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STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AT THE MINILATERAL LEVEL: THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S DUAL MEMBERSHIP OF IBSA AND BRICS

By Colleen Alison Esmé Chidley

A thesis submitted to the Wits School of Social Science, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Johannesburg

2015

Abstract

The literature on International Relations purports that the proliferation of strategic partnership, particularly at the minilateral level, is explained with reference to the inherent characteristics of this latest archetype of international alignment. Although it is generally accepted that it is the inherent characteristics of strategic partnership that make it an effective diplomatic and political tool through which states can strategically position themselves in a shifting global arena, this assumption has yet to be validated. The aim of this research study is to elucidate the extent to which, and how, strategic partnership at the minilateral level impacts upon the global strategic position(ing) (GSP) of its member states. Combining universal comparison in case study methodology with constructivist perspectives, South Africa's dual membership of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum and the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) Forum are used to test the hypothesis that strategic partnership at the minilateral level enhances the GSP of its member states. The considerable overlap in membership of IBSA and BRICS yields two related research questions addressed in this study; what it is that India, Brazil and South Africa are better suited to achieve through IBSA without China and Russia; and what it is that China and Russia (the two BRICS members not in IBSA) bring to the table.

The findings of this research study reveal that membership of IBSA and of BRICS has made a positive impact upon South Africa's GSP according to the three strengths by which GSP is measured. However, the impact of IBSA on South Africa's GSP is limited and largely confined to the diplomatic arena, while in the case of BRICS the impact is more significant and cuts across the diplomatic, political, economic and social spheres. As part of these findings, the particular issue-areas in which IBSA and BRICS respectively make a discernible impact upon South Africa's GSP are identified.

These findings show that IBSA and BRICS are better suited to dealing with different issue areas, which enables the two forums to be considered *sui generis* entities on separate but parallel tracks. Further than this, the findings provide valuable insight into South Africa's strategic approach to international politics in the 21st Century; in particular how South Africa seeks to leverage its soft power in the international system through the intensification of its network power. More significantly, though, at the theoretical level these findings show that strategic partnership at the minilateral level is not by itself sufficient to strengthen the GSP of its member states. Instead, the extent to which a strategic partnership has an impact upon a member state's GSP is determined by the particular composition of that minilateral alignment; that is to which particular states are (minimally) essential to achieving a particular identified mutually desired outcome. Thus, a smarter more targeted approach to minilateral alignments may well rest not only in a "magic number" but, more crucially, in their composition.

Keywords: International Relations, alignment, strategic partnership, minilateralism, South Africa, foreign policy, IBSA, BRICS

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

_____

Colleen Alison Esmé Chidley

_____ day of _____ in the year _____

Dedicated to my family

Acknowledgements

I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to be employed in service to the public in the Government of South Africa in my capacity as a diplomat in the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). It is an honor and a privilege to be part of the team tasked with implementing the foreign policy of democratic South Africa. I relied strongly upon the services, kindness, patience and expertize of others in the South African diplomatic service as well as input from officials hailing from India, Brazil and Russia. A special thank you goes to Ambassador Christaan Basson for his valued role in ensuring that I could advance my studies and for his patient efforts in evaluating endless drafts.

This thesis could not have been completed without the gracious intellectual guidance, supervision and advice of my supervisor, Professor Garth Shelton, in the Department of International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand. We have travelled a long road together! I am most grateful for his optimism, his kind support and encouragement as well as the time he spent reading and rereading several drafts. I owe a debt of gratitude for his suggestions and comments that extended my thinking. I would also like to extend my sincerest thanks for the useful comments and suggestions made by the readers of the proposal. These comments had a positive impact upon the evolution of the thesis. I would also like to thank my editor, my dearest Mum, for her tireless efforts in working through long, unwieldy sentences to ensure that this thesis reads easily and accurately.

Finally, I wish to extend a special thank you to my partner and to my daughter. To my partner, for his loving support throughout these years of study as well as his unwavering conviction in my ability to complete this Herculean task. To my precious daughter, for giving me the absolute joy and happiness that enabled me to maintain a healthy balance between research and the other important aspects of my life.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ARF	African Renaissance Fund
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AU	African Union
AUPSC	African Union Peace and Security Council
BRICS	Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa Forum
BTAP	Beijing Treaty on the Protection of Audiovisual Performances
BTT	South Africa's Board of Tariffs and Trade
BTTC	BRICS Think Tank Council
CDIP	Committee on Development and Intellectual Property
CGETI	BRICS Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues
CIVETS	Columbia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey, South Africa
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COP-15	15th Conference of Parties
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (South Africa)
DAG	Development Agenda Group
DBSA	Development Bank of South Africa
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs, South Africa (prior to 2009)
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation, South Africa (2009 onwards)
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration

DTI	Department of Trade and Industry, South Africa
EDSF	Economic Diplomacy Strategic Framework
EUISS	European Union Institute for Security Studies
EU	European Union
EPAs	European Partnership Agreements
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
FRIDE	Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
G-8	Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, USA and UK
G-20	Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and the European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSP	Global Strategic Position(ing)
GTA	Global Trade Atlas database
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus infection / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Association
IBSA	India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum
IBSA CETI	IBSA Center for Exchange of Tax Information
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTS	International Co-operation, Trade and Security Cluster
IDGs	International Development Goals
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOR-ARC	Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation

IPAP	Industrial Policy Action Plan
IPE	International Political Economy
IPEA	Institute of Applied Economic Research
ITAC	South Africa's International Trade Administration Commission
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MERCOSUR	Mercado Comun del Sur (Southern Common Market)
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
NAASP	The New Asian-African Strategic Partnership
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDP	National Development Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NEPAD PICI	NEPAD Presidential Infrastructure Championing Initiative
NGP	New Growth Path
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act of India
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
ORF	Observer Research Foundation
PCRD	Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development
PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa
REC	Regional Economic Community
RIS	Research and Information System for Developing Countries
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADOCC	Southern African Documentation and Cooperation Centre

SADPA	South African Development Partnership Agency
SAIDA	South African International Development Agency
SAPA	South African Poultry Association
SARS	South African Receiver of Revenue
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SGSY	Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Young self employment programme (India)
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SSS	South-South Solidarity
TDCA	Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement
TICAD	Tokyo International Conference on African Development
TPSF	Trade, Policy and Strategy Framework
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Economic and Social Community Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WSIS	World Summit on Information Society
WTO	World Trade Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"What current events have brought into prominence,
scholarship has an obligation to subject to critical analysis"

- Robert Cox (1992: 161)

1.1 Overview

The central research question of this thesis seeks to elucidate the extent to which, and how, strategic partnership at the minilateral level impacts upon the global strategic position(ing) (GSP) of its member states, if at all. In this thesis GSP is defined as the development and support of private and state—owned assets, governmental or military relationships, and business associations with foreign countries either positioned at key global strategic points or with those projected to hold key global strategic points in the future either independently or in multi—country arrangements, for the purpose of accumulating information, influence, power and technological expertise in pursuit of the national interest. South Africa's dual membership of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum and the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) Forum (hereafter referred to as IBSA and BRICS respectively) will be used as the two case studies to test the hypothesis that strategic partnership at the minilateral level enhances the GSP of its member states. By determining the impact of strategic partnership at the minilateral level upon the GSP of its member states, we might better understand South Africa's strategic decision to first seek, and then maintain, dual

membership of IBSA and BRICS over the medium to long term. For policy makers and scholars alike this is significant because it provides a valuable insight into South Africa's strategic approach to international politics in the 21st Century; in particular how South Africa seeks to leverage its soft power in the international system through the intensification of its network power in order to ensure that the process of evolutionary change currently underway in the global system results in, according to a high-ranking South African Ambassador, "a qualitative shift in the structure, substance and conduct of international politics over the long term" (G. Maitland, personal communication, August 10, 2013).

This qualitative research is undertaken with reference to strategic partnership at the minilateral level within a framework of international alignment. Strategic partnership is the newest archetype of international alignment. Its instance at the minilateral level is an innovative diplomatic and political channel through which emerging middle powers[1], such as South Africa, seek to promote its national agenda, which includes foreign policy, alongside and in support of more traditional bilateral and multilateral channels of engagement in what is a densification of its international networks. This thesis posits that IBSA and BRICS are the newest instances of this type of international alignment. The over-arching theoretical perspective is informed by constructivism.

Owing to the considerable overlap in membership of IBSA and BRICS, with India, Brazil and South Africa enjoying dual memberships of both forums, the use of IBSA and BRICS as case studies yields two related research questions; what it is that India, Brazil and South Africa are better suited to achieve through IBSA without China and Russia; and what it is that China and Russia (the two BRICS members not in IBSA) bring to the table. These related research questions have potential theoretical implications for Moisés Naím's conception of minilateralism, "the smallest possible number of countries needed to have the largest possible impact on solving a particular problem", and goes beyond merely counting the number of states. In addition to his argument that the "magic number … depend(s) on the problem" (Naím, 2009), this research implies that it is also crucial to consider which particular states are (minimally)

essential to achieving a particular identified mutually desired outcome. This too has significance for both scholars and policy makers. Firstly, it provides scholars with valuable insight into the way in which international alignments among emerging middle powers are evolving in support of multilateralism. Secondly, within the context of a burgeoning number of minilateral arrangements commonly referred to as "club-diplomacy", it could assist in answering a practical question that inevitably arises that is, how many of these arrangements (what volume of diplomatic activity) can be usefully possible. This research may illuminate the underlying elements that identify which minilateral arrangements have the potential to make a systemic impact on a global scale, and thereby an impact upon the processes of change underway in the global system in a sustainable manner, and those that will likely not. An additional significance of the latter two research questions is that they provide policy makers with useful knowledge on how to assess different countries for potential alignment against the need to achieve a particular desired outcome. This has implications for the potential expansion of either or both IBSA and BRICS and could have practical use as a guide to South African decision-makers in their evaluation of this issue.

This thesis contributes to the study of South African foreign policy, in particular to its dual memberships of IBSA and BRICS. The research conducted herein brings innovative insights into the body of knowledge concerning international alignment and strategic partnership, particularly its instance at the minilateral level, and makes an original contribution to our understanding of the phenomenon of minilateralism. It also deepens our understanding of strategic alignment among emerging middle powers. Rooted in pragmatism, this research study allows for possible practical application by policymakers in South Africa.

1.2 Debate in Pretoria

South Africa's participation in influential global forums such as the G20, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Security Council

(UNSC), with two terms in the non-permanent category on the Council within a six-year period (2007/2008 and 2011/2012 respectively), and more especially its influential role on the African continent and in the Southern African region, has raised the country's profile as a systemically important global player[2] in an evolving multipolar world system. Policy makers and scholars alike argue that the inclusion of South Africa as an emerging middle power into BRICS in December 2010 further enhanced the country's GSP, alongside other emerging powers such as China, India and Brazil; also this was in the context of the relative decline of the United States as the post-Cold War hegemon. In addition, South Africa's membership of BRICS served to refocus critical attention upon IBSA. The obvious question was why South Africa would align itself with two small entities with heavily overlapping memberships. Consequently, South Africa's accession to BRICS called into question the continued existence of IBSA in favor of what is largely perceived to be a more valuable alignment in the BRICS with its presence of entrenched global decision-makers in Russia and China. The tenth anniversary celebration of IBSA in 2013 was marked by a ministerial statement, which underlined the continued relevance of the IBSA Dialogue forum. However it did not succeed in emerging from the shadow cast over it by the challenge of BRICS over the global role it has assumed as the voice of the South.

South Africa became a member of the BRIC mechanism on 23 December 2010 (officially named the BRICS Forum at the Third BRICS Summit in April 2011). The President of South Africa accepted accession to the mechanism and agreed to lead a delegation to attend and participate in the Third BRICS Summit of Heads of State and Government held on 14 April 2011 in Sanya, Hainan Province, China. The first ideas of IBSA and BRICS alongside each other were firmly laid down earlier in April 2010 with the back-to-back hosting of the 4th IBSA Summit and the 2nd BRIC Summit in Brasilia.[3] Similarly, in South Africa's statement of acceptance to the BRICS Forum there was an immediate reference to IBSA, "we believe that the IBSA will get a better balance, and become even stronger, with South Africa now as a member of the BRICS…(and)…convinced that South Africa's diversified foreign policy objectives and interests allow for both groupings, IBSA and BRICS, to co-exist. It is our belief that the

mandates of BRICS and IBSA are highly complementary" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2010c). Thus in South Africa the juxtaposition of IBSA alongside BRICS was evident from the outset with membership of IBSA being cast as strategically relevant to, rather than a distraction from, BRICS. This may be an indication of the nature of the internal deliberations within the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) itself, prior to accession to BRICS, on how best to reconcile and consequently manage its membership of these two increasingly similar strategic partnerships at the minilateral level.

An intense atmosphere of public debate formed the backdrop of the work underway within the DIRCO to prepare for the Third BRICS Summit. A comprehensive examination of both the domestic and the international media reporting on the subject of BRICS from December 2010 to April 2011 reveals that vigorous public debate revolved around arguments both for and against the evolution of BRIC into BRICS with South Africa's entry. The original Jim O'Neill/Goldman Sachs coining of the BRIC as a financial construct features prominently in the arguments of those who viewed the entry of South Africa negatively.[4] On the surface South Africa's inability to match up to the other BRICS members in terms of GDP figures, economic and financial growth prospects as well as in terms of population size was used as a critique against the country's entry into BRICS. The preoccupation with *post-facto* debates on the suitability of South Africa as part of the BRICS Forum came at a crucial time when the Government of South Africa required more domestic support for its decision. In fact, ideas needed to be developed on how best to utilize membership of BRICS to further South Africa's foreign policy objectives and this perhaps indicates the extent to which South African foreign policy commentators and academia were taken by surprise by the timing of the country's accession to the BRICS Forum.[5]

South Africa's arguably successful participation in the Third BRICS Summit in April 2011 prompted the domestic debate on BRICS to progress: from heated debate as to the suitability of South Africa as part of the BRICS to a more constructive, yet equally lively, debate on how to position South Africa to leverage the opportunities available in

BRICS in order to contribute to the realization of the national agenda, including its foreign policy agenda. However, the debate did not move on before forcing a broader discussion about South Africa's place in the world and not before raising fundamental questions about the country's foreign policy orientation and the direction in which it was headed under the relatively new Administration of President Jacob Zuma.[6] The resultant discourse went to the heart of the debate about South Africa's identity as a state operating in the international system: how that state identity is conceptualized in the domestic environment as a product of its unique historical experience and how the South African state's identity impacts upon, and is in turn impacted upon, its social interaction in the international system. Foreign policy, and in particular the decision to align, when and with whom, is reflective of a state's identity and thereby its interests. Indeed, foreign policy is a function of a state's identity (Kahl, 1998, p. 95).

The domestic debate surrounding South Africa's accession to the BRICS Forum raises many challenging questions that directly concern the evolving identity of the South African state. For instance, does accession to BRICS signal a shift in South Africa's foreign policy away from the African Agenda that has, since 1994, been at the centerpiece of South Africa's post-Apartheid identity? Does membership of BRICS signal a change in South Africa's approach to international politics; one associated with revisionism rather than reformism as articulated by IBSA? How does membership of BRICS impact upon South Africa's multilateral commitments: at the regional level through the South African Development Community (SADC); at the continental level through the African Union (AU) and in terms of voting patterns at the international level in the United Nations (UN), including within its associated organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), World Labour Organization (WLO), World Maritime Organization (WMO), WTO, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) as well as other international organizations such as the G20? What is the impact of membership of BRICS on South Africa's bilateral relations with Brazil, Russia, India and China, if any? As China, Brazil and India are the three biggest emerging investors on the African continent, can South Africa's BRICS membership be seen more cynically as a strategy

of containment by other means in the realist tradition? What does South Africa's accession to BRICS mean for its policy on South-South cooperation epitomized by IBSA? Is it dead or is BRICS itself to be seen instead as an organization of the South? Does membership of the BRICS Forum underline a decisive 'look east' trajectory for the South African government? If so, what are the implications for South Africa's relations with the developed North, particularly the United States and the European Union (EU), both still being the country's major economic partners? It is only once we have a greater understanding of strategic partnership at the minilateral level and its impact upon the GSP of its member states, that we can determine the value of a strategic approach that, according to the former Chief of Staff of the Director-General at DIRCO, Ambassador Christaan Basson, maintains dual membership of two essentially "*sui generis* entities running on separate but parallel tracks" (C. Basson, personal communication, July 5, 2012).[7]

1.2.1 The literature on South Africa's foreign policy

There is a broad base of literature on South Africa's foreign policy with a number of well-established think tanks in South Africa such as the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), the Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), as well as universities, consultancies and journalists who are monitoring, evaluating, analyzing and interrogating South African foreign policy. Scholarly contributions on the subject are well documented by prominent experts on South African foreign policy: Chris Landsberg (2011, 2010, 2012), Chris Alden, Siphamandla Zondi, Lesley Masters, Garth Le Pere, Francis Kornegay, Philip Nel, Ian Taylor, Janis van der Westhuizen, Mzukisi Qobo, Elizabeth Sidirpoulos (2008), and David Monyae (2006) being the most notable. These studies are important in their own right and are a useful guide from which to draw on the subject of South Africa's foreign policy. In addition, the annual publication the *State of the Nation* published by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), as well as the *South African Yearbook of International* Affairs published by SAIIA are useful texts from which to obtain factual information. A constructivist perspective finds its strongest expression when

drawn from an analysis of discourse, as being indicative of identity and consequently of interests. Consequently the central document from which this research study will draw in the Third Chapter on South Africa's Foreign Policy are the two Strategic Plans of the DIRCO, respectively 2009-2012 and 2012-2017, particularly the stated values, principles and the foreign policy priorities. Also examined are the speeches and statements made by the President of South Africa, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation as well as the two Deputy Ministers, the Director-General of the DIRCO and, where relevant, other cabinet members and government officials. For these resources the respective governmental portals and departmental websites, such as www.dirco.gov.za, www.dti.gov.za as well as www.thepresidency.gov.za, are of particular value.

