

# South African Peacebuilding Approaches: Evolution and Lessons

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## INTRODUCTION

Following the demise of apartheid, South Africa has made considerable strides in advancing itself as a global player and champion of African interests within the continent and globally. This has been most manifest in its role in peace and security. With its dual membership as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in 2006–7 and 2009–10, its membership in the G20 from 2009 and its role in the United Nations Peacebuilding Council, South Africa has positioned itself as a key player in the new efforts at international and African peace and security. As one of the architects of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the recently developed African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC), designed to rapidly deploy in response to threats to peace and security, South Africa has positioned itself as a crucial

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role player in efforts to manage security threats in Africa. South Africa has also contributed resources to peacebuilding endeavors, including the recent pledges and donations of

- over US\$1 million to support the Central African Republic's (CAR) recovery efforts under the leadership of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA);
- about US\$10 million to curb violence in Mali;
- over US\$8 million toward assisting the then-Transitional Federal Government of Somalia;
- the first AU peace support operation in Burundi (Lucey and Gida 2014) and the special United Nations Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), endorsed by the AU to support the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) national army (FARDC) in defeating the M23 rebellion operating in the Eastern region of the DRC.

Additionally, one of the first things the ANC did when it assumed power was to write off the debts of Swaziland, Mozambique, and Namibia, each valued at about ZAR1 billion (about \$60 million) (Besharati 2013). Today, South Africa is transforming its aid and development cooperation activities from the African Renaissance Fund to the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA). The SADPA is projected to operate an annual budget of R500 million (approximately US\$50 million) (Besharati 2013). Although the size of its budget and its technical resources are much smaller than those of many traditional donors, through the SADPA, South Africa strives to achieve impact on the African continent.

South Africa's peacebuilding approach has been modeled on its own post-conflict reconstruction program called the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP). The RDP includes a socioeconomic policy framework that was designed to address the immense socioeconomic problems brought about by the long years of the apartheid regime. Specifically, it set its sights on alleviating poverty and addressing the massive shortfalls in social services across the country by relying upon a stronger macroeconomic environment. Unlike traditional peacebuilding, this framework was need-driven and offered houses, built roads to marginalized communities, and made health care and other social services affordable to victims of apartheid. In addition, the RDP attempted to combine measures to boost the economy such as contain fiscal spending, lower taxes, reduce

government debt, and foster trade liberalization with infrastructural projects. Consequently, the policy adopted both socialist and neo-liberal elements whose implementation across Africa has drawn a number of criticisms, particularly because in its engagements South Africa has not been consistent on its assistance and outreach to states in need. This inconsistency casts a shade of doubt on the credibility of South Africa as an actor not much different from the interest-driven traditional peacebuilding actors from the global north. For instance, some have questioned its involvement in regions outside Southern Africa such as its mediation roles in Cote d'Ivoire and Burundi (Nibishaka 2011). Even in Southern Africa, its motives and interests have been a subject of debate about whether it is advancing its power/hegemonic interests under the pretext of regional common good (Kagwanja 2009). It has been accused of imposing its own model of transition featuring government of national unity and truth commissions in situations where this model might not be applicable. It has also been criticized for showing inconsistent ambition for Africa's peace, showing energy in some cases and pulling back in others, such as Somalia. It has been accused of using its peace diplomacy to open markets for its multinationals, which exploit other Africans. The spike of violence against African migrants and refugees in South Africa has also shamed the country (Fayomi et al. 2015). Of course, South Africa has sought to assure fellow Africans that its interests are genuine and motives are grandiose. It has adjusted its approaches and sought to consult more now than before. It has sought to communicate a bit more clearly and to intervene only after careful consultations with other African countries. As a result, over time, its interventions have been limited to those that are done under a multilateral mandate such as the SADC mandate for Zimbabwe's peace facilitation, the UN-mandated intervention in the DRC, and the AU-UN mandate in Darfur, among others (Zondi 2012). More recently, it is voting patterns in the United Nations Security Council, especially on Resolution 1973, which in the guise of imposing a No Flight Zone was converting into a mission to overthrow and unseat Gaddafi. By voting for the Resolution which other African heads of states criticized South Africa's integrity has been put on the spotlight and a constant reminder that it has turned its back from Africa is evidenced by the recurrent xenophobic incidences that have been sporadic across the country since 2008.

