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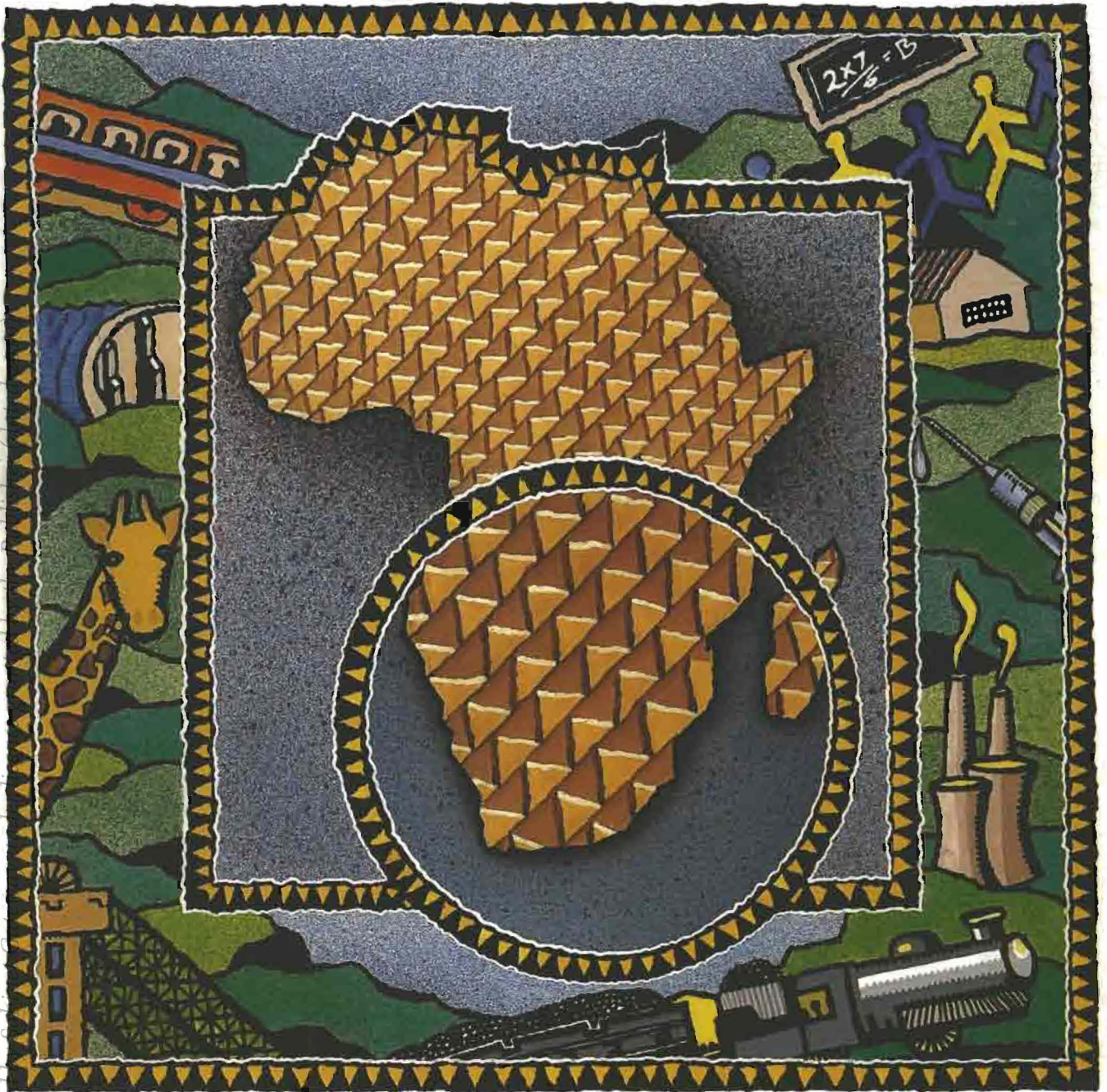
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# INSIGHT

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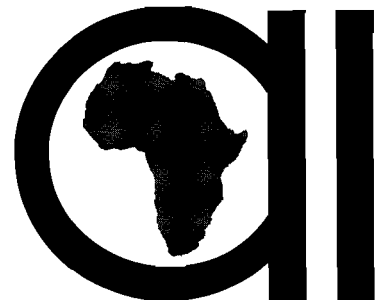
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# Southern Africa after April 1994: A time for thinking anew

*Dr Stef Coetzee, former Executive Director of the Africa Institute, at present Vice-Principal (Research Development), Potchefstroom University*

South Africa's expected accession to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) by mid-1994 will formally introduce a new era in the country's Africa relations. Most of the articles in this issue of *Africa Insight* deal with aspects of interchange with Africa that will require the attention of the government that is to emerge from South Africa's first universal franchise elections, scheduled for the end of April.

*Africa Insight's* focus is in particular on the matter of South Africa becoming a member of regional economic groupings such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa), as is evident from the contributions by Gavin Maasdorp and Rob Davies. In addition, the Institute's researchers have produced a factual survey – published as a supplement to this issue – on the present state of South Africa's interaction with Africa south of the equator.

There can be no gainsaying the importance of regional economic cooperation in subequatorial Africa in general and in Southern Africa in particular. Despite the years of apartheid a surprising degree of integration and cooperation has already taken shape in the region as is borne out by the existence of the Customs Union, the multilateral monetary agreement and several other bilateral, including trade, agreements, between South Africa and its neighbours. As Rob Davies points out, integration in Southern Africa could promote cross-border investments, mineral beneficiation projects, new niches for producers and industries in the region and changes in the pattern of production, with South African industries competing

more directly outside the region. In fact, regional cooperation is also crucial in the socioeconomic, environmental, security and infrastructural fields – to mention but a few.

However, as discussed below, a number of political/security, economic and socioeconomic problems militate against economic integration and could delay the revival of economic growth and development in the region. The region is saddled with political instability, the scars of destabilization efforts of the past, wars and civil unrest, rising ethnic passions, economic decline and dependency, poverty, food shortages, disease, rapid urbanization and unemployment. The transition to political democracy and economic liberalization in this part of the world is not any different from the rest of the continent and the past few years have presented a steep learning curve. The initial euphoria regarding the prospects for the region once apartheid has gone, has gradually been making way for a more realistic assessment of what the future holds.

The present situation calls for a liberation of outmoded ways of thinking and the generation of new ideas regarding the future development of the region. Long-term prospects for growth and development will critically depend on the choices made now. This may very well mean that “sacred cows” will have to be dropped in favour of new thinking about Africa's political and economic challenges.

## **The changing political environment**

Until about two years ago, optimistic forecasts were made, both locally and abroad, regarding Southern Africa's future development prospects. This optimism was based on the successful

transition to political democracy in Namibia and Zambia, the negotiations which commenced in Angola, signs of *rapprochement* between the major warring factions in Mozambique and the adoption of new economic policies in Zimbabwe, which for the first time indicated that a break from the radical socialist policies of the 1980s was on the cards.

However, the fortunes of the region changed dramatically during the second half of 1992. In Zambia, President Chiluba had to deal with discontent among some of his archrivals in a way which left the donor community very nervous; Dr Savimbi rejected the outcome of the elections in Angola, resuming a devastating civil war; and in South Africa the multiparty negotiations were temporarily derailed by the ANC/SACP/Cosatu mass mobilization.

In the course of 1993, the situation in the region did not change significantly, despite the successful election conducted in Lesotho. In Zambia, Chiluba continued to face the pressures of corruption and social discontent; in Malawi unrest and uncertainty coincided with President Banda's deteriorating health; in Angola the civil war led to huge daily loss of life; the preparations for the free elections in Mozambique stalled; in South Africa revived Zulu and Afrikaner ethnic passions led to frustrating delays in the negotiations at the World Trade Centre, while the violence in some parts of the country continued unabated as “third forces” and “self-defence units” continued the power struggle; and in Zimbabwe, President Mugabe was facing open discontent for the first time as the effects of the structural adjustment programme started to take their toll.

Although 1993 ended on a high note, with the adoption of a South

African interim constitution, the course of events in the subcontinent demonstrated to the international community that the transition to political freedom and economic liberalization in Africa may be more complex than was previously understood and that the inter-relationship between democratization, stability and economic growth/development needs to be studied more carefully in the African context. The novelty of the experience with democracy, the fragile economic situation and the instability caused by ethnic rivalry, warring factions and vigilante groups – all of them acquiring and distributing arms – should all be taken into account. Indeed, revision by the donor community of the conditionalities regarding democratization and economic liberalization should be considered in this context (see Baynham in this issue).

### **The socioeconomic situation**

In addition to the above problems related to transition, the developmental and structural economic features of the region will have a very direct bearing on the prospects for economic recovery and of the possibility of economic integration/cooperation in the region. There is a world-wide trend towards the promotion of trade and investment within the ambit of regional economic integration. In Africa, however, it would be a tragic mistake to ignore the deep-seated developmental problems or to suggest that they would be automatically solved by the promotion of economic growth through trade and investment alone.

A cursory glance at the development features of Southern Africa shows that 60 to 70 per cent of the population in the region lives on incomes below the subsistence level and some 35 to 42 million in extreme poverty. The population growth rate (of 2,5 per cent and higher for three of the countries and 3 per cent and higher for four of them) exceeds the economic growth rate with a commensurate decline in income per capita. Given the economic stagnation of the region since the 1980s (with

the notable exception of Botswana) unemployment is assuming levels of 20 per cent and higher. In South Africa the percentage of the workforce without employment opportunities rose to 46 per cent in 1993.

Of the ten Southern African countries, eight (Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe) fall in the low human development range and two (Botswana and South Africa) in the medium human development range. A surprisingly high percentage of the subcontinent's population has access to basic health services, but infant mortality rates remain unacceptably high. During the 1980s, per capita food production declined markedly and some of the countries had very high food dependency ratios. (See tables in the supplement to this issue of *Africa Insight*.)

Meanwhile Aids and other diseases are depleting human resources. In 1990, officially reported Aids cases in Southern Africa numbered 7 519 and the figure is rising. Moreover, owing to the sensitivity of the matter, many cases are not reported and the above figure could represent a considerable undercount. It has also been estimated that the total cost related to the treatment of Aids cases in South Africa alone could be as high as US\$1 188 million by the year 2000.

This picture indicates the complexity and seriousness of the situation in Southern Africa. Regional cooperation in the region will have to take these and other trends, such as rapid urbanization (see Tarver) and southward migration (see Solomon), into account. In addition, the asymmetry of economic relations is a third consideration that needs to be borne in mind.

### **Economic imbalances**

Southern Africa is marked by the small size of its countries' economies and by the substantial economic imbalances between South Africa and its neighbours. As shown in the supplement to this issue of *Africa Insight*, the South African economy accounts for 79 per cent of the GNP of Southern Africa and for 60 per cent of subequatorial

Africa's. South Africa also dominates industrial and agricultural production, with production respectively ten and seven times higher than that of the next largest, namely Zimbabwe. In fact, South Africa is the only country in the region with significant industrial capacity, advanced technology, an infrastructure resembling First World standards and a well-developed financial infrastructure.

South Africa's dominance in the region has cultivated dependency relations, especially with some of its neighbours. Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique are to varying degrees dependent on South Africa for either income through the Customs Union or remittances of migratory labour from the mines or both. It is not surprising that trade flows in the 1980s between South Africa and SADC exceeded intra-SADC trade by more than three to one.

The above economic realities have both positive and negative implications for economic development throughout the continent. South Africa's considerable (but not unlimited) resources could no doubt strengthen development efforts in subequatorial and Southern Africa, but care should be taken that South Africa does not reap most of the benefits in a new cooperation deal. The question at stake is rather how a harmony of interests could be created in the aftermath of South Africa's forthcoming election. As Gavin Maasdorp points out in this issue, the decisions of the new South African government regarding its membership of the Customs Union and its prospective participation in SADC and/or Comesa will have a major influence on the future structure of regional economic cooperation and integration.

### **Towards a new framework of thinking**

The southern part of Africa is particularly well endowed with natural resources. Yet, from the above it is clear that the subcontinent is saddled with all the well-known African developmental problems. A new framework of thinking regarding the solutions to these problems is suggested below.

- The containment of group conflict is crucial for successful political transition and the stability that, in turn, constitute a precondition for the future development of the region. A balance should be struck in countries such as South Africa, Mozambique and Angola between the demands for national integration, on the one hand, and the accommodation of ethnic diversity on the other. If Africa could rid itself of its propensity for political centralization and concentration of political power, we might see meaningful attempts at devolving power, even to the extent of embracing federal forms of government. Successful regional integration, to be sure, represents another process that would require the political will, on the part of neighbouring countries, to relinquish a measure of national sovereignty.
- New security arrangements will be required to restore the damage inflicted by the destabilization of the past. Cooperation for security, as suggested by Breytenbach in this issue, could bring about a peace dividend: an allocation of resources away from the military in favour of human development. Collective security arrangements are also essential for political stability and the transition to democracy. More broadly defined security measures should also aim at improving food security, the satisfaction of basic human needs and the creation of job opportunities.
- Authorities have no option but to accord priority to human development under conditions of economic stagnation and within the context of structural economic adjust-

ment. If civil wars and violence continue unabated, attempts at addressing socioeconomic imbalances will suffer severe setbacks. However, experience elsewhere has shown that substantial progress with human development is possible under conditions of economic decline, necessitating austerity measures, if priority is given to basic health, education, water and nutrition programmes.

- A fourth priority concerns sound management of the environment. This assumes even greater importance under conditions of extreme poverty. Integrated management systems are required in countries of the region as is coordination between these systems to combat the degeneration of the environment inflicted by population growth, grazing practices and the inadequacy of agricultural extension services. It is also necessary to develop alternative forms of energy, such as the substitution of thermal power for hydroelectricity.
- Governments will have to face up to their essential task: to create the conditions for economic revival and the adoption of a balanced approach between efficiency and equity considerations. Here the policy framework is of crucial importance, especially if sustained economic growth is to be achieved. Sound macroeconomic policies and healthy balances of payments are required for restoring international confidence and creating the environment for private investment. In fact, a new interpretation of the role of private initiative and a policies that encourage private enterprise are imperative.

- It is important for countries in the region not to take their competitive advantages as given, but to create new competitive advantages. This can be done by transferring technology and investment in education, training and research, which in turn require social cohesion and an institutional framework that is often not in place in developing, and particularly not in African countries.

- The institutional framework for development and development cooperation will have to be adjusted. The debate on good governance has highlighted the importance of transparent and accountable public management. Decentralization and devolution of government and wider acceptance of the principles of federalism and regionalism could herald the beginning of mass participation in development and the release of people's organizational genius at solving their community problems.

The above discussion points to the need for the promotion of both trade and investment and of more broadly conceived development actions to upgrade the human potential, to bring about sustainable development and to support democratization. The SADC has already shifted its focus to a more definite developmental one, but hitherto members lacked the capacity to deal with these problems effectively. The added capacity of South Africa in this and other regional forums, together with the support of international development agencies, could herald a new era of development cooperation in Southern and subequatorial Africa.

# The future structure of regional trade integration and development cooperation in Southern Africa

*Professor Gavin Maasdorp, Director of the Economic Research Unit, University of Natal, looks at the existing regional economic groupings that vie for South Africa's membership and concludes that South Africa could play a decisive role in the quest for a more rational regional framework, also perhaps in formulating a modus operandi between the Southern African Customs Union and the rest of the subcontinent.*

The political emergence of the new South Africa at the end of April 1994 will have an important influence on the country's economic relations with its immediate neighbours as well as with the broader subcontinent and Africa as a whole. Early admission to the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the African Development Bank (ADB) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is expected, while formal responses to invitations to join the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) will have to be decided upon. Trade and monetary relations with neighbouring countries in the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and Common Monetary Area (CMA) are already under joint review, and this process will be concluded. Thus, all existing institutional structures relating to trade integration and development cooperation will be affected in one way or another by political change in South Africa.

This is not to say, though, that the decisions of the new South African government will be the only factor determining the future of these institutional arrangements. Donor agencies have played an important role in financing the PTA and SADC, and their decisions will be critical, while the views and actions of certain countries in the region, either individually or collectively, will also be influential.

To what extent the restructuring of regional institutions will be the product of politically based decisions or of a sober economic assessment of the functioning of the various institutions and of the limits to integration, will be a major determinant of the success of long-term economic integration.

This article attempts to present a rational examination of the possibilities concerning the future structure of regional economic relations. The emphasis is more on the economic than the political aspects, and South Africa's role in the region is assessed.<sup>1</sup>

## Political factors

The new South African government will be dominated by the African National Congress (ANC) which, according to all opinion polls, should emerge with a comfortable majority in the April elections. There has been some speculation as to what the ANC's attitude to regional economic relations will be: one school has argued that the new government might not be a more generous neighbour than the old because it will be inward-looking as a result of the daunting domestic economic challenges it will face, and it will therefore pay little serious attention to the problems of the region. Another view is that it will be called upon to repay past favours given the ANC by the "frontline" states and countries such as Uganda over the past few decades, and that it will endeavour to fit into

the OAU framework prepared to share with, rather than extend its economic power over, its neighbours.

The official attitude of the ANC may perhaps be taken as that expressed by its president, Nelson Mandela, in a recent article. As he puts it:

In forging links with our neighbours, the ANC will draw on an African tradition, of which we are a part, of promoting greater continental unity. We are currently involved in consultation with the ... (SADC) ... and ... (PTA) ... We look forward to a mutual beneficial association with both of these important vehicles for promoting regional prosperity. At the same time we recognise that Southern Africa cannot afford a proliferation of institutions or a duplication of efforts and that the challenges of the future will require considerable institutional development. We likewise look forward to becoming involved in the process of reforming the Southern African Customs Union.<sup>2</sup>

Mandela's remarks about the need for considerable institutional development in relation to the PTA and SADC are well taken. For a number of reasons going back to their establishment, there is intense rivalry and some antipathy between these organizations.<sup>3</sup> It would not be going too far to say that each views South African membership as the ultimate prize: in a growing climate of opinion that the region cannot afford both organizations, South Africa's choice is seen as decisive in ensuring victory for one over the other in a battle for survival. It is, of course, possible that the new South African government

could choose to join both, but it would then have to use its influence to achieve a rationalization so as to diminish the overlapping of activities. The ANC in the past has enjoyed observer status in both the PTA and SADC, but its political ties have probably been closer to the frontline states which played an important role in establishing SADC. There has been some speculation, therefore, that the new government might well prefer SADC membership,<sup>4</sup> although a recent article argues that it would favour the PTA.<sup>5</sup>

But this does not mean to say that the decision by the new government in Pretoria will be the only factor in determining the future of the PTA and SADC. As Mandaza points out,

... the role of the donors ... [has been] ... almost central in the history and development of SADCC/SADC; and ... is bound to pervade and influence not only the outcome of the PTA/SADC dispute but also the content and direction of regional and economic cooperation and integration in Southern Africa.<sup>6</sup>

Not all the major donors have been enthusiastic about the SADC plans for an economic community, eg, the EC expressed concern over the duplication of activities with the PTA, and there was general concern over the practicality of the idea and the overlap with the PTA.<sup>7</sup> A joint committee set up by the PTA and SADC is to report on the harmonization of activities. Clearly, the donor community would welcome a rationalization of the institutional structure in the region, and is in a position to call many of the shots, especially if a consensus can be reached between major donors and the new South African government. From an OAU viewpoint, however, the historical development of the PTA as a brainchild of the ECA technocrats is important, and it is thought that the PTA accords better with the Pan-African goal of regional economic blocs ultimately coalescing into a continent-wide economic and monetary union: thus, the OAU has supported the PTA's transformation into the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa).<sup>8</sup>

The different views and needs of Southern African countries themselves will also be a factor in determining the future of regional organizations. That some countries, although belonging to both the PTA and the SADC, favour one over the other is well known. Zambia is the major protagonist of the PTA and Botswana of SADC<sup>9</sup> (apart from South Africa, Botswana is the only Southern African country that does not belong to the PTA). Zimbabwe has apparently been trying to effect a compromise, being aware that the international community is both worried and bewildered by the existence of the two organizations.<sup>10</sup> Zimbabwe has taken a leading role in peddling the idea of a "super-SADC", and in this regard has had the support of Botswana, Mozambique and Tanzania. A super-SADC would include South Africa, Kenya, Uganda and Zaire, and Zambia apparently has been mollified by the proposal to move the headquarters of SADC away from Gaborone to Lusaka as a *quid pro quo* for its support. The remaining PTA states would then form an eastern bloc of their own while the super-SADC would be the southern economic bloc of the Abuja Treaty.<sup>11</sup>

More recently, however, a treaty of cooperation has been signed between Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda to reactivate the idea of a common market along the lines of the defunct East African Community (EAC).<sup>12</sup> This has been taken to indicate that Tanzania has had second thoughts about its Southern African links, and that a super-SADC might then well shed Tanzania from the existing SADC ten and take on South Africa and Zaire only. What effect a resuscitated EAC would have on the East African PTA members is relevant here; the countries of the Horn are hardly attractive partners, while the Indian Ocean Commission (consisting of the island states) could then form a trade bloc of their own. Clearly, however, the establishment of a super-SADC and EAC would be a death blow for PTA/Comesa while the Pan-African idea of five regional economic blocs would require revision if the countries of the

Horn are left in a vacuum by these developments.

These political decisions will, or at least should, be based significantly on economic considerations, and it is to a discussion of economic factors that we now turn.

### Economic issues

Institutional structures for regional economic integration and cooperation must be grounded on solid economic principles if they are to have any hope of success. The decision by the government of a country to join such an organization is a political one, and the government must have the political will to implement the decisions of the particular organization if regional integration is to be successful. A decision taken on political grounds only, eg, as a show of regional solidarity, without taking heed of the underlying economic realities, will not make for successful regional integration. It is important, therefore, that these economic issues be examined (or re-examined as the case might be) by all countries in Southern Africa so as to ensure that the regional structures are built on firm foundations. Among the issues which require examination are:

- Which of the existing structures has worked/is working/can work successfully?
- What are the limits to integration?
- Are all economies in the region sufficiently sound (in terms of key indicators such as exchange rates, inflation rates, macroeconomic policy and ability to trade) to engage in integration arrangements?
- What model(s) of integration/cooperation is/are desirable for Southern Africa?

It is necessary at this stage to clarify what is meant by the terms "integration" and "cooperation". The literature is specific about the definition of "integration", which in fact refers to trade integration. There are four types in a hierarchical arrangement:

- At the lowest level, a *free trade area* involves the removal of quantitative restrictions (such as quotas)



and customs tariffs among member countries.

- A *customs union* takes the free trade area conditions further by adopting a common external tariff against outside countries.
- A *common market* extends the customs union arrangements by abolishing all restrictions on the movement of factors of production (in practice, capital and labour) among member countries.
- At the highest level, an *economic union* builds on a common market to include the harmonization of national economic policies (such as fiscal and monetary policies).

As a precursor to economic integration, countries may enter into an agreement covering preferential tariff and other concessions on a reciprocal basis. In Southern Africa the PTA represents a good example of such an arrangement. At the top end, an economic union could be converted into a political union, but there are no examples of this.

Economic cooperation at a regional level refers to sectoral cooperation, eg, in transport, and the coordination of national development plans. The relevant example here is the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC).

It is unfortunate that the terminology in respect of the various types of economic integration is used loosely outside of economics literature. The result is that the names adopted by regional organizations are not always an accurate description of what they are, eg, the Central American Common Market never approached the conditions of a common market. The term "economic community" has become popular, but it has no precise definition in economics literature and can, in fact, represent almost any type of regional arrangement.

#### Integration or cooperation?

In Southern Africa the only example of economic integration is that of the SACU. The PTA, as mentioned above, is only a forerunner of true trade inte-

gration to which it aspires in the form of Comesa. The sectoral cooperation model is represented by SADCC, but this organization has undergone change and, as SADC, has opted for the trade integration model. When SADCC was established in 1980, there was some debate as to which path to follow, and the sectoral cooperation route was chosen on the grounds that trade integration theory was not relevant to developing countries.

World trading conditions have changed since then as a result of the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (Gatt), the transformation of the EC into a single market, the formation of the North American Free Trade Area (Nafta) and various moves towards integration in South-East Asia, the Pacific Rim and Latin America. It is the formation of regional trading blocs that has given renewed impetus to trade integration in Southern Africa.

It is generally agreed in the literature that the conditions necessary for successful economic integration require countries to be at similar levels of industrial development and to have competitive industrial sectors but with the potential to develop complementary industrial sectors. In addition, the countries should have broadly similar economic systems, and they should all perceive that they will gain from the arrangement, especially from the point of view of industrialization. On an organizational and political level, a supranational authority should be established with real powers to make governments of member countries implement its decisions; governments should be prepared to cede some of their sovereignty in the field of economic policy to the supranational authority; and political differences among member countries should be containable.

In the geographic area covered by the PTA and SADC, there are considerable differences in the levels of economic and industrial development as well as in macroeconomic policies. These organizations contain some of the world's least-developed countries

and some which are ravaged by civil war. The capacity of such countries to engage in any constructive way in regional integration arrangements is very low, and this inevitably sets limits to the degree of integration possible. Despite the efforts of the PTA and SADC, intraregional trade (excluding South Africa) has remained at only about 4–5 per cent of the total trade of member countries.

#### The Preferential Trade Area

The PTA consists of 22 countries stretching from Sudan to Lesotho in the south, and from Angola in the west to Mauritius in the east. The treaty establishing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa) makes provision for South Africa and Botswana to join, making an eventual total of 24 countries. No provision is made for the accession of Zaire (which lodged an application for membership of the PTA in 1991) or Egypt (which it was rumoured was wanting to join). On 6 November 1993, in Kampala, 15 PTA member states ratified the treaty that established Comesa.<sup>13</sup>

Since commencing operations in 1983, the PTA has chalked up a mixed record. Several member countries are economic basket cases, some governments tend to pay only lip service to PTA resolutions, and arrear subscriptions have been a perennial problem. On the positive side, tariffs have been reduced on a range of commodities, a Clearing House has been established in Harare and a Trade and Development Bank in Bujumbura, travellers' cheques (denominated in UAPTA, the unit of account of the PTA) have been introduced for intraregional travel, and cross-border movement of goods by road has been facilitated by the Road Customs Transit Document (RCTD), which involves simplifying and standardizing documentation at border posts, and also by the introduction of a common carrier's licence and a harmonized road transit charge. Again on the negative side, however, these initiatives have not been used by all member countries. For example, in

1992 only 12 of the then 18 member states had used the Clearing House,<sup>14</sup> banks in some countries still do not recognize UAPTA travellers' cheques, and the necessary legislation has not been enacted by all countries to give effect to the RCTD and other road transit measures.

Despite this mixed picture, the PTA is seen by donors and firms as an organization which has at least taken practical steps to increase intra-regional trade. Similarly, the Comesa Treaty is a detailed document that clearly spells out the *modus operandi* for the evolution of the organization. With regard to timing, it specifies the establishment of a customs union within ten years of the coming into effect of the Treaty; thereafter, it talks of transforming the "common market" into an "economic community", but the use of the term "common market" is loose. It is clear that Comesa will be a "common market" in name only for a long time to come; in fact, it is unlikely that even a customs union can be established among all member states in the first ten years. This is because of the disparate nature of the grouping from the historical, political and economic points of view, and its resulting lack of cohesiveness. For example, President Chissano of Mozambique has stated that his country is only vaguely known by, and has no economic, trade and cultural contacts with, many PTA states.<sup>15</sup>

#### The Southern African Development Community

SADCC transformed itself into SADC in 1992. It consists of the ten countries of Southern Africa excluding South Africa. Of the SADC countries, only Botswana is not also a member of the PTA. As mentioned earlier, the SADCC model was one of sectoral co-operation, each country being given responsibility for a sectoral portfolio. Despite the change to SADC, the organization is still in essence concerned with sectoral co-operation since the *modus operandi* for establishing a form of trade integration has not been revealed. All that is known from available SADC documentation is that the

goal is the formation of an "economic community", but there is no clarity as to what form the trade integration component of this will take.

The donor communities are concerned about the duplication of effort between SADC and the PTA; both are aiming to establish an "economic community", and the areas of overlapping activity have increased. What puzzles observers is how a country can be a member of both organizations; how, for example, will the SADC's tariff reductions and timetable for the establishment of free trade and more advanced forms of trade integration relate to that of Comesa, and will there not be conflicting obligations under the two treaties?

SADC, like the PTA, has a patchy record. Some of its sectoral achievements have been greater than others, the work of the Maputo-based Southern African Transport and Communications Commission (SATCC) being particularly worthy of mention. But even in that field, the private sector played an indispensable role in the rehabilitation of the Beira corridor, while the South African transport industry (comprising the rail, road and port networks and the operators) has continued to be crucial in the movement of SADC overseas trade. The commitment of member governments to the organization has varied enormously, as is reflected in the amount of attention they have accorded their sectoral portfolios: some governments do not have the human resources in their ministries to handle the additional burden of a portfolio responsibility.

Then, too, economic development within SADC has been held back by the civil wars in Angola and Mozambique, and by economic decline and the subsequent concentration on the introduction of special adjustment programmes, especially in Tanzania and Zambia. The SADC grouping may not be as disparate as the PTA, but there have been marked contrasts in economic philosophy in the past among member states. However, there is now a convergence of economic policies in the region.

#### The Southern African Customs Union

This is the only authentic example of economic integration in Southern Africa. It is a long-standing arrangement, its roots going back a hundred years. Speculation from time to time that the SACU is about to dissolve or that one or other member is about to withdraw has proved to be unfounded. It is well known, however, that all member countries are keen to revise the Agreement, albeit for different reasons. The sentiments of the smaller countries are probably best summed up by the following statement by the Botswana Vice-President and Minister of Finance:

We meet today to discuss a customs union arrangement that has outlasted countless governments in the region and one that is of longer standing than any other in the world. We do so recognising the mutuality of benefits, and of the interdependence that is inherent in this Customs Union ... international trade which the Customs Union Agreement is meant to encourage is an instrument of expanding economic opportunity. It has clearly been a highly successful instrument in this regard.<sup>16</sup>

Certain aspects of the Agreement have been under examination since 1981, but now consensus has been reached on amending them. A technical committee was appointed in August 1993 to review the Agreement, and it is hoped that this will lead to mutually satisfactory amendments and a strengthening of the relationship. These moves have the support of the ANC, Mandela having indicated that the position of the smaller countries will be sympathetically viewed: "Our approach to the reform of SACU will be guided by broader considerations than the implications for the South African treasury".<sup>17</sup> The present South African government's approach to amending the Agreement has been based largely on the revenue-sharing formula which it perceives to be unduly favourable to BLSN. It has been particularly perturbed at the declining share of the common revenue pool accruing to Pretoria – the proportion hovered around 80 per cent between 1983/84–1989/90 but then fell to only 66,4 per cent in 1992/93.<sup>18</sup> BLSN, in

contrast, wish to change the payment mechanism to obviate the two-year time lag in revenue payments to them, and they are also concerned about other aspects such as infant industry protection, the effects of South African dumping, and the lack of adequate consultation regarding changes in tariffs and the imposition of import surcharges. In 1993, however, the countries worked closely together in the Uruguay Round negotiations with Gatt, and they now appear to be more appreciative of one another's problems.

Two recent studies<sup>19</sup> have recommended that the SACU should be maintained as the core economic integration arrangement in the region, and that an appropriate relationship should be concluded with other countries. One report talks of a "variable geometry" and the other of a "multi-spread" approach – both argue that further integration should occur in a stepwise manner with individual countries joining the core as and when their economies are ready to do so. Political changes have meant that there is greater appreciation for this view in the region today. Thus, the new SADC Executive Secretary has written that:

Within SADC we have no problem with the customs union. We regard it as a higher level of integration than the rest of the region can, at this moment, aspire to.<sup>20</sup>

Some countries have been reported as being interested in joining SACU, but only Zimbabwe could be seriously considered at this stage: its liberalization measures could bring its macroeconomic indicators more into line with those of the SACU countries, and it has the capacity to protect the integrity of customs union borders.

#### **The Common Monetary Area**

The closest approximation to monetary integration in Southern Africa is found in the CMA consisting of South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland and Namibia. As with the SACU, its roots go back to the late-1800s, but the relationship was formalized only in 1974. Since then there have been a number of amendments, and the CMA is at present gov-

erned by the Multilateral Monetary Agreement concluded in 1992 when independent Namibia was admitted as a member. Some aspects of the agreement are being reviewed by a technical committee.

The CMA guarantees free movements of capital between member countries, while Botswana's independent currency is convertible and is linked to a basket of currencies in which the rand predominates. When the level of de facto mobility of labour (both skilled and unskilled) across borders is also taken into account, the SACU and CMA together offer their members a form of economic integration approximating that of a common market. This fact would seem to suggest that future economic integration arrangements in the region should be built around this SACU-CMA grouping.

#### **Views of firms**

Both the PTA and SADC regard the private sector as the main force in economic growth. In an endeavour to ascertain the views of the private sector with regard to existing institutional structures for regional integration, a survey was conducted among firms engaged in cross-border trade in the BLSN countries, Malawi and Zimbabwe in 1992.<sup>21</sup> Of particular interest for the purposes of this article are the following results:

- 85,4 per cent of firms in CMA countries have found the CMA useful in the course of their business; the comparative figures for firms in the other groupings were 73,3 per cent for SACU, 46,6 per cent for the PTA, and 24,1 per cent for SADC.
- Of firms in each particular regional grouping, 87,5 per cent felt that their country should belong to CMA, 77,9 per cent to the SACU, 64,7 per cent to the PTA, and 56,6 per cent to SADCC.
- Of firms in Lesotho and Swaziland, ie, firms which were in both the SACU and PTA, 85,3 per cent felt that their country should opt for SACU membership if faced with a choice.

- Approximately 75 per cent of firms supported a PTA/SADCC merger as well as the inclusion of South Africa in both these organizations.
- Approximately 70 per cent supported the idea of a SACU/SADCC merger.
- 55 per cent of firms in the SACU felt it should become a common market.

The survey was conducted before SADCC announced its conversion to SADC. Since this organization was not involved in the promotion of trade, it is perhaps not surprising that it received a relatively low rating given the composition of the sample. The points which emerge from the survey are the high level of respect for the CMA and SACU, and general support both for a rationalization of institutional structures and for greater economic integration.

#### **The role of South Africa**

It is clear that the decisions of the new South African government regarding the country's membership of the PTA and SADC will have a major influence on the future structure of regional economic integration and co-operation. It is to be hoped that South Africa, as an "outsider", would be able to take a relatively detached and objective view of the pros and cons of membership of these two organizations. South Africa should certainly be in a strong position to act as a broker in achieving a more rational regional framework. The new government should have no vested interests one way or the other, and it would serve no useful economic purpose if it were to sign any treaty unless it were confident that the goals specified in that treaty could be met. Since there must be considerable doubt as to the practicability of the PTA and SADC treaties, the new South African government could play an important part in a thorough review and amendment of these agreements in order that integration moves in the region might accord better with reality.

The role of the South African government would be particularly important in formulating a *modus operandi* between the SACU and the rest of the region. It has been suggested that this follow the lines of the EC-EFTA agreement on the European Economic Area which came into being at the beginning of 1994.

Apart from playing a constructive part in the restructuring of regional organizations, South Africa will influence regional relations through the attitude it adopts towards its neighbours in fields such as trade, transport, labour migration and technical cooperation. In the past, fear has been expressed in SADC about the likelihood of South African economic domination, especially in manufacturing. More recently, however, there seems to be growing confidence in some SADC countries, notably Zimbabwe, that they will be able to compete with South Africa mainly because of a feeling that South Africa's internal challenges will be so enormous that the country will not be able to dominate the region or act as an engine of growth.

There might be more than a grain of truth in this view, and much will depend on whether the general macro-economic policy environment under a new government will be such as to engender investor confidence, stem the emigration of young skilled people, and enable the country to regain the high economic growth rates of the 1946–1975 period. The region is looking to South Africa to behave in a manner less strident than in the past, and the ANC has committed itself to a policy of good neighbourliness. The new government could, for instance, open up institutions such as the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), universities and technikons to the region (or at least the SACU). The DBSA could be restructured to include other countries as members and to receive funding for development projects from abroad. South Africa's contribution to regional de-

velopment is more likely to lie in increased trade and technical/sectoral cooperation than in investment.

### Conclusion

Outside of the SACU, the remainder of Southern Africa has a difficult road ahead to economic integration. The conclusion of hostilities in, and the reconstruction and development of the economies of, Angola and Mozambique, together with the liberalization of the economies of Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, are necessary prerequisites for the establishment of a solid base for integration, but the emergence of post-apartheid South Africa will introduce new opportunities for rationalizing the institutional framework.

In the final analysis, however, whilst a credible structure would help to raise the image of the region in the international community, it is the economic policies of countries and the willingness of governments to implement joint decisions which will determine whether or not the institutional framework succeeds.

### Notes and references

- 1 This article builds on the author's previous contributions in this field which have been presented at various conferences in the region between 1989–1993. The published versions include, *inter alia*, "Trade Relations: Changes Ahead?", in G Maasdorp and A Whiteside (eds), *Towards a post-apartheid future: Political and economic relations in Southern Africa*, London: Macmillan, 1992; "O papel da economica sul Africana, SACU, CMA, e outros grupos economicos regionais", in A Zacarias (ed), *Repensando Estrategias sobre Mocambique e Africa Austral*, Maputo: Instituto Superior de Relacos Internacionais, pp 275–302. "Economic prospects for South Africa in Southern Africa", *South Africa International*, vol 22, no 3, 1992; "Economic integration – Latin American and Southern African experiences", *Unisa Latin American Report*, vol 8, no 1, 1992; *Economic cooperation in Southern Africa: Prospects for regional integration*, Conflict Studies 253, London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, 1992; "Trade", in G Maasdorp and A Whiteside

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- 17 N Mandela, *op cit*, p 92.
- 18 G Maasdorp, "Trade", *op cit*, p 43, and recent figures supplied by the Department of Trade and Industry, Pretoria.
- 19 "Integration strategy for Southern Africa", chapter 16 in draft report on "The economic integration of Southern Africa in the post-apartheid period", African Development Bank, Abidjan, 1992; G Maasdorp, "Trade", *op cit*; see also R Hess, "SADC vs PTA: Alternatives for economic integration", in *SADC top companies report 1994*, Harare: SADC Press Trust, 1994, p 19.
- 20 Dr K Mbuende in an interview in *Southern Africa Exclusive*, 17 January 1994.
- 21 These results are analysed in greater detail in G Maasdorp, "Trade", *op cit*, pp 36–40.

