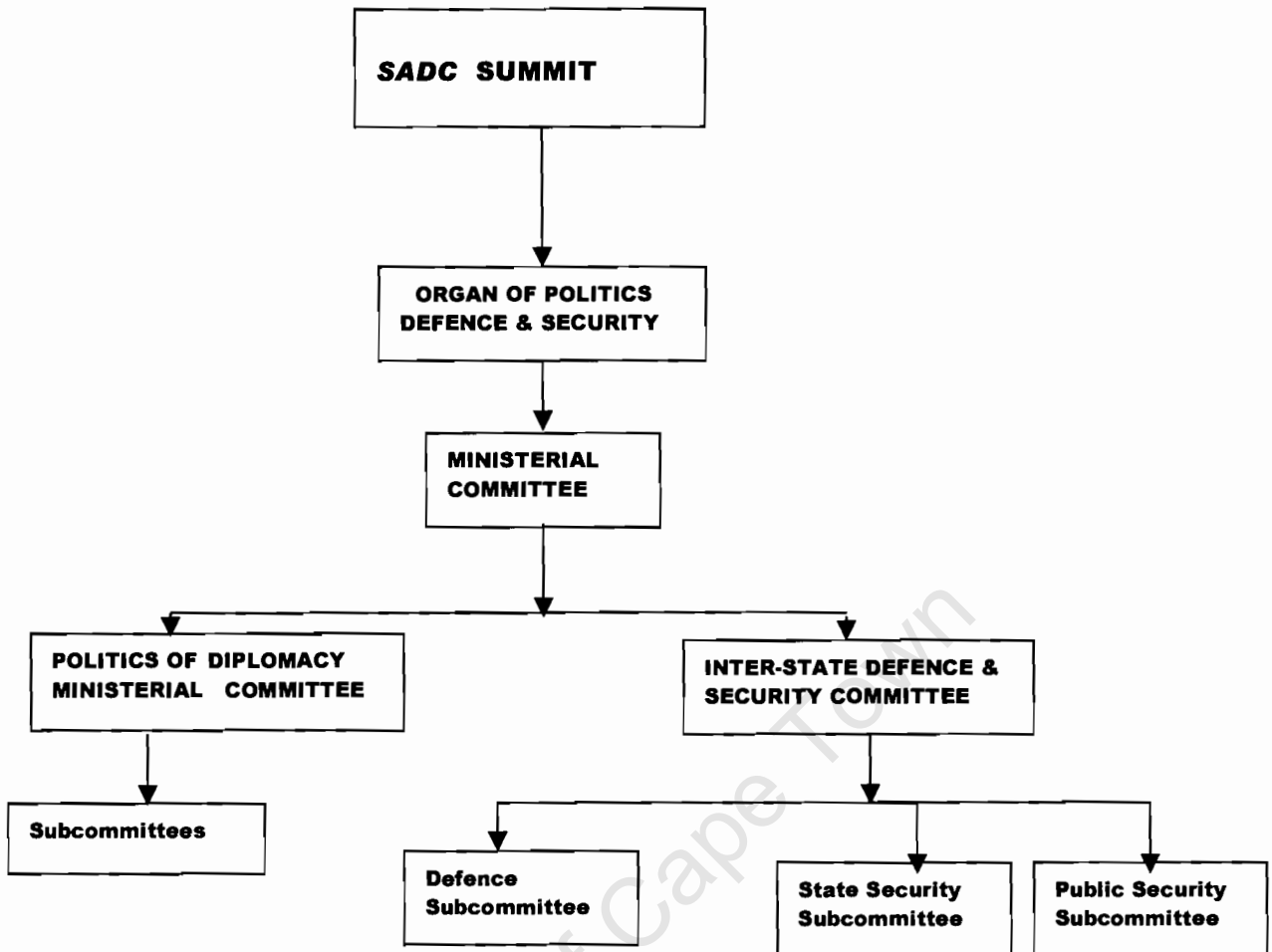
The OPD will be integrated in the SADC structures but coordinated at the Summit level, and will rotate on an annual and troika basis reporting to the chairperson of the Summit. These bureaucratic institutions were geared towards making the Organ more effective and efficient in carrying out its functions.

The Protocol goes further in Articles 4 to 9 to describe how the above structure would be operationalised. According to Article 4, the Summit has been empowered to elect a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson of the Organ on the basis of rotation from among the members of the Summit except that the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson of the Summit shall not simultaneously be the chairperson of the Organ. The term of the Chairperson of the Organ according to this Article shall be one year respectively. The Chairperson of the Organ shall consult with the Troika of SADC and report to the Summit. The organisational structure of the Organ has been designed as follows in figure 1;

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

Figure 1: Organ on Politics, Defence and Security



Source: Mwesiga Baregu and Christopher Landsberg, (ed) (2003) From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's evolving Security Challenges. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers

Therefore the protocol argued that the Chairperson, in consultation with the Troika of SADC, should be responsible for the overall policy direction and the achievement of the objectives of the Organ.

The Chairperson may request reports from any Ministerial Committee of the Organ on any matter within the competence of the committee. Similarly, the Chairperson may request any Ministerial Committee of the Organ to consider any matter, which is within the competence of the Committee. Finally, the Chairperson may also request the

Chairperson of SADC to table for discussion any matter that requires consideration by the summit.<sup>34</sup>

In relation to Article 5, which determines the functions of the Ministerial Committee, the article argued that this committee shall be composed of the Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs, Defence, Public Security and State Security from each of the member states. This committee shall be responsible for the co-ordination of the work of the Organ and its structures. In terms of its responsibility, it shall report to the Chairperson of the Organ. It shall however be chaired by a Minister from the same country as the Chairperson for a period of one year on a rotation basis. The Chairperson of the Committee shall convene at least one meeting on an annual basis. However, the Chairperson of the committee may when necessary convene other meetings of the Ministerial Committee at the request of either ISPDC or ISDSC. This Committee may refer any relevant matter to, and may request reports from, ISPDC and ISDSC.<sup>35</sup>

Article 6 of the same protocol argued that the Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC) should be composed of Ministers of Foreign Affairs from each of the member countries. This committee shall perform such functions as may be necessary to achieve the objectives of the Organ relating to politics and diplomacy. It shall also report to the Ministerial Committee without prejudice to its obligation to report regularly to the Chairperson. A Minister from the same country as the Chairperson chairs this Committee according to this protocol for a period of one year and on a rotation basis. Like the above Committees, the Chairperson of ISPDC shall convene at least one meeting on an annual basis as he or she deems necessary or as requested by another Minister serving on ISPDC. The Committee is however allowed to establish such sub-structures, as it deems necessary to perform its functions.<sup>36</sup>

Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) according to Article 7, shall comprise the Ministers responsible for Defence, Public Security and State Security from each of the State Parties.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

It shall perform such functions as may be necessary to achieve the objectives of the Organ relating to defence and security, and shall assume the objectives and functions of the existing Inter-state Defence and Security Committee. It shall report to the Ministerial Committee without prejudice to its obligation to report regularly to the Chairperson. A Minister from the same country as the Chairperson shall chair ISDSC for a period of one year and on a rotating basis. The Chairperson is required to convene one meeting annually and other such meetings as he or she deems necessary or as requested by another minister serving on ISDSC. Nonetheless, ISDSC shall retain the Defence, State Security and Public Security Sub-Committees and other subordinate structures of the existing Inter-State Defence and Security Committee. It may also establish such other structures, as it deems necessary to perform its functions.<sup>37</sup>

As a matter of procedure, Article 8 indicated that in all ministerial committees of the Organ, the quorum for all meetings shall be two-thirds of the State Parties. However, these committees shall determine their own rules of procedure and decisions shall be taken on consensual basis. Finally, Article 9 mandated the SADC Secretariat to provide secretariat services to the Organ.<sup>38</sup>

Article 11 of the 1996 protocol, obliges the Organ to operate in terms of international law. The Charter of the UN under this Article section one (1) states that parties shall refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, other than for the legitimate purpose of individual or collective self-defence against an armed attack. State parties shall manage and seek to resolve any dispute between two or more of them by peaceful means. The Organ shall seek to manage and resolve inter-and intra-state conflict by peaceful means. Therefore, the Organ shall also seek to ensure that the State Parties adhere to and enforce all sanctions and arms embargoes imposed on any state party by the United Nations Security Council.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, in [http://www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity\\_to\\_union/pdfs,sadc/1Protocol\\_on\\_Defence\\_Organ.pdf](http://www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity_to_union/pdfs,sadc/1Protocol_on_Defence_Organ.pdf). See also Mark Malan, Jackie Cilliers, "SADC Orgab on Politics, Defence and Security: Future Development" Institute for Security Studies Occassional Paper No.19 (March 1997) In <http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/PAPES/19/paper19.html>,

In terms of OPDS jurisdiction, Article 11 section two (2) of the protocol, stated that the Organ may seek to resolve any significant inter-state conflict between State Parties or between a state Party and non-State Party and a 'significant inter-state conflict' shall include a conflict over territorial boundaries or natural resources. It may also include a conflict in which an act of aggression or other form of military force has occurred or been threatened.

This conflict shall also involve a conflict, which threatens peace and security in the region or in the territory of a state party, which is not a party to the conflict. The Organ may seek to resolve any significant intra-state conflict within the territory of a State Party and a 'significant intra-state conflict' shall include large-scale violence between sections of the population or between the state and sections of the population, including genocide, ethnic cleansing and gross violation of human rights. Furthermore, a military coup or other threat to the legitimate authority of a State, a condition of civil war or insurgency, and a conflict which threatens peace and security in the region or in the territory of another state Party. Subsection (c) of this section argued that the Organ in executing all these functions must do so in consultation with the United Nations Security Council and the Central Organ of the African Union Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. The Organ may also offer to mediate in a significant inter-or intra-state conflict that occurs outside the region.<sup>40</sup>

Like any international organisation, OPDS must adopt certain methods and procedures that will assist in the implementation of these obligations. According to section three (3) of Article 11, these methods employed by the Organ are envisaged to prevent, manage and resolve conflict by peaceful means. They shall include but not be limited to preventative diplomacy, negotiations, conciliation, mediation, good offices, arbitration and adjudication by an international tribunal.

This section goes further to state that the Organ shall establish an early warning system in order to facilitate timely action to prevent the outbreak and escalation of conflict. Where peaceful means of resolving a conflict are unsuccessful, the Chairperson acting on the advice of the Ministerial Committee may recommend to the Summit that enforcement action be taken against one or more of the disputant parties. The Summit shall resort to

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

enforcement action only as a matter of last resort and in accordance with Article 53 of the United Nations Charter, i.e. with the authorization of the Security Council. Therefore, external military threats to the Region shall be addressed through collective security arrangements to be agreed upon in a Mutual Defence Pact among the State Parties.<sup>41</sup>

The OPDS in its quest to execute its mandate of conflict management and prevention must follow procedures, which are contained in Article 11 section four (4). They stated that, in respect of both inter-and intra-state conflicts, the Organ shall seek to obtain the consent of the disputant parties to its peacemaking efforts. The Chairperson, in consultation with the other members of the troika, may table any significant conflict for discussion in the Organ. According to this subsection therefore, any State Party may request the Chairperson to table any significant conflict for discussion in the Organ and in consultation with the other members of the troika; the Chairperson shall meet such requests expeditiously. Similarly, the Organ shall respond to a request by a State Party to mediate in a conflict within the territory of that state and shall endeavour by diplomatic means to obtain such request where it is not forthcoming. Finally, and in accordance with Article 11 section 4 (e), the exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and to the Central Organ of the African Union Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.<sup>42</sup>

SADC created a framework, which encapsulated procedural aspects that govern OPDS roles and responsibilities in conducting its relations with member states when dealing with conflicts. According to Nathan, the Organ in its preamble emphasised strict respect for each member state's territorial integrity and sovereignty.<sup>43</sup> The preamble also advocated respect for good neighbourliness, interdependence, sovereign equality, political independence, non-aggression and non-interference in the internal affairs of the member states. The 1996 protocol also articulated the objectives of the Organ, which provided the framework for its operations. These objectives laid down collective security

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Laurie Nathan, (2002) "Organ Failure": A Review of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security: In *Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa*; ed. Laakso Liisa (Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and peace Building in Africa, Europe, SADC and ECOWAS. University of Helsinki, Department of Political Science 2002), 62-102.

arrangements. For instance, Baregu<sup>44</sup> argued that, the objective of the OPDS protocol as provided by Article 2 of the Organ illustrated succinctly collective security arrangements because they are geared towards protection of human rights and serve as guiding principles for the Organ as they seek to;

- a) Protect the people and safeguard the development of the region against instability arising from the breakdown of law and order, intra-state conflict, interstate conflict and aggression;
- b) Promote political co-operation among the member states and the evolving common political value system and institutions;
- c) Develop a common foreign policy in areas of mutual concern and interest and lobbying as a region on issues of common interest in international fora;
- d) Promote regional co-ordination and co-operation on matters related to security and defence and establish appropriate mechanism of conflict prevention, management, and resolution to this end;
- e) Prevent, contain and resolve inter and intra-state conflict by peaceful means and through mediating inter-and intrastate disputes;
- f) Use preventative diplomacy to pre-empt conflict in the region, both within and between states, through an early warning systems and consider enforcement action in accordance with international law and as a matter of last resort where peaceful means have failed;
- g) Promoting and enhancing the development of democratic institution and practices within the territories of State Parties and encourage the observance of universal human rights as provided for in the charters and conventions of the UN and OAU;
- h) Developing a collective security capacity and concluding a mutual defence pact for responding to external military threats, and building up regional peacekeeping capacity within national armies that could be called on to act within the region and elsewhere;

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<sup>44</sup> M. Baregu, "Preventive Diplomacy and Peace-Building in Southern Africa", SARIPS Peace and Security Series 2, Harare, Zimbabwe, 1999: 73-75.

- i) Develop close co-operation between the police and state security services of the States Parties in order to address cross-border crime as well as promoting a community based approach to domestic security;
- j) Observe, and encourage the State Parties to implement, United Nations and African Union and other international conventions and treaties on arms control, disarmament and peaceful relations between states;
- k) Develop the peace-keeping capacity of national defence forces and co-ordinate the participation of the State Parties in peace-keeping operations; and
- l) Enhance regional capacity in respect of disaster management and co-ordination of international humanitarian assistance and also address conflicts outside the region that affect peace and security in Southern Africa.<sup>45</sup>

This protocol committed the member states to abide by UN Security Council resolutions in the maintenance of peace and security within the region. They would work in close co-operation in matters relating to politics, defence and security. They committed themselves to adopt conflict resolution mechanism rather than direct intervention in the domestic affairs of member states.