The above notwithstanding, some analysts have emphasized the importance of South Africa's military capability in supporting Peace Support Operations (Heitman 2013). Some have underlined the need for South

Africa to lend more support to the African Union's African Solidarity Initiative (ASI) and the Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) initiative in a multilateral platform, which is in sync with the AU's and REC's positions (Lucey and Gida 2014). They have argued for continued role in capacity building, implementation support, economic development, and information sharing programs, which can strengthen African states' recovery from crisis (Hendricks and Lucey 2013a, b). Some analysts have made the case for South Africa's involvement in promoting civil society engagement and the Livingstone Formula, which states that "Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) may provide technical support to the AU by undertaking early warning reporting, and situation analysis, which feeds information into the decision making processes of the PSC" (Lucey and Gida 2014).

Central to all this is the contested understanding of the concept of peacebuilding. For policy makers as well as experts in African conflict management frameworks, the concept has remained fluid and seems to generically encompass prevention, mediation, peace support operations, and post-conflict reconstruction, thereby begging for an appreciation of what exactly South Africa's interventions have constituted in countries where they have invested human and financial capital. Using the examples of Burundi and the DRC, this sub-section does not just identify the nature of South African interventions with the view of appraising the distinction between such interventions and those previously undertaken or concurrently undertaken by traditional peacebuilding actors. This distinction is further critical in relation to various platforms and instruments used by South Africa to implement their peacebuilding engagements, and is presented in two main sections with the first focusing on what peacebuilding is conceived to be in South African policy circles and the motivation for intervention and the second identifying the tangibles of peacebuilding.

### MOTIVATION FOR INTERVENTIONS

Admittedly, peacebuilding is a broad concept that cuts across a number of zones, including matters of economy, development, law, humanitarianism, and security. Understanding the nature of support that South Africa provides to struggling, fragile, or post-conflict states is key in determining the country's definition of peacebuilding. Part of the problem is that the country's involvement in post-conflict development and reconstruction is under-reported and scarcely discussed (Hendricks and Lucey 2013a, b).

South Africa's efforts suggest an unwritten peacebuilding and reconstruction framework with emphasis on building national infrastructure and the provision of affordable essential services like health care, housing, economic and social grants, and communications infrastructure. The practice is that interventions are in many cases driven by demand, such as where South Africa is requested by multilateral organizations such as the AU and SADC, certain cases such as in Zimbabwe, Madagascar, and Lesotho (Motsamai 2014). Yet, the difficulty in ending the crisis early has often led to accusations that South Africa was acting malevolently or unilaterally (Polzer 2008).

There have been occasions where, motivated by the doctrine of preventive diplomacy as expounded by the late UN Secretary-General Boutros-Boutros Ghali, South Africa has acted proactively to intervene in developing conflict such as in Lesotho in the late 1990s. On such occasion, there were accusations of unilateralism on its part though the intervention was mandated by the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Given the travails of a South African economy that has continued to grow without generating significant employment creation and given the impact of the global financial crisis on it, South Africa has found mandated interventions crucial for it to help stabilize regions on which it depends for investment without generating political problems for itself. South Africa is home to the largest pool of asylum seekers and refugees from the rest of Africa, imposing upon it the burden to respond the reasons for this migration while being sensitive to migrants' needs.