# Approaches to regional integration in the Southern African context

*Professor Robert Davies, Co-director of the Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape, examines two important conceptual approaches towards regional integration and argues that a strategy based on the economic development of member states, especially the least developed ones, would be in the long-term interest of all concerned.*

The debate on Southern African regional integration has moved on considerably in recent months. Studies commissioned both by regional organizations,<sup>1</sup> NGOs<sup>2</sup> and important extra-regional interested parties<sup>3</sup> have sketched out a vision of closer cooperation and integration in a post-apartheid Southern Africa. One important new initiative, supported by the IMF, the World Bank, the European Community and the African Development Bank, has indeed moved well beyond the study phase and a number of countries are beginning to implement a Common Programme of Action.<sup>4</sup>

South Africa is as yet not part of any new regional initiative or programme, although South Africans have participated in several of the studies and many new plans are clearly premised on the assumption that the processes of domestic political change underway in South Africa will, in the near future, make that country acceptable as a full partner in a regional programme. The relative size of the country's economy compared to the rest of the region and the extensive economic ties it already has with other Southern African countries have led to South African involvement being widely seen as a potential catalytic event which could give new momentum to a programme of regional economic cooperation and/or integration. Both the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Eastern and Southern African Preferential Trade Area (PTA) are preparing for the possible accession of a democratic South Africa to their respective organizations.<sup>5</sup>

Within South Africa itself, several distinct and contradictory positions have been articulated in a national debate, which remains as yet far too restricted to narrow circles of regional specialists. On the one hand, the South African Chamber of Business (Sacob), appears to have emerged as an advocate of an extremely cautious approach both to any regional integration programme and to seeking membership of existing regional organizations – except for Sacu, of which South Africa is already a member. A discussion document published by the Chamber in 1992<sup>6</sup> set out from the premise that a new government would not (and presumably should not) “cede sovereignty to any supra-national body” and proposed that “South Africa should insist on rationalization of SADC and the PTA as a condition for serious negotiations about membership”.<sup>7</sup> A circular sent in support of the central recommendation of this document – viz that South Africa should press for the establishment of a non-executive body modelled on the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development – was sent to both the Department of Foreign Affairs and the ANC by Nedbank's Chief Economist. This went considerably further than the Discussion Document and explicitly argued that “the concept of economic integration is seriously flawed and is premature in terms of generations” and proposed that “South Africa should eschew any form of membership with SADC. On the contrary it should advocate the demise of SADC . . .”<sup>8</sup>

Several of the study projects, including the ADB study, have, on the

other hand, argued that “all SAR (Southern African region) countries have much to gain from various forms of regional cooperation and from launching a determined effort to integrate the regional market”.<sup>9</sup> A discussion document prepared for the ANC's Macro-Economic Research Group<sup>10</sup> concurred that “a programme of regional integration in the Southern African region could provide real benefits to all cooperating partners”, and recommended that a democratic South Africa should seek membership of both SADC and the PTA as a step towards working as a partner from the inside to develop an appropriate institutional framework for a development orientated regional programme, embracing elements of both sectoral cooperation and integration.<sup>11</sup> An ANC discussion document on foreign policy released in 1993 took a similar view, proposing that a democratic South Africa seek membership of both SADC and the PTA in order to “work both with SADC and the PTA to craft an appropriate institutional basis for the promotion of mutually beneficial cooperation and integration in Southern Africa”.<sup>12</sup>

Under these circumstances, much greater clarity is needed on the issues at stake in this debate. This article aims to highlight just one aspect: the arguments for and the underlying conceptual bases of various proposals for a regional integration programme in a post-apartheid Southern Africa.

## Conceptual issues

At the outset, it is necessary to distinguish the concept economic integration from two other concepts with

which it is often used interchangeably: cooperation and coordination.

*Economic integration* refers to a process in which the economies or markets of individual states are merged (in whole or in part) into a distinct entity – a regional economy or market. *Economic cooperation*, on the other hand, is a much more open-ended concept referring to a range of situations in which individual countries act together for mutual benefit. It includes, for example, situations in which countries share or make available to each other resources, technology or expertise, collaborate in joint projects or act together in external economic relations. *Coordination* refers to cases where policies, strategies or regulations are harmonized to bring them into line with those of partners, again in situations where this is seen to be of mutual benefit. Cooperation or coordination may or may not be undertaken with the aim of promoting economic integration.

Proponents have seen a more integrated Southern Africa regional economy holding out at least the following benefits:

- Allowing certain economies of scale which will facilitate restructuring at a higher level of productivity.
- Creating a climate conducive to raising levels of investment and encouraging investment in new forms of production.
- Helping to create the kind of competitive environment likely to facilitate innovation.
- Encouraging a rationalization of investments in infrastructure and creating economies of scale which make infrastructural projects more economically viable.
- Helping to strengthen the bargaining position of the countries of the region in an asymmetrical world.
- Promoting the freer movement of human resources, and thereby increasing output and productivity.
- Helping to create an environment conducive to non-violent forms of conflict resolution and the creation

of a non-militaristic security order in Southern Africa.<sup>13</sup>

In the literature, and underlying the various proposals for integration programmes in the Southern African region, two distinct approaches or paradigms can be recognized. The first is the market or trade integration paradigm, the second a developmental approach or paradigm.

#### **The trade/market integration approach**

The trade or market integration approach essentially views integration as a process in which tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade between cooperating partners are progressively removed and in which the external trade regimes, and eventually fiscal and monetary policies of cooperating partners are harmonized. Progress up what might be termed “the ladder of integration” is conventionally seen as involving the creation in linear succession of the following types of institutional arrangement:

- A preferential trade area in which member countries charge each other lower tariffs than those applicable to non-members, but in which customs duties are still levied on imports from other members and there is not yet free movement of goods within the area.
- A free trade area in which no duties are applied to goods from other members, but each member determines its own tariff policy in relation to goods imported from outside the area.
- A customs union in which trade with non-members is governed by a common external tariff, and in which each member therefore gives up sovereignty to determine its own tariff policy.
- A common market in which there is free movement of capital, labour and goods, and in which some harmonization of fiscal and monetary, and possibly of labour and social policies also takes place.
- An economic union or community in which there is either a single

currency or joint management of monetary policy.

- A political union in which the political institutions of member countries are unified or federated.

Strong emphasis is placed under this paradigm on the distinction between trade creation and trade diversion. Trade creation refers to a situation in which the production of particular goods in country A, which does not have a comparative advantage in that area, is replaced by the purchase of cheaper goods from country B, which does. Trade diversion, on the other hand, takes place if country A turns from lower cost suppliers in country C to what are in reality higher cost suppliers in country B, now enjoying an “artificial” advantage because of a preferential tariff arrangement. Under the trade integration paradigm, economic integration is held to be economically desirable in cases where the trade creation effects are greater than trade diversion. This has conventionally been seen as most likely to occur in situations where:

- trade among cooperating partners is either currently or potentially a large proportion of their total trade;
- or where there is a high level of complementarity in productive structures: A produces what B needs and vice versa.

This approach has been subject to a number of criticisms.<sup>14</sup> The Ricardian “comparative advantage” theory on which it is based has been criticized as presenting an unrealistic vision of the mechanisms and power relations in contemporary international trade. The approach to the issue of “trade creation” versus “trade diversion” has been seen as static in that it refers to existing comparative advantages without considering the potentiality of regional cooperation to overcome obstacles and create new comparative advantages. More particularly, for these and other reasons, critics have seen it as inappropriate in “third world” regions where the above described conditions justifying the

formation of customs unions generally do not apply.

### Integration for development approaches

The development integration paradigm is essentially premised on the view that a different approach is required in "third world" regions, where underdeveloped production structures and infrastructural deficiencies constitute major impediments to regional trade. Two main alternative models or approaches to building integration in "third world regions" have been proposed.

The first is known as the *functional integration or integration through project cooperation* approach. This argues that cooperation in the formulation and execution of joint projects aimed at overcoming underdevelopment-related deficiencies in the spheres of production and infrastructure should have first priority in programmes in "third world" regions. Not only is this viewed as essential to remove immediate barriers to regional trade, it has also been seen as a means of generating a regional identity and consciousness which would set in train processes of interaction which would lay the ground for a more secure integration than over hasty trade liberalization. The latter, it has been argued, would under conditions of underdevelopment tend to benefit stronger partners disproportionately and could thus lead to a polarization ultimately prejudicial to the whole integration effort.

A more ambitious model also located within the same essential paradigm is known as *development integration*. Like the project coordination approach, it too sees a conventional *laissez-faire* trade driven approach as either not leading to effective integration or else creating unacceptable polarization in underdeveloped regions. In contrast to the project cooperation approach whose initial focus at least is largely micro, development integration stresses the need for both macro and micro coordination in a multi-sectoral programme embracing production, infrastructure

and trade. It thus stresses the need for close political cooperation at an early stage of the integration process, in contrast to the market integration approach under which this only emerges at a rather late stage.

The development integration approach also emphasizes the need for an equitable balance of the benefits of integration, and argues that trade liberalization measures need to be accompanied by compensatory and corrective measures orientated particularly towards the least developed member countries. It thus sees a need for trade integration to be complemented by:

- efforts to promote coordinated regional industrial development;
- the establishment of regional funds or banks giving special priority to the least developed members;
- measures to give less developed members greater preference in access to regional markets and facilities and a longer period to reduce tariffs;
- some coordination of macropolicies at a relatively early stage, particularly in relation to fiscal incentives for investment.

### IMF/World Bank strategy

As I have argued elsewhere,<sup>15</sup> recent changes in the global political economy and in fashions in economic theory, have led to significant modifications in the paradigms most likely to inform efforts to promote integration in Southern Africa. On the one hand, factors such as the current hegemony of neo-liberal discourse and the lack of success of many earlier integration projects in regions in "the South", have fuelled efforts to refine and adapt the conventional trade integration approach to bring it more into line with the current pre-occupations of the "structural adjustment" agenda of the international financial institutions (the IMF and World Bank).

The World Bank and the IMF, it should be noted, are relatively recent converts to regional integration. Both institutions stood aloof from integration efforts, both in Africa and

elsewhere, in the past. The structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), adopted by a succession of African countries at the behest of the Bank and the Fund, were partly premised on a view that the fundamental requirement as far as a country's external economic relations was concerned was to undertake "unilateral trade reform" which would "open up" the domestic economy, and integrate it more closely with, the world economy at large. Regional integration was seen as, at best, an irrelevance and, at worst, a diversion from the fundamental goal of lowering tariffs towards the world at large.

The Bank's shift towards supporting a new round of regional integration efforts in Africa partly derives from the fact that most countries are now following Bank-supported SAPs, and partly from a perception that an integration programme of a certain type could reinforce efforts to promote unilateral trade reform. In studies undertaken to give substance to the Bank's new-found support for regional integration programmes, a significant attempt to modify the conventional trade integration paradigm to make it compatible with "unilateral trade reform" is accordingly discernible.

Neo-classical customs union theory on which the trade integration approach is based had, as indicated earlier, always cautioned against measures that would artificially divert trade from third parties with comparative advantages. It was, however, relatively silent about the type of trade regime the union as a whole should maintain with the outside world: whether the common external tariff which comes into existence when a customs union is established should be high or low, relatively protective of intraregional trade or more "open". This derived from the focus of the theory, which was always on relations between members of the union rather than on relations between the union and the rest of the world.

It is precisely towards this perceived lacuna in the conventional neo-classical paradigm, that officials in the World Bank have sought to

address themselves. Side by side with the Bank's new-found support for a new round of regional integration efforts has been an attempt to refine and adapt conventional customs union theory to bring it more into line with the perspectives underlying "unilateral trade reform". An example of this approach can be found in a 1991 World Bank study on integration in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>16</sup>

The main argument of the study is that the Bank should support a new round of integration projects in sub-Saharan Africa, but that these should be "consistent with an outward orientated strategy that 'promotes incentives which are neutral between production for the domestic market and export'".<sup>17</sup> Regional integration should thus not become a means of salvaging failed import substitution industrialization programmes, but should be harmonized with ongoing structural adjustment programmes.

This requires, argues the study, some modification of the conventional goals of integration. "Customs Unions, with their potential for trade diversion behind a high CET [Common External Tariff], should not be the primary objective of integration efforts."<sup>18</sup> The "ultimate objective" should rather be "to create conditions which would allow the private sector to freely work, trade and invest across African borders and *with relatively low barriers against third parties*".<sup>19</sup>

Integration should then be seen as a process of "mutual regional liberalization" which would strengthen and extend ongoing adjustment efforts by adding another dimension.<sup>20</sup> While "temporary increases in regional preferences are acceptable" this should be within a framework of a "general and significant lowering of external protection" which would guarantee that "regional preference would indeed be temporary".<sup>21</sup> Regional integration as a process of regional liberalization, is accordingly "an intermediary stage towards general liberalization".<sup>22</sup> Its essential driving force would be "a private sector constituency that would benefit from the focus on creating conditions conducive to

legalising and enhancing private cross-border economic activity".<sup>23</sup>

Such an approach appears largely to inform the current IMF/WB/ADB/EC initiative. The "Concept Paper" on which the initiative is based indicates that it is premised on "accelerated economic liberalization with respect to external payments and domestic regulatory environment" and seeks to "build on the progress achieved in national structural adjustment programs".

The initiative involves a series of core measures in the areas of trade; payments and exchange systems and investment. In the trade area, the programme envisages eliminating all tariffs on intra-regional trade on a reciprocal basis by 1996 and removing a range of non-tariff barriers *on imports from all countries*. On payments, the programme aims at "complete non-discriminatory elimination of all restrictions on current account transactions and relaxation of certain types of capital account transactions". In the area of investment, the programme envisages harmonization of investment incentives and simplification and liberalization of cross-border investment procedures.

The emphasis of this initiative is on "unilateral action and self-selection".<sup>24</sup> Although based on extensive interactions with the PTA and consultations with SADC and the Indian Ocean Community (IOC), it does not simply seek to reinforce efforts of these organizations, but to encourage a self-selecting group of countries to proceed on a faster track. Goaded on by an offer of \$30 million on average, a number of PTA, SADC and IOC member states are reported to be keen to sign on to this new initiative.

Critics of this approach have focused on a number of aspects:

- First, the underlying assumption that the fundamental requirement of a successful externally orientated growth strategy is a unilateral and pre-emptive liberalization of domestic tariff and regulatory regimes is seen as not taking adequate account either of the experiences of the East Asian NICs or of

the acute unevennesses and inequities of the current phase of "global liberalization" – where countries of the South have made significant moves towards opening up their domestic economies only to be confronted with an increasing range of non-tariff barriers in countries of "the North".<sup>25</sup>

- Second, such an approach is rooted in an assumption that what's good for business is good for the community as a whole. Its essential thrust is towards accommodating the demands of capital, without taking account of the interests of other stakeholders.
- Third, it takes little heed of, and indeed appears to be relatively indifferent to, the potentiality for polarization in *laissez-faire* approaches to integration. It also says little or nothing about such critical questions as how to overcome the barriers to integration deriving from underdevelopment, inadequate infrastructure and other deficiencies, or how to empower the most impoverished and least developed partners to become more effective in regional trade.
- Fourth, while conceding that an integration and cooperation agenda may proceed at different paces, and that within either there may be a need to take account of "variable geometry" and accept that subsets of countries may move at different paces, initiatives like that of the WB/IMF/EC/ADB appear to be based on an almost total isolation of the integration from the co-operation agenda, with a near exclusive focus on the "fast track" group.

### An alternative integration strategy

The alternative to this type of approach is seen by many as continuing to lie in the overall direction of the basic concerns and thrust of the neo-functional and development integration approaches outlined above. SADCC's 1992 theme document, for



example, concluded that “the Development Integration approach, providing for investment, production and market or trade integration, is appropriate for SADCC, and that it [should] be accorded priority in the overall integrative framework”.<sup>26</sup>

However, the strong pressure for, and in several regions the actual implementation of, integration projects based on neo-liberal perspectives coupled with the evident failure of several previous projects based on the neo-functional or development integration approaches has given rise to a perception that some development and modification of these approaches is essential to take account of weaknesses demonstrated in past practice. In particular, an effective alternative integration strategy would need to take account, *inter alia*, of the following:

- The unlikelihood that import substitution industrialization financed by foreign exchange earned from the sale of primary products on world markets would be any more successful, under prevailing circumstances, on a regional basis than similar policies were at national level. In this sense, the World Bank is correct. The primary aim of integration cannot be to rescue failed import-substitution strategies. Growth and development will require the elaboration of strategies to increase the value added of export products and become more effective and competitive in world markets. The point, however, is that the potential contribution of regional integration to this endeavour needs to be judged according to a wider set of criteria – including the extent to which a larger regional market creates conditions conducive to a restructuring of production on a more competitive basis or the emergence of cross-regional ventures – and not reduced to the degree to which the integrated regional market is open to external penetration.
- Project cooperation has been shown to be an insufficient basis

for promoting regional integration. This appears to be a major lesson that SADC has drawn from its own self critical review. Cooperation in infrastructural projects is important in its own right and can contribute towards the creation of a regional identity and common sense of purpose, but an integration programme needs to reach beyond this and embrace trade issues as well as such “thorny questions” as currency convertibility.

- A viable integration project will have to find ways to promote greater political commitment. The experience of the European Community (EC), indeed, is that strong, sustained political commitment is essential to sustain an integration programme, particularly through the inevitable lean patches. This clearly is a complex question. On the one hand, it depends on governments seeing concrete benefits flowing from what is generally perceived as a “surrendering” of some degree of sovereignty to regional institutions. On the other hand, it depends on creating a degree of overall legitimacy, popular support and a sense of involvement by peoples and non-governmental institutions.

Reflection on some of these issues has perhaps gone further in Latin America, where processes of integration are more advanced. Some specificities of the Latin American experience clearly do not apply in Southern Africa. For example, one of the key issues in Latin America is the incorporation of Mexico into the North American Free Trade Area (Nafta) raising questions not just of integration among a grouping of less developed countries, but of involvement in an integration project involving advanced industrialized countries. There are nevertheless a number of points where issues highly pertinent to Southern Africa are being confronted, including how to respond to a situation where a well-developed neo-liberal agenda is guiding existing policy and, particularly in relation to the

Mexico-Nafta arrangement, how to deal with disparities in an integration project involving not only economies with different levels of development but taking place in a region where existing relations are characterized by domination and dependency.

The basic approach of such forces as the parties and movements associated with the São Paulo Forum and various inter-American trade union groupings has shifted from an initial knee-jerk reaction which opposed integration as a threat to economic sovereignty to a search for an alternative approach to integration. The notion that the integration process should be driven by the demands of the corporations is strongly rejected. It is argued instead that integration must enhance “triple democracy” – democracy in the political, economic and social spheres – and that organizations such as trade unions should be involved in shaping the process. In this sense the issue of sovereignty is still seen as relevant, but no longer in a narrow national sense. Rather the issue is now seen as how to assert the sovereignty of peoples against the pressures of trans-national corporations. The point has also been made that only if peoples are involved will the process of integration gain the legitimacy necessary to ensure that it is sustainable and effective.

Another notion which has emerged is that of an “integrated mixed economy”. The argument here is that integration will meet the interests of working people only if it is accompanied by specific policies and state interventions aimed at eliminating unemployment and poverty and actively promoting economic growth of a type that brings benefits to all members of society.<sup>27</sup>

In more practical terms, this reflection has led to a call for the inclusion of social charters in integration agreements. One issue which has featured particularly strongly in these charters, especially those called for by trade unions, is that integration agreements should specify and enforce minimum standards in areas of workers’ rights and democratic practice so that

integration becomes a mechanism for raising the general level of workers' rights and standards across the region rather than reducing them to the lowest prevailing level.

Other elements seen as essential in integration agreements include:

- Compensatory and corrective mechanisms so that the burden of adjustment to the new integrated region does not fall disproportionately on working people and the poor.
- The establishment of funds to stimulate retraining and investment in depressed regions and provide assistance to disadvantaged regions and groups.
- A resolution of the debt burden hampering development in many countries.
- A reform of immigration laws to protect those forced by political or economic necessity to live outside their own countries.
- The enforcement of regulations to ensure environmental responsibility.
- The entrenchment of democratic practices and the creation of democratic regional institutions.
- The creation of space within integration agreements to allow for some management of trade and a level of protection, at least on an interim basis, so that "trade meet[s] the needs of national economic development strategies and [does not become] a random, destabilizing element".<sup>28</sup>

The overall vision of the "integrated mixed economy" can perhaps be summed up in the following quotation from a document emanating from an inter-American trade union meeting:

Integration at all levels (sub-regional, regional and continental) must be conceived of as a process which brings together a wide range of national policies in different areas. Thus integration must include effective inter-regional democratic institutions which involve all sectors of society including trade unions; it must be based on common agreement on human rights, and so must contain basic standards in areas of labor and social policy; and it must include strong funds to build integration on the

basis of increased investment to raise output and employment in regions that are poorer or do not benefit from integration. Integration on this basis has the potential to create strong economic and social forces which will result in a genuine prospect of higher living standards for all persons involved ...<sup>29</sup>

## Conclusion

There can be little doubt that a democratic South Africa will find itself under considerable pressure to become part of a regional integration initiative. Continental and regional organizations, which a democratic South Africa will either definitely join or will be strongly urged to join, have identified integration as a central goal. Influential international bodies and other extra-continental "interested parties" could also well use their influence to urge participation in some or other form of regional integration initiative.

But, it is not just a question of confronting external pressure. In the changing global context, a programme of regional integration in the Southern African region could provide real benefits to all cooperating partners. Two considerations are particularly relevant in this respect: first, there is the reality that all countries in the region confront the objective necessity to restructure their economies in the face of a changing global economy, and in particular to reduce their dependence on primary product exports, by becoming more significant exporters of manufactured goods. Second, there are the asymmetries in international economic relations. Not only are there acute disparities in the global distribution of wealth and economic power, but there are increasing signs that unless the countries of the south become more significant players in the world economy, international economic relations might be restructured to the benefit of the developed North at the expense of the underdeveloped South.

There is no doubt that regional trade, involvement in regional projects, obtaining access to regional resources and infrastructure and co-operation in various sectors could all be of great significance to efforts to

promote growth and development in a democratic South Africa.<sup>30</sup> More than that the overall regional ambient will be of considerable significance for a democratic South Africa. A region characterized by relative growth and stability will have very different implications than one plagued by stagnation and crisis.

South Africa is, moreover, already part of a region, in which there is a significant degree of economic integration. It is a member of a customs union with four other countries. It is part of a monetary union with three of these countries. It has bilateral preferential trade agreements with several other countries, most of which are also involved in preferential trade schemes both with each other and with other countries.

A more integrated regional economy, which allows cross border investments and projects supplying goods to the markets of several countries, would greatly facilitate a regionally orientated minerals beneficiation industrial strategy. A more integrated region could also have considerable trade creating effects. There is already a significant overlap between products currently manufactured and exported by South Africa and imports of PTA countries.

A more integrated region, in which the South African market was also opened up to other countries, could facilitate a significant reorganization of production and trade patterns, in which not only would South African goods compete with goods imported from outside the region, but a range of producers and industries would begin to find niches in a broader regional market. Component manufacture, with enterprises in several parts of the region producing a part of final products, destined for export as well as the regional market, would also be possible.

Under these circumstances, the options for promoting the kind of closer regional economic relationship, now almost universally held to be potentially advantageous to all parties, cannot be seen in terms of a polarized choice between cooperation and

integration. *The real issue is rather to identify that combination of cooperation, coordination and integration, realistic and feasible under prevailing conditions, which can best advance the goals of contributing to growth and development.*

This article has argued that several very different paradigms in fact underlie the various plans or proposals for post-apartheid regional integration now being put forward. Which of them guides and informs a future integration project will to a very large extent determine whether integration contributes to strengthening the capacity of all of the peoples of the region to cope with the challenges of an increasingly complex global environment or whether it becomes merely another mechanism for subordinating the region to the current neo-liberal orthodoxy.

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# The role of South African engineering in African development

*Dr Erich Leistner, Resident Fellow of the Africa Institute, examines the availability of funds for development projects in SSA and discusses some of the problems facing the construction industry in African countries.\**

## New vistas for South African business

The normalization of South Africa's relations with the rest of Africa opens up significant opportunities for South African business. However, these are opportunities on a continent in crisis. Rather than dealing with the dimensions of that crisis, the following concentrates on a few issues with a direct bearing on the South African engineering industry's prospects for business in Africa.

The article first presents factual data and tendencies concerning the availability of funds for development projects in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). It then outlines the nature and problems of the construction industry in African countries. Lastly, the implications of the foregoing for the South African engineering industry are discussed.

## The flow of external funds to SSA

SSA's heavy dependence on external funds for development must be thoroughly reckoned with in attempting to assess business prospects in Africa. If the inflow of external funds – aid funds in particular – decreases or even stops altogether, most African economies immediately experience payments problems. Recent suspensions of aid to Kenya, Malawi and Zambia illustrate the point.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC), for example, expects external donors to fund no less than 87 per cent of the \$6,65 billion budgeted for its 216 projects in the

transport and communications sector. (By June 1992, only 46,6 per cent of total funds needed had been secured.)<sup>1</sup>

SSA's dependence on foreign aid has increased over time. Expressed as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), aid averaged 3,3 per cent in 1970; it almost doubled to 6,2 per cent in 1980, and rose to 7,4 per cent in 1990. In 1991, aid was equal to 10 per cent of Gross National Product (GNP). For some countries, the corresponding percentage is very high – 69,2 per cent for Mozambique; 39,2

per cent for Tanzania; 48,2 per cent for Guinea-Bissau; and 22,6 per cent for Malawi, followed closely by Lesotho and Burundi.<sup>2</sup>

The total net flow of external aid to SSA amounted to \$16,6 billion in 1991 – \$870 million less than the year before. More than one-third of the total (\$6,44 bn) went to sub-equatorial Africa, excluding Zaire (see table 1).

Approximately 70 per cent of the aid to SSA is bilateral, that is, aid supplied by a donor country directly to a particular country. The remaining 30

**Table 1: Total external aid to sub-Saharan and subequatorial Africa, 1988–1991**

Country	Net disbursements (US\$ million)			
	1988	1989	1990	1991
Angola				
Botswana	159	171	235	250
Burundi	151	160	149	131
Comoros	189	199	265	249
Congo	52	45	43	53
Gabon	90	93	214	134
Kenya	106	133	140	142
Lesotho	809	967	1 083	884
Madagascar	108	132	137	125
Malawi	304	320	396	358
Mauritius	366	412	479	494
Mozambique	59	60	87	95
Namibia	894	805	1 004	1 022
Rwanda	23	59	57	179
Seychelles	252	233	290	328
Swaziland	21	20	36	20
Tanzania	38	29	55	48
Uganda	982	924	1 157	1 038
Zaire	363	447	553	566
Zambia	578	636	904	505
Zimbabwe	478	392	494	587
Subequatorial Africa	273	265	348	376
Rest of sub-Saharan Africa	6 295	6 502	8 126	7 584
Total sub-Saharan Africa	7 916	8 285	9 334	9 008
	14 211	14 787	17 460	16 592

Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Development Cooperation. 1992 Report*, Paris: OECD, December 1992, page A-48.

\* Revised text of a paper presented at the Centenary Conference of the South African Institution of Mechanical Engineers, "Identifying Winning Technologies for Africa", Sandton, 30 and 31 August 1993.

**Table 2: World Bank projects approved for sub-Saharan Africa, fiscal year 1993**  
(US\$ million)

Country	IBRD loans		IDA credits		Total	
	Number	Amount	Number	Amount	Number	Amount
Angola	-	-	3	81,9	3	8,19
Botswana	-	-	-	-	-	-
Congo	-	-	-	-	-	-
Comoros	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burundi	-	-	2	13,5	2	13,5
Gabon	1	22,5	-	-	1	22,5
Kenya	-	-	3	114,8	3	114,8
Lesotho	-	-	-	-	-	-
Madagascar	-	-	3	32,7	3	32,7
Malawi	-	-	2	76,7	2	76,7
Mauritius	1	20,0	-	-	1	20,0
Mozambique	-	-	6	122,9	6	122,9
Namibia	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rwanda	-	-	1	26,0	1	26,0
Seychelles	1	4,5	-	-	1	4,5
Swaziland	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tanzania	-	-	4	340,7	4	340,7
Uganda	-	-	5	223,8	5	223,8
Zaire	-	-	-	-	-	-
Zambia	-	-	4	194,4	4	194,4
Zimbabwe	-	-	2	189,5	2	189,5
Subequatorial Africa	3	47,0	35	1 416,9	38	1 463,9
Rest of SSA	-	-	37	1 353,4	37	1 353,4
Total SSA 1993	3	47,0	72	2 770,3	75	2 817,3
SSA 1992	10	738,4	67	3 235,2	77	3 973,6
SSA 1991	10	662,9	67	2 731,3	77	3 394,2

Source: World Bank, *Annual Report*, 1991, 1992, 1993, Washington DC.

per cent is multilateral, that is, aid provided by international organizations such as the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme or the European Development Fund.

The *World Bank* is the most important of these organizations. It comprises three agencies: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). The majority of SSA countries are restricted to borrowing from the IDA which lends only to countries with a per capita income (GNP) of less than \$1 235 while the IBRD generally lends only to countries above that threshold and up to \$4 465. The IDA offers more favourable conditions than the IBRD, and prefers projects addressing basic human needs. In

1993 it granted 72 credits totalling \$2,77 bn to SSA as compared to 3 loans totalling \$478 mn made by the IBRD (see table 2).

Since 1984–1988, when it provided an annual average of \$2,21 bn to SSA, the World Bank has increased its lending to \$3,92 bn in 1989. Its lending remained at the 1989 level until 1992 but fell by 29 per cent to \$2,82 bn in 1993 (see table 3).

The *African Development Bank group* (ADB) is organized along similar lines to the World Bank. The bulk of its lending is provided by the African Development Fund whose functions are similar to those of the IDA. Like the IBRD, the Bank proper grants loans at commercial rates. In 1992 the Fund approved loans and grants to SSA equal to approximately \$1,13 bn (803,47 mn Fund Units of Account (FUA)) as compared with

approximately \$849 mn (602,69 mn Bank Units of Account (BUA)) from the Bank (see tables 4 and 5).

The African Development Bank depends largely on Western countries and organizations for its funds. These donors have become increasingly critical of the Bank's lending policies, with the result that in 1992 it had to reduce its activities compared with previous years. Even so, it expects to make loans totalling \$8 bn during 1992–1996, meeting between 10 and 15 per cent of Africa's needs.

The *European Community*, through the European Development Fund (EDF) and, to a much smaller extent, the European Investment Bank (EIB), is another important source of development aid to Africa. Funds are allocated on a five-year basis in terms of the Lomé Convention. Under Lomé IV, the countries of subequatorial Africa, excluding Zaire, have been allocated 1 892 mn ECU (European Currency Units) (approximately \$2,29 bn). About 72 per cent of this represented grants (see table 6).

The *United Nations* comprises 32 development organizations, excluding the World Bank group, and is primarily involved in providing the technical inputs on particular projects. The UNDP (UN Development Programme) is at the centre of the UN system of aid organizations. During 1992–1996, it plans to dispose of \$1 580,7 mn for SSA, including \$384,6 mn for the SADC countries.

Since Africa generally is avoided by *private investment capital*, its dependence on aid is correspondingly heavy.

However, World Bank figures on direct foreign investment in SSA indicate that countries believed to offer growth potential do succeed in attracting private investments. In 1991, for example, \$665 mn and \$125 mn went to oil-rich Angola and Gabon respectively. Kenya received \$43 mn and Mozambique \$23 mn (see table 7).

In 1991, SSA as a whole attracted \$1 746 mn of direct foreign investment – a figure equal to about 10 per cent of the aid received that year. The

**Table 3: World Bank lending to sub-Saharan Africa, fiscal years 1984–1993 (US\$ million)**

Sector	Annual average,					
	1984–88	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Agriculture and rural development	509,6	754,8	997,4	504,9	697,5	318,3
Development finance companies	188,7	311,6	127,6	138,8	419,9	-
Education	108,3	88,2	350,7	265,9	402,9	417,4
Energy						
Oil, gas and coal	34,0	31,2	-	300,0	48,5	-
Power	130,1	138,4	230,0	155,0	76,0	356,0
Industry	89,5	81,4	105,1	-	406,0	335,8
Nonproject	358,5	1 019,0	271,6	832,6	895,0	414,2
Population, health and nutrition	65,6	81,3	232,7	432,8	100,3	131,8
Public-sector management	51,3	-	45,6	5,7	76,7	20,6
Small-scale enterprises	17,4	270,0	130,0	-	-	-
Technical assistance	69,9	144,6	56,0	81,9	88,0	131,8
Telecommunications	29,4	103,3	225,0	12,8	-	89,1
Transportation	382,4	248,7	543,6	309,5	242,8	474,5
Urban development	111,2	414,0	360,4	98,3	222,6	61,2
Water supply and sewerage	61,8	238,2	257,2	256,0	297,4	67,2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 207,7</b>	<b>3 924,7</b>	<b>3 932,9</b>	<b>3 394,2</b>	<b>3 973,6</b>	<b>2 817,3</b>
Of which: IBRD	828,2	1 560,6	1 147,0	662,9	738,4	47,0
IDA	1 379,5	2 364,1	2 785,9	2 731,3	3 235,2	2 770,3
Number of operations	79	81	86	77	77	75

Source: World Bank, *Annual Report*, 1992, 1993, Washington DC.

OECD euphemistically describes this pattern of aid dependency as “not desirable for the long term”.<sup>3</sup>

As regards Africa’s prospects for the period 1992 to 2002, the World Bank expects that the high level of aid flows “may not be forthcoming as easily as in the 1980s because of an increase in demand from other countries ... and increasing donor scrutiny of domestic policies”.<sup>4</sup>

Owing to the collapse of the Soviet empire, Africa is no longer an area of global strategic interest. The end of super-power competition means that aid can no longer be extorted by playing one side off against the other. Private investors can find more attractive conditions elsewhere in the world. The reconstruction of the economies of Eastern Europe and Russia is of far greater interest to Western powers than apparently futile efforts to uplift Africa. Beyond that, world recession and the emergence of large competing trading blocs impair the major donor countries’ ability to provide funds to the less-developed parts of the world.

Other global trends cloud Africa’s general economic outlook yet further. The countries of SSA are heavily dependent upon the exportation of agricultural and mineral raw materials to the industrial economies of the northern hemisphere. They are affected detrimentally by technological breakthroughs in industries such as electronics, information technology and bio-engineering, as well as by resource-saving techniques in other branches. African countries also find it increasingly difficult to compete with more efficient producers in Latin America and Asia. As a result, their terms of trade tend to worsen.

To summarize. The countries of SSA are heavily dependent upon external funds to finance development and even, in many cases, a substantial share of their imports. Yet, external aid shows a downward trend that is unlikely to be reversed in the foreseeable future. The prospects for foreign private investment depend largely on political and economic conditions in Africa, and must, accordingly, rate as poor.

### The construction industry in SSA countries

Civil engineering activities are the foremost feature of engineering in Africa, but the following also indicate the scope for mechanical engineering.

#### Nature and size

In most African countries, the construction sector is unable – quantitatively as well as qualitatively – to meet demand. Large projects usually have to be undertaken by foreign firms. There is also a heavy dependence on foreign construction technologies and on imported building materials.

Engineers and other skilled personnel are in very short supply, and expatriates have to be employed at great cost. An analysis of the SADC region – which can be regarded as representative of SSA as a whole – refers to “an alarming brain drain from the region to the industrialised countries of the north”, which is attributed to low remuneration, bad working conditions, and oppressive political regimes.<sup>5</sup>

The African construction industry is estimated to constitute 40 to 56 per cent of total capital formation as compared to the European norm of 51 to 66 per cent. Organized housing, excluding private housing, accounts for 30 to 35 per cent of the output of the industry. The remaining 65 to 70 per cent are made up of major works and public infrastructures such as dams, irrigation schemes, transport structures, hospitals and educational buildings.<sup>6</sup>

The underdeveloped state of the industry has been blamed on the generally low degree of diversification in the secondary sector of the economy which is dominated by food, beverages, tobacco, textiles, and the like.<sup>7</sup> Basically, of course, this underdevelopment is symptomatic of the overall level of economic life in the region.

#### Difficulties facing the construction industry<sup>8</sup>

Construction costs in Africa are higher than in any other part of the world. Experienced contractors put overall costs in Africa at least 50 per cent higher than in Asia. The costs for power and highways in Africa are estimated to be higher on average by some 55 to 60 per cent, and 25 per cent for water supplies. In the 1980s, the construction cost for a two-lane paved road in SSA was put at \$250 000 per km, compared to \$190 000 per km in South Asia. Figures such as these naturally vary a great deal between countries.

According to a World Bank study, Africa's high costs, broadly speaking, result from the logistics and state of development of the region. More specific reasons include the following:

- Physical constraints: large areas, desert regions and long rainy seasons in the rainforest countries.
- High transport charges: both inter-continental and within Africa, and in particular high port charges, long delays and pilfering.
- Lack of industrialization, making it necessary to import nearly everything.
- Lack of support facilities such as workshops, subcontractors and services.

**Table 4: African Development Fund loans and grants for sub-Saharan Africa approved 1989–1992 (FUA million)<sup>1</sup>**

Country	1989	1990	1991	1992
Angola	3,87	39,79	6,15	15,29
Botswana	5,00	7,07	11,50	-
Burundi	9,19	31,56	18,50	22,60
Comoros	-	-	8,50	1,13
Congo	-	2,64	-	-
Gabon	-	1,71	-	1,78
Kenya	35,0	30,48	68,31	5,00
Lesotho	2,81	15,31	0,84	36,71
Madagascar	44,65	7,05	20,85	27,88
Malawi	15,75	56,09	45,36	20,24
Mauritius	0,99	-	0,43	-
Mozambique	10,00	14,87	22,01	119,20
Namibia	-	-	0,68	14,35
Rwanda	7,66	20,61	21,00	0,60
Seychelles	1,20	-	-	-
Swaziland	6,27	1,26	0,53	11,20
Tanzania	14,99	69,59	33,50	87,80
Uganda	3,16	60,16	74,74	12,20
Zaire	25,45	21,24	33,61	28,30
Zambia	99,14	1,77	6,68	-
Zimbabwe	2,41	12,50	6,25	1,20
Subequatorial Africa	287,54	393,70	379,44	405,48
Rest of sub-Saharan Africa <sup>2</sup>	463,98	373,63	467,37	397,99
Total sub-Saharan Africa	751,52	767,33	846,81	803,47

Source: African Development Bank, *Annual Report 1992*, Abidjan, 1993, p 135.

Notes: 1 The Fund Unit of Account is equivalent to the Special Drawing Right (SDR) of the International Monetary Fund. In 1992, 1 SDR equalled approximately US\$1 408.

2 Includes some multinational funds to subequatorial region.

- Low labour productivity – possibly half that in India; more intensive labour supervision, requiring more expatriates (while a typical Asian project may require three to four expatriates, 12 to 15 may be needed in Africa).
- The limited mobility of trained African labour arising from ethnic or tribal rivalries.
- The high cost of equipment – perhaps double that elsewhere – because of heavy transport costs and poor operating practices, requiring the contractor to provide his own repair shop, maintain twice the normal stock of spare parts because of long delays in obtaining them from abroad, and sometimes pay more for bilaterally financed equipment.
- Risk of nonpayment, particularly of the local currency component, or of prolonged delays in receiving payment.
- Exchange rate risks, particularly in multiple-currency contracts, in circumstances where large devaluations of local currency are common.
- Emasculation of contractors' rights as a result of arbitrary changes made in the Fédération Internationale des Ingenieurs Conseils (FIDIC) standard contract, further increasing contractors' risk.
- Bureaucratic problems, including difficulties in obtaining the necessary licences and customs clearance and in recovering duties and taxes paid by contractors on imported equipment, entailing substantial financial risk and the need to hire "expeditors"; a six- to 23-month interval between tender opening and contract because of

**Table 5: African Development Bank loans for sub-Saharan Africa approved 1989–1992 (BUA million)<sup>1</sup>**

Country	1989	1990	1991	1992
Angola	-	44,96	60,35	26,94
Botswana	25,07	11,50	18,50	-
Burundi	-	4,18	-	-
Comoros	-	-	-	-
Congo	32,97	8,00	-	-
Gabon	44,04	-	24,00	92,00
Kenya	43,02	12,21	12,00	-
Lesotho	-	-	-	28,26
Madagascar	-	-	-	-
Malawi	-	-	15,00	-
Mauritius	-	-	25,55	-
Mozambique	-	-	-	-
Namibia	-	-	-	-
Rwanda	4,00	-	-	-
Seychelles	5,46	-	16,90	-
Swaziland	3,22	-	6,00	41,20
Tanzania	-	-	-	10,00
Uganda	-	20,00	15,00	-
Zaire	207,26	60,12	-	-
Zambia	5,81	49,35	10,00	-
Zimbabwe	1	122,64	125,00	-
Subequatorial Africa	370,85	332,96	328,30	198,40
Rest of sub-Saharan Africa <sup>2</sup>	424,84	551,96	617,31	404,29
Total sub-Saharan Africa	795,69	884,92	945,61	602,69

Source: African Development Bank, *Annual Report 1992*, Abidjan, 1993, p 60.