The development of literature on South Africa's foreign policy, utilizing in part or in full a constructivist paradigm, is still at an early stage and there remains a critical need to develop a research program upon the subject in South Africa. The work that does exist however is valuable. Of particular import for this research study is the work conducted by Olivier Serrão and Paul-Henri Bischoff which analyses South Africa's post-apartheid foreign policy from a constructivist perspective and centralizes the importance of identity in foreign policy formulation. Their joint article "Foreign policy ambiguity on the part of an emergent middle power: South Africa through different lenses" (Serrão & Bischoff, 2009), drawn in part from a Master's thesis by Olivier Serrão (2009), coupled with earlier work conducted by Bischoff (2003), utilizes a constructivist approach in International Relations to explain the sources of ambiguity in South Africa's foreign policy. Serrão and Bischoff (2009, p. 363) argue that rationalist theories are insufficient in themselves to explain the complexities inherent in foreign policy; however constructivism, with its focus on identity, cannot either sufficiently explain its reception or results on the world stage and thus a mixed focus approach brings a more holistic insight. The particular focus on the constructivist contribution to International Relations Theory on identity is used by Serrão and Bischoff (2009, pp. 366–372) to identify two models of foreign policy embodied by South Africa, a liberal democratic and radical democratic model. These thereby demonstrate that the tension

and interplay between these two opposing models, a direct result of the South African state identity, is the source of its foreign policy ambiguity. In addition, the work conducted by the IGD on South Africa's foreign policy, from a constructivist perspective, is informative, in particular the comprehensive review of South African foreign policy edited by Chris Landsberg and Jo-Ansie van Wyk (2012).

Andrew Cooper's work on middle powers is useful in that he advances the classification of middle power status beyond the definition provided by Robert Keohane (1969, p. 296), "a state whose leaders consider that it cannot act alone effectively but may be able to have a systemic impact in a small group or through an international institution", by positing that classifying a state as a middle power "stands and falls not on their subjective identification but on the fact that this category engages in some objectively distinctive form of activity" (Cooper, 1997, p. 7). Cooper's identification of elements characteristic of traditional middle powers is further advanced by Philip Nel, Ian Taylor and Janis van der Westhuizen (2000, p. 46) who argue that the concept of emerging middle powers (i.e. in the developing world) are distinguishable by five additional criteria, over and above that provided by Cooper, for classification of a state as an emerging middle power. Accordingly this allows for the firm location of South Africa as an "emerging middle power" in the theoretical research and thus points to the objectively distinct activities of South Africa in the international arena.

1.3 Searching for a framework of reference

Many scholars seek to find a categorical way of understanding international alignments and the system in which they operate. How we categorize instances of international alignment goes to the very core of what we think they are and how they should function. Our assumptions of, as well as our expectations for, various international alignments; how we analyze them and the other international alignments with which we make comparisons, are intricately linked to how they are categorized. Identifying the type of international alignment of a particular inter-state arrangement

provides a common framework of understanding and gives important information, often by definition, about the purpose, structure and function of that alignment. Often, alignments have particular associations, merely by being categorized in a certain manner. Knowing that a particular international alignment is either an alliance, a coalition, a security community or a strategic partnership also provides important insights into a state's national policy, particularly into its foreign policy, into the perspectives that that state holds *vis-à-vis* the world and the other states in the alignment as well as being indicative of a state's strategic intentions. More importantly, it serves to deepen our understanding of International Relations at the theoretical level.

The broad spectrum of the academic literature limits itself to reference of IBSA and BRICS as names in themselves, as isolated unique cases, in what is arguably an acknowledgement of the challenge in categorizing these two entities within the International Relations discipline. There follow some exceptions to this that are noteworthy. Chris Alden and Marco Antonio Vieira (2005) examine the rise of the cooperative strategy known as 'trilateralism' within the context of multilateralism by regional leaders within the South encapsulated by the 'trilateralist diplomatic partnership' of IBSA.[8] Where there is an attempt to categorize the BRICS Forum it is, by the authors' own admission, a very loose reference to an alliance (Kornegay & Masters, 2010, p. 13) or "proto-alliance" (Kornegay, 2011), a coalition (Laïdi, 2011; Roberts, 2010; Senona, 2010), or simply as a bloc or grouping (Qobo, 2010a, 2010b; Soko & Qobo, 2010). Niu Haibin (2011) argues that BRICS is a reflection of China's objective to create "a peer group of viewpoints" on global systemic issues. Leslie Armijo interrogates the legitimacy of the BRIC (prior to South Africa's accession) as an analytical category from, respectively, an economic liberal, realist and liberal institutionalist perspective. Armijo (2007, p. 8) concludes that "BRIC as a category is, strictly speaking, a mirage - but one that provides considerable insight." Michael Emerson (2012, p. 1) argues that the BRICS Forum cannot be considered a bloc as yet, despite posing real concrete strategic challenges to others such as the EU.

The international conference hosted by the IGD in November 2010 stands out as a first attempt to categorize the BRICS Forum as well as other mini-lateral alignments such as the IBSA, BASIC and the G20 (Kornegay & Masters, 2010). The outcome was a tendency to conceptualize BRICS as either a) a special type of coalition understood as "second generation coalition multilateralism,"[9] or b) an "emerging power alliance"[10] or as c) a "limited multilateral strategic partnership"[11]. Coalition multilateralism, albeit second generation, and alternative emerging/developing world power alliances arguably miss the qualitative distinctiveness of these two international alignments. Alliance and coalition terminology cannot account for the way in which BRICS as well as IBSA, operate, not only substantively, as these terms connotes security in the traditional (military) sense as an inherent assumption, but also in the way in which these forums are structured, the way in which they function and in the particular world-view that they project onto the international stage. All of which pose fundamental questions about the way in which we conceive of international alignment in general. BRICS and indeed IBSA, as well as others such the Pacific Alliance and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), are indicative of changing conceptions of world order led by the developing world and one that challenges a hitherto-accepted securitized International Relations discipline. Further, the description of the BRICS Forum as a "limited multilateral" locates the Forum within broader studies of multilateralism as a phenomenon. This research study argues for explicit reference to IBSA and BRICS as minilateral arrangements because of the possible theoretical implications they may hold for the phenomenon of minilateralism.

The search for a framework to understand the IBSA and BRICS forums reveals a theoretical gap in the International Relations literature that needs to be filled at the outset. International alignments are evolving to an extent where it is arguably no longer appropriate to assume that they are underpinned by an inherent security element as a primary motivator or central characteristic of an inter-state relationship, such as in the case with alliance and coalition frameworks. The fluid international order of the 21st century is characterized by a burgeoning number of these new, non-traditional arrangements between (bilateral) and among (mini-lateral/multilateral) states driven by

the developing world. This marked trend is indicative of a changing international system where arguably "foreign policy worldview has moved away from Cold War, narrowly understood politico-security concerns" reflected in alliances and coalitions, "towards the maximization of economic advantages for domestic interests" (Qobo, 2010) in a globalized world. Traditional theoretical frameworks of reference are thus challenged to account convincingly for new inter-state formations at the political level that fall outside the security lexicon. While it is clear that not all inter-state partnerships can be deemed alliances/coalitions, there is neither a model nor a framework of study put forward for those partnerships and arrangements that do not meet the criteria of security cooperation.

The success of Alliance Theory in International Relations from mainly rationalist perspectives blurs the fact that it is one, admittedly dominant, sub-set of what is a broader, generic concept of alignment. It would be disingenuous at best, inaccurate at worst, to analyze either IBSA or BRICS as instances of security cooperation under the framework of alliance/coalition theory because security is neither a key driver of these arrangements nor their primary purpose. By the same token, to describe either IBSA or BRICS as purely plurilateral arrangements serves to centralize their function, and thus our expectations, solely within the practice of multilateral diplomacy within international institutions. While not being an inaccurate depiction, reducing the IBSA and BRICS forums to a narrow (plurilateral) function limited to the multilateral arena, reflects a lack of appreciation of the broader scope and depth of cooperation within these particular types of international alignment. In addition, such a description cannot account for the unique ability of IBSA and BRICS in functioning to reinforce relations between the member states at both the bilateral and multilateral levels.

This thesis proposes to fill the identified theoretical gap in the International Relations literature in two ways. First, it proposes the development of an over-arching framework of international alignment in an attempt to provide a context under which various cooperation theories exist. This includes but is not limited to security cooperation theories. This original argument is the result of an innovation in the research study;

namely in problematizing security in the traditional (military) sense in concepts of international alignment. The concept of alignment can be fully recovered to its rightful place as an umbrella concept over and above its different forms, if reference to a security characteristic/property as a *necessary* element is removed. Second, it proposes elements for such a framework, namely that international alignment is a value-neutral concept that neither infers nor connotes any particular content to an inter-state relationship. A comprehensively articulated content-neutral and value-neutral framework of international alignment is a first step in pursuit of understanding the different forms of alignments being established in the 21st century. Such alignments include strategic partnership, and in particular where such alignments fit into the theoretical landscape alongside more traditional partnerships such as alliances and coalitions. This research study understands strategic partnership at the minilateral level within a value-neutral, content-neutral framework of international alignment.

Strategic partnership at the bilateral level, has over the last ten years, become the subject of a comprehensive research program, particularly within the EU. In contrast, comparatively little is known about strategic partnership at the minilateral level because it has not as yet been the subject of a comprehensive study. The examination of the SCO by Thomas Wilkins (2008) stands out as the one exception. What we do know about strategic partnership at the minilateral level is that, as well as exhibiting the same properties as that at the bilateral level, it is "an inherently complex amalgam of networks embedded at multiple levels and across multiple sectors" (Wilkins, 2008, p. 370). Another finding is that the complexity of strategic partnership at a mini-lateral level is such that it is often able to blur the exact parameters of the bilateral relations that exist amongst the actors and is so subsumed in other co-operative fora (Wilkins, 2008, p. 371). According to Wilkins this is beneficial to the partners in a strategic partnership because it enables a degree of deliberate ambiguity in the partnership and masks the degree of collaboration to external parties. Strategic partnership at the minilateral level is qualitatively distinct from other forms of international alignment and is particularly adept at enabling a state to navigate through an increasingly networked world order; one where the power of a particular state depends more and more upon its

network position, defined by its persistent relationships with other powerful states (Flemes, 2013, p. 1030). With states alternately cooperating and competing with one another for a strategic position in the evolving networked, multipolar world order, strategic partnership at the minilateral level is primarily a pre-emptive decision of intent on the part of political elites to preference states which are calculated to be of strategic importance going forward.

This thesis broadens and deepens current knowledge of strategic partnership at the minilateral level in four innovative and original ways. First, it conceptualizes IBSA and BRICS as respective instances of strategic partnership at the minilateral level. Second, it argues that the concept of inherent rivalry be formally recognized as a property of generic conceptions of strategic partnership both at the bilateral and minilateral levels. This is an innovative contribution to the literature to date. Third, this innovation leads to the argument that the management of inherent rivalry is a function of strategic partnership. Taken together, these two steps are a new contribution to the academic literature on strategic partnership as they refines the definition thereof by arguing for the inclusion of the presence of rivalry between (bilateral) and among (multilateral) partners as an inherent property and thereby indicate the additional function of strategic partnership as a tool to manage that inherent rivalry. Fourth and finally, although this research study confirms current thinking on strategic partnership that is that it does appear to enhance the GSP of its member states, at least in the case of South Africa, the two case studies in this research reveals this result to be limited. There is a strong indication that the extent to which a particular strategic partnership at the minilateral level enhances the GSP of its member states depends more upon which countries constitute the strategic partnership than on the nature and form of this type of international alignment. This could point to a crucial link between the optimal configuration of strategic partnership at the minilateral level and which particular states are (minimally) essential to that configuration if the partnership is to enhance a state's GSP. This finding could be considered an original contribution to the academic literature on minilateralism.

1.3.1 The literature on international alignment, strategic partnership and minilateralism

It was George Liska (1962, p. 3) in his seminal book *Nations in Alliance* who said "it is impossible to speak of international relations without referring to alliances; the two often merge in all but name." Following thereon Glenn Snyder (1997, p.121), nearly three decades later, wrote "alliances and alignments are surely among the most central phenomena in international politics." The distinct terms alignment and alliance are used almost interchangeably in the broad spectrum of International Relations literature from eminent authors such as Kenneth Waltz (1979), Stephen Walt (1987, 2009) and Robert Schweller (1994). At first glance the interchangeable use of alignment and alliance does not present a problem until, upon delving deeper into the literature, it becomes clear that alliance, unlike alignment, rests either implicitly or explicitly on the assumption of security as the pivotal characteristic/element/purpose of that arrangement of states. This points to a second, related, problem: the dominance of rationalist paradigms to the virtual exclusion of all else. Kajsa Ji Noe Oest (2007) documents the various rationalist paradigms that dominate analyses of alliance theory. Although not his purpose, his analysis is useful because it highlights the problem of the dominance of the rationalist paradigm on alliance theory in the academic literature. Game theory, rational choice, grand strategy, public goods model, classical realist balance of power, neorealist balance of power, balance against threat, balance against interest, democratic peace theory, economic incentives, economic public goods theory, structural liberal are all articulate on the subject of alignment/alliances, all of which are analyzed from rationalist paradigms.

The blurring of the concepts of alignment and alliances is extremely problematic as it is detrimental to the development of other comprehensively articulated and understood frameworks of alignment which involve cooperation that is not, in the first place, targeted against any third party, nor established in defense of (understood as both for and against) a security consideration. Also, and as argued by Thomas Wilkins (2012), for all this wealth of literature on alignment and alliances there is still no working

taxonomy of the concept of alignment in international relations, a gap that Wilkins himself attempts unsuccessfully to fill. The perspectives contributed by Glenn Snyder (1997), Robert Jervis (1990), Michael Ward (1982), Steven David (1991) and his insights on Third World alignment and more recently Thomas Wilkins (2012) and Parag Khanna (2008) all provide a firm foundation for this research that attempts to draw from the literature a way in which to comprehensively resurrect the term alignment as an umbrella concept in International Relations.

With reference to the concept of strategic partnership, there is little conceptual or theoretical development in the literature from which to draw, particularly concerning its occurrence at the minilateral level. There are two reasons for this: firstly, the concept is fairly novel and is confined, for the most part, within political and diplomatic speak; secondly, it appears at first glance to be rather a self-evident concept which renders its explanation redundant. That being said, there are crucial insights into this type of alignment coming to light all of which could be considered to contribute to a comprehensive research program dedicated to the subject of strategic partnership at a future date. The research being conducted done by Giovanni Grevi (2008, 2010, 2012) concerning the EU's strategic partnerships under the auspices of FRIDE, Andrew Kuchins (2001) and Dmitry Danilov (2007) concerning Russia's strategic partnerships with the EU, China and India and the insights provided by Sean Kay (2000) into the strategic partnerships of the United States are essential reading on the subject. Without a doubt the ongoing research conducted by Thomas Wilkins at the University Of Australia is paramount to the understanding of strategic partnership within a framework of alignment. To date Wilkins is the only researcher who has conducted and documented a systematized study that codifies a conceptual understanding of strategic partnership and tracks the process of development along a three-phase 'collaboration continuum'; comprising a formation phase, implementation phase and evaluation phase (Wilkins, 2011). Similarly Wilkins (2008, 2011) is the only scholar to systematically delineate generic properties of strategic partnership, which are evidenced in studies of strategic partnerships dyads between Russia and China, Japan and Australia, Japan and India, the EU and Russia as well as at the minilateral level using the SCO as an

example. In addition, the subject of strategic partnership is the focus of a PhD study and still in the process of development by Luis Blanco (n.d) at the Bielefled University in Germany.

This study of strategic partnership at the minilateral level requires extensive reading of the literature on minilateralism and, perhaps more importantly, its link to the well-documented but still under-conceptualized phenomenon of multilateralism. A thorough understanding of the literature on multilateralism is essential if a convincing argument is to be made to locate strategic partnership at the minilateral level under the framework of minilateralism rather than under multilateralism as most scholars of strategic partnership have done. To this day minilateralism is arguably only superficially understood as a "derogation from multilateralism" (Kahler, 1992) and is largely limited to Moisés Naím's notion of it being "the smallest possible number of countries needed to have the largest possible impact on solving a particular problem" (2009). There is arguably space for more research to be done that would contribute to our theoretical understanding of minilateralism, particularly as the early 21st Century world order is witnessing a proliferation of minilateral inter-state arrangements. One method is by reference to multilateralism as a launching point to develop our understanding of the way in which these two "isms" are distinctive yet linked. John Gerard Ruggie (1992) and the work he has undertaken on the phenomenon of multilateralism, particularly its definition and conceptualization is utilized in this research study. The results of the research program into multilateralism in the European context are also of use as an example of multilateralism in action. Elena Lazarou, Geoffrey, Hill and Smith (2010), who work for the MERCURY project, grapples with the concept of multilateralism and proposes a "doctrine of multilateralism" that is an "authoritative guide clarifying 'what means' and 'how should they be used?' (and on the basis of which principles)" are given attention in this research studying pointing as they do to the important distinction of whether multilateralism is a 'means' (instrument) or and 'end in itself' (understood as a multilateral world order). Other theorists such as Robert Cox (1992), with his five-year research study into multilateralism, and the UN university scholars looking at the same subject are also important materials on the subject. In addition, the work of Robert

Keohane (1990) and James Caporaso (1992) have also contributed significantly to the body of knowledge on multilateralism and their insights have been utilized in this thesis.