Another important fact in this approach to peace diplomacy is South Africa's anti-imperialist outlook on international affairs, being watchful for signs that western powers use difficulties in African countries to engineer regime changes and impose puppet governments. This is the policy stance that leads to South Africa intervening even at great costs to eliminate the conditions that lead to such eventualities. Recent comments by former President Thabo Mbeki in an open letter on Zimbabwe policy suggest that South Africa was fearful that the UK and the USA would intervene militarily in Zimbabwe to remove Mugabe and his government and install a government of their choice, taking advantage of the deep governance crisis accelerated by the ZANU-PF one-party state agenda and violations of the rights of citizens that opposed it. Similarly, its 2011 intervention through the AU committee in Libya, trying to mediate between parties and hoping for a political solution in conflict between the Qaddafi government and rebels, was motivated by the AU policy to prevent unconstitutional

changes of government and a wish to see Africa take the lead in solutions to African problems. Indeed, NATO-led forces brought down the Qaddafi government and in the process Qaddafi was killed. The result was a power vacuum that left a train of anarchy in that country, and that has destabilized large parts of the Sahel region. South Africa voted in favor of UN Security Council Resolution 1973, which authorized the NATO-led intervention in Libya, is still hotly debated in South Africa's foreign policy circles.

However, in the last decade, the demand for South African assistance in Africa's troubled hotspots has increased exponentially. These demands have found themselves competing with domestic pressures and citizenry demands for jobs, improved wages, and most recently "free education" across the board. According to Hendricks and Lucey (2013a, b), in certain cases, despite these domestic pressures, there is an "expectation ... [within the continent] ... that South Africa will not just be another donor, but a partner with a vested interest in the development of the continent." Maqungo goes further to say that, although demands come from everywhere, South Africa's peacebuilding activities have been directly focused on the African continent safe for when supporting a project within a larger multilateral arrangement such as within the UN Peacebuilding Commission, BRICS or IBSA.<sup>1</sup> When supported a peacebuilding project as part of a conglomeration of states, South Africa cannot lay claim to a different approach but the prevailing national sense is that, South African support "is not massive" but it is a demonstration of solidarity.

According to Kwezi Mngqibisa, post-apartheid South African interventions are justified by the feeling of a moral obligation to support Africa, as Africa did for her during the century long apartheid dispensation.<sup>2</sup> And so to the African states seeking assistance from South Africa, there is the expectation that unlike development aid from traditional peacebuilding actors that piles on their national debt, South Africa's aid is different and designed to trigger economic growth. In emphasizing the distinction, Maqungo contends that while traditional peacebuilding actors such as the UN have specific mandates to prevent conflicts, South Africa's interventions are driven by interests that she exemplifies as geographical, security, humanitarian, and furtherance of personal and political party relationships by wielders of power and drivers of state policy at a particular time. To Maqungo, geographical interests are seen in cases such as Zimbabwe and Lesotho, where because of the geographical proximity, if South Africa does not intervene early enough to avert a crisis, it would be directly affected

by the spillover of such crisis. Pertaining to humanitarianism as a motivation for South African interventions, Maqungo cited interventions such as Mandela's mediation in Burundi and said, South Africa had no direct interest or stakes in the Burundi process, but because the death of Nyerere left a vacuum that prompted the continent to solicit the moral authority of Mandela to intervene, the country got drawn into it (at great cost). But interestingly, personal friendships such as that between President Bozize (Central African Republic's present) and Thabo Mbeki (SA) also drive deployments, such as the security sector reform mission to Central Africa before the overthrow of Bozize. Maqungo also suggested that experience sharing such as between liberation movements like South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) can motivate interventions.

### THE ESSENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN PEACEBUILDING SUPPORT

It should be stated from the onset that unlike some development partners who sharply differentiate between mediation, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and humanitarian assistance, South Africa's broad spectrum approach is fluid and utilizes the concept of Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) to refer to funding for humanitarian and development assistance; and with cases such as Somalia, such funding can be used for capacity building trainings, policy development, inter-government exchange of ideas and electoral support, which all gear toward building a strong and resilient state.

