

***Peace as an International Public Good:
An Application to Southern Africa***

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ABSTRACT: We review basic economic concepts relevant to international public goods production and apply them, in preliminary fashion, to the case of security and peace in southern Africa.

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Introduction

In his presidential address to the American Economic Association, entitled “International Public Goods Without International Government,” delivered in December 1985, Charles Kindleberger (1986) said:

“I come at long last to international public goods. The primary one is peace. Economists are poorly qualified to discuss how, after war, peace is restored and maintained” (1986, p. 7).

That was the extent of Kindleberger’s comments on the *economics* of peace. In the years since Kindleberger’s speech (but even before then), economists have made progress toward an economic understanding of conflict, war, and peace. This research note suggests how this progress might be extended to the analysis of international security arrangements. While NATO has been extensively analyzed (e.g., Sandler and Hartley, 1999, and the literature reviewed therein), relatively little work has been done on other international security arrangements such as those included in ASEAN in southeast Asia, ECOWAS in western Africa, and SADC in southern Africa. Too often, regional security arrangements between and among nation-states are dismissed as infeasible, e.g., due to their falling prey to free-rider behavior among potential participants.

The overriding intent of this research note is to extract from the literature a set of fundamental features that help determine the likelihood of success of any collective action and to apply these features to the current southern African context. Section I provides an overview of southern Africa. Section II assembles a catalogue of collective action features pertinent for collective action. Section III provides a preliminary analysis for southern Africa, and section IV concludes this article.

I. Southern Africa

If one defines the southern African region as comprising the fourteen member nations of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) then the region contains two population giants, the Democratic Republic of Congo (the former Zaire) and South Africa, which together account for about half of the region’s nearly 180 million people. In addition, there are six mid-size nations (Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe) with populations between 10 and 30 million, and six small nations (Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, the Seychelles, and Swaziland) with populations below 2 million each (see table 1).

In terms of economic achievement, South Africa alone, with one-fourth of the region’s population, generates GDP three times as large as all the other SADC-members taken together. This “giantism,” in itself cause for concern for South Africa’s neighbors, complicates regional cooperation and integration and is an institutional feature that cannot be neglected in any attempt of thinking about peacekeeping and peacemaking in the southern African region. Not unlike the case of Nigeria in ECOWAS, a west African grouping, there cannot be any notion nor pretense of equals sitting at the negotiating table.

Table 1: Selected indicators, southern Africa, 1995

<u>Country</u>	<u>Total population</u>		<u>GDP at market prices</u>	
	'000	% of region	US\$ million	% of region
<i>Total</i>	178,874	100.0	166,003	100.0
Angola	10,800	6.0	3,722	2.1
Botswana	1,500	0.8	4,318	2.5
Dem. Rep. Congo	43,900*	24.5	5,268*	3.0
Lesotho	2,000	1.1	1,029	0.6
Malawi	9,800	5.5	1,465	0.8
Mauritius	1,100	0.6	3,919	2.2
Mozambique	16,200	9.1	1,469	0.8
Namibia	1,500	0.8	3,033	1.7
Seychelles	74	0.0	490	0.3
South Africa	41,500	23.2	136,035	77.3
Swaziland	900	0.5	1,048	0.6
Tanzania	29,600	16.6	3,602	2.1
Zambia	9,000	5.0	4,073	2.3
Zimbabwe	11,000	6.2	6,522	3.7

Source: World Bank, 1997; UNDP, 1997.

Note: * Data for the Democratic Republic of Congo are, for 1995, those for Zaire. The World Bank (1997) carries per capita 1995-GDP data for Zaire in Table 1a (p. 248) but does not provide an estimate of Zaire's population. The UNDP (1997) provides a population estimate as of 1994 (Table 22, p. 195). Multiplying the UNDP's population estimate with the World Bank's per capita GDP estimate provides an estimate of GDP.