The Summit reaffirmed that the SADC Organ constituted an appropriate institutional framework by which SADC countries would coordinate their policies and activities in the areas of politics, defence and security. They therefore agreed to the principles, which would guide OPDS in its operation in addition to those explained by Nathan above. The principles appear as inter-alia, set out in Article 4 of the SADC treaty, which shall be the guiding principles for the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security:

- i. Achievement of solidarity, peace and security in the region;
- ii. Observance of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
- iii. Promotion of economic development in the SADC region in order to achieve for all member states, equity, balance and mutual benefit;

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<sup>45</sup> SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security , in [http://www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity\\_to\\_union/pdfs/sadc/1Protocol\\_on\\_Defence\\_Organ.pdf](http://www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity_to_union/pdfs/sadc/1Protocol_on_Defence_Organ.pdf). See also Mark Malan, Jackie Cilliers, " SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security: Future Development" Institute for Security Studies Occasional Paper No.19 (March 1997) In <http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/PAPES/19/paper19.html>, See also Jackie Cilliers, "The SADC Organ for Defence, Politics and Security" in Institute for Defence Policy Papers No.10 (October 1996) in <http://africa.cis.co.za/idp>

- iv. Peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation and arbitration;
- v. Military intervention of whatever nature shall be decided upon only after all possible political remedies have been exhausted in accordance with the charter of the AU and of the United Nations.<sup>46</sup>

The organ was therefore set up to achieve the above principles and objectives. However as a SADC implementing body the Organ in executing its mandate had to work closely with member states. The Organ since its inception appears to have achieved some successes in implementing the above mandate. Despite some limitations, which derived from the fact that the Organ is still young and growing, some achievements have been recorded to date.

## 2.2 OPDS Achievements

The foremost achievements of SADC have been in all sectors including politics, defence and security, demonstrating that regional co-operation is not only desirable but also possible.<sup>47</sup> SADC has also been able to inculcate a sense of regional belonging as well as a tradition of consultation among the people and governments of Southern Africa in defence policy issues and security within the region.<sup>48</sup> The region has been able to put in place a regional programme of action - the SADC Programme of Action - that covers cooperation in various economic and security sectors. These hard-earned achievements have provided a firm foundation without which any attempt at building a regional security and defence community would have definitely failed.<sup>49</sup>

Secondly, SADC Organ under the chairmanship of Zimbabwe has been able to mount operation Blue Hungwe successfully. Blue Hungwe was, at best, a multinational joint field training exercise in the tactics and techniques of UN peacekeeping, such as patrolling, observation, convoy escort and negotiation. It proved, albeit on a small scale

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<sup>46</sup> The SADC Communiqué on the Summit of Heads of States and Governments of the Southern African Community (SADC) met in Gaborone, the Republic of Botswana, on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1996, under the Chairmanship of His Excellency, Sir Ketumile Masire, president of the Republic of Botswana, to launch the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security.

<sup>47</sup> Coning Cedric de, "A new Lease of Life for the SADC Organ", in Conflict Trends-No.4/1999, Southern African Development Community <http://www.accord.org.za/web.nsf/0/89cf608dc3288fc542256a14002f810?OpenDocument> (accessed 2003/08/06).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

and under simulated conditions, these elements of the various armed forces of the region have the capability to train and operate together.<sup>50</sup> Despite far greater South African resources, Zimbabwe has been accepted at the level of the ISDSC as the 'lead nation' for peacekeeping training in the SADC region.<sup>51</sup> This operation, which was the first to be mounted by the OPDS under the chairmanship of Zimbabwe, proved a major success for the security of the region. The first tangible evidence of regional cooperation for peace operations was presented when the Zimbabwe Defence Forces in conjunction with the British Government took the initiative in hosting a regional battalion-level peace operations field exercise from 1-20 April 1997.<sup>52</sup> It involved a combined total of some 1 400 members of the armed forces of ten of the twelve SADC countries, as well as civilian police observers and international humanitarian NGOs and agencies. The troop contributions varied from 400 Zimbabweans and 300 South Africans to one or two observers from Botswana and Zambia.<sup>53</sup>

This operation became a success despite the fact that it experienced several problems regarding command and control, communications and radio procedures, and others. In fact,

the lessons learned may now be used to enhance inter-operability, or the compatibility of various national forces in terms of weapons, equipment, doctrine, and command and control. The exercise also contributed to the building of mutual confidence among the region's armed forces. For example, although the SANDF has never been at war, the incursions of the former SADF into neighbouring countries and their two-decade occupation of Namibia are by no means forgotten.<sup>54</sup>

This operation also shows the determination of members of SADC in operationalising OPDS.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

Recently, both SA, Lesotho and Mozambican forces have mounted several cross border searches in the prevention of stock theft and other criminal related matters under OPDS.

Thirdly, Summit recently tasked the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security with the responsibility to formulate a strategy for speeding up implementation of the DRC Agreement, in collaboration with the Joint Military Commission (JMC).<sup>55</sup> SADC Organ working with the JMC and MONUC was able to complete this task successfully. The Organ was mandated to monitor the withdrawal of Rwandan and Ugandan forces from the DRC by the United Nations. OPDS has ensured that both Ugandan and Rwandan forces withdrew from DRC according to the above mandate as quickly as possible. This task has since been completed hailing another success on the part of the OPDS.

Despite the OPDS limitations, another SADC structure that was retained after the FLS was disbanded was the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC). This structure continued to meet informally at both official and ministerial level frequently. Van Nieuwkerk argued that the success of the ISDSC could be traced back to FLS. For instance,

the ISDSC advised and implemented decisions of FLS Summit meetings. When the later was disbanded, the ISDSC was retained and its membership was expanded to include all SADC member states. Its objectives are to promote regional co-ordination and co-operation on matters related to security and defence and also to establish appropriate mechanism to this end.<sup>56</sup>

This body formed part of the OPDS arm and is currently concentrating on multilateral military co-operation. This involves issues of military peace keeping, training and capacity building. It continues to build a database of information relating to cross border crimes such as small arms trade, illegal goods, drug-smuggling, public security and state security. However, like the OPDS, it has the major weakness of excluding civil society

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<sup>55</sup> LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT ANC Today Joint Statement on ANC-Cosatu bilateral meeting, 12 January 2002 in <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/pr/2002/pr0112.html> Volume 2, No. 3.

<sup>56</sup> Anthoni Van Nieuwkerk "Regionalism into Globalism? War into Peace? SADC and Ecowas Compared" in *African Security Review*, Vol.10 No.2 (2001), 14.

and other non-state actors, while at the same time firmly controlling regional peacemaking and peacekeeping agendas.<sup>57</sup>

## **2.4 The DRC and Lesotho Interventions**

Despite the above successes, the SADC Organ was not able to prevent the first interventions in both the DRC and Lesotho by some member countries. Both these interventions were claimed to have been conducted on behalf of SADC. However, the evidence was not presented to justify this claim.

It is still not clear as to whether the above principles and objectives of OPDC were operationalised in both cases.

### **2.4.1 Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibian intervention in the DRC**

Several theories have been articulated to explain the Zimbabwean intervention in the DRC. Like the South African intervention in Lesotho these claims were both based on interests' calculations.

In the case of Zimbabwe, the intervention was based on strategic, economic and political interests, despite the fact that a military solution to the crisis in DRC was not feasible.

The civil war in the DRC in 1998 forced the embattled Kabila regime to appeal to the international community to help dislodge the rebel advance to Kinshasa. It recruited Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, Chad and several non-state militias to avert an imminent collapse of the regime. The DRC civil war thus became international. Most of these participants did not only want to assist Kabila but they had special interests as well.

Nevertheless, the involvement of SADC countries in this civil war outside the SADC mandate created a major challenge to the Organ itself. While the Chairperson of OPDS (Zimbabwe) claimed that they were conducting a peacekeeping role in the DRC, their actions did not support this claim. Firstly, there was no written agreement between the warring forces, which necessitated SADC peacekeeping forces. Secondly, the intervention was not conducted according to 1996 protocol of OPDS. Therefore, their peacekeeping role was not even sanctioned by SADC or the Summit itself which is the highest decision making body.

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

The argument goes that it was not feasible for Zimbabwe, to defy SADC, its citizens and the International Community by dispatching over 11000 army personnel out of its 30,000 strong army if it was not benefiting from the whole exercise.<sup>58</sup> It was further argued that the real interests of Zimbabwe have been disguised as a rescue mission but the truth of the matter was that,

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe is reported to have his sights set on Mbuji-Mayi's diamond wealth. In addition, Congo's Kabila owes \$40 to \$200 million for military support. Zimbabwe would not trust neither Rwanda nor Uganda, if they come to power, to repay the debt Congo owes to Zimbabwe... without Mbuji-Mayi (Zimbabwe's President) Mugabe has no reason to keep fighting; says a Western diplomat. His army didn't have a reason to start with, so they will really be glad to get out.<sup>59</sup>

This intervention was therefore, driven by strict economic interests of the elite. Several media houses such as the Financial Times have provided an in-depth analysis of the Zimbabwean motivation to intervene in the DRC. The scope and magnitude of Zimbabwean economic interests have been considerable. Rather than Zimbabwean intervention being on political imperatives of rescuing another SADC member state, the results were on the contrary. The intervention strongly manifests empirical overtones of economic interests.<sup>60</sup>

It is clear that Zimbabwean elites and their allies have turned the DRC civil war into a profitable business for themselves. The takeovers of Gecamines (by Zimbabweans operator Billy Rautenback) and oil reserves by Angolans as compensation for Kabila's debts to these countries were cases in point.<sup>61</sup>

For another Zimbabwean SADC partner in this war, President Nujoma, Namibian intervention like that of Zimbabwe in the DRC was to defend DRC sovereignty and territorial integrity. Nevertheless, this assertion, like that of Zimbabwe, was political rhetoric and nothing else. Orogun argued that,

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

the Namibian government had plans to divert water from the river Congo across Angola to northern Namibia. Thus, by intervening on Kabila's behalf in the current Congo crisis, President Sam Nujoma, like President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, was trying to secure economic and vital resource benefits while advocating the political rhetoric of standing up to South Africa.<sup>62</sup>

Similarly, Namibia had been equipping Kabila's government with military equipment to sustain the regime's war effort. While initially Namibia refused to acknowledge that it had been supplying arms to Congo, it finally agreed under much public pressure, but refused to confirm or deny accusations that it had sent its army into the DRC.

Angola had a long history of involvement in the DRC. This was mostly related to its domestic conflicts with UNITA (Union for the Total Independence of Angola) rebels said to be operating from DRC territory. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1998, Angola had been supplying military weapons to the besieged Kabila government. It used its air power and troops to repel rebels from reaching Kinshasa and overthrowing Kabila's regime. Angola saw the toppling of Kabila by the Tutsi alliance as a direct threat to its security interests, since it believed that UNITA was going to have access to the DRC bases that might enable it to launch fresh attacks. Therefore,

the Angolan government entered the war on the side of Kabila largely in order to act against UNITA enclaves in the southern Congo. The government was understood to be opposed to any ceasefire that leaves a government friendly to UNITA in place in the region.<sup>63</sup>

The Angolan interest had been to block UNITA at all costs from having military access and other logistical access from Congo. In like manner, it was more desirable to have a regime in Congo, which was friendly to the Angolan government. Kabila was identified as a genuine ally of Angola.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 36.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 35. For more reasons of Angola intervention see Antoinette Roz'ès, "Angolan Deadlock: Chronicle of a war with no Solution", in *African Security Review*, Vol.101, No3 (2001), 17-31.

It was in MPLA's (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) interest to have Kabila in power in order to deny UNITA this tactical advantage.

The Angolan elite wanted to protect Angolan security interests, hence their involvement in this war. It was for this reason that they ignored to request SADC authorisation.

Regional analysts saw these interventions as motivated by the DRC's natural resources, such as diamonds.<sup>64</sup> These countries were largely motivated by realist calculations rather than their moral claim of rescuing a fellow SADC member state. They became embroiled in this conflict not for peacekeeping but to safeguard their interests. For Zimbabwe, the motive was basically business interests. In the case of Namibia, it was water interests, and for Angola it was security interests. All these cases reflect realist calculations on the part of these SADC countries. Their alleged peacekeeping operation was therefore based on these interests.

#### **2.4.2 South Africa and Botswana's intervention in Lesotho**

The 1998 May elections in Lesotho culminated in more disputes because the opposition parties questioned the validity of the results. The government and opposition parties sought mediation from South Africa to settle the disputes. A South African High Court Judge, Justice Pius Langa, headed the investigating commission.<sup>65</sup> The Langa Commission's findings created more anxiety and confusion among stakeholders in Lesotho. Despite its credible process and transparency, the report was mishandled.<sup>66</sup> At first, the SA Deputy President Thabo Mbeki came to Lesotho ostensibly to present the Langa Commission report.

Unfortunately, this did not happen. Instead, it was alleged that the report must be presented before Heads of Southern African Development Community (SADC) state meeting in Mauritius. It was not clear whether the report was finally presented at this Summit. Rumours were rife in Lesotho that the report was being "Doctored" and its findings manipulated in favour of the ruling party, before it was presented to all parties.

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<sup>64</sup> Paul, S. Orogun, "Crisis of Government, Ethnic Schisms, Civil war, and Regional Destabilization of the democratic Republic of the Congo" *World Affairs* Vol. 165 (Summer 2002), 25-41.

<sup>65</sup> Sehoai Santho, "Conflict Management and Post- Conflict Peace Building in Lesotho. In *Crisis in Lesotho: The Challenges of Managing Conflict in Southern Africa*", Lambrechts Kato Foundation for Global Dialogue. ed. Series No2. (1999), 11-13.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

Subsequent to the above confusion, between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> September 1998, an Army mutiny broke up at the main Army barracks in Maseru. This exacerbated the fragile situation in the country.

A situation of hopelessness and confusion ensued. Eventually, on the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1998 the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) intervened in Lesotho<sup>67</sup>. They first went to the northern part of the country, the Katse Dam, where they shelled members of the Lesotho Defence Force guarding this strategic Dam which stored water enroute to the South African industrial heartland. Operation "Boleas," as it was called, then moved down to Maseru to handle the ongoing anarchy that was taking place. It is also worth noting that the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) arrived late on the second day of the operation.

From South African official pronouncements, the intervention in Lesotho was justified in order to stop a military coup in process. They argued further that SA cannot allow a democratically elected government within its borders to be toppled by unconstitutional means. In justifying the intervention, SA claimed that it intervened in Lesotho on behalf of SADC after being invited by a legitimate government.

The SA intervention in Lesotho has been subjected to many interpretations. The fact that the SA military went to Katse Dam before going to Maseru where there was an Army mutiny unfolding and anarchy in process was a key issue. Katse Dam is part of a massive Lesotho Highlands Water project whereby Lesotho would divert water from its mountain to slake the industrial thirst of Gauteng in exchange for substantial revenue, which could underwrite the financial base of its government.<sup>68</sup> The South African government paid for this project and both SA and Lesotho stood to benefit. But, it is clear that the RSA is the primary beneficiary rather than Lesotho.

In explaining the SA interest in this operation, it is important to focus our attention on the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. The Highlands water project formed the main element

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<sup>67</sup> Theo Neethling, "Military Intervention in Lesotho: Perspectives on Operation Boleas and Beyond," in the Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution Issue 2.2 May 1999 ISSN 1522-211X, [www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr/](http://www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr/) also see Eric Berman, "African Regional Organisation's Peace Operations: Development and Challenges" in African Security Review Vol.11, No.4 (2002), 33-43.