More broadly, in terms of peacebuilding support, South Africa has provided states with substantial assistance in the areas of good governance, dialogue and reconciliation, security sector reform, human resource and infrastructure development, policy implementation, economic development and trade, information sharing and exchange visits among South African dignitaries, as well as humanitarian assistance. Key examples that can be cited are training and restructuring advice provided by South Africa to the DRC national army (FARDC) and police, police in South Sudan, military in the Central African Republic and the Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process in Cote d'Ivoire. In such capacities, South African expertise and resources have been essential in the development of key policy reforms, institutionalization of accountability

frameworks, and support for electoral processes in recipient countries. Furthermore, South Africa has fostered dialogue and reconciliation in many instances through financing negotiations, facilitating mediations, and channeling international buy-in of the process.

Moreover, human resource and infrastructure development assistance committed by Pretoria has ensured training, capacity-building workshops, professional exchange visits for key sectors of government and civil society organizations, as well as the building of new roads, hospitals, airports, schools, and water and irrigation schemes in conflict-affected countries. In addition, South Africa's commitment and know-how have also been essential for the implementation of nationally identified priorities such as DDR, fund raising and sponsorship programs to procure key state capacities such as public safety, data administration, and asset management in beneficiary countries. In the same vein, South Africa's support and export of technical knowledge in the areas of economic development and trade have helped many nations like the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to increase their national incomes by increasing the utility of national endowments such as mines and water reserves.

A good illustration is South Africa's technical assistance and skills training for Congolese to build a hydroelectric plant in the Bas Congo Corridor and facilitation of the business communication through regular flights and the setting up of leading South African businesses. Concomitantly, South Africa has provided information sharing and exchange visits, combined with humanitarian assistance, manifest vital support for CSOs immersed in democratization, gender mainstreaming, peacebuilding, dialogue, security sector reform, and transitional justice. By the same token, the South African non-governmental organization Gift of the Givers (GOTG) is the largest African humanitarian NGO and the South African government often donates funds to the GOTG as it has a proven track record of delivering humanitarian assistance in Africa and beyond, including in Afghanistan and Pakistan.<sup>3</sup> During the 2011 famine crisis that hit Somalia, an estimated 11 chartered "flights carrying 175 tons of supplies and ... another 132 containers carrying 2640 tons of aid on several ships ... [t]ogether with the medical support [to] ... four hospitals" were sent from South Africa into Somalia (GOTG 2012). It is estimated that this cost approximately ZAR80 million (approximately US\$10 million) over a one-year period.<sup>4</sup> This provided food security to about 126,000 people among whom 7000 were and several hundred physically challenged families (GOTG 2012).



The above examples from the DRC, South Sudan, Burundi, and Somalia offer tangible evidence of South Africa's peacebuilding support. When one talks about peacebuilding and South Africa, the above come to mind first.

### THE CATEGORIES OF INTERVENTIONS

Following from the above, South Africa's approaches to peacebuilding are strongly informed not just by its own recent history, but a strong national interest that benefits from peaceful resolution of seemingly intractable conflicts. This, according to its policy documents, compels South Africa to participate in peace missions to alleviate the plight of other peoples who are struggling to resolve similar conflicts (Department of Foreign Affairs 1999). Specifically, the 1999 White Paper on South African participation in international peace missions contemplates that civilian assistance, armed forces, and police officers are essential tools for peace, and their work in promoting the respect for human rights, good governance, and institution building is critical to reconstructing sustainable peace as opposed to the use of force which was previously characteristic of military interventions (Department of Foreign Affairs 1999). South Africa therefore committed through this document to work with the UN, the AU, SADC, and other multilateral agencies such as BRICs and IBSA to make appropriate contribution to international peace missions. South Africa's potential contributions include the services of a diverse group of civilians with expertise and experience in areas that may be fundamental to the success of a peace mission (conflict resolution, election monitoring, medical care, demining, telecommunications, etc.). Consequently, whether in South Sudan, the DRC, Burundi, or Somalia, the principles that have defined South Africa's intervention and peace support have been the same and have adopted a more nuanced terminology of peace missions as opposed to the traditional peacekeeping or peacebuilding mandates. The difference is that, from inception, a government decision to support a fragile country or one in conflict is seen as a peace mission, and all support such as below seeks to transform the ailing configuration of conflict and restore durable peace by putting in place resilient institutions and infrastructure (see Tables 6.1 and 6.2).