Notes: 1 The Bank Unit of Account is equivalent to the Special Drawing Right (SDR) of the International Monetary Fund.

2 Includes some multinational funds to subequatorial region.

### The potential market for the construction industry

Viewed in terms of human needs, Africa's physical infrastructure is woefully deficient and offers a vast potential for the construction industry. Looked at in terms of cost effectiveness, of course, the prospects for the industry are less impressive.

The rapid rate of urbanization since independence has created an enormous backlog in respect of housing, power, water, sanitation, transport as well as health, education and entertainment facilities. This accounts for much of the economic inefficiency and also the social malaise prevailing in SSA. In the rural areas, too, the physical infrastructure is for the most part highly deficient and a major drag on the development of commercial agriculture and rural levels of living.

SSA's inefficient highway, railway, airline, shipping and telecommunications services act as barriers to intra-African trade and contribute to the high costs of doing business. Much of the infrastructure had been designed primarily to serve the import and export trade with the rest of the world rather than with other African countries.

The following illustrates the magnitude of Africa's needs. In some countries more than half the population lives more than half a day's travel from an all-weather road; in some areas, over 95 per cent of intercity telephone calls cannot be completed because of system failures, and these conditions are not isolated extremes.<sup>12</sup>

Access to safe drinking water is available to only about 29 per cent of the rural population and 57 per cent of the urban population – the lowest of any region of the world. Average road network densities per unit area are one-half to one-third of those in other regions. The World Bank has estimated that only 40 per cent of municipal solid waste in Kumasi, Ghana, is collected.<sup>13</sup>

There are few reliable statistics on pertinent aspects such as past spending on infrastructure in Africa, the quality of infrastructure purchased with that spending, or the optimum level of

slow government decision-making; difficulty in obtaining commensurate contract time extension and payment when government inaction causes delays, notwithstanding the provisions in the contract; failure of the government to complete legal formalities on contract completion, leaving the contractor with continuing project maintenance and other costs; government pressure on the contractor to retain a larger workforce than necessary in the interest of maintaining employment; and overall, the pervasive difficulty of conducting business in the face of the manifest weakness of administration in SSA.

and do not reflect the socioeconomic and cultural conditions of African countries.<sup>9</sup>

A Nigerian study comparing the results of two multinational construction firms with those of a local company in the late 1970s and early 1980s, underlines the heavy cost of expatriate personnel by way of salaries, inducement allowances and very high housing costs. Even though the two MNCs had much larger turnovers, their profits were relatively much smaller than that of the local company. (There is, of course, the possibility that the MNCs have deliberately underreported their profits.)<sup>10</sup>

A recent estimate of the cost of expatriates in general puts the annual cost per person at no less than \$300 000, that is, more than R1 million, in respect of Tanzania.<sup>11</sup>

In some countries, costs are also raised by building codes and regulations that are derived from the colonial system



spending in relation to the national economy. The following can, however, be quoted from a World Bank study (all amounts in 1980 US\$).<sup>14</sup>

Prescriptive analyses of SSA indicate that spending on infrastructure could justifiably equal at least 2,5 per cent of Gross Domestic Product, and should perhaps be as high as 6 to 8 per cent. A typical African country, with an annual per capita income of \$300, might then be expected to invest as little as \$7,50 and as much as \$18 to \$24 annually per capita in infrastructure. Operations and maintenance of capital increase these relative levels of expenditure, perhaps by 0,5 to 1 per cent of GDP, or about \$2 to \$3 per capita annually.

Construction of infrastructure can account for more than 30 per cent of a low-income country's capital formation and 5 to 6 per cent of GDP, while maintenance of facilities adds further to infrastructure's directly measured role in the economy.

Spending levels in Africa vary substantially among countries and from year to year within a given country. Figures are most reliable for transport, which is almost always the largest component of infrastructure investment. From 1973 to 1982, for example, Ethiopia spent the equivalent of between \$0,93 and \$2,64 per capita on investment in transport and communications alone, about 1 to 2 per cent of Gross National Product. Tanzania spent in the range of \$1,62 to \$4,89 (data are incomplete), again about 1 to 2 per cent of GNP, but about half the rate of the preceding five years.

Oil-rich Nigeria invested between \$10,91 and \$69,19 per capita during the period, and at the 1976–1977 peak spent 5,4 to 6,7 per cent of GDP. This spending rate dropped below \$22 per capita in 1982, just under 2,6 per cent of GDP.

These figures suggest that the governments of SSA (excluding South Africa) may spend a total of \$3,5 to \$5,0 bn on new infrastructure investment annually. In respect of southern Africa alone, an estimate of \$1 to \$2 bn has been quoted elsewhere –

**Table 6: Resources allocated to subequatorial African countries in terms of Lomé IV (1990–95)<sup>1</sup> (ECU million)<sup>2</sup>**

Country	Programmable resources			Total
	EDF <sup>3</sup> Grants	EIB <sup>4</sup> loans and risk capital	Structural adjustment funds	
Botswana	32	6	-	38
Burundi	112	14	12	138
Comoros	22	3	4	29
Congo	51	6	-	57
Kenya	140	90	24	254
Lesotho	42	8	8	58
Madagascar	130	30	10	170
Malawi	121	19	17	157
Mauritius	34	20	-	54
Mozambique	154	22	30	206
Namibia	45	6	-	51
Rwanda	118	14	18	150
Seychelles	5	1	-	6
Swaziland	25	5	-	30
Tanzania	166	29	30	225
Uganda	145	15	17	177
Zambia	95	35	16	146
Zimbabwe	88	70	-	258
	1 525	393	186	2 104

Source: Business International Limited, *Trade from aid*, London, 1992.

Notes: 1 As at January 1992.

2 In January 1993, one ECU averaged US\$1,21153.

3 European Development Fund.

4 European Investment Bank.

a figure equal to about 10 to 15 per cent of South Africa's projected 1993 domestic expenditure on construction of R26,3 bn.<sup>15</sup>

Most African countries neglect the maintenance of infrastructure, causing an enormous backlog in spending under this heading. In respect of roads, for example, it is estimated that such neglect multiplies the costs of repairs by 200 to 300 per cent and places a 20 to 40 per cent greater burden of cost on vehicle owners and shippers. Private motor vehicles are reported to last only three years on Zairean roads.

The World Bank estimates that clearing the backlog of road maintenance in Africa will cost about \$5 bn, on top of the \$700 mn needed annually over the next decade for routine maintenance to avoid further deterioration.<sup>16</sup>

## Implications for South African engineering

Sub-Saharan Africa clearly offers a potentially important market for the South African engineering industry – provided funding is available. Relevant considerations are examined below.

### Ability to operate elsewhere in Africa

South African construction firms have learned to cope with the difficulties outlined above. Roads, railway lines, dams, factory buildings, housing schemes, grain silos, and so forth throughout southern Africa and further north provide tangible evidence.

At the same time, the Africa-related expertise of many major overseas companies must not be underestimated. However, compared to their overseas competitors, South African firms

**Table 7: Direct foreign investment (net) in sub-Saharan Africa 1988–1991 (US\$ million)**

Country	1988	1989	1990	1991
Angola	131	200	-335	665
Botswana	40	42	38	0
Burundi	1	1	1	1
Comoros	4	3	0	3
Congo	9	0	0	0
Gabon	133	-31	74	125
Kenya	0	62	51	43
Lesotho	21	13	17	8
Madagascar	0	13	22	14
Malawi	0	0	0	0
Mauritius	24	36	41	19
Mozambique	5	3	9	23
Rwanda	21	16	8	5
Seychelles	23	23	27	22
Swaziland	51	69	45	20
Tanzania	0	0	0	0
Zaire	0	0	0	0
Zambia	93	0	0	0
Zimbabwe	-18	0	0	0
Subequatorial Africa	538	450	-2	948
Rest of sub-Saharan Africa	506	2 026	671	798
Total sub-Saharan Africa	1 044	2 476	669	1 746

Source: World Bank, *World debt tables 1992–93*, External Finance for Developing Countries, Washington DC, 1992.

active elsewhere in Africa, enjoy major cost advantages by operating closer to their home base. Amongst others, they have shorter supply routes for machinery and materials, and specialists from head office can visit projects more readily.

#### Need for realistic expectations

There is little reason for optimism concerning developments in SSA, at least for the foreseeable future. The countries in the region have yet to establish stable political structures, viable economies and functioning administrations. The majority are small in terms of income and population, and the whole of SSA's GDP is not even double that of South Africa.

Despite the cost advantages mentioned above, South African firms can expect powerful competition from overseas firms. The latter usually have access to concessionary finance from domestic sources and/or preferential tender conditions under bilateral aid

provided by their governments. Bearing in mind the Republic's own economic problems, South African companies tendering for projects in Africa cannot necessarily count on similar support from government or financial institutions at home.

African countries' ability to pay, particularly in transferable currencies, is a critical factor to be reckoned with. South African firms looking for trans-border construction contracts would therefore be well advised to establish close links with overseas aid organizations, particularly the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the UNDP.

As indicated above, Western aid to Africa shows a falling trend in step with the continent's ranking on Western priority scales. However, as Dave Brink, chief executive of Murray & Roberts, has put it, "The crumbs that fall from the table for Africa will be sufficient for us to do very well as contractors."<sup>17</sup>

For the time being, the chances to win contracts financed by the European Development Fund or the European Development Bank are not too good because companies from EC member countries receive preferential treatment. Much will depend on the agreement to be negotiated between South Africa and the EC.

#### Geographical priorities

What geographical pattern will the activities of South African engineering firms follow in Africa? Quite likely it will be similar to that of the Republic's trade with the rest of the continent. About 90 per cent of that trade is with southern Africa, notably Zimbabwe and the members of the Southern African Customs Union, that is, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland. Important trading partners outside southern Africa include (or included) Zaire, Mauritius, Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire.

Southern Africa is the RSA's natural economic hinterland. Thanks to its natural resources and close interaction with the Republic, it is also attractive for overseas commercial interests – more than most of Africa further north. The presence of foreign companies in South and southern Africa, in turn, will create opportunities for partnerships between them and South African firms. Partnerships, of course, can also be envisaged in countries further north, for example with French companies in francophone Africa.

Particular interest focuses on the huge task of rebuilding or rehabilitating the infrastructures of Angola and Mozambique once lasting peace is established. Resource-rich Angola probably will be the more attractive of the two, but South Africa can expect fierce competition from Portugal, Brazil, the USA and elsewhere.

The industry stands to gain if the regional construction council, agreed upon in principle at a ministerial meeting in Swaziland in May this year, actually gets off the ground. The meeting indicated that South African companies would receive support as regional enterprises if they were seen to promote the development of local capacities.<sup>18</sup>

South Africa's competitive edge stands to improve if it joins one or more regional economic groupings such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) or the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA). However, once the RSA is fully accepted as a member of the community of African states, this may well lead to far-reaching change in existing regional groupings, including the Southern African Customs Union – a process likely to take a long time.

### International interest in South and Southern Africa

South Africa's future role in Africa hinges decisively on its own stability and economic health. Informed opinion in the Northern hemisphere perceives the Republic as practically the only ray of hope in a continent that it has effectively written off as a factor in international affairs. Notwithstanding much scepticism, the leading industrial countries hope that South Africa will emerge from its present crisis and serve as the catalyst for the economic upliftment of neighbouring as well as more distant African countries.

To the extent that the Republic manages to establish a stable and democratic political order and a sound economy, it can expect reasonable – though certainly not spectacular – financial and other support from outside. This would no doubt benefit the local engineering industry by leading to contracts for housing, educational buildings, health and other facilities aimed at raising the living levels of the less privileged population groups.

No less importantly, peace and stability would once more attract overseas business and investment to South Africa. Even now, Japan and other mineral-deficient Pacific Rim countries show a growing interest in South and southern Africa.

Neighbouring countries would also stand to gain from positive change in South Africa because many overseas firms would view the country as an ideal basis from which to conduct business in the region. This, in turn, would open up opportunities for tri-lateral ventures involving overseas capital and know-how in partnership with South African capital and enterprise in projects with governments and other partners in the region.

Further, an internationally accepted and peaceful South Africa is likely to become a growing market for the procurement of goods and services under international aid programmes. According to a well-informed Swedish economist:

This market has been restricted as long as apartheid ruled in South Africa, but will expand quickly as the comparative advantage of procurement in South Africa, due to transport, maintenance and service factors, becomes significant. It will provide South Africa based industrial and construction companies as well as technical, economic and other consultants with new markets.<sup>19</sup>

It is not fanciful to expect that South Africa will increasingly become the gateway to Africa for Western as well as Far Eastern business – a development that has been described as “to some extent unavoidable” by another Scandinavian scholar.<sup>20</sup>

All this augurs well for the future. In fact, there is little doubt that if foreign business people and investors come to believe that this country has a stable and prosperous future, many profitable opportunities will open up for the South African engineering industry both at home and elsewhere in Africa.

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# Conflict in Southern Africa: Whither collective security?

*Professor Willie Breytenbach, of the Department of Political Science at the University of Stellenbosch, considers the issue of collective security in Southern Africa in this adapted version of his paper presented at the Eighth Conference on Peace and Security, Centre for Foreign Relations (Dar es Salaam), Arusha, February 1994.*

## **The legacy of two opposing power blocs within the regional system**

### **The removal of interbloc antagonism in the region**

Until 1988, the Southern African region was characterized by two opposing power blocs: the "black bloc" (or African liberation alliance) and the "white bloc" (or white alliance):<sup>1</sup> the former consisted of the Frontline States (FLS), especially Zambia and Tanzania; and a number of liberation movements, notably before 1974, the Angolan MPLA and Mozambican Frelimo; before 1980, the Zimbabwean Zanu and Zapu liberation movements; and before 1988, the Namibian liberation movement, Swapo. Then there were the South African ANC and PAC liberation movements that enjoyed a special status in this alliance, eg they were offered bases and transit facilities, observer status in many interstate bodies, and a special place in the Organization of African Unity's (OAU) Liberation Committee based in Dar es Salaam.

The second bloc consisted of South Africa and the Portuguese-controlled administrations of Angola and Mozambique before their independence in 1975, Rhodesia until its independence in 1980, and South West Africa until 1990, when it became the independent state of Namibia. After independence all four of these political entities from 1974 to 1990 – switched over from the white to the black blocs, creating the possibility of a single bloc in future, once South Africa had moved

away from apartheid. It seems likely that 1994 is destined to be the date.

These two sets of alliances rendered the region incompatible with any semblance of a collective security, for within the region antagonism continued, with the blocs opposing each other. And despite decolonization, the legacy of two bloc formations continued. South Africa "neutralized" at least two members of the black bloc when it signed a non-aggression pact with Swaziland in 1982 and with Mozambique in 1984, when the Nkomati Accord came into being.<sup>2</sup> In both cases, the signatories undertook not to allow their respective territories to be used for acts of violence, terrorism or aggression against the territorial integrity of the other.<sup>3</sup>

The New York Accord of 1988, signalling the independence of Namibia and foreign troop withdrawals from Angola, also ruled that signatories (in this case Angola and South Africa) would not allow their territories to be used for subversion against each other. This meant that the ANC was forced to close its camps in Angola.

Hereafter, the nature of the conflict in Southern Africa changed dramatically: first, the "peace dividend" that ended the Cold War – wide-ranging disarmament agreements, and the collapse of the USSR – meant that super-power rivalry in Southern Africa could vanish soon; secondly, the subsequent withdrawal of Cuban and South African troops from Angola and Namibia, in terms of the New York Accord, bringing peace to that region –

but initially only to Namibia as the civil war in Angola showed no signs of abating; and thirdly, but further afield, peace initiatives came to Mozambique at last, with the resolution of the civil war now apparently imminent.

And simultaneously, there is the democratization of South Africa itself, arguably the most important event of all.

These external and domestic changes in the region point to the emergence of new objective conditions that could, for the first time, finally integrate the two opposing power blocs established in the colonial era. And the last of the "white bloc" may disappear by 1994 when the first non-racial elections and power-sharing render South Africa irreversibly beyond minority rule.

The remaining and bigger "black bloc" lacks structures for collective security, notwithstanding the existence of the FLS. The FLS is "not a collective security system or even a concert system of shifting coalitions, but a collective defense alliance against a no-longer-hostile external power".<sup>4</sup> And since the region no longer faces Cold War-type external threats from foreign proxies, or from South African "destabilization", the FLS has outlived its usefulness.

### **Defining collective security**

Since this article deals with old and new conflicts in the region, an assessment will be made of the prospects for ensuring internal security and peace by means of a regional collective security system.

### What then is a collective security system?

First, it is not concerned with external threats and would not form defence alliances such as Nato, but would be concerned with internal peace and cooperation.<sup>5</sup> Second, opposing intra-regional sets of alliances are clearly incompatible with collective security.<sup>6</sup> Third, while peace-keeping could be an integral part of a collective security system, it may also be regarded as an alternative to collective security.<sup>7</sup> And fourth, collective security works best on a regionalized scale, where contracting states concentrate their efforts on crisis prevention (including "peace-keeping") rather than crisis resolution (including "peace-making"), *inter alia* through arbitration and mediation measures; codes of conduct; non-aggression pacts; confidence-building measures; disarmament and arms trade controls; efforts to promote peace and security not only through military cooperation (eg "peace-making" or enforcement), but also through cooperation on non-military threats to security.<sup>8</sup>

"Collective security", therefore, does not necessarily require the establishment of a peace-keeping force as this function may still be reserved for the United Nations, as in Yugoslavia, which also falls within the jurisdiction of the Council for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), but where no CSCE peace-keepers are involved.

Unfortunately this region has neither a tradition of collective security nor peace-keeping institutions to offer. And with new conflicts emerging in the region, it is desirable that progress be made in either or both directions, lest the region remain defenceless against itself.

### Change agents working on regional security

There are certain very useful intra-regional initiatives that may prove helpful in the eventual creation of collective security in the region, especially in respect of the non-peace-making varieties. These are, on the one hand, interstate initiatives, albeit

of a limited and often bilateral nature, and on the other, academic attempts at more comprehensive security arrangements. So far, academics have been the most active change agents in this respect. As will subsequently become clear, their role is one of "advocacy".

The first relates to the fact that during the period after Cuito Cuanavale (the last of the big military confrontations in Southern Africa), the region produced only two interstate security pacts of any note: the New York Accord of 22 December 1988 (signed between South Africa, Angola and Cuba on the peace process in South West Africa – the USA and USSR were observers in this regard); and a bilateral agreement between South Africa and Mozambique on curbing cross-border gun-running, drug-smuggling and organized car theft in June 1993. As such, it is an important building bloc in non-military cooperation (in this case police authorities) on an important issue related to wider aspects of security. (The South African Peace Accord of 14 September 1991 was an internal product, not related to cross-border gun smuggling, although this is a source of conflict in South Africa today.)<sup>9</sup>

Although the New York Accord was of great historical importance to the region as a whole, only two states of the region were actually involved: South Africa and Angola. Moreover, this was an American rather than African initiative. And the bilateral crime-busting agreement between South Africa and Mozambique remains rather limited in scope.

However, soon after the epoch-making speech of President F W de Klerk in 1990, academics pre-empted the politicians in advocating an eventual system of collective security in the region that went far beyond crime-busting, but would presumably exclude peace-making, while strongly proposing multilateral security structures, confidence-building measures, arms limitations, and aspects of non-military cooperation in the region.

In Southern Africa, initiatives were taken in anticipation of the water-

shed political events of 1994, when South Africa should become eligible for membership of "black bloc" institutions.

These initiatives still lack official backing, and are mainly driven by academics from the University of the Western Cape (UWC), the Instituto Superior de Relacoes Internacionais, the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (Ebenhausen), the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Bonn), the Peace Research Institute (Frankfurt) and the Foundation for Development and Peace (Bonn).

The first academic initiative, which included members of the Southern African Development Community and discussed concepts relevant to this topic, dates back to a research conference held in Maputo in 1990, under the aegis of the Instituto Superior de Relacoes Internacionais, the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Ebenhausen, and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Bonn.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile President de Klerk mooted a similar idea, when he proposed a multilateral body, similar to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe<sup>11</sup> – the "CSCE" process.

Long before the end of the Cold War, Europe embarked on the so-called "Helsinki process" (from 1972) in furthering the causes of security and cooperation in that part of the world.<sup>12</sup> This led to the so-called "CSCE" process, that came into being in 1975 and that culminated in the removal of Europe's two opposing alliances in 1990, when Nato and Warsaw states signed the world's biggest disarmament agreement, the agreement on limiting conventional forces in Europe.<sup>13</sup>

In 1990/1991, academics such as Bernhard Weimer, André du Pisani and Peter Vale, argued for more or less similar initiatives for the region and for the establishment of post-apartheid structures for regional security in Southern Africa. Implicit in their proposals, is the convergence of three trends: the collapse of the Cold War, the ending of regional destabilization, and the final demise of apartheid, after which a new regional order of collective

security would not only be possible, but desirable, given the absence of external threats and the preponderance of intraregional conflicts.<sup>14</sup>

In 1993, three other conferences were held that for the first time involved South African officials (highly placed South African military officers) on foreign soil. As such, these conferences may have ushered in the tradition of “technocratic counsel” (even “corporatist” public policies between state, struggle and SADC roleplayers, hitherto rarities in South African security circles). Official policy-makers representing the African states (SADC members), MK cadres and officers of the remaining white bloc, were now unofficially involved in the drafting of new proposals for policies of collective security in the region.<sup>15</sup>

Then there were the Kampala proposals of the Africa Leadership Forum in 1991 (not an academic initiative) jointly arranged by the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, in which Southern African leaders also participated. The Forum proposed that a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) be established for the entire continent, aimed at strengthening the conflict-management mechanisms of the OAU, including the OAU’s Commission for Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration. This was an elaborate scheme for continental collective security focusing on issues such as peace, freedom, basic human needs, and social justice, while envisaging an African peace-keeping force and plans for (a) confidence-building mechanisms; (b) non-aggression pacts; and (c) the lowering of military expenditures on the continent.<sup>16</sup>

The 1992 OAU summit in Dakar and the 1993 OAU summit in Cairo, endorsed conflict resolution mechanisms, but not an OAU peace-keeping force or specific security structures for any of the regions.

### **Where does Africa stand?**

This brings us back to the regional initiatives.

Another region in Africa where significant regional initiatives are advanced, is West Africa. The Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) decided in 1990 to end the Liberian civil war by sending in peace-making forces drawn from five of the 16 member states. This decision was based on the Ecowas Defence Protocol of 1976: “the first and still the only example of a collective security arrangement on the continent”.<sup>17</sup> From a security point of view, there were mainly two reasons for this intervention: the high death rate in Liberia and the resultant problems of refugees fleeing into neighbouring states.<sup>18</sup>

In Southern Africa, official initiatives are still lacking, except in the cases of mainly bilateral relations between police forces. But as mentioned, the academic initiatives have gone some way in conscientizing public opinion. However, it is uncertain where this initiative as a public policy-making process stands at the moment. The debate so far has produced more issues than answers.

The main policy-making issues are:

- how to convert academic initiatives into concrete policy proposals to be adopted on an interstate level
- whether military and non-military matters should be targeted for security cooperation
- whether the CSCE process could be transferred, or better still, transplanted into Southern Africa
- should “collective security” in the region (whether the CSCE model, or not) be linked to the Organization of African Unity (OAU), or the Southern African Development Community (SADC), or be free-standing
- whether collective security in the region should include peace-keeping and peace-making forces
- whether South Africa should be taking the initiative in attempts aimed at forging collective security institutions in the region

Apart from de Klerk’s ideas and the Maputo Conference, South African

academics are still the major thinkers behind these regional schemes.<sup>19</sup> But by 1993, when academics, senior serving soldiers of the SADC region, senior MK cadres and senior Defence Force officers participated in the same conferences for the first time, albeit unofficially, “counselling” might have taken place during the feedback sessions at the various defence headquarters in the region. However, most official participants seemed reluctant to move forward faster.

It is therefore fair to assume that “feedforward” would be much slower than “feedback”,<sup>20</sup> not only on the (white) South African part, but perhaps also in the rest of the region, where perceptions about South African domination – even in a post-apartheid dispensation – could still linger for a long time. In this respect, most of the early initiatives were aimed at “analysis for policy-making” (ie for others) rather than “analysis of policy-making” – say, by “insiders” – for themselves which would come two years later.

What is particularly significant is that proposals for collective security in the region showed a clear preference for linking with the SADC, and no preference for an OAU or UN or free-standing body in the region.<sup>21</sup> This is in line with modern tendencies where collective security systems are usually structured within the (decentralized) frameworks of economic communities, as is also the case with the Ecowas. (The UN and the OAU were seemingly relegated to the background, in these regional designs, although in West Africa – Liberia – it is a joint effort between Ecowas and the OAU, while the UN remains the major peace-keeper in Africa.)

The quest for collective security should culminate in either a Conference for Cooperation and Security in Southern Africa (CCSSA) or in terms of more recent thinking, in an Interstate Committee for Defence and Security (ICDS), as part of SADC.<sup>22</sup> But leading up to this final step, intermediary steps should be taken: these could, according to Hans-Dieter

Lemke, be the establishment of conflict-prevention and management mechanisms; the introduction of confidence-building mechanisms (CBMs); and an agreement on arms limitations.<sup>23</sup> The role model in this respect – similar to de Klerk’s ideas – is that of the CSCE. It excludes peace-keeping forces.

But security cooperation should extend further than military matters,<sup>24</sup> as was forcefully argued by Weimer, Du Pisani, Nathan and Vale in their earlier contributions. All these academics favour confidence-building mechanisms, with Nathan, as mentioned, favouring linkage with SADC structures, and Vale favouring the transplantation of the CSCE model. Clearly, the emphasis is on conflict prevention (eg mediation and arbitration, CBMs, etc) rather than peace-making.

These will be dealt with later on. (See Figure 1.)

### Sources and types of conflicts in Southern Africa

What follows now is not an exhaustive catalogue of conflicts in Africa. It will merely touch in some selected topics and issues as they may pertain to initiatives aimed at setting public policy arrangements in the field of collective regional security systems.

In doing so, attention will be given to military and non-military matters, including transnational (ie inter-state and international) and internal dimensions, also those originating from the unstable transition in South Africa itself. But conflict prevention elevates the non-military and internal dimensions to a special place.

A similar type of analysis – but for a different purpose – has been made by Douglas Anglin.<sup>25</sup> It is comprehensive and perhaps by far the best published so far. In his latest publication (for 1993), he refers to the mood of pessimism that is returning to the continent, and then alludes to the problems of democratic governance and economic pathology, which he links neatly by observing that there is “increasing recognition in Africa that democracy is a prerequisite for meaningful development, so its sur-

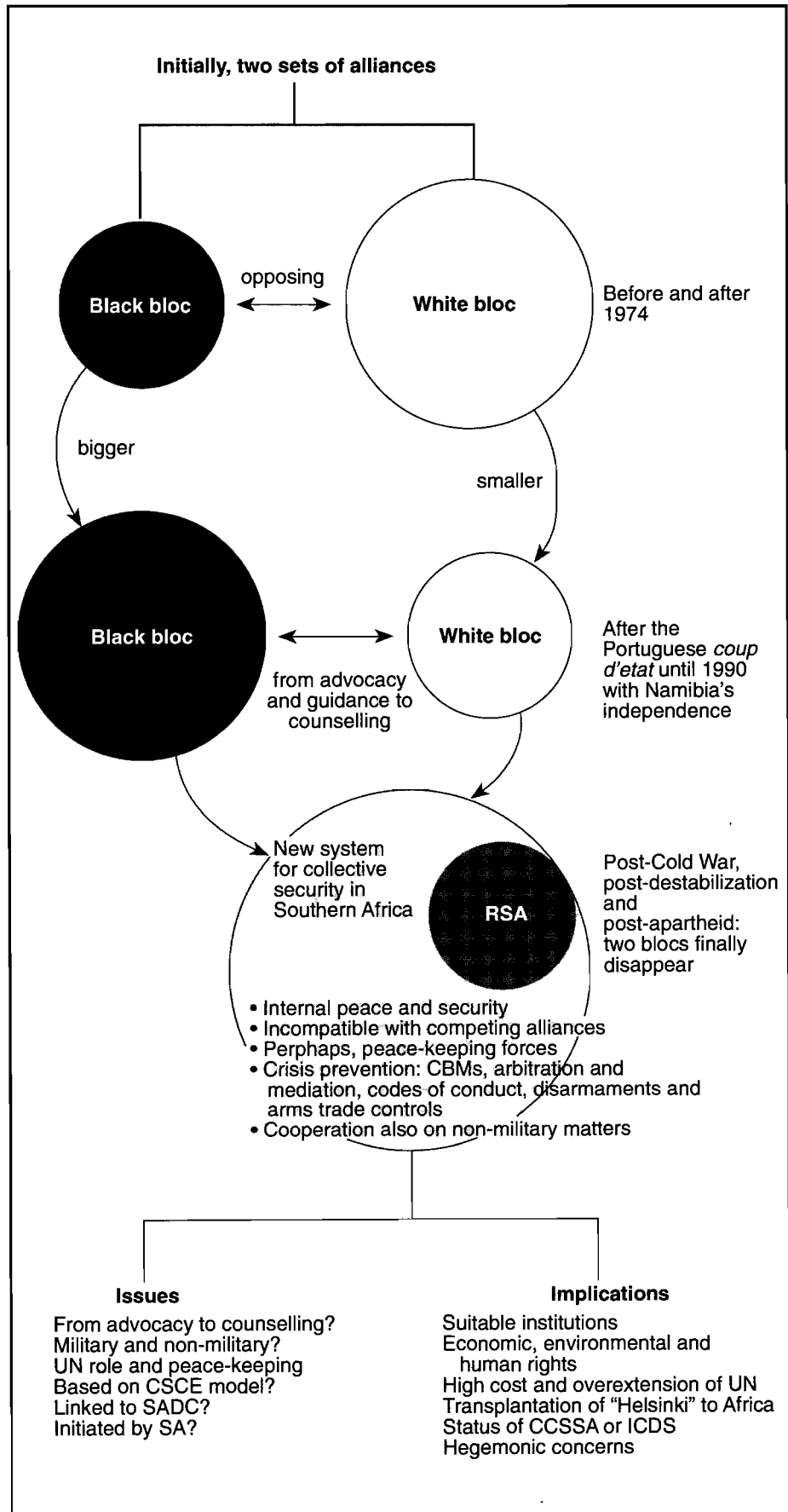


Figure 1: Security in Southern Africa

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vival is seen to be closely tied to the attainment of sustainable development", and of "the relevance of peace to the attainment of sustainable development".<sup>26</sup> Non-military issues relevant to development are therefore of paramount importance.

### **Military sources and types of conflict**

With the simultaneous ending of the Cold War and destabilization in the region, conventional threats to security have ceased to exist. This factor, more than anything else, implies that Nato-type alliances are not called for in the region (ie dealing with external threats). Military threats are still worrisome, but are domestic and intra-regional, and fall within the realm of collective security systems, as argued before.

The continuing armed conflict in Angola is the only remaining conventional military conflict in the region. Angola's overspending on military matters is therefore understandable.<sup>27</sup> For the rest, however, military conflict in Angola and Mozambique and South Africa relate to armed rebel groups and to their supporters.<sup>28</sup> Often these rebel groups operate in exile and therefore pose retaliatory threats to neighbouring states as in the cases of rebels-in-exile who target Malawi, Zaire, Kenya and South Africa<sup>29</sup> from bases in Mozambique, Zambia, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Swaziland.<sup>30</sup>

After years of liberation wars, destabilization, civil war in Mozambique and a full-scale conventional war in southern Angola, the region is still awash with arms, especially small arms, merchandised by entrepreneurs in the region. The smuggling of weapons into South Africa, probably through Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana and even Zimbabwe, is a case in point.

More sinister, however, are the dangerous activities of Western and Eastern arms salesmen who, following the collapse of some of their traditional markets, are serving the continent in the hope of unloading their surplus stocks of weapons in Africa.<sup>31</sup>

The rise of ethnicity in Africa could lead to more separatist uprisings as have been the case in Biafra, Shaba and Eritrea. These examples are of the secessionist (or breakaway) varieties. But in other cases, for example in the Ogaden area in Ethiopia, the Somalis who live there fought for re-incorporation into Somalia. This kind of irredentism is as yet not a major issue throughout the continent, but may happen anywhere as a result of the arbitrarily drawn political boundaries at the time of Africa's partition after the Berlin Conference of 1884/85.

The other problem linked to politicized ethnicity may occur in South Africa where there is a legacy of ethnic armies and ethnic battalions in the SADF that may replicate similar problems elsewhere, also in Africa, where military splits occurred along ethnic lines. The examples of Nigeria, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Burma, Sri Lanka, India,<sup>32</sup> and of late, Yugoslavia, come to mind. There were ethnic battalions in the SA Defence Force until quite recently, namely for the Swazi, Shangaan, Venda, North Sotho, Zulu and South Sotho, in addition to armies for each of the four TBVC independent homelands.<sup>33</sup> KwaZulu has its own police force. The implications for ethnic dissent are self-evident.

Moreover, prior to 1988 there was no multilateral tradition of peaceful settlement of disputes in Southern Africa.<sup>34</sup> Bilateral ties existed with Swaziland and Mozambique. Neither the OAU, nor any other African body, demonstrated the ability or capability to make peace or keep the peace, as the tragic examples of Liberia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Angola or Mozambique clearly illustrated. After 1988, some successful examples were the Joint Monitoring (and often Military) Commissions – the so-called JMCs in Angola and Namibia, leading up to Namibian independence. South Africa and Angola have proven experience in this respect.

Without legitimate African attempts at the reduction and the abolition of arms transfers, arms control, or complete disarmaments, the outcome of

outsider attempts (eg the Americans in Somalia) will be found wanting.<sup>35</sup>

### **Non-military sources and types of conflict**

#### **Problems of a transnational regional nature**

In an era when Africa's economic crises are paramount, any scarcity of resources may lead to competition for wealth-producing commodities such as food and water, and this include: fishing resources.

Foreign fishing fleets are plundering marine resources and this poses serious challenges to famine-stricken and agriculturally depleted African states.<sup>36</sup> And in a continent ravaged by cyclical droughts, competition for water, including war over water (the conflict between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia over the water of the Nile is a case in point), is a possibility in Africa.<sup>37</sup>

The same may be said for trade and transportation problems for the land-locked states, in very much the same way South Africa blocked transport routes during the destabilization years.<sup>38</sup> Access to ports will remain a crucial issue in the quest for increased exports of commodities or manufactured products and for the importation of food and fuel.

Droughts, failed agriculture, imposed structural adjustments and resulting poverty and famine, together with ongoing civil strife, are some of the most salient causes behind the refugee problems in Africa. So far, it has been Malawi that has borne the brunt of Mozambican refugees. But in future, civil strife and collapsing economies may cause "near uncontrollable" migration<sup>39</sup> of peasants and ordinary economic refugees fleeing to South Africa and perhaps to a post-drought Zimbabwe as well. Most illegal migrants in South Africa happen to be Mozambican and, to a smaller extent, Zimbabwean.

Then there are cross-border problems of cattle-rustlers, poaching and car theft rackets that call for police and licensing authorities to cooperate on a multilateral basis.<sup>40</sup>

Finally, there is the potential for



large-scale smuggling in the region (the smuggling of drugs has already become a serious problem, linking South Africa with Latin America and the Far East, often through Africa) if South Africa were to join the PTA. The SA Customs Unions would then have to disband, implying that the member states (Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Namibia) would have to impose tariffs on imports from South Africa, which would entail higher domestic prices in those countries, leading inevitably to smuggling.<sup>41</sup>

*Domestic dimensions of some types of conflict*

One of the biggest problems in Africa today is that of failed states in sub-Saharan Africa: the "cannibal state", where power-holders turn onto themselves, degenerating into warring factions such as in Liberia and Somalia, and the "collapsed state", where institutions are weak and the governments are incompetent and where the state has been ungovernable as in Southern Sudan and Zaire.<sup>42</sup>

An then there is the problem of too many states, that could be either too small, or too big, as in the cases of Sudan, Zaire, Ethiopia and perhaps Angola and Mozambique.<sup>43</sup> Big states offer very special problems. For example, their boundaries are often ill-defined. Many are therefore open to secession where separatist tendencies may easily arise in the case of brittle boundaries, especially if the composition is multi-ethnic as in Ethiopia and Sudan. In future this problem may extend to Cabinda and Southern Angola in Angola, and again to Shaba in Zaire, to Casamanche in Senegal, to Zanzibar in Tanzania, to Northern Somalia in Somalia, and to Zululand and an Afrikaner/Boerestaat in South Africa.<sup>44</sup>

The current OAU boundary regime has been operating since 1964. It lasted for 29 years, until 1993 when Eritrea seceded from Ethiopia. But with the international doctrine of (ethnic) self-determination now on the ascendancy, the territorial sovereignty of many African states – based on colonial boundaries – is likely to be challenged. As Herbst put it:

The norm of sovereignty, which African countries successfully used as a cover to repress those who challenged the existing nation-states, is also now being threatened in a world increasingly concerned with self-determination.<sup>45</sup>

In the socio-economic fields, various domestic conflicts may arise from the collapse of social services as a result of the inadequate health services related to the spread of aids, tuberculosis, cholera and malaria. And this may either lead to more refugees or further deterioration of social services.

And then there is the question of reconstruction: firstly, the structural adjustment programmes that could have equally destructive consequences. For example, the retrenchment of bureaucrats (ie creating unemployed middleclasses); the devaluation of African currencies and higher costs of living; debt servicing at the expense of the provision of social services; budget deficits; the commercialization of peasant agriculture emphasizing cash and not food crops; societal inequalities between producers and consumers; higher food prices; higher interest rates, etc. And then finally, the problem of the rehabilitation of war economics, especially in Southern Africa.

*Conflicts inside South Africa may spill over into the region*

Political violence is nothing new in South Africa. The "frontier wars" of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, clashes during the Great Trek, the first and second Anglo-Boer Wars, the Bambatha rebellion, the anti-British rebellion during World War I, the problems of the Ossewa-Brandwag during World War II, Sharpeville in 1960, the Soweto riots of 1976 and the state of emergency during the 1980s are all manifestations of "political warfare" in South Africa.

This time matters are more complex, because an analysis of the present violence suggests at least three simultaneous patterns which may, or may not be traced to single sources. So far, political, as opposed to economic conflicts (calculated to represent between 10 per cent and 14 per cent of violence in South Africa – and

increasing) are characterized by three identifiable patterns.