Intra-regional asymmetries of this kind invariably create suspicion about possible domination by, and ulterior motives of, South Africa. This alone places a heavy burden on the quality of South African diplomacy in the region. In addition, threats to peace, security, and development are mounting as non-military challenges emerge, e.g., in the form of indebtedness to foreign creditors, fiscal imbalances, serious political instability in many countries, and — recurrently — droughts and the attendant crises of malnourishment, hunger, and migrant flows to hoped-for greener pastures. Despite (and, in some cases, because of) numerous attempts by African leaders to institute liberalist reforms (e.g., democratic principles, neo-liberalist structural adjustment programs), there is in some quarters a dystopian view that Africa is becoming ever more peripheral in the global economy, and is doomed to further poverty, immiserization, and ostracization.

Within the southern African region, the South African economy and, in many instances, her state of development, stands out like a shining beacon. South Africa outperforms her neighbors in a number of ways. But throughout the region the pace of change has shifted and has warped accepted patterns of state behavior. The intensity of this process is expected to increase as the process of regional integration deepens. In addition, old security issues linger with great potential for damage. For example, the proliferation of weapons throughout the region — a legacy of the region's ideological past and of the UN's mishandling of post-war disarmament in Angola and Mozambique — is highly destabilizing (see, e.g., Smith, 1996, and Batchelor, 1996).

Two major forces then are emerging from the divide between South Africa and other countries on the sub-continent. First, the inability to scratch out even a meager living in what is a vast economic wasteland is compelling millions of hungry, poverty-stricken inhabitants to seek greener pastures elsewhere (push-forces). To most, South Africa represents those greener pastures (pull-forces). Hence the annual influx into South Africa of hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants (Hough, 2000). Economic refugees from elsewhere in southern Africa are exerting considerable pressure on an already explosive demographic situation in South Africa. With more and more people seeking jobs and sustenance, and laying claim to the country's strained resources, the potential for violent conflict is obvious. Paradoxically, South Africa's superior economic performance and prospects relative to the rest of southern Africa contribute to its high incidence of unemployment and societal disintegration. As long as there are pronounced regional disparities in the sub-continent there will be an inevitable influx of illegal immigrants for many years to come. Thus, it is in South Africa's interest to make a meaningful contribution to economic development and enhanced prosperity in all southern African countries. It is far better to import goods and services from its neighbors than to import instability.

Second, recent developments have further deepened the potential for conflict. Intense problems have arisen over arranging and enforcing cease-fires and peace accords as well as in demobilizing armies and integrating former enemies into unified armed structures. Security is also threatened by the large number of unexploded land mines in countries such as Mozambique and Angola. Conflicts are also likely to emerge from declining economic activity and from the usually wrenching short-run impact of IMF structural adjustment programs that could negatively affect within-state reconciliation efforts. Increasingly, too, it is apparent that change has awakened long-dormant ethnic, religious, and sub-national loyalties. State fragmentation may also take place within the region, e.g., Zanzibar, the Shaba province in the Democratic Republic of Congo, southern Angola, and northern Mozambique. Because of porous borders, change cannot be contained within any one country. As a result, conflict and other problems spill across borders. This is now a central concern in southern Africa. In addition to intra-state conflict, in some isolated cases countries of the region are involved in border disputes or are quarreling over tracts of land.

Historically, four institutions in southern Africa have vied for ascendancy, namely the *Southern African Customs Union* (SACU), the *Southern African Development Community* (SADC), the *Common Market of East and Southern Africa* (Comesa), which grew out of the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA), and the *Frontline States* (FLS). Each was established at a different moment in the region's turbulent past and each aimed to cope with a slightly different set of circumstances. South Africa's full readmittance into political and economic structures in the region (in 1994) has dramatically shifted the relative power of these groupings from which, with the exception of SACU, South Africa was previously

excluded. The central challenge facing the region now is to select a predominant institutional vehicle through which it can channel its energies in the decades ahead, and it seems that SADC is the most likely candidate. FLS disbanded as a consequence of South Africa's democratization; SACUs purpose, since 1910, is strictly limited to customs union matters and seems more likely to be incorporated into SADC than to be expanded on its own terms; Comesa might be on its way to disbandment also as SADC members signed, in 1996, a Trade Protocol with the aim of establishing a southern African free-trade area by the year 2004.