The tables above demonstrate the width of South African support to South Sudan and to the DRC and in a sense provide a snapshot of how peacebuilding support is channeled and funded. How different then are

**Table 6.1** South African peacebuilding support in South Sudan (Hendricks and Lucey 2013a, b, 3)

Governance	Development of the Child Act (University of Cape Town) Observing the referendum (35-member team consisting of members of the parliament, government officials, and analysis unit (PRAU))
Capacity building	Training of diplomats by the Department of Foreign Relations and Cooperation's (DIRCO), Policy Research and Analysis Unit (PRAU) Regional Capacity Building Project for Civil Service by the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) Capacity building of top- and middle-level government managers by the University of South Africa (UNISA) and the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) Training of South Sudan Police Service (SSPS) by the South African Police Service (SAPS) on operational training and senior management, crime prevention, sexual harassment, community policing, cybercrime, and crowd management Training of key security personnel and institution building by the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) Exchange between the universities of Juba and Fort Hare (Higher Education Department) and the University of the Western Cape (Law department)
Implementation support	Mediation between Sudan and South Sudan (Mbeki as Chair of AUHIP) Support with electoral materials for election in 2010 As part of UN Police (UNPOL) under the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) Securing airspace during independence day celebrations (SANDF) Demining (Mechem—Subsidiary of Denel) Refurbishing government buildings (KV3)
Economic Development & Trade	Arms (Denel), beer (SAB Miller), and mining exploration (New Kush Exploration), agribusiness (Joint Aid Management), cellular network (MTN), cement (Afrisam), and banking (Stanbic)
Other	MoU with Council of Geoscience to map minerals NGOs engaged in conflict resolution and capacity building, namely IJR, ACCORD, ISS, SAWID, IGD, AISA, and the SA Council of Churches. There are also South Africans working in other organizations in South Sudan in their individual capacities

**Table 6.2** South African peacebuilding support in the DRC (Hendricks and Lucey 2013a, b, 4)

Governance	<p>Assistance with the development of a master plan for the reform of the armed forces</p> <p>Needs assessment for the army, navy, air force and military health (proposed)</p> <p>SA Police Services (SAPS) development of a five-year plan (not fully implemented)</p> <p>Interpol (SA representative stationed at National Congolese Police (PNC) to assist with planning)</p> <p>Development of an organic law for decentralization of government and public administration, and vision and strategy document for the public service</p> <p>Anti-corruption legislative and institutional framework</p> <p>Establishment of the diplomatic academy</p> <p>Supporting the legislative drafting and development of a legal and constitutional framework</p> <p>Trade policy formulation; quality control; competition policy; intellectual property; and micro-finance</p> <p>Deployment of election observers</p>
Human resource development	<p>Training of army (three battalions; rapid detection force; new recruits)</p> <p>Training of PNC to police elections; VIP protection training; professionalization of PNC; office administration training/human resource and project management for police; arms control proliferation training</p> <p>Training of civil society for engagement in community policing forums and SSR</p> <p>Training of prosecutors, investigators, auditors, civil society &amp; business to develop and implement integrity initiatives</p> <p>Training of immigration officials</p> <p>Training of senior DRC public servants and public management</p> <p>Training of diplomats; foreign language training</p> <p>Training on conflict resolution and negotiation, SA foreign policy, management and leadership and mission administration; training on anti-corruption</p> <p>Training of DRC magistrates</p> <p>Building capacity for infrastructure development (i.e. job inspection, licensing of civil construction agents, setting up of information, financing, infrastructure development)</p> <p>Administrative assistance for CENI</p> <p>Training of DRC revenue authorities</p>

