

Review of the SADC Standby Force's Preparedness to Community conflicts' threats

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Objective

- * To share SADC standby force response to community conflict threats
- * To Highlight on the preparedness/ success/Challenges
- * To stimulate discussion on possible areas of academic interest

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- * Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, remains one of the most peaceful, like other RECs faces a range of evolving peace and security threats;
 - * maritime security and piracy,
 - * cyber and technology-driven security threats,
 - * Political and socio-economic unrest .

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- * SADC faces acute challenges characterised by tensions between member states, resource deficits, citizens' exclusion, social discontent and limited internal and external coordination

Background

- * In response to the regional security challenges SADC established a multinational SADC standby peacekeeping brigade.
- * Oriented towards Chapter VI missions, typically to be deployed under a UN or AU mandate.

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- * Though SADC expects in Planning and preparations to cater for deployment under the mandating authority of SADC itself

Establishment

- * The Protocol on the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation signed 2001 includes the following specific objectives:
 - To consider enforcement action in accordance with international law and as a matter of last resort where peaceful means have failed;

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- * The SADC Brigade (military, police and civilian) supports regional peace operations.
- * The Function of the Brigade is to participate in missions.

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- * Observation and monitoring missions;
 - * Peace support missions;
 - * Interventions for peace and security restoration at the request of a Member State;
 - * It serves in peace-building efforts including post-conflict disarmament and demobilisation and humanitarian assistance in conflict

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- * One of its objectives is a commitment to;
 - * Develop a regional peace support operational capability based upon the individual member state's standby arrangements and promoting the joint training of civil police
 - * Consolidate and develop the activities of the regional peacekeeping training centre.
 - * Finance the regional peacekeeping

Preparedness

- * Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre (RPTC) in Harare, Zimbabwe,
- * RPTC is intended to act as a SADC clearinghouse for peace support training activities
- * A proposed Logistic base in Gaborone Botswana
- * Civilian Standby Database and Rostering System.

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- * It has demonstrated its readiness for deployment, successfully conducting joint exercises,
 - * AMAN II
 - * CPEX
 - * Field Trainings
 - * RDC under ASF
 - * though it needs further strengthening to expand its humanitarian and disaster management roles.

Interventions

- * Two regional military operations and One Civilian
- * Lesotho (including troops from South Africa and Botswana)
- * DRC (Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia) that initially appeared to accentuate rather than reduce regional differences
- * Madagascar (Civilian)

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- * Not fully incorporated a civilian component, which is necessary to provide for human security as specified by the AU.
 - * No post-conflict reconstruction program or security sector reform policy framework to underpin sustainable peace

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- * Beyond efforts to respond to these challenges, policy implementation capacity and information and response mechanisms are yet to be actualised

Lessons

- * SADC's intervention in Lesotho , Madagascar and Zimbabwe had exposed the region's limited capacity to enforce agreements it has brokered.
- * Mediators' responsibilities suffered additional burdens due to Ad hoc and under-resourced mediation imposed on them

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- * SADC processes and Civil Society engagement in the three countries has been at best tangential, confirming the gulf between the regional body and its citizens.
 - * SADC's mediation efforts revealed complexities and challenges of dealing with unconstitutional changes in government, contested elections and violations of the region's electoral code.

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- * Existed a culture of political solidarity among members with a shared common liberation struggle history remains, and a commitment to non-interference in the internal politics of member states.
 - * The Lesotho, Madagascar and Zimbabwe cases also highlighted structural governance deficits and politicised security sectors exacerbated conflict.
(Example SADC Tribunal remain suspended)

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- * Decision-making was consensual and rested solely with the heads of state and government and ministerial committees
 - * The system that inhibited effective preventive diplomacy and provided justification for non-engagement in cases of potential conflict and security threats.

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- * It is not clear how the early warning system established in 2010 under SADC utilises the conflict signals arising in the region and how best this infrastructure could be enhanced.

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- * The secretariat is expected to function as SADC's implementing arm, but lacks capacity and the authority to enforce decisions and is not empowered to engage in independent diplomatic action to address conflict situations.

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- * There are varying geopolitical interests among members
 - * Exclusive alliance of countries with liberation struggle history, and sensitivities regarding possible hegemonic domination.
 - * There some prominence of bilateral over multilateral security cooperation.

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- * South Africa's role and potential in this regard are particularly pertinent, as are its relations with Angola, the second most influential SADC member.

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- * Foreign partnerships around peace and security are disjointed and are not tied to a coherent strategy to build infrastructure and capacity.

Conclusion

- * Need to explore the use of the civilian component of the standby force
- * And civil society as the bridge and building blocks to community peace.
- * Answer to the question of whether self reliability and sustainability is attainable honestly

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