Additionally, SADC itself is expanding in membership and functions. There are now 14 member states, the Seychelles and the Democratic Republic of Congo having joined in 1997. SADC now comprises 19 functional areas (such as Trade and Investment, Agriculture, and the like), called "sectors," two "commissions," five "protocols" (the latest being the 1996 Trade Protocol), and one "Organ," the "Organ on Politics, Defence and Security" (PDS) which was added in 1995. Principles and objectives of PDS are displayed in table 2. The language of these principles and objectives suggest that the PDS Organ is, as yet, toothless.¹

Taking into account these factors — political instability and consequent uncertainties, recurrent political and economic refugee streams, and SADC as the region's continuously developing forum of cooperation — what steps might be taken to influence developments, especially security-related developments, in the region?

II. Collective action

Our claim is that any simple approach to the question – can stable peace be achieved in the southern African region? – may falsely predict failure as the ultimate outcome of peacebuilding measures.² The simple approach to collective action problems such as regional peacebuilding is to view such action as a textbook prisoners' dilemma game in which free-riding on other actors' efforts becomes the dominant strategy. Irrational rationality prevails: what is rational for each player is irrational for the group. But this outcome

¹ For example, a news item in *SADC Today* of 9 September 1997 reads as follows:

09-16-97 — SADC Leaders to Meet on Angola, Regional Security

SADC leaders will meet at the end of September in Luanda, Angola to bring Angola's peace process back on track, said SADC Executive Secretary Kaire Mbuende.

The discussion will center on the conflict between the Angolan Government and UNITA. Mbuende said the lack of commitment by UNITA to fully take part in the Government of National Unity and failure to demobilize its troops remain a cause of concern. SADC leaders will also decide on who will head the SADC "Organ on Politics, Defense and Security," the organization's conflict resolution body.

But, as yet, there is no regional enforcement mechanism in place. Indeed, later on it was the UN Security Council, not SADC's PDS, that "imposed sanctions against the Angolan rebel movement, Unita, to pressure it to comply with the Lusaka peace accord signed in November 1994" (*SADC Today*, Oct. 1997, Vol. 1, No. 5).

² Although there are obvious differences, in this article we use peacebuilding, peacemaking, and peacekeeping as synonyms unless otherwise indicated.

Table 2: Principles and Objectives of SADC's Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (PDS)**Principles** (Excerpts)

- Sovereign equality of all member States;
- Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and for its inalienable right to independent existence;
- Achievement of solidarity, peace and security in the region;
- Observance of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
- Peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation and arbitration;

- Promotion of economic development in the SADC region in order to achieve for all member States, equity, balance and mutual benefit; and
- Military intervention of whatever nature shall be decided upon only after all possible political remedies have been exhausted in accordance with the Charter of the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU) and the United Nations.

Objectives (Excerpts)

- Protect the people and safeguard the development of the region, against instability arising from the breakdown of law and order, inter-state conflict and external aggression;
- Promote political cooperation among member States and the evaluation of common political value systems and institutions;
- Develop a common foreign policy in areas of mutual concern and interest, and to lobby as a region, on issues of common interest at international fora;
- Cooperate fully in regional security and defence through conflict prevention management and resolution;
- Mediate in inter-state and intra-state disputes and conflicts;
- Use preventive diplomacy to pre-empt conflict in the region, both within and between States, through an early warning system;
- Where conflict does occur, to seek to end this as quickly as possible through diplomatic means. Only where such means would fail would the Organ recommend that the Summit should consider punitive measures. These responses would be agreed upon in a Protocol on Peace, Security and Conflict Resolution;
- Promote and enhance the development of democratic institutions and practices within member States, and to encourage the observance of universal human rights as provided for in the Charters and Conventions of the OAU and the United Nations;

- Promote peace-making and peace-keeping in order to achieve sustainable peace and security;
- Give political support to the organs and institutions of SADC;
- Develop a collective security capacity and conclude a Mutual Defence Pact for a responding to external threats, and a regional peace-keeping capacity within national armies that could be called upon within the region, or elsewhere on the continent;
- Promote the political, economic, social and environmental dimensions of security;
- Develop close cooperation between the police and security services of the region, with a view to addressing crossborder crime, as well as promoting a community-based approach on matters of security;
- Encourage and monitor the ratification of the OAU, United Nations, and other international conventions and treaties on arms control and disarmament, human rights and peaceful relations between States;
- Coordinate the participation of member States in international and regional peace-keeping operations; and
- Address extra-regional conflict which impact on peace and security in southern Africa.