1.4 Constructivism as a useful perspective

Any study of South African foreign policy must acknowledge that it does not fit neatly into one or other of the predominant theoretical categories of International Relations: (neo)realism or (neo)liberalism. South Africa's dual membership of IBSA and BRICS arguably highlights what some commentators point to as a "schizophrenic" (Naidoo, 2012) foreign policy at worst, "haphazard" (Hamill & Lee, 2001) at best. Although a strong argument can be made for it being cast as predominantly (neo)liberal, as do Alden and Vieira (2005) [12], Serrão and Bischoff (2009, p. 363) make a compelling argument for a "mixed focus" analysis, incorporating both constructivist and materialist (rationalist) – based theories of International Relations. Stephen Walt's (1998, p. 5) advice is worth bearing in mind in this regard, "a wise leader would also keep insights from the rival paradigms in mind" because "each of these competing perspectives captures important aspects of world politics" and "our understanding would be impoverished were our thinking confined to only one of them". Instead of confining this research to economic variables, political systems and ideology in isolation from one another, this thesis takes the view that a more holistic understanding of South Africa's foreign policy, particularly its dual memberships of IBSA and BRICS, is better understood through examining how the country relates to and negotiates with the world. Thus the focus is upon how South Africa categorizes itself through its behavior in IBSA and BRICS.

It is important to state initially that there is no comprehensive, authoritative constructivist theory of international institutions, or indeed for that matter, international security (Checkel, 1998, p. 332-333). In addition, it remains debatable whether constructivism in fact has a methodology of its own (2002, p. 6). In agreement with

Jeffery Checkel[13] and Ted Hopf, and for the purposes of this thesis, constructivism is viewed not as a theory, but rather as a perspective, an additional (not alternative) approach/method from which to explain state behavior and a state's foreign policy besides rationalist/materialist accounts (Hopf, 1998, p. 197). Of the numerous aspects that constitute the large body of work on constructivism, only those perspectives that are relevant to advancing our understanding the framework within which this research is conducted - that is strategic partnership and international alignment as well as that which contributes to understanding South Africa's foreign policy - are used rather than reference to any authoritative text. Consequently, the constructivist perspectives on anarchy, state identity and interests are of particular value to this research. These perspectives are used in the full knowledge that this thesis may reinforce the point made by Checkel (1998, p. 337) that the empirical work offered by constructivists suffers from "over-determinism", being loaded by single country/issue analysis in the absence of theory.

From a constructivist perspective then, the decision to align can be explained by an in-depth analysis of the operation of identity. The analysis of South Africa's foreign policy, and in particular its decision to align with both IBSA and BRICS, is examined from the perspective of the evolving South African state identity while bearing in mind that a state's national interests and its foreign policy are, to a significant degree, a function of state identity (Kahl, 1998, p. 95). There should be a distinction made between alliances *of* identity and alliances *for* identity[14] and this is equally applied in this thesis concerning alignments that take place in international politics beyond that of alliances, where IBSA and BRICS can be seen to be alignments "of identity" rather than "for identity". This is akin, but not equivalent, to Alexander Wendt's (1994) work on collective identity. The constructivist perspective on power discursive power, being an additional viewpoint to the traditional material conceptions of power, forms part of the focus of the analysis in this research study.

1.4.1 The literature on constructivism

The authoritative neo-realist book most often referred to and used as a basis for critique by constructivists, is Kenneth Waltz's (1979) *Theory of International Politics* and it is therefore an essential base text to understand before grappling with constructivism. It is also essential to fully grasp the two predominate rationalist traditions of (neo)realism and (neo)liberalism before embarking upon a constructivist analysis. The book edited by David Baldwin (1993) entitled *Neorealism and Neoliberalism* is a valuable resource in this regard because it provides a thorough theoretical examination of the difference, as well as the similarities, of these two theories.

The development of a constructivist perspective, particularly the contentious matter of state identity and interests, as well as the characterization of state relations, if an anarchic world is to be taken as the world in which we currently live, is dealt with by Nicholas Onuf (1989) in his inspired book, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations*. In addition to the perspectives contributed by Nicholas Onuf in this book, the work of Alexander Wendt, his conception of anarchy and his vision of change in international politics as well as his articles on collective identity are also utilized in this research study. These base texts are amply supported, and referenced in this thesis, by the insights contributed by eminent scholars such as Emmanual Adler (1991, 1997, 2003), Ted Hopf, Colin Kahl (1998), Paul Kowert (1998), Bruce Cronin (1998,1999), James Caporaso (1992), Martha Finnemore (1996), as well as Michael Barnett and Jack Levy. Frank Schimmelfennig's (1998) constructivist explanation of NATO enlargement as well as Ted Hopf's (2002) book entitled *Social construction of International politics: Identities and foreign policies, Moscow, 1955 & 1999* are of seminal importance because they demonstrate how (methodology) to apply a constructivist perspective to events in the political arena, to NATO in the first instance and to explaining Russian foreign policy in the second. Schimmelfennig and Hopf's demonstration of how an analysis of discourse is indicative of a value-rational motivation on the part of political elites is instrumental to the study of the discourse emanating from South African leaders with regard to IBSA and BRICS.

In addition, Martha Finnemore's (1996) analysis of three case studies showing how international institutions are able to reconstitute state interests, as well as Thomas Risse-Kappan's liberal-constructivist approach to explaining NATO, are helpful not only for their substantive contributions to explaining international institutions, but also for the general research procedure that is applied.[15]

The study of International Relations has arguably been dominated by constructivist perspectives from the late 1990s, leading to the rather tongue-in-cheek question posed by Legro and Moravcsik (1998) in their article "Is anyone a realist". Critique of constructivism though can be found. However, these critiques focus largely upon identity and national interest as well as on norms and identity and do not address a constructivist's vision of change in the international system. Chafetz, Spirtas and Frankel (1998) are such critics pointing out that identity is too complex a concept to be defined as constructivists aim to do. They argue that conceptualizations of identity carry a danger of false precision and that even when identity is conceptualized it adds little to the study of International Relations. Jonathan Mercer's (1995) critique of Alexander Wendt's (1992) canonical text entitled "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics" is perhaps the most astute critique in that it uses constructivist assumptions to provide a theoretical and empirical foundation for the validity of neorealist arguments about identity, self-help and relative gains.

1.5 South Africa's membership of IBSA and BRICS as case studies

Theory and methodology are most beneficial when they accompany each other for the advancement of knowledge (Sprinz & Wolinsky, 2002). Although there is increasingly strong argument for more pluralist approaches to methodology in the study of International Relations, combining perhaps qualitative methods of analysis (historical, diplomatic, case studies) with quantitative (statistical) methods and formal methods, in a bid to move away from a more methological purism, this research study remains monomethodic in that it confines itself to using a qualitative methodology.

Case studies occupy, according to Arie Kacowicz (2002, p. 121) paraphrasing Emmanual Adler, a "methodological middle ground" between soft positivists and constructivists "who intensively use process-tracing methods and similar historical analysis of detailed cases". The disadvantages of a case study methodology are well documented. Endogeniety and serious limitations to external validity are common challenges to case study bias (Kacowicz, 2002, pp. 111-112) and can equally be applied to this research study.

Case study methodology is used in this research study because of its strengths. Firstly, it provides an empirical basis for the formulation of a framework of international alignment and broadening knowledge of strategic partnership at the minilateral level. Secondly, the process-tracing methodology involved provides a necessary link between political science and diplomatic history. It allows for this research study to remain rooted in pragmatism and lends itself to possible use by the Government of South Africa in the implementation of its foreign policy.

South Africa's memberships of IBSA and BRICS are used as case studies in this research study for three reasons. First, South Africa is a dual member of IBSA and BRICS. This allows for an appropriate comparative analysis after due consideration on the comparability of the two case studies and militates against the charge of asymmetric comparison. The three criteria with which to measure a state's GSP are applied equally with reference to the same variables across both case studies, namely South Africa's foreign policy, particularly its key priority areas. The type of comparative analysis used in this thesis is what Charles Tilly (1984, p. 97) calls 'universalizing comparison'. Universalizing comparison is most commonly associated with the ambitious project to use comparison in order to develop causal theories with considerable generality and wide range of applicability (Azarian, 2011, p. 119). Although there is an element of this, in that the results seem to hint at theoretical implications for our understanding of minilateralism, far more work would be required and a specific research design crafted in this regard before a universalizing result could be proclaimed with confidence. Instead the research design of this thesis uses universalizing comparison for a less

ambitious but important function: to help test existing hypotheses, providing further support for the true ones while revealing the false ones. Universalizing comparison is useful because it demonstrates the limits of the validity of the central hypothesis by revealing the underlying generalities as well as by understanding the compared units more clearly as their individuality is illuminated in a comparative light (Azarian, 2011, p. 120). Using South Africa's memberships of IBSA and BRICS as case studies permits maximum efficacy in the research design to test the central assumption of the thesis as it conducts a compelling comparative analysis of sufficiently similar entities but one which differs in respect of a phenomenon of particular interest.

The second reason is that IBSA and BRICS are the most recent examples of strategic partnership at the minilateral level to which South Africa belongs. As such they are deemed the most appropriate diplomatic and political vehicles through which to examine the evolution of South Africa's global networking power and provide useful insights into the extent to which network power can be considered a factor underpinning the country's global strategic position. Prior to the establishment of IBSA and BRICS, South Africa enjoyed a well-documented global strategic position as an emerging middle power; one that was linked to its moral authority having traversed the route from racial oppression to a democratic South Africa through peaceful negotiations under the leadership of former president Nelson Mandela. However, under the Mbeki and Zuma administrations the link between South Africa's global strategic position and its moral authority has become less apparent in light of the country's waning moral leadership. That South Africa continues to enjoy a global strategic position, despite the decline in its moral authority, points to the influence of other factors. A focus on IBSA and BRICS gives us the best insight into network power as one of these factors.

Third, it would be interesting to undertake the same research study but using first India and then Brazil's dual membership of IBSA and BRICS as case studies in order to compare the findings in what could be a broader research investigation. However, I have a particular interest in the study of South African foreign policy and being a diplomat in the service of the Government of South Africa I have first-hand experience

and insight into the implementation of its foreign policy. I had the privilege of working on the IBSA/BRICS desk in the Department of International Relations and Cooperation during the country's first year of its membership in BRICS and was thus actively engaged in implementing these partnerships. That being said, the opinions and views contained and articulated herein are entirely the author's own except where referenced otherwise and cannot in any manner or form be attributed to or construed as the opinions or views of the Government of South Africa.

1.5.1 The literature on IBSA and BRICS

IBSA being an elder, more institutionalized forum than BRICS has far more written about it in the academic literature than BRICS. Also, not all the literature applicable to the study on IBSA is directly related to and concerns an analysis of IBSA. Indeed much of the literature on IBSA is referenced as an example under broader analysis of the 'Global South' such as Ian Taylor (2009) or as Refilwe Mokoena (2007) and Gladys Lechini (2007) does, under the auspices of 'South-South cooperation'. There are however a number of articles that undertake assessments of the forum's progress at particular intervals such as Miller (2005), Beri (2008) and Puri (2007) writing for an UNCTAD report as well as the comprehensive examination of IBSA as an international actor by FRIDE (2008). Similarly, reference to BRICS is often as an example used under a more comprehensive examination of 'emerging powers' thus limiting the amount of comprehensively analyzed literature on BRICS itself.

SAIIA has laid a firm foundation for much of the literature that is specifically focused on IBSA. The article by Agarwal, Besada and White (2010) is of particular interest, discussing as it does the progress made by IBSA in addressing social development challenges within the member countries of IBSA. Also, the articles contributed by Lyal White and Joseph Senora (2010) are instructive in their analyses of the IBSA Dialogue Forum as well as Nel and Taylor's (2013) article questioning IBSA's commitment to South-South solidarity. Other articles emanating from India and Brazil are also

instructive. Of particular import is that developed by the Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale (CeSPI) in Brazil entitled "India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) and global politics: the ambitions and constraints of a new alliance" referring as it does to IBSA as an alliance, an argument specifically refuted in this thesis. The 10th anniversary of IBSA in 2013 inspired a plethora of academic literature that concerns the future of IBSA. Of particular note are the articles by Soule-Kohndou (2013), Vieira (2013) and Doyaili, Freytag and Draper (2013).

The BRICS Forum under examination in this thesis is encapsulated by the first BRIC Summit meeting in Russia in 2009, followed by subsequent Summit meetings, namely the Second BRIC Summit in Brazil held in 2010, the Third BRICS Summit in China held in 2011, the Fourth BRICS Summit in India held in 2012 and the Fifth BRICS Summit in South Africa held in 2013. In line with the scope of this research paper, the literature review of BRICS takes into account the broad spectrum that has been written on the subject of BRIC(s) into consideration but with the emphasis placed on those writings that directly concern the pentalateral diplomatic and political entity rather than those discussions that concern use the BRICS as a shorthand to refer to the individual sovereign countries.

The BRICS Forum is in its infancy. Consequently the majority of commentary on BRICS, as a political and diplomatic initiative, is largely found in media articles, editorials, and short articles written by various institutions, including Think Tanks as well as by economic and political consultancy firms. There is not, at this stage, a significant body of writing that can be found in the academic literature on the topic of BRICS to which useful reference can be made. Consequently the research study relies largely on primary source information emanating in the first place from the Government of South Africa, as well as from the other BRICS member states where applicable, and the first-hand experience of the author as an employee of the DIRCO as well as, to a lesser extent, upon the several articles in the media and on the Internet that attempt to analyze and interpret the primary source information. Apart from the articles written about BRICS in Indian, Russian, Brazilian and Chinese newspapers, there is a plethora

written about the subject in South Africa. The opinions of analysts such as Lyal White, Miles Soko, Mzukisi Qobo, Oliver Stuenkel and his informative "post-Western world" website (www.postwesternworld.com) dedicated to examining emerging powers encapsulated by the BRICS, Elizabeth Sidiropoulos (2011), Sanusha Naidoo (2012), Candice Moore (2012), Shubin (2013) have all made valuable contributions and are used as reference points in the research study. Others have made contributions based upon their first-hand experience of BRICS through the BRICS Business Forum and so are equally enlightening. These perspectives are contributed by example from the former CEO of BUSA, Jerry Vilakazi, by Gill Marcus in her capacity as Head of the Reserve Bank and by Kuseni Dlamini, the CEO of Old Mutual. Given the constructivist paradigm from which this research study is approached, the lack of pre-existing literature on the subject of BRICS is deemed an advantage as it is the discourse itself emanating from the primary sources that requires a fuller examination for a constructivist perspective to take root in the study effectively. Other applicable research is being proactively undertaken by various Think Tanks and academic scholars from the BRICS member states and is designed to take forward the conceptualization of BRICS. Much of the work in this regard is under embargo as they are 'works in progress' and yet to be published. Those published however have been informative. A book written prior to the first BRIC Summit in 2009 and published in 2010, supported by the Ministry of External Affairs of India, which comprised interesting thoughts on crucial subjects by experts from the four countries entitled "BRIC in the new world order: Perspectives from Brazil, China, India and Russia," edited by Nandan Unnikrishnan and Samir Saran. Both Cynthia Roberts (2010) and Macfarlane (2006) highlight the particular role of Russia in BRICs.

Useful articles emanating from South African Institutions that deal with both IBSA and BRICS are also an extremely useful source of opinion. Articles written on the subject of both IBSA and BRICS by Francis Kornegay, in particular, from the IGD are seminal and notable for the proactive policy advice concerning the direction in which each forum may take. A few of these articles of particular import are those that appeared as early as July 2009 in the IGD's Global Insight entitled "South Africa's South-South

Dilemmas: Will a BRIC fall on IBSA?" Another article published in May 2011 entitled "From BRIC to BRICS: Report on the proceedings of the international workshop on South Africa's emerging power alliances: IBSA, BRIC, BASIC," as well as Kornegay's paper presented to the Observer Research Foundation in November 2011 entitled "South Africa, The Indian Ocean and the IBSA-BRICS Question: Reflections on Geopolitical and Strategic Dimensions" are both valuable. The SAIIA, through its Emerging Powers program, has produced a couple of interesting papers on the subject of IBSA and BRICS, which have similarly proved useful. These are "Perspectives from the BRICs: Lessons for South Africa, Report on a seminar held by the South African Institute of International Affairs, 1 March 2011," and "BRIC and IBSA Forums: Neo-liberals in Disguise or Champions of the South?" The Standard Bank series on "BRIC and Africa" written by Simon Freemantle and Jeremy Stevens is an extremely useful source of statistical information and is used by this research study for its particular focus on the activities of the BRICS countries in Africa.

1.6 Objectives

This thesis covers four objectives. First, I aim to conceptualize a framework of international alignment (2.1) and to show how strategic partnership at the minilateral level is understood within a value-neutral and content-neutral framework (2.2). This is done by problematizing the concept of security in the traditional understanding of alignment and general conceptions of strategic partnership. Second, I aim to broaden and deepen our knowledge of strategic partnership by examining its instance at the minilateral level with reference to IBSA and BRICS as the newest instances thereof (2.4). I focus in particular on the concept of inherent rivalry as a formal property of strategic partnership which yields an important function; namely the use of strategic partnership, included at the minilateral level, as a tool to manage that inherent rivalry. Third, I aim to reveal the link between GSP and the national interest conceptualized as the three ultimate ends of state (3.1) through an examination of how South Africa's key foreign policy priorities, including both its material and ideational constituent parts, link

to its domestic agenda within the context of furthering the national interest of South Africa (3.2). Of particular interest is to examine the prescripts of South Africa's key foreign policy priorities as provided by the DIRCO in successive departmental strategic plans, which together aim at leveraging the country's GSP (3.3). Fourth, through the use of two case studies, I aim to probe the extent to which strategic partnership at the minilateral level strategically positions a state globally according to a three-stage analysis by which to measure GSP (Chapters 4 and 5).