The biggest in terms of incidents and deaths during the first half of 1993 is the black-on-black pattern, which is not country-wide, but highly concentrated in three regions: The Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging region (±55 per cent of all deaths) and mainly on the East Rand; followed by Natal (±35 per cent of all deaths), where this black-on-black pattern first erupted in 1983/84 before it spread to the PWV and other areas; and the Western Cape (±5 per cent of all deaths), where economic rather than political motives are apparently at the root of the matter.

Then there is the black-on-white pattern (less than 5 per cent of total deaths) which is almost exclusively a Cape Province phenomenon, although recent attacks on whites in the Eastern Transvaal and Eastern Free State, may suggest the spreading of this pattern to areas outside the Cape. But these attacks may also be examples of non-revolutionary political violence perpetrated by mavericks, or simply being cases of armed crime, without clearcut political objectives. The incidences of violence and deaths inflicted on whites in King William's Town in November 1992 and the Kenilworth church massacre (in Cape Town) in August 1993, are clearly political. And political organizations have also claimed responsibility for these. Usually, this has been Apla, the PAC's armed wing.

The third and last pattern is that of white-on-black violence (less than 1 per cent of total deaths). It is the smallest of the three, and is mainly a Transvaal phenomenon. It is mainly perpetrated by individuals not linked to any of the established rightwing organizations, as the well-known case of the "Wit Wolf" (Barend Strydom) testifies. Other attacks on blacks, carried out more or less at random, follow the same apparent pattern: acts of extremists. But careful analysis (eg looking for common denominators) suggests that the white-on-black and other patterns are perhaps more complex than preliminary investigations reveal. And then there is the

rightwing threat that "interim rule" in South Africa would unleash "civil war" (for the rightwingers, read "race war"), presumably increasing this latter pattern.

There are three patterns correlating with ethnic factors; but all these patterns are different.

*One:* With the exception of the Western Cape, the black-on-black pattern may be termed a "Zulu War"; in Natal the conflict is between Zulus and Zulus; and on the East Rand, the conflict is between the ANC and Inkatha, whose members are almost exclusively Zulus. In this struggle, Inkatha and the ANC are prominent. Significantly, the PAC is not involved in the black-on-black struggle, only in the black-on-white struggle, since Apla is the armed wing of the PAC.

But two more points need to be made, and they concern the "Zulu factor" and the "Third Force".

The "Zulu factor" is now a national problem since KwaZulu made known that it will resist (NP/ANC) legislation dissolving homeland structures, especially if these are passed before the drafting of the final constitution after the elections of 1994. And meanwhile, KwaZulu/Inkatha approached the Supreme Court for a ruling on the validity of Kempton Park's "sufficient consensus" procedures, which did not always take cognizance of Inkatha positions. This case was rejected in court. But ethnicity in Natal has become so politicized, that an early resolution of the conflict seems improbable. The Zulu monarch's growing involvement in KwaZulu politics indicates a prolonged process. The KwaZulu Police and the monarch's traditional *impis* (warriors) are relevant in this context. And then the question about the "Third Force". Killings related to such a force are very strongly connected with the carnage on the Reef: train killings; hostel conflicts; and gang murders in the (mainly East Rand) townships. Theories abound about some form of police, Inkatha, and white right complicity in this phenomenon. However, conclusive evidence is lacking or has not been made public. But should it

be true, wholly or partially, then it suggests ethnic manipulation by some or other mysterious political force. And this may carry on for a long time.

*Two:* With the exception of the Eastern Transvaal and Eastern Free State the black-on-white pattern is predominantly a "Xhosa war", since the attackers in King William's Town and Cape Town are all reputed to be Xhosa-speaking members of the Azanian People's Liberation Army (Apla). Xhosas are also the ANC's main rural support base in the Eastern Cape, but the ANC's involvement is not suspected by any of the main theoreticians on this matter.

*Three:* The white-on-black pattern takes on a racial rather than ethnic pattern, because attackers (eg Barend Strydom, Janusz Walusz and Clive Derby-Lewis) do not fit into any narrow ethnic category – eg Strydom is Afrikaans, Walusz is Polish and Derby-Lewis is English. However, this pattern is fraught with danger, because unlike in the past, when individuals (really extremists), acted without political sanction, a whole range of rightwing organizations nowadays threaten "civil war" if, and when, an interim government takes over exercising multi-racial control over the security forces.

Those who threaten the most are the Afrikaner Volksfront (where the ex-Police and Army Generals are involved) and the Conservative Party, while the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) is actually involved in training whites for the "inevitable" showdown. The AWB's Wenkommando and Ystergarde are two "private armies" on the right. General Constand Viljoen claims that the rightwing Afrikaners' military power base extends not only into the AWB's units, but also into the police reservist system and the whites-only Commando system as an extension of the citizen force. But these tentacles of potential organized resistance go much further. There are indications that the ranks of the ultra-rightwingers are being swelled by former Eastbloc refugees and individuals with grudges against the previous communist regimes of Eastern Europe.

Their possible role in a rightwing "Third Force" is often mentioned, but evidence is lacking.

Whereas the CP/AVF/AWB resistance is mainly against a future "black" government, and alternatively for a system that would safeguard Afrikaner self-determination, their struggle may suggest an "Arafat option" as alluded to before, ie "terror for an own territory", driving the unwanted hegemony (an ANC-government) away, as is also the case in Northern Ireland, where the Irish nationalists are engaged (notably in England and in London) in extra-territorial acts to demoralize the British. In South Africa, this would be tantamount to a terror campaign in Johannesburg (the power base of "New" South Africa) for the sake of self-rule in the self-proclaimed Afrikaner homeland, somewhere in the Transvaal, Northern Free State or Northern Cape.

The ultra-rightists may have a different vision of the future. Afrikaner nationalists have an own territory in mind, ultra-rightwingers not. They want to protect white supremacy, and may want to unleash a civil war and/or the revolution on the new regime especially if it is perceived to be communist-influenced, or worse, communist-dominated. This scenario could be the beginning of the white-on-white pattern of political violence (both revolutionary and non-revolutionary) which is lacking so far and in which the civilian militia – that comprise the Commandos/Police Reservists/ AWB units – are challenging the SA Defence Force of the "new" South Africa.

During and after interim rule, the SADF may become increasingly African (especially formerly MK) in its make-up, but may still, for a long time to come, remain predominantly white. And should there be no mutiny in its ranks, this scenario implies a white-on-white struggle as well, almost like the rebellion of 1914 and the Ossewa-Brandwag's resistance of the 1940s, or further afield, the Russian and Spanish civil wars, where kith and kin struggled it out, exactly as the Zulus of Natal are doing at the present moment.

There is tremendous concern about the rise in instability in South Africa. And while it is acknowledged that transitions away from older authoritarian orders are never very smooth, there are two additional explanations in South Africa's case.

The first is that processes of democratization are seldom smooth when accompanied by low economic growth when expectations outstrip affordability and frustration sets in, which easily feeds into aggression, violence and conflict. Social decay then serves as a powerful accelerator for this kind of conflict, and coupled with all the inequalities in South Africa, the preconditions are rife for protracted instability over a long period of time.

The second is that vested interests would resist politically, be they Zulus, marginalized Apla cadres, or conservative whites who dislike the future. And this is where theories of a third force, or forces, come into question.

A good exposition of the first school of thought is the Report of the International Commission of Jurists published in June 1992, which stated that the basic problem is that law and order have broken down as a result of mainly socioeconomic problems, such as high unemployment, absence of social security for the destitute, massive urbanization, squalid living conditions in the informal settlements, the hostel system, the lack of legitimacy by the security forces, the loss of influence by parents and traditional leaders, the collapse of education for blacks, political competition and opportunism and armed crime, perpetrated by gangs, and random killings. Here, the analysis is one of social decay.

But then there are theories about "Third Forces", which have gained great credibility as a result of masked hit squads in the townships (eg the Boipatong massacre) and commuter train attacks. This fits the black-on-black pattern, but it is hardly a case of faction fighting because of its clinically-executed military style of killings and lack of any claims by organized parties. Armed crime (eg the taxi

wars) should not be confused with Third Forces. Here, politics is the prime force.

This had led to the theory that some government security agencies, perhaps elements in the SA Police and former anti-insurgency forces in the military, together with elements of the KwaZulu Police, may have been involved in these attacks in order to destabilize the ANC in the townships; or alternatively to protest against breakthroughs in Kempton Park. Police support for an Inkatha trade union, and the revelations about police complicity in Inkatha actions, such as the so-called "Trust Feed Case", are cited as evidence of this theory.

But the proceedings of the Goldstone Commission increasingly indicate that there is no single Third Force to blame. Apart from the police, many parties, and their leaders, are to blame, including the ANC. The ICJ Report referred to above, also alludes to this possibility. The recent revelations about "kitskonstabels" (or special police assistants) actually siding with the ANC's Self-Defence Units (SDUs) in the townships, are cited as evidence of ANC complicity in "third forces" of a different kind.

Supporters of this school of thought point to the Bisho incident when a strong SA Communist Party element in the ANC decided to overthrow the Ciskei government by force in September 1992 (eight of the 10 ANC leaders involved in this action were known members of the SACP, including Mr Ronnie Kasrils). The Bisho incident was, at the time, an example of the "Leipzig Option", ie the option to topple sites of state power hostile to the ANC. Ciskei, Bophuthatswana, KwaZulu and even Pretoria were seen as such targets.

Since then, the initiative within the ANC has swung back towards the negotiators, where all energy is focused on Kempton Park, the transitional structures, the levelling of the playing fields (eg the role of the media and SABC impartiality) with a view to the election, and the election itself. South Africans will oversee this process.

This is where the rightwing alliance of the CP/AVF/AWB resolved to resist transitional structures, unless of course, conservative demands were met. This resistance would turn into "civil war", the rightwingers warn. For them, "civil war" is pseudonym for "race war", a war in which reservists, commandos and the AWB's Wenkommandos and Ystergarde would all participate in white, militant mass action against the new, non-white state. But it is improbable that commandos would mobilize against the state, while AWB structures are relevant only in the Western Transvaal. So, the problem points again into the direction of Natal, and the Reef. In Natal, and some townships, the struggle already approximates a black "civil war", a struggle between Inkatha and the ANC, between Zulus and Zulus. In this sense the conflict in Natal differs from that in Yugoslavia because there, Serbs are not killing Serbs. But in Natal, Zulus kill one another.

## Conclusion

Ever since the times when apartheid and destabilization characterized regional relations, problems related to collective security in Southern Africa remained very topical: first, the region was divided, giving rise to two opposing power blocs, with the South Africa-driven white bloc militarily the strongest, but being increasingly weakened by political changes since 1974 when former allies joined the other bloc as they attained independence. And secondly, now that political trends, that could create a unified collective security regime have converged, the surviving "black bloc" has, as yet, nothing to offer.

The policy problem, therefore, is that there is very little to build on. (See Figure 1.) But initiatives to that effect have seen to it that this item has arrived on the agenda of the region, thanks mainly to "guidance", even "advocacy", by non-establishment academics within the region. However, as from 1993 onwards, "white bloc" insiders have also become involved, often reluctantly, in

this new kind of policy-making. They seem to accept that the conditions in the region have changed, but fear faster movements forward, perhaps because the new institutions will symbolize the final demise of the last vestiges of the old, white bloc, especially if MK is to play a major role on behalf of South African interests in the military components of regional security arrangements in future.

But by 1994, the bargaining position of South African securocrats will have diminished, especially after the elections in which the ANC is likely to emerge as the strongest party in South Africa. The advocacy role played by academics may then disappear, unless they become counsellors to the new government. But then the initiatives may also have shifted to interstate levels (all within the African liberation bloc, including South Africa) where officials will wrestle with the issues outlined in this paper.

Thereafter, further progress will depend on consensus on all, or most, of the remaining questions, such as whether to proceed with regional conflict management, how to define "security", whether to consider peace-keeping and peace-making forces, whether to consider the adoption of the CSCE or other model, whether to link regional structures with SADC, or not, and what role South Africa ought to play in this regard.

The wide nature of conflicts in the region suggest strongly what the needs are; and since these are mainly, but not exclusively, of a non-military nature, designs should be considered that are suitable for these conditions.

Most academics (eg Vale, Nathan, Lemke and others) involved in this advocacy process" are of the opinion that it is perhaps useful to think in terms of the CSCE process, which provides for three "baskets": security; economic and environmental; and human rights.

Beginning with security, it is worthwhile recalling that the "black bloc" has little to offer, except the OAU's Liberation Committee in Dar es Salaam, or even the Frontline States,

but these structures are now obsolete. And for these and other reasons, there are no peace-keeping forces or appropriate structures linked to regional institutions in Southern Africa.

Sure enough, there are peace-keeping forces in three sub-Saharan African states, all provided by the United Nations, namely in Angola, Mozambique and Somalia, with observer missions in Uganda, Rwanda and South Africa. The OAU has peace-keepers only in Liberia, where the OAU and the Economic Community of West African States (Ecomog) have a joint operation, the Ecomog Monitoring Group (Ecomog).

The UN therefore has a far more impressive record than the OAU. But even the UN is scaling down, mainly as a result of escalating costs. It has, thus, refused to send peace-keepers into Kenya, Liberia and Zaire. Anglin therefore concludes in this respect: "the outlook is not encouraging".<sup>46</sup>

A very special problem related to the military component of security, is the question of disarmaments and arms trade controls. These are increasingly dealt with on a multilateral basis, of which the following are examples: the partial test ban treaty (PTBT), the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT), the convention on biological and toxic weapons (BW Convention, 1972), the convention on environmental modification techniques (Enmod, 1977), the Inhumane Weapons Convention (1981), and the chemical weapons convention (1993).<sup>47</sup>

These issues are almost too sophisticated for African conditions, where threats are increasingly non-military. However, one related issue, as identified in the Kampala Proposals (1991) is the lowering of military expenditure. And if the norm is 2 per cent of GDP, then South Africa is almost within the limits, with its 2,6 per cent in 1992,<sup>48</sup> much better than other states in the region with higher expenditures.

Other problems of a security nature refer to armed rebels, armed exiled groups, gun smuggling, and

arms trade. It also feeds into the second basket of mainly economics.

But because of the localized nature of this kind of arms trade, bilateral agreements between law enforcement agencies in the region would perhaps lead to more successful outcomes than military cooperation. The South African/Mozambican initiative in this regard, will therefore be watched carefully. This may well lead to arms limitation agreements on a wider scale.

Meanwhile confidence-building mechanisms could be explored by military leaders in the region, to be followed by the negotiations of acceptable public policy plans aimed at conflict-prevention and management mechanisms. After that, implementation should begin. And these mechanisms may form part of Nathan's proposals for an Interstate Commission for Defence and Security, linked to SADC.

Transnational and domestic conflicts of an economic and environmental nature relate to food security, fishing, water, trade, transport, ports, refugees and drug trafficking. Cross-border problems of cattle-rustling and car thefts are usually dealt with bilaterally, and between policing authorities.

Related problems of a domestic origin, but with potentially serious regional implications, are the collapse of social services, health problems, escalating costs of living, etc, forcing people to flee to greener pastures.

And finally, there is the "basket" of human rights. The mere fact that so many countries in the region are democratizing is ample suggestion of such problems in the region be they in South Africa itself, or in Malawi, Zaire, Swaziland, Angola, Mozambique or Zimbabwe. In fact, only Botswana and Namibia could lay claim to an unblemished human rights record. So, clearly this is a major issue in the region.

Then there is the problem of South Africa itself that manifests itself in at least two ways. The first is the problem of "giantism", or South Africa's sheer size, strength and power. For example, within the "SADC plus South Africa" region, South Africa has the largest population, the biggest

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territory, the best infrastructure, an air force, navy and army (most African states have an army only), and a nuclear potential. Weak states always fear bigger neighbours.<sup>49</sup> The second is that one can hardly talk about collective security at a time when the regional superpower is undergoing a turbulent transition and creating further conditions of instability. Here, the following prognosis may apply.

It is quite evident that instability will remain one of the most intractable features of the South African transition. And this may be caused by high unemployment, social decay, violent crime and the various forms of political violence.

Here, the prognosis suggests that the least likely event at this stage is a *coup d'état*, through a military takeover. The reasons for this being the absence of a Latin American political culture of military takeovers in South Africa. The military ethos in South Africa is probably more English, even in an Afrikaans-speaking dominated permanent force, than many right-wingers would care to admit. The majority of soldiers, sailors and air force personnel are not permanent force in any case and are not centrally controlled in one location. Command structures are geographically dispersed, and it is highly unlikely that military coercion would ever prevail country-wide. Moreover, a military takeover implies control over all relevant civilian institutions such as radio, television, city councils, civics, unions, etc. Truly, a tall order.

The second least likely event relates to the rightwing threat of "civil war". This can only be seriously considered once the rightwingers have declared war, but on whom? And where will the soldiers for this war come from: the commandos? the Ystergarde? the Wenkommando? the police reservists? For basically the same reasons that a *coup d'état* is unlikely to materialize, let alone succeed, the rightwing-driven civil war is as unlikely.

But there is one other source of civil war, with more credible capabilities: the Zulu King's traditional *impis*

(warriors), the KwaZulu Police, and Inkatha's leadership. This is the "Zulu factor". In a way, however, the "Zulu war" is nothing new; it has been fought since 1983 and could escalate in future, depending on the outcome of the continuing negotiations, and the position of Zululand in a future dispensation.

The third possibility, perhaps slightly more likely than *coup d'état* and civil war, is a rightwing-driven revolution. Revolutionary theories often work on the assumption of phases, beginning with political organization and sabotage as early manifestations of such protracted struggles over long periods of time.

In South Africa today, incidents of sabotage (eg rightwing bombing of shopping complexes), political assassinations (eg Chris Hani, and attempts on the life of Peter Mokaba) are evidence in this direction. This is the work of ultra-rightists, and not the "soft right" (the sacrificial partitionists). And they may include many ex-Eastbloc immigrants, not Afrikaner homelander. And as "new" South Africa unfolds, rightwing revolutionaries may become more active. This will therefore not stop in April when elections are held, but last through this interim rule period to 1999 or longer.

Then, finally, the question of Third Forces, left and right. After April this year, the left may stabilize somewhat. But the rightwing-inspired Third Forces will continue to fuel black-on-black violence as in the past, and for the entire period of this build-up to the first democratic elections under the new, final constitution, say in 1999.

It took Zimbabwe five to six years to stabilize the dissident problem in Matabeleland after the Zanu takeover in 1980. Our problems are perhaps more complex, and will also last as long if not longer.

But with the political dispensation overtly federal, and with regional autonomy for some regions where Afrikaners may exercise "sufficient self-determination", not an impossibility, the required antidotes for civil

war (read "race war") are in fact already in place.

Another antidote is the realization of the danger that further escalation of violence could bring. And here it is heartening to note that all the parties at the "political centre", the SACP/ANC alliance to the left-of-centre, the DP in the middle, and the NP alliance to the right of centre, share in this realization. And these parties will form the core of the ANC/State power-sharing dispensation for the next five years.

So, as long as the centre holds, things may not fall apart, reducing the risks of chronic instability at the centre, and forestalling more political violence in the form of especially a *coup d'état*.

The "centre" will not be ushered in after the implementation of the TEC/Interim Constitution package, since it has been growing through pacting and reconciliation during the last three years, despite serious problems at times.

As in the former Eastbloc, ethnicity is also at the root of many of our problems. But virtually all political alliances are multi-ethnic in nature, as the Kempton Park and forum processes which are at the centre of restructuring, so vividly demonstrate. State power in "new" South Africa is also premised on this assumption. And with the economy poised to recover, socioeconomic instability may improve with more positive results for South Africa as a whole.

No doubt, rumours of war will persist, but by then they may be seen for what they are: pseudo wars, propagated by marginalized minorities, who actually have very little clout, militarily or economically, reducing the threat of a *coup d'état*, civil war or rightwing revolution to virtually zero. Meanwhile, alliance politics may well have spawned a culture of coalition which is perhaps a final antidote against further fragmentation. Kempton Park is proof that alliance politics work. But without peace and growth, the prospects will remain bleak for a fully fledged democracy, now and in the future.

For these reasons, policy designs relating to security should be exercised with the greatest circumspection. But with South Africa's capacity for wider roles well proven, South Africa's active participation in these fields is vital. So, South Africa's role is therefore, perhaps, not a case of "whether" but "how".

And this may include investigations into the question of "where" to locate regional structures: in Gaborone where the SADC secretariat is? Or on the CSCE analogy, dispersed throughout the region: one centre on the Atlantic, say Luanda or Cape Town; one on the Indian Ocean Coast, say Dar es Salaam, or Maputo, or Simonstown; one within the Customs Union core, say Pretoria or Windhoek or Mbabane; another within the central regions of Lusaka, or Harare or Lilongwe, etc.

No doubt this debate will gain momentum once South Africa becomes eligible for SADC membership, in the not too distant future, ie once an interim government is in place, from April 1994 onwards. South Africa may then become a SADC member, and in time to come, membership of security structures concentrating also on non-military aspects of regional instability. But the outcome of this process will depend as much on "how" South Africa will get involved, as on whether such a project is sustainable.

## Notes and references

Anne-Marie Kriek (in her D Litt et Phil dissertation, 'n *Analise van die aard van die magskonfiguratie in die Suider-Afrikaanse regionale stelsel, 1969-1990*, Pretoria: Unisa, 1992, p 286), using the concepts of Cantori and Spiegel (L J Cantori and S L Spiegel, *The international politics of regions: A comparative approach*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1970), argues that the greater region comprised two opposing power blocs: a "black bloc" and a "white bloc", obstructing a collective security regime for the region as a whole.

The Nkomati Accord of 1984 between South Africa and Mozambique may be regarded as an expanded version of the non-aggression treaties between South

Africa and Ciskei, Venda and Bophuthatswana. The security agreement with Swaziland is less extensive but broader in scope, as it also provided for mutual assistance in combatting terrorism, insurgency and subversion. See M Hough, W Booyse and M van der Merwe, *Current selected South and Southern African treaties, agreements and declarations*, Pretoria: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1985, p 1.

3 *Ibid*; Article Three(1) of the Nkomati Accord.

4 I William Zartman, "Sources of conflict and institutions of conflict management in South Africa", Paper presented for the Seventh International Conference on Peace and Security in Southern Africa, Centre for Foreign Relations, Tanzania, July 1992, p 10.

5 Ivor Fung, "Collective security and the agenda for peace: Addressing relevant elements", Paper presented at the Foundation Peace and Development Conference on Security Cooperation, Midgard, Namibia, 1993, p 2.

6 James Lee Ray, *Global politics*, 5th ed, Boston: Mifflin, 1992, p 432.

7 *Ibid*, p 434.

8 Ivor Fung, *op cit*; I William Zartman, *op cit*.

9 See *National Peace Accord*. It contains 10 chapters, and none deal with regional issues, not even with arms smuggling from neighbouring states.

10 See André du Pisani, "Security and peace in post-apartheid Southern Africa", *International Affairs Bulletin*, vol 13, no 3, 1992, p 9.

11 F W de Klerk, *The international road ahead for South Africa*, Braamfontein: SAIIA Occasional Paper, 1991.

12 Norbert Ropers and Peter Schlotter, *The CSCE: Multilateral conflict management in a transforming world order*, Bonn: Foundation for Peace and Development, 1993.

13 The Stockholm Initiative, *Common Responsibility in the 1990s*, Bonn: Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden, 1991, p 138-140.

14 See Bernhard Weimer, *The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC): Past and future with specific reference to South Africa*. Ebenhausen: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 1990; André du Pisani, *op cit*; Peter Vale, "The case for a conference for security and cooperation in Southern Africa", in Anthoni van Nieuwkerk and Gary van Staden (eds), *Southern Africa at the Crossroads - Prospects for the Political Economy of the Region*, Braamfontein: SAIIA, 1991, pp 148-153.

15 *Kampala document of a proposed conference on security, stability, development and cooperation in Africa*, Kampala: Uganda, 23 May 1991.

16 The first of these conferences took place in Windhoek in February 1993, on "Confidence and Security Building in Southern Africa", and was arranged by the UN Office for Disarmaments. Main participants were South Africans such as Peter Vale and Laurie Nathan, of the University of the Western Cape (UWC). SADF participation was unofficial. The second took place at Midgard Farm outside Windhoek in May 1993 and was organized by the Peace Research Institute in Frankfurt, and the Foundation for Development and Peace in Bonn, on "Security, Development and Cooperation in Southern Africa". The University of the Western Cape initiated this conference. Participation by SADF officers was organized by the author. The third, also involving SADF participants, together with MK cadres, and high-ranking officers from the SADC states, took place in Harare in August 1993. This was co-sponsored by the United Nations and the New York-based Institute for International Education, chaired by General Garba, former Nigerian Foreign Minister.

17 Earl Conteh-Morgan, "Ecowas: Peace-making or meddling in Liberia", *Africa Insight*, vol 23, no 1, 1993, p 36.

18 *Ibid*, p 37.

19 University of the Western Cape academics played a prominent role. They thus indulged in "advocacy" and "guidance", rather than "counselling", because of their limited access to policy-makers. And since they were "outsiders" trying to influence policy-making, their attempts may be regarded as analysis "for" others, and not yet analysis "of" policy for official inputs. William Dunn makes the useful distinction between "technocratic guidance" (defined as a shift from policy-making to policy-analysis) and "technocratic counsel" (defined as enhancing the power of policy-makers). For him, this was typical of "post-industrial society" where non-governmental roleplayers could also make inputs in policy "guidance". Academics are well placed for this role. But within government, the role is not of guidance, but of "counselling". See William Dunn XI, *Public policy analysis: An introduction*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1991, pp 12-14 and 26-27. The distinction between "analysis for policy" and "analysis of policy" is made by Christopher Ham and Michael Hill. The latter may refer to policy proposals - even the controversial area of "advocacy" - by outsiders. See C Ham and M Hill, *The policy process in the modern capitalist state*, New York: St Martin's Press, pp 6 and 8. Typically, "analysis for policy", may form part of policy advocacy where (non-establishment) analysts may also have political interests in the outcome (p 9). This could apply to South African initiatives in this respect, who have during

- the early days been identified with mainly "non-establishment" thinkers in this respect.
- 20 In his paper, Walter Carlsnaes, "On the role of institutions, belief systems and discursive practices in the analysis of foreign policy change", (unpublished), Uppsala University, 1993, pp 9–11, makes the distinction between "fast feedback" and "slower feedforward" in policy-making. He also contends that policy-making requires two dimensions: new conditions and new institutions. The first applies to the region; the second not yet, as is argued in this article.
- 21 That collective security should be part of SADC structures, is the growing consensus. It has first been proposed by Laurie Nathan. For example, Nathan writes: "The logical forum for regional cooperation is the Southern African Development Community (SADC), established by the member states of the SADCC in Windhoek in 1992". Nathan then points out that Article 21(3) of the SADC Treaty includes peace and security as an area of co-operation. See, L Nathan, "With open arms: Confidence- and security-building measures in Southern Africa", Paper prepared for the Seminar on Confidence and Security Building in Southern Africa, UN Office for Disarmament, Windhoek, February 1993, p 6.
- 22 Laurie Nathan, "Confidence building measures", Paper presented at the Foundation Peace and Development Conference on Security and Cooperation, Milgard, Namibia, 1993.
- 23 Hans-Dieter Lemke, "Military aspects of future security building in Southern Africa", Paper presented at the Seventh International Conference on Peace and Security in Southern Africa, Centre for Foreign Relations, Tanzania, July 1992, pp 10–25.
- 24 E Luard, *The blunted sword: The erosion of military power in modern world politics*, London: Tauris, 1988; also L Nathan, "Toward a post-apartheid threat analysis", *Military Research Group*, 23 March 1993.
- 25 Anglin Douglas, "Conflict in sub-Saharan Africa, 1992–1993", for publication in *Les conflits dans le monde, 1992–1993: Rapport annuel sur les conflits internationaux*, Québec, 1993.
- 26 *Ibid*, p 8.
- 27 Simon Baynham, "Geopolitics, glasnost and Africa's second liberation: Political and security implications for the continent", *Africa Insight*, vol 21, no 4, 1991.
- 28 Douglas Anglin, "Conflict in sub-Saharan Africa 1991–1992", Unpublished Special Paper, Ottawa: Carleton University, 1992, p 9.
- 29 *Ibid*, p 10.
- 30 Simon Baynham, "The New World Order: Regional and international implications for Southern Africa", *Africa Insight*, vol 22, no 4, 1992.
- 31 Douglas Anglin, *op cit*, p 8.
- 32 D L Horowitz, *Ethnic groups in conflict*, Berkeley: University of California, 1985, pp 464–465.
- 33 Simon Baynham, "Towards a National Defence Force in South Africa", *Africa Insight*, vol 20, no 2, 1990, p 121.
- 34 Peter Vale, "Hoping against hope: The prospects for South Africa's post-apartheid regional policy", Paper presented at the 7th International Conference on Peace and Security in Southern Africa, Centre for Foreign Relations, Tanzania, 20–24 July 1992, p 9.
- 35 One of the few positive references to date in this respect was that of the Chief of the SA Air Force's indication of willingness to consider "arms limitation agreements in Southern Africa". See, J P B van Loggenberg, "The role of air power in Southern Africa", *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, vol 13, no 1, May 1991, p 57.
- 36 Douglas Anglin, *op cit*, p 8.
- 37 Simon Baynham, *op cit*, p 93.
- 38 Douglas Anglin, *op cit*, p 5.
- 39 Peter Vale, "The case for a conference for security and co-operation in Southern Africa", *op cit*, pp 148–153.
- 40 L Nathan, *op cit*, p 7.
- 41 G M E Leistner, "Post-apartheid South Africa's economic ties with neighbouring states", *Development Southern Africa*, vol 9, no 2, May 1992, p 173.
- 42 Douglas Anglin, *op cit*, p 8.
- 43 Jeffrey Herbst, "The potential for conflict in Africa", *Africa Insight*, vol 22, no 2, 1992, p 108.
- 44 Douglas Anglin, *op cit*, p 11.
- 45 Jeffrey Herbst, *op cit*, p 105.
- 46 Douglas Anglin, *op cit*, p 33.
- 47 M Hough, "Disarmament and arms control with specific reference to the RSA", *South African Defence Review*, no 9, 1993, pp 17–20.
- 48 Willem Steenkamp, "SADF and the budget battle", *Weekend Argus*, 6/7 November 1993, p 17. Defence budget as percentage of GDP is 2,61 per cent for RSA; 3,38 per cent for Kenya; 3,68 per cent for Tanzania; 4,04 per cent for Botswana; 5,75 per cent for Zambia; 6,79 per cent for Zimbabwe; 10,6 per cent for Mozambique; and 36 per cent for Angola. The World Bank accepts that 2 per cent should be the goal as part of its conditionalities.
- 49 Deon Geldenhuys, "Ten crises in South Africa's external relations", *International Affairs Bulletin*, vol 13, no 3, 1989, reminds us that long after apartheid and destabilization have passed, "giantism" may remain a "crisis" in South Africa's regional relations.

# After the Cold War: Political and security trends in Africa

*Dr Simon Baynham, Director of Research at the Africa Institute of South Africa, discusses some of the major political and security implications for Africa arising from the surge towards democratization and the apparent global renaissance of ethnic/nationalist sentiment.<sup>1</sup>*

## The global shift towards democracy

According to Samuel Huntington,<sup>2</sup> five discernible factors lay behind the world-wide shift from authoritarian political systems to democratic ones:

- The inherent problems of legitimacy confronting non-democratic regimes, a consequence, largely, of their inability to provide for the security and material economic needs of their citizens. This was especially so during the economic depression of the 1970s.
- In contrast, while the stagnation of the 1970s weakened authoritarian polities, the 20 years of extraordinary economic development prior to 1974 had produced the financial and social bases for the introduction of democratic systems in many other parts of the globe. Throughout the world, especially in Southern Europe and Latin America, many societies had become more wealthy, better educated and had developed a thriving middle class. Most of the states that made the transition to democracy in the 1970s and 1980s were at the upper-middle level of economic development.
- Of the first score or so states to democratize, the process was hastened and given added impetus by the role of the Roman Catholic Church, which had emerged by the early 1970s as the most effective opponent of dictatorship and tyranny of both the left and the right.
- In addition, outside actors such as the European Community countries and the USA helped the process to

gather extra momentum in those parts of the world where they had influence (EC in Portugal, Spain, Greece and Turkey; Washington in Central and South America).

- Added to the above is what might be called the snowballing or domino phenomenon, of democracy becoming “contagious” from one country to the next.

The dramatic shift towards a global *novus ordo*, and especially the rapid displacement of seemingly entrenched and highly repressive regimes in Eastern Europe, had profound repercussions for Africa (albeit somewhat later in the day than elsewhere) catalysing demands for democratic pluralism and for an end to single-party hegemonic domination. Thus in an era that has been dubbed Africa’s “second liberation”, an emboldened and deeply disillusioned civil society has confronted and ousted many of the continent’s military and one-party dictatorships. This unprecedented opposition to the authoritarian yoke has been underpinned by the OECD countries who regard the implementation of multiparty politics and open government as a *sine qua non* for structural adjustment and improvements in the economic sphere. As a consequence of these triple external and internal pressures (collapse of the USSR and its Eastern European empire, Western pressures for democratic reform, internal opposition to authoritarian government), in the period 1991 to December 1993 no less than 11 African leaders lost their positions – the highest turnover since the OAU was created in 1963. More

widely, political changes since 1989 had led to the trebling of the de jure multi-party states (with elections in almost all of them) from 10 to 33 by late 1993.

## Africa’s economic crisis

These political upheavals have not come before time. The continent’s litany of economic woes is of staggering proportions:

Africa’s economic growth rate is 1.5 percent – the world’s lowest – and it claims 32 of the bottom 40 countries on the UN annual development index. ... Food production is 20 percent lower now than it was in 1970, when the population was half the size. ... Population, meanwhile, continues to grow at a rate of 3.2 percent annually versus the 2.1 percent for Latin America and 1.8 percent for Asia.<sup>3</sup>

Nor is this all. The continental crisis is characterized by a cumulative burden of related afflictions: steadily worsening terms of trade, drastic reductions in social welfare programmes, the ravages of Aids and other pandemic diseases (of the world’s 12 million HIV-infected adults, 8 million live in Africa), rapidly deteriorating infrastructure, rising unemployment, rampant corruption and economic mismanagement by kleptocratic bureaucratic and political oligarchies, environmental degradation and drought, protracted intercommunal conflicts that have uprooted millions of families (indeed, half of the globe’s refugees are African, most of them fleeing famine or civil war or both) and a debilitating and unsustainable debt burden. By 1992, the continent’s total debt of \$290 billion was some two and a half times more than in 1980; sub-Saharan Africa’s debt more than tripled during



this period. To service its debt obligation, Africa paid \$26 billion to its creditors in 1991 alone, amounting to a net *outflow* of resources (despite donor aid). Moreover, the continent's debt amounts to 90 per cent of its GNP. For sub-Saharan Africa, the figure is 110 per cent of GNP. The wider socio-political ramifications of this debt burden becomes all too clear if it is considered that Africa spends four times more on debt-servicing than on the provision of health-care facilities to its population of some 600 million.<sup>4</sup>

It is patently clear that the new international order has had very tangible reverberations on the African continent, most notably (as previously mentioned) regarding the dual imperatives of political pluralism and economic liberalization. These developments have raised real hopes for the better governance of Africa which, in turn, is fundamental to any chance of sustained economic recovery. But the surge towards democratization and the medicine inherent in structural alterations to the economy will inevitably mean a painful and extended period of adjustment – with parallel problems relating to domestic and regional security. The dynamics *behind* the new African *modus vivendi* are relatively easy to quantify. However, the crucial questions remain: will Africa be able to sustain the drive toward representative government? Is it possible to control, contain and end violent conflict? In short, can democracy be nurtured to survive? These questions are intimately tied up with a number of other issues, namely:

- changing notions and approaches to state sovereignty in the new international system;
- the debate concerning the putative global marginalization of the African continent;
- the impact of external political, economic and other conditionalities;
- ethnic conflict, secessionist tendencies and border adjustments; and
- foreign intervention and conflict resolution.

All of these interrelated topics are relevant to the questions posed above; and all of these issues will be addressed in the broad-brush discussion which follows below.

### **Marginalization: Fact or fiction?**

For Africa, the superpower *rapprochement* of the late 1980s and the subsequent conclusion to the Cold War represent something of a mixed blessing. To be sure, the end of major power confrontations on the continent with the waning of Africa's geopolitical significance has brought some measure of comfort. But the relaxation of East-West tensions has ushered in well-founded fears that Africa is drifting off the map of world concerns and that sub-Saharan Africa in particular has become peripheral to the international agenda. Put another way, and to quote Stephen Rosenfeld, an editor on *The Washington Post*, the West has lost "interest by virtue of having won the Cold War ... [Africa] stands a fate worse in some respects than being fought over – being ignored".<sup>5</sup> Briefly stated, the collapse of Soviet communism, and the sensational recent developments that have occurred in the international system, already appear to be having far-reaching consequences for the continent. The reasons for Africa's growing marginalization can be summarized as follows:

- Africa's dismal performance to date – as measured by virtually every economic and political indicator – has heightened negative external perceptions of the continent as a bottomless pit and lost cause for Western financial largesse. In short, Western disillusionment with Africa has engendered a profound sense of aid fatigue.
- Such stereotypes are mirrored in the economically impoverished countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe from whence aid has diminished to a trickle. Deprived of global purpose, the former Socialist bloc is seeking to escape from costly overseas commitments, especially in Africa.

- Linked to these factors is the fact that the situation in the former socialist states is turning out to be infinitely more challenging for the West than was anticipated. As one observer has noted: "The massive transfer of capital from Western Europe to Eastern Europe is not merely an investment in the economic future of these countries. It is also an investment in Europe's peace and security which will be endangered if the present economic decline in the East ... and the rise in ethno-nationalism ... continues."<sup>6</sup>
- Fourth, and as noted above, the relaxation of the superpower adversarial relationship terminated the lucrative arrangements by which states were able to play off East against West in an ideological war that gave many Third World countries a disproportionate influence which they exploited with a high degree of impunity for economic gain. This option is no longer available.
- Fifthly, very significant recent progress in the Middle East peace process (against the backdrop of the Gulf War) implies additional claims on scarce foreign aid budgets. Vietnam and Cambodia are also knocking on the donors' doors.
- In the final place, it is already crystal clear that the much-awaited "peace dividend" – resources freed for the Third World by the ending of the Cold War arms race and disarmament in Europe – will be directed, ironically, not towards the impoverished South, but back towards the very region with which the West had been involved in a major ideological struggle.<sup>7</sup>

All these developments – together with the fact that traditional assistance flows are being diverted to humanitarian emergencies (eg Somalia and the drought in Southern Africa) – have pushed Africa very far down the list of Western priorities. In short, competition for resources has never been greater and countries that cannot demonstrate that they are utilizing

aid effectively – and that means good governance and sensible economic policy – will lose it.

### Western conditionalities

On the other hand, the West (especially, of course, the European colonial powers) has long-standing historical and ethical commitments to Africa. In addition, there are signs of a growing cultural and political awareness of the continent among African-Americans. And as far as South Africa itself is concerned, there is a genuine West European desire to see the RSA fully resuming its natural role as the engine-room for the growth and regeneration of a dying continent.