Source: <http://www.sadc-usa.net/reference/protocol/organ.html>

relies on specific assumptions about the construction of the simple prisoners' dilemma game that rarely hold in applied situations, and one must acknowledge important theoretical developments in the collective action literature since Olson's seminal work (Olson, 1965). These permit differentiated analyses, tailored to the cases at hand. In this section we briefly present a set of stylized features of collective action and then apply them in preliminary fashion to the case of southern Africa in section III.

According to Sandler (1992, pp. 8-9), three basic themes run through Olson's work. First, due to mutual free-riding, the larger is a group of equal members that could benefit from collective action, the smaller is the likelihood that the good will be optimally provided. Second, however, asymmetries in the group (e.g., larger against smaller, richer against poorer members) may lead to "exploitation of the great by the small" (Olson, 1965, p. 35). For example, the richer member may provide the collective action good, and the smaller members free-ride. Third, by paying attention to institutional design and to selective incentives, collective action failures may be overcome.

The simple prisoners' dilemma analysis relies, in part, on assuming homogeneous players possessing equal utility functions leading to identical payoffs, engaging in a particular form of strategic behavior (Nash-behavior), playing without communication a single, non-repeating game, and pursuing a pure collective action good produced by summation technology,

$$(1) \quad Q = \sum_{i=1}^n q_i$$

where Q is the quantity of the collective action good and q_i is each contributor's potential contribution. If $n-1$ members contribute, then n 's contribution is not necessary for provision and the n^{th} member can free-ride. The collective action good is provided sub-optimally or not provided at all. Untangling the multitude of assumptions behind the simple prisoners' dilemma game, and reassembling them for specific cases at hand, makes it impossible to "state general propositions concerning the feasibility of collective action" (Sandler, 1992, p. 44), although successful collective actions tend to share certain features, such as private, excludable joint products, with favorable payoffs to at least one player, the presence of an exclusion mechanism that might convert a public good into a club good, and repeated interactions among players (p. 196).

The incentive for free-riding can be reduced or enhanced when instead of summation so-called weakest-link or best-shot technologies apply, i.e. $Q = \min (q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n)$ or $Q = \max (q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n)$ (Hirshleifer, 1983). Peacebuilding among a set of equally endowed actors may be a weakest-link production. The minimum contribution determines the level of provision. If a single nation-state fails to make a contribution or withdraws from prior or future contributions (the weakest-link), mutual peacebuilding may not be available any longer for the group as a whole. In contrast, with unequal, heterogeneous players, peacemaking and peacekeeping can be a best-shot production in which a technically and economically very powerful nation-state could provide the collective action good for all participants (e.g., the US intervention in Kuwait in 1991). However, it is likely to do so only when the collective action good yields considerable private (excludable, nation-state specific) benefits so that the purely public collective action benefits are coincidental. Thus, the provision of collective action goods may depend, in part, on being impure, yielding private benefits, and depend on the distribution of these benefits across players. Collective action may

depend on whether groups are homogenous or heterogeneous.

Similar thoughts apply to the distribution of costs, the form of cost-sharing arrangements, transaction costs, and economies of scale and scope. For example, building an institutional architecture for any one collective action good is a sunk cost whose average may be lowered by distributing it over several collective action goods.

Further limits on the prognosis for collective action failure come from the nature of the game. The simple textbook prisoners' dilemma game is a single-shot game without repeated interaction. But peacebuilding among nation-states involves actors, with the possible exception of a mediator, who have interacted in the past and are likely to interact in future in a number of venues. Therefore, peacebuilding is almost certainly a joint product of repeated interaction that yields private benefits on a bilateral basis even as peacebuilding itself is a multilateral product. For instance, the rebuilding of peace in Europe after World War II involved multilateral action even as it improved bilateral relations, say, between France and Germany. Thus, the temporal dimension of collective action is important and the collective and private gains can possibly be structured to increase over time so that defection from the collective becomes less and less palatable. This would be a form of a temporally self-enforcing contract. The structure of incentives is thus of importance to induce desired collective behavior. To eliminate defection from collective action, selective incentives can also be provided at the start and intermittently as needed, for instance by offering initial payoffs or "progress" or conditional payments or other benefits in certain players' favor. Particularly in southern Africa, with its hugely rich natural endowments, outside vested interests in economic development and prosperity might consider providing degrees of matching funds in the form of preferential information and physical access to overseas markets to enhance collective action within the region.