Central to the research study are the foreign policy priorities of the DIRCO, which are drawn from the twelve deliverable "Outcomes" of Government that resulted from the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) document that the DIRCO, as a member of the International Cooperation, Trade and Security Cluster (ICTS), must implement.[16] These are notably:

a) Enhancement of the African Agenda and sustainable development;
b) Strengthening of the political and economic integration of the SADC;
c) Strengthening of the relations with strategic formations of the North;
d) Strengthening of South – South cooperation;
e) Participation in the global system of governance; and
f) Strengthening bilateral political and economic relations.

Particular attention is also paid to the role of values and principles in South Africa's foreign policy, which are indicative, and also reflective, of the national interest and thereby of the national identity.

1.7 Hypothesis

The academic literature on strategic partnership in general, including its instance at the minilateral level, recognizes that this type of international alignment is indicative of a political and diplomatic strategy on the part of political elites, calculated to enhance the global strategic position of their respective states in an evolving

multipolar world. Drawing from the insights gained from business theory into strategic partnerships the decision to align into arrangements of a strategic nature is driven, arguably, less by retrospective rationalities than by strategic intentions (Todeva and Knoke, 2005, p. 5), although this is not to discount the former entirely. This thesis such insights theory to advance our understanding of strategic partnership at the minilateral level and makes the point that what makes a partnership "strategic" is that it is not only driven by evaluations of present circumstances, but also by expectations about future outcomes. Thus the decision to align in a strategic partnership at the state level is almost always forward-looking and designed to position the state better for some pre-determined gain sometime in the future. In light of this insight, it should follow that strategic partnership, including at the minilateral level, should accordingly function to enhance the GSP of its member states. The obvious question is whether strategic partnership, in particular at the minilateral level, does indeed have such an impact since there are no studies within the International Relations discipline that explicitly interrogate this assumption.

This thesis investigates this hypothesis to test its validity by using South Africa's memberships of IBSA and BRICS as case studies. The findings of this research are intriguing. Membership of IBSA has made a positive impact upon South Africa's GSP in all three areas by which GSP is measured. However, this impact is limited, often only to the diplomatic arena, and discernable only in specific issue areas. These areas are: the global development discourse, South-South cooperation, global governance, global trade and investment, global democratic discourse, intra-IBSA trade and investment, intra-IBSA exchange of knowledge, skills and technology transfer as well as intra-IBSA tourism. In comparison, membership of BRICS has also positively impacted upon South Africa's GSP in all three of the criteria used to measure a state's GSP. However, the impact is shown to be more significant than that made by IBSA, cutting across the diplomatic, political, economic and social spheres and is particularly strong in the following areas: foreign policy prestige and standing, the global economic and financial reform agenda, food security, global public health, the global discourse on trade and investment, the African Agenda, with a particular emphasis on the integration agenda of

the continent and the drivers of that integration, to a limited extent in the area of intra-BRICS trade and investment as well as in knowledge exchange, skills and technology transfer. In addition because BRICS is still in its infancy there is a greater scope for potential that still needs to be actualized and many areas that are not yet operational. Thus further potential exists not only in the areas outlined above, but also in other areas such as funding for development through the NDB, insurance and reinsurance markets, cooperation between commercial banks as well as state-owned enterprises, South-South cooperation, as a bridge to building relations with formations in the North, science and technology cooperation as well as in terms of intra-BRICS tourism, academia and business. The difference between these increasingly similar alignments lies in its membership. These results indicate that strategic partnership at the minilateral level may not in itself be able to enhance the GSP of its member states by virtue of its unique purpose, structure or function. What the research shows is that where strategic partnership at the minilateral level does have an impact upon the GSP of its member states it seems to be determined instead by the composition of that alignment. This has theoretical implications for minilateralism that go beyond the link between Naím's "magic number" and the particular problem that needs to be resolved, and appears to suggest that it is essential also to consider which particular states in a minilateral arrangement are (minimally) essential to achieving a particular mutually desired goal.

1.8 Scope

Excluded from the research study are firstly, the bilateral relationships that underpin IBSA and BRICS and which South Africa enjoys with the other member states of both Forums. Although IBSA and BRICS serve to mutually reinforce South Africa's bilateral relationships with these states, it is not the scope of this research study to examine these bilateral relationships in any significant depth. The scope of this study consequently confines itself to a discussion on and around the activity of IBSA and BRICS as political and diplomatic entities in themselves.

Also falling outside the scope of this research is a study of the "BRIC" or its plural, the "BRICs", as an economic construct originally coined by Jim O'Neill from Goldman Sachs. The reason for this is that the economic construct has developed beyond its original conceptualization by Goldman Sachs and, with the inclusion of South Africa, embodies a political and diplomatic construct in its own right as an instance of strategic partnership at the minilateral level. Reference to IBSA and BRICS similarly is not used merely as a shortcut to refer to the three or five countries making up these acronyms, as is the case for many studies, but rather it refers to the political and diplomatic constructs being the IBSA Dialogue Forum and the BRICS Forum.

Further, the relationship between the domestic and the foreign policy arenas in South Africa will be examined largely in reference to process. An in-depth examination of the substance of policy, such as Government's five national priorities and that contained within the National Growth Path 2030, falls outside the scope of this study. South Africa's foreign policy discussion confines itself instead to the foreign policy priorities as outlined in successive Strategic Plans published by the DIRCO covering the period 2009 - 2017 and which were designed to ensure the implementation of Outcome 11 that resulted from the domestic processes related to the MTSF. Thus the five national priorities and other substantive policy directives will be taken for granted and not analyzed according to their merits and the extent to which they have or have not been achieved. Excluded also from this research study is an explicit discussion on whether South Africa's foreign policy should be seen as either revisionist or reformist, even though some scholars may presume to find an answer to this implicitly.

1.9 Sources

This thesis relies on qualitative data from both primary and secondary sources. Extensive primary sources used in this research include: public speeches, statements and press interviews made by government officials, national plans, government departmental plans, budgets, Summit declarations and statements, press

statements, outcomes from conferences, symposiums and seminars, where relevant. Primary sources importantly include direct interviews with diplomats, relevant government officials and with people whose work in the field relate to IBSA and BRICS such as people in business, parastatal companies, Think Tanks and in academia. Secondary sources include books, journal articles, media articles and editorials as well as working and occasional papers.

1.10 Outline of Chapters

This research study consists of an introductory chapter, a body of five chapters, a conclusion chapter as well as a bibliography. The chapters are as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction

The introductory chapter provides an outline of the thesis: its aims, objectives, scope and the central hypothesis it sets out to interrogate for validity. Included is a background to the subject matter that provides a context for central questions this research study aims to interrogate. A review of the literature for each of the main sections of the thesis is also provided.

Chapter Two: Strategic partnership at the minilateral level within a framework of international alignment

This chapter provides the theoretical framework of reference for this thesis. Strategic partnership, particularly its occurrence at the minilateral level, is examined as an archetype of international alignment in the broadest sense. Firstly, an argument is put forward that aims to distinguish the concept of alignment from that of alliance as an over-arching umbrella concept in International Relations under which its various archetypes exist. Secondly, an in-depth examination of the concept of strategic partnership is presented. Two additions are made to assist in the conceptualization of

the concept: inherent rivalry is proposed as a property of strategic partnership and also its function as a tool to manage that rivalry. Thirdly, an argument is made for examining strategic partnership at the minilateral level under the auspices of minilateralism rather than as part of the body of literature on multilateralism.

Chapter Three: Overview of South African foreign policy

This chapter locates South Africa as a middle emerging power and begins by introducing a three-stage analytical model by which to measure a state's Global Strategic Positioning (GSP). These are: the extent to which a state can successfully exert its influence; the extent to which the state is able to access economic gain and the extent to which a state is able to carve a niche for its foreign policy (by extension its national agenda) on a global scale. There is a particular focus upon highlighting the role of the domestic agenda in South Africa's foreign policy, particularly in drawing out the ideational elements that show foreign policy as a reflection of state identity and thereby the national interest. In line with this, the chapter draws a clear link between the values and principles of South Africa's foreign policy, its consequent diplomacy of Ubuntu as well as the development of its key priority areas with the state's identity and its interests. Thereafter South Africa's six key foreign policy priority areas, as outlined in successive DIRCO strategic plans for the period 2009-2017 are laid out in detail because these areas form the core analysis of two case studies to follow.

Chapter Four: South Africa's membership of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum

This Chapter is the first case study used to interrogate the validity of the central hypothesis of this thesis and provides an answer to the other two research questions of this research. It examines the impact of South Africa's membership of IBSA on the country's GSP. The three criteria for measuring GSP are examined with reference to the extent to which, and how, South Africa's membership of IBSA advances the realization of its six foreign policy priorities. The results show that membership of IBSA has made a positive impact upon South Africa's GSP in all three areas used to measure a state's

GSP. However the extent of this impact is limited, largely to the diplomatic arena, and discernable only in the following issue areas: These areas are: the global development discourse, South-South cooperation, global governance, global trade and investment, global democratic discourse, intra-IBSA trade and investment, intra-IBSA exchange of knowledge, skills and technology transfer as well as intra-IBSA tourism. These results are evaluated and interpreted in light of the research questions of this thesis.

Chapter Five: South Africa's membership of the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) Forum

This Chapter is the second case study used to interrogate the validity of the central hypothesis of this thesis. It examines the impact of South Africa's membership of BRICS on the country's GSP, if any. As with IBSA, the three criteria for measuring GSP are examined with reference to the extent to which, and how, South Africa's membership of BRICS advances the realization of its six foreign policy priorities. The results show that membership of BRICS has made a positive impact upon South Africa's GSP in all three of the criteria used to measure a state's GSP. The impact is shown to be more significant than that made by IBSA, cutting across the diplomatic, political, economic and social spheres, and is particularly strong in the following areas: foreign policy prestige and standing, the global economic and financial reform agenda, food security, global public health, the global discourse on trade and investment, the African Agenda, with a particular emphasis on the integration agenda of the continent and the drivers of that integration, to a limited extent in the area of intra-BRICS trade and investment as well as in knowledge exchange, skills and technology transfer. These results are evaluated and interpreted in light of the research questions of this thesis.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

Based upon the two case studies it is concluded that strategic partnership at the minilateral level may not in itself be sufficient to enhance the GSP of its member states by virtue of its unique purpose, structure or function. Nor is strategic partnership able to make an impact on the GSP of its member states merely because of its strategic,

forward-looking and pre-emptive intention. research study appears to suggest is that the degree to which a state's GSP is enhanced is not the consequence of the type of alignment it happens to be part of, in this case a strategic partnership, but determined instead by the particular composition of that minilateral alignment. The implications of these findings are discussed: at the theoretical level in terms of our knowledge of minilateralism as well as in terms of South Africa's strategic approach to international politics in the 21st Century. The limitations of the research study are also noted and thereafter the areas for further research as a result of this study are elaborated upon.

Notes:

[1]This research upholds the distinction between traditional/established middle powers of the industrialized Western world and emerging middle powers in the South advocated by Nel, Taylor and van der Westhuizen (2000, pp. 46-48). Therefore this thesis categorizes South Africa, India and Brazil as emerging middle powers that have a distinctive role and a unique position in the international system, one that is demonstrably different from established middle powers such as Canada and Australia.

[2] This phraseology is drawn from the G20's description of itself as "systemically important industrialized and developing economies." For more information refer to http://www.g20.org/about_what_is_g20.aspx

[3] The juxtaposition of IBSA and BRICS alongside one another began as early as the second BRIC Summit. At the initiation of President Lula de Silva of Brazil, in his capacity as chair of the IBSA Dialogue Forum and the BRIC Mechanism in 2010, and host of both the 4th IBSA Summit of Heads of State and Government on and the 2nd BRIC Summit in Brasilia held the two Summit meeting back-to-back, the IBSA Summit on the 15 April 2010 and the BRIC Summit on the 16 April 2011 in Brasilia. President de Silva's creativity extended to the hosting of the official banquet for IBSA, normally hosted during the Summit for Heads of State and Government according to standard diplomatic practice, but which was instead held jointly with the BRICS banquet. Similarly the first joint IBSA/BRIC Business Forum was convened in Brasilia on 15 April 2011.

[4] O'Neill (2001) coined the BRIC acronym to denote a) the relationship between the G7 and some of the larger emerging market economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China, b) to forecast the drivers of global GDP (namely the G7 + BRIC) over the decade (to 2011), and c) in light of the expected relative growth of the BRICs, mount an argument to "incorporate China and probably Brazil and Russia and possible India, (and) expand the key body of global economic policy coordination. The concept was further elaborated upon by fellow Goldman Sachs economists Wilson and Purushothaman (2003) reporting on their economic projections over the next 50 years regarding emerging markets and their collective potential to overtake the current economic superpowers. Goldman Sachs also identified a group of 11 countries, called the 'Next 11' or N11, that are, according to their analysis, travelling in the same direction as the BRIC countries, although they might lack the overall heft to become really dominant global players. They are Mexico; the Republic of Korea; Turkey; Vietnam; Indonesia; Nigeria; Bangladesh; Egypt; Iran; Pakistan; and the Philippines). For more information on the N11 see Lawson, Heacock & Stupnytska (2007). Since which time there have been a plethora of acronym's coined by economists to denote the next "batch" of emerging markets to watch as drivers for global economic growth and used as effective labels upon which to hang economic projects. One of which, CIVETS (Columbia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey, South Africa) is increasing in popularity.

[5] It could be supposed that the timing of South Africa's accession to BRICS, coming as it did immediately prior to Christmas 2010, similarly came as a surprise to the Government of South Africa if the lack of a coordinated public diplomacy effort on the part government on the subject of BRICS in the immediate aftermath of accession is any indication. This was rectified and from February 2011 onwards when a rather prominent public diplomacy campaign on BRICS and South Africa's views thereon was proactively pursued in order to keep the public informed of what was and is still considered to be a diplomatic success.

[6] Jacob Zuma became the president of South Africa after the 4th democratic elections were held on 22 April 2009.

[7] The expression that IBSA and BRICS are "*sui generis* entities running on separate but parallel tracks" is directly credited to Ambassador Christaan Basson, former Chief of Staff in the office of the Director-General of the DIRCO of South Africa. The expression was first coined in 2010 and was used in the DIRCO to describe the relationship between IBSA and BRICS from a South African government perspective. The author is grateful for the express permission granted by Ambassador Basson to use this expression in its entirety without amendment throughout the thesis.

[8] The USA-Japan-Australia trilateral strategic dialogue, which was signed in 2005, is also referred to as "trilateralism" from the perspective of these countries though it is not the purpose of this research study to analyze the commonalities (if any) and differences (where they exist) with the 'trilateralism' referred to by Alden and Vieira. Refer Alden & Vieira (2005, p. 1077) for more detailed information.

[9] According to Kornegay & Masters (2010), second generation coalitional multilateralism highlights what is seen as an erosion of the undisputed but contested grip of Western powers on economic and political institutions and the symmetrical interdependence of their global reach. Such coalitions are formed from a small group of developing countries reaching beyond their regional boundaries. They are emerging as formations that are independent of the traditional major powers.

[10] As per the report by Kornegay & Masters (2010), the IGD conference argued that "emerging power alliances" reflect the trend establishing developing world alliances that are practical, issue-specific and organic in their development. They are used specifically to context the existing power arrangements and are not simply about changing old alliances.

[11] In their limited coalitional nature, "selective multilateral strategic partnerships" reflect the diverse agendas of converging interests between the states comprising them. Their limits in terms of membership may reflect 'strategic triangles' or quadrilateral arrangements at head-of-state or ministerial level with global governance reform and developmental agendas of varying scope and depth. As they are multilateral though of limited number in membership, they intersect strategic partnerships of a bilateral nature and thereby, may present challenges to the bilateral dimensions of relationships among the states constituting these groupings, depending on their nature (Kornegay & Masters, 2010).

[12] For instance, it is argued by Alden & Vieira (2005, p. 1090) that former President Thabo Mbeki's vision of creating a 'G7 of the South' is "instructive as an indication of an analysis of the international system that is both informed by a structuralist critique and that employs the language of material power to realize its ambitions". In addition, they cast Thabo Mbeki's attempts to restructure the African continent's economies and state system as being along neoliberal lines, as manifested in NEPAD and the AU.

[13] Jeffery Checkel (1998, p. 325) argues that the central challenge for constructivist scholars is theory development. That "having demonstrated that social construction matters, they must now address when, how, and why it occurs, clearly specifying the actors and mechanisms bringing about change, the scope conditions under which they operate, and how they vary across countries" otherwise constructivism is doomed to be plagued by empirical ad hocism.

[14] Alliances *of* identity should be understood as being an identity issue, not threat based but rather a relationship between two (or more) states based on a common understanding of each other's likeness or similarity. Whereas alliances *for* identity are aimed more at preserving the state, which can merely be seen as a tactical alliance against a strategic threat (as viewed by a realist) or a way of protecting autonomy.

[15] The research procedure referred to generally conforms to the following 4 steps: a) document the social structures, b) note a correlation between these and new state interests, c) examine changing discourse as further evidence of these normative effects, and d) strengthen the case by considering alternative explanations. For more information in this regard refer to Checkel (1998, p. 334).