*(continued)*

**Table 6.2** (continued)

Infrastructure development	Rehabilitation of the Mura base; rehabilitation of the Maluku police training center; renovation of ENA (school of public administration); refurbishment of foreign ministry building to set up diplomatic academy Bas Congo corridor (deep-water port at Banana, rehabilitation of Matadi Port, rehabilitation of the railway line, Matadi to Kinshasa); Zambia Copper Belt spatial initiative
Implementation support	ACSA undertook financial needs assessment (airport construction) DDR; identification and registration of FARDC personnel; destroyed illegal and redundant weapons and ammunition Security patrols Transportation of ballot papers for elections; air support for elections; deployment of SAPS members for elections; donation of 4×4 vehicles, communication equipment and desks, tents, and computers Institutional development of national ministries, provincial legislature, and municipal local councils Census of public service personnel; pilot project—asset register for immovable assets in relation to infrastructure sector Feasibility study for Bas Congo Corridor and Zambia Copper Belt; technical expertise by Telkom to Congolese telecoms network; Eskom feasibility study for electrification of Kimbanseke area; financial needs assessment of state-owned enterprises Preparation of funding applications; organizing investor conferences to raise funds for PCR/D projects
Economic development and trade	Support for the development of trade and industry in DRC Mining of bauxite, aluminum smelter, hydro-electricity (as part of the Bas Congo Corridor) SAA flights, retail sector (Shoprite), telecommunications (MTN, Vodacom), Western Power Corridor Project; Standard Bank
Information sharing	Workshops by, e.g. IDASA (democratization and establishment of sustainable policing in the DRC); SAWID (gender mainstreaming); ACCORD (workshops in peacebuilding); IGD (dialogue on PCR/D and elections); ISS (gender mainstreaming in the security sector); IJR (information sharing on transitional justice) Information sharing between provincial and local councils in SA and DRC
Humanitarian	Gift of the Givers—humanitarian assistance

South African peacebuilding support interventions from those of Western and established actors? One obvious difference is that South Africa's support is quite small in size and quantity compared to Western established donors, owing to the fact that South Africa is an emerging actor in this

field and still having to address critical development challenges domestically. For this reason, over time, Pretoria has provided development assistance through a variety of different institutions and not been directly involved as in the first decade of its post-apartheid democracy.

South Africa's efforts listed above demonstrate the breadth of assistance including conflict prevention, mediation, peace support and post-conflict reconstruction as vehicles for peacebuilding, which makes South Africa's approach to this assistance comprehensive. The modalities for delivery of this assistance are clearly distinct from Western and established actors in this field, namely South Africa's engagements are through the African Renaissance Fund as well as a host of national departments individually, whereas with established actors the assistance is coordinated by a single agency. Some of the South Africa actions were funded by Western donors, through so-called triangular North-South-South Cooperation arrangements. For instance Norway funded the training of South Sudanese police by the SAPS and the Netherlands funded the building of brassage centers for the FARDC by the SANDF. Similarly, the South African NGO actions listed in the tables above were also largely funded by Western donors. Another area of difference is that South Africa, like other emerging and Southern actors, does not feel obliged to push the ideology of human rights and democracy in their assistance. As a result its pre-conditions have little to do with conforming to certain political cultures preferred by South Africa, as contrasts with established donors.

### LESSONS LEARNED

There is no gainsaying that in its international engagements South Africa has taken a clear South orientation, endeavoring to be the "voice of Africa" in aid negotiations. It has been vocal about global-aid effectiveness. Although development support has remained a tiny quotient of its support to countries such as Burundi, the DRC, and South Sudan, the competition for this aid has increased and exposed a much decentralized and internally competing South African public system. This is largely because in the 20-year-old democratic dispensation, the ANC has tried to transform the image of South Africa in Africa as a driver of growth, human capacity, and freedom on the continent while also trying to right the wrongs of apartheid.