Finally, although our 'catalogue' is far from exhaustive, collective action among nation-states may critically depend on sub-games within and across nation-states. In southern Africa, rivalry among political parties associated with particular tribal groupings within nation-states may hold inter-state collective action hostage to intra-state conflict. Similarly, interests from diamond-miners to arms-smugglers across nation-states may interfere with collective action among nation-states.

The primary challenge then is to design a set of institutions and incentives that encourages contribution and prevents defection to achieve optimal provision of a (set of) cross-national collective action good(s). That this must fail, as the simple prisoners' dilemma game analysis suggests, is by no means clear. Success of failure depends on how cleverly institutions and incentives are designed and structured.

III. Collective action in southern Africa

Joining the southern African context, as described in section I, with theoretical concepts, from section II, we may make the following general observations to assess the likely success or failure of SADC as a peacebuilding community. First, we know that large membership size by itself does not necessarily presage failure so long as there exists a subset of members willing and able to provide the good in question even as other members may free-ride (the group is then said to be privileged). South Africa's admission, in 1994, to membership in SADC fundamentally transformed SADC to become a privileged group. International public goods production instantly changed from summation to best-shot technology because of South

Africa's "giantism." Actual provision of international public goods depends, in large part, on whether South Africa wishes it. If it does, it can almost single-handedly provide the good; if it does not, the other members may not possess the resources to provide it. South Africa's overwhelming economic size can cut two ways. It can lead to a situation in which "the small exploit the large" by means of free-riding on South Africa's efforts of provisioning, or it can lead to the converse situation in which "the large exploits the small."

For example, immediately upon taking office in the summer of 1999, the newly elected South African president, Thabo Mbeki, suggested to deploy South African peacekeeping troops to the Congo against rebels supported by non-SADC members Uganda and Rwanda. South Africa's presence or absence makes a huge difference. In its absence, the smaller SADC states' wish to withdraw from their costly engagement in the Congo suggests peacemaking and peacekeeping as a summation game where it is better to free-ride on the contributions others' make. The international public good of peacekeeping would not be provided and the Congo might implode yet again with highly uncertain consequences for its southern neighbors and for SADC. But in South Africa's presence, the stakes are different. Neither the rebels, nor Uganda and Rwanda, could hope to be more than a constant irritant were South Africa to decide to project its considerable powers into the Congo. The game, if South Africa decides to play it, would be converted into a best-shot affair. This results in a curious set of incentives. As minor players, other SADC members should want to free-ride on South Africa's efforts. And yet, South Africa can extract concessions (contributions) from them by credibly threatening *not* to contribute either and to let the exposed SADC member states along Congo's frontier fend for themselves.³ This would be an example of exploitation of the small by the large (also see Sandler, 1992, p. 57-58).

Second, after admitting South Africa, it seems to have been mistaken to also have added Mauritius (1995), the Congo (1997), and the Seychelles (1997). All three seem decidedly non-southern African. One might say that their utility-functions likely differ appreciably from those of the other SADC members and that a commonality of interests or preferences would be lacking, making cooperative behavior more difficult to achieve. Economically, neither Mauritius nor the Seychelles would appear to be able to add much to SADC but might potentially hinder decision-making in its one-member, one-vote framework. Congo is not traditionally viewed as southern African, is French-speaking, internally highly unsettled, engaged in various border skirmishes, and overshadowed by uncertainties. However, it is also a highly lucrative raw materials partner, especially for South Africa's mining industry. Congo would have appeared certain to be a net burden rather than a net benefit to SADC. Yet, ironically, Congo has helped spur interest in active regional peacekeeping of sorts. In the current conflagrations in Congo, this produced a conflagration of its own within SADC. Whereas South Africa's then-President favored peace-talking missions, other members insisted and eventually succeeded in sending troops (Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe) in crucial support of the formal government of the Congo (see the Mutual Defence Pact objective in table 2). This led to serious disagreement between Mandela and Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe who heads the PDS and wanted to use it in a much less consensual fashion than South Africa preferred (*The Economist*, 3 October 1998, p. 47-48). Thus, crucial leadership issues of how to consult and arrive at decisions have not yet been fully established and will burden SADC's effectiveness. Whereas South Africa clearly is the