<sup>68</sup> Roger Southall, (1999). "Is Lesotho South African's Tenth Province? In Crisis in Lesotho: The Challenges of Managing Conflict in Southern Africa", in Lambrechts Kato, Foundation for Global Dialogue. ed. Series No2. (1999), 19-26.

of South Africa national interest. It was rational for SA to first secure the Dam before quelling the anarchy. In explaining the mandate of operation Boleas, the Acting South African President Mangosuthu Buthelezi argued that their objectives were three pronged, “to secure the Dam, restore order in the security establishment and clear protests from the Royal Palace”.<sup>69</sup> It was very clear where the South African interests were and what motivated their intervention in Lesotho. Water was the primary objective. Even the embattled Prime Minister of Lesotho did not claim that the water project was in danger when he invited SA to come and quell the alleged coups d’etat.<sup>70</sup>

SA decided to intervene to protect these interests. Realist theory teaches us that where state interests are concerned, issues of morality are not considered. According to realist theory, when states pursue their interests they may disregard international law in pursuit of their own interest. The history of international relations contains many examples where states have acted unilaterally outside the confines of international law.

We must accept that, “according to foreign affairs officials, South Africa sent troops to Lesotho amongst others to defend Katse Dam”.<sup>71</sup> This was the result of indications that some Lesotho troops attempted to bombard the Katse dam after battling SA troops. Therefore, it can be argued that, “South Africa’s intervention into Lesotho was thus driven more by material interests than political and humanitarian imperatives”.<sup>72</sup> We can confidently conclude that the SA intervention was influenced by realism.

SADC peacekeeping role has not been clear, as the cases of the DRC and Lesotho have indicated.

What weakened the case for intervention in both cases has been the lack of transparency and clarity in relation to when the consensus was reached to intervene. Lack of accountability and transparency in a decision of this magnitude serve only to erode SADC credibility as a regional body. This has raised questions relating to whether these countries have indeed abided by the 1992 SADC Treaty which “calls on its member

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<sup>69</sup> Lambrechts Kato (ed) Foundation for Global Dialogue. Series No2. (1999), 28.

<sup>70</sup> See both Khabele Matlosa, “The Lesotho Conflict: Major Causes and Management. In Crisis in Lesotho: The Challenges of Managing Conflict in Southern Africa”, in Lambrechts Kato ed. Foundation for Global Dialogue. Series No2. (1999) 6-11. And Laurie Nathan, “Peacekeeping in South Africa. In Crisis in Lesotho: The Challenges of Managing Conflict in Southern Africa”, in Lambrechts Kato ed. Foundation for Global Dialogue, Series No2. (1999) 4-6.

<sup>71</sup> Lambrechts Kato (ed) Foundation for Global Dialogue. Series No2. (1999), 27.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 27.

states to promote peace and security, human rights, democracy, the rule of law and the peaceful settlement of disputes”.<sup>73</sup> The perceived lack of transparency and accountability has left a major hole in understanding of the above peacekeeping operations. These operations also raised questions of procedure, specifically as to whether proper procedures were followed or not. Similarly, issues concerning peaceful settlements of disputes have also been raised by these interventions, though the main question has always been which protocol sanctioned these interventions.

In establishing the Organ on Politics Defence and Security, SADC formulated clear objectives and principles for this body to achieve, and yet the Organ’s performance was hampered by the member states themselves. The interventions in DRC and Lesotho indicated clearly that member states were more interested in securing their own interests than promoting peace. Even though OPDS has some achievements since its inception in 1996, they are not sufficient to conclude that the Organ has achieved most of its objectives. It is fair to indicate that there were some impediments, which hindered the Organ from achieving its goals. It is to these issues that we discuss in the following chapter.

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<sup>73</sup> Francis Kornegay and Simon Chesterman” Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Architecture: Problems and Prospects” in Proceedings of a conference in Program on Developing Regional and Sub-Regional Security Mechanisms in Africa: Held by International Peace Academy in Partnership with the African

## Chapter Three: Why The Organ Has Failed

### 3.0 Introduction

SADC is not a superstate, but an institution of sovereign states that meets to formulate regional policies, which serve their interests. In such a community of states, an institution like OPDS, as a policy implementing body of SADC cannot be autonomous but is accountable to SADC Summit proper. From the earlier analysis, it is clear that the SADC Organ performance has been mixed.

This chapter will examine the factors, which shaped the Organs performance including the lack of consensus and political will between member states to assist the Organ to function properly, member states lack of a unified strategy of ending conflicts in the region, despite the fact that 1996 protocol had clarified the way forward about how conflicts should be managed.

The Organ failure was also exacerbated by an attempt to end conflicts through unilateral interventions. This strategy did not bode well for a new Organ like the OPDS. One other major factor, which contributed to the Organ failure, was the institutional confusion by some key member states such as Zimbabwe and South Africa. It was during this confusion that the Organ was not able to arrest the ensuing instability in both the DRC and Lesotho. Finally, the member states levels of development have been another factor that contributed to this failure. Member states were jealous about each other's economic successes and consequently became suspicious of each other. Therefore, it became difficult for members to deal with sensitive security matters while they lack confidence between themselves.

### 3.1 Lack of Consensus and Political Will

According to Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, Southern African Development Community "continued to be plagued by difficulties stemming from the lack of consensus among SADC member states regarding the OPDS statute in relation to

the SADC treaty”<sup>74</sup> The Organ’s lack of autonomy has been inhibited by some member states misinterpretations of the 1996 protocol. This limitation was reflected by the disagreements, which emerged between SA and Zimbabwe, the Organ was unable to resolve these differences. It was these differences, which inspired the SADC initiative to convene yet another Summit in March 2001 in Windhoek Namibia to address their differences over the functions of the Organ. The regional leaders ultimately made a breakthrough during this summit when they decided to integrate the OPDS into the SADC structure.<sup>75</sup>

OPDS was intended to be flexible to be able to defuse and pre-empt potential conflicts. As an institutional mechanism of conflict management, it was designed to be efficient and effective in addressing these conflicts. Unfortunately this was not to be the case. OPDS is yet to achieve its objectives, which have not been operationalised fully to date. The lack of political will among the parties has led to delays in the implementation of the 1996 protocol.

This has made it difficult for the Organ to operate as an institution able to achieve its goals without hindrance from member states.

### **3.2 The Lack of Unified Strategy of Ending Conflicts**

While SADC Organ principles and objectives were clear about how to end wars and what procedures must be followed, it appears that member states lack a concerted strategy to bring this to fruition. It has become difficult to operationalise these principles in the absence of consensus and political will within the member states.

One major advantage that the European Community had from the beginning was the political will and consensus on how to prevent future European wars. These strategies were absent from SADC. Their absence made it difficult for SADC countries to develop concerted strategy for ending war in Angola. The main unresolved question was what could the Organ do to bring this protracted conflict to finality? The Angolan civil war “had escalated and threatened to engulf the region; this too, brought tension within the

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<sup>74</sup> Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges*; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 8.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

OPDS to the fore”.<sup>76</sup> The question had always been how to intervene in this country. It would appear that since SADC was divided on the operations of OPDS, the region appeared reluctant to address the Angolan conflict. This was also exacerbated by the Angolan intervention in the DRC, the matter that had created much tension within the region, and also the current ongoing role of the UN in that country. In general as long as the tension about DRC intervention still exists the OPDS appears not able to make headway on this issue.

### **3.3 Unilateral Interventions**

Two years after its establishment, the OPDS, was challenged by two unilateral Interventions in the region in the DRC and Lesotho, creating stress and polarisation among member states. When Zaire became DRC under President Laurent Kabila, the country joined SADC. Kabila who won power after waging guerrilla warfare was backed by Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia. The attainment of SADC membership by the DRC made it easier for these countries to come to Kabila assistance whenever his country was threatened. This happened in August 1998 when these countries intervened in the DRC to dislodge rebels who were threatening to topple the government. This intervention challenged the OPDS directly, because this Organ did not facilitate it. The unilateral action of Zimbabwe and its allies was criticised by other SADC members, including South Africa as the chair of SADC, who advocated diplomatic solutions rather than war. This culminated in the failure of these countries to have a new SADC Executive Secretary nominated from either of their countries. Instead, a compromise candidate was nominated from Mauritius.

These countries ignored SADC and OPDS when mounting this operation. They opted for direct military intervention and ignored South African calls for a diplomatic resolution to the DRC conflict.<sup>77</sup> President Mugabe ignored both rebel and SADC calls to cease hostilities and told the Zimbabwean state media that; “no one is compelled within SADC to go into a campaign of assisting a country beset by conflict”.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>77</sup> Ali B. Ali-Dinar, DRC: Zimbabwean, Angolan troops arrive to back Kabila 1998.8.21, in <http://www.rcliefweb.int/>

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 1.

He argued further that those who do not want to help should keep out, and not discourage those who want to help.

In fact Mugabe's strategy, according to regional analysts, was to improve Kabila's bargaining position for negotiations that were hampered by the rebel captures of large areas of the DRC. This move to help Kabila at all costs by Mugabe and others appeared to have split SADC member states. The chairman of SADC had to call the ceasefire in the fighting in DRC and also called an emergency SADC Summit to discuss peaceful resolution of DRC conflict. According to Reuters, Mandela argued that

"we have been asked to call a Summit of SADC leaders...I want President Robert Mugabe (of Zimbabwe) to be involved,"<sup>79</sup> Mandela said in Cape Town. He also announced that he and Deputy President Thabo Mbeki had spoken to President Laurent-Desire Kabila on the telephone. "I am convinced we are making headway in bringing about a peaceful solution,"<sup>80</sup>

Mandela was aware of deep disagreements, which appeared destined to fragment SADC and weaken the OPDS. Therefore, the DRC situation has illuminated tensions around several issues;

- a) Autonomy (the relationship between OPDS and SADC Summit);
- b) The legal framework in which OPDS should be operating; and
- c) The hegemonic power struggles in the post liberation, post apartheid era.<sup>81</sup>

Not only did the South African government refuse to join the military intervention, but it was also very vocal in denouncing the intervention. The country was at pains to emphasise that as chair of the SADC, it regarded no other alternative to a diplomatic solution of the DRC conflict.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>81</sup> Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 7.

Despite the above SA protestations against Zimbabwean intervention in the DRC, on September 22<sup>nd</sup> 1998, South Africa and Botswana intervened in Lesotho. They argued that they had mounted the military intervention under the auspices of the SADC Organ, the OPDS.<sup>82</sup> This operation it was later claimed followed consultations between the governments of Mozambique and Zimbabwe before it was launched.<sup>83</sup> Operation Boleas as the intervention was called had been criticised from different quarters for violating the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lesotho, and also the OPDS protocol. For instance, John Seiler<sup>84</sup> argued that SADC policy of regional efforts and initiatives in containing intra-interstate conflicts was still in a drafting stage therefore the intervention could not be regarded as legitimate. Secondly, the Acting SA State President Buthelezi consultations with SADC member states were purely informal and done through telephone communication. Ironically he did not speak with President Robert Mugabe, who was the current head of OPDS. In fact in justifying operating outside the OPDS mechanism, Buthelezi argued that there was no time for further negotiations, because economic coercion and threats of force mounted on Lesotho government leaders, their property and their lives were at risk.<sup>85</sup>

In response to the above criticisms, South African officials were at pains to indicate that a legitimate government requested the intervention. On the other hand, the significance of this intervention was its lack of reference to international law on interventions and the use of force. In fact both South African and Lesotho officials were inconsistent about which relevant provisions of the UN charter were consulted.<sup>86</sup> It was this unilateralism that has defeated the smooth operation of the OPDS. In fact, Nathan argued further that,

the SADC decision to not allow coups in the region had in fact been a proposal from the ISDSC to the SADC Summit; the proposal had included the proviso that

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Nathan, Laurie (2002) "Organ Failure": A Review of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security: In *Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa*; ed. Laakso Liisa (Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and peace Building in Africa, Europe, SADC and ECOWAS. University of Helsinki, Department of Political Science 2002), 62-102.

<sup>84</sup> John Seiler, 'SA cannot Justify Lesotho Invasion' Sowetan, Monday October 26 1998.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Nathan, Laurie (2002) "Organ Failure": A Review of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security: In *Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa*; ed. Laakso Liisa (Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and peace Building in Africa, Europe, SADC and ECOWAS. University of Helsinki, Department of Political Science 2002), 62-102.

UN, OAU and SADC approval be obtained prior to any military intervention; the Summit had neither endorsed the ISDSC's proposal nor authorised military action in Lesotho; and, in the absence of Summit approval, the decision by the two neighbouring states to launch the operation was inconsistent with SADC's decision-making rules.<sup>87</sup>

This operation highlighted the absence of agreed rules and also complexity in decision-making within the Organ when it comes to legal, military and political matters for undertaking collective enforcement action by the institution.

### **3.4 Institutional Confusion**

For the first time since its inception, "SADC showed signs of severe stress when South Africa and Zimbabwe were at loggerheads over how best to address Southern Africa's security challenges".<sup>88</sup> Member states soon began to confuse the role of the Organ as an institution by equating it with that of SADC.

They forgot that like other sectors, which were accountable to the Summit, the Organ as well is in fact a creature of the Summit.

In the first instance, the prefix SADC that had been attached to the Organ explicitly meant that the Organ is part of SADC. Ever since the Organ was established, it had become the institutional framework of security cooperation within SADC. It has also used the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) of the disbanded Front Line States as its institutional memory and ad hoc secretariat. The ISDSC was therefore declared to be an institution of the Organ. Therefore, according to Pitso,<sup>89</sup> the ISDSC, even though it has no permanent structure, comprises Ministerial Council and three Sub-committees, on Defence, Security and Intelligence respectively. Subordinate to the Defence Sub-committee are three functional committees: the Operations Sub-committee, the Standing Maritime Committee and the Standing Aviation Committee. The Operations

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 79.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>89</sup> Major General G.L. Pitso, "Southern African Regional Security", in <http://www.mil.za/CSANDF/CJSupp?TrainingFormation/DefenceCollege?Researchpapers...> (accessed 2003/08/06)

Sub-committee, in turn, consists of structures focussing on (military) intelligence, logistics, personnel, communications, legal affairs, chaplaincy, and medical affairs.

Initially, the Organ was expected to report directly to SADC Heads of State Summit, which is the supreme policy-making body of SADC in terms of its 1992 Treaty. However, the protocol through which the Organ was established departed from this provision of the Treaty. Contrary to the spirit of the July 1994 conference in Windhoek, the Organ operates at Summit, Ministerial and technical levels with its own chair and functions independently from other SADC structures.

However, it is also important to look at the decision-making apparatus and compare these processes with other Organs. While this may not be a new feature for a growing Organ, which still has to find its place within the region, it is fair to argue that it shares several institutional similarities with other security Organs of this nature. For instance, when compared with other regional Organs in Africa, OPDS shares most similarities with the ECOWAS. In terms of decision-making, the Summit remains the supreme decision making body in this regard. Both Organs are accountable to the community and as such do not enjoy autonomy. Therefore, they form part of their regional structure.<sup>90</sup>

SADC Organ until recently has been functioning independently under the chairmanship of President Robert Mugabe. He had chaired the Organ since its inception in 1996 in Botswana. This was “to fill the void left after the Frontline States dissolved in 1994”<sup>91</sup> and the longest serving statesman was elected by the Summit to fill this position. The Zimbabwean Ministry of Foreign Affairs also administered the Organ on behalf of SADC.