Finally, the changing criteria for economic developmental assistance – the new conditionalities – clearly suggest that the outside world will *not* disengage so long as the contentious, but admirable, principle of linkage between foreign assistance and political/economic reform is maintained. Basically speaking, external donors are confronted with three choices in this regard:

- they can provide no aid at all, which would be “an abrogation of their responsibility to the peoples of Africa”;
- they could provide “aid on a no-questions-asked basis, which may well make them accomplices in the most appalling abuses of human rights”; or
- they can channel assistance with specifications attached, thereby laying “themselves open to charges of interference in domestic politics. In practical terms, the last of these is the only option open”.<sup>8</sup>

To sum up this section, it would seem that – so long as African governments embrace externally encouraged programmes/guidelines for democracy, human rights, security expenditures and good governance – the dire predictions for a massively marginalized Africa will not in fact come to pass.

The main external emphasis, however, will continue to focus on good

governance as the vital factor in underpinning economic reform. The World Bank first raised this theme in its 1989 study, *Sub-Saharan Africa: From crisis to sustainable growth*, which concluded, *inter alia*, that underlying the litany of Africa’s desperate plight is a crisis of governance. The Bank’s definition of the term emphasizes the following:

- accountability of government officials and the civil service for public funds;
- transparency in procedures, investment decisions and appointments;
- predictability in public policy;
- open access to information; and
- respect for the rule of law by governments and institutions.<sup>9</sup>

However, this is not to say that Western donors are intent on imposing immutable yardsticks and specifications irrespective of local circumstances and conditions. In this regard, the West is already showing a degree of flexibility in its approach to Africa. For as the Nairobi Bureau Chief of *Time* magazine has noted:

France made it clear this year [1992] in several West African countries that democracy is relative and that Paris would not promote chaos over stability. The British seemed to prefer stability as well. US Ambassador Smith Hempstone’s relentless three-year drive for multiparty democracy in Kenya had British diplomats irate over its ‘naivete’ ....<sup>10</sup>

### Ethnic conflict, secessionism and border adjustments

Yet, for all the arguments and ambiguities noted above, the prospects for peace and stability in Africa are strewn with obstacles. Many observers of the African condition foresee a continent wracked with ethnic strife, with borders being challenged and with civil wars a growing problem. The very existence of many African states, it is commonly argued, will be threatened by the centrifugal forces of ethnicity. The genocidal blood-letting in Burundi following the 21 October coup, is the most recent evidence behind such fears. There are apprehensions, too, that instability and

economic decline will also encourage the rise of radical political Islam.

At an international level, very few problems threaten world peace today as do ethnicity and nationalism. Tribal and religious conflicts are as bitter and protracted as racial warfare. Race and ethnicity are merely different shades of a common human tendency to categorize and discriminate. In the former Soviet Union and elsewhere, release from oppression and enforced ideology has unleashed a torrent of nationalist sentiment and resentment, as seen, to take just one example, in the fighting between Armenians and Azeris in Nagorno-Karabakh. The current bitter conflict in Yugoslavia – frozen for half a century by a socialist system – also reflects a wider world-wide awakening of fissiparous nationalisms and sub-nationalisms across the international spectrum of states. In Czechoslovakia, Slovak secessionism broke the state into two separate countries at midnight on 31 December 1992; and in Canada, the Quebec separatists have recently become the second most powerful body in the Canadian parliament.

The widespread reawakening and resurgence of primordial identities across the globe is also reflected in Africa where, as in Central and Eastern Europe, the authoritarian lid has been (or is in the process of being) lifted. As in the former Socialist bloc, there is a very real chance that Africa’s “second liberation” will unleash forces which will challenge, and in some cases alter, the continent’s colonially-imposed (and to date, mostly unchanged) international borders. For three decades, the OAU cultivated the view that, if just one secessionist group was successful in its objectives, it would herald the dissolution of many other states. In such an eventuality, chaos and disorder would sweep through Africa on an unprecedented scale. There is scarcely a state in Africa whose leaderships have not been plagued by the problem of regional disaffection and dis-membership.

But in the new world order, the OAU and its constituent members will

have to accept some negotiated adjustment to the continent's frontiers as an option infinitely more preferable to decades of debilitating civil war. Indeed, that road has already been embarked on: witness, on the one hand, the birth on (24 May 1993) of Africa's 53rd independent state, Eritrea; and consider, on the other, the agreement for the 1994 incorporation of Walvis Bay into Namibia. There is also the de facto declaration of independent sovereignty by the predominantly Issaq Somali National Movement (SNM) in the Republic of Somaliland (formerly British Somaliland). The main tendency in Africa is for an *increase* in the number of countries via division; but a counter-veiling trend also exists, that is for the *reduction* of states (or their size) by annexation (Western Sahara by Morocco, Cabinda by Congo, northern Chad by Libya, Lesotho and Swaziland by a strongly confident black South African government?).

Although the great majority of the continent's existing frontiers will, in all likelihood, remain the same, there will be some instances "where divorce along the lines of the Bangladesh secession" provides a solution or, in other cases, opposition movements "may retain tacitly accepted control over its home region, because the central government cannot conquer it and the insurgents cannot gain formal recognition of independent statehood".<sup>11</sup>

Apart from the cases already cited, the most likely cases for further state fission and secessionist declarations exist in:

- *Zaire*: Shaba/Katanga, Equateur du Nord;
- *Tanzania*: Zanzibar;
- *Sudan*: North/South division;
- *Somalia*: patchwork of clan-based statelets;
- *Angola*: Cabinda, North/South separation; and
- *Nigeria*: division into two, three or more states.

Two final points concerning the global renaissance of ethnic/nationalist sentiments. First, the worries of African

leaders concerning the polarizing impact of multi-party politics cannot be readily dismissed given the apparent saliency of ethnic particularism in Africa. Second, when one contemplates border delineations, it is well to keep in mind the notion of introducing semi-boundaries *within* African countries (ie federal structures) "as a means of disaggregating centralized state power, balancing competing ethnic claims on economic resources, and protecting freedom of association". In this manner, federal administrations "may find that national political loyalties can be strengthened rather than weakened by diffusing autocratic power and providing cultural autonomy".<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, it has been noted that efforts to solve the problems of ethnic plurality via a federalist dispensation have exacerbated, rather than stabilized, the segmentation of political society – as in Nigeria.<sup>13</sup>

### Foreign intervention and conflict resolution

One of the major problems for Africa in the 1960–1990 era were civil wars born of tribal or ideological conflict, many of which had Cold War implications. In the past three years, some of these conflicts have been resolved; but in other cases, centuries-old ethnic and religious feuds have reappeared with a vengeance, posing a formidable threat to the stability of the newly established multiparty states. For several decades, Western and East bloc intervention in Africa was motivated, primarily, by geopolitical interests. But with the end of the Cold War, these strategic considerations have all but disappeared. Today the previous *raison d'être* for American and West European intervention – the world-wide containment of communism – has disappeared. However, this rationale is being replaced, to some extent at least, by new imperatives: global humanitarianism, fostering democracy and the promotion of global security.

In the new world order, the international community has begun to serve notice that the interests of people come before the interests of

states.<sup>14</sup> Thus the question of intervention is closely tied up with that of state sovereignty – an issue that came sharply into focus with the end of the Gulf War and by events since in Bosnia, Somalia and Iraq. The decision by Washington, London and Paris to intervene in northern Iraq to establish a form of separate Kurdish state constituted both a direct challenge to the sovereignty of Baghdad as well as an unprecedented innovation in the policy of external humanitarian intervention. This moral justification (which may be linked to other motives) bases its legitimacy in Article 24 of the UN charter which obligates the Security Council to "assume primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security", an impossible task in the days of the Cold War.

In Africa, the West's – but especially the USA's – "activist" policy and engagement in conflict prevention and resolution is likely to be coordinated with a number of other policy dimensions:

In the first place, it will be coupled with greater emphasis in assisting indigenous peace-making mechanisms via the OAU. The State Department foresees an identity of interest with the OAU in regional conflict resolution and argues that Washington should support African initiatives to enhance OAU capabilities. It is assumed that any such mechanism under OAU auspices will be short of funds and under-equipped. Because of this, the USA can be expected to assist the OAU to develop a modest communication and logistical infrastructure for use in monitoring ceasefire, demobilization and election scenarios. The Clinton administration's "reality therapy" in Somalia has already resulted in much talk of "African solutions for African problems" – but assisted by Washington and the UN wherever possible. It should be noted, however, that the USA's activist policy is endangered by a growing mood of retreat and disengagement in Congress.

Secondly, for both political and economic reasons, the USA's involvement

in programmes to reduce and rationalize the continent's military establishments will be broadened and deepened. These activities should be regarded as one facet of the US's desire to promote "core values" (ie democratization). The RSA will also be subject to such pressures, but it will be alleviated by the West's interest in seeing South Africa take up its rightful role and obligations as a regional superpower. On the other hand, Pretoria's place in African peace-keeping could be undermined by regional fears that the SADF is the largest and best-equipped force in the subcontinent.

A third dimension of American military policy in Africa will include the maintenance of access to a number of air and naval facilities for US contingency operations in the Middle East.

Finally, whilst Washington's activist role in conflict resolution does "not preclude possible border adjustments", the USA and its European allies will not encourage self-determination to be applied continually until it reaches its lowest common denominator. That is seen as a recipe for chaos.

### **Conclusions: Prospects for peace and democracy**

The majority of Africa's 53 countries remain in some sort of political transition. In some states, however, free choice has been deferred; and in a number of others opposition to political pluralism could be prolonged almost ad infinitum. It thus seems clear that the era of one-party and military rule in Africa has seen its heyday and is coming to an unsteady end. Multiparty elections monitored by the international community have become the accepted formula for transformation and – for the foreseeable future at least – the drive towards more accountable forms of government seems virtually irreversible. But despite the promise of reform, formidable obstacles remain to the spread of democracy on the continent.

For instance, the political excesses and gross human rights abuses of authoritarian single-party systems have been accompanied over the

decades by rising economic difficulties. For the public at large, the clamour for change has been an expression of discontent not only with political structures, but also with economic performance. In other words, political freedom has taken on the profile of a panacea for all the causes of popular discontent. Herein lies the danger. If democracy fails to deliver material prosperity, there could be a rapid return to the disenchantment that leads logically to the re-establishment of dictatorship. "It is therefore important to put the democracy movement and what it can realistically achieve in perspective. The economic underpinnings of politics will be the crucial, if not the deciding, factor in whether democracy will prevail."<sup>15</sup>

Secondly, and more widely, is the fact that even if the democratic process does produce competent, honest and open administrations, the African continent can do little by itself to alter its unfavourable international economic circumstances (terms of trade, debt burden, dependence on commodity exports, etc).

Another major hurdle is the question of disputed electoral results, an issue that looms large in Angola, where the transition was disrupted following Unita's rejection of the September 1992 presidential and legislative elections, and in Nigeria, where the military government cancelled the June 1993 presidential election (apparently won by Moshood Abiola of the Social Democratic Party).

In the fourth place, many African governments' public acceptance of the requirement for more democracy has not been accompanied by an equal commitment to encourage or permit the freedoms upon which democracy rests: tolerance, a free and vigorous press and freedoms of assembly and speech. For as can be seen in Kenya and Cameroon, it is quite possible to have multipartyism in which the opposition parties and press are intimidated and therefore rendered largely ineffective.

Fifthly, many African governments continue to maintain strong military

and para-military forces whose loyalties – often ethnically reinforced – lie primarily with the ruling civilian elite. These units are frequently resistant to democratic trends – as was so graphically demonstrated in Burundi by the October 1993 coup attempt by a faction of the 1500-strong rebel Tutsi-dominated army.

Related to the above is the thorny question of demobilizing both government and rebel troops and reconstituting a unified army – one of the most difficult, but most important, conditions for free elections. The status of demobilized soldiers – many of whom have abandoned ideology for crime – is closely connected to another legacy of the Cold War, the accumulated proliferation of infantry weapons. Many parts of the continent are almost literally awash with arms. What makes matters worse is that conventional disarmament in Europe has produced a second wave of cheap weapons worldwide, which could engender further disruptions in view of the apparent resurgence of economic and ethnic conflicts in Africa.

Finally, the drive for democracy has led to polarization of particularistic groupings as parties crystalize mostly on the basis of tribal, regional and religious interests instead of coalescing around common ideology or political principles – all of which jeopardizes the unity and stability of the state. Or as one observer puts it:

All endeavours of economic and democratic transformation ... will fail if a far more basic malaise is not overcome: the division, even antagonism, between the modern territorial state and ethnicity ... One may even say that ethnicity is well and alive whereas the African state is not.<sup>16</sup>

And once ethnic conflict gets out of hand, it has the potential to plunge the state into full-scale civil war in which thousands are killed and entire communities are internally or externally displaced. Such wars break up the country's physical infrastructure and seriously disrupt the vital agricultural sector which provides for the livelihood of most African families. Here it is crucial to stress that mass

starvation in Africa owes more to warfare than to drought. Indeed, famine has never occurred on the continent unless warfare has coincided with drought.

For all the above, a glimmer of light on the "Dark Continent" can be detected. Africa's "second liberation" has been set in motion and the global community has not written off Africa altogether. Free or relatively free elections (of which recently there have been almost two dozen) constitute a key element in the process of transition; however, they are not in themselves sufficient. But while one can point to some successes in Africa during the past few years, these economic and political gains can still be reversed. In short, the transition to democracy and development has begun, although it is by no means guaranteed. For the remainder of the century, one of the hardest tasks will be that of maintaining support for policies which will inevitably make most people poorer without simultaneously destroying the ambition and will to succeed in the years to come. At the same time, Africa will have to come to terms with, and reconcile,

the contest between the forces of fragmentation and the imperative of integration:

The search for freedom ... tends toward fragmentation in the political realm, while the search for prosperity tends toward integration in the economic realm.<sup>17</sup>

### Notes and references

- 1 This article builds upon a previous essay: Simon Baynham, "The new world order: Regional and international implications for Southern Africa", *Africa Insight*, vol 22, no 2, 1992, especially pp 84-85.
- 2 Distilled from a press report on Huntington's address to the HSRC in July 1993. *Financial Mail* (Johannesburg), 30 July 1993.
- 3 Marguerite Michaels, "Retreat from Africa", *Foreign Affairs*, vol 72, no 1, 1993, pp 95-96.
- 4 For further details, see Simon Baynham, "Africa's debt crisis", *Africa Institute Bulletin*, vol 33, no 4, 1993, pp 1-4.
- 5 Quoted in *Africa Recovery*, vol 4, no 3/4, October-December 1990, p 10.
- 6 Winrich Kühne, *Africa and the end of the Cold War*, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Ebenhausen, December 1990, pp 40-41.
- 7 Also hopes that disarmament in the North will free resources for economic development in the South will not occur because

of the costs of disarmament (ie the systematic destruction of heavy weapons, and "the conversion of the military industrial complex, is much more difficult and expensive than realized before". *Ibid*, p 38.

- 8 Christopher Clapham, *The African state in the post-Cold War era*, paper presented at the African Studies Association of South Africa (Asasa) biennial congress, Magaliesberg Conference Centre, 17-18 June 1993, p 6.
- 9 Witney Schneidman, "Africa's transition to pluralism: Economic and investment implications", *CSIS Africa Notes*, no 142, November 1992, p 3.
- 10 Quoted by Marguerite Michaels, *op cit*, pp 97-98.
- 11 Christopher Clapham, *The African state*, paper delivered at the conference of the Royal African Society on Sub-Saharan Africa: The Record and Outlook, St John's College, Cambridge, 14-16 April 1991, p 19.
- 12 Whitney Schneidman, *op cit*, p 2.
- 13 Winrich Kühne, *op cit*, p 31.
- 14 Stephen Stedman, "The new internationalists", *Foreign Affairs*, vol 72, no 1, 1993, p 16.
- 15 *West Africa*, 6-12 January 1992, p 5.
- 16 Winrich Kühne, *op cit*, pp 30-31.
- 17 John Gaddis, quoted in *The Economist*, 22 August 1992, p 72.

# What can Africa expect from a post-apartheid South Africa?

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Stripped of its morally repugnant ideology, and unfettered by sanctions, a post-apartheid state in South Africa would be in a very good position to challenge the rest of Africa in political, economic and military terms. African responses to these challenges would largely depend on whether they are neo-imperialist, further undercutting the ailing economies of the north, or whether they would be aimed at strengthening democracy and furthering regional economic development/integration. These two possibilities call for urgent attention.

## **Economic pre-eminence**

Having been involved in clandestine commerce with a number of African countries, South Africa has now come out into the open and is actively courting overt and official relations with an expanding number of African partners. Many have for many years traded with South Africa in spite of OAU sanctions policies. Indeed, many became hardcore sanctions breakers as a result of the reality of their economic dependence on South Africa. Others paid lip service to sanctions while they looked the other way as the linkages between their private sectors and those of South Africa expanded.

Substantial increases in South African exports to Africa have been recorded in recent years: Zimbabwe remains South Africa's largest market, with Zambia and Mozambique vying for second place.

High-level trade delegations from South Africa have been received in Togo, Angola, Kenya, Gabon and several other countries. South African

trade offices are already functioning in more than 25 African countries, including eight that host South African embassies. Likewise, trade delegations from African countries are visiting their counterparts in South Africa almost on a daily basis.<sup>1</sup>

When President de Klerk undertook his historical visit to Nigeria on 9 April 1992, he confirmed that trade ties, even though minuscule, existed between his country and Nigeria. Although Vice-President Augustus Aikhomu had previously reprimanded Nigeria's local businessmen for rushing to secure a firm base in South Africa, the aftermath of de Klerk's visit witnessed official acquiescence and even overt encouragement of this practice. Likewise, their Ghanaian counterparts are known to be moving into the Bantustans in large numbers in search of business and gainful employment, given the very low absorptive capacity of the Ghanaian economy, for its army of trained professionals.

Reflecting this openness, was a meeting held in Swaziland during the second week of March 1991 in which business representatives from 14 African countries met with their South African counterparts to discuss business opportunities.<sup>2</sup> Apart from individual business representatives, all the relevant regional and international aid agencies participated in that meeting. These included the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). (Ironically, these two bodies, particularly SADC, were founded to counter the threat of South Africa's economic dominance of its neigh-

bours.) Others included the African Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – bodies which had excluded South African membership owing to international sanctions.<sup>3</sup>

It is perhaps in the extractive sector that South Africa's wealth can best be measured. It is the main source of global supplies of most minerals of strategic, economic, military cum political value. It is the world's largest producer of gold, platinum, chromium and vanadium. It also holds considerable reserves of coal, diamonds and manganese.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, its resource security in terms of crude oil, which it lacks, is moderated by the success of its synthetic fuel industry.

An area in which South Africa has an advantage over other African and notable overseas producers of minerals is that it is self-reliant in terms of the relevant technology and transportation required for maximum efficiency in this sector. The transport routes from the mines to the coast for onward shipment of minerals to foreign markets is wholly South African in both ownership and operation.<sup>5</sup>

The major issue of the unchecked brain-drain from Africa to developed Euro-American countries and most recently, Southern Africa, is a pointer that a post-apartheid South Africa might well become the major destination for migrant skilled labour from the rest of Africa. This would further impoverish those states while contributing to South Africa's neo-imperial status in the continent. At the moment, many African intellectuals and professionals, even from oil-rich

Nigeria, have migrated to Southern Africa, particularly to Botswana. Presently, about 300 000 citizens of that subregion alone find their livelihood in South Africa as migrant workers at various levels of employment. Besides the fact that those individuals prefer to work in South Africa, their own national economies benefit and have come to rely on the foreign exchange so remitted home. Mozambique, for instance, gets one-third of its foreign exchange from this source.<sup>6</sup>

In a post-apartheid era, these sub-regional benefits are certain to spread northwards to the rest of black Africa. In Nigeria for instance, intellectuals taking sabbatical leave and other professionals have started to accept appointments in client states of the Republic of South Africa such as Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, etc. It would be recalled that the Brain-Drain Panel set up by the Nigerian government last year actually revealed the positive aspect of this phenomenon as regards foreign currency remittances by Nigerians working abroad. Latest reports by Amnesty International have accused Western European countries, in particular, of clamping down on economic refugees while the US and Canada have tightened up immigration regulations to keep out foreigners – mostly Africans.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the signs are that a post-apartheid South Africa may increasingly become a destination for Africans in search of a better living.

These developments direct attention to the economic pre-eminence of South Africa in the African region and the Southern African subregion. And it is our argument here that this pre-eminence is bound to increase rather than diminish in the future. Indeed, South Africa is becoming very relevant for the future of subregional and regional efforts at coordinating African development for optimum results. Moreover, current recessionary trends and escalating external debt commitments would seem to be throwing Africans together to seek ways to spur growth and development. South Africa, which still brings the most

diverse and dynamic economy to the table, is obviously regarded with some envy and perhaps silent admiration by the rest of the continent, which is negotiating rough times.

The situation is further exacerbated as Western aid, investment packages and preferential trade links with Africa are drying up. The reasons are obvious. The United States, for instance, has started to wind up its Cold War aid gambits in Africa. Besides, American interest in preventing another division of Europe between free market and centrally planned economies has meant a redirection of aid from Third World to Eastern European countries. The European Community now gives more aid to Europe than it does to the Third World, despite the fact that Eastern Europe (with a per capita GDP of US \$5 600) is considerably better off than, say, the Southern African region with just \$300. It was revealed that in 1990, for example, aid to Eastern Europe increased significantly, while regional allocation for Southern Africa fell in real terms by 30 per cent.<sup>8</sup>

This development creates a vacuum; and no external power is showing an interest in filling it. The consequent search for an alternative (for Euro-American aid agencies) is perhaps an open invitation to the only non-client state in the region, the Republic of South Africa. Will this post-apartheid superstate under a multiracial government then become Africa's aid donor, investor, linchpin of regional trade and economic integration, etc? Moreover, this raises the spectre of the new South Africa becoming a neo-imperial economic power, increasing its economic dominance northwards into the heart of black Africa, where not even the Nigerian debt-ridden economy would raise a challenge to its whims. It is perhaps necessary to examine the possibility of this intriguing scenario.

### **Superstate?**

The study of political economy indicates that whoever possesses the carrot (economic capacity) has also the

stick (political strength/control). With its economic power, political clout is assured. This undoubtedly gives the post-apartheid state in South Africa the status of superstate in the African region. Despite the historical slur of apartheid, the country boasts a more than eight decades tradition of limited democracy, civilian control of the military and responsibility towards a part of the electorate. This points to a South African polity that could be an example for sub-Saharan Africa in its search for credible political pluralism and institutionalized politics. It is instructive to bear in mind that the practice of apartheid in South Africa was legally institutionalized. This remained binding until, in the course of the unfolding reforms, all apartheid legislation was abolished. Moreover, the overthrow of legally constituted civil leadership by the military and other forms of arbitrary governance, which is prevalent in the rest of Africa, appears to be the exception in South Africa.<sup>9</sup>

While no attempt is being made to glorify apartheid practice in South Africa or elsewhere, it could be argued that since racist ideology in South Africa was backed by law, the new non-racial dispensation would be similarly institutionalized. Racial discrimination in other parts of Africa should then receive a greater amount of attention. It can indeed be argued that even though South Africa is still in a process of transition from racist rule to multiracial democracy, injustices visited on black Africans there pale into insignificance when considering discrimination against Berbers in northern African countries and black people's resistance against racist Arabism in such places as Mauritania and Sudan.<sup>10</sup>

As a result of its increasingly multiracial and virtually self-sufficient defence force, with an historical tradition of respect for civil leadership, South Africa could conceivably play the role of a regional power balancer and arms supplier. Alternatively, the ailing regional "heavyweights" such as Nigeria, Zaire and Libya may resist such a trend – in which case Africa

may be fragmented into spheres of influence with each major power surrounded by satellites in its subregion and possibly beyond. In the latter scenario, overlapping interests of regional powers may threaten stability and regional security. This may then turn into a situation similar to that in Indo-China where the interests of China, the Soviet Union, Vietnam and the United States threw that subregion into chaos and caused bloodshed even among communist countries.

Another scenario, is the one reminiscent of regional politics in North-east Asia where newly industrialized countries (NICs) have produced an active counterresponse to the new Japanese superstate since the late 1960s. By the same token, the so-called regional powers in Africa could organize a collective response to a future South African superstate. But given the gap between them and South Africa in terms of economic capacity, military self-sufficiency and, of course, the sophistication already attained by South Africa's arms-producing (and exporting) industry, it is not unlikely that they may be unable to respond effectively to the challenge of South African hegemony, an inability that may lead them to accept a neo-dependent relationship with South Africa as far as their economic and military requirements are concerned.

A post-apartheid South Africa (with a stable multiracial democracy) is

likely to become the linchpin of the envisaged African Economic Community which may eventually compete with non-African regional blocs. A very real scenario in this respect is economic competition in key areas that may lead to South African attempts to capture Western markets in Africa and other Third World areas. This development could affect relationships between the OECD countries and South Africa.

Indeed, with increased self-confidence in the region and beyond, ultra-nationalism may come to predominate in South Africa's domestic politics as is often the tendency in similar situations where a strong regional power emerges. As a result of this the regional power may assume the role of the region's protector or liberator. It would be recalled that this was the case with Iraq before allied bombardments and military defeat in the ensuing Gulf War put paid to that development at least for the time being. Possible assumption of regional liberator/protector role commitments in the region, would invariably project South Africa's power in a way which might radically redefine its erstwhile kith and kin relationship with the West.

In conclusion therefore, the unfolding changes in South Africa certainly point to the imminence of power realignments in the continent. Although the present indications are

that a new democratic South Africa can be expected to play nothing else but a constructive role in regional affairs, such realignments may well be as dysfunctional for regional security as it could be functional in that regard. What seems to be certain at this stage, is that there is an inextricable linkage between the transformation we are currently witnessing in the Republic of South Africa and stability, peace and security in the entire African continent.

### Notes and references

- 1 *Africa Bulletin*, no 21, 1990.
- 2 *Ibid.*
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Jennifer Seymour Whitaker, *Conflict in Southern Africa*, New York: Foreign Policy Association Inc, 1978, p 26.
- 5 For details, see Jide Owoeye "Japan's search for resource security in Africa", *Africa Spectrum*, vol 3, no 1, 1984, pp 279-289.
- 6 *Africa Bulletin*, no 20, 1991/2, p 8; and no 22, 1991/3, pp 4-5.
- 7 *Ibid.*
- 8 Christopher Coker, *op cit*, p 116.
- 9 Although South Africa has never experienced a military coup, there have been military takeovers in three of the four former independent homelands (Ciskei, Transkei and Venda) and South African military intervention in another one (Bophuthatswana).
- 10 *Africa Bulletin*, *op cit*.



# An evaluation of the OAU on the eve of South Africa's accession

*Dr Denis Venter, Director of Academic Programmes at the Africa Institute of South Africa, discusses the weaknesses and strengths of the OAU and considers some reforms that may be necessary for the Organization to effectively meet future challenges.*

The end of the Cold War, the pro-democracy movements in Eastern Europe, and the collapse of the Soviet Union had a profound effect on Africa. In nearly all geopolitical zones of Africa, autocratic leadership is being challenged by a variety of opposition groups, united by a vision of "democracy". Siad Barre of Somalia, Samuel Doe of Liberia, Mathieu Kérékou of Benin, Moussa Traoré of Mali, Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia, Didier Ratsiraka of Madagascar, and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia have been swept away by the winds of change. Felix Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire has died. Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo, Paul Biya of Cameroon, Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, Daniel arap Moi of Kenya, Kamuzu Banda of Malawi and a few others still cling to power. Some of them will be lucky if they last out 1994.

What all this points to, is that there is a season of instability in Africa. The end of the Cold War (resulting in the winding down of the East-West conflict) and the imposition of aid conditionality by Western donor countries and international lending agencies (setting preconditions for political democracy and open-market economies) have eroded the ideological legitimacy of a number of African regimes. In Africa itself, there is growing impatience with military regimes and autocratic rulers. The immediate results have assumed three forms: a spontaneous uprising against the state in response to falling standards of living; the weakening of the state vis-à-vis organized opposition, leading to the popular overthrow of the government; and intensification of armed

revolt against governments in a bid to compel a power-sharing agreement with rebels now emboldened by the financial and military weakness of the state. These tendencies are not likely to be reversed in the near future, as more pro-democracy movements emerge in different parts of Africa. With Africa being progressively marginalized in the "new world order", those states with little or no domestic resources to sustain their economies may start to question colonial boundaries, in an effort to acquire scarce resources.<sup>1</sup> The result will be that the map of Africa that may emerge in the 21st century may be radically different from what we have come to know.

## **After three decades: A critique**

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) is very much a product of its time: the immediate needs and fears of the founding members marked the organization's structure and agenda in ways that have largely endured.<sup>2</sup> And the history of the OAU is such that African countries first had to focus on political issues: how could Africa talk in terms of unity and economic cooperation when at the time of the founding of the organization almost one third of the continent was still under colonial domination? Because of the politics of the moment, a preoccupation with the essentially political matter of decolonization, institutions within the OAU structure remained almost dormant: the Commission for Economic and Social Development, the Commission for Science, Culture and Education, the Military Commission, and the Commission on Mediation, Conciliation

and Arbitration. However, in view of contemporary changes in Africa and in the world, and the fact that Africa has to focus on economic development, regional integration and technical and social cooperation, the machinery which already exists within the OAU has to be revived and updated to ensure that it functions to the optimum, and to initiate the necessary reforms which will take the present realities into account.<sup>3</sup>

What are these realities? Global changes of profound importance over the past few years have created a new political landscape in Africa, and have suggested a new agenda for the OAU in the 1990s. There is now less and less interest in the legitimate concerns of Africa and the only way to break out of this trend towards marginalizing Africa and its peoples is for African countries themselves to assume their responsibilities and to ensure that through their collective action they force themselves on to the international agenda. With the phase of "classical decolonization" now almost complete – a referendum in the Western Sahara, and an election in South Africa should settle the two remaining problems during 1994 – Africa has entered the phase of its so-called "second liberation". The priorities of the moment will be to concentrate on socioeconomic development: how to translate the objectives of inter-African cooperation into a more meaningful, practical dimension. The first priority will be how to promote economic cooperation and realize the goal of African economic integration: the strengthening of cooperation at the subregional level through Ecowas, Comesa and the

SADC are going to be the pillars of an envisaged African Economic Community.<sup>4</sup>

However, after three decades of the OAU's chequered existence, Africa still can neither be bailed out of its economic doldrums nor extricated from its maelstrom of conflicts. Owing to an endless list of problems which have reached crisis proportions, the organization often comes under fire for being ineffective, irrelevant, indifferent, incapable of "delivering the goods" and, above all, for having failed to be in the forefront of African affairs, particularly in relation to Somalia, Liberia, and the Western Sahara. While this might be true to some extent, it would be unfair to lay the blame for all the woes that have befallen Africa at the doorstep of the OAU. The organization is not guilty as charged but has been made a scapegoat for the inertia and deficiencies of its entire membership. Indeed, the OAU is a pan-African organization which derives its strength from the collective consent and support of all its 53 member states. Its ultimate success is, of necessity, contingent upon the commitment and political will of its member states to transform it into a much stronger continental forum.<sup>5</sup>

But realities seem to fire the embers of "Afro-pessimism". In a brutally frank assessment of Africa's situation at the 25th anniversary of the OAU in 1988, General Olusegun Obasanjo was forced to lament that if Africa was no longer the "dark continent", it had certainly taken on "the reputation or notoriety of being the continent of drought, debt, desertification, disease, and death".<sup>6</sup> The continuing malaise of the continent recently forced Claude Ake to remark that "Africa is not so much marginal as irrelevant; at any rate, relevant only as a nuisance – a nuisance forever complaining about being exploited, forever begging for help, constantly making a mess of its own affairs and looking to others to clean it up".<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Africa today is caught up in a convergence of crises in all sectors of economic, political, social and cultural life.<sup>8</sup> Especially during

the 1980s, the African crisis was reflected in shattered economies, in the growth of authoritarian regimes, increased conflict within and between countries, and the fastest growing refugee population in the world. And the implications of the ongoing crisis were even more crucial in the sense of a fundamental breakdown of the equilibrium of social structures in Africa.<sup>9</sup>

Thus the gamut of boiling issues the OAU summit meetings have to deal with each year, range from autocratic leadership to fratricidal war, through religious fundamentalism and political intolerance to gross violation of human rights.<sup>10</sup> With smouldering conflicts in virtually everyone of its five geographical regions, an excruciating debt burden, the debilitating incidence of hunger, poverty and disease, and the stultifying effect of economic and political instability, Africa must certainly rank as the most turbulent continent in the world.<sup>11</sup> But after three decades of existence, the institutional capacity of the OAU and the political will of most member states have unfortunately not been equal to the challenges facing Africa, especially in the socioeconomic, security, refugee, and human rights fields.<sup>12</sup>

It would seem, at first glance, that the OAU has a dismal record in resolving inter-African conflicts and in defusing tension between states. Consequently, it is commonly perceived as having become little more than a forum for mutual recriminations and denunciations by conflicting parties. This criticism then seems justified because the Charter and the numerous resolutions and decisions which emphasize the peaceful settlement of disputes are repeatedly being violated. Yet any verdict should be tempered by one significant qualification: the recognition that although the Charter enunciates the provisions for the peaceful settlement of disputes in great detail, it does not empower the OAU, or provide it with the necessary wherewithal, to prevent or defuse such conflicts. Moreover, the decision-making process in the organiza-

tion is so cumbersome that its initiatives are, even with the best of intentions, goodwill and effort, almost invariably overtaken by events. The few peace-keeping efforts that have succeeded have, in fact, been made by concerned states outside the decision-making process of the OAU, although on its behalf and with its blessing.

To be sure, the OAU has been often criticized for real as well as imagined failures, mistakes and weaknesses. Today, it suffers from an overwhelming crisis of confidence, credibility and relevance. Even worse, it is viewed in some quarters with unbridled hostility for the role it has played and continues to play in legitimizing unjust and corrupt regimes, for the moral and political support it renders to illegitimate states and for its duplicitous application of certain hallowed principles. Some of the criticism is based on a miscomprehension of the general purposes and mission of the OAU, while the rest is caused by frustration rooted in idealism and the unique role that was mistakenly attributed to the organization in African affairs. Such criticism also fails to realize that the OAU has had to operate under severe constraints. Admittedly, the organization has made many mistakes and has been plagued by many failures; but the aggregate of these failures does not nullify the achievements – both concrete and intangible – of the OAU over the past three decades.<sup>13</sup>

### **An African symbol and unifying force**

Clearly, the OAU is of huge symbolic importance to African states: it is viewed as the embodiment of the "African ideal". While African unity has always held different connotations and evoked different emotions for different people, it has created a certain mystical bond of unity between Africans that did not exist prior to the establishment of the OAU. While an "African personality" may not yet exist, "Africanness" is commonly recognized: one may be Nigerian, Sudanese, Zairois or Mozambican, but today one

also is African. Herein lies the most significant contribution of the OAU. Moreover, the organization is now recognized as a moral authority, even when it is not always heeded or respected. Quite often, African states have restrained themselves from taking certain actions, or have taken certain other actions because of their responsibilities to the OAU.<sup>14</sup>

One of the most remarkable features of regional diplomacy within the OAU – and a major source of strength for the organization and for its survival prospects – is the ability of African governments to paper over their differences in order to save the organization and preserve the appearance of African unity. The survival of the OAU is an emotional issue to many Africans, largely because of its symbolic value as the embodiment and the concrete assertion of Africa's collective political personality on the world stage.<sup>15</sup> It can therefore be said that the OAU, habitually, does not so much ride out a storm, as precariously survive without actually breaking up.<sup>16</sup>

The OAU has succeeded in providing a diplomatic forum for airing the views of Africa on international issues affecting Africans. To be sure, the organization has become an important instrument for the conduct of collective African diplomacy in the world context. It has provided the arena within which common African policies are forged or disputed and where the tensions of inter-African relations are released. In addition, the OAU has brought to the fore, probably more sharply than any other region in the world, the problems stemming from colonialism, racism, and underdevelopment.<sup>17</sup>

Understandably – although it has not always been successful in formulating common strategies, in adopting common policies, and in speaking with one voice – perhaps the most concrete contribution of the OAU has been its success in forging an African bloc and holding its members together. Indeed, the organization has proved singularly successful in coordinating policies of its member states on global issues (colonialism, disarmament,

the denuclearization of Africa); in having certain common African actions in world affairs, whatever their moral merits, adopted (the severing of diplomatic relations with Israel, the recognition of an Angolan government-in-exile, the imposition of sanctions against South Africa); and in regulating Africa's relations with, and presence in, other international organizations or forums (the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the UN Economic and Social Council – Unesco, the UN Conference on Trade and Development – Unctad, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade – Gatt). The OAU has also succeeded in generating a psychological need for togetherness among its member states. The "African Group" at the UN is a permanent body which discusses issues with a view to forging a common front not only at the UN but also in other international organizations and movements. Even in the absence of an official framework, or governmental instruction, African representatives tend to form ad hoc caucuses because of this spirit of African solidarity.<sup>18</sup>

Indeed, the OAU is an uniquely African institution, voluntarily created by African states as a vehicle to serve pan-African interests; it embodies the aspirations of the African peoples, and the collective decisions of African leaders. Clearly, the organization is a positive instrument not only for promoting African unity and cooperation but also for the establishment and pursuit of new priorities for the continent. However, if African states tend to ignore the OAU, does not equip the organization to fulfil its task, and talk in terms of acting individually, then Africa is courting disaster.<sup>19</sup>

Despite its major shortcomings – not having addressed the question of conflict resolution and conflict management, having allowed the violation of human rights to proceed with impunity, not putting into concrete action its commitments on economic cooperation and integration – the OAU has been able to project an African identity, to solidify and enhance the Africanness of the African peoples.

This unity is sometimes artificial, but it is there: there is something called "Africa". Unless there is this "togetherness" of African countries, which is best symbolized in the OAU, individual African states would be of no consequence in the world.<sup>20</sup> To quote OAU Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim: "[Through] the OAU, through the collective inspiration and expressions of Africa, no country, no power bloc, no combination in the world, no continent can ... [but take note of] Africa";<sup>21</sup> and, almost echoing himself, although in a different context: "Not even ... Africa's great powers, Nigeria, Egypt and, potentially, South Africa ... would be in ... [a] position to make a significant difference in the world arena. But collectively and working together, no one can simply ignore Africa."<sup>22</sup>

In a world increasingly dominated by economic power blocs, a weak and divided Africa can never hope to be an effective force or voice for change in an international system which in the past worked to its disadvantage.<sup>23</sup> Clearly, "for Africa to enjoy the full benefits of ... [a] new emerging [world] order, it must be prepared to re seize the initiative and prove to the world that ... [it is] committed and ready to deploy ... [its] full energy and resources to conflict resolution and to a united assault on poverty and underdevelopment",<sup>24</sup> to once again quote Salim Ahmed Salim. However, he also enjoined the developed world to permit Africa to benefit from the improved international political climate in the post-Cold War era, while urging Africa to rise to the challenge of collective self-reliance, individually as countries and collectively as a continent, in an environment of diminishing interest in its economic wellbeing.<sup>25</sup>

Although individual African states may be quite powerless in world politics, the collectivity of member states of the OAU has definitely more status and influence. The organization provides numerous opportunities for multilateral interaction not only among African states themselves, but also facilitates Africa's collective interaction

in the global arena.<sup>26</sup> Fact is that the OAU is both the largest (now totalling 53 member states) and biggest (30,368 mn km<sup>2</sup> of surface area) regional organization in the international system.