At the same time, recent efforts have raised questions about South Africa's commitment to deliver on its ambitious peace support agenda.

Somalia offers one example. In February 2012, during the International Contact Group of Somalia conference in the UK, South Africa committed R100 million (US\$7.5 million) toward assisting the Transitional Federal Government achieve its priorities objectives before the end of its term in September 2015. South Africa has insisted that the assistance be informed by government to government relations. Somali administrations have been adamant that the assistance should be directed toward building national government structures that would later engage in relations with their South African counterparts. Regardless of different expectations, considerable progress was made with Somalia with the opening an embassy in Pretoria and the recognition of Somali consular instruments by South African immigration authorities.

Despite this progress, little movement has been recorded thus far in South African efforts to get accredited in Mogadishu. Differences have also hampered spending the pledged assistance. The South African government supported the ACCORD-managed South Africa–Somalia Assistance (SASA) Project, also known as the “Somalia Initiative.” The Somalia Initiative, working with the peacebuilding priorities identified by Somali local and national stakeholders, aimed to reverse the potency of a relapse. The government, however, argued that it, rather than a broader group of stakeholders, should direct the expenditures since the allocation for SASA is part of pledged funding.

Such ambiguity has been at the core of contestations as to whether South Africa is really doing anything in Somalia, whether there is even the will by Pretoria to live up to the foreign policy pledges and pace previously set in Burundi, the DRC, and South Sudan. As a result, the perceptions about South Africa are varied. And justifiably so, because South Africa’s track record as demonstrated in the case of the DRC and South Sudan has been visibly large and impressive—thus begging the question why a change in the case of Somalia. Is it resource scarcity? Is it an absence of geo-strategic importance? These notwithstanding, when asked to identify specific activities that South Africa has supported, an interviewee stated that “South Africa gives seminars and gives some money but it is not enough.”<sup>55</sup> Another view was that “South Africa’s support has been through the Gift of the Givers and partnerships with educational institutions.”<sup>56</sup> But the recurrent sense of more was expected from South Africa seemed like the country had set its commitment to the continent higher than it could respond to. In spite of this, there is a strong African desire to strengthen ties with South Africa and to develop a mutually beneficial relationship.

Another cause for concern about South Africa's continued peace efforts on the continent was its decision to draw down its troops from Sudan in April 2016. Whereas this decision was part of a broader austerity measure to respond to domestic economic challenges, it also exposed an often undervalued precondition for peacebuilding: the indispensability of resources. The existence of political will and policies are not enough to drive peace support operations. There is a fundamental need for resource availability, a stable domestic economy and a politically stable and mature democracy which sees value in humanitarianism and global peace endeavors for peace support to flow. It may seem that South Africa, itself 20 years into a process of post-conflict recovery and democratization, overcommitted itself and started experiencing fault-lines that in other states have triggered relapse.

Before now, South Africa's support to other states has been sourced from its African Renaissance Fund (ARF). The dispensing of development assistance through the ARF almost created the unintended contemplation that South Africa had graduated from a developing country and joined the ranks of developed countries. But recent economic challenges, widening inequality, and soaring unemployment were stark reminders of the need for South Africa to reconfigure its intervention framework. Against this backdrop, the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA) was conceived to address the shortcomings in the management and implementation of development projects experienced with the ARF. SADPA would use development cooperation as a tool to advance South Africa's foreign policy goals, while the newly created South African Council of International Relations (SACOIR) decide on foreign policy priorities as indicated by the National Development Plan. The SACOIR and SADPA are therefore two new organs designed to balance national interest and foreign policy. While the SACOIR underscores and promotes practical opportunities for cooperation, to tackle the problems of poverty, inequality, and unemployment, SADPA would offer development assistance where the opportunity for South Africa's interest are not undermined to the detriment of its people.