³ This recently happened as UNITA rebels of Angola conducted incursions into Namibian territory, apparently in at least partial retaliation for Namibia's and Angola's military assistance to the Congo which undermined UNITA supply routes.

economic leader of the region, there is a battle over political leadership that may yet render SADC apart.

Third, like other regional bodies, say ECOWAS in western Africa (www.ecowas.net) and ASEAN in southeast Asia (www.aseansec.org), SADC's founding treaty envisions a broad scope of activities. Scope carries two contradictory faces. On the one hand, because of the overwhelming tasks and coordination costs, it is inadvisable to burden a relatively new and poor regional body with an encompassing mission. Specific, limited objectives are easier to achieve and can then, on the other hand, be expanded over time to evolve toward more complex objectives and interactions, as the development of the European Union since World War II illustrates. Once a minimal set of legislative and executive procedures is instituted, economies-of-scope may help distribute the sunk cost across an expanded line of international public goods. SADC's current organizational structure farms out the coordination and primary management of sectoral areas to each of its member countries. Zimbabwe for instance is assigned the coordination of the food, agriculture, and natural resources sector, Swaziland is assigned to human resource development, Malawi handles the forestry sector, and so on. For example, the forestry sector's mandate, functions and responsibilities are based on the decision of the SADC Council of Ministers which met in Maseru, Lesotho, in May 1985. The mandate includes:

- < Initiate, coordinate, evaluate and monitor sectoral projects
- < Act as facilitator to member states and help them identify opportunities
- < Coordinate policy analysis, research and training
- < Mobilise resources for approved projects
- < Organise technical meetings, workshops, seminars, etc.
- < Collect, analyse, store and disseminate relevant data
- < Review Forestry Sector Programme of Action⁴

This functional allocation of responsibilities is institutionally clever. Each country develops expertise in its assigned sector and shares it with member states in return for which the other member states share their expertise. Each member therefore creates and retains a vested interest in SADC. Each possesses a modicum of leverage over the others. This does not, however, apply to the area of regional defense and security where only South Africa possesses leverage. According to press reports (I am not aware of scholarly studies), the war in the Congo has been very expensive for Zimbabwe, on the order of several million dollars a day. Angola's direct military involvement in the Congo was stimulated by its desire to prop up President Kabila in exchange for undercutting UNITA rebels' bases and supply lines running through the Congo. Namibia's military adventure in the Congo has been harder to understand and may yet, as in Zimbabwe, come to haunt it as internal dissension and strife has increased in northern Namibia.

Fourth, all SADC members must consider private (national) benefits to South Africa in order to extract from it funding for projects that produce international collective goods for themselves. All must have it in their own self-interest to make South Africa privileged. Whenever South Africa is more secure (e.g., fewer migrants to South Africa from fellow SADC members), obtains more investment opportunities (e.g., in the Congo), and generates more economic growth for its population, positive spill-over effects will generate

⁴ http://www.fstcu.org/about_us/mandate.htm (accessed 18 February 2000).

concomitant economic growth in other SADC members. Thus, SADC members ought to be encouraged, not chided, for free or easy-riding on whatever regional security and other benefits South Africa can provide. Envy would be bad policy: it is better to ride on South Africa's coattails than not to ride at all. Both sides, SADC and South Africa, need recognize this point.