Utilizing this numerical strength in the UN General Assembly – the member states of the OAU constitute nearly one-third of the total UN membership – African states, despite their obvious material weakness, have been attempting to use the UN as a convenient instrument for the conduct of their diplomacy and for giving global priority to issues important to them. One of the early successes of African diplomacy at the UN concerns the 1963 campaign to amend the UN Charter so as to redress the absence of any specific representation of Africa in certain UN agencies, and Africa's marked underrepresentation in all the major and subsidiary bodies of the UN. As a result, Articles 23, 27 and 61 of the UN Charter were amended, increasing the membership of the UN Security Council from 11 to 15 and that of Unesco from 18 to 27. Moreover, the most outstanding achievement of the OAU's economic diplomacy on the international front was the holding of the first ever Special Session of the UN General Assembly exclusively devoted to the economic crisis in Africa in May 1986, and the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD).<sup>27</sup>

At another level, African states collectively under OAU auspices have attempted to coordinate Africa's position in the various Unctad conferences. The OAU has also played a vital role in generating an African common front in the negotiations prior to the different Lomé Conventions signed between the European Community (EC) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states. Africa's domination of the Non-Aligned Movement is also undisputed, with African states constituting the majority in the grouping. However, the extent to which OAU member states can follow a collective policy of non-alignment depends on their

ability to limit their individual dependence for development and security on foreign powers, as well as their ability to reduce cleavages and tensions among themselves.

On the continent, the OAU has provided the general framework within which mutual interaction of all African states takes place. It also provided a device for replacing and superceding the former bilateral pattern of interstate relations in Africa with a multilateral continental medium for promoting coordination and cooperation among its members. The unity of the continent which the OAU has managed to preserve so far, has given the organization, as far as African affairs are concerned, a moral standing which no single African country or limited group of countries can possibly match.<sup>28</sup>

Although the OAU remains "the only effective forum for expressing Africa's hopes and aspirations and a vehicle for effective participation in international politics",<sup>29</sup> today – more than three decades after the founding of the OAU – the continued and, indeed, increased dependence of African countries on foreign powers and institutions to resolve Africa's problems has become a source of growing frustration, humiliation, and anxiety to many Africans. Such dependence contradict and undermine the independence and sovereignty of African states. In an increasingly interdependent world, where the concept of absolute sovereignty is largely meaningless, interstate cooperation – whether at the subregional, regional, or international level – is essential. This is particularly pertinent in Africa, where the small and weak countries saw the creation of the OAU not only as a way of maximizing their influence collectively on the international scene, but also as a more realistic and appropriate approach to dealing effectively with their common problems.<sup>30</sup>

### Some constraints of its Charter

The Charter of the OAU enshrines noble principles and embodies worthy goals. It also attempts to create

the essential legal and political foundations, and the administrative framework, which would enable member states to manifest a collective will, to assume their rightful place in the world, to establish the nature and manner of their cooperative relationship, and to confirm their commitment to African unity.<sup>31</sup> In Article II of the Charter, the OAU details its aims and purposes: to promote the unity and solidarity of African states; to coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa; to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and independence; to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa; and to promote international cooperation. The prospects of achieving these aims were good, if only the African countries were prepared to coordinate and harmonize their general policies, especially in the areas of politics, diplomacy, economics, culture, science and technology, and defence and security.<sup>32</sup>

However, the OAU is not what it is popularly perceived to be: a supranational organization mandated to bring about African unity. Its Charter clearly reveals that it was destined to be nothing more than a loose association of independent African states. In the struggle between the political tendencies that existed in immediate post-colonial Africa, the Charter represented a victory for the "gradualists" or the "evolutionists", who opposed any surrender of sovereignty, over the "radicals" or "progressives" who sought continental union immediately. It came to emphasize regional cooperation rather than unity. An essentially conservative document, produced to be acceptable to all, the Charter ended up by sanctifying the uniqueness of each state and committing the new organization to the perpetuation of that distinctiveness. Accordingly, the OAU would play only a limited role in African affairs and could represent African interests in world forums only at the discretion of its member states and only when – and if – they could achieve consensus, if not unanimity, on any given issue.<sup>33</sup>

The question is often asked: what went wrong with the OAU? Why is its organizing idea in the casualty ward? What can be done, and how should it be done? There are a number of obstacles in the way of revitalizing the OAU: the limitations imposed by its Charter; the emasculation of the General Secretariat by this very same Charter; the failure of many member states to pay membership dues and to contribute financially and otherwise to specific activities; the crippling African debt burden along with the lack of effective intra-continental economic action; the failure of African leaderships with the concomitant persistence of petty nationalisms and parochial mentalities; the indifferent mediatory efforts on the myriad of boundary disputes and wars; the relative dearth of democracy and political stability; foreign interventions at politico-strategic levels (especially prior to 1989) and in the economic sphere; and the lack of linkages between the OAU and the peoples of Africa.<sup>34</sup>

The fact that the OAU today is almost as far as ever from realizing the fundamental aspirations of its founders may have more to do with the divisions which existed amongst African states in 1963, and the kind of Charter which these divisions engendered, than with the actual causes and nature of what disunity there might be. While the preamble to the Charter is couched in the rhetoric of radical-idealism, its main provisions are cautious, even traditional. Its emphasis on territorial integrity and sovereignty, and the implicit upholding of arbitrary colonial boundaries between independent states, has attracted the approval of orthodox international lawyers. Paralysis or deadlock, when it occurs, cannot be blamed on what is actually quite a realistic document. But over the years the vicissitudes of the OAU have attracted criticism and even ridicule.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, OAU summits have come to have little substance and have been reduced largely to rhetoric;<sup>36</sup> the consequence is that disillusionment has resulted in the OAU now being nothing

more than a token pan-continental ritual.<sup>37</sup>

In fact, the obvious impotence of the OAU is not attributable to the Charter, which has never been fully exploited, but to the prevailing political circumstances and perhaps to the dispersion and dilution of the reservoir of political leadership in Africa. The kind of imperative that produces a collective determination on the part of heads of state and government is clearly absent. Insofar as this is the result of the nature of the Charter itself, it is because politicians have neither the will nor the determination to find the means of carrying out the reasonable principles which it lays down. In other words, they have neither exercised their rights nor shouldered the burden of their responsibilities.<sup>38</sup>

But in spite of several constraints on the effectiveness of the OAU, it will survive – barring a major catastrophe. However, any muted optimism about its future must be moderated by the realization that, to be relevant and robust, there is a critical need for the redefinition and refocusing of its purposes and orientations, a re-analysis of its principles and decisions, and a realistic reassessment of its capabilities. There are four broad areas in which changes have to be effected: the principles of the Charter and certain decisions and resolutions of the OAU; the operational environment of the organization; the decision-making process and framework of the OAU; and the structure of the General Secretariat and the powers of the Secretary-General.

Clearly, the Charter needs to be thoroughly reviewed and realistically revised, and certain impractical principles and inappropriate resolutions and decisions must be re-examined and amended or revoked. Hitherto, the OAU has not been responsive to and, indeed, ignored the wishes and plights of peoples struggling against unjust regimes and illegitimate governments. In some cases, the organization has gone contrary to its stated ideals and principles and has deliberately refused to take up, or artfully avoided, issues (for example, the

decolonization of Eritrea) even when it was not constrained by relevant decisions or resolutions. In its failure to act on such matters, the OAU stands accused not only of moral decrepitude but also of being instrumental in the exacerbation of existing conflicts and tensions. Similarly, in spite of an African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (and the necessary enforcing mechanism of a commission), the OAU has yet to pay more than lip service to the dignity of Africans as human beings. The Charter must also in greater detail and clarity embody the economic and social principles of cooperation and unity, because it is possible that timely attention to socioeconomic needs might have obviated many of the upheavals, conflicts and instability that continue to plague the continent.

The survival of the OAU also depends on a correct analysis of reality and an expedient use of the environment in which it operates. There is always the need to strike a delicate balance between the ideal and what reality dictates. In the past, the OAU unfortunately failed to identify or make a realistic assessment of the relative strength of the internal and external forces which operated for or against it. Its interests were not defined beyond generalities. It did not articulate realistic policies and continues to use exaggerated rhetoric useful in the heyday of the "liberation struggle" but quite counter-productive in present-day diplomacy. As a result, it often did what it was not expected to do, and did not do what it was supposed to do. For this to change, the OAU must develop confidence in itself and, above all, it must refrain from inflated rhetoric, boastful claims, and unrealistic threats.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, the OAU is a corporate body which derives its powers and authority from its members; that is, the extent to which it can act is limited by its member states. It has no autonomy of its own, and cannot act independently; its activities are derived largely from decisions and directives of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government and of the Council of

Ministers. And it is important to note that these organs of the OAU are composed of individual member states acting collectively. In fact, the member states have not found it easy to delegate their individual or collective powers to the body of their own creation.<sup>40</sup> The requirement of a two-thirds majority for all decisions in summit meetings demonstrates a protective preference for inaction and delay over decisive movement, in the absence of general support. Executive action, when it is taken, is reserved for the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, and then only for those subjects on which they can achieve broad consensus.<sup>41</sup> The organs of the OAU are essentially deliberative in nature: they have power only to discuss issues and make recommendations to the sovereign member states, and they cannot take decisions that are binding on member countries, let alone impose sanctions on them.<sup>42</sup>

Clearly, the OAU is not a "command organization", nor is it equipped with independent executive instruments capable of enforcing decisions against either members or non-members.<sup>43</sup> The OAU does not have supra-national enforcement powers such as those given to the UN Security Council. It is not a formal security or defence alliance, but rather a forum for the harmonization and coordination of policies and actions on matters of regional interest. It depends on interstate collaboration on the basis of voluntary political will; its resolutions and decisions are not binding and are merely recommendatory. Moreover, its Secretariat is hampered by grossly inadequate resources – a very small budget and staff, and very limited and largely administrative powers for the Secretary-General. These restrictive circumstances have contributed significantly to the steady marginalization of the collective role of the OAU, and hence of Africa, in major operations: such as the peace-keeping efforts to lead Namibia to independence, or to resolve the Western Sahara and Somali conflicts.<sup>44</sup>

One of the major institutional weaknesses of the OAU is that, in

order to stabilize the political map of Africa, the organization had to impose the principle of the sovereign equality of all member states on the community of African nations. However, this refusal to institute hierarchies within the community of African states, in conformity with modern international public law, was pushed to a point so extreme that no provision was made for a decision-making body in the OAU Charter – such as the UN Security Council. Such a body's decisions, without even being obligatory and binding on the sovereign member states of the organization, would have been able to serve as an effective means of settling many crises confronting contemporary Africa. Although states find it difficult to adhere to decisions that they regard as contrary to their interests, Africa could have been spared many tragedies. Indeed, the absence of a political decision-making body with executive or even advisory powers makes the OAU an organization without direction, an often noisy and bustling machine, evolving in a rather clouded atmosphere with no clearly defined vision for the future. To be sure, the politico-strategic and socio-economic crises confronting Africa cannot be effectively solved by an organization with no authority to make decisions and enforce them.

Thus the need for a profound reform of the OAU is imperative, although it may result in a major battle between the "reformers" or "innovators" and the partisans of immobility, those in favour of doing nothing. But there seems to be growing support for the idea that the OAU Charter should be revised with a view to creating a permanent crisis management body, which Sierra Leone has called a "Political Security Council". The OAU's problem with conflict resolution has always been the absence of a structure for dealing with crises – in essence, a permanent decision-making body within the organization.<sup>45</sup>

The Charter of the OAU reserves the political decision-making powers of the organization for, primarily, the Assembly of Heads of State and

Government and, to a smaller extent, the Council of Ministers. As a result, political decision-making has been unwieldy; and it is a sad comment that the OAU has constantly been overtaken by events for lack of a properly empowered permanent organ and speedy process that could tackle crises between the annual summits of the Assembly or the bi-annual sessions of the Council of Ministers. This dilemma can be solved by the restructuring of the decision-making organs of the OAU. There is an urgent need to create a duly empowered permanent organ composed of plenipotentiaries of the member states accredited to the OAU which would meet throughout the year in much the same way as its counterpart in the United Nations. Of course, any head of state or government would, as in the case of the UN, be able to address sessions of this body when necessary. With this structure, the collective welfare of the continent would be attended to on a daily basis, since any urgent problem would be addressed promptly. And this does not mean that the OAU will have to abandon some of its unique modalities of mediation and conciliation. Commissions of elder statesmen, committees of wise men, and groups of eminent personalities have been unusually effective if only because they have been operating on uniquely African, rather than generally accepted, procedures.

Any meaningful structural reform and distribution of power must include the addition of articles to the OAU Charter that would expand the political and executive powers of the Secretary-General. He must have powers that would enable him to initiate certain policies, to actively participate in the deliberations of the highest bodies of the organization, and to direct and control the various commissions and agencies of the OAU.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, the Secretary-General must always play a delicate role and remain sensitive to the sensibilities of member states, but he must assume a certain degree of eminent domain and influence because of the dynamism of his personality.<sup>47</sup> He has to

be "in a position to manage the present and conceive the future"; he, therefore, has to be "imaginative".<sup>48</sup> To a large extent, his influence must be based on the confidence and trust that will be bestowed on him by member states because of his talents and actions. Indeed, it will serve no useful purpose – and in fact can be curious, as events have proven – to make him impotent by laws, regulations and administrative processes.<sup>49</sup> In addition, both the professional and administrative staff in the OAU General Secretariat must be committed international civil servants possessing high moral integrity and imbued with a great sense of responsibility. In a stinging indictment, the staff in the General Secretariat was aptly described, even by a well-disposed African leader, as being "of proven incompetence".<sup>50</sup> In fact, says Amare Tekle, "it is curious but true that there seems to be an inverse relationship between the Secretariat's efficiency, moral integrity and sense of responsibility, and the increase in the size of the staff and the rise in administrative costs".<sup>51</sup> Moreover, the OAU General Secretariat has no power to link up with African people and no mandate to take populist initiatives. No wonder then that it has largely been a conference centre, though with "the trappings of protocol and the power of sophistry".<sup>52</sup>

What, then, needs to be done? The Secretariat must be streamlined to make it more efficient: many agencies, commissions and committees have existed for too long without being operational or without justifying their existence, and can easily be dispensed with. The OAU should be able to compensate for them by making expedient use of its association with the United Nations and its specialized agencies as well as other regional organizations. It is important to note that, even in the unlikely event that all member states pay their dues regularly, the OAU will never be financially strong enough to acquire the material resources or attract all the experts it needs to execute its responsibilities efficiently.<sup>53</sup>

Nevertheless, what is important is that at the institutional level Africa has had an all-embracing framework for cooperation for more than thirty years. As referred to above, the OAU embodies the collective political will of the countries of Africa to work together in the furtherance of their common objectives. This political context apart, there is an institutional expression of that will in the form of the OAU General Secretariat. But there are obviously institutional weaknesses deriving partly from the discordant political voices of Africa and partly from a deficiency of resources and manpower. However, these political divergences and systemic weaknesses can certainly be corrected. What is of essence is that Africa has a system and an institution already in existence, which has the political endorsement of the entire continent.<sup>54</sup>

But it needs to be emphasized that it is imperative that much-needed reform of OAU structures and working methods be carried out if the General Secretariat is to provide an efficient service to member states. Fact of the matter is that the OAU, as presently constituted, cannot adequately address the problems confronting Africa in the 1990s and beyond. Three major reasons suggest themselves: the OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government – up to now, the main policy-making organ in the OAU structure – that meets annually, is of such a nature that in between summits many governments will have fallen; the organization does not have the means to assemble and sustain a respectable military force to deal with intra-African and inter-African problems; and most of the member states are so poor that they hardly pay their annual dues and contributions to the organization. What is the sense, then, in a continental organization that gives equal votes to Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea?

Clearly, the familiar amnesia of the OAU and its apparent ineffectuality is a function of its structural defects. Universal African brotherhood and equality served an historical function in the era of decolonization. That phase is over and the OAU is now

confronted with the prospect of a new world order in which Africa stands a serious risk of being consigned to the dustbin of history. The best way to escape this fate is to do unusual and innovative things. Perhaps it is time for the establishment of an OAU Security Council which, based on regional or geopolitical influence, should not consist of an even number of countries. Three countries, namely Egypt, Nigeria, and South Africa suggest themselves most readily. In a different context, General Olusegun Obasanjo has suggested the development of a Cairo-Abuja-Pretoria axis for power, diplomacy and economic initiative in Africa.<sup>55</sup> These three countries, which shall have veto power in the OAU, should together contribute 37 per cent of the total funds of the OAU; at present, Nigeria alone is estimated to be responsible for that amount of OAU funding.

An OAU Security Council should meet regularly, especially in response to emergencies and develop among its members regional rapid deployment forces while functioning as regional command and control centres for a new regional defence initiative. Such forces will, like the Ecomog in Liberia, serve to protect African states from themselves and from each other as well as from external military adventurism. Decisions of an OAU Security Council, as in the case of the UN, shall be binding on OAU member states and the annual OAU summit should serve as the equivalent of the UN General Assembly. Clearly, the quest for African permanent representation on the UN Security Council is untenable for as long as an order of precedence and political hierarchy among African countries has not been established.<sup>56</sup>

In the final analysis, any human institution must revere its past because it forms the basis on which its mission is built; but it cannot afford to be ambivalent about the present or ignore the future. It must respond to the exigencies of the present and prepare for the needs of the future. It must justify its existence by making

itself relevant and credible. This applies, all the more, to an institution such as the OAU.<sup>57</sup>

### **South Africa's accession to the OAU**

The first reference to possible South African membership of the OAU is found after the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of Heads of State and Government for Southern Africa held in Arusha, Tanzania in April 1992. OAU Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim then stated the condition for South Africa's admission as "a process of irreversibility to positive change in South Africa with the creation of an interim government as the benchmark".<sup>58</sup> In June 1992, during the meeting of the OAU Council of Ministers in Dakar, Senegal, the international community and the member states of the OAU were again requested not to establish official ties with South Africa "until an elected, democratic interim government is established".<sup>59</sup> This seems to pinpoint South Africa's admission to the OAU for sometime after the first multiracial elections scheduled for 26 to 28 April 1994 – probably, taking its seat for the first time at the next OAU summit meeting in Tunis in June 1994.

The articles of the OAU Charter relevant to membership are Article IV, which determines that every independent, sovereign African state shall be entitled to become a member of the organization; Article V, which stipulates that all member states shall enjoy equal rights and have equal duties; and Article VI, which indicates that member states pledge themselves to observe scrupulously the principles enumerated in Article III of the Charter. These principles are: first, the sovereign equality of all member states; second, non-interference in the internal affairs of member states; third, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each member state and for its inalienable right to independent existence; fourth, peaceful settlement of disputes through negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration; fifth, unreserved condemnation, in all its forms, of political

assassination as well as of subversive activities on the part of a neighbouring state or any other member state; sixth, absolute dedication to the total emancipation of African territories that are still dependent; and last, affirmation of a policy of non-alignment with regard to all blocs.

According to Article XXVIII, any independent, sovereign African state may at any time notify the OAU Secretary-General of its intention to adhere or accede to the Charter. The Secretary-General shall, on receipt of such notification, communicate a copy to all member states. The Charter determines that admission shall be decided by a simple majority: the decision of each member state shall be transmitted to the Secretary-General, who shall – upon receipt of the required number of votes – notify the state concerned of the outcome. This was the position until the dispute over the admission of the Western Sahara (the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic), and recognition of the Chadian government in 1982. The matter was resolved, without changing the Charter, by trying to have objections to membership withdrawn through persuasion, failing which the dispute becomes a policy issue that requires a two-thirds majority when put to the vote – as differentiated from procedural matters such as unopposed admissions, which require only a simple majority.

Clearly, no African country would feel completely legitimate unless it gained admission to the OAU.<sup>60</sup> South Africa is destined to become the 54th member state of the OAU at a time when the organization is engaged in a radical process of reforming its objectives. A change in priorities was decided on at the 1990 Summit of African Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa when it was declared that "[at] this crucial juncture when our continent is emerging from a phase in its history that focused mainly on political liberation and nation-building and is about to embark on a new era laying greater emphasis on economic development, we need to strengthen the OAU so

that it may also become a viable instrument in the service of Africa's economic development and integration".<sup>61</sup> With its greater economic, scientific and technical resources, and its potential military contribution to peace-keeping, a post-April 1994 South Africa will be in a position to make a major contribution to strengthening the role of the OAU in tackling the multifarious challenges facing the continent.<sup>62</sup>

But sadly, the OAU is perhaps the only international organization which allows financial and political defaulters to get away; the United Nations, for example, punish defaulting member states by withdrawing their voting rights and related privileges. In the OAU, defaulters are very often the ones who are long on words and short on action. In order to stem this tide and to enable the organization to function optimally, it is necessary to include some kind of penalty clause or clauses in the OAU Charter conducive to the imposition of punitive measures against defaulting member states and the encouragement, thereby, of fiscal responsibility and political commitment.<sup>63</sup>

The 1990 Addis Ababa Summit of the OAU was preceded by the 52nd meeting of the Council of Ministers. The state of the organization's finances was a key issue on the agenda, as the arrears in contributions of member states – some dating back more than a decade – was said to total some US\$50 mn. At the time of the 1993 OAU Summit Meeting in Cairo, member states were about US\$60 mn in arrears, the equivalent of the organization's budget for two years. Many specialized agencies of the OAU – such as the Supreme Council for Sports in Africa (SCSA), the African Bureau of Science and Education, and the Pan-African News Agency – suffer because of this delinquency of African governments. Consequently, the foreign ministers decided to discipline member countries who continue to default on the payment of their OAU contributions. It accepted recommendations made by a subcommittee to the effect that,



in addition to the application of Article 97 of the OAU's Financial Regulations – which bars a defaulting country with arrears totalling at least two years' contribution from voting in OAU meetings – other measures should also be imposed, which include being barred from taking the floor in meetings and being prevented from putting up candidates for OAU posts.<sup>64</sup>

The smaller member states of the OAU are usually the ones who are short on action and long on words. This is especially so in meeting their financial obligations, and in spite of the fact that Nigeria and Algeria together shoulder close to one half of the financial obligations of the OAU in many vital respects. When OAU Interim Secretary-General Peter Onu lamented some years ago that the organization was “slowly but surely verging towards total paralysis”, he said it in response to the shortfall in contributions by member states which had forced the organization to live “literally from hand to mouth”.<sup>65</sup> But conversely, when former OAU Secretary-General Ide Oumarou was once asked whether it was a sound democratic principle for states which renege on their membership dues to have equal votes in the organization, or for that matter to be elected into high-profile offices of the pan-African body, he diplomatically skirted the question by answering: “Extenuating and peculiar circumstances make it very difficult for some of the members to keep up to date [with their contributions]; non-payment makes the running of the organization tortuous, but not impossible”.<sup>66</sup>

One of the more serious of the OAU's many unresolved problems is that of membership dues, although some tend to take a softline approach saying that “however vexing ... its impact is debilitating rather than apocalyptic”.<sup>67</sup> But clearly, it is more serious than that. The chairman of the OAU Council of Ministers at the time, Zimbabwean Minister of Foreign Affairs Nathan Shamuyarira, once had to lament that one of the leading constraints in OAU discussions and reso-

lutions has always been the shortage of funds. He, therefore, urged member states – who would more regularly and readily make contributions to other international and regional organizations to which they belong – to give priority to the OAU and its sister organizations when it comes to the payment of membership dues.<sup>68</sup>

To be sure, the achievements of the OAU will remain limited so long as its sovereign member states are unwilling to provide the organization with the necessary power and resources to perform its assigned functions effectively. It is worth noting that the annual budget of the OAU during the first decade of its existence varied between US\$2,5 mn and US\$4,5 mn. Even after three decades of existence its annual budget remains a paltry sum in the order of US\$30 mn, which is a clear indication of the level of support the organization enjoys from its member states.<sup>69</sup> All but five OAU member states are indebted to the body, forcing it to cut down economic and social programmes. For example, only US\$1,9 mn of a budget of US\$24,5 mn for 1992 was realized.<sup>70</sup> It was estimated that member states owe the OAU some US\$62 mn in arrear contributions.<sup>71</sup>

This situation has caused OAU Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim to lament that this “state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue if the credibility of the organization is to be maintained . . . It is one of the regrettable ironies that at a time when member states have continued to repose greater confidence in it, and assigning it new and important responsibilities, the resource base of the organization has continued to diminish”.<sup>72</sup> But despite this, it is encouraging to note that the OAU is now also playing a greater role in the process of democratization on the continent by way of monitoring elections and referenda in many African countries and deploying observer teams in hot spots, including South Africa. Although this augurs well for the future of the organization, it will be practically impossible for the OAU

to attain the required level of effectiveness without sustained financial, moral and, above all, political support from all its member states.<sup>73</sup>

### Formula for contribution to the OAU budget<sup>74</sup>

Under its original terms of reference, the OAU Committee on Contributions based its assessment for membership dues on the principle of “capacity to pay”, which takes into account “comparative income per head of population” as a means of accommodating countries with comparatively lower levels of income per capita. This criterion is used for the purpose of determining the measure of relief to which a country may be entitled in the application of the “low per capita income allowance formula”. The primary yardstick is “taxable” or assessable income, which is defined as the difference between national income and the amount of relief received or absorbed through the application of the “low per capita income allowance formula”, and which is contained within the following parameters: the per capita income limit, which determines whether a country is entitled to relief from the application of the formula, or whether it should be a “relief absorber”.

The Committee agreed to use the median of per capita national income of the total OAU membership to form the basis for the income per head limit: for the 50 member states at the time, it was calculated at US\$309. Thus, when the per capita income of a member state is less than US\$309, that state shall receive a percentage reduction or relief from its national income, as illustrated below:

$$\frac{309 \text{ minus per capita national income}}{309} \times 50\%$$

For example:

- Equatorial Guinea: with a national income of US\$22 mn (average for 1982 to 1984) and a population of 380 000 in mid-1983, income per head on average for that period was US\$58. Thus, according to the formula, the percentage taxable income of Equatorial Guinea was:

$$\frac{(309 - 58)}{309} \times 0,50 = 0,406 \text{ or } 40,6\%$$

- Liberia: with a national income of US\$620 mn (average for 1982 to 1984) and a population of 2,040 mn in mid-1983, income per head on average for that period was US\$304. Thus, according to the formula, the percentage taxable income of Liberia was:

$$\frac{(309 - 304)}{309} \times 0,50 = 0,008 \text{ or } 0,8\%$$

The percentages of 40,6 and 0,8 constitute the percentage relief accruing to Equatorial Guinea and Liberia, respectively, due to the application of the formula. Thus, the taxable income of these states are calculated as follows:

- Equatorial Guinea:
 

RR	PTI	NI	TI
100,0% - 40,6%	= 59,4%	× 22	= 13
- Liberia:
 

RR	PTI	NI	TI
100,0% - 0,8%	= 99,2%	× 620	= 61

RR = Rate of Relief  
 PTI = Percentage Taxable Income  
 NI = National Income  
 TI = Taxable Income

Therefore, as per capita income moves further below the income per head limit, the rate of relief it accrues becomes greater. On the other hand, when the per capita national income of a member state is equal to or greater than US\$309, that state's taxable income will be higher than its national income by the ratio of the total relief granted to the total national income of member states with per capita incomes equal to or greater than US\$309. The amount of this upward adjustment is in proportion to a country's share in the total national income of this group of countries. In the calculation of the *machine scale*, this ratio amounts to 2,6 per cent. The national income of all member states with per capita income equal to or greater than US\$309 is, therefore, multiplied by 1,026 in order to arrive at their taxable incomes. For example:

- Gabon: with a national income of US\$2,507 bn, a population of 1,130

mn, and per capita income of US\$2 218, taxable income is arrived at by increasing national income by 2,6 per cent – that is, US\$2,507 bn × 1,026 = US\$2,572 bn.

- Zambia: with a national income of US\$2,728 bn, a population of 6,240 mn, and per capita income of US\$437, taxable income is calculated thus: US\$2,728 bn × 1,026 = US\$2,799 bn.

Finally: once the taxable income for each member state is determined, a scale based on taxable income, as differentiated from a scale based on national income, is derived by dividing individual taxable income by the total taxable income. The difference between the two scales represents the percentages of relief granted to and relief absorbed, respectively, by countries with per capita income below and above the income per head limit of US\$309.

Another scale is tabulated after the imposition of a “ceiling” or maximum rate of 10 per cent, and a “floor” or minimum rate of 0,50 per cent. The percentage points arrived at by setting these constraints are of necessity distributed pro rata to all other member states not affected in order to maintain a total of 100 per cent. The “ceiling” rate produces extra percentage points that have to be added; and, on the other hand, the “floor” rate releases percentage points that have to be deducted from the rates of assessment of member states that are affected neither by the “ceiling” rate, nor by the “floor” rate.

These scales are geared to meet the total budget of the OAU – the maximum rate of 10 per cent applies to Algeria, Egypt, Libya and Nigeria. If the budget is increased, all member states will consequently contribute more, and vice versa. Naturally, the admission of a new member state will also affect the contributions of all members, as it reduces their annual individual contributions.

The difference between the UN and OAU methodologies of assessment scaling is that the UN uses the factor of population to calculate per

capita income for the purpose of granting relief, while the OAU uses population as an additive factor. Thus, the OAU methodology recognizes that a larger population contributes more to a country's generation of income, and therefore its capacity to pay, but ignores the fact that a large population exacts a greater burden on a country's economic and financial resources in terms of the costs of feeding and taking proper care of that population. The result is that some countries, which are accepted to be less developed than others, are assessed at a higher rate.

The financial commitment of a new member state commences from the date of its admission; consequently, it has no responsibility for any debts incurred by the OAU prior to its membership.

### South Africa's membership contribution to the OAU:

#### An estimate

The method of determining the exact contribution breakdown for individual member states for a given year is rather complex. Various sets of data have to be compiled and it has to be done by following certain steps:

- Step 1: determining the median per capita national income of all OAU member states;
- Step 2: calculating the “taxable” or assessable income of all member states, differentiating between those with a per capita income higher than median gross national product (GNP) per head and those with an income lower than the median;
- Step 3: dividing individual taxable income by total taxable income of member states in order to determine the proportion of relief to be granted or to be “absorbed”;
- Step 4: imposing a “ceiling” or maximum rate of 10 per cent and a “floor” or minimum rate of 0,5 per cent; and
- Step 5: calculating of actual individual contributions.

While it is relatively easy to determine Step 1 above, the process becomes

rather cumbersome as one progresses to Steps 2 through 5: this procedure should preferably be carried out with the help of statisticians and appropriate computer equipment.

However, irrespective of the detailed calculations in terms of the above, the contribution expected from South Africa may not exceed 20 per cent (see Article XXIII of the OAU Charter) of the annual regular OAU budget, which amounted to some US\$27,444 mn for 1991/92: thus, US\$5,489 mn. This is in spite of the fact that South Africa's share of total OAU national income equals some 24,2 per cent. Moreover, if the 10 per cent "ceiling" mentioned in Step 4 above is applied to the OAU budget, it would indicate a South African contribution of US\$2,744 mn.

In conclusion, South Africa's annual membership contribution to the OAU can therefore be expected to be of the order of between US\$2,75 mn and US\$5,5 mn. This, of course, does not include additional voluntary contributions to OAU projects, membership of Specialized Agencies or the costs of diplomatic representation.

### Summary of data and calculations

	GNP (1990)
Africa* (total)	US\$373,656 bn
South Africa	US\$ 90,410 bn
(as percentage of total Africa)	24,2 per cent
OAU budget for 1991/92	US\$ 27,444 mn
• South Africa's contribution based on its share of total OAU GNP (24,2 per cent) but adjusted downwards to 20 per cent in terms of Article XXIII	US\$ 5,489
• South Africa's contribution after the application of the 10 per cent ceiling on the OAU budget	US\$ 2,744 mn

\* Inclusive of South Africa but exclusive of Morocco, which has suspended its membership (total 51 member states, at the time).

Every member state has a quota of 10 posts for professional staff and an unlimited number of technical staff, at the discretion of the OAU Secretary-General (that is, translators, interpreters, secretaries, revisers, proof-readers, including general service staff). Some countries like Chad, Angola, Mozambique and Somalia have not been in a position to take up

their entitlements because of civil wars. As a result, certain other countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal have a disproportionate number of their nationals in the OAU structures. It stands to reason that preference will be given to South African applicants when vacancies occur, in the event of South Africa becoming a member state of the OAU.

Every member is obliged to pay its contribution to the annual regular OAU budget. In keeping with the provisions of Resolution CM 1279 (LII) and Resolution CM 1311 (LIII) – that for those countries that are in arrears with their membership contributions, the organization will review the number of posts allocated to them under the recruitment quota for their nationals, as required by the OAU Staff Rules and Regulations – 25 member states of the OAU were in 1992 liable to sanctions for not paying their membership dues (for lengths of time varying between 2 and 15 years). In theory, if a member state is 3 years or more in arrears with its membership dues (19 member states fell into this category at the

It is against this rather alarming and increasing trend that the OAU Council of Ministers requested the Secretary-General in Resolution CM 1364 (LV) to put the issue of arrears as a regular item on the Agenda of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

### Conclusion

The OAU's current weaknesses are particularly disconcerting, because the need for an effective intergovernmental institution to deal with the increasing range of pan-African or transnational problems requiring collective intergovernmental solutions is more urgent and relevant today than ever before. Problems of war and peace have contributed to giving Africa three dubious international distinctions – the most conflict-ridden continent, with the largest number of ongoing armed conflicts; the region with the largest number of refugees and displaced persons; and the poorest and least developed region in the world. These challenges demand collective action at the continental and regional level.

The major political issues which will confront the OAU in the future will be those of civil wars and revolts, *coups d'etat* and politically motivated assassinations and, to a lesser extent, territorial and boundary disputes. And the issues of external involvement and intervention in intra-African political affairs will be linked more directly with the pattern of foreign economic interests in the continent. Today, and throughout the 1990s, there is a clear need to revitalize and enhance the role of the OAU and to reverse the current trend towards the marginalization of African issues and Africa's role in the world. The consequence of the growing internationalization of African problems and of the expanding role of non-African actors in the search for solving them has clearly been the steady sidelining of African views on, and perceptions of, those problems. Indeed, the critical decisions on pressing African issues of peace and security in Southern Africa, the Horn of Africa, as well as

time), then that member cannot take part in the financial decisions of the organization: the reasoning being that as it is not contributing to the finances, it can hardly be involved in decisions that commit the organization to expenditure. The total amount of arrears in contributions up to 31 May, 1992 amounted to some US\$59,240 mn.

on the debilitating debt burden, the worsening problem of depressed commodity prices, and the overall economic crisis in Africa, are not being taken in the continent, but elsewhere and by others. The OAU is conspicuously absent from centre-stage, from the frontline of decisive action on the issues of paramount importance to its member states. Clearly, efforts to revitalize the OAU to enable Africa to meet the challenges of the "new world order" would require, above all, the concrete expression of the political will of African states towards that end.

While the symbolic value of its existence and of its annual ministerial and summit conferences should not be underestimated, the OAU's real importance and credibility derive principally from the effectiveness of its contribution to the promotion, realization, and maintenance of peace, freedom, and progress for the peoples of Africa. Thus, greater efforts need to be made to enhance the organization's authority and influence – upon which its credibility, both within and outside the region, ultimately depends. Clearly, when member states disregard or violate agreements, decisions, or resolutions adopted by consensus at OAU meetings, such attitudes only tend to undermine the credibility and effectiveness of the organization. Furthermore, when African countries appear to honour their commitments to other international organizations, including the payment of their assessed financial contributions, more readily than they do to the OAU, this also tends to erode the OAU's effectiveness, especially in its interaction with those particular international organizations.

The establishment of the OAU has proved valuable to non-Africans, in particular as a forum for gauging African views on a variety of issues. When Africa's position on a particular issue is sought, it is easier to consult the OAU than each of Africa's 53 independent states. Only the coming years will determine whether the well-intentioned list of resolutions the OAU is famous for making will leap from the pages of computerized

handouts into the domain of implementation. Now, more than ever, Africa needs to take stock of its past failures, its potential to rectify them, and combine the hard facts with a determination to find, once and for all, a solution to the economic and political ills that have bedevilled the continent.

What role is there for the OAU beyond apartheid and decolonization? Will it adapt to the demands of the moment or would a democratic South Africa be its epitaph? Clearly, the OAU will continue to exist and survive into the 21st century, mainly because new issues and problems that will confront Africa in the future will require inter-African cooperation and pan-African solidarity. Undoubtedly, the OAU is one of the crucial instruments for such cooperation; and the problems of development and underdevelopment will feature more frequently and prominently in the affairs of the OAU. During the 1990s, the OAU may even achieve something more than minimal survival; however, what is perhaps more certain is that it may not survive this decade in its current form.

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- 36 There are many who would say that every OAU summit meeting merely adds to the volumes of words and mounds of paper which have passed for pan-African activity of African governments on all issues, except decolonization and the elimination of apartheid, over the past three decades. Clearly, dramatic change is needed if every other OAU summit meeting is not to become yet another footnote in history: see "The will to change: OAU summit affirms old goals and announces response to changing world", *West Africa*, 23–29 July 1990, p 2147.
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- 47 Clearly, current Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim is someone with the personality, vision, and experience needed to begin to revitalize the OAU. An Afro-Arab from the Zanzibari region of Tanzania, Salim appears well-placed to deal with the sensitive issue of harmonizing black African and Arab-African interests within the OAU and to articulate a vision and a strategy that carefully balances African interests north and south of the Sahara. Furthermore, as a former ambassador to the United Nations, and having served as his country's Foreign Minister and Prime Minister, Salim has handled bilateral relations, multilateral diplomacy, and faced the awesome challenges of domestic leadership in a developing country. He is also known and respected in international circles, which could be helpful in bringing the OAU's views to the attention of influential circles world-wide: see Sammy Kum Buo, *op cit*, p 54.
- 48 Former OAU Secretary-General Ide Oumarou, as quoted in Lucien Pagni, "Interview with the Secretary-General of the OAU, Ide Oumarou", *The Courier*, July–August 1987, p 6.
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- 50 Of necessity, the amendment of Article III of the OAU Charter will precipitate a revision of the functions of the General Secretariat. Former OAU Secretary-General Ide Oumarou lamented the statutory inabilities of his office and called for its liberation from bureaucratic mediocrity: others have found the General Secretariat guilty of misconduct, resource squandering and mismanagement. If the General Secretariat is to be assigned increased responsibilities and functions – especially in the areas of the observance of fundamental human rights, conflict resolution and peace-keeping, environmental protection, institution and capacity-building – a massive reorganization of its staff complement and structures will be needed. However, notwithstanding the paucity of funds and lack of political commitment, the General Secretariat has already proved its potential for enhanced action, given its credible African diplomacy at the United Nations and its coordination of activities regarding the African Development Bank and the UN Economic Commission for Africa: see Chuba Okadigbo, *op cit*, p 29.
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- 71 *The Star* (Johannesburg), 12 July 1993.
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- 74 This section is based on information obtained from the OAU General Secretariat's Division of Political Affairs in Addis Ababa, through the good office of Dr Jean Thisen of the UN Economic Commission for Africa – information that was originally utilized for an unpublished, commissioned report to the South African Department of Foreign Affairs, entitled *Implications for South Africa of membership of the Organization of African Unity under and interim government*, Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa, November 1992, 45 pp including appendices.