## CONCLUSION

As South Africa continues to consider the future of its involvement in seeking solutions and stability in the complex and old crisis in Somalia and finding finality to the drawn-out assistance to the never-ending crisis in the DRC, three issues come up sharply in respect of the country's post-conflict interventions. The first is the fact that all interventions derive their success

or failure from the objective conditions in the crises which South Africa responds. Where the situation is ripe for mediation and stabilization, the country's approach succeeds in a limited time. But where the intervention occurs in an ongoing conflict with no conditions for subsiding, as in Somalia and the DRC, it gets drawn out. The second is that South Africa's interventions are generally framed by the broad thrust of South Africa's foreign policy and worldview. Thus, its commitment to stabilizing Africa and enable a renaissance that will benefit South Africa's diverse economy underpins its decisions on interventions. Thirdly, South Africa is laden with the responsibility of playing a lead role among other countries in achieving the shared goals of the continent on account of its own benefits from African solidarity during the anti-colonial, anti-apartheid struggle and on account of its relative capacities.

Among the lessons evident from engagements like the DRC and Burundi is the fluidity of the concepts of mediation, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding as South Africa applies them. South African peacekeepers and the domestic mission support team which includes civilians play divergent roles in helping the state to recover. These roles are often not just military but a blend of military, civilian and police.

South Africa's peacebuilding initiatives in Africa highlights important novel approaches promoted, while offering vital lessons for all stakeholders to improve upon. Among the lessons learned are the need to avoid adopting a narrow security prism to interventions in complex conflicts and refrain from attaching conditions to aid. It is also the need to avoid the use of many middle men in such interventions as some major actors do in order to avert security risks. It is important to engage local partners, inquiring from them about the conditions and solutions as well as directly responding to their needs. It is also wise not to overcrowd or the host country's vital bureaucracy, but have interventions that can be done in partnership with assisted countries within their capacity.

The case Somalia affirmed that there is still room for improvement in the sense that the bilateral engagement with NGOs like ACCORD, without taking cognizance of the Somali government priorities or allowing the latter to control the funds and define what they should be used for seemed like funds with strings can generate negative perceptions about using own institutions and exporting solutions. This single example suggests that South Africa is more successful in those cases where it was directly involved from the conceptualization of the peace process like



mediation. This in part could explain the heavy investments in the DRC and Burundi processes. In these two cases, South Africa demonstrated high-level political commitment, familiarity with the issues, and felt sufficiently involved as part of the key stakeholders to the process, which is in contrast to Darfur and Somalia, where its involvement is in solidarity with the international community and thus a posture in engagement of actors, and less political commitment.

Today, with the South African Council of International Relations put in place to lead on discourses around foreign policy, there is lieu and time to broaden this discussion and work with the government toward addressing its challenges in policy implementation evidenced in the case of Somalia where a neat balance needs to be struck between meeting foreign policy objectives and responding to domestic challenges in manners where intervention is appreciated externally and its dividends well received by the South African populace.

## NOTES

1. Telephonic interview with Mr. Sivu Maqungo, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa to the United Nations.
2. Interview with Kwezi Mngqibisa, Coordinator of SA-Somalia Project, ACCORD South Africa, July 15, 2015.
3. Gift of the Givers (GOTG) is the largest NGO operational in Mogadishu presently. Next in line are the Iranian and Turkish Red Crescent.
4. Ibid. Also note that the exchange rate as of 2012 was about 1 rand = 0.122 US\$. Thus, ZAR80 million = \$US10 million. In this text, exchange rates generally approximate the USD values when the pledge or aid was disbursed.
5. Interview with an official at the Office for Diaspora Affairs, Mogadishu, August 23, 2015.
6. Interview with a Somali Civil Society Activist, Mogadishu, August 25, 2015.

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