#### **3.4.1 The Emergence of the Impasse**

The relationship of the Organ within the whole SADC has always been complex. This was as a consequence of the current disagreements between SA and Zimbabwe. The fact that SADC members agreed that the Organ should operate at the summit level created more problems than was anticipated.

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<sup>90</sup> Anthoni Van Nieuwkerk, “Regionalism into Globalism? War into Peace? SADC and Ecowas Compared” in *African Security Review*, Vol.10, No.2 (2001), 1-17.

<sup>91</sup> SADC to ‘Wrest Security Organ from Mugabe’ the *Zimbabwe Independence* 10, 2001, in <http://www.mdczimbabwe.com/archivemat/other/regional/zimind010810sadctxt.htm> 2003/08/06

This major problem of SADC was that it became split in two areas. That is the security leg and the socio-economic leg. Therefore, Breytenbach argued that,

the chairmanship was to rotate (but never did); the ISDSC became the secretariat (separate from the SADC secretariat in Gaborone). A Summit was introduced (mandated) in the communiqué, but a second Summit within SADC was not sanctioned by the SADC Treaty of 1992.<sup>92</sup>

The 1996 protocol emphatically emphasised that OPDS shall operate at the Summit level, independent from other structures. This presupposes that SADC had two Chairpersons, one for SADC as a regional body and the other for the Organ. The justification of this structural conflict between the Organ and the Summit by having two Chairpersons was that the Organ required an ad hoc flexible approach in order to respond expeditiously to regional conflicts. The tradition has been that SADC discusses political issues at the regional level and the creation of another Chairperson was seen as a duplication of effort that might create unnecessary tensions and operational problems. South Africa was vocal in indicating that SADC was not meant to have two Chairpersons. To suggest that an Organ like SADC be chaired by a different Chairperson and also OPDS was to bring unnecessary competition and undue organisational rivalries with bifurcation of goals between the two Organs. It was also argued that the Chairperson of the Organ should report directly to the SADC Summit and the SADC Chairperson. This simmering tension came to the public domain in the heated 1997 Summit whereby President Mandela threatened to resign the SADC chair. He was vehemently opposed to Mugabe's monopoly of the Organ, which he wanted to chair indefinitely. The dispute revolved around the implementation of Gaborone Protocol which "reads that the Organ shall 'function independently' from other SADC structures".<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Cedric de Coning, "A new Lease of Life for the SADC Organ", in *Conflict Trends*-No.4/1999. <http://www.accord.org.za/web.nsf/0/89cf608dc3288fc542256a14002f810?OpenDocument> (accessed 2003/08/06)

It also argued that the Organ should report to the Summit. It was this section of the communiqué, which confused Zimbabwe completely. For instance, “Zimbabwe, the chair of SADC Organ since it was established, interpreted this to mean that the SADC Organ should function totally independent of SADC proper”.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, Zimbabwe argued that it should be an independent institution capable of holding its own Summits separate from those of SADC.<sup>95</sup>

For Zimbabwe the Organs should operate separately but parallel to the body in accordance with the 1996 Summit, which established the Organ. Mugabe argued that SADC was donor-funded body, which was susceptible to foreign influence.<sup>96</sup> Therefore, security was a very sensitive issue, which could not be subordinated to donor influence. He added that there could be too much interference and in any case the Organ needed to be headed by a long serving SADC leader. Zimbabwe argued further that members of the Organ are also members of the SADC and it would be improper for members of the OPDS to report to the SADC Summit while all were both members of this body.<sup>97</sup>

The impasse between President Mandela and President Mugabe indicted that Organ/SADC relations were very complicated.

According to Mugabe the Organ operates independently from SADC while Mandela took a different view as the Chair of SADC.

In actual fact, “Pretoria argued that issues of politics, defence and security were too sensitive and important to be effectively left to one member state.”<sup>98</sup> There appears to be no problem for the Organ to be accountable to the chair and SADC Summit because this body is a SADC creation after all. In fact all heads of states make decisions relating to SADC structures including the Organ. Therefore, “any fears about the separate SADC Organ Summit being abused by the SADC Organ Chairman are unfounded”,<sup>99</sup> because decision chains as envisaged by SADC Gaborone Communiqué mostly relating to interstate issues cannot be unilaterally taken without consultation with all member states

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> SADC to ‘Wrest Security Organ from Mugabe’ the Zimbabwe Independence 10, 2001, in <http://www.mdczimbabwe.com/archivemat/other/regional/zimind010810sadetxt.htm> 2003/08/06

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.86.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Asher Walter Tapfumeneyi, “The SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security: Interpreting the Decision of the Maputo 1997 SADC Summit”, in Accord Occasional Paper, No9/99. 5.

of SADC. In terms of the SADC Organ, the Chairman of SADC must first consult the Troika whose decision must be endorsed by the Summit.

### **3.4.2 Consequences of the Impasse**

These differing views have important policy implications. Under these circumstances, who makes policy regarding interventions? Can policy be formulated where both chairs hold diametrically different positions?<sup>100</sup> This impasse precipitated one of the most fundamental failures of the Organ on Politics Defence and Security.

These tensions also trickled down to the operational level. To the Operational Commanders it was not clear who they should report to: the SADC Chairperson or the Organ's Chairperson? These are difficult questions for mounting any peacekeeping operations.

With the impasse around the Organ and SADC it would be very difficult to mount any operation under these circumstances. It has become impossible to determine who should be appointed to lead the operation.

Therefore, this impasse has crippled the OPDS completely. It remains a major challenge to see how the Organ shall be operational under the prevailing conditions. It appears that the Organ relations with SADC as a whole have become untenable. The Organ has not been able to mount an operation on its own or under SADC support. However, the two interventions in the DRC and Lesotho were alleged to have been conducted under the auspices of SADC. This raises a lot of legitimacy questions. These questions lead us to conclude that the Organ was not operational during these interventions.

### **3.4.3 The Resolution of the Impasse**

In order to address these differences relating to Organ relations with SADC, member states devised a new strategy of resolving this conflict. It was on the basis of the above challenges that SADC adopted a new thinking. This approach necessitated member states to delegate Swaziland to review OPDS and make necessary recommendations to the SADC Summit. However, in undertaking this task, Swaziland had to work in close consultation with member states. By 2000, member states were engaged in multilateral efforts to break the impasse between SA and Zimbabwe over the confusion of OPDS

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

functions. They persevered to find appropriate formal mechanisms to operationalise objectives of collective security in the divided region.<sup>101</sup>

Zacarias argued that even though there have been several claims that certain activities have taken place within the OPDS, this argument lacks credence in the sense that

none of these activities, however, can be said to have taken place within the framework defined by the SADC or the OPDS. Rather, they were a result of ad hoc agreements between departments, top officials of departments, or ministers responsible for those specific portfolios in the countries involved and heads of state acting outside the structures of SADC<sup>102</sup>

As a departure from the then existing structure and in order to ameliorate divisions within SADC major powers therefore,

the leaders decided that OPDS would not be accountable to the chair country of the structure but to the heads of states and government. The OPDS will be integrated in the SADC structures but coordinated at the Summit level, and it will rotate on an annual and troika basis reporting to the chairperson of the Summit.<sup>103</sup>

Furthermore, another structure was established which will regulate the functions and operations of the OPDS. This was a new protocol on Politics Defence and Security Cooperation. The decision of this Summit heralded and affirmed regional commitment towards collective security and collective accountability.<sup>104</sup> This decision was adopted and ratified at Malawi, Blantyre in August 2001. The OPDSC was placed firmly under SADC and the Organ was now called Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation (OPDSC).<sup>105</sup> The OPDSC was to have its own structures, which will be served by the SADC secretariat as well. This structure was accorded a mandate to formulate and implement regional security policies. According to this treaty

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Agostinho Zacarias “Redefining Security”, in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges*; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003),36.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 8.

the OPDSC will operate on a troika basis, with the troika members to be selected by the Summit. However, the chairperson of the Summit cannot at the same time have the chair of the SADC summit.<sup>106</sup>

The protocol went further to prescribe functions of the Ministers who will be involved in this protocol. It argued that a Ministerial Committee consisting of Ministers responsible for Public Security, or State, Defence, Foreign Affairs and Security would form the membership of OPDSC. Currently, the chairperson of the Organ is Mozambique and Zimbabwe as an outgoing chair and Tanzania as an incoming Deputy chair, both serve as a troika of the OPDSC<sup>107</sup>. This protocol also provided for the establishment of inter-state Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC), which is composed of all SADC foreign Ministers. It is envisaged that their main functions would be the promotion of diplomacy within the OPDSC, which currently has an elaborate set of defence subcommittees.

The protocol also established within Ministers of Public Security the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (SARPCCO). This structure has a permanent secretariat hosted by Interpol sub- regional Bureau of Southern Africa in Harare. Among others functions “the protocol also provides a framework for SADC policies and activities to promote, defend, and consolidate democracy, peace, security and stability”.<sup>108</sup>

The above confusion was further exacerbated by the perceived differences of development levels within the member states. Thus jealousies arose as some countries saw other economies prospering while their own economies were lacking behind.

### **3.5 Different Levels of Development**

When Southern African countries formed SADC, they were all at different levels of development.

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 9.

They became aware that economic development cannot be achieved or even sustained unless there is “peace, stability and concomitant move towards democracy - part and parcel of an approach to emancipate the market, increase trade and reduce trade barriers within the region”.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, this reality has complicated relations between SADC countries.

Tense relations over the mechanics of the OPDS were also exacerbated by political and economic strains. This tension came almost to the boiling point when several member states even accused South Africa of pursuing selfish and inimical economic and inhospitable migration policies.<sup>110</sup> Some member states have become very sceptical about each other’s actions, more especially regarding economic management and levels of democratisation.

These embedded tensions came to the fore in 1994 after South Africa became the newest member of SADC. Some members notably Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia became even more suspicious of SA. This came as no surprise because some SADC members are among “the poorest nations in the world, with a declining share in the global economic product-a paltry 0, 58 percent in 1993, or 0, 13 percent without South Africa’s input”.<sup>111</sup> It was not surprising that some of these countries viewed SA as pursuing inimical policies. Therefore, SA as an economic and military power in the region has raised more concerns to some of these countries. It was as a result of these tensions that some countries supported Zimbabwean intervention in the DRC while others remained opposed, and supported SA diplomatic approach.

In terms of trade, SADC members fear fair competition with SA. In fact their economies cannot even compete with that of South Africa. Trade has become a major foreign policy concern in the region. South Africa was accused by its neighbours of not allowing access to its market. Among the countries, which were most vocal, were Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mauritius. These countries were “complaining about South Africa’s positive trade balance with the rest of the region and alleging unfair trade practices by South African

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<sup>109</sup> Jakkie Cilliers, “The SADC Organ For Defence, Politics and security,” in Institute for Defence Policy Papers, No10, (October 1996), 1.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, 1.

businesses in cooperation with the government.”<sup>112</sup> This conflict reflects lack of confidence and trust between member states. Therefore, it has serious implications for the SADC Organ to operate efficiently and effectively. Member states must have confidence and trust in order to craft a common defence policy, which will be implemented impartially by the OPDSC. While these suspicions remain, the goal is nevertheless, difficult to achieve.

However, the trade disputes spread to Zimbabwe. For instance, in March 1997, “the cement war occurred between Zambia and Zimbabwe, after Zimbabwe unilaterally increased the import duty on cement from Zambia.”<sup>113</sup>

The impact of these actions affects SADC directly because mutual trust and confidence is critical for OPDS to work within the region with member states. The Organ cannot function properly under the environment of mistrust and lack of confidence among member states.

The 1996 SADC Finance and Investment report, which was produced for SADC by South Africa, accentuated these suspicions between South Africa and Zimbabwe. The report alleged that

Zimbabwe’s GDP in 1995 had declined by 10 percent—an allegation that was untrue...A formal apology was delivered to Zimbabwean government the next day by South African Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo, South African Finance Minister Chris Liebenberg, and SADC Executive Secretary Kaire Mbuende.<sup>114</sup>

An enquiry into these events was launched and further apology was demanded and South Africa had to deliver it once again. For the Zimbabwean Foreign Ministry, the above distortions of facts were nothing but a conspiracy meant to undermine both SADC and Zimbabwe.

These events have contributed to declining confidence levels within SADC member states and consequently have affected the Organ operations. If members of the region view each other with so much suspicion they cannot work closely on sensitive military

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<sup>112</sup> Tandeka C. Nkiwane, “The Quest for Good Governance,” in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges*; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 66.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid*, 66.

issues. This mistrust led to the April 1999, “Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola and the DRC concluding a Defence Treaty without official notice to SADC.”<sup>115</sup> This treaty provided that an attack on one of the signatories would be regarded as an attack to all. The treaty also affirmed that they would train together and conduct their own collective operations. It has been this treaty, which among other factors contributed to the failure of the Organ. The Organ failed because of these factors identified above. However, among its principles, the Organ is expected to promote democratisation and settlement of disputes through peaceful means within the region. The next chapter will evaluate to what extent the Organ has been able to achieve these objectives.

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid, 66.

<sup>115</sup> Nathan, Laurie (2002) “Organ Failure”: A Review of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security: In *Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa*; ed. Laakso Liisa (Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and peace Building in Africa, Europe, SADC and ECOWAS. University of Helsinki, Department of Political Science 2002), 87.

## Chapter Four: The Organ and Regional Political Trends

### 4.0 Introduction

SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Protocol enshrines principles of democracy, good governance and human rights. The OPDS was therefore designed to protect these values. The chapter will examine problem cases which deviated from these values, analyse the Organ response to these problems and make a conclusion in relation to what extent did the Organ succeeded in protecting these democratic values.

### 4.1 The values the OPDS was designed to protect

The OPDS was established to protect several values in the region. As a subsidiary body of SADC, the OPDS was subject to the same principles and values of SADC. According to Venter the OPDS was designed to “ensure sovereign equality of all member states, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the safeguarding of human rights, the advancement of democracy, and the observance of the rule of law.”<sup>116</sup> These were the fundamental rules, which serve to guide the Organ to evolve, protect and promote common political values that will eventually lead to the promotion of peace and security in the region.

The 1996 Protocol on Politics, Defence, and Security Co-operation, argued that the Organ was designed bearing in mind that chapter VIII of the UN Charter recognises the role of regional arrangements in dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action.

It also recognised the above issues illustrated by Venter and went further to recall the 1964 resolution of the Assembly of heads of States and Governments of the OAU, declaring that all member States pledge to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence. The Protocol reaffirmed the primary responsibility of the UN Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security and the role of the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. The Protocol emphasised that it was convinced that peace, security and strong political relations are critical factors in creating a

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<sup>116</sup> Dennis Venter, “Regional Security in Southern Africa,” in *The Political Economy of Peace and Security in Africa: Ethnocultural and Economic Perspectives*, eds. Adele Jinadu (Zimbabwe: Print Source (Pvt) Ltd 2000), 208.

conducive environment for regional co-operation and integration. It argued that the Organ constituted an appropriate institutional framework by which member States could co-ordinate policies and activities in the area of politics, defence and security. It was Protocol determination to achieve solidarity, security and peace in the region through close co-operation in the above areas and promote at all times peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, conciliation, mediation or arbitration.<sup>117</sup> These were some of the values the OPDS was designed to protect and safeguard.