# Migration in Southern Africa: A comparative perspective

*Hussein Solomon, Research Fellow in the Centre for Southern African Studies at the University of the Western Cape, examines the causes and effects of migration and suggests some ways in which the mass movement of people can be successfully managed.*

Mass migration, or the mass displacement of people, is increasingly drawing public attention, not simply for humanitarian reasons, but because any large-scale influx by foreigners tends to create domestic and interstate tensions.<sup>1</sup> For this reason it is also a matter of concern to governments.

This article is concerned with setting out, in a comparative perspective, the causes and effects of migration. It also intends to suggest possible ways in which mass movement of people can be successfully managed. It is however necessary that we first examine mass regional migrations in terms of the global context.

## The global context

Broadly speaking, there are four main types of population movement.<sup>2</sup> These are:

- intra-state population movement,
- East-West population movement,
- South-North population movement, and
- South-South population movement.

### Intra-state population movement

Estimates suggest that there are presently 20 million internally displaced people on the planet (see Table 2). Many are victims of ethnic strife: Liberia, Ethiopia, Somalia, the Balkans, or what was formerly the Soviet Union. Others are victims of civil strife: Mozambique, Cambodia, Guatemala, Afghanistan.

A number of broad influences account for South Africa's 4,1 million internally displaced people: the migrant labour system; forced removals as a result of apartheid policies; ecological and economic factors such as recurrent drought and rural poverty;

and more recently, the additional scourge of endemic violence in parts of the country. Indeed, manifold and complex reasons push and pull people in great numbers into internal migration, especially from the rural areas to the towns and cities. Similar factors, in differing combinations, are to be found in other parts of the world.

Internally displaced people are not formally accorded refugee status under the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Although there are valid reasons for this, the omission must be considered short-sighted, since there is a link between internal migration and the global situation. Recent events in former Yugoslavia demonstrate the point. The civil war first displaced, internally, large numbers of people; these people then decided to leave their country, resulting in large numbers of refugees across the border in Hungary, and asylum-seekers in Germany.

### East-West population movements

The destruction of the Iron Curtain removed the physical barriers between rich and poor Europe and granted freedom of movement to more than 400 million people living in areas extending from the River Oder to Kamchatka.<sup>3</sup> The destruction of the Iron Curtain was accompanied by enormous changes and instability (ethnic rivalries, irredentist pressures, nationalist disputes and economic hardship), all of which resulted in the movement of people from Eastern to Western Europe.<sup>4</sup> In 1989 alone, 1,2 million people left the former Warsaw Pact states to live in Western Europe. By 1991 Bearman<sup>5</sup> estimated that 2 to

2,5 million people had left Eastern Europe and the CIS for the same destination.

### South-North population movements

Civil war, economic decline, environmental catastrophe and a host of other factors have also resulted in population displacement from South to North.<sup>6</sup> This South-North migration can be seen in the steep rise of asylum-seekers and illegal immigrants making their way to the West from the Third World. In Western Europe alone, the number of asylum applications from the Third World rose from 70 000 in 1983 to 442 000 in 1990,<sup>7</sup> an increase of more than 500 per cent in the space of seven years.

### South-South population movement

The largest and most dramatic population movements of recent years, however, have been the estimated 30 million refugees and internally displaced people in the developing world.<sup>8</sup> Political unrest, social upheaval, economic dislocation and ecological disaster have all contributed to movement across national borders from one "southern" state to another.<sup>9</sup> As a result there are 3,2 million Afghans in Pakistan and 2,3 million in Iran; 685 000 Ethiopians are reported to have fled to Somalia.<sup>10</sup> Civil war and hunger have led to one-third of Liberia's population (763 000 people from a total population of 2,4 million) taking refuge in neighbouring Guinea, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire.<sup>11</sup>

In 1989 it was estimated that, by the standards of the 1951 UN Convention, there were 4 million official

refugees in Africa.<sup>12</sup> By the following year this figure had increased by 10 per cent, to 4.4 million.<sup>13</sup> What this means is that, in 1989, Africa (with only about 12 per cent of the world's population) had the world's largest concentration of refugees.<sup>14</sup>

The sheer scope and magnitude of the refugee issue now cuts across all regional boundaries and is becoming an increasingly prominent feature of global politics (Table 1). Moreover we can expect that further world migration (which averaged about 1.1 million persons per annum between 1985 and 1990) will not only add to the world's 18 million official refugees and 20 million internally displaced people but also propel the issue of international migration flows up the priority lists of the world's key decision-makers.<sup>15</sup>

**Table 1: Origins of the world's refugees, \* 1991**

Afghanistan	6 027 100
Palestinians	2 428 100
Mozambique	1 427 500
Ethiopia	1 066 300
Liberia	729 800
Iraq	529 700
Sudan	499 100
Somalia	454 600
Angola	435 700
Kuwait	385 500
Cambodia	344 500
Sri Lanka	228 000
Iran	211 000
Rwanda	203 900
Burundi	186 200
West Sahara	165 000
Vietnam	122 200
China (Tibet)	114 000
Bangladesh	75 000
Laos	67 400
Mauritania	60 100
Guatemala	57 400
Burma	50 800
Zaire	50 700
Nicaragua	41 900
South Africa	40 000
El Salvador	37 200
Chad	34 400

Source: *World Refugee Survey 1991*, Washington DC: United States Committee for Refugees, 1991.

\* As defined by the 1951 UN Convention

Following Gomel,<sup>16</sup> a clear distinction needs to be made between migration, the permanent relocation of individuals from one place of residence to another, and temporary emigration, which largely consists of migrant labour working on contract and students. In this article less emphasis will be placed on the 165 825 contract migrant workers from neighbouring countries on the mines and the some 100 000 employed in the agricultural sector (1991 figures) of the Republic of South Africa.<sup>17</sup> This article therefore focuses on refugees and the permanent relocation of individuals from one place to another.

The 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines refugees as:

... persons who are outside their country because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.<sup>18</sup>

But this UN definition offers problems. Woehlcke,<sup>19</sup> for example, notes that the Convention was originally intended as a regulation of the European refugee problem after World War II, and that it is no longer relevant today when economic refugees (those fleeing poverty and economic hardship) and environmental refugees (those fleeing ecological catastrophe) make up the bulk of the problem. Loesch<sup>20</sup> elaborates:

... in many developing countries which have few resources and weak government structures, economic hardships are generally exacerbated by political violence. Thus it has become increasingly difficult to make hard and fast distinctions between refugees [as defined by the 1951 UN Convention with its political bias] and economic migrants.

In the same vein, Suhrke<sup>21</sup> notes that the key criterion determining "refugee status" is persecution, usually an act of government against an individual. This excludes those fleeing from generalized conditions of violence, insecurity and oppression as in the case of, say, Mozambique, Zaire or Angola. It also excludes the inhabitants of states where violence is externally induced. South Africa's destabilization of the Frontline States throughout much of the 1980s by its support of

proxy groups such as Renamo in Mozambique, Unita in Angola, the "Super-Zapu" in Zimbabwe, the Lesotho Liberation Army in Lesotho, and the Mashala Gang in Zambia provides good examples of externally induced unrest.<sup>22</sup>

For this article, the term *refugee* is wider and encompasses those defined by the 1951 Convention (those facing persecution); economic migrants; environmental migrants; and those fleeing generalized conditions of violence and insecurity. It includes both legal and illegal migrants.

### The major categories of migrants

Migration in Southern Africa is primarily of the South-South variety. Migrants are driven by different forces:

- An interstate movement of professionals (usually quite legal) including people from elsewhere in the continent; we can call this the "brain-drain".

**Table 2: Selected list of significant numbers of internally displaced citizens, 1991**

Sudan	4 500 000
South Africa	4 100 000
Mozambique	2 000 000
Afghanistan	2 000 000
Sri Lanka	1 000 000
Ethiopia	1 000 000
Philippines	900 000
Lebanon	800 000
CIS	750 000
Angola	704 000
Liberia	500 000
Iraq	500 000
Somalia	400 000
El Salvador	400 000
Nicaragua	354 000
Uganda	300 000
Cyprus	268 000
Burma	200 000
Peru	200 000
Cambodia	140 000
Guatemala	100 000
India	85 000
Colombia	50 000
Turkey	30 000
Honduras	22 000

Source: *World Refugee Survey 1991*, Washington, DC: United States Committee for Refugees, 1991.

- An interstate movement of unskilled and semi-skilled people (usually quite illegal).

#### Brain-drain migrants

Studies have shown that there is a southwards flow of doctors, teachers, engineers and other professionals to South Africa and to the robust economies of its neighbours, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Namibia.<sup>23</sup> Higher wages, better living standards and a more secure future appear to be the magnet attracting these migrants.

A total of 448 doctors emigrated from Zimbabwe in the 1980s. Most of them settled in South Africa and Botswana; a smaller number moved to North America and Europe. In a single year, 1991, more than 200 doctors left Zimbabwe for South Africa and Botswana; while a grand total of 15 000 skilled people have left Zimbabwe since independence. A similar exodus of university lecturers in Zambia and Zimbabwe took place; and of nurses from the BLS states.<sup>24</sup> This brain-drain holds serious economic, social and political implications for the countries these professionals abandoned.

The professionals settling in South Africa are not only from neighbouring states; some hail from as far afield as Uganda, Ghana, Somalia and Zaire.<sup>25</sup>

The majority of African professionals appear to arrive in South Africa by way of its four ostensibly independent homelands. These areas have long been desperate for specialists to run their schools and clinics. And once a newcomer has established himself or herself in Transkei or in Boputhatswana it is relatively easy to move across the border into South Africa. For example, Dr Christopher G Kibuuka, a Ugandan-trained gynaecologist, was initially recruited for a hospital in Boputhatswana and then later accepted for post-graduate work in Cape Town. He has estimated that today Ugandans alone comprise 20 per cent of the doctors and nurses and a quarter of the secondary school teachers in the four homelands.<sup>26</sup>

The brain-drain is still more serious if we take marital status into account: partners are usually profes-

sionally qualified too, resulting in the migration of more skilled people than figures usually reflect.<sup>27</sup>

#### The influx of unskilled/illegal migrants

Mozambicans and, to a lesser extent, Angolans make up the bulk of this group in Southern Africa, owing to the civil wars in their countries. As long ago as 1989 it was estimated that Zambia and Zaire were playing host to almost 400 000 Angolans.<sup>28</sup> Indications today (1993) are that not too much has changed. The breakdown of the peace process and the return to arms indicates that there is likely to be an increased outflow of refugees from Angola.

The 1980s witnessed a 300 per cent increase in the number of Mozambican refugees in Malawi, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa.<sup>29</sup> The current UN figures show that there are 1,4 million Mozambican refugees in neighbouring countries (Table 1).<sup>30</sup>

#### The causes of migration

Very broadly, the following factors may account for the spatial movement of people:

- Socio-cultural factors
- Communications and technology
- Geographical proximity
- Precedent
- Demographic factors/population growth
- Environmental factors
- Economic factors, local but increasingly global
- Civil war

#### Socio-cultural factors

These may not act only as a push determinant in the area of origin but also as a pull determinant in the place of destination. Consider, for example, the Indians who came to the Colony of Natal as indentured labourers as long ago as the 1860s to work on the sugar-cane plantations. In the majority of instances these immigrants were Harijans, or the lowest caste in India's rigid caste system. In India they were discriminated against politically, economically, and, of course, socially.

Recognizing that they could not improve their lot in any significant way in their homeland, they chose to move to Natal in an attempt to build a brighter future. This is an example of a situation in which unfavourable socio-cultural factors, or their perception as such, serve as a puissant push factor.

But, a comparable situation may also serve as an influential pull factor. A good illustration might be the 250 000 Mozambican refugees in South Africa. Large concentrations of these refugees are to be found in the homeland of Gazankulu. Two reasons account for this choice of destination. First, the cultures of the Shangaan inhabitants of this homeland and Mozambican refugees have some similarity. Secondly, Gazankulu, together with Kangwane, offer refugee status of a sort to these aliens.

#### Communications and technology

The communication and technology revolution has acted as a tremendous spur to population movement. Advances in information technology – I need only instance live CNN broadcasts worldwide by satellite – have put more information at people's disposal, thus enabling them to make more informed decisions on the feasibility of migration. Some scholars, such as Loescher,<sup>31</sup> believe that television programmes, in particular, have brought home to people in Third World states and the former Eastern bloc, as nothing else has done, their own poverty and lack of democracy. This, they argue, has further strengthened the impulse to migrate and must be seen as having been one of the contributing factors to East-West and South-North migration. The communication and technology revolution has underlined the truism that we are all residents of a global village, and at the same time undermined the sovereignty of the nation-state.

#### Geographical proximity

In his study, Gomel<sup>32</sup> found that geographical proximity was one of the major reasons why France experienced waves of migration from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. These findings



are echoed by Heisbourg<sup>33</sup> who concludes that, "... the Maghreb, with its fragile economies, will increasingly become for Europe the functional equivalent Mexico is for the United States".

In Southern Africa these findings are confirmed by the spread of Mozambique's 1,9 million displaced persons across its borders: 1,1 million in Malawi; 230 000 in Zimbabwe; 240 000 in Zambia; 25 000 in Swaziland; 72 000 in Tanzania, and 250 000 in South Africa.<sup>34</sup>

### Precedent

Some suggest that precedent plays an important role. A pioneer group who have migrated smoothly act as a magnet for further migration. Korner<sup>35</sup> puts it this way:

Once migration has been routine, as it has been in most of the countries concerned (ie traditionally receiving countries), relevant information is more or less common knowledge. The fact that migration paths and procedures have been "run-in" also makes the risk ... less daunting. Migration may then become a mass phenomenon ...

Gomel's<sup>36</sup> work further elaborates on this by pointing towards a tendency in which migration flows from some or other country are directed towards an area in which there is already an initial nucleus of home-country immigrants. This makes the relocation of subsequent arrivals less costly; for example, most foreigners settling in Germany have for many years been from Turkey (34 per cent) and Yugoslavia (13 per cent). In Southern Africa this statement also seems to be true. George, a Mozambican refugee, admitted that his cousin's successful negotiation of the obstacles to emigration – including a 3 200 volt electric fence, and SADF and Renamo patrols – gave him the necessary incentive to emigrate too. He also knew that his cousin and friends would provide him on arrival with food and shelter while he sought employment.

### Demographic factors

Population growth, itself, does not necessarily constitute a factor urging people to cross borders. But popu-

lation growth when coupled with economic decline certainly induces people to leave home in search of a better life: the push comes from fewer employment opportunities, greater stress on the social and welfare services of the home state, and ultimately, too, from a general social and political discontent.

Certainly this seems to be the case in the Maghreb. Each year more than a million youths join the Maghrebi workforce: the population increases at an annual rate of 3 per cent. Faced with declining economic performance and fewer job opportunities, they emigrate to the more prosperous economies of Western Europe.<sup>37</sup> Population pressure is also seen as a major factor spurring further emigration from Mexico to the United States.<sup>38</sup>

This also seems true for Southern Africa whose population overall is growing at between 2,5 and 3,5 per cent per annum with a concomitant drop in living standards. Angola's real GDP has fallen to only 70 per cent of its 1973 level, while Mozambique's real GDP declined by 15 per cent between 1982 and 1987.<sup>39</sup> To further complicate the picture, Baynham<sup>40</sup> notes that the populations of Southern Africa have a youthful profile; as a result they have a built-in demographic momentum. This means that while employment opportunities are decreasing (or remaining relatively constant) the labour force is expanding at an alarming rate. Thus unemployment levels increase – and the motivation to migrate, too.

### Environmental factors

Policy makers are increasingly aware that deepening ecological damage can also foster major refugee movements. These "environmental refugees" result from two categories of catastrophe:

- catastrophes with no anthropogenic cause: volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, hurricanes, drought, landslides, avalanches, floods and forest fires;
- catastrophes with an anthropogenic cause: the destruction of arable and

grazing land, plus sustained heavy flooding, increasingly violent whirlwinds, hailstorms, landslides, avalanches and forest fires – all arising directly or indirectly from human activity.<sup>41</sup>

Woehlcke<sup>42</sup> concludes, however, that *most environmental refugees have become what they now are as a result of "direct anthropogenic milieu destruction"*, especially that linked with the degradation of the soil.

The causal link between environmental decline and mass migration has been demonstrated in various studies. Heisbourg<sup>43</sup> argues that "... environmental prospects in Eastern Europe will play a key role in provoking population movements to the prosperous West". Similar conditions explain the exodus of roughly one million Haitians who have fled the poverty caused by, among other things, soil erosion and deforestation.<sup>44</sup>

In Southern Africa, natural disasters with an anthropogenic component also provided a stimulus to human movement. Regional agricultural farming policies have not always been suitable to Southern African conditions; nor have peasant farming practices been productive. According to Alfredo, another Mozambican informant, the peasants in his village did not engage in crop rotation; the result: a lower crop yield and degradation of the soil. In addition, the civil war in Mozambique, Renamo's devastation of the countryside and threats to the lives of the local population, which forced them to flee, meant that there was often no labour to work potentially productive fields.<sup>45</sup>

But Southern Africa's population movements have also been sparked by natural disasters without an anthropogenic component. There was the drought of recent years, which analysts regard as the worst to affect the region in 80 years.<sup>46</sup> Angola illustrates the result: erratic rainfall in the central and southern provinces, coupled with civil war, led to 1,9 million people facing starvation there since 1991. Not surprisingly, migrants moved from the most disastrously hit

provinces towards and over the country's borders.<sup>47</sup>

Until 1990, the member states of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (now the Southern African Development Community) were producing enough to feed their population of more than 85 million people. But in 1991–1992 the region had a food deficit of 2,8 million tonnes. Those living in areas hardest hit by the drought, and now facing the prospect of starvation, moved elsewhere in their own country – and ultimately crossed the borders to countries where the drought was not as severe.<sup>48</sup>

### Economic factors

Larrabee<sup>49</sup> notes that the majority of migrants in the 1990s are “economic refugees”. As indicated above, this is the primary cause of much modern migration – the westward movement from former Eastern bloc countries; those of Haitians, Mexicans and El Salvadorans into the United States; that of North Africans into Western Europe;<sup>50</sup> and the movement, between 1986 and 1990, from countries in Central Africa (between 2 per cent and 5 per cent of their populations) to Eastern and Southern Africa. (This shift coincided with differential GDP growth rates: higher in Eastern and Southern Africa – an average of 3,2 per cent; lower in Central Africa, 0,5 per cent.)<sup>51</sup> Within Southern Africa, South Africa in particular serves as an almost irresistible magnet to those seeking employment, a higher standard of living and brighter economic prospects.

As pointed out above, economic disparities do not of themselves induce population movements. Potential migrants need the daily spur of information. The link between advances in communication and population movements has been vividly illustrated in Europe, where television programmes were daily beamed from West Germany to East Germany, from Finland to Estonia, from Italy to Albania and from France to Algeria. People saw the opportunity of improving the quality of their lives and chose to move from

Algeria to France, from Albania to Italy, from Estonia to Finland, and westwards across Germany.<sup>52</sup>

In Southern Africa a similar consciousness of economic disparities has been reinforced by the contract labour system – a century-old structure of transnational migration which has unceasingly criss-crossed the sub-continent.

It is clear that the skilled are the most susceptible to any economic downturn; but their skills make them mobile; they are fairly well informed; and they have a fairly low aversion to risk.<sup>53</sup> It stands to reason that professionals and skilled workers who, by the nature of their education and training, are infinitely more mobile than unskilled or semi-skilled workers, will be much less restricted to an economically unfavourable environment. This is borne out by a study from the Economic Commission for Africa which estimates that in 1987 an astonishing 30 per cent of Africa's skilled manpower was living in Europe.<sup>54</sup>

The relationship between economic decline and the migration of skills is well illustrated by Justin Pabwe, a young electrician who emigrated from Zimbabwe to South Africa. “For us young people, expectations have been raised by our level of education. I was at university for four years and I expected a much higher standard of life. I want a house in a low density suburb, a car, and I want my family to live well.”<sup>55</sup> These sentiments would be echoed by senior medical doctors leaving Zimbabwe for Botswana. Senior doctors in Zimbabwe earn the equivalent annually of US\$ 9 135; their counterparts in Botswana earn US\$ 13 441. Coupled with the higher rates of taxation in Zimbabwe, this makes Botswana a natural destination for Zimbabwean practitioners.<sup>56</sup>

There is also an entirely fresh consideration originating at international level.

The incentive to migrate is frequently sharpened by the effects of *economic structural adjustment programmes*. In an attempt to confront economic crises, most countries in

Southern Africa have reluctantly adopted structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) brokered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These, wherever implemented, have adversely affected the local population. In Zambia the price of maize meal, the country's staple, has increased by 500 per cent since subsidies were cut.<sup>57</sup> Under the auspices of SAPs, restructuring of the private sector in Zambia began in earnest in October 1991, its aim being to curb production costs by the retrenchment of thousands of workers. In the public sector, 20 000 civil servants lost their jobs. In the private sector, it has been estimated that restructuring could swell the ranks of the unemployed by a further 70 000.<sup>58</sup> Thus the effect, some claim *short-term* effect, of SAPs has been the increased impoverishment of the populace. Here, then, is a new push-factor for people who believe they could earn a living, legally or illegally, in another country.

### Political factors

Turmoil resulting from political rivalry, ethnic strife, socio-economic inequalities or regional imbalances, tends to promote South-South migration.<sup>59</sup> The causes vary: the persecution of certain groups, the denial of political rights, mass expulsions, coups or civil war.<sup>60</sup>

The link between political instability and mass movement has been evident from time immemorial. The 2–3 million Kurds who recently escaped Iraqi persecution and repression by sheltering in neighbouring Iran and Turkey are testimony to this phenomenon. An equally poignant instance is that of the former Yugoslavia where disintegration, civil war and the re-drawing of boundaries are creating internal haemorrhaging and the escape of large numbers of refugees to both Hungary and Germany.<sup>61</sup>

In Southern Africa, civil strife in both Angola and Mozambique have displaced thousands of people: this too underlines the central role that political factors plays in the movement of the region's people. In 1990,

for example, it was estimated that since the start of the civil war between 600 000 and 1 million people had died in Mozambique and that 3 million Mozambicans had been uprooted.<sup>62</sup> A recent United Nations report shows that besides those killed in the civil war, an additional 1,4 million Angolans (from a population of 10 million) are suffering material loss – the destruction of crops and homesteads and the loss of employment opportunities, and personal loss – deaths of family and friends, as a direct result of civil war. The report also reveals that 4,7 million Mozambicans out of a total population of 15,7 million are suffering directly as a result of civil war. These are all potential emigrants.<sup>63</sup>

An instant and dramatic illustration of the link between political turmoil and mass displacement occurred in May 1991 when Renamo attacked the Mozambican border town of Ressano Garcia and drove some 3 000 residents into neighbouring South Africa.<sup>64</sup>

### **The effects of migration**

In Southern Africa, migration has revealed that it holds profound economic, sociocultural and political ramifications for every state in the region. These are worth our attention.

#### **Economic effects**

The displacement of people has serious economic consequences for both “despatching” and “recipient” states. Positive and negative economic consequences may be traced in the home country when part of its population emigrates and there is a nett export of unemployed and underemployed. There is the welcome anticipation of foreign currency earnings through remittances; and the relief of economic pressures, particularly on social services and housing. Vietnam regards its expatriate citizens as a national resource (about a half the State’s foreign currency is derived from remittances from overseas citizens.<sup>65</sup> In Southern Africa – Lesotho is the prime example – many thousands of families in poorer states are dependent for their livelihood upon the re-

mittances of labour migrants in South Africa’s mining and agricultural sectors; they constitute a major source of the nation’s wealth. Individual households earn up to 40 per cent of their income in this fashion.<sup>66</sup>

We must, however, study the other side of the coin. Emigration = brain-drain. This loss of skilled professionals, especially from the Third World to the First World, has taken on enormous proportions and is now a source of major concern to policy makers; for recipient countries are making professional and technical gains at the expense of their poorer cousins who have invested resources in the training and education of their own citizens – only to lose them when qualified. This loss of skills generates professional gaps in countries which cannot afford to maintain a higher standard of living for specialist professionals. Of course there are other reasons why these professional men and women leave which have nothing to do with higher salaries. University academics, are also thought to leave for reasons such as inadequate laboratory facilities, insufficient time for research, and a lack of resources and opportunity to engage in post-graduate work and research.

The University of Zambia has been particularly adversely affected in this way. As a result of staff shortages, some departments have closed; and the knock-on effect inevitably leads to a decline in standards as institutions up and down the line are all compelled to recruit inexperienced staff.<sup>67</sup> This has also happened in Zimbabwe, where university departments have been threatened with closure or forced to reduce student numbers. By the end of 1991, only 23 out of 68 vacant professional posts at the University of Zimbabwe had been filled. As standards fall further and local experts become hard to find, projects either wither or become dependent upon foreign consultants. (If the latter occurs there is a further drain on foreign exchange.) In Harare, capital projects have been delayed as a result of a shortage of skills: the loss of engineers, quantity surveyors, archi-

itects and valuers has resulted in a waiting list for houses of 60 000.<sup>68</sup>

And finally an unpalatable but incontrovertible fact: it is invariably the most gifted who leave. This impoverishes their country of origin economically, politically and socio-culturally.

Little positive economic advantage accrues from unskilled migration to the host state. Why is this so? A mass influx of the unskilled places heavy burdens on the country of asylum. This frequently leads to political and social tension and pressures the government to restrict immigration.<sup>69</sup> In 1989, the continued cost of care for asylum seekers in eleven Northern countries was US\$4,5 billion; in 1992, it was US\$ 8 billion.<sup>70</sup>

There is economic dislocation too. The cost of housing a large influx of immigrants can drive up property prices. A mass influx also places a strain on the host state’s social services, water supply and physical infrastructure.<sup>71</sup> We can see this in Malawi, which is host to no less than 1,1 million Mozambican refugees.<sup>72</sup> A good example of stress is to be found at the Nyamithuthu Camp in the Nsanje district of southern Malawi, some 15 km from the Mozambican border. An estimated 290 000 Mozambican refugees are housed in the camp which is situated in a district where the local Malawi population numbers only 240 000. The impact has been enormous: dense forest has been cleared for firewood and housing; an access road linking the camp to Blantyre has been eroded by heavy trucks which bring in relief supplies; health facilities have been overburdened by the sheer numbers of these migrants.<sup>73</sup> This example illustrates how, over and above the immediate economic costs of hosting an immigrant population, the recipient country has recurring and often hidden costs to bear.

There are other indirect costs, too. Cross-border migration promotes the transmission of killer diseases; with time, the host country has inescapably to bear an overall increase in health and other social services and

an accompanying loss of productivity.<sup>74</sup> With new migrants arriving at a rate of 8 000 per month, and a refugee population already making up more than 10 per cent of the national population, Malawi's fragile polity is close to breaking point.

Mass influxes of immigrants also contribute to overcrowding. Since 1975, Hong Kong has given refuge to some 185 000 Vietnamese migrants. This has increased the population density in Hong Kong; in mid-1989 this density was estimated to be 5 300 per km<sup>2</sup> as against 352 in Britain and 22 in the United States.<sup>75</sup> In Southern Africa, population density is also thought to have increased phenomenally as a result of an influx of migrants to most states in the region. Although no figures are available for population density, the case of KwaZulu is instructive. In 1990 alone, this tiny self-governing homeland played host to 60 000 Mozambican refugees. This not only worsened the overcrowding in that poverty-stricken homeland, but also resulted in further soil erosion and an increased decline in agricultural production.<sup>76</sup>

It is often thought that immigrants usurp employment opportunities and serve to depress wage levels. But Hamilton and Holder<sup>77</sup> note that the impact of immigrants on an economy is not uniformly harmful. Legal immigration, especially into white collar jobs, is thought to be economically beneficial to the host state; whereas the economic ramifications of low-skilled or unskilled legal and illegal immigrants do appear to have an adverse effect on the economy. They may, for example, deprive those locals on the very lowest rungs of the social ladder of desperately needed employment opportunities. It is thought that employers, when faced with a choice of employing either unskilled native or unskilled foreign workers, will opt for the latter. The reasons for this are very clear. First, lower wages can be paid to unskilled foreign labour. Second, foreigners are thought to be more resistant to unionization than locals.

That foreigners are generally resistant to unionization may be attributed

to a number of different factors. It is argued that their foreign origins and status alienate them from the majority of workers. This alienation also extends to the formal political domain, where migrants perceive themselves to be apolitical. They may also fear that their residence or work permits might be revoked if they engage in any overt union or political activity. More generally, the very act of migrating to a certain place must be read as a tacit acceptance of the status quo there. Overall, purely material concerns, rather than political concerns, will occupy the thoughts of a newly arrived migrant.

#### Sociocultural effects

Ultimately migration is not simply a movement of people across national boundaries but a flow of languages, cultures, religions and social beliefs. These sociocultural effects of mass movement may well exert adverse effects on the host country by causing politically expressed friction between native citizens and immigrants.<sup>78</sup> A common assumption – in Europe, in particular – is that migration constitutes a threat to national identity.

In Western Europe, fears of being swamped by foreign cultures, religions, languages and social beliefs have certainly been expressed, especially against the backdrop of a declining birth rate among host-country populations and of local economies in recession.<sup>79</sup> The pervasiveness of these fears is to be seen in the phenomenal growth of extreme right-wing parties, all of which have strongly anti-immigrant platforms: Jean-Marie Le Pen's sizable (10–15 per cent) share of the vote in the recent 1992 French elections; the strong resistance in the United Kingdom to the immigration of 250 000 British subjects from Hong Kong; the success of the extreme right in Norway and, more recently, in Austria; the breakthrough of the regional "leagues" in northern Italy; and a spate of racial incidents throughout the Italian peninsula and in Germany which, following unification, has seen the rapid growth of neo-Nazism.<sup>80</sup>

On the local scene South Africa's already complex internal socio-cultural differences – coupled with frustration at poor economic prospects, often blamed on the "theft" of jobs by immigrants – has resulted in a spate of racial attacks on Mozambican mine-workers and Chinese street hawkers. More well-to-do immigrants see this as a precursor to attacks on themselves. An immigrant Ghanaian university lecturer expressed these concerns as follows: "Already they (ie native South Africans) are getting fed up with us. There is a lot of jealousy now."<sup>81</sup>

#### Political effects

The political consequences of mass immigration are not only limited to the growth of right-wing parties, mobilizing support on strongly anti-immigrant platforms. Mass migration as a general issue has raised a series of debates both practical and theoretical in nature. They range far and wide.

In the Horn of Africa, Southern Africa and Liberia, and most recently in parts of Yugoslavia and the former USSR, mass displacements of people are challenging the sanctity of national borders and the integrity of states, contributing in some small way, it may be thought, to the disintegration of nations.<sup>82</sup> Migrations also challenge traditional concepts of national security and foreign policy.<sup>83</sup> As a result, more attention needs to be given in the academic literature to the relationship between migrancy, the nation-state and national sovereignty.

It is not difficult to see why mass migrations have been seen as contributing to interstate conflict, regional instability and international friction. Very often they are employed as foreign policy tools. Migrants have become instruments of warfare and military strategy. Armed exiles have been used as "freedom fighters" and guerrillas to wage wars of resistance on every continent.<sup>84</sup> The assistance rendered by the Pakistani government to Afghan rebels (Mujaheddin) fighting against the Soviet-supported Kabul government and the assistance rendered by the Honduran government to the Contras in Nicaragua

provide opposite examples. In Southern Africa, there has been strong evidence that South Africa uses Mozambican refugees to augment the numerical strength of Renamo. And there are always spin-off problem situations: during the 1980s, South Africa regularly attacked refugee camps in Angola, Botswana, Zambia and Lesotho; and Vietnamese forces regularly shelled Cambodian refugees encamped along the Thai border.

An unwilling host country's treatment of refugees, alone, often serves as a source of tension in international relations.<sup>85</sup> South Africa has found itself accused of the "inhuman treatment" of Mozambican refugees. As a result, a group of European parliamentarians called upon South Africa to adopt international standards.<sup>86</sup> More recently, Pretoria has officially refused to grant refugee status to the more than 250 000 Mozambicans living in the country; this status is imperative if they are to receive assistance from international organizations and avoid enforced repatriation. Instead, the South African government has labelled them "illegal immigrants". They lead, consequently, a pitiful existence in the impoverished self-governing homelands of KwaZulu and Gazankulu, where they can acquire only temporary residence permits. This is unsatisfactory because it increases their vulnerability. The only assistance they can expect is from NGOs, such as Operation Hunger, which provide food and shelter. No assistance is provided by the South African government. The plight of these Mozambicans is further exacerbated by exploitation: men are employed for as little as R30 per month and women are reportedly sold as concubines for R200.<sup>87</sup>

A final word on the value of an immigrant. Loescher<sup>88</sup> notes that some population movements contribute to the host state's power base, national self-confidence or dominant ethnic community. The large-scale influx of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union to Israel has been viewed by the government as a boost to the Israeli state, although to

its Arab neighbours and Palestinians it has always been a source of much tension.

Another example: immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall South Africa appeared to actively encourage the immigration of East Europeans. Many interpreted this as a device to enlarge the white population within South Africa. Not surprisingly, it aroused the suspicions of blacks both within the Republic and in neighbouring states that the de Klerk government was not wholly committed to change.<sup>89</sup>

### Managing migrations

How should, or how could, Southern Africa manage the migrant issue? Are there lessons to be learned elsewhere on the planet? What implications do various strategic approaches have for the future of regional relations?

Innumerable strategies have emerged to control or stem the global tides of migration; they can be grouped in two broad approaches which, colloquially, might be termed "the carrot" and "the stick".

#### The stick approach

The intention here is to provide a series of disincentives which will discourage people from even contemplating migration. There is a range of "stick" strategies, from the crude to the more sophisticated, to deal with the "migration problem". One of these is enforced repatriation, exemplified in the Bush administration's turning away of Haitian boat people while still at sea. This strategy met with little success since the net inflow of illegal Haitian immigrants continued.<sup>90</sup>

Another strategy makes use of institutional structures to limit immigration. The United States has its quota system, Australia has a points system, as the United Kingdom will have when coping with the 250 000 British subjects from Hong Kong due to receive passports.<sup>91</sup>

The central difficulty with these strategies is that while they may serve to limit legal migration, they ignore current international trends: most of today's migrations are uncontrolled or illegal.

A third strategy enforces greater control along national borders. This was illustrated in 1989 by the deployment of the Austrian army along Austrian borders to staunch the flow of people from Eastern Europe.<sup>92</sup> Bearman<sup>93</sup> notes that such a policy can be only partially effective, since borders – as Africans well understand – are increasingly porous. The political and diplomatic costs of an unduly restrictive policy may also be high in terms of maintaining good relations with either host or transit states. "Simply building barriers to deter such [population] movements will not make the problem disappear, nor will it ensure a stable political base for international relations."<sup>94</sup>

British policy for halting the flow of Vietnamese boat-people into Hong Kong offers another strategy of disincentive. Upon arrival, migrants are housed in survival-level camps which, theoretically, are thought to deter further arrivals.<sup>95</sup> But this strategy has also met with failure. Between August 1990 and August 1991 the total Vietnamese refugee population in Hong Kong rose from 55 000 to 62 000 – a net increase of 7 000.<sup>96</sup>

A more sophisticated strategy is used by Italy. It informs prospective Albanian migrants while still in their home country by way of local newspapers and radio, of all the various obstacles (say, enforced repatriation) they will encounter. This strategy has met with limited success, although its supporters say that it is too early yet to gauge the real success of the programme.<sup>97</sup>

In Southern Africa, South Africa has made extensive use (with limited success) of the stick approach.

As we have noted, South Africa regards Mozambican refugees within its borders as "illegal immigrants"; it also follows a policy of forced repatriation, returning Mozambicans at the rate of 3 000 per week. Notwithstanding this policy, there has still been a net increase in the number of Mozambican refugees.<sup>98</sup> Neither increased border patrols, nor a 38-mile-long, 3 200-volt electric fence deters the influx of these refugees. (It is a fact that more people

have died on this fence than at the Berlin Wall.) In addition to these physical obstacles, Mozambican refugees also have to negotiate others: SADF and SAP patrols and a four-day march through the Kruger National Game Park with its lions, elephants and armed game rangers.<sup>99</sup>

The conclusion to be drawn from these examples is painfully obvious: disincentives are obviously not powerful enough if the number of refugees continues to rise. The true message of the urge to move best comes across, in the present writer's view, in the words of Patrick Nkuna, a 19-year-old Mozambican refugee: "Death is sometimes better than living, we suffer so in Mozambique."<sup>100</sup>

### **The carrot approach**

Recognizing the limitations of the stick approach, several analysts have put forward strategies which we might call the "carrot" approach. This aims to provide incentives for prospective immigrants to stay within the borders of their own country. Essentially the carrot approach is a long-term process aiming at redressing the political and economic causes which give rise to migration in the first place.<sup>101</sup>

One line of this strategy runs broadly that political pluralism should be encouraged in the Third World.<sup>102</sup> This is generally seen in terms of liberal democracy, a multiparty system, and free, fair and frequent elections. These, the argument runs, would stem political conflict and civil war, and reduce refugee flows. While not disputing the importance of pluralism, it simply has to be recognized that transitions from a single-party state to political pluralism are delicate. And, as the resumption of fighting in Angola suggests, attempts may all too easily have results contrary to those desired. This point holds special importance for Southern Africa. "In the region's case the difficulties which transitions pose are exacerbated by the overall weakness of polities within which change is taking place."<sup>103</sup>

Recognizing that poverty (or rather a lack of economic opportunities) is

often at the root of population movements, the carrot approach stresses the need for economic development within the states of origin. This is often done by means of special trade agreements, investment programmes and educational schemes.<sup>104</sup> A programme of this kind has been proposed by Italy and Spain for North Africa. The hope is that these policies will result in job creation, economic stability and hence a reduction in population movements from North Africa into southern Europe.<sup>105</sup>

A weakness of this particular approach is that while it tackles the global nature of the problem it does so on a piecemeal basis. Globalists argue that only a restructuring of the international economy will reduce South-North flows and that, until this happens, the haemorrhage will continue. Moreover, even if such a strategy proves successful in the long run, it will certainly have contradictory results in the short to medium term. Hamilton and Holder<sup>106</sup> put it this way:

The development process itself tends to stimulate migration in the short to medium term by raising expectations and enhancing people's ability to migrate. Thus the development solution to the problem of unauthorized migration is measured in decades – or even generations . . . . Any serious cooperative effort to reduce migratory pressures must stay the course in the face of shorter-term contradictory results. . . .

A more sophisticated strategy is to encourage regional integration. Proponents of such a strategy see regional economic integration as the key to stem migration flows and point to the European Community (EC) as a successful example. Gomel<sup>107</sup> makes the point that the countries of southern Europe (Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal) ceased exporting their surplus labour to the more affluent countries in northern Europe in the 1970s as a direct result of EC regional integration. This effectively decreased wage differentials and generally increased economic and social homogeneity within the EC.

On the surface, such a strategy seems workable. On close inspection, however, various cracks are

revealed. For example, the decrease in population movements from southern to northern Europe was not only the result of economic factors. Demographics also played a role; a drop in birthrates decreased the pressure on southern Europe's social and economic infrastructure, increasing the overall living standards of the population.