Fifth, it is significant that SADC's Politics, Defence and Security (PDS) Organ, while formally part of the SADC umbrella, is in fact a separate institution which would permit PDS to develop separately, much as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is somewhat separate from ASEAN itself⁵ or as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is much separate from the EU even as it is linked to it. Again, however, SADC members need recognize the giantism effect that South Africa exerts. A mutual common-defense club along the lines of NATO would inevitably be dominated by South Africa's considerable military resources, armaments, arms industry, experience, and sheer size and weight but, once established, would also be highly vulnerable to South Africa's withdrawal. Any such peacekeeping force, certainly if envisioned as a permanent and effective force, would therefore need to build in institutional features that make South Africa's continued participation reliable and credible.

But there is no presupposition that a southern African peacekeeping club needs to involve all 14 SADC members. It is entirely conceivable that a subset of small nations such as Lesotho and Swaziland abandon independent military forces altogether (in favor of properly constituted police forces) and transfer the function of keeping the peace to a joint force with a larger partner, such as South Africa. Alternatively, like Costa Rica, a larger subset of small nations, such as Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mauritius, and the Seychelles could formally abandon military forces and explicitly form a joint institution for peace training, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping. This would also acknowledge a frequent criticism of military forces in small states. Thomas Scheetz (forthcoming) argues for the Latin American context, that small states are functionally incapable of offensive war-fighting capabilities and therefore might as well transform their military forces into peacekeeping forces with primarily defensive force postures and structures and achieve economies-of-scale in the process.⁶

Sixth, the process of decision-making within SADC is cloudy. While there exist formal treaties and procedures, the serious row between Mandela and Mugabe over whether or not to send troops under SADC auspices to the Congo illustrates the fragility of the current arrangements in the defense and security arena. For SADC to be more successful, it might be useful to more clearly separate the political (legislative) level from the operational (executive) side of things. For instance, all member states agree that current nation-state borders are inviolable. It is therefore a fairly simple matter to institute a *rule of automaticity* that says that SADC peacekeeping troops will immediately and automatically be deployed to and

⁵ ARF's objectives are "(a) to foster constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interest and concern; and (b) to make significant contributions to efforts towards confidence-building and preventive diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region" (<http://www.aseansec.org/amm/objarf1.htm>; accessed 18 February 2000).

⁶ Hummel and Lavoie (1990), in an altogether different context, provide a different line of argument, namely that in many instances, national defense is not synonymous with the defense of a people's interests but rather with the defense of ruling class interests. Inasmuch as objectives of rulers can be achieved with a police force, the function of defense from external threats can again be transferred to a joint force, much like membership in an insurance pool transfers internal resources outward to a collective of which one is a member.

intersperse themselves between the contestants without any further discussion or decision at the political level.⁷ This would lend some credibility to peacekeeping in the region, probably discourage some military adventures, and help strengthen existing governments while at the same time directing dissenting forces to concentrate their efforts within their own countries without seeking refuge and bases in neighboring states.

Seventh, we mentioned earlier that intra-regional asymmetries invariably create suspicion about possible domination by, and ulterior motives of, South Africa and that this places a heavy burden on the quality of South African diplomacy in the region. But South Africa cannot afford to wait upon the rest of southern Africa to catch up economically, politically, and militarily. At some point, it faces a stark choice: either risk being drawn down to the economic malaise of its neighbors or to more boldly assert its *de facto* leadership and unilaterally set a regional agenda, even in the face of diplomatic discomfort. Whichever of its neighbors want to go along for the ride would have to submit to South Africa's leadership and will probably be the better for it. To South Africa the success or failure of SADC and of PDS is certainly a much more marginal affair than it is to its small neighbors.

IV. Conclusion

Failure of peacebuilding as an instance of collective action in southern Africa is not a preordained outcome. Neither of course is success. The road to success depends crucially on clearly identified and agreed-upon objectives, very clever institutional design, appropriate incentive structures based on a sharp understanding of the relevant costs and benefits, and on a non-capricious, flexible way of adjusting these objectives, institutions, and incentives to changing circumstances. The Southern African Development Community and its Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security might wish to examine the intricate history and workings of the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) of how to build, gradually, a largely successful organizational structure that provides international public goods, especially conflict prevention, to its members. Another example would be provided by ASEAN and its ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

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⁷ On automaticity, see Brauer (2000). For other specific suggestions on the nature and structure of a peacekeeping force in southern Africa, also see Potgieter (1996) and Brooks (1997/98).

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