[16] Concerning monitoring and evaluation of Government, the Jacob Zuma administration of 2009 introduced the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MSTF), a planning blueprint aimed to ensure that Government works in a coherent way in order to achieve its objectives for the a particular electoral mandate period. Five national priorities were identified as the focus of the Jacob Zuma administration. From these five priorities, twelve "Outcomes" were developed, for which each government cluster is responsible (baring in mind that some clusters are responsible for the implementation of more than one outcome given the cross-cutting nature of some of the clusters). The DIRCO falls within the International Cooperation, Trade and Security (ICTS) Cluster, and as such is responsible, along with the other Government Departments, to implement "Outcome 11", which pertains to the area of International Relations. The Strategic Plan of the Department, 2009 – 2014, in which the Department's foreign policy priorities are encapsulated and explained, are drawn from "Outcome 11" in a direct manner in order to contribute to the Government's delivery plan and the Minister's performance agreement entered into with the President and designed to ensure accountability for delivery. For more on the Government monitoring and evaluation, related to service delivery at the national level, and how it is achieved. Refer to www.info.gov.za and www.thepresidency.gov.za and for more detailed information in this regard.

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CHAPTER TWO

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AT THE MINILATERAL LEVEL WITHIN A FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL ALIGNMENT

The study of international alignment is an effective reference point from which to study the global system in which we live. This is because international alignments and their evolution are deemed reliable reflections of the global order and the system governing that order. On the one hand strategic partnership, "emblematic of the new, 21st century alignment archetype" (Wilkins, 2012, p. 68), is cast as the latest archetype of international alignment and reflective of the world in which we live. In its current articulation, though, strategic partnership is considered to be a particular type of security cooperation alongside alliances, coalitions and security communities thus contributing to a saturation of studies on security cooperation. On the other hand, the fluid international order of the 21st Century is increasingly characterized by new, non-traditional archetypes of international alignment that fall outside the traditional security lexicon. The establishment of IBSA and BRICS and potentially the CIVETS, in the event that it becomes a fully-fledged diplomatic and political initiative, as well as other types of cooperative partnerships such as the Pacific Alliance, the New African-Asian Strategic Partnership (NAASP), the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) and the G20, do not fit comfortably in a securitized International Relations discipline because security in the traditional (military) sense is neither a driving force of these alignments nor the primary motivator. Constructivist perspectives on structure, interests and world order lend credence to the idea that a securitized notion of strategic partnership may be out of step with 21st Century trends in international alignment and in addition its further development under the auspices of security cooperation does little to advance our understanding of the shifting trends in the

international system towards a multipolar world order. While International Relations scholarship recognizes that not all international alignments can be analyzed under security cooperation frameworks such as alliance and coalition theory there is neither an adequate model nor framework of reference put forward to account for the burgeoning number of new, non-traditional types of alignment at a time when it is becoming increasingly germane.

The absence of a comprehensive and rigorously researched framework of reference under which new, non-traditional alignments can be studied is that there is very little that can be said on a theoretical plane of analysis about alignments that embodies the full spectrum of cooperation, including but not limited to security cooperation, outside the particular instances under examination. It is also difficult to compare and contrast different instances of these alignments without recourse to a common analytic framework. This Chapter will show that strategic partnership is an appropriate framework of reference with which to account for some of the new, non-traditional types of international alignment because its problematic association with security it not a necessary condition for its conceptualization. So construed, it will be argued that far from being categorized as an alliance, a coalition or a plurilateral arrangement of states operational in a multilateral setting, our understanding of IBSA and BRICS, and the structural relations that underpin these forums, is more effectively advanced under the framework of strategic partnership, albeit at the minilateral level. More than that, the examination of IBSA and BRICS under the framework of strategic partnership at the minilateral level deepens our understanding of how this type of international alignment is uniquely able to manage complexity in the global system of the 21st Century.

2.1 A contested concept

Strategic partnership is commonly seen as a dominant feature of modern diplomatic discourse. Despite being a meaningful foreign policy concept commonly employed in political and diplomatic circles, it nevertheless remains within academia an

under-examined concept. At the political/diplomatic level strategic partnership means different things for different states, is employed for different reasons and even performs different functions depending on the countries involved. Anne Schmidt's (2010, p. 3) review article on the subject of strategic partnership concluded that it is a "contested policy concept that, although extensively used in official documents of the European Union in particular, there remains a problematic lack of conceptual clarity". Similarly in official documents of the Government of South Africa, nowhere is the concept of strategic partnership defined. It is therefore a challenge to understand, much less predict, the kinds of international partners South Africa would envisage for this type of alignment.

As a contested concept a consensus definition for strategic partnership remains elusive. Renard and Biscop (2010, p. 3) view the lack of substantial clarity as detrimental because it risks overstretching the concept and creating confusion within the European Union (being their case study) and its partners abroad. Supportive of this perspective is Kay (2000, p. 16) who warns that an increasingly amorphous term, with little meaning, could potentially have serious associated strategic costs that could, for example, unintentionally undermine traditional concepts, such as alliance. Khandekar (2011) worries that identifying arrangements between (bilateral) and among (multilateral) states as strategic partnership without a clear idea of what this means, risks creating unrealistic expectations leading to a constant assessment of the partnership as being unable to deliver.

For Kay (2000, p. 15) the origins of the strategic partnership may lie with the Soviets and his conception of the term is derived accordingly. Kuchins (2001, p. 260) supports this perspective and points out that in lieu of any alliances with great powers (the brief Russo-China alliance in the 1950s aside) the term has loomed significantly and substantively in the Russian Foreign Service as well as at the political level. FRIDE and the EUISS, both Think Tanks of the European Union, have a research program dedicated to the study of strategic partnership, specifically those in which the EU is part. Although some of the work done by these Think Tanks could be broadened in

order to develop a more generic conception of strategic partnership, the strong Euro-centric bias prevents the research from being an authoritative voice on the subject beyond the instance and experience of the EU. Indeed, the challenge with the different conceptions of the term that are current is that they are heavily dependent upon the particular instance to which they are being applied. This makes it difficult to say anything about strategic partnership on a general plane of analysis. For strategic partnership to have any meaning within the International Relations discipline beyond what political elites deem it to be at a particular time and for a particular political purpose, it may require a definition, however broad, as a starting point to developing a framework for analysis.

Luis Blanco (n.d., pp. 3-4) has gone some way toward analyzing this relatively new concept in international political and diplomatic discourse in its generic form, outside of its particular instances, by attempting to examine its origin and function. Blanco's study of the major corpora of British and American English, which tracks the political usage of the term in the English language, shows that the term could not be found in the corpora before the 1990s. Although Blanco notes a proliferation of the term in the 2000s, he cautions that these findings are not definitive and cannot be used as evidence that the term was first used only by international political actors in the 1990s. What is clear though for Blanco is that the term is of relatively recent origin, that its initial use was associated with military and economic cooperation and that its prominence as a legitimate expression in international political discourse is increasing. Similarly, Thomas Wilkins's (2011, p. 122.) account of strategic partnership notes that the term entered into the security lexicon to describe privileged bilateral relationships that further proliferated in the 1990s in a 'scramble' for states seeking close alignment to upgrade relations. Wilkins's proposed definition is perhaps the most useful because it is an attempt at the generic definition that encapsulates the majority of elements of strategic partnership recognized by other scholars. He notes that although there is a widely used business tool that does enunciate a definition of strategic partnership, as well as the existence of many definitions for the term strategic alliance in business literature, these

cannot be adequately applied to the concept in International Relations.[17] Consequently, he proposes the following definition of strategic partnership:

> "A structured collaboration between states (or other actors) to take joint advantage of economic opportunities. Strategic partnering occurs both in and between the international and domestic sectors (levels). Besides allowing information, skills, and resources to be shared, a strategic partnership also permits the partners to share risk" (Wilkins, 2008, p. 363).

The competition of ideas (reflected in the several conceptions and definitions that abound) should not be deemed to reflect strategic partnership's weakness or indeed meaninglessness. Instead it is a normal reflection of the free intellectual environment that is necessary in the initial stages of a research program in order to maintain the concept's relevance in changing conditions. Certainly it would be undesirable and impractical to discard strategic partnership in the absence of a common definition because the concept is so obviously widespread in the political arena. One possible interpretation of Grevi finds him to be of the same opinion. Instead of searching for a definition of strategic partnership he argues that there should be a shift in focus from finding criteria and set definitions towards identifying substance and purpose (Grevi, 2012 p. 10). Elsewhere Grevi (2008, p. 158) argues that the lack of conceptual clarity is advantageous at this early stage in the research as it allows for a degree of flexibility and constructive ambiguity thus "creating space for mutual adjustments, concessions, trade-offs, an incremental approach and importantly, pragmatism." Avery Goldstein (2003, p. 73) appears to align with this perspective and in lieu of providing a definition he prefers to isolate the elements of strategic partnership such as "a commitment to promoting stable relationships and extensive economic intercourse, muting disagreements about domestic politics in the interest of working together on matters of shared concern in international diplomacy, and routinizing the frequent exchange of official visits, … and regular summit meetings between top government leaders."

In line with this perspective, a model of strategic partnership that allows for sufficient innovation to make it an enduring feature of an evolving global order is preferred. As opposed to a definition, a theoretical construction designed to reveal and explain the chief elements of strategic partnership's form and its underlying structure of relations may be an effective way in which to understand this type of international alignment.

This requires the articulation of two essential elements: first, a notion of what strategic partnership entails will be elucidated with a focus on, secondly, the underlying structure of relations i.e. the underlying economic, social and cultural conditions that supports the construction of strategic partnership. As such, strategic partnership is viewed as a process or set of processes.

Important to note at this stage is that strategic partnering is not necessarily confined to bilateral state-to-state relations despite the fact that the majority of research in this regard focuses largely on bilateral instances as case studies. In the case of the EU's strategic partnerships with other states, the EU is treated as a unitary actor and hence it falls under studies of a bilateral nature. As Schmidt (2010) points out, strategic partnering can be embedded at the multilateral level representing what Wilkins (2008, p. 370) calls a "complex amalgam of formal and informal linkages between the actors sometimes operative in a purely bilateral context and at other times in a multilateral context depending on the issue." Wilkins (2008, p. 371) argues that this type of alignment at the multilateral level is often able to blur the exact parameters of the bilateral relations that exist amongst the actors. This enables a degree of deliberate ambiguity to the partnership by masking the degree of collaboration to external parties.

Before examining the notion of what strategic partnership at the minilateral level entails and the underlying structure of relations in this type of international alignment it is necessary to first clarify how the terms minilateral and minilateralism are used in this thesis.

2.2 Defining minilateral and minilateralism

In order to pursue conceptual clarity, the use in this thesis of the terms bilateral, mini-lateral, sub-regional, regional, plurilateral and multilateral are not random. The importance in accurately ascribing the difference between these levels of inter-state engagement essentially lies in the scope and scale of cooperation as well as in

the particular diplomatic arena in which they operate. It is thus important to accurately identify the level at which a particular cooperative arrangement operates because our expectations for these alignments, as well as the way in which we assess them in the context of the broader International Relations literature, are contained therein.

The literature on strategic partnership to date describes strategic partnership between three or more states as strategic partnership at the multilateral level. Wilkins's (2008) study of the Russo-Chinese bilateral strategic partnership and how it is embedded within the SCO at the multilateral level is a case in point. Wilkins's work on the SCO is the only in-depth study of strategic partnership at this additional networked level and thus is a core reference point for examination of strategic partnership at this level. Grevi (2010) is the only other scholar to acknowledge that strategic partnering could occur at levels other than at the bilateral level. However, his comments are limited and notably are not backed up by an in-depth examination of the phenomenon or with reference to practical examples. Grevi (2010, p. 10) notes that strategic partnership paves the way to reconciling bilateral engagement and multilateral cooperation, strengthening both dimensions at once because "it stands at the interface of bilateral, minilateral and multilateral relations to facilitate the shift of levels of engagement up and down this ladder".

For two reasons this research study rejects reference to strategic partnership at the multilateral level used to depict a strategic partnership between three or more states. First, reference to strategic partnership at a multilateral level locates the research within broader studies of multilateralism by default. This is problematic because it risks embroiling strategic partnership between three or more states in a term that is recognized by Bouchard and Peterson (2011, p. 3) as "under-conceptualized". Lazarou, Geoffrey, Hill and Smith (2010) recognize the challenges inherent in the concept of multilateralism and consequently calls for a 'doctrine' of multilateralism; the development of an accepted, authoritative guide clarifying 'by what means' and 'how should they be used' and on the basis of which principles where the exact circumstances and mode of operation in which they are employed are liable to interpretation. Several

definitions of multilateralism exist with those proposed by Keohane (1990, p. 731) and Ruggie (1992, pp. 564-568) being most widely cited. However, the extent to which a definition assists in conceptualizing a particular term is limited. Interpretation, as well as expectations, of a particular concept often depends on the theoretical lens through which an analysis is conducted. Cox (1992, p. 177) recognizes the role of theory in conceptualizing multilateralism by presenting its different conceptions from the perspective of realism, liberal institutionalism, world system structuralism and what he calls "historical dialectic". The argument made by Grevi (2012, p. 16), that grouped together emerging powers take an "instrumental approach to international cooperation, where multilateral bodies are seen as useful in so far as they amplify their respective national positions, constrain or inhibit unwelcome initiatives and uphold the traditional principle of non-interference in internal affairs", similarly interprets the concept through a theoretical lens. Bouchard and Peterson (2011, p. 25) recognize that conceptions of multilateralism can also be culturally based. They root the example of China's "sovereignty-based multilateralism" and the USA's "cost-benefit analysis" conception of multilateralism as culturally based, as opposed to a principled commitment to multilateral action as the cornerstone of world order, or as a route to democracy promotion and the emergence of a liberal peace as argued by others. The different conceptions, and thus the expectations, of multilateralism, for whatever reason, impacts upon the determination of multilateralism as either a means to an end or an end in itself, or possibly both.

Caporaso (1992, pp. 602-603) draws a distinction between multilateral institutions, referring to an "organizing principle, an organization, or simply an activity" and the concept of multilateralism, which manifests itself in organizations, and has a significance that cuts deeper and is "grounded in and appeals to the less formal, less codified habits, practices, ideas and norms of international society." The argument being that although all multilateral institutions exhibit multilateralism, not all instances of multilateralism are manifest in multilateral institutions. Fortunately the academic literature has evolved since Caporaso made this insight and automatically permits a refinement in our understanding of institutions/organization/process with reference to

the different levels at which these international alignments occur. The International Relations literature specifically acknowledges alignments that take place between more than three states but which do not necessarily manifest multilateralism. These kinds of alignments are distinguishable from multilateralism not only in terms of the drive for universalism but also, more importantly, in terms of process and the operation of a particular normative culture. Thus minilateral arrangements in which minilateralism is manifest as well as regionalism, trans-regionalism and plurilateralism are all recognized as distinct ordering devices in International Relations and different from multilateralism, itself an ordering device. Diplomatic practice also demands the preservation of the distinctiveness of these processes because they have important strategic implications for the manner and substance of engagement. Construed under the auspices of multilateralism, studies of strategic partnership at the multilateral level as opposed to a minilateral level thus miss a valuable opportunity. They contribute less to our understanding of the amorphous concept of multilateralism than they could do to deepening understanding of the growing phenomenon of minilateralism.

Second, strategic partnership at the multilateral level may be a contradiction in terms. The 'strategic' element of these kinds of partnership has a substantive implication and arguably exists in a grouping with a limited number of states. In arrangements with several states the strategic element is necessarily diluted to permit a greater number of states and often to an extent where the strategic nature of the partnership no longer has substantive significance thus rendering the partnership a different type of alignment altogether. As this thesis will show strategic partnership, particularly that which involves three or more states, is a distinctive type of international alignment in its own right. As such it has a particular kind of structure and operates in a particular manner, where distinctive processes are in operation and where a particular normative culture, sometimes at odds with the general precepts of multilateralism, is evident. Studied under the auspices of multilateralism this presents an anomaly and raises challenging questions for which scholars of multilateralism are obliged to account but which would result in deepening the already indeterminate concept of multilateralism. Instead studying strategic partnership between three or more states as a minilateral arrangement

under the framework of minilateralism could enhance our understanding of this phenomenon and how it has evolved in order to meet the demands of 21st Century diplomacy.

In light of these reasons this thesis frames strategic partnership between three or more states as an alignment at the minilateral level, where minilateralism is manifest. Moisés Naím's conception of minilateralism is perhaps the most cited reference made by scholars examining its instance in the post, post Cold War period[18]. Accordingly minilateralism is "the smallest possible number of countries needed to have the largest possible impact on solving a particular problem" (Naím, 2009). Although Naím never explicitly comments on the relationship between minilateralism and multilateralism, there is sufficient evidence that his argument might be akin, but not identical, to that expressed by Miles Kahler. Naím's minilateralism is a response to the failure of multilateralism in addressing global challenges. He promotes the idea that the world should abandon the "fool's errand" of trying to bring together the world's 200 countries in agreement in favor of a minilateral approach. Before Naím, Kahler (1992, pp. 682-686) expressed a similar, but more strident, view when he argued that minilaterlism is "a derogation from multilateralism" and is effectively used when multilateralism fails to keep a hegemonic power in check. Kahler's argument begins with multilateralism's "impulse to universality" (large numbers, possibly the largest number, if reference is made to the United Nations) and the neoliberal problem that view groups with large numbers as a difficult, if not impossible, obstacle to effective cooperation (p. 682). Kahler invalidates this neoliberal critique by demonstrating that obstacles to multilateral institution building, in the post-World War Two period, were often dealt with by creating a core of mini-lateral cooperation among economic powers. He argued "where minilateral institutions flourished, they were typically supported by minilateral cooperation among Atlantic powers, a 'disguised' minilateralism that provided the essential frame for a multilateral order" (pp. 686). Thus for Kahler (1992, p. 707), minilateralism emerged in the political arena after World War Two to address collective action problems by "mini-lateral great power collaboration disguised by multilateral

institutions and by derogations from multilateral principles in the form of persistent bilateralism and regionalism."