Since the advancement of democracy also promotes good governance and Human rights culture, Dahl argued that democratisation ought to meet the following institutional requirements,

elected representation, free and fair elections, political parties, inclusive suffrage, and the right to run for office, freedom of expression (i.e. free press), associational autonomy, and the rule of law, an efficient bureaucracy and development based on a market economy.<sup>118</sup>

What is important is that the state itself must be subjected to law. In further defining democracy Sartori argued that “in a democracy no one can choose himself, no one can invest himself with power to rule, and therefore no one can abrogate himself unconditional and unlimited power”.<sup>119</sup>

The principles and objectives of the SADC Organ conform to the above perspective. 1996 Protocol in its objectives argued that the Organ shall promote the development of democratic institutions and practices within the territories of state parties and encourage the observance of universal human rights as provided for in the Charters and Conventions of the Organisation of African Unity and United Nations respectively.<sup>120</sup>

Furthermore a survey by the Consortium of research institutions working under a programme called Southern African Democracy Barometer (SADB) was carried out in

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<sup>117</sup> Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation; in [http://www.issa.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity\\_to\\_Union/pdfs/sadc/1Protocol\\_on\\_Defence\\_Organ.pdf](http://www.issa.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity_to_Union/pdfs/sadc/1Protocol_on_Defence_Organ.pdf).

<sup>118</sup> R.A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, (New Haven; Yale University 1971), 88.

<sup>119</sup> G. Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*, (Chartham, Chartham House 1987), 13.

<sup>120</sup> Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation, in [http://www.issa.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity\\_to\\_union/pdf/sadc/1Protocol\\_on\\_Defence\\_Organ.pdf](http://www.issa.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity_to_union/pdf/sadc/1Protocol_on_Defence_Organ.pdf).

late 1999 and early 2000 in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa and Zambia. The latter reflected a similar trend of popular “strong resistance to the idea of returning to the authoritarian past; whether it be colonialism, white minority rule, indigenous one-party rule or military dictatorship”.<sup>121</sup> Nevertheless, it would appear that both the OPDS principles and objectives have proved to be too ambitious and idealistic.

#### **4.2 Lack of Democracy in Zimbabwe, Swaziland and the DRC.**

Despite OPDS noble intentions, the SADC region is consistently facing challenges of authoritarianism from member states such as Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

This was despite the fact that the Organ laid down clear and unequivocal guidelines of good governance and human rights. There are no known cases whereby the OPDS succeeded in promoting democratisation and political stability within the region. It is these limitations that we now discuss.

##### **4.2.1 Zimbabwe**

The 2002 Zimbabwean elections were conducted under a highly charged environment of severe intimidation. This has led to major opposition parties disassociating themselves from the elections results. It would appear that democracy has been hijacked by the ruling party in this country against the will of the majority.

In Zimbabwe, three years after independence, in 1983, the security apparatus and authoritarian state were swiftly operationalised and developed by President Mugabe in Matebeleland. Mugabe unleashed a military contingent known as the Fifth Brigade. He systematically initiated the first repression programme under democratic rule in Matebeleland. The Fifth Brigade was an army contingent trained by North Korea. This army was

trained for unquestioning loyalty, it operated outside the normal military hierarchy, and answered directly to Mugabe. Under Colonel Perence Shiri, the

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<sup>121</sup> Renaissance, A review of Democracy and Governance in Southern Africa Vol.2 No7 (August 2000), 9.

Unit was responsible for mass murders, torture, and property burnings in the communal areas of Northern Matebeleland.<sup>122</sup>

Matebeleland was the opposition stronghold. Members of the opposition were persecuted and according to the Catholic Church, over 2000 civilians were killed, thousands were beaten, their houses destroyed, public executions became a norm in this area.

Lack of democratic values within the ruling Mugabe regime can be traced to the above period. The opposition parties were incapacitated through unfair constitutional and electoral laws, which rendered the process meaningless. Among 150 Zimbabwean parliamentary seats for instance, 30 are selected by the President who also,

appoints the members of the Electoral supervisory Commission-usually serving or retired Officials-who are answerable to him. The Registrar General is a presidential appointee, responsible, for instance, for maintaining the voters roll, unfettered by any legal obligation that the list be open to scrutiny.<sup>123</sup>

In fact in 1995 over 100,000 voters had to be turned away because the voting was chaotic and the voter's roll was problematic.

Most of these voters were unable to say whether their names were in the register or not.

The government of Zimbabwe introduced the Political Parties Financial Act after successfully persuading Joshua Nkomo to join ZANU party and thus establishing ZANU-PF. The Act funded political parties with more than 15 seats in parliament. The ruling party benefited handsomely from this legislation. Apart from these financial benefits, the party controlled the state media houses and aggressively promoted ZANU-PF ideology in complete disregard of other parties.

In terms of Human rights in Zimbabwe, the executions of people in death row were processed in fast manner to the extent that the international community became concerned. In fact Kenneth Good argued further that,

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<sup>122</sup> Kenneth Good," Dealing with Despotism: The People and the Presidents, Zimbabwe's Presidential Elections 2002 Evidence, Lessons and Implications, in Henning Melber ed, (Nordiska Afrikainstitute, Discussion Paper 14, Sweden by University Printers: 2002), 8.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, 10-11.

the President's increasing authoritarianism and his disdain for human rights through this period was evident in many areas...A ruling party Official who murdered opposition supporter was pardoned, and by the mid-1990s, 56 or 57 people were believed to have been executed.<sup>124</sup>

Mugabe went further to give permanent residence to Mengistu (a former Ethiopian dictator) who escaped from war crimes charges in Ethiopia. Between 1987 and 2000, Mugabe had amended the Zimbabwean constitution more than 16 times.<sup>125</sup> However, three days after loosing the 2000 referendum, he unleashed on the 16 February war veterans to occupy commercial farms. The campaign to confiscate farmland was "spear-headed by self-styled war veterans (of the liberation struggle), whom President Mugabe had promoted and mobilised behind himself and his interests."<sup>126</sup> In fact around March 2000 more than 500 farms were occupied and by November the same year, 1700 were also confiscated. President Mugabe informed the nation that the government would not interfere; the era of anarchy had arrived. Farm workers were assaulted, and killed, property destroyed, the police remained inactive and "when High court and Supreme court declarations were obtained ordering the removal of the occupiers, the executive and police took no steps to implement the orders"<sup>127</sup> The whole campaign was geared towards frustrating opposition supporters. Land expropriation went ahead regardless of court rulings.

State sponsored intimidation and violence escalated by June 24-25 2000 parliamentary elections. The resignation of a High court Judge James Robertson Devittie after making a ruling nullifying results of Zimbabwe's June 2000 parliamentary elections in three constituencies, reflected lack of democratic values by the Mugabe regime. Furthermore,

Devittie's resignation comes in the wake of the resignation of the Chief Justice, Justice Anthony Gubbay who was pressured into taking an early retirement by the

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid

<sup>126</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, 15.

government after passing a series of ruling, which were deemed to be against the country's land redistribution policy.<sup>128</sup>

In relation to the above events, The Commonwealth Secretariat reported that there was violence and intimidation in both rural and urban areas against voters supporting the opposition as part of government strategy to diminish the opposition. In fact

systematic intimidation was supplemented by electoral manipulation on a large scale. Constitution was gerrymandered, the electoral role is out of date, and ZANU hack is in charge of the count. A local human rights group found that 25 per cent of the names on the voters roll were either fictitious, listed repeatedly, or those of the dead.<sup>129</sup>

Several international bodies confirmed that the roll was manipulated and full of errors. The United Nations Team also confirmed these findings. Towards the end of 2001 and before the 2002 Presidential elections, Mugabe introduced laws, which banned several international elections observer groups such as the European Union, The Carter Centre, American observer group and the International foundation for elections systems. All these

draconian laws were being pushed through parliament...all but banned political gatherings, free speech and the right to strike. Parliament had banned Zimbabweans overseas from voting, removing about 500,000 people-one in ten potential voters-from the rolls...other new laws made it harder for young people to register to vote.<sup>130</sup>

There was even more evidence that indicated that government supporters could vote many times. Members of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) were assaulted and 13 killed by ZANU-PF militia popularly known as terror Teens.

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<sup>128</sup> Renaissance, a review of Democracy and Governance in Southern Africa Vol.2 No7 (August 2000), 10.

<sup>129</sup> Kenneth Good, "Dealing with Despotism: The People and the Presidents, Zimbabwe's Presidential Elections 2002 Evidence, Lessons and Implications, in Henning Melber ed, (Nordiska Afrikainstitute, Discussion Paper 14, Sweden by University Printers: 2002), 25.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid, 26.

Despite 2002 Zimbabwean elections, which created a lot of controversy, the role of OPDS never came to prominence. Baregu argued that,

in Zimbabwe, the relationship between the opposition Movement for Democratic Change and President Robert Mugabe's government spilled over into serious tensions and violence, even after highly disputed elections of March 2002, in which Mugabe was accused of using legitimate questions over land for political gain.<sup>131</sup>

The OPDSC was still nowhere to be seen. These instances have actually challenged the role of this Organ and of course the role of SADC as well. The role of SADC and OPDSC was that of complete indifference. Members of SADC aligned themselves with the government of Zimbabwe. For instance,

President Thabo Mbeki appeared to have no knowledge of electoral malpractice and wide-scale illegality as the June parliamentary elections approached, and had no interest in acquiring it either.<sup>132</sup>

In fact South Africa and other SADC members dismissed early warnings of simmering dangerous conflict as speculative. As the international Community suspended aid to Zimbabwe, in a SADC Summit in Namibia, "Deputy President Jacob Zuma declared that the Zimbabwean President had convincingly explained that supposed redistribution would not affect commercial farming."<sup>133</sup>

Member states were in support of this Zimbabwean view. For Mozambican President and Chair of OPDSC, described Mugabe as a comrade and as "master and champion of the rule of law. Mismanagement in land redistribution, for him (Chissano) and Mbeki agreed was the fault, not only of colonialism and racism, but also of foreign donors."<sup>134</sup>

In fact President Chissano in accentuating what he called the root causes of Zimbabwean crisis

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<sup>131</sup> Landsberg Christopher and Baregu Mwesiga, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges*; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynner Rienner Publishers 2003), 4-5.

<sup>132</sup> Kenneth Good, "Dealing with Despotism: The People and the Presidents, Zimbabwe's Presidential Elections 2002 Evidence, Lessons and Implications, in Henning Melber ed, (Nordiska Afrikainstitute, Discussion Paper 14, Sweden by University Printers: 2002), 27.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid*, 28.

even went further to inform the BBC television that “Mugabe was defending his people’s democratic rights, accusations that Mugabe had enriched himself at the expense of his people were untrue.”<sup>135</sup> In order to investigate the above accusations of Mugabe, SADC appointed a six men delegation to look at these claims. They however, “reiterated support for Mugabe’s land policies, in December 2001, and declared their opposition to sanctions because, the Malawian Foreign Minister claimed, they would ‘hurt’-not save-‘the whole region’”.<sup>136</sup>

The South African Foreign Minister and her Deputy opposed the imposition of sanctions against Zimbabwe and condemned any threats of imposing international sanctions. They argued that sanctions were not in the regional interests and at the end of the day what SADC says count. SADC delegates who were observing 2002 Zimbabwe’s Presidential elections were evasive in their account of the elections. In most cases they did not even recognise that these elections were conducted under environment of violence and intimidation. The South African Mission in their press conference argued that their “mission did not witness instances of violence.”<sup>137</sup> The Namibian delegation together with SADC Ministerial Forum in their press statements on March 9<sup>th</sup> 2002 “argued that the violence had been exaggerated by the international media and that they were satisfied with the elections at that point.”<sup>138</sup> The SADC parliamentary Forum press conference created a furore. Their conference was postponed three times. It was clear that the team had fundamental differences. The delegates from Tanzania, Angola and Namibia were arguing for a less critical report while majority members were arguing for a more critical reporting of events as a whole. The SADC Forum eventually convened their press conference in which they argued that “because of the climate of insecurity in Zimbabwe since 2000 parliamentary elections, the electoral process could not be said adequately comply with the norms and standards for elections in the region.”<sup>139</sup> Conversely, South African delegation called them legitimate. These different versions were made despite the

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>137</sup> Tandeka C. Nkiwane, “Observing the Observers” in *The People and the Presidents, Zimbabwe’s Presidential Elections 2002 Evidence, Lessons and Implications*, in Henning Melber ed, (Nordiska Afrikainstitute, Discussion Paper 14, Sweden by University Printers: 2002), 55.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 55.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid, 56.

alarming violence and intimidation that characterised the elections and also despite the fact that Zimbabwe lacks an independent body, which administer and control electoral process and conflict management.

Despite having held regular elections, Zimbabwe represent a worst scenario in terms of democratisation index and political rights assessment; Breytenbach, argued that according to Freedom House,

political rights in Zimbabwe dropped to six in 2002, a score normally associated with autocracies. Its civil liberties are also scored at six. The electoral democracy in this country had clearly not prevented the erosion of civil and political liberties during this period, dropping to the level of dictaduras.<sup>140</sup>

However, member countries had not yet been able to operationalise the Organ more especially its objectives and principles for fear that they might be used against them.

#### **4.2.2 Swaziland**

In 1973, King Sobhuza II of Swaziland issued a royal degree banning political parties. However, this action was temporarily suspended. Subsequently, the banning order was re-imposed in 1997 by King Mswati III, thus making Swaziland, yet again an executive Monarchical country and a typical autocracy.<sup>141</sup> The Leader of Swaziland appears keen to delay democracy on the pretext that the country is about to introduce a new constitution that will address its citizen's political aspirations. Swaziland Democratic Alliance (SDA), which consists of labour unions and political organisations that have been banned by royal fiat for the past 30 years, wants the state of emergency prohibiting political activity lifted and constitutional convention with elected representatives be convened.<sup>142</sup> Civil liberties are conspicuously absent and there is still no Bill of human rights in Swaziland. In fact press freedom in Swaziland came under scrutiny in May 4, 2001, when government issued an order shutting down one Swaziland newspaper, The Guardian of Swaziland and The National Magazine. In order to implement these measures "the Police

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<sup>140</sup> Breytenbach Willie, "Democracy in the SADC Region: A Comparative Overview" in African Security Review Vol.11, No4. (2002), 100.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Mail & Guardian (May 9to15 2003), 16.

were deployed to impound copies of *The Guardian*".<sup>143</sup> These papers were seen as damaging the Institution of the Monarchy. Therefore,

on two occasions, the government had ordered the closure of *The Swazi Observer* for failure to comply with state political demands. In 1999, the entire workforce of journalists was sacked when the government ordered the closure of the *Swaziland Observer*.<sup>144</sup>

Nonetheless, it has been claimed that the Swazi Monarch would ratify the draft constitution by October 2003, because it expressed the views of the Swazi majority. The Constitutional Review Commission, which was set up by the King, was mostly composed of his relatives hence "The king should not be advised by his brothers. Princes and Princesses have a vested interest in royal matters."<sup>145</sup> Most people who have been consulted by the commission were local, regional and national leaders. Mostly the royal family composes this section of the Swazi society. Nevertheless

a desire for a democratically elected government was raised by people who wished to vote for national leaders like the Prime Minister directly, via a secret ballot. The draft constitution calls for palace appointment of the Prime Minister, cabinet, and most national and regional leaders, as well as all chiefs.<sup>146</sup>

This was contrary to the Prince's interest which was why the draft Constitution left out these democratic views, because the constitution proposes the government which runs the country for the benefit of the King who appoints the Prime Minister, but not the government which is popularly elected and works for the people's interests. The Prince's position was clear that is, if the draft was to reflect these dissenting views, the position of the Monarchy would have been seriously impaired. This would undermine Royal authority, and it is why the palace refuses to allow political parties to operate. Furthermore,

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<sup>143</sup> *Renaissance: A Review of Democracy and Government in Southern Africa* Vol. 1. No9 (2001), 10.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> *Royal Rule Questioned as Draft Constitution Discussed UN Integrated Regional Information Network*, in [http://allafrica.com/Publishers.html?passed\\_name=UNIntegrated](http://allafrica.com/Publishers.html?passed_name=UNIntegrated).