Meissner<sup>108</sup> has challenged the long-held tenet that wage differentials between southern and northern European countries were at the time that far apart. She also points out that Turkey's application for membership of the EC was turned down for fear that, with wage differentials of 10:1, economic integration might lead to substantial emigration from Turkey to Western Europe. Meissner uses this as an example of migration's acting as a serious deterrent to broader economic integration. This is an important lesson for the states of Southern Africa, who are considering regional integration while showing large wage disparities. In instance South Africa, Botswana and Namibia, on the one hand; and Angola, Lesotho and Mozambique on the other. Could such wage disparities put a spoke in the wheel of regional integration here? The case of the EC suggests that it may.

What the above discussion illustrates is that efforts to manage or stem population movements by means of the stick approach are bound to fail. And efforts to manage migrations flows by the carrot approach may meet with only some success in a few decades or even generations.

The question which now needs to be posed is this: How do we live with mass migration in the interim? Perhaps our only hope is to look calmly at this vast field, area by area – in turn the socio-cultural sphere, the economic sphere and finally the political sphere.

### **The socio-cultural sphere**

International population movements foster concerns about cultural conflict. While the challenges of major ethnic shifts should not be minimized, neither should they be viewed

with too many misgivings. The nation, as Hamilton and Holder<sup>109</sup> correctly observe, "... is resilient and, with adequate planning, any problems posed by such challenges can be addressed". Immigrants, whether legal or illegal, need not necessarily be a threat to national identity and national unity; indeed they could be a definite boon to national identity, depending, of course, upon what type of nationalism is practised.

Smith<sup>110</sup> makes a distinction between two types of nationalism – ethnocentric and polycentric. "For an ethnocentric nationalist, both power and value inhere in his cultural group. Indeed these dimensions are inseparable. My group is the vessel of wisdom, beauty, holiness, culture, hence power automatically belongs as an attribute of my group."<sup>111</sup> Here, ethnocentric nationalism is an exclusive, narrow-minded nationalism. But there are other views: polycentric nationalism is a more inclusive nationalism that starts from the premise "... that there are many centres of power; other groups to have valuable and genuinely noble ideas and institutions which we would do well to borrow or adapt"<sup>112</sup>

These divergent notions of nationalism certainly influence the treatment meted out to immigrants, legal or illegal. For Europeans, membership of their societies is tied to shared ethnicity and nationality; people from elsewhere – northern Africa, or Turkey, for example – though they may have lived and worked in France or Germany for many years and may even be citizens, cannot share in this exclusive membership. This is a very different view from that held in Australia and Canada, where nation-building, through immigration, has led to ideas of membership based on civic participation and a generally shared commitment to democratic values.<sup>113</sup> In asserting that they are non-immigrant nations, European states tend to reject ethnic diversity as a positive societal value. Immigration, therefore, is seen as a fundamental threat to national unity and the common good. And this, in turn, paves

the way for the virulent anti-immigrant nationalism expressed by a number of right-wing parties.

In the new South Africa, I propose that we think and exude a polycentric, inclusive type of nationalism that will give us pride as South Africans, while recognizing that we are Southern Africans as well. We need not view the influx of immigrants as a threat to our national identity; indeed it could be of great value, adding to our socio-cultural mosaic and thereby enriching our cultural heritage. In order to accomplish this, however, we need to socialize (or resocialize) local South Africans to value the common humanity we share with people everywhere and the responsibility which that imposes. This is not an easy task, but, as we can see from Brazil, it can be successfully accomplished.

#### The economic sphere

Migrants can be both an asset and a liability to the host economy. In most instances, skilled/professional immigrants are an asset, whereas unskilled immigrants (who form the bulk of those inside South Africa's borders) are a liability, especially in the context of the high unemployment levels among local South Africans, estimated at around 40 per cent.

The first thing that needs to be done is to internationalize the problem and obtain assistance from outside sources. This can be done by cancelling the classification of the 250 000 Mozambican refugees in the country as illegal immigrants and granting them refugee status. This would immediately qualify the Mozambican refugees and their host, the Republic of South Africa, for assistance – financial assistance from the UNHCR, in particular. To a limited extent this approach to the problem has already been adopted. The UNHCR and the Pretoria government have reached certain agreements and repatriation of some of these refugees has begun.

Second, we need to convert these Mozambican refugees from an economic liability to an economic asset. One promising possibility might be to

organize these refugees into production units or cooperatives, either for farming or handicrafts operations. The purpose of such cooperatives would be two-fold: to render these refugees self-sufficient, economically productive members of society; and, a concomitant of the first objective, to make use of their increased purchasing power to help build South Africa's domestic market.

#### The political sphere

To a large extent the political difficulties of being the recipient of a refugee influx, as expressed by the growth of right-wing parties, is generally a reflection of fears arising from sociocultural and economic considerations – fears of "overforeignization" (that is, being swamped by foreign cultures, languages and social practices) and of jobs being "stolen". It is hoped that if action, as outlined above, is taken at sociocultural and economic levels, it will have a positive impact in the political sphere.

To reinforce the position and prevent potential conflict between natives and foreigners, more needs to be done, however. Here it is instructive to look at northern Europe where tax-paying foreigners have been granted the right to vote in local elections.<sup>114</sup> If this were to be followed in South Africa, especially in the context of a federal system, it would diminish the chances of any political party from mobilizing support on an anti-immigrant platform, since immigrants would form part of its constituency! This, it is hoped, will serve as an additional bulwark against potential conflict. Another strategy which might serve the same function would be to grant citizens of the BLS states the right to vote when resident in South Africa, as do the Irish in Britain.

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## Erratum

Some of the asterisks in the panel below, which appeared in the previous issue of *Africa Insight* (p 199), were misplaced. The correct version is printed below.

### **Multiparty African countries before 1990**

*Regular multiparty elections have been held since the dates indicated.*

<i>The Gambia</i>	(1965)	<i>Egypt</i>	(1977)
<i>Botswana</i>	(1966)	<i>Zimbabwe</i>	(1980)
<i>Morocco</i>	(1972)	<i>Tunisia</i>	(1981)
<i>Mauritius</i>	(1968)	<i>Comoros</i>	(1987)
<i>Senegal</i>	(1977)	<i>Namibia</i>	(1989)

### **Multiparty systems adopted, 1990 to December 1993**

*First multiparty elections in year indicated.*

<i>Gabon</i>	(1990)	<i>Djibouti</i>	(1992)
<i>Côte d'Ivoire</i>	(1990)	<i>Kenya</i>	(1992)
<i>Cape Verde</i>	(1991)*	<i>Niger</i>	(1993)
<i>São Tomé</i>	(1991)*	<i>Lesotho</i>	(1993)
<i>Benin</i>	(1991)*	<i>Burundi</i>	(1993)*
<i>Zambia</i>	(1991)*	<i>Seychelles</i>	(1993)
<i>Burkina Faso</i>	(1991)**	<i>Togo</i>	(1993)**
<i>Mauritania</i>	(1992)**	<i>Central African Republic</i>	(1993)
<i>Cameroon</i>	(1992)	<i>Equatorial Guinea</i>	(1993)**
<i>Mali</i>	(1992)	<i>Guinea</i>	(1993)
<i>Congo</i>	(1992)*		
<i>Ghana</i>	(1992)		
<i>Madagascar</i>	(1992)*		

\* Government defeated in election  
(In Mali, Niger and Lesotho military governments transferred power to elected civilian governments.)

\*\* Elections boycotted by principal opposition parties.

# Namibia and South Africa: Towards cooperation and peaceful coexistence

*Namibia's independence in 1990 signalled the end of the apartheid era in African politics. Johnny Pitswane, lecturer in the Department of International Relations, University of the Witwatersrand, reviews events of the past five years that influenced relations between South Africa and its neighbours, South Africa-Namibia relations in particular.*

The Nujoma government in Namibia has now been in power for four years. During this period, the new government in Windhoek has sought not only to consolidate its sovereignty but to expand its network of external relations. In determining foreign policy, Namibia has been, above all, preoccupied with creating conditions suitable for promoting economic growth and ensuring political stability. In addition, the country has worked to promote a stable security environment with its neighbours. For this reason Namibia's relations with South Africa remain of paramount importance.

After the general election of mid-November 1989 confirming the South West African People's Organization (Swapo) as the victorious party, both President de Klerk and Minister of Foreign Affairs Pik Botha accepted the election results – certified by the United Nations Special Representative Martti Ahtisaari.<sup>1</sup> South Africa's new and benign approach was illustrated by Botha's statement that South Africa had entered upon a new period in which the focus would be more on economic cooperation than on ideological differences.<sup>2</sup>

By extending this hand of friendship to Namibia, the South African government was laying the foundations for a *modus vivendi*. In a reciprocal gesture, the Nujoma government adopted a less hostile stance, indicating a desire to see a peaceful and meaningful transition towards democracy in South Africa. In this somewhat grandiose diplomatic interaction, de Klerk and his "new men" were portrayed as pragmatic, sensi-

ble, well-intentioned and honourable. These exchanges led the way towards a strengthening of diplomatic and economic relations.

The improvement in relations can be traced back to the period before the elections. During the late 1980s, contact between (Swapo) and the South African government followed in the wake of the series of multilateral talks held to pave the way for the eventual implementation of UN Resolution 435 and Namibia's independence. (Under the tutelage of the Western contact group – the United States, Canada, Britain, France and West Germany – and the support of the former Soviet Union, a working relationship was cultivated.) The superpowers – the United States and the Soviet Union – were both at this time making consistent efforts to resolve regional conflicts in Southern Africa and elsewhere, and this background and policy environment served as a catalyst for conflict resolution.

Separate bilateral talks were also held by the two parties. In May 1989, a Swapo delegation led by central committee member Daniel Tjongarero met with Democratic Turnhalle Alliance leader Dirk Mudge and South African administrators in Pretoria.<sup>3</sup> At this meeting, both parties reiterated their commitment to the implementation of Resolution 435. In the few months preceding the general election, it had become clear that South Africa had resigned itself to the inevitability of a Swapo government in independent Namibia, although it still regarded the mobilization of an anti-Swapo alliance led by the DTA as essential. (The ratio-

nale here was that the establishment of a one-party socialist government in Namibia would be to the detriment of South Africa, thus the need to strengthen the future opposition.)

The final breakthrough came when, on the eve of the election, Minister Pik Botha and Swapo leader Sam Nujoma agreed "to let bygones be bygones". Nujoma said Swapo policy was "to leave the sad history behind and to try to adopt a much more flexible policy towards our neighbours, including South Africa ... we must start afresh."<sup>4</sup>

## The regional environment

In Southern Africa several events in recent years have significantly influenced the options available to the players concerned for improving intraregional relations. The Cuban withdrawal from Angola and the demise of the Soviet empire removed what South Africa perceived as major threats to the republic and its allies.

On the other hand, the collapse of the Soviet Union meant that Angola and Mozambique lost an important ally. After a series of negotiations, a UN-monitored general election took place in Angola in 1992. Unita vehemently disputed the outcome of the election (which put the MPLA government in power) and has since continued its military confrontation. South Africa seized the opportunity to expand its influence in the region by attempting to mediate in Angola.

The crisis in Mozambique has persistently defied solution, to the detriment of peace, stability and development. In the past twenty months,

ceasefire agreements have constantly been violated; Renamo, steadfastly opposed to the Maputo regime, proving the major culprit. Hopes were raised, recently, with the implementation of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (Unomoz). Sadly, the operation has been threatened by disagreement and hostility between the parties. Although South Africa has refrained from active involvement in this crisis, it has nonetheless indicated a desire to see an end to the conflict. At a time when South African government authority itself is facing internal challenges to its legitimacy, chaos on its borders can only have adverse effects internally.

With the Frontline States now more preoccupied with internal political and economic problems, condemnation of South Africa has lessened considerably. This was primarily due to the multi-party negotiations for a democratic society. Countries in the region have kept (and are keeping) a close watch on what actually happens during this vital transition period.

Meanwhile, South Africa has been taking advantage of this less belligerent regional environment to promote good relations in sub-Saharan Africa, not least with Namibia.

### South Africa's new foreign policy outlook

There is no doubt that, in the past five years, important aspects of South Africa's foreign policy have changed significantly. Prior to F W de Klerk becoming president, the country's external relations were determined by the fact that it had been isolated by the international community. South African foreign policy therefore reflected the desire of the ruling élite to maintain domestic and regional hegemony. Excommunicated from the international community of states, and clearly having lost the moral battle, Pretoria found itself with very few friends. Nevertheless, both Vorster and Botha tried to attract certain African countries with schemes such as the "dialogue" and the "constellation of states" initiatives.

In February 1990, a few months

after de Klerk had become president, outlawed political movements were unbanned, prominent black leaders released from prison and curbs on the press lifted. The business community lauded these moves and predicted that they would lead to an economic boom. It also seemed that sanctions would soon be a thing of the past. One of the most important consequences of these developments was indeed a radical change of attitude in the global community. Many foreign governments began to court the new and reformist National Party leadership. New embassies and consulates were opened overseas. The South African government no longer found it necessary to portray the former communist Eastern Europe as the bogeyman and diplomats from Pretoria therefore undertook repeated visits to the hitherto uncharted territories.

Indeed, with the demise of the Soviet Union, the "total onslaught" theory, which had dominated South African foreign policy during most of the 1970s and 1980s, had become obsolete.<sup>5</sup> Yet much of the change in attitude of the world towards South Africa has quite different origins: the government's acceptance of the failure of apartheid policies, the reform initiatives, the decision by the ANC (recently also by the PAC) to abandon the armed struggle, and the commitment by most of the political actors to achieve a peaceful transition to democracy through negotiation. It is in this improving environment that South Africa has been able significantly to expand its external links.

It could be argued that South Africa's foreign policy is currently non-aligned,<sup>6</sup> for with the end of the Cold War superpower rivalry, the country is no longer impelled to seek alliances in either the East or the West. It is obvious that ties with Western countries will be of paramount importance because of the enormous economic benefits involved. But these relationships will be less ideological than heretofore. Relations with countries in Latin America, Southeast Asia, the Carri-

bean basin, Eastern Europe and the Middle East will also be strengthened. Nevertheless, the most immediate concern is Africa, particularly the Southern African region where the fruitful possibilities of different areas of cooperation seem likely to dictate policy.<sup>7</sup> A new, democratically elected government will also adopt this path.

### Economic cooperation

At the core of relations between South Africa and Namibia is the entire issue of economic cooperation. Namibia is more closely integrated with South Africa than with any other country in the region.<sup>8</sup> Its infrastructure, in particular, is closely linked to that of its more powerful neighbour. Yet the country as a whole has inherited serious economic imbalances as a result of decades of South African control.<sup>9</sup> At independence, the Namibian economy was heavily dependent upon energy and capital imports.<sup>10</sup> In the past three years, consequently, attempts have been made to diversify the economy, with strong emphasis on strengthening the manufacturing sector. The short term objective is to reduce dependence upon South Africa.<sup>11</sup>

However, furthering economic cooperation with South Africa remains vitally important to Namibia, particularly in trade, communications, transport and fisheries.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, Namibia will continue pushing for stronger concessions from South Africa within the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), in particular the removal of what is seen as unfair competition from South African firms in certain areas.<sup>13</sup> This is crucial in the light of Namibia's need to create new industries. However, much of the process of economic cooperation between the two countries will take place within the framework of the Southern African Development Community (SADC): South Africa is expected to join this group in the near future.<sup>14</sup> Such a development will see the acceleration of efforts aimed at increased regional economic cooperation.

## Namibia and the new South Africa

The thorny issue of the future of Walvis Bay has always been a major point of contention. There were at one time fears that South Africa would not relinquish control of this enclave and the offshore islands. The Namibian government vehemently opposed South Africa's continued presence. It claimed the enclave as rightly belonging to Namibia; and its continued occupation by South Africa as a blemish on Namibia's statehood. The Nujoma government was able to mobilize international support in favour of the incorporation of the territory into Namibia.

As the country's only deep-water port, Walvis Bay is a significant economic resource. It derives its importance from its modern and well-developed infrastructure, vital for Namibia's exports and imports.<sup>15</sup> The fishing industry has been the mainstay of the enclave's economy over many years. However, fears of continued South African possession were allayed when an agreement was reached on 17 May 1991 to establish a Joint Technical Committee to administer the port jointly on an interim basis. By January 1993 the Joint Administrative Authority (JAA) on which both countries were represented, had started functioning. The majority of residents in Walvis Bay were calling for full integration with Namibia, suggesting a timetable of two to three years for the transfer.<sup>16</sup>

Negotiations between both government continued. Foreign ministers Pik Botha and Theo Ben Gurirab and

their delegations continued to work at a feasible, permanent solution. With time, South Africa began to accept the inevitability of the incorporation of Walvis Bay into Namibia. In a major breakthrough on 16 August 1993, the South African government publicly agreed to hand over Walvis Bay and the offshore islands.<sup>17</sup> The decision was taken by the Multiparty Negotiating Council in South Africa and endorsed by the de Klerk administration. Both governments reaffirmed their commitment to speedily facilitate the reintegration process and the formal transfer took effect on 1 March 1994. This historic agreement prepared the way for the termination of 84 years of South African control of Walvis bay and the islands (110 years after Britain transferred them to the Cape Colony). It will further strengthen good relations between these countries.

The outcome of the proposed non-racial general elections in South Africa on 27 April 1994 will be closely scrutinized by the international community, including Namibia. A new democratic government in South Africa is likely to forge much closer relations with Namibia. It can be expected that both countries will play an active role in non-aligned international politics. At the regional political level, stability and security will undoubtedly become serious concerns. Bilateral economic interaction will involve such important aspects as joint ventures, and certain financial and trade agreements. Barring some inconceivable catastrophe, relations between the two countries should remain entirely peaceful.

## Notes and references

- 1 See *Southern Africa Report*, vol 7, no 46, 17 November 1989, p 1.
- 2 *Ibid.*
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- 4 *Business Day* (Johannesburg), 7 November 1989.
- 5 Michael Christie, "Isolationism and South Africa", *South Africa International*, vol 22, no 3, 1992, p 143.
- 6 Greg Mills, "Changing the guard: South African foreign policy into the 1990s", *Africa Insight*, vol 20, no 3, 1990, p 186.
- 7 *Ibid.*
- 8 Peter Vale, *Beyond the bend: South Africa, Southern Africa and Namibian independence*, Occasional Paper no 13, Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA), 1988, p 6.
- 9 Johnny Pitswane, "Namibia: Challenges of the first decade", in Larry Benjamin and Christopher Gregory (eds), *Southern Africa at the crossroads? Prospects for stability and development in the 1990s*, Rivonia: Justified Press, 1992, p 117.
- 10 André du Pisani, *Rumours of rain: Namibia's post-independence experience*, South African Issues, no 3, Braamfontein: South African Institute of International Affairs, February 1991, p 12.
- 11 *Ibid*, p 18.
- 12 *Ibid*, p 25.
- 13 See Onesmus Upindi, "The Southern African Customs Union", *Namibia Review*, vol 2, no 4, April/May 1993, p 29.
- 14 J Pitswane, *op cit*, pp 122-123.
- 15 *Ibid*, p 120.
- 16 See *Namibia Development Briefing*, volume 2, no 4 and 5, October/November 1992, p 7.
- 17 *The Star* (Johannesburg), 17 August 1993.

# Urbanization in Africa since independence

*Prof James D Tarver of Howard University (Washington DC) concludes our three-part series on urbanization in Africa.*

Europeans colonized Northern Africa during ancient times. However, modern European colonization began in 1462 when Portugal established a colony on the Cape Verde Islands. Later the Dutch, British, French, and other European nations colonized the rest of the vast continent, with the exception of Liberia and Ethiopia.

During the colonial period, ports, administrative centres and mining towns were founded. These urban centres, particularly in Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa, were planned and constructed to serve the needs of the white inhabitants and they became the principal settlements of the European colonists and administrators during the colonial period. Africans were prevented from residing in the white areas of these European cities in many parts of Africa, except as servants on their employers' properties. Many thousands, however, settled in planned townships or unserviced shantytowns outside these segregated cities. With the coming of independence the colonial prohibitions were repealed (except in the Republic of South Africa until 1986) and the rapid urbanization of Africans began, which drastically altered the racial composition of cities. Also in countries with no or limited restrictions on black urban residents the urban areas had much larger gains after than before independence.

South Africa became the first colony to obtain its independence in the modern period when, in 1910, the Union of South Africa with its four provinces was established. Egypt followed in 1922 when the British declared it independent, but retained a say in the country's foreign relations until 1956. Freedom for the rest of the

African colonies began to be realized after World War II when, in 1951, Libya became independent. Following a vigorous independence movement led by Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana became the first black African country to achieve freedom. After many years of war and protracted international negotiations, Namibia became an independent republic in 1990. The only significant remaining former colony is Western Sahara whose future is to be decided by referendum. Recently, in 1993, Eritrea, a for-

mer Italian colony, seceded from Ethiopia to become the 53rd independent African country.

## Urban population growth after independence

The urban population increased very slowly in the colonial period before World War II. Table 1 indicates, for example, that only 15 per cent of all inhabitants lived in urban areas in 1950, the lowest of all major regions in the world. However, by 1990 more than a third were urban residents,

**Table 1: Change in the urban population of Africa, by region, 1950–2025**

Areas and regions	Total population '000	Urban population '000	Urban population %
<b>1950</b>			
Africa	221 984	32 249	15
Eastern Africa	64 984	3 405	5
Middle Africa	26 316	3 747	14
Northern Africa	51 798	12 667	25
Southern Africa*	15 736	5 972	38
Western Africa	63 150	6 457	10
<b>1990</b>			
Africa	642 111	217 440	34
Eastern Africa	232 243	42 860	22
Middle Africa	81 933	26 458	38
Northern Africa	159 245	62 695	45
Southern Africa*	45 972	22 465	55
Western Africa	227 426	62 962	33
<b>2025</b>			
Africa	1 596 855	911 735	57
Eastern Africa	542 536	254 138	47
Middle Africa	192 342	122 328	64
Northern Africa	274 390	181 981	66
Southern Africa*	80 133	59 123	74
Western Africa	507 455	294 165	58

\* Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland.

Source: United Nations, *World urbanization prospects 1990* (1991), pp 118–119 and pp 142–143.

**Table 2: Populations of 28 African urban agglomerations that grew from 50 000 inhabitants at independence to over 1 million in 1990 (selected countries and agglomerations)<sup>1</sup>**

Country and independence date	Urban agglomeration	Estimated population		
		At independence '000	1990 '000	2000 '000
<b>North Africa</b>				
Algeria (1962)	Algiers	975	3 033	4 528
Egypt (1922)	Alexandria	1 504 <sup>2</sup>	3 684	5 108
	Cairo	1 200	9 040	11 826
Libya (1951)	Tripoli	110	2 062	3 163
Morocco (1956)	Casablanca	1 100 <sup>2</sup>	3 213	4 562
	Rabat	235	1 068	1 519
Sudan (1956)	Khartoum	275	1 947	3 160
Tunisia (1956)	Tunis	535	1 636	2 245
Totals		5 934	25 683	36 111
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>				
Angola (1975)	Luanda	669	1 717	2 866
Cameroon (1960)	Douala	150	1 200	..
Côte d'Ivoire (1960)	Abidjan	180	2 168	3 530
Ethiopia	Addis Ababa	401 <sup>2</sup>	1 890	3 126
Ghana (1957)	Accra	350	1 100	1 496
Guinea (1958)	Conakry	100	1 296	2 255
Kenya (1963)	Nairobi	275	1 503	2 722
Mozambique (1975)	Maputo	532	1 588	3 139
Nigeria (1960)	Ibadan	570	1 326	1 954
Senegal (1960)	Lagos	763	7 706	12 890
	Dakar	366	1 492	2 284
	Greater Cape Town	174	2 400	3 100
	Durban	90	2 600	4 100
South Africa (1910)	Greater Pretoria	80	1 600	2 550
	Witwatersrand <sup>3</sup>	450	5 000	6 700
	Dar es Salaam	180	1 657	3 127
Tanzania (1961)	Kinshasa	451	3 505	5 520
Zaire (1960)	Copperbelt	500	1 650	..
Zambia (1964)	Lusaka	150	1 020	1 800
	Harare	590	1 000	1 530
Zimbabwe (1980)		7 021	43 418	64 689

**Notes:**

1 Countries and urban agglomerations for which recent data are readily available.

2 1960 population estimate.

3 Central Rand (Johannesburg), East Rand and West Rand.

Main source: United Nations, *World urbanization prospects 1990* (1991), pp 187–194.

which reflects a rapid movement from rural areas to cities after colonial rule ended.

Over 185 million inhabitants were added to the urban areas of Africa between 1950 and 1990, with the increase being about 6,75 times that of the 1950 urban population.<sup>1</sup> This reflects rather accurately the magni-

tude of the accelerated urbanization in the independence era, which represented the highest rate of urban growth in the world. The Southern African region (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland) is the most highly urbanized, with 55 per cent of its residents in urban areas in 1990; while Eastern Africa is

the least urbanized, with less than a quarter of its population living in urban centres (Table 1). Traditionally, Africa has been a rural continent. However, it is estimated that by the year 2015 more than half of its population will be living in urban areas.<sup>2</sup>

Many factors, of course, have contributed to the huge exodus from the rural to urban areas. Many parts of Africa have, for example, suffered prolonged droughts, overgrazing, locust infestations, desertification, and other conditions adversely affecting crop and livestock production. Millions have become refugees from natural disasters, political oppression and rural poverty. The large exodus from Africa's rural areas has gone to cities of varying sizes, but the large cities, including capitals, perceived to be offering the best opportunities, have attracted disproportionately large numbers of destitute migrants.

### Population growth in urban agglomerations

The post-independence population changes of 28 urban agglomerations with one million and more people (including capital cities), are shown in Table 2. All these cities had at least 50 000 inhabitants at the time of independence. An urban agglomeration comprises a central city and its surrounding urban areas. In Botswana, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia, Réunion, Rwanda and a few other sparsely settled countries, the populations of the largest cities did not reach 50 000 until some time after independence.

Urbanization greatly accelerated in both northern and sub-Saharan Africa after the colonies became independent countries. Eight North African urban agglomerations had 25,7 million inhabitants in 1990 while 43,4 million inhabitants lived in 20 sub-Saharan agglomerations. Even though 63 per cent of these urban residents lived in the sub-Saharan cities, the average size of the North African agglomerations was 3,2 million people as compared to 2,2 million for those in sub-Saharan Africa.

Table 3: Population of Africa's 62 national capitals, 1990 (Non-independent territories in italics)

Country/territory Capital	Population '000	Country Capital	Population '000	Country Capital	Population '000
<b>North Africa</b>		Comores		Mozambique	
Algeria		Moroni*	24	Maputo*	1 588
Algiers*	3 033	Congo		Namibia	
<i>Ceuta</i> (Spain)		Brazzaville*	630	Windhoek*	146
Ceuta *	70	Côte d'Ivoire		Niger	
Egypt		Abidjan (former capital)*	2 168	Niamey*	583
Cairo*	9 040	Yamoussoukro (since 1983)	100	Nigeria	
Libya		Djibouti		Abuja (since 1991)	250
Tripoli*	2 062	Djibouti*	330	Lagos (former capital)*	7 706
<i>Melilla</i> (Spain)		Equatorial Guinea		<i>Réunion</i> (France)	
Melilla*	63	Malabo*	644	Saint Denis*	226
Morocco		Eritrea		Rwanda	
Rabat	1 068	Asmara*	325	Kigali*	298
Sudan		Ethiopia		São Tomé & Príncipe	
Khartoum*	1 947	Addis Ababa*	1 890	São Tomé*	50
Tunisia		Gabon		Senegal	
Tunis*	1 636	Libreville*	296	Dakar*	1 492
<i>Western Sabara</i> (Morocco)		Gambia, The		Seychelles	
El Aaiun*	88	Banjul*	200	Victoria*	40
<b>Total</b>	19 007	Ghana		Sierra Leone	
		Accra*	1 100	Freetown*	690
		Guinea		Somalia	
		Conakry*	1 296	Mogadishu*	718
		Guinea-Bissau		South Africa	
		Bissau*	70	Cape Town (legislative)	1 800
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>		Kenya		Pretoria (administrative)	1 000
Angola		Nairobi*	1 503	<i>St Helena</i> (United Kingdom)	
Luanda*	1 717	Lesotho		Jamestown*	1
Benin		Maseru*	62	Swaziland	
Porto-Novo	213	Liberia		Mbabane*	52
Botswana		Monrovia*	668	Tanzania	
Gaborone*	130	Madagascar		Dar es Salaam*	1 657
Burkina Faso		Antananarivo*	675	Togo	
Ouagadougou*	413	Malawi		Lomé*	514
Burundi		Lilongwe	310	Uganda	
Bujumbura*	246	Mali		Kampala*	689
Cameroon		Bamako*	660	Zaire	
Yaoundé	768	Mauritania		Kinshasa*	3 505
Cape Verde		Nouakchott*	762	Zambia	
Praia*	64	Mauritius		Lusaka*	1 020
Central African Republic		Port Louis*	158	Zimbabwe	
Bangui*	725	<i>Mayotte</i> (France)		Harare*	1 000
Chad		Dzaoudzi*	6	<b>Total</b>	43 906
N'Djamena*	728				

\* Largest city in the country

Main source: United Nations, *World urbanization prospects 1990* (1991), pp 195–198.

Alexandria (1 million), Cairo (2,4 million) and the Witwatersrand (Ridge of White Waters) in South Africa were the only African urban agglomerations with at least one million inhabitants in 1950.<sup>3</sup> By 1990 the two Egyptian cities together had 12,7 million inhabitants and the Witwatersrand some 5 million,<sup>4</sup> whereas the other 25 urban agglomerations with a million inhabitants each in 1990 had a total population of about 51 million. There are also many large cities with more or

less half a million to one million inhabitants. These figures reflect the high rates of urbanization and the growth of large primate cities since these countries became independent and support the fact that Africa has the highest rate of urbanization of all major regions in the world.

### Population of capital cities in 1990

In 1990 about 63 million of Africa's total urban population of 217 million

were residents of capital cities. This number includes an estimated 325 000 residents in Asmara, the capital of the newly created Republic of Eritrea.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the residents of the 62 capitals represented 29 per cent of the total African urban population in 1990 (Table 3).

Africa's capital cities ranged in size from about 1 000 people in Jamestown, on St Helena Island in the South Atlantic, to over 9 million in Cairo. Lagos, Kinshasa, and Algiers,

the next largest, ranged from 3 to 7,7 million. One very significant aspect of urbanization in Africa is that the capitals are the largest cities in at least 54 of the 59 countries and territories listed in Table 3. Lagos, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, for example, are disproportionately larger than the next most populous cities in their countries. Another distinctive feature is that most capitals (34 in Table 3) are seaports.<sup>6</sup>

The 62 capital cities had an average 1990 population of about one million. The 53 sub-Saharan capitals averaged 828 000 inhabitants, whereas in North Africa (excluding Western Sahara and the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla) the average for six capitals was 3,1 million.

Three countries have more than one national capital. South Africa has a dual capital system and in Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria the former capital cities are still the de facto capitals (Table 3).

### Future urbanization in Africa

The large African cities and urban agglomerations are likely to continue to increase in population in the future but not as rapidly as since independence. Nevertheless, the 28 urban agglomerations with at least one million inhabitants had a total population of 70 million in 1990, and are projected to reach 100 million in the year 2000. This represents a 30 million or more than 40 per cent in-

crease in this decade (Table 2). Therefore, the growth of urbanization in these large metropolises will probably continue to be impressive for some time.

Algiers is typical of older cities that have become highly congested and are beginning to suffer net migration losses. For example, this city grew more slowly in the 1977–1987 census period than earlier. Several other African metropolises are beginning to experience similar patterns of population change and of waning dominance.

Lagos, on the other hand, is a great contrast to Algiers. Although it also suffers from congestion and lack of services, the city and its environment has had a phenomenal population growth and is projected to become the largest African urban agglomeration by the year 2000. In 1950, Lagos had barely 300 000 inhabitants. In 1990 it had 7,7 million inhabitants, which is expected to increase to 12,9 million by the year 2000 (Table 2). The Cairo/Giza agglomeration will continue to grow, but at half the Lagos growth rate and will take second place after Lagos in the future. Also, Addis Ababa and a few other large agglomerations are likely to record relatively high rates of increase between 1990 and 2000.

Overall, Africa's urban population is projected to increase by approximately 135 million in the 1990–2000 decade (from 217 million to 352 mil-

lion).<sup>7</sup> Perhaps no more than 30 million of that gain is likely to be in large agglomerations of a million and over. About 105 million of the growth probably will occur in the smaller urban centres. This suggests that urban growth is likely to be higher both numerically and proportionally outside the large primate cities of Africa in the current decade.

Finally, the total African urban population is likely to reach one billion inhabitants within the next 50 years. It stood at 32 million in 1950. Presently, the United Nations projects 912 million urban residents (57 per cent of the total population) by 2025 and the urban areas will continue to attract thousands of migrants just as in the past (Table 1).

### References

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- 6 A J Christopher, "Continuity and change of African capitals", *The Geographical Review*, vol 75, pp 44–57.
- 7 United Nations, *op cit*, pp 118–119.



# BOOKSHELF

**The state in Africa: The politics of the belly** by Jean-François Bayart. London: Longman, 1993, 370 pp. ISBN 0 582 06422 8

*The state in Africa: The politics of the belly* is the English translation of one of the most important texts in comparative politics of the past decade.

Drawing upon a breathtakingly wide range of literature, Jean-François Bayart denounces the assumption of African "otherness" based on the stereotyped images of famine, corruption and civil war associated with the dominant paradigms of dependency and development theory. In their place he invites the reader to understand that African politics is like politics anywhere else in the world, not an exotic aberration. While acknowledging the insights of Western social scientists from Weber to Foucault, Bayart never loses sight of the necessity of locating his analysis in real life and he is careful, wherever possible, to allow authentic African voices — whether those of the "small boy" of the street or the "big men" of the presidential palaces — to speak for themselves in telling observations on the reality of African politics.

**Power in Africa: An essay in political interpretation** by Patrick Chabal. London: Macmillan, 1994, 311 pp. ISBN 0 333 55579 1

*Power in Africa* casts a fresh look at contemporary black African politics. It argues that our understanding of Africa has all too often been hampered by the limitations of the concepts and approaches we have used. It reviews the merits and failings of existing interpretations of Africa's post-colonial society and offers a new approach to its understanding. *Power in Africa* has two main aims. First, to present a comparative conceptual framework which places Africa's politics within its appropriate historical context (from the pre-colonial to the present). Second, to provide an explanation of what is exactly happening in Africa in terms which make it possible to relate Africa's contemporary predicament and its possible futures to those of other parts of the world.

No-one can deny that today Africa is in crisis. Wars, coups, famines and violence stalk the continent and fill the pages of our newspapers. Africa's debt is astronomical, economic development has ceased, corruption appears endemic and force seems the chief instrument of politics. At the same time we hear that Africa is now mov-

ing towards democracy. Economic and political liberalization is seen as the way forward. How do we assess the viability of the current moves towards democracy? How do we move away from the clichés of Africa as a dark continent perennially in crisis? *Power in Africa* develops a political analysis which attempts to offer a plausible interpretation of Africa's fate.

**Non-governmental organizations and the State in Africa: Rethinking roles in sustainable agricultural development** edited by Kate Wellard and James G Copestake. London: Routledge, 1993, 331 pp. ISBN 0 415 08850-x

*Non-governmental organizations and the state in Africa* analyses over twenty specially commissioned case studies of farmer-participatory approaches to agricultural innovation initiated by NGOs and state institutions in Africa. Beginning with a broad review of institutional activity at the grassroots, the authors set the case material within the context of NGO relations with the state and their contribution to democratization and the consolidation of rural civil society.

Specific questions are raised. How good/bad are NGOs at promoting technological innovation and addressing constraints to change in peasant agriculture? How effective are NGOs at strengthening grassroots/local organizations? How do/will donor pressures influence NGOs and their links to the state?

This title is part of a series on NGOs coordinated by the Overseas Development Institute. To complete this comprehensive review and critique there are two other regional case study volumes on Latin America and Asia and an overview volume, *Reluctant partners?*

**Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, results and the road ahead — A World Bank Policy Research Report.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1994, 284 pp. ISBN 0 19 520994 X

To reverse the economic decline that began in the 1970s, many sub-Saharan African countries have undertaken structural adjustment programmes. These programmes are designed to pave the way for long-term development and prosperity by fundamentally restructuring African economies. Continent-wide growth of gross domestic

product (GDP) per capita remains low, however, leading many to question the effectiveness of adjustment efforts. But is this poor performance the result of a failure to reform policies or a failure of those policies to restore growth? To address this question, *Adjustment in Africa* examines the extent of policy reforms and their impact on growth and poverty in 29 sub-Saharan countries that were undergoing adjustment in the second half of the 1980s.

**Frontline Africa: A right to a future** by Susanna Smith. Oxford: Oxfam, 1990, 387 pp. ISBN 0 85598 104 0

Recent political moves have brought hope for meaningful political change in South Africa. Yet, as this report documents, apartheid continues to cause immense suffering inside South Africa, and the effects of destabilization are still being felt daily in the neighbouring Frontline States.

Drawing on Oxfam's direct experience of 30 years' work in the region, *Front Line Africa: The right to a future* explains the pressures that impede development. Three major obstacles to poor people's struggle for a better future are identified: apartheid, the unjust economic relationship between North and South, and the failure of Southern African countries to promote equitable development.

This book argues that the international community has a vital role to play in helping to find lasting solutions to the problems of the region. The book concludes with a series of proposals for action by the British government, the European Community and the governments of Southern Africa.

**The African background to medical science: Essays on African history, science and civilizations** by Charles S Finch. London: Karnak House, 1990, 212 pp. ISBN 0 907015 43 3

The author looks at the question of race and prehistory and contextualizes human development from its beginnings in Africa and its spread around the globe; presents a reappraisal of the world's first multi-genius, Imhotep;

looks at the black queens of Ethiopia; and presents an argument that links the origins of Christianity to Ancient Egyptian religion. The author also presents two essays based on the documentation of ailments and cures by early Egyptian medical scientists.

**Malawi at the crossroads: The post-colonial political economy** edited by Guy C Z Mhone. Harare: Sapes Books, 1992, 380 pp. ISBN 0 7974 1127 5

This account of Malawi focuses on macro-economic and social issues, industry and agrarian problems from a number of key perspectives. It is perhaps the first book written and edited by Malawians that squarely addresses the political economy issues confronting Malawi.

**The atlas of African affairs** by Ieuan Ll Griffiths. London, New York: Routledge. South African edition, Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1993, second edition, 234 pp. ISBN 1 86814 238 8 (South African edition).

The book, providing brief introductions to a variety of topics, is a product of the author's teaching and researching at the School of African and Oriental Studies, University of Sussex. The 65 short chapters are grouped under the following section headings: *Environmental* (physical and human geography); *Historical* (the story from prehistoric times until Namibian independence in 1990); *Political* (a rather unstructured selection of issues ranging from boundary problems and land-locked states to military rule and case studies on secessionism, irredentism, and African imperialism); *Economic* (the longest and perhaps most useful part of the book); *The South* (three chapters reviewing the apartheid era and its effects on South Africa's neighbours, with concluding notes on the likely impact on the larger Southern African region of the present political transformation in South Africa). Each chapter is illustrated with one or more maps and several tables present some basic data.

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