This thesis uses Naím's conception of minilateralism but, importantly, differs from both Naím and Kahler's view that minilateralism detracts from multilateralism. It conducts the examination into strategic partnership at the minilateral level with reference to minilateralism, one that is supportive of multilateralism and multilateral processes as seen as an end in itself. If we acknowledge that the relationship between these two 'isms' depends upon whether multilateralism is viewed as a means to an end or as an end in itself it opens the possibility to such a perspective. Implicit in both Naím and Kahler's view is that multilateralism is a means to an end, a tool or strategy to achieve other goals relating to global governance, international peace and security, sustainable development or to address the issue of climate change. Minilateralism too is a means to an end and thus stands in competition to multilateralism, as an alternative tool/strategy through which to achieve a particular goal/set of goals. If multilateralism is viewed as an end in itself then minilateralism could arguably be construed more positively as being supportive of, rather than a challenge to, this eventual end. So construed, minilateralism can be seen to act as an incubator for progress on a larger (universal) scale. It brings together the smallest number of states necessary to realize a mutual goal in order to facilitate progress on a broader scale. A practical example serves to illustrate this perspective. In international negotiations where there are obstacles to reaching an agreement on a particular common challenge, minilateralism serves to bring the relevant states that have particular concerns together for compromise in order to prevent failure of the broader process. Progress in this instance is viewed in the negative sense, where progress is the absence of collapse or failure. By all accounts, the 15th annual United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC), also known as the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP-15) held in Copenhagen in December 2009 was in crisis had not the Copenhagen Accord been drafted and official note been taken thereof by the broader conference (Shah, 2009). The Copenhagen Accord is the result of a minilateral process initiated within the broader multilateral process of the COP-15. It was a joint document drafted by the United States and Brazil, South Africa, India and China (BASIC) and

effectively brought together the smallest number of states needed to broker an accord (albeit non-binding) that would serve to ensure that the broader COP-15 did not collapse through deadlock. The 'magic number' that Naím aims at was in this case determined not only by the issue under discussion but also with reference to which particular states had the requisite amount of influence to stall the COP-15 meeting and thereby hamper the UNFCCC process. Renard and Biscop (2010, p. 3) are in agreement with this depiction of minilateralism when they argue that strategic partnership is most effective if seen as an instrument to further effective multilateralism.

2.3 A qualitatively distinct international alignment

Driven by research into strategic partnerships entered into by respectively the EU and the United States with other countries, as well as by countries within the Asia-Pacific region amongst themselves, the body of knowledge on strategic partnership to date depicts this latest archetype of international alignment as another instance of security cooperation in the same way that alliance and coalition implies security as a necessary, almost defining, element of the inter-state arrangement. This ignores the qualitative distinction of strategic partnership and contributes to the saturation of studies concerning security cooperation from mainly rationalist perspectives. Indeed Wilkins (2012, p. 59) specifies that "all forms of alignment share the property of being cooperative security endeavors" and thus he describes strategic partnership as a "security archetype" (Wilkins 2008, p. 359). There is evidence to support this perspective with reference to some instances of strategic partnership. The United States in particular as well as the EU, but less obviously so, utilizes the vehicle of strategic partnership to address various security concerns. Kay (2000, p. 16) argues that the United States pursues four pragmatic relationships (read functions) under the rubric of strategic partnership: alliance, reassurance-based cooperation, managed great power decline, justified cooperation and balancing. Similarly, strategic partnerships formed amongst states in the Asia-Pacific region demonstrate the trend of utilizing strategic partnership as the instrument of choice in seeking broad security collaboration (Wilkins,

2011, p. 121). While it is certainly true that some instances of strategic partnership may have a security dimension to the partnership in addition to other elements, depending on the agreement reached by the particular states involved, it is not by definition an inherent characteristic such as it is in an alliance or a coalition. Security in the traditional (military) sense is neither a necessary property of nor a (pre)condition for generic conceptions of strategic partnership.

The result of assuming security to be an inherent part of strategic partnership is that it ignores the qualitative distinction of strategic partnership from other types of international alignment. This detracts from its generic conceptualization applicable outside of its particular instances. In the absence of a generic concept of strategic partnership the scope of study into this type of alignment is needlessly narrowed to its respective instances. At the same time, it detrimentally limits the number of international alignments in the world today that would otherwise meet the criteria of strategic partnership but for the assumption of security as a key driver of the alignment. More importantly, however, the assumption of security in concepts of strategic partnership risks embedding this latest archetype of international alignment in a key challenge facing the International Relations discipline today: namely the synonymous use of what are different concepts, alliance on the one hand with alignment on the other. If we can discover how to extricate the concept of alignment from being used interchangeably with that of alliance, so that it can take its rightful place in the academic literature as an umbrella concept over and above its different forms, then we might better understand the qualitative distinction of strategic partnership as the latest archetype of alignment. A generic understanding of strategic partnership, outside of its particular instances, is important because it better reflects the evolution in international alignments taking place in the early 21st Century and mirrors the processes of change underway in the evolving international system. This is a necessary theoretical step if strategic partnership is live up to its expectation of being a quintessentially 21st Century archetype of alignment.

2.3.1 The problem of security in International Relations

"It is impossible to speak about IR without referring to alliances; the two often merge in all but name. For the same reason, it has always been difficult to say much that is peculiar to alliances on the plane of general analysis." George Liska's (1962, p. 3) masterful insight seems at once to have forewarned of conceptual confusion in International Relations between what is alignment, broadly conceived as an 'umbrella concept', and alliance, which is but one of its many forms, and at the same time to have it validated as acceptable. Snyder (1991, p. 123) first recognized the need to understand the broad phenomenon of alignment, of which an explicit alliance is but one sub-set. In the context of Snyder's review of the work of various alliance theorists, his treatment and reference to alignment as a paramount concept, where alliance is but a sub-set, appeared rather unremarkable at the time and was not pursued on an analytical plane. His insight is crucial however, given the fluid international context of the 21st century, which is characterized by new, non-traditional arrangements between and among states, such as IBSA and BRICS.

According to Qobo (2010a, p. 17), "foreign policy worldview has moved away from Cold War, narrowly understood politico-security concerns", reflected in alliances and coalitions, "towards the maximization of economic advantages for domestic interests", reflected in new formations within a framework of a generically understood concept of alignment with the consequent rise of what Cerny (1997) calls the "competition state". Snyder's important insight however was overtaken primarily by analyses of cooperation under the framework of a Theory of Alliance from various theoretical lenses: Game theory, rational choice, grand strategy, public goods model, classical realist balance of power, neorealist balance of power or balance of threat, democratic peace or ideology, economic incentives, economic public goods theory, structural liberal, ethnicity, interests, hegemonic stability theory or cultural identity based explanations rather than national interests. Constructivists have also developed alternative accounts for a theory of alliance but these similarly contribute to the saturation of studies on forms of cooperation between states that have a security element as a necessary property of that

alignment. Studies on particular instances of cooperation that do not include security as an element of the partnership are in evidence. The G20, as well on partnerships such as BASIC (environment) and the other arrangements of states that have formed (and dissolved) within the context of the WTO Doha Development Round of negotiations are such examples. Notwithstanding the value of analyzing particular instances of cooperation that fall outside the security lexicon, there is a need to fill the theoretical gap in these studies. An approach in this section is to develop further Snyder's insight and create a framework in International Relations that transcends the securitization of international politics to account for a generic, umbrella notion of a framework of alignment.

Wilkins is one of the few scholars who has taken seriously Glenn Snyder's insight into alignment and subjected it to examination, though its fullest development requires further study. Wilkins (2012, p. 57) notes that alliance literature, particularly that which proliferated during the Cold War, and the empirical reality in which it was embedded, has "served to generate a type of 'hegemony' over perceptions and theorizing" and remains a dominant discourse that still persists despite the altered international context. Wilkins is not merely pointing out here what other alliance scholars themselves have not already made clear which is that not all cooperation can be deemed to be an alliance in a reductionist manner. His argument correctly locates at the core of the confusion the misuse in the academic literature of what are two conceptually distinct terms, alignment and alliance. However, the recognition of the interchangeable use of the term alignment and alliance is not sufficient to fully recover the concept of alignment from alliance, though it is an important first step. Therefore this section resurrects Snyder's insight on alignment and applies it to Wilkins's argument that security is a necessary element to the concept of alignment. It will be postulated that only by removing reference to security as an assumed element of alignment (as argued by Snyder) can the concept be fully recovered as an umbrella concept and its various forms approached without the assumption of a security element. By conceptualizing alignment in value-neutral and content-neutral terms the theoretical space for different forms of alignment widens

beyond cooperation for security purposes and can more convincingly accommodate the new and non-traditional archetypes of alignment.

2.3.2 The meaning of security

It is important here to clarify what is meant by security. Security has no value outside its definition and, at the same time, it cannot be employed meaningfully without a definition. In the practice of diplomacy in particular, consensus on values and content ascribed to particular terminologies are often the key ingredient around which like-minded countries find convergence on a particular issue. Diplomats and politicians are very careful of what terminology they use in recognition of the fact that terms are value-laden and as such are a powerful tool through which to communicate a particular world-view held by a state. This is especially the case for emerging middle powers, such as the IBSA member states whose particular world-view differs from traditional power-based perspectives. Thus 'enlightened self-interest' is pointedly preferred to 'national interest' as a reference point for engagement with another state. A 'people-centered development' paradigm is subscribed to and articulated as opposed to narrow conceptions of development centered upon aid and trade. Security is understood to imply human security in addition to the traditional military understandings of the term. Even traditional notions of power are altered to reflect a more nuanced position, where notions of power are ascribed a value when seen as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself. Many of these perspectives are internationally recognized at an official level under the auspices of the UN. Recognition of these perspectives within the official terminology of the UN is considered to be a foreign policy achievement by states that advocate these perspectives. However, much must still be done to elevate these definitions beyond semantics by ensuring that they are subscribed to in their practical application on a sustained and consistent basis by all states of the UN. In addition, they must be carried through at the national level as well as into all inter-state arrangements that exist alongside, and in support of, the multilateral arena. Thus definitions and the values associated with various terms are very important in their practical application in

the world of diplomacy. Accordingly, security must be scrupulously defined, despite the fact that this process has contributed to its remaining an "essentially contested concept" (Buzan, 1991), persistently falling short of achieving sufficient consensus.

Sarah Tarry (1999) outlines the different schools of thought on the issue and highlights the "increasingly entrenched cleavages in the definition of security," where traditionalists favour the maintenance of Cold War conception of security - defined in military and state-centric terms while the non-traditionalists have attempted to broaden and deepen the definition to include human security and its various drivers such as food security, economic, environmental and social (including cultural) security. This thesis subscribes to a traditional definition of security that concerns both internal and external military threats to the state. So defined, security as an element of the concept of alignment is problematized because it has an implicit value, indicative of a particular normative path: it is implicitly associated with a particular world-view that sees the international system as essentially anarchic, power considerations being the primary motivating factors, and the increase of power being a state's objective *vis-a-vis* other states.

The necessary presence of the element of security within the concept of alignment infers a particular content, which is then logically ascribed to its different forms. As a result, the different forms that could be legitimately classified as types of international alignment would be limited to those that contain security as a central element, such as alliances, coalitions and security communities. There are other international partnerships that fall short of meeting the security criterion and would not then be classified as a form of alignment that included security as a necessary element, though clearly they are instances of it. These partnerships include for instance, strategic partnerships at the minilateral level such as IBSA, BRICS, arrangements at the regional level such as the IOR-ARC, or at the multilateral level such as the FOCAC, TICAD and India-Africa Forum.

It could be argued that a neat side-step be made by employing a broader and/or deeper non-traditional definition of the term security, thus resolving the problems associated with the term being present in generic conceptions of alignment. By doing this, the presence of a security characteristic could arguably remain a property of a broad concept of alignment and also, by extension, appear in all its various forms. It is undeniable that broad conceptions of security in particular, and increasingly deeper conceptions of the term, have been proven to be academically valid and are included at national policy level in some of the emerging countries, particularly by the member states of IBSA and BRICS. This approach is discounted both at the theoretical and at the practical level.

At the theoretical level, wider and deeper definitions of security serve to conflate the argument for alignment with that of rationalist conceptions of security and the essential qualitative point in the argument for a framework of alignment is lost. To circumvent this, it is important to maintain the two arguments, alignment and security, as distinct although linked. Wider and deeper definitions of security, progressive though they may be, do not step outside traditional definitions of security. Instead, they work within the framework of traditional definitions since they use as their departure point the narrow (military) definition of security. Because wider/deeper definitions work within the framework of a traditional military definition, they can be assumed to contain a particular world-view: one that sees the international system as anarchic, where self-help systems predominate (either from realist or idealist perspectives), and thus this is a given, unchangeable fact of the international system. This in itself does not detract from the overarching argument for a framework of alignment. The argument for alignment applies to inter-state cooperation in any kind of world order, including anarchic world orders. What it does do is to contribute to the securitization of international politics and to perpetuate rationalist conceptions of the international system and this is the essential qualitative point being made here in advocating a framework of alignment. It is not that perspectives of the international system as anarchic are incorrect, far from it, it is that such a world-view is limiting and closes the possibility of other perspectives on the international system and particularly the drivers of that system, understood in terms of

security either narrowly, broadly or deeply defined. In attempting to give content to an alternative world-view it is important to do so on its own terms and not with reference to traditional conceptions of world order, power and security. For as long as alternative world views are developed in the context of, and in relation to, traditional perspectives, the essential qualitative point being made is obscured and often the argument lost on factual (according to whom?) grounds. It is not clear how using the same terminology dominant in rationalist discourse although widened and/or deepened, contributes to an understanding of a fundamentally different world-view, one in which anarchy and power are but chosen realities and thus subject to evolutionary change.

This point suggests why wider/deeper definitions of security are also discounted at the practical level. In its application in the field of diplomacy, essential content and context is lost. Strategic partnership at the bilateral level, but particularly at the mini-lateral level is a case in point. Scholars agree that strategic partnership is qualitatively different from alliance formations, coalitions, security communities or any other security-oriented partnership. This is primarily because of its multidimensional, multifaceted nature, where engagement takes place spherically, at multiple levels domestically and on the international stage, across multiple sectors. In addition in the case of strategic partnership at the mini-lateral level, such engagements are specifically designed to maximize a state's flexibility in the multilateral arena in order to be able to act as a plurilateral arrangement, often simultaneously, on issues where sufficient consensus can be reached by the member states. Such instances of strategic partnership clearly do not include security cooperation (narrowly understood), or if they do it is not the primary driver of that arrangement, nor does it feature prominently. Therefore, so construed, these partnerships cannot be seen as instances of an umbrella concept of alignment if alignment necessarily entails a security element. It is true however that they do include security cooperation widely understood. Consequently, it could arguably be subsumed under the umbrella concept of alignment understood to entail an element of security defined either more broadly or more deeply. After all, the concept of human security and its link to a fundamentally new development paradigm is evident as a core driver of IBSA and is an increasingly important element that is incubating in the BRICS Forum.

Within other partnerships such as the FOCAC, the TICAD and the India-Africa Forum the drivers of human security, particularly in Africa, form part of the agenda. Discussion then on climate change, environmental degradation, energy and resource security, major infectious diseases and massive natural disasters takes place against a background of their impact upon socio-economic development (5th FOCAC Ministerial Conference Declaration and Action Plan, 2013-2015).

The international system today is marked by an increase in instances of issue-specific partnerships and coalitions such as BASIC, the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group and the G4, ad hoc plurilateral arrangements of like-minded states such as those within the WTO Doha Development Round negotiations that evolve, dissolve and mutate and are borne of complementary positions on the topics under discussion. However, to characterize any of these partnerships as security arrangements, even in the widest/deepest sense, conveys a misleading impression. Ultimately, as Klare and Thomas (as cited by Tarry, n.d.) assert, a concept is not a theory and so cannot be disproved; rather, it can only be accepted or rejected based on its analytical usefulness and "its consistency with one's own normative or theoretical inclinations." Consequently, this thesis prefers a traditional, military understanding of security unless specified otherwise in order to preserve the essential qualitative distinction of the various new (non-traditional) alignments that are being established apace in the global arena.

2.3.3 Current and past use of the term alignment

Alignment has been used in the past as synonymous with the concept of alliance with the implication that alignment, like alliance, inherently assumes a security characteristic and forms part of broad studies of security cooperation. However, despite colloquial use today there is support for preserving the distinction between alignment and alliance on etymological grounds. The term alignment comes from the old French *alignier* (and the modern French *aligner*) derived from “to” + *lignier* “to line”, or “to

range (things) into a line". The link between noun and verb is "alignment" from the verb "to align". While the origins of the noun "alliance" comes from the old French *aliance* (and the modern French *alliance*) derived from *allier* "to combine, unite". The link between noun and verb is "alliance" from the verb "to ally" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary). The study of etymology interestingly shows that these terms, although related, originate in different understandings and are derived from different verbs where alignment is the more generic term for things being "in line"/agreement and alliance is more value-laden being derived from the verb "to ally" which connotes similarity in some manner.