<sup>146</sup> *Renaissance: A Review of Democracy and Government in Southern Africa* Vol. 1. No9 (2001), 10.

other Swazi's are showing no hesitancy in making their views known to the constitutional delegation. This has raised further doubts about the palace's claim that an overwhelming majority of Swazi's agree with what is in the draft constitution.<sup>147</sup>

The Prince's Constitutional Review Commission did not hold public hearings when it collected views on governance from the people. According to the Swaziland branch of Women in Law in Southern Africa,

Submissions were held in secret. The press was barred. There was no independent accounting of what was said. When the Constitutional Commission's report was presented to King Mswati, it contained no data on how many people made submissions, or a percentile breakdown of how many people subscribed to different views.<sup>148</sup>

A member of the Commission, Attorney Doo Aphane of The Swaziland Law Society, in further supporting the undemocratic nature of this consultative process that was undertaken by the Commission, noted that, "We collected stories from people who were coached to say certain things."<sup>149</sup> Nevertheless, the chairperson of the commission Prince Mangaliso insisted that "an overwhelming majority" of Swazi's disliked political parties, and wished not only to retain but strengthen the Monarchical system."<sup>150</sup> Without these views being put to test through a referendum nobody can be sure that indeed the Swazi people do not like democracy. This would mean that the credibility and integrity of this consultative mechanism remains highly questionable. The consultative process was secretive, and driven by Princes who had special interests. Therefore the process was fraught with problems. What it reflects is not the wishes of the people of Swaziland as a whole but of those who desire to maintain the status quo. The Princes are known to have voiced their displeasure with the efforts of Lawyers for Human Rights in Swaziland, who are currently sensitising people about democracy and educating them about their rights and constitutional issues. They have been accused of "sabotage by putting into people's

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

heads notions that later become submissions challenging the contents of the draft constitution.”<sup>151</sup> The draft constitution gives the Monarchy absolute power over the state and governance of Swaziland. This means that political parties will remain banned and democracy delayed. The Swazi’s displeasure with the proposed constitutional changes has even gone further to the National Anthem. Some people have expressed their disappointment about the fact that,

the song calls for blessings to be bestowed on Royal leadership, but makes no mention of the Swazi people. In Nkwene, in the southern region, Congo Shabangu suggested to the CDC delegation a lyric change from "God bless the leaders of Swaziland" to "God, who bestows blessings on the nation of Swaziland." <sup>152</sup>

They argued that the national anthem was discriminatory in its content because it only recognises the Royalty but not the people of Swaziland as a whole.

Recently, Swazi authorities introduced legislation, which limits further freedom of expression. According to the International Press Institute (IPI), the global network of editors, media executives and leading journalists from over 115 countries, the country had decided to proceed with new legislation which, if enacted, would seriously impede the free flow of information in Swaziland and suppress the independent media. Based on information provided to IPI, the Justice Ministry is proposing to enact a Secrecy Act, which imposes a fine of US \$3,385 if journalists refuse to reveal sources, it also carries prison sentences of up to five years, and prohibits journalists from publishing information the Swazi government believes to be secret<sup>153</sup>.

Swaziland government commitment to authoritarian rule has been demonstrated by its heavy handedness strategies in quelling of peaceful protests demanding democratic reforms.

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> International Press Institute (IPI) Condemns Swazi Government's Decision to Draft New Secrecy Act International Freedom of Expression Exchange Clearing House (Toronto) PRESS RELEASE August 11, 2003 Posted to the web August 13, 2003

For instance on the 13<sup>th</sup> August 2003, Police used teargas to disperse hundreds of pro-democracy activists and trade unionists who protested in Mbabane against Swaziland's hosting of the Global Smart Partnership International Dialogue. This was the first day of a three-day protest action by Swazi labour federations, which was broken up by the security forces and one unionist was reportedly killed. The national strike and demonstrations were called to protest the governance record of King Mswati III.<sup>154</sup> In the eastern sugar plantation region, agricultural workers attempted to meet at the Tambankhulu stadium. Police fired on them with live ammunition. At least one worker was admitted to Good Shepard Hospital in Siteki with a Gunshot wound.<sup>155</sup> According to the Congress of SA Trade Unions, Swazi police also used live ammunition and batons to beat the protesters. At least 15 Presidents and former Heads of State were attending the three-day conference on sustainable development, including South Africa's Deputy President Jacob Zuma and former President Nelson Mandela. The protesters object to the fact that the Summit is being held in "undemocratic" Swaziland. "The Swazi police beat up and terrorised the protesters and also started shooting live ammunition at them."<sup>156</sup>

In actual fact the police action showed that they were prepared to punish anyone with dissenting views. The Human Rights Association of Swaziland, claimed to have collected dozens of statements from Swazi's who suffered indiscriminate police beatings during that week. The police used tear gas, rubber bullets, water cannons, batons and rifle against unarmed people. This police violence proved the brutality of recalcitrant Swaziland National Leaders who were afraid of losing their positions and privileges in democratic reform. The protesters argued that police beat them in order to prevent them from delivering their petition to the Summit, which read as follows,

we understand that one of the basic tenets of the Global 2003 Summit is respect for the rule of law. Our government has jettisoned this noble tenet ... Baton-charging and tear-gassing peaceful marchers and dispersing peaceful assembly shows the arrogance of force.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Police use Teargas to Disperse Anti-Summit Protests South African Press Association (Johannesburg) August 13, 2003 Posted to the web August 14, 2003 Johannesburg

<sup>155</sup> South African Press Association (Johannesburg) August 13, 2003. Posted to the web August 14, 2003 Johannesburg.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

Despite the above protests, SADC has not publicly reacted to the situation in Swaziland. In fact SADC members attended this Summit as well. The failure to operationalise the Organ principles on human rights and good governance has been exacerbated by lack of leadership within SADC member states who are overtly reluctant to exercise regional leadership on good governance issues. Invariably, this reluctance could be ascribed to member states themselves who have been facing severe criticism because of their own authoritarian tendencies.

SADC has not made any effort to convince Swaziland to democratise and adopt Bill of human rights. The country has consistently violated human rights and it appears that SADC Organ is unable to promote democracy in this country as well. The OPDSC has not challenged the Swazi Monarch about his undemocratic position. SADC has become sensitive to these issues because, some of its members are authoritarian. Venter for instance point out that

Swaziland is regarded as non-democratic and is still frozen in time on the political dead-end road of no-party, feudal Monarchy; Zambia and Zimbabwe are accused of being undemocratic in election-related practices and flouting the principles of good governance.<sup>158</sup>

Clearly these undemocratic positions of SADC countries and the Organ inactiveness in addressing these issues reflect lack of leadership within the region, which is committed to ensure democracy within SADC member states.

#### **4.2.3 Democratic Republic of Congo**

The DRC gained independence in 1960 from Belgium. The country was renamed Zaire under President Mubutu and in 1970 it became a one party state under his leadership until 1997 when rebels led by Laurent Kabila toppled the Mubutu regime. Zaire was yet again renamed DRC in 1997. The incessant political instability in the DRC appears to have damaged the prospects of democracy in this country. This has also been the case with Angola because of their internal instability. Democracy in this region continues to face

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<sup>158</sup>Denis Venter, "Democracy and Multiparty Politics in Africa: Recent Elections in Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho, in *Eastern African Social Science Review*, Vol.XIX No.1 (2003) 35.

more stress, mostly in Angola, the DRC, Zimbabwe and Swaziland. In the case of Angola, not

until the death of National Union for the Total Independence of Angola leader Jonas Savimbi in February 2002, government and opposition in Angola continued to interact not through parliament but through war, with hostile factions fighting for control of diamond and oil fields.<sup>159</sup>

The Organ appeared not to have convened a meeting or discussion by member states regarding conflict in Angola prior to the death of the UNITA leader. The role of OPDSC had not featured in these countries, unlike in other countries whereby, it was alleged that instability necessitated intervention such as in Lesotho and the DRC.

The failures of OPDSC to respond to political crises in the region derive from several factors; for instance one of the main reason had been that SADC and its implementing Organ lack not only the resources to respond to these problems, but there is also lack of political will within SADC member states to operationalise the Organ. While most members of SADC are democratic, two other members, the DRC and the Kingdom of Swaziland are yet to democratise. Democracy and security are strongly linked to each other. Democracy is therefore a conflict management strategy.

However, as a result of peaceful negotiations chaired by Sir Ketumile Masire and South Africa, on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2002, four former rebel leaders took an oath of office as Vice Presidents in the DRC. This does not mean that hostilities have ended there, but it was regarded as a step in the right direction.

From the forgoing discussion, we can conclude that the values, which were supposed to have been protected by the OPDS, and later OPDC were breached by some member states. The interventions in the DRC and Lesotho were the cases in point as far as territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence were concerned.

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<sup>159</sup> Mwesiga Baregu 'Economic and Military Security' in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges*; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 23.

The major problem of lack of democratisation and therefore human rights violation by the above member states attested to the fact that OPDS has not been able to promote common values as the 1996 Protocol advocated.

Zimbabwe had elections in 2002 and Angola had them in 1992. These countries have inadequate civil liberties and DRC and Swaziland still remained autocracies. Nevertheless, “the DRC remained least free in terms of political rights, followed by Swaziland and Angola (an electoral democracy without a functioning multiparty parliament) in the second position”.<sup>160</sup>

It can also be argued that Angola even though it had multiparty elections in 1992 is not different from Swaziland as a result of a bloody civil war, which escalated after opposition UNITA opposed the elections outcome.

These countries must pursue peace, development and democracy as a priority. Similarly, the anarchic situation in Zimbabwe necessitates major attention. It must strive to address law and order issues and improve civil liberties and political rights, which are deficient. Venter argued that the greatest deficiency within SADC remains the absence of integrated systems, processes and mechanisms to deal with human rights abuses, and the advancement of democracy, and good governance.<sup>161</sup>

While the Organ was challenged by the above problems, the following chapter will evaluate the OPDS limitations in details.

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<sup>160</sup> Breytenbach Willie, “Democracy in the SADC Region: A Comparative Overview” in African Security Review Vol.11, No4. (2002) 87-102.

<sup>161</sup> Denis Venter, “Democracy and Multiparty Politics in Africa: Recent Elections in Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho”, in Eastern African Social Science Review. Vol.XIX. (2003), No1. 1-39

## **Chapter Five: The Evaluation of the Organ**

### **5.0 Introduction**

The SADC Organ on Politics Defence and Security has been influenced by the turbulent relations between its member states. While most people believed that the demise of apartheid would remove insecurity, this has not happened. In fact just as South Africa was one of the countries, which caused insecurity during apartheid, it appears that, it has created other problems within SADC. Member states have become fearful of South Africa. The country has been accused of pursuing hegemonic policies and practices.

The levels of mistrust within member states have made it difficult for the Organ to execute its mandate and work within a conducive environment. The unilateral interventions in both the DRC and Lesotho had created more tension and mistrust among SADC members states. This chapter will therefore address these issues, which have become a major obstacle to the operations of SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and security.

### **5.1 SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security**

The OPDS primary objective is to execute the defence and security policies of SADC. Conversely, the word “Politics” within the Organ is not clearly defined. Until the meaning of this word is well understood by all members within the context of the Organ, SADC problems of operationalising the OPDS will still remain. The Organ principles relating to democracy are clear. However, the issues of politics are many and diverse. Therefore it is also crucial for member state to state in clear and unambiguous terms what the word politics means within SADC context in order to be easily evaluated. The failure to define this concept within the 1996 protocol has created even more confusion between member states. It has been these misunderstandings, which have led to members’ confusion of the Organ functions and mistrust between each other.

### **5.2 High Levels of Mistrust**

The formation of the first Security Organ in the region appeared to have been done hastily without actually evaluating other options available to Member States. It was assumed that apartheid South Africa was the main security issue and once that was removed there would be peace in the region. These assumptions have been proved

inaccurate. There is high level of mistrust between these countries covering several issues from security, trade and operational matters of the Organ. The countries in the forefront of this tension have been Angola, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Even though SADC member states committed themselves to regional cooperation and integration, the prevailing level of mistrust led us to conclude that they are not actually convinced that both the SADC and its Organ will serve their interests. The presence of democratic South Africa has hardened some members' attitudes. They saw South Africa as pursuing hegemonic agenda within the region, hence the reason why some members supported Zimbabwe over its intervention in DRC. Member states as a result have become fearful of losing their sovereignty and independence as a result of the establishment of the Organ. While member states perceived the creation of OPDS as an institution of conflict management and security, they also see it as a precursor for intervention in their own countries. They share the opinion that this Organ might be used against them and interfere in their domestic and foreign policies. As such member states have become suspicious about this Organ.

One of the most contentious aspects for OPDS has been its principles. Zimbabwe and its allies believed that rather than an Organ having clear principles it is desirable for it to operate on an ad hoc manner. Their view is that the Organ will be more flexible in this way. Therefore, they are opposed to an Organ protocol that contains clear procedures of conduct and principles of values in managing conflicts. This means that if the Organ operates according to these principles and procedures, decisions must be arrived at through consensus. As already explained in chapter three, consensus is difficult to reach within SADC. This will inevitably lead to a situation whereby consensus would not be reached. The confusion and misinterpretation of the Organ functions by Zimbabwe and its allies is a case in point.

The mistrust is so entrenched within SADC that Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia signed their own defence pact outside OPDS. This also reflects the fact that within SADC, there are members who preferred conflict to be managed through military means rather than negotiations.

The disagreement between Zimbabwe, the then chair of the OPDS, and South Africa, the chair of SADC, over the functions of OPDS spilled over to the public domain thus creating an impasse which was referred back to the member states to address.

The Organ impasse in the security area between South Africa and Zimbabwe was passed over to Mozambique, Namibia and Malawi in 1997. These countries were mandated to address this impasse. However, “the report is still outstanding. In other words, when new crisis in the DRC and Lesotho erupted in 1998, there was no Organ to deal with them.”<sup>162</sup> This task was subsequently passed to the newly elected SADC chairperson, Mozambique, from SA in 1999 Summit. Similarly the results were still negative in regard to resuscitation of the Organ.

The task of conflict management within SADC has had international resonance. The United States, during the 1990’s Great Lakes crisis, suggested the establishment of an All-African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI).<sup>163</sup> This international initiative was to be composed of major SADC countries such as Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe. This US initiative immediately resurrected suspicions about the role of OPDS. Most countries were suspicious about Botswana’s special relations with the US. It has been some of these issues that divided these countries. It would appear that the Great Lakes crisis has complicated SADC in dealing with conflicts within the region. As hostilities increased in the DRC, both SADC and the UN convened an urgent Summit whereby they called for a ceasefire and peace. In July 1999, the parties ceased hostilities and signed the peace agreement. What was most salient about this ceasefire was that it “did not originate from any SADC initiative, as there were combination of bilateral efforts driven mainly by Zambia and South Africa.”<sup>164</sup> As far as the OPDS was consent, it remained suspended and its position far from clarified. President Chissano was now tasked to resolve the differences of opinion over the autonomy of the Organ. By the time the August 1999 Maputo Summit came to an end, the Organ position remained unknown.

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<sup>162</sup> Willie Breytenbach “Failure of Security Co-operation in SADC: The Suspension of the organ for Politics, Defence and Security” *South African Journal of International Affairs* Vol. No1. (Summer 2000), 89.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

In the case of Lesotho, both South Africa and Botswana argued that their intervention was the response to appeals from a legitimate government, which required them to assist in suppressing the ensuing political instability in that country. In relation to Lesotho crisis therefore,

both South Africa and Botswana claimed that they were acting on SADC mandates, but at the time the Organ was suspended and neither SADC nor ISDSC or the Defence Committee had met explicitly to mandate such action.<sup>165</sup>

While it was clear that the intervention was outside the SADC and of course the Organ mandate, the lesson to be learnt here relate to how such events could be avoided in future. The Organ could not feature because member states were still debating its future functions. What complicates matters even more was the fact that the 1996 treaty does not provide for unilateral troops deployment without prior blessings by both the African Union and the UN Security Council.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the cases of Lesotho and the DRC were the manifestation of the Organ failure in preventative diplomacy. The most significant shortcoming relates to lack of transparency. It was not clear how the decision to intervene in the DRC and Lesotho was taken, nor was it clear who authorised the mission. We do not know who took the decision to intervene between SADC and the Organ, or indeed, if there was any deliberation. It is also unclear which SADC Summit authorised these interventions. The issue of mistrust harbours serious implications for 1996 OPDS protocol. It is impossible to have similar defence and foreign policy under these circumstances.

### **5.3 Interventions**

The interventions in DRC and Lesotho exacerbated suspicions and divisions between member states. While answers remained unavailable, speculation is rife that South Africa intervened in Lesotho on the basis of its realist perspective. It intervened to protect its main interest the water project in Lesotho. The peacekeeping mission led by South Africa and Botswana was to protect these interests under the guise of SADC auspices. It has

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid, 91.

been difficult to ascertain and justify the authenticity of this intervention under SADC or the Organ. Similarly, in the case of DRC it would appear that Zimbabwe and its allies had similar economic interests, which can be related to the control of the DRC vast diamonds resources. This conclusion derived from the fact that both interventions were not informed by both SADC treaty and the 1996 Organ protocol. In fact in both these cases neither the Organisation of African Union (OAU) nor the United Nations were informed about these operations. Chapter VIII of the UN Charter stated clearly that regional Organs such as SADC or OPDS should conduct no enforcement action without prior approval by the UN Security Council. The lack of clear authorisation of intervention policy in both conflicts questions the legitimacy of these interventions.

Lack of transparency surrounding these interventions, raised even more complications for the countries concerned. This was despite the fact that all UN decisions authorising peacekeeping missions or even enforcement mission are transparent and taken on the public domain. The DRC and Lesotho cases lack these credible ingredients, which justify the legitimacy of both interventions.

These actions reflect the urgent need for an early warning system within SADC that could be put in place before fire breaks out. It is not desirable to award a Nobel peace price to someone who excels in extinguishing fire, rather than to the person who prevents it. The OPDS must institutionalise this early warning mechanism.<sup>166</sup>

#### **5.4 Lack of Common Defence Policy**

Lack of a common defence policy within the community had weakened the OPDS. Member states have adopted a narrow and a traditional view of security. This view means that “security was seen in zero-sum terms: the security of one meant the insecurity of the other, a view that deepened even further as the conflict gained a regional character.”<sup>167</sup> Therefore, security according to this view is very important and sensitive to be subordinated to bureaucratic debates on economic development within SADC. As such

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<sup>166</sup> Ibbo Mandaza “Comment, SADC and Preventive Diplomacy”, in *Southern African Political & Economic*, Vol.11, No12 (Oct/Nov1998), 3.

<sup>167</sup> Agostinho Zacarias “Redefining Security”, in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges; A project of the International Peace Academy*, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 34.

some member states have instead elected to operate on an ad hoc basis thus bypassing formal SADC structures. Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia decided to intervene in the DRC without the SADC mandate. They were soon replicated by South Africa and Botswana who intervened in Lesotho acting outside formal SADC mechanism.

### **5.5 Lack of Democracy within the Region**

One of the serious limitations that SADC faces is lack of well functioning democracy within the region. The Organ was intended to assist in the promotion of democracy within SADC. Unfortunately this goal proved to be too ambitious and idealistic to come to fruition. Zimbabwe and Swaziland are still undemocratic. Both countries continued to violate human rights without even SADC as a whole taking a united stand against them. For the DRC and Angola, internal problems have limited any rapid prospects for democratisation due to the prevailing civil wars in these countries.

The above discussion indicated that realism is very much alive in Southern African. SADC members still put their security interests first when deciding on any policy option. The OPDS failures stem from the fact that members are still calculative when it comes to making decision relating to security issues. It would appear that member states are still very protective about their sovereignty and thus they still subscribe very much to realism. Their interests are primary in almost all of their actions. In shaping decisions in interventions in the DRC and Lesotho and in trade policies and even in sectoral policies of SADC, member states interests are paramount. The issue of lack of trust also highlights this realist perspective.

The issue of security in most countries is still a very sensitive area. The fact that the Organ on Politics Defence and Security could not function as expected stems from fears of member states. Concerned with their sovereignty, they would not allow the Organ to deal with their security issues, which they regarded as sensitive. The Zimbabwean argument about OPDS functions reflected some of these fears. This country demonstrated this fear explicitly when it signed security pact with Angola and Namibia without even informing the Summit while it was still a chair of the SADC Organ.

This traditional security thinking has militated against new security thinking in other areas. Therefore, it has become difficult for SADC to graft a new common defence policy

under these circumstances. Inevitably, these countries could not be able to assist OPDS in the implementation of both its principles and objectives.

It is also important to note that OPDS had not been able to promote democratisation as required by the Organ Protocol. The prevailing mistrust between member states made it hard for the Organ to perform its functions as mandated by the Protocol since its inception in June 1996. Therefore, SADC needs to seriously revisit its operations as far as the Organ is concerned. It must also try to build confidence between member states in order to be able to come up with a credible unified common defence policy suitable for the region as a whole.

While these limitations may stem from the Organ relations with the rest of SADC, the final chapter will address OPDS future prospects and challenges.

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## Chapter Six: Future Prospects

### 6.0 Introduction

The above discussion indicated that, there were a plethora of issues, which remains to be clarified and addressed by SADC before it ventures into the future. For this regional organisation to be efficient and effective it must live up to its regional expectations and promises. This chapter will therefore address this unfinished business.

### 6.1 The Challenges of OPDSC

Like any new organisation, SADC Organ had experienced challenges, which must be overcome if the organisation is to be effective. Currently some of these challenges have been defined in terms of tensions and suspicions between member states. The other problem has been the member's willingness to confront these challenges, which have bedevilled the progress within the organisation. Political will and commitment by SADC member states is also critical for the Organ to achieve its objectives and principles, as an institution which has been created to manage conflicts within the region.

The tension that emerged between Zimbabwe and South Africa can be traced back to the formation of SADC itself. One of the main reasons why SADC was established was to confront the apartheid regime. This legacy has come back in the post-apartheid area to haunt SADC. There is currently a high level of mistrust and tension between South Africa, Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, Zambia and Botswana. This has created much stress within the region. This polarity came to the fore as a result of Zimbabwe and its allies intervention in the DRC. These were followed by SA refusal to joint the parties in this endeavour and instead denouncing the trio for intervening without the Summit sanctioning their actions.

These countries did not form closer relations with SA, but viewed SA as aspiring to hegemonic policies. The war in DRC revived old tensions between SA and Zimbabwe together with its allies as known from the apartheid era. This resulted in Zimbabwe Angola and Namibia collaborating against SA during its tenure as a chair of SADC and intervened in DRC without informing it.

Another challenge that SADC must address has been the members' lack of political will and commitment to regional arrangements. Although SADC states have repeatedly

declared their commitment to regional co-operation and integration, the reality is different. These countries are not fully convinced that this regional body best serves their national interests. This assertion is confirmed by the actions of Zimbabwe and its allies, who have interpreted some SADC paragraphs to serve their own interests. The interpretation and the operationalisation of the Organ have created tension that was not anticipated. Baregu<sup>168</sup> argued that, paragraph 4.3.1 of the 1996 Summit stated that the Organ shall operate independently from other SADC structures and operate at the Summit level and also at the ministerial and technical levels. On the other hand, subparagraph 4.3.3 stated that ISDSC should be one of the institutions of the Organ. This institution was empowered to establish other structures as the need arise.

The members' interpretation of

these two subparagraphs of the Summit communiqué' have been the major bone of contention between SADC members with respect to their interpretation of the operationalisation of the Organ. The 1997 Summit in Blantyre, Malawi, failed to resolve these outstanding differences.<sup>169</sup>

Therefore, the action that was taken by Zimbabwe and its allies has exacerbated the tension and debates over the DRC crisis within SADC. South Africa on other hand, argued that the decision to intervene rest squarely with the Summit because it was a legitimate policy making body of the Organ. Article 10 of the 1996 SADC Treaty supports this position by stating that SADC is "the supreme policy making institution, the Organ is answerable to the Summit".<sup>170</sup> Conversely, Zimbabwe and its partners have taken a position that the Botswana Summit has created a separate Summit for OPDS which operations are based on the principles of FLS. These tensions reflect a clear lack of consensus among parties and also hegemonic struggles within the region more especially between South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The problem of consensus within SADC stems from the functions of OPDS. Both the OPDS and SADC give an impression that the two Organs are not related. The Chairperson of SADC is elected for three years while that of OPDS is supposed to rotate

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<sup>168</sup> Mwesiga Baregu 'Economic and Military Security' in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges*; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2003), 23.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid, 23.

annually. The problem has been that, “no institutional mechanism was established to harmonise or co-ordinate the work between the OPDS and the SADC”.<sup>171</sup>

Suspicious are rife between member states within SADC. Some SADC states fear loss of sovereignty and independence as a result of the establishment of a regional body that oversees the functions of conflict management, security and defence. They are concerned that OPDS might at some stage be used to interfere in their domestic affairs and foreign policy. This explains why some member states “have signed a protocol guaranteeing free circulation of SADC nationals in the region, but the ratification of this protocol and implementation by national governments is still pending”.<sup>172</sup>

The other challenge facing the Organ is the creation of a solid and firm early warning system mechanism in the area of security and good governance. The current structure, which is based in Zimbabwe, is yet to be developed. It has become difficult for SADC and indeed the OPDS to know when crisis are about to emerge and where. In fact the Organ needs to be restructured in order to operate efficiently and effectively.

A few SADC states believe that South Africa seeks to pursue a hegemonic agenda through the Organ. These countries have watched SA negotiating and signing trade agreements with European Union, which exclude SADC members. These countries felt that SA seeks to advance its strategic interest but not that of the region as a whole. Similarly, suspicions still exist between SA and Zimbabwe on economic and military issues. This suspicion extends to Angola and Zambia. Angola accused these countries of harbouring dangerous UNITA elements.<sup>173</sup> Namibia on the other hand still perceives SA as having neo-colonial ambitions. It has been these suspicions, which have precluded the possibility of arriving at the consensus of grafting a common security policy and a unified vision of the region.

The intervention by Zimbabwe and its allies in the DRC reflected that some SADC states are convinced that intra-and-inter-state conflicts are best addressed in a flexible and ad-hoc fashion.

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<sup>171</sup> Agostinho Zacarias “Redefining Security”, in Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu, *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa’s Evolving Security Challenges*; A project of the International Peace Academy, ed. (London: Lynner Rienner Publishers 2003),38.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

They are therefore opposed to an Organ protocol that contains clear principles and procedures for conflict prevention and resolution. This also reflects lack of common understanding of OPDS objectives and principles on the basis of which security can be viewed in the region, more especially the sixth objective, which states that intervention will be used as a last resort and also under the UN and AU principles. Some states are also concerned that a conflict management system that requires decision-making by consensus will inevitably be unable to reach consensus in situations of crisis. Therefore, member states appear to be more comfortable in operating informally on an ad hoc basis whereby their police forces have been co-operating in different operations outside the legal framework of the OPDS.

Some states (e.g. Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola) are more interested in a collective defence pact than in common security arrangements. This led to these countries signing their own Defence Treaty in April 1999 without the official notification to the SADC Chairperson or Summit. This Treaty of the trio stated that any armed attack on one is an attack on all of them.<sup>174</sup>

There is a fundamental divide between the SADC states that have an antimilitarist approach to conflict management and those who have a militarist orientation that relies on the use and threat of military force. It is clear that Namibia, Angola and Zimbabwe support a military rather than a diplomatic approach to conflict management. This obviously, has had a critical bearing on the OPDS protocol. Another relevant feature is the fundamental divide between SADC states that are democratic and those that are not.

The Organ protocol requires the promotion and development of democratic institutions and practices within SADC. The challenge has been to attain democratic institutions and practices in non-democratic states such as the Kingdom of Swaziland, the DRC and to a certain extent Angola and Zimbabwe.

Many of the SADC states that have embraced multiparty democracy nonetheless lack common democratic values. The region only began to experience pluralistic politics in the early eighties. Despite this new democratic development, democratic culture is far

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<sup>174</sup> Nathan, Laurie (2002) "Organ Failure": A Review of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security: In *Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa*; ed. Laakso Liisa (Regional Integration for Conflict Prevention and peace Building in Africa, Europe, SADC and ECOWAS. University of Helsinki, Department of Political Science 2002), 62-102.

from noticeable. The protracted conflict in Angola after Jonas Savimbi lost elections, the recalcitrant attitude of the Swaziland Monarch to issues of democracy and the elections disputes in Zimbabwe are cases in point. These are some of the challenges that SADC must address in order to live up to its regional objectives.