The essential distinction between alignment and alliance was captured by Snyder's (1991, pp. 123-124) perspective, where alignment refers to the expectations of policymakers concerned with "who defends whom" or "who will support whom and who will resist whom to what extent and in what contingencies." Critically however, "who defends whom" or "supports whom" or "resists whom" is not limited to a security (military) implication. He goes further to note that alignment is a broader, more fundamental concept than alliance and should be understood to include "alignment against" as well as "alignment with." This distinction, between perceived negative alignments in the former case and positive alignments in the latter, is increasingly important in a world where arguably, for emerging middle powers at least, the military solution is not a preferred option. For Snyder (1991, p. 124) the relationship between alignment and alliance is clear, where alliances are but one of the subsets under that umbrella of a broadly conceptualized alignment and "serve (primarily) to strengthen pre-existing alignments by introducing elements of precision, legal and moral obligation and reciprocity." Snyder (1997, p. 6) proposes defining alignment as "expectations of states about whether they will be supported or opposed by other states in future interactions." Ward (1982, p. 7) similarly recognizes that alignment is a "more extensive concept than alliance since it does not focus solely on the military dimension of international politics" and that the "degrees of alignment in political, economic, military and cultural spheres present a multifaceted sculpture of national and supranational postures." Alignment serves to simplify, by categorization, the

international context and can also be seen as an additional tool on the part of states to manage, understand and interpret the complex nature of international politics.

The concept of alliance on the other hand necessarily infers content with its inextricable link to security, both broadly and narrowly defined, and thus the concept contributes to the securitization of international politics. Indeed what makes alliances (formal or informal) different from any other international relationship is the inherent presence of a security element. From narrow to wide conceptions of security, to alliances for and against a third party, all agree on its necessary presence, if not its centrality. Kajsa Ji Noe Oest's (2007) work on alliances is notable because it takes as its starting point "international cooperation" more broadly, including all instances of cooperation in international politics from across the theoretical spectrum, including cooperation between non-state actors. From this broad base, he then categorizes the different instances of cooperation, choosing to focus on security cooperation, namely alliances, in particular. Because Oest begins his work on alliances by mapping international cooperation in general, he is the scholar that most clearly illuminates that which is missing in the study of International Relations. Using diagrammatic representation, all the different types of cooperation are depicted and the absence of an overarching framework, under which all types of cooperation fall becomes evident.

Conflating the conceptual distinction between the related, but distinct, concepts of alignment and alliance arguably serves to reinforce a traditional security-oriented view of International Relations. The interchangeable use of the terms alignment and alliance, historically unproblematic, is a challenge for the progressive development of a discipline. A discipline that must keep pace with the evolving global system in order to provide additional, theoretical frameworks of analysis which can reflect new forms of alignment as well as more traditional security-centric forms between and among states.

Walt (2009) uses the terms alignment and alliance interchangeably. Walt's (1987, p. 17) re-definition of balancing and bandwagoning to suit his balance-of-threat theory uses alignment and alliance synonymously, "balancing is defined as allying with others

against the prevailing threat; bandwagoning refers to alignment with the source of danger." Walt (2009, p. 86) continues to use the two concepts explicitly as synonymous when he states, “an alliance (or alignment) is a formal (or informal) commitment for security cooperation between two or more states” (brackets used are in the original text). The conceptual distinction between the two terms is further blurred when Walt notes “governments may be ‘bribed’ into alignment by promises of economic/military assistance.” Another possible interpretation of Walt’s view would be to preserve the distinction between alignment and alliance where Walt was referring, in particular, to alliances in his arguments and not to a broader concept of alignment. Similarly, in his discussion on credibility factors, Walt refers to alliances when he says, “alliances depend in part on credibility – on the belief that commitments will be honored.” Although particularly true for alliances, the issue of credibility could also be attributed to the broader concept of alignment because the honoring of commitments is applicable for all forms of alignment, not limited to those that involve security cooperation.

Schweller (1994), although taking issue with balancing and bandwagoning behavior of states and the conditions under which states choose one over the other, also uses the terms alignment and alliance interchangeably. He states that the “balance-of-threat theory is designed to consider only cases in which the goal of alignment is security, and so it systematically excludes alliances driven by profit” (Schweller, 1994, p. 79). Schweller goes on to argue “The most important determinant of alignment decisions is the compatibility of political goals, not imbalances of power or threat” (p. 88). It is a powerful argument and points to a possible alternative interpretation. It could be argued that the way in which he uses the two terms implies a distinction between alignment and alliance, albeit not fully explored. In noting the deficiencies in balance of power and balance of threat-based theories of alliance, David (1991) has a marked preference for the term when referring to the Third World experience of the decision to ally. Even this preference, though, does not enable him to elevate his argument from being mired in alignment and alliance interchangeability. By noting at the beginning of his argument that “alignment occurs when a state brings its policies into close cooperation with another state in order to achieve mutual security goals” (David, 1991, p. 234) he

assumes that alignment necessarily implies a security consideration. The question then is why he chooses to use the term alignment over alliance. David does not explain his choice of terms, but one view could be that his theory of omni-balancing, the need to "counter all threats" and one that considers "internal and external threats to the leadership" as opposed to external threats only (p. 233), is indicative of a recognition that the term alliance is for some reason inadequate to account for the decision to ally by states in the co-called Third World.

Barnett and Levy's (1991) examination of alliances in the so-called Third World similarly uses the two terms as apparently distinct. As constructivists, it is understandable that these two scholars may find the term alliance problematic because of its connotations of power and security in an anarchic world. Their argument, that "although external security concerns may dominate in many cases, particularly for wealthy and politically stable states, a general explanation of alliances and alignments must include internal budgetary constraints and the domestic political interests of the regime in power as well as external security goals, particularly for (the) Third World" (p. 378), is indicative of a preference for the term alignment in addition to alliance, though a thorough interrogation of the two concepts is not undertaken. This could possibly explain the introduction of the word alignment in the title of the article, which seems to point to a distinction between the two terms but is one that is not developed further.

Why the interchangeability of these two terms is so widespread is debatable. It requires reflection in order to show the extent to which the security dimension and analysis of instances of security cooperation, in general, have become pervasive in the study of International Relations across the spectrum of theoretical perspectives. It could be attributed to the fact that the canonical work of Kenneth Waltz (1979) on the subject uses the terms alignment and alliance interchangeably and that scholarship has unquestioningly followed this lead. It could be traced even further back to Morgenthau (1948) who, arguably, single-handedly shaped the discipline of International Relations. His preoccupation with power and interest, which has the effect of centralizing ideas of

security, has preoccupied scholars since and analysis has thereafter concerned itself with the narrower study of security cooperation. Perhaps, as Smith (2000, p. 374) argues, "a damaging US-centric positivist International Relations paradigm, to the virtual exclusion of all else", could be a reason why the broader concept of alignment has been reduced to being synonymous with conceptions of alliance and the distinction between the two concepts has since been lost.[19] Although the rise of liberal institutionalism and functionalism in particular belies Smith's assessment that International Relations is dominated by a one particular paradigm his underlying point is not inaccurate. Legro and Moravcsik (1998) underlines the dominance of realism and argue that this is because realism remains the only clearly articulated theoretical approach (often termed a 'paradigm') in the field of International Relations where the others are strands that are treated as fragmentary hypotheses or as separate criticisms of realism, rather than variants of a distinct, coherent theory. Onuf (1989, p. 6) makes a point of tracing the history of the study of International Relations, noting that "the ambiguous way in which politics and International Relations come together is not just a matter of sloppy usage or popular misunderstanding" but because scholars reproduce the ambiguity in International Relations by consistently referring to it in terms of "decentralization, self-help and, especially of late, anarchy", with the assumption of power politics and its inherent link to security. For anyone, including Onuf, who has doubts about the claim that anarchy is a "central and defining feature of International Relations" (p. 12), there is grave difficulty in accounting for current inter-state relations against the backdrop of a 21st century international context. This is because the backdrop against which International Relations is studied often involves self-help systems and power politics and their inextricable link to security (even the liberal tradition takes this conception of world order as a given while demonstrating how cooperation is still possible in such a world). Constructivist perspectives of world order that may be but are not necessarily anarchic have a profound ripple effect because the process of theorizing enables a different conceptualization of the world we live in, with consequent alternative implications for world politics. This allows for a vision beyond the securitization of International politics.

In accord with Wilkins (2012, p. 53) the result of the interchangeable use of the distinct concepts of alignment and alliance is "the lack of a working taxonomy of the concept of 'alignment' in International Relations". The reduction of alignment to alliance has arguably impoverished a fuller understanding of state behavior in International Relations on the part of systemically important emerging powers such as China, India, Brazil and South Africa. This is a gap that Wilkins goes some way towards rectifying, but a more fundamental issue that prevents Wilkins from fully recovering alignment from alliance as an umbrella concept is his insistence that "all forms of alignment share the property of being cooperative security endeavors" (2012, p. 59). Consequently, alliance, coalition, security communities and, most recently, strategic partnership is deemed by Wilkins to be the four archetypes of (security) alignment. By failing to rescue the concept of alignment from the *necessary* presence of a security characteristic, Wilkins has, arguably, left the door open to the use of alignment and alliance interchangeably, the very thing that he is trying to avoid. As a consequence Wilkins's argument, which most convincingly and importantly locates the relatively new concept of strategic partnership within an alignment (not alliance) framework, meanders between describing strategic partnership as an "archetype of alignment" in some instances (with an inherent security consideration) and more directly as a "security archetype" in others. This questionably introduces unwanted conceptual confusion to the concept of strategic partnership, which itself has only recently been placed under the microscope of scholarship.

2.3.4 Constructivist support for problematizing security within the concept of alignment

This section focuses on how a constructivist perspective supports the central argument being made. This is not to say that other perspectives do not in their way also support the problematization of security within a concept of alignment; most evidently they do because the central argument applies across the theoretical divide. But a constructivist perspective on this issue is not yet evident in the literature, a gap that ought to be filled. Onuf's work on world order, interests, and rules in social theory and

International Relations, followed by Wendt's insights with respect to anarchy are of assistance in recovering the concept of alignment as a paramount concept. This is because of the similarities in process that encourage the mind to recalibrate, which include questioning the premises upon which arguments are built. These works separately demonstrate how anarchy, self-help systems and power (security implication) are not inviolate premises of International Relations (as perceived by rationalists, (neo) realists and (neo) liberals alike.[20] Their argument which is that anarchy, its self-help systems and the necessity of power politics are not exogenously given structures of world order but only a consequence of process and our collective meanings of that world amongst other alternatives, provides the opening for a constructivist's vision of change and how alternative world orders can be brought about through process. These insights from Onuf and Wendt, expanded upon by scholars such as Ted Hopf among others, allow for the possibility of an alternative world order and the rules constituting (not governing) this order to emerge.

It is not proposed here to conflate the argument between moving away from a traditional security-oriented view of International Relations with the conceptual distinction between alignment and alliance. The conceptual distinction between alignment and alliance exists in both realist and idealist visions of an anarchic world as well as in other types of world orders that may potentially exist. After all, it is has been shown that the premise of an exogenously given anarchic world order of self-interest and power permits other forms of cooperation beyond security to exist (liberalism and functionalism are cases in point). The insights by Onuf and Wendt are used here because they call into question the fundamental premise upon which the study of International Relations, at least in the West, has largely been conducted. This is a useful departure point for the development of a framework of alignment. It allows the scholar to step out of traditional frameworks of reference and to conceptualize the possibility of different world orders; these could be informed by alternative world-views that see "a world of alignments, not alliances" Khanna (2008, p. 324), a world "characterized by multiple forms of alignment not just alliances, in their many guises" echoed Wilkins (2012, p. 53).

Beginning with the problem of order Wendt (1992) demonstrates through an analysis of endogenously-given identities and interests that "there is no 'logic' of anarchy" (p. 395) because "structure has no existence or causal powers apart from process, and self-help systems and power politics (used increasingly as synonymous with world politics) are institutions only and not essential (exogenous) features of anarchy". Famously, "anarchy is what states make of it" (p. 395). If it is an anarchic world order in which we live it is so because states make it that way; their collective meanings construe and reinforce it as such. Wendt goes on to argue that self-help systems are inter-subjective structures given meaning only through process, which itself is the inter-subjective understandings and expectations that constitute a state's identity (p. 396). What neither Wendt nor Onuf, nor any other constructivist, has comprehensively lain out is exactly what an alternative to an anarchic world order would look like, what its prevailing characteristics would be and how relations would be characterized. Even Onuf's discussion on heteronomous relations, a departure from the traditional literature, is specified as taking place against a conventionally described anarchic world order where International Relations are necessarily relations of super- and sub-ordination. Articulating a framework of alignment is arguably supporting the giving of substance to what conception of an alternative world order may depict, with the logical consequence for the types of relationships in such a world. Some examples of which, such as strategic partnership at the mini-lateral level, include importantly non-state actor cooperation as an integral part of the overall cooperation.

Constructivism also problematizes identity, and thereby interest. This is another aspect of constructivism that supports the problematization of security in a concept of alignment. Onuf's study of interest (national interest), supports the recovery of alignment as an umbrella concept because its perspective shows how the predominant concern of security, even granted the premise of an anarchic world order, need not pre-occupy scholars to the extent that it obscures other motivators and accounts of state behavior. Constructivist perspectives are not the only ones to demonstrate that other motivators and accounts of state behavior beyond security concerns exist; idealists,

functionalists and liberal institutionalists have all done so. The difference with a constructivist account is that it springs from an alternative premise: a different conceptual base informs thinking. If an anarchic world of power is accepted as the world we live in today, though it could evolve with time, constructivists arrive at conclusions that arguably bridge the traditional realist/idealist divide and usher in an alternative world-view. The process by which constructivists reach conclusions contributes to a more nuanced explanation of international politics and that is its value to the development of a framework of alignment, which is itself a nuance on traditional thinking.

According to Onuf (1989, p. 258), "the reasons people give for their conduct also point to interests so construed." Thus for Onuf, interests are the reasons given for conduct. Thus national interest then is the reason given for the conduct of the state (constructivists often impute the same interests of individuals to collectivities, such as states). Interests are seen by Onuf as ultimate ends that an individual or a state wants (their preferences), though Onuf and others distinguish between interests and mere wants/preferences by arguing that interests have the added element of actionable expectations or opportunities. Consequently "a want is not an interest unless one can plausibly act on it" (p. 275). Accordingly, Onuf (p. 293) argues that there are only three interests (ultimate ends) that are the "controlling interests of humanity", the reasons for states and the ends of statecraft, and as such they constitute "the national interest". They are standing, security and wealth (not only material wealth but denoting anything of value) into which the numerous other diverse ends can ultimately be categorized (p. 277). Given the diversity in interest/ends, ordering preferences is a requirement, which in turn fosters comparison of states of affairs. For Onuf then, global comparison, the first category of comparison of states of affairs "gives" people a concern for standing as an "immediate" end and engenders feelings of esteem and envy. The second, binary comparison, gives people an awareness of threat and a concern for security as an immediate end. The third category, internal comparison, gives rise to a concern for wealth (anything valued), its acquisition and possession (p. 270). These three categories of comparison underline the three ultimate ends/interests. Consequently, for Onuf,

power alters depending upon the type of comparison occurring. Thus, in a world of global comparison, the overriding interest (end) is "standing"; in a world of binary comparison, the overriding interest is "security", and in a world of internal comparison, the overriding interest is "wealth" (p. 280).

In the literature on International Relations that takes anarchy as a given, the binary comparison and security predominate. Thus power describes military capability as a means and predicts the outcome of its use (Onuf, 1989, p. 280) and the necessity of a security dimension in studies of relations in such a world order. Onuf (p. 282) though arrives at a different conclusion. He argues that International Relations, as opposed to being an anarchic self-help system characterized by power politics because of the binary comparisons and security as both an immediate and ultimate end (interest), can now be characterized as "pervasively heteronomous, implying a dominance of internal comparison (with the overriding interest being wealth), with asymmetries in the resources available to free choosers yielding a stable pattern of asymmetric outcomes subject to hegemonial support." This conception of interests, and by extension the type of relations within and between political actors in the international system supports the argument for an inclusive, overarching concept of "alignment", one that accounts for all three of Onuf's comparisons; global, binary and internal, rather than for a binary comparison alone.

2.3.5 Alignment as a value-neutral, content-neutral concept

Security, having been removed as a *necessary* element, means that alignment can now be conceptualized in value-neutral terminology and with content-neutral perceptions.

As a paramount concept, alignment does not infer content nor does it prejudge conceptually the type of cooperation involved. Importantly, alignment is not synonymous with cooperation. Alignments are formed in pursuit of cooperation, for the

purpose of cooperation but is not cooperation itself. Alignment encompasses "alignments against", "alignments with", "alignments for" as well as "alignments of" and significantly does not infer content to any of the various forms alignment may take. Those alignments that may have an over-riding security cooperation element, such as alliances, coalitions and security communities, are characterized as alignments for identity. Examples of this are the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the US-Japan Alliance and the "Coalition of the willing" during the Iraq War. Further, others such as IBSA and BRICS, or the IOR-ARC and NAASP may be conceived of as alignments of identity. They may facilitate cooperation between and among states around, primarily, non-military elements, such as fostering people-to-people contacts, business cooperation, economic, cultural and scientific cooperation and/or health and welfare cooperation and could, though not necessarily, include security cooperation.

Alignment similarly does not contain implications of number (other than the obvious two or more states) and includes both bilateral and multilateral (including mini-lateral, regional and plurilateral) alignments. There is also no implication in alignment about the degree of formality an arrangement may have along a continuum from ad hoc, to informal, to formal or to federation, to borrow from Katja Weber's (1997) useful distinction.

Through the process of refining the concept of alignment of all that would give it value and content, leaving it instead in its basic form in an attempt to ensure the broadest, most fundamental understanding of the concept, its content has arguably been recovered and restored. Alignment is able to take its rightful place as an all-encompassing 'umbrella' concept under which the vast scholarship on various alignments, characterized by various cooperation types not limited to security cooperation, can be studied.