The 1996 SADC protocol is silent on the role of civil society. This sector can play a pivotal role in informing policies and assisting both the OPDSC and SADC operations. If SADC is to become a democratic institution, it must shed this traditional security posture of state centric view and allow this sector to have a role. Civil society can assist the OPDSC to be more proactive rather than reactive as it has become the norm. In fact the Organ appears to lack proactive mechanism even when conflicts have emerged, there is lack of concerted strategy to address these challenges.

## **6.2 Prospects for future**

SADC appears reluctant to change from traditional to the new security thinking. This analysis stems from the position that the Organ appeared to have embraced new security thinking while institutional structures have not yet developed for providing efficient and effective implementation. In fact mechanisms for securing peace in the region are still undeveloped. Conversely, the Organ is still new and SADC in its current form need to be developed further. This will take time and resources. It is important for SADC to adopt the new security thinking because it will be able to put more emphasis on developmental issues, which would consolidate their political integration further. These include issues such as poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS, cross border crime, drug trafficking and a single defence policy. All these factors have security dimension. It was traditional security thinking which inhibited SADC progress. Therefore, the adoption of the new thinking can contribute to a dynamic and more prosperous future for the region.

Both SADC and the Organ can operate efficiently and effectively only if there is political will to do so. Currently, member states appear to be working towards this endeavour. There has been much groundwork for instance, towards resolving the South African and Zimbabwean impasse.

This reflects political maturity on the part of SADC. The fact that South Africa and Zambia with the UN were able to bring Zimbabwe with its allies to the table and signed a peace agreement that led to cessation of hostilities in the DRC signifies this maturity.

### **6.2.1 Policies on Early Warning Systems within Member States**

The importance of establishing early warning systems cannot be overemphasised. SADC cannot leave this to chance and operate on an ad hoc basis. The region in order to arrest timeously, conflicts such as those in Lesotho, Zimbabwe and the DRC, must establish early warning mechanisms to manage these conflicts before they develop into unpalatable violence. Several cases can be cited to justify why it is crucial for SADC to have such a system and how the system will benefit the region in managing its conflicts.

Ahmed<sup>175</sup> argued that less than a decade after the end of the cold war, 101 armed conflicts have been recorded which brought death and destruction's to nearly 68 countries. What was even more alarming was that in most of these conflicts, military factors severely hampered relief efforts. Furthermore, 800,000 people were massacred in Rwanda in 1994 genocide during April and July. This was described as "one of the most abhorrent events of the twentieth century".<sup>176</sup> As if the world had not seen enough of this calamity, less than a year later in one of the worst war crimes committed in Europe since the end of Second World War, the Bosnian Muslims town of Srebrenica fell to a siege by Serb militias, during which 8,000 Muslims were killed under the eyes of the UN peacekeeping contingent deployed when Srebrenica had become the world's first ever-civilian safe area in 1993.<sup>177</sup>

It became very clear at the time that the world was in need of early warning systems. This will make it easier to predict these conflicts. Therefore, it is essential for states to develop effective early warning capacity to assess these risks.

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<sup>175</sup> Ahmed Adeel and Kassinis Elizabeth Voulieris "The Humanitarian Early Warning System: From Concept to Practice": in Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning System, eds. Davies, J. L. and T.R. Gurr (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield 1998), Overview and chapters 1,2,17.

<sup>176</sup> Woodhouse, T. "Conflict Resolution and Peace Keeping: Critiques and Responses". International Peacekeeping, Vol7, No. 1, (2000), 1.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, 1.

Ahmed<sup>178</sup> argued that if crises could be prevented, lives and scarce resources would be saved. Early warnings inform decision-makers about signs of any simmering conflict that might lead to the country experiencing armed conflict. Early warning involves two main tasks; firstly, it identifies the type of conflict and its location. This enables the researchers to establish whether the conflict could be violent or not. The second role of early warning is the monitoring and appraising of the situation in order to calculate the probability of violence. Early warning has also been defined as the ability to collect and analyse data in the interest of providing strategic choices for preventive action if necessary.<sup>179</sup>

In order to assist states in the monitoring and assessment of conflict, The General Assembly passed Resolution 46/182, which was adopted in 1991. This was put forward as a guiding principle for the co-ordination and provision of humanitarian assistance. It was geared toward preparedness and prevention of armed conflict. The purpose of HEWS was to identify crisis with humanitarian implications. Therefore, early warning is the systematic collection and analysis of information coming from areas of crisis for the purposes of anticipating the escalation of violent conflict, development of strategic responses to these crisis and presenting of options to critical actors for the purposes of decision-makers.<sup>180</sup>

These initiatives have long been used to prevent various natural calamities such as volcanoes, snow, earthquakes and floods. The major goal is to warn people and various organs and agencies responsible for assisting victims and formulate contingency plans in order to prevent the situation from creating maximum damage and injury to both human and property.

In conflict management “Early warning is about forecasting the potential for a crisis: namely the escalation or eruption of inter-state conflicts. The aim is to avert violence”.<sup>181</sup>

Though other early warning strategies can monitor and measure specific variables, conflict early warning system need information from various sources as wide ranging as

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<sup>178</sup> Adeel, Ahmed and Kassinis Elizabeth Voulieris “The Humanitarian Early Warning System: From Concept to Practice”: in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning System*, eds. Davies, J. L. and T.R. Gurr (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield 1998), Overview and chapters 1,2,17.

<sup>179</sup> Rusu Sharon, “Principles and practice of Conflict Early Warning:” In *Journal of Conflict, Security and Development Vol. 2: (2001)125-135*.

<sup>180</sup> Naraghi Sanam, and Auderlin Sanom, “Preventing Future Wars: State of the Art Conflict Early Warning Systems”. In *Conflict Trends 2: (1999), 20*.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid, 21.

economy, history of conflict, social factors, communal hostilities and political factors. A thorough and effective, credible analysis is required to assess the risk factors. Nevertheless, even if the information is objectively analysed and is free of biases, as long as those who are in authority are not taking requisite steps conflict prevention will fail. This demands a high commitment from both local and international players to ensure that conflict is managed and does not escalate.

An early warning initiative was perceived as a tool used to describe different and differing activities. Others argued that the “Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS) was established to identify crises with humanitarian implications, recognising that the causes of crisis are as numerous and as complex as the implications themselves”.<sup>182</sup> HEWS emphasise the importance of collecting and building and sustaining computer-assisted information gathering network. This was to enable the system to manage large volumes of information.<sup>183</sup> Organising voluminous information of data was the objective of HEWS. It was envisaged that the effective management of information would assist in the analysis, identification of data that will generate credible and accurate early warning information. Some of the sources of HEWS were UN agencies, Bretton Woods Institutions, members states, NGOs, and academia. Ahmed argued that this approach was to analyse background conditions, which focus on low and worsening human development indicators, economic decline, and high level of disparities among demographic groups.<sup>184</sup>

In addition to the above, the approach focuses on accelerating factors. These relate to monitoring of those factors that may escalate the tension. These are lawlessness, deterioration of food security, arms inflows, and discrimination and targeting. Finally, the approach looks at the trigger incidents such as changes in leadership and other external actions and changes within the region. Togo is the case in point where there is a serious

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<sup>182</sup> Adeel, Ahmed and Kassinis Elizabeth Voulieris “The Humanitarian Early Warning System: From Concept to Practice”: in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning System*, eds. Davies, J. L. and T.R. Gurr (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield 1998), 203.

<sup>183</sup> Alex, P. Schmid, “Indicator Development: Issues in Forecasting Conflict Escalation” in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning System*, eds. Davies, J. and T.R. Gurr, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield 1998).

<sup>184</sup> Ahmed Adeel and Kassinis Elizabeth Voulieris “The Humanitarian Early Warning System: From Concept to Practice”: in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning System*, eds. Davies, J. L. and T.R. Gurr (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield 1998).

decline of law and order, deteriorating security situation whereby the army has not been paid for months and they are currently engaged in sporadic looting. Some tribes are being targeted as in Ivory Coast before and after the attempted coup last year.

According to Davies,<sup>185</sup> the main goal of early warning is proactive engagement in the earlier stages of potential conflicts or crisis. It is geared towards prevention and alleviation of potentially destructive conflict. Tracking down and identifying the background conditions that constitute the root causes of tension can expose structural tensions. These conditions may lead to unnecessary tension, which may escalate crisis. Dynamic factors of acceleration may be identified; otherwise they may exacerbate the conflict into a major crisis.

In-country situation studies by specialised observers can be carried out including screening and analytical coding of public news sources. Davies<sup>186</sup> argues further that, the quality of available information sources, the reliability of early warning of various crisis phenomena also depend on the understanding and analysis of their root causes. These methods can be used as a reservoir of information about early warnings. Further more, systematised sharing of field reports and analysis from different agencies within the country can be another source of early warning initiatives. The coded assessment by country experts of current situations and trends, country or group-profiles, or databases of structural indicators that provide the basis for long-term risk assessments can provide viable data for early warnings.

Ted Gurr<sup>187</sup> identified three factors, which have a high propensity for a minority group to rebel. These are,

collective incentives, capacity for joint action, and external opportunities. Each concept is represented by indicators constructed from data coded for the project, and justified by correlations with the magnitude of ethnic rebellions in previous years.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Davies, J. L. and T.R. Gurr, *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning System*. eds. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield 1998).

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>187</sup> Hugh Miall, H., Ramsbotham and Woodhouse Tom, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999).

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

Gurr argued that the Kosovo Albanians at the time of their appraising in the 1990s had high incentives to rebel but lacked capacity and opportunity. Nevertheless, the East Timorese had both incentive and capacity to rebel. This approach yields acceptable results that may direct the focus to agencies, which may devise the appropriate conflict management strategy<sup>189</sup>. This could be used as an effective policy tool in decision-making.<sup>190</sup>

In sharing this information, transparency and accountability are crucial in identifying the source. Collaborating in collecting, analysing and sharing information is key to the development of an effective early warning system.<sup>191</sup> Most NGOs in the 1980s supported the documentation of networks based on mutually agreed standards formats for the compilation and dissemination of data provided by human rights monitors.<sup>192</sup>

The early warning initiatives have therefore been triumphant in several cases. Imminent armed conflict crises were prevented in the 1990s. In Macedonia and Ukraine (1992), Guatemala (1993), Fiji (1996) and other places.<sup>193</sup> These successes were as a result of cost effective prevention interventions that were alerted by early warning initiatives.<sup>194</sup>

The measurement for successful early warning initiatives is based on analysis, which is directly linked to strategic options for political and preventive action. For instance Rusu, argued that this system was triumphant in the following areas of conflict:

Macedonia, as a result of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, mission, and the UN peacekeeping presence. Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, owing, inter alia, to the respective efforts of international crisis group whose reporting has kept Burundi high on regional and international agendas; and The African Peace Forum, whose network of members warned of the potential for resumed fighting in

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ruddy Doom and Koen Vlasseuroot "Early Warning as an Instrument" In *Early Warning and Conflict Prevention: Research Project in the Framework of Policy preparing Research in the field of co-operation in development* November 1995: (1995), 25-49.

<sup>191</sup> Rusu, 2001 "Principles and practice of Conflict Early Warning:" In *Journal of Conflict, Security and Development* Vol. 2:125-135.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Hugh Miall, H., Ramsbotham and Woodhouse Tom, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999).

<sup>194</sup> Davies, J. L. and T.R. Gurr, 'Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning System', eds. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield 1998).

Eastern Congo in mid-1998.<sup>195</sup> These conflicts did not explode because of successful early warning initiatives that were carried out by the above groups.

Given contemporary developments in technological advancement, such as the Internet and telephone communication, there is high potential for information to be made available with meagre resources in order to provide early warning triggers. An integrated approach to the prevention of conflict involves all levels of groups within society, regional and international. It also requires decentralisation of decision-making among all stakeholders and the recognition of their unique role in conflict prevention.

While more information is now available, the major challenge is to engage governments for more effective action. This can be done through provision of reliable early warning information, which has been analysed, and communicated in a reliable manner to the authorities. This information should primarily be based on open sources and be easily available to the public. It can assist decision-makers to take collaborative action. The accuracy and credibility of this information is critical. There is a need to develop common information policies within the whole region in order to achieve this task.

Communication among communities has improved tremendously.

Local, regional and international structures have become more integrated and their capacities developed.

It is essential for SADC to assist in strengthening member states institutions and their commitment in building early warning, risks assessment and rapid diplomatic deployment mechanism, which would be crucial for addressing violent conflicts within the region.

### **6.2.2 The Role of Civil Society**

The role of Civil Society in conflict management cannot be overemphasised and SADC has the opportunity to incorporate this sector in its structures. To allow this sector to participate within the regional body will go far in promoting SADC credibility as a democratic institution. Civil Society is known to excel in building grassroots centred approaches to conflict management. This approach will enable SADC to have an impact

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<sup>195</sup> Sharon Rusu., 2001 “Principles and practice of Conflict Early Warning:” In Journal of Conflict, Security and Development Vol. 2:129.

at the grass roots level more especially in the area of conflict management and resolution. When communities are at peace with one another, OPDSC can be able to focus on other security areas that will aid the development of the region.

The new security thinking includes among others poverty as a security threat, which means that OPDSC must deal with this new threat. The participation of Civil Society within the SADC structures will inform policies geared towards poverty alleviation and devising local solutions to conflicts that may be motivated by poverty at the local level. Since Civil Society works at the local levels, its participation is crucial in informing policies, which are able to address local conflicts, and provide grassroots solutions to these local conflicts. Therefore, SADC has the opportunity to open its doors for this sector to be involved so that incessant conflicts can be addressed before they explode into major conflicts. In fact the role of Civil Society in this area also serves as an early warning mechanism, which SADC definitely needs.

### **6.2.3 Preventive Diplomacy**

SADC needs to develop a coherent and unified proactive diplomatic strategy. This strategy might require direct negotiations and interventionism where necessary. Proactive or preventative diplomacy will reduce conflicts and associated humanitarian costs that usually follow the devastating carnage and atrocities of intra-state and inter-state conflicts.

This strategy will aid the implementation of 1996 protocol, more especially the Organ objectives which were geared towards conflict management and resolution through peaceful means. SADC must also practice open diplomacy rather than secret or silent diplomacy. White argued that open diplomacy, which was subject to public scrutiny and control, was very important because “states were no longer the only actors involved”.<sup>196</sup> SADC must therefore involve more of these groups both domestic and international, which deal with or are engaged in diplomacy.

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<sup>196</sup> Brian White, “Diplomacy” in *The Globalisation of World Politics: an Introduction to International Relations*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. John Baylis & Steven Smith (Oxford University Press; 2001), 317-30.

SADC must therefore, prepare itself to use various forms of multilateral and bilateral diplomacy in stabilising the region. This can be done by constantly conducting civic education about the role of SADC and its Organs. Conferences can be held to sensitise people in these matters. This would go far in enhancing OPDS principles and objectives that have been adopted by OPDSC in august 2001 Summit and thus sustaining SADC as a regional organisation for centuries to come. SADC have a great potential to implement these strategies.

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