The strength of a framework of alignment proposed here is that it applies across the theoretical spectrum, in both anarchic conceptions of world order and other conceptions that may be ushered in if states make it that way. The importance of this theoretical step

towards a framework of alignment is that it is now possible to conceptually locate correctly the different forms of alignment, including the concept of strategic partnership, as archetypes of alignment without prejudging or associating these archetypes with any one pre-defining characteristic/element.

2.4 A model for understanding IBSA and BRICS

It is Wilkins who has perhaps gone further than any other scholar in conceptually locating the term strategic partnership within the study of International Relations. By his own assertion, he is the only scholar to have proposed an analytic model, drawn from Organizational Theory, to conduct a systematized study that codifies a conceptual understanding of strategic partnership and tracks the process of development along a three-phase "collaboration continuum"; comprising a formation phase, implementation phase and evaluation phase (Wilkins, 2011, p. 117). Wilkins (2008, pp. 360-364; 2011, pp. 123-124; 2012, p. 68) delineates five generic properties of strategic partnership evidenced in studies of strategic partnerships dyads between Russia and China, Japan and Australia, Japan and India, the EU and Russia as well as at the minilateral level using the SCO as an example. Wilkins finds that firstly, strategic partnerships are organized around a general purpose known as a "system principle" such as the championship of a multipolar world rather than a specific task like deterring or fighting a hostile state (2008, p. 360). In light of the foregoing argument (cross reference 2.3), the system principle does not imply security as a necessary element or even as the primary motivating factor; though it does not preclude security from being one of the many elements of the partnership alongside others. It is based upon interests and not always underwritten by shared values. Secondly, strategic partnerships are "goal driven" rather than "threat driven" arrangements, where no enemy state is identified as a threat (Wilkins, 2012, p. 68), although the partnership may be concerned with global security issue areas such as terrorism and cyber security. Third, such partnerships are informal in nature and entail low commitment costs rather than being underpinned by a treaty that binds rigid courses of action (Wilkins, 2008, p. 361). For Wilkins, this allows

for degrees of autonomy and flexibility and mitigates the entrapment dynamic. Fourth, economic exchange is salient among the functional areas of cooperation and is often a key driver of the partnership (Wilkins, 2011, p. 123). Lastly it is a top-down/elite-driven process requiring significant support and direct involvement from top leaders as the key ingredient to prospects for success (Wilkins, 2008, p. 364).

To date, there is no study that tests the validity of Wilkins's proposed analytic framework neither has his framework been utilized by other scholars to examine various other instances of strategic partnership. This is more a reflection of the fact that the study of strategic partnership in International Relations is in its infancy rather than an implied commentary on the quality of Wilkins's work. A theoretic understanding of strategic partnership is still being determined and those elements of strategic partnership that have been generally agreed upon have yet to be comprehensively critiqued. The value of Wilkins's analytic framework lies in the fact that it comprehensively captures aspects of strategic partnership that other scholars have either implicitly or explicitly commented upon during the course of their research into this kind of international alignment. However, although it is a useful entry point into understanding strategic partnership, his examination is incomplete because it is rooted in rationalist conceptions of security cooperation. This section proposes to rectify this in two steps. First, using constructivist perspectives to undertake a deeper analysis of what the notion of strategic partnership entails and thus underline the qualitative distinction of this kind of alignment. Second, it proposes the inclusion of the presence of inherent rivalry between and among strategic partners as an element of strategic partnership. A logical consequence of this is a related function of strategic partnership: namely its use as a tool to manage that inherent rivalry.

2.4.1 Arrangement around a system principle

A partnership arranged around a broad system principle reflective of a state's interests, rather than shared values, is a more convincing approach to analyzing

strategic partnership, particularly at the minilateral level. However, not everyone would agree. Dmitry Danilov (2007, p. 155) assigns some importance to values when he argues that the presence or absence of shared values distinguishes 'minimal cooperation" from strategic partnership. While for Schmidt (2010, p. 5) the choice of EU strategic partners looks "distinctly unprincipled" in reference to the lack of perceived common values to be found in some of its strategic partnerships. Blanco (n.d., p. 14.) reflects a pragmatic approach to international politics by arguing that although shared values are an element to the European Union's conception of strategic partnership in its foreign policy discourse, values are not the "*sine qua non*" of strategic partnership. He acknowledges that the role of shared values depends upon the nature of the relationship that the parties wish to build.

Alignment around a system principle is directly linked to the operation of identity in the decision to align. Constructivism, as opposed to other theoretical lenses, offers an account of a state's decision to align based upon the operation of identity: where state identity, comprised of the two parts of Self and Other, implies, or is indicative of, a state's interests (Hopf, 1998, p. 175).[2] Constructivist perspectives are therefore well-placed to understanding the role of identity in an arrangement of states around a system principle. Research conducted into collective interests by Wendt assists in illustrating the point. Wendt (1994, p. 386) argues that where positive identification occurs between, or among, socially constructed states understood along a continuum from negative (anathema to the Self) to positive (extension of the Self), interests are defined, by degrees, with Other. The most extreme form of the continuum is where welfare of the Other is recognized as the cognitive extension of the Self and is reflected as political solidarity. In this characterization there is an empathetic rather than instrumental/situational interdependence between Self and Other and, according to Wendt (1994, p. 386), this provides the basis of feelings of solidarity, community and loyalty and thus for collective definitions of interest.

Accordingly, the elevation of existing bilateral relations to that of strategic partnership at the minilateral level could, in part, be understood as the states involved having

reached a particular point along the identification continuum: a point where the respective state's social identities involve an identification with the fate of Other (another state, or groups of states), and have generated sufficient collective interests to warrant the elevation of a partnership to a strategic level. Importantly, the tipping point does not have to be on the extreme end of the identification continuum, i.e. solidarity. Merely that there is a particular point along Wendt's identification continuum where there is judged to be sufficient identification of Self with Other, even sufficient recognition of Self in Other, to generate collective interests rather than self interests, but which does not necessarily have to go as far as full solidarist identification. Arguably, when a state reaches this point it is then a natural step to elevate its relations with the important Other (state or group of states) to a strategic level. There is no objective way to determine when a state, or group of states, would reach that particular point on the identification continuum. Even if that point were reached on the identification continuum, there is no evidence yet to suggest that it would necessarily result in the establishment of a strategic partnership. This decision remains highly political and although includes reference to the domestic (national) agenda, including the foreign policy agenda which by extension is a reflection of the national interest, may not be limited to such a consideration.

Interests deserve a thorough examination because that is an area that lends a qualitative distinction to this kind of alignment in the 21st Century and is particularly evident in strategic partnership at the minilateral level. The crucial point about interests in strategic partnership is that they are better understood as complementary interests rather than common interests. Ayanda Ntsaluba (2011), a former Director-General of the DIRCO in South Africa, echoes this point by noting that "surely by now it should be clear to all that there is no political purity on this Earth and those who use it as a benchmark for alliance building might as well wait for the world hereafter." Two points are relevant here. Firstly, common interests should not be confused to imply identical interests. Identical interests arguably do not exist because different states have different agendas that may be driven by different domestic imperatives; they have unpublished hidden agendas as well as different expectations about the value of a particular interest

to the national agenda and value of its role in reinforcing a particular aspect of state identity. It is further acknowledged that a state has multiple identities, indicative of multiple interests, and how a state prioritizes those interests within a particular context impacts upon the decision-making process of political elites and the resultant policy position taken. Thus, even when interests converge in international politics and are referred to as 'common interests', identical interests are precluded because of the different interpretation, value and hierarchization (prioritization) of the multiple interests by each state.

Secondly, and for similar reasons, common interests are arguably difficult, although not impossible, to ascertain among states and are an unrealistic benchmark for assessing a particular international alignment. An interest in the promotion of multilateralism for instance would be better understood as a complementary interest that has converged sufficiently to warrants its being upheld by a particular international alignment, as opposed to a common interest. It has been shown (cross reference 2.2) that conceptions of multilateralism is influenced by a state's worldview, whether multilateralism is essentially seen as a means to an end or an end in itself, as well as a state's historical experience of and with multilateralism in multilateral fora. These aspects come together to permit a nuanced understanding of the concept of multilateralism by individual states. Thus a common interest in multilateralism is better understood as a convergence of a complementary interest in multilateralism.

For instance Hongying Wang (2000, pp. 479-489) argues that China's perception of multilateralism is attributed to a) Chinese policy makers' experience of multilateralism, including their lingering suspicion that it is an instrument of USA interests in the Asia Pacific region, and b) to their particular world-view (characterized by a demand for realpolitik) and its hierarchical political system. This stands in stark contrast to the perception of multilateralism by South Africa which is essentially seen as a moral (global) good and a positive end in itself for which to strive, but which importantly does not preclude its use as a means to an end in a more instrumentalist fashion, depending on the issue. South Africa's perception of multilateralism is similarly

determined in part by the ruling elite's experience with multilateralism. On the one hand the positive role of multilateral institutions such as the UN in support of the anti-Apartheid movement through global sanctions and a coordinated campaign to isolate the Apartheid state coupled with on the other hand the post-Apartheid state's more negative experience of multilateralism as a process that perpetuates the centre/periphery dynamic through structure, conduct and function of international multilateral institutions. This experience has yielded a particular understanding of multilateralism that is able to reconcile it both as an eventual global good, an end itself, as well as being a means to an end in a more instrumentalist manner depending on the issue and the objective. The different conceptions, and thus expectations, of multilateralism by individual states impacts upon the determination of multilateralism as either a means to an end (instrumentalist approach) or as an end in itself, or possibly both, and how that interest will be prioritized.[3] Consequently, states have different expectations of the outcomes of what should be more accurately described as a convergence of complementary interests in multilateralism rather than multilateralism as a common interest.

It is here, at the nexus of nuanced understandings of conceptual terms where interests are best expressed as complementary, that they do converge, albeit to varying degrees and at certain times. There are some who would argue for the point of convergence between complementary interests being deemed the common interest. But, as the example shows, even at the point of convergence it does not necessarily imply a common interest in light of the particular experience that state has with multilateralism and how that experience is interpreted in the domestic context. Interests so construed show how complementary interests that have converged at a particular moment in a particular context on a certain issue-area may not necessarily do so in another context. Understanding interests as complementary could account for instances where states that traditionally enjoy a so-called 'common interest' on a certain issue do not act as predicted upon that particular interest, as seen sometimes in a state's voting patterns in multilateral fora.

In a similar manner Person (2006) notes that strategic partnership may have parallel, not identical (read 'common'), interests. Person's point is noteworthy but he does not go far enough. The benchmark for strategic partnership should be set at complementarity in interests rather than commonality. Complementary interests may run parallel to one another sometimes and converge at others. As a result, assessing a particular strategic partnership can, in part, be referenced by the extent to which the complementary interests of the states involved are able to find convergence, run parallel and/or be mutually supportive. The more often these complementary interests are able to find convergence, run parallel and/or be mutually supportive, the more likely it is for the states involved to find consensus on a particular issue. From this consensus states are able to develop common positions, however broad, on specific issues.

Identifying the system principle around which IBSA is arranged

In identifying the system principle at work in the collective identity formation of IBSA and BRICS, it is helpful to bear in mind Wendt's (1994, pp. 385-390) suggested ways by which collective identities among states may be formed. Firstly, the structural context of the regional/global international system constitutes interaction contexts that either inhibit or facilitate the emergence of dynamic of collective identity (p. 389). Secondly, systemic processes, by which is meant the dynamics in the external context of state action, means that structures are always being reproduced and transformed by practice thus the background conditions for collective identity formation are not static, nor rigid (p. 390). Increasing interdependence increases the thickness (density) of constituted systemic structures, which has the effect of decreasing the ability to meet corporate[21] needs unilaterally and increases the extent to which actors share a common fate (p. 385). Equally, the transnational convergence of domestic values is also a systemic process that encourages collective identity formation because it has the effect of decreasing heterogeneity (and increasing similarity) among actors. Wendt argues, however, that neither increased interdependence nor increased societal convergence is sufficient to create collective forms of identity and so the third mechanism for collective

identity formation is strategic practice: what actors actually do generates meaning through the production, and reproduction of identities and interests (p. 390).

The system principle around which IBSA is arranged is the fairer dispensation of global governance and the equitable participation in the international economy through reform of multilateral systems based upon the rule of law. Implicit in this system principle is the "effective engagement on the Southern axis in an effort to address globally relevant issues from a development perspective" (Lyal White, n.d., p. 5). The fluid international context in the post, post Cold War period and the evolution of state identity under the stewardship of former presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Lula de Silva of Brazil and Atal Bihari Vajpayee of India was conducive, in 2003, to recognizing the opportunity that presented itself when their socially constructed state identities generated sufficient collective interests to warrant pursuing a cooperative strategy. The move toward establishing a trilateral strategic partnership as a mechanism of coordination and strategy of cooperation was a practical step to enhance a convergence of views on international issues of significance amongst developing components of Africa, Asia and the Americas in a Southern initiative.

The complementary interests of these three states converge, run parallel or are mutually supportive on several issues. All three have convergent interests in promoting a more equitable world order through reform rather than revision given their respective positions as systemically important in the current global system. Given their own domestic contexts and their common need to address social inequalities internally, all three have a parallel interest in poverty alleviation and eradication policies in the developing world. Therefore a human-centered development paradigm underlies the positions of these three countries both in their respective domestic contexts and within political, economic and social multilateral fora. All three countries have a mutually supportive interest in consolidating South-South relations through IBSA in a period in which there is a definitive shift from a North-South economic power axis toward entrenching relational alternatives along a South-South axis. All three countries have a mutually supportive interest in promoting democracy and good governance in

accordance with the rule of international law given their particular histories held together by a common experience of colonialism as well as the diversity in their multicultural and multiracial societies. India, Brazil and South Africa all have a parallel interest in resisting actions/activities/policies that would give rise to their characterization as regional hegemons (which is anathema to all three states for historical reasons) while at the same time recognizing their ability to play a leadership role (Burges, 2005, p. 1139).

IBSA member states enjoy a high degree of shared values and principals. Despite the fact that these are not necessary to formulate a strategic partnership their existence certainly will not detract from the prospects for longevity of the partnership, and may even contribute positively to those prospects. These values concern: the promotion of human rights, including economic and social rights, the democratic values of accountability, transparency and representivity. The shared principles include: equity (non-hierarchy among states), the primacy of state sovereignty and non-interference in the domestic affairs of another sovereign state and the principal of inclusive development. These shared values and principles provide a strengthened foundation upon which the trilateral strategic partnership rests.

The strong positive identification of India, Brazil and South Africa with one another, which in part contributed to the establishment of IBSA should not be confused as being the strongest possible identification, solidarity, along Wendt's identification continuum. The study of auto-estima in Brazil conducted by Burges (2005) points out that although idealist notions of solidarity play an important role in Brazilian diplomatic discourse it is underpinned by a hard-edged interest analysis. He argues that for Brazil it is always "interest-based solidarity" that plays a central role in the maintenance of its developing country coalitions (Burges, 2005, p. 1139). For South Africa it is in the Africa continent that it finds its strongest identification (solidarity) along Wendt's identification continuum with South–South relations, encapsulated by IBSA, following thereafter arguably along the lines of an interest-based solidarity.

Identifying the system principle around which BRICS is arranged

The complementary (not identical) system principle around which BRICS is arranged is encapsulated as "peace, security and development in a multipolar, interdependent and increasingly complex globalized world" (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶3). Implicit in this system principle is the "strengthened representation of emerging and developing countries in the institutions of global governance" (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶4), particularly within global economic and financial governance institutions. The formation phase of BRICS comes within the context of a systemic shift from North to South in the global engines of economic growth. An OECD (2010) study confirmed that the balance in the world economy is shifting from North to South with the emerging and developing economies matching those of the OECD by 2020, with the South expected to account for 60% of global GDP by 2030. These geo-economic shifts are beginning to have geopolitical implications, albeit more slowly, as evidenced by the growing influence of developing countries in the governance structures of the Bretton Woods Institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB), as well as within the UN system beyond the UNSC. The G20 itself could be seen as an experiment in the direction of global economic governance reform. It could potentially delineate the poles along which a reformed economic system could be arranged, how it could function and the development of a particular normative culture that recognizes, and uses, plurality and diversity in its membership and its policy positions as strengths upon which to build.

The complementary interests among the BRICS are several and are based upon a similar world-view that is anti-hegemonic on the part of any one state and champions multipolarity in the context of an evolving globalized world order. These interests include: mutually supportive interests on the African continent, a parallel interest in the enhanced representation of developing countries in the global decision-making processes thus strengthening the muscle of the South in global affairs, a convergent interest in advancing the restructuring of the global political, economic and financial architecture toward one that is more equitable and balanced, a mutually supportive

interest in leading the world's economic recovery after the financial and economic crisis that began in the developed world in 2008, convergent interests in the promotion of multilateralism as an eventual (good) end, a mutually supportive interest in the primacy of sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of another sovereign states as well as a convergent interest in expanding intra-BRICS trade and investment.

Although there appears at this stage to be no discernible commitment to shared values within BRICS, a careful reading of the BRICS Summit Declarations show that there is a commitment to shared principles. The principle of consensus through consultation and collective decision-making appears central (N. Barnard, personal communication, August 8, 2013). In addition, successive BRICS Declarations articulate the principles of transparency and openness (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶1), non-alignment, non-confrontation against third parties and inclusiveness, in particular building partnerships with non-BRICS members from developing countries (BRICS Sanya Declaration, 2011, ¶6) also appear to be cornerstones of the partnership. The principle of cooperation based on universally recognized norms or international law, the principle of multilateralism (to uphold the importance of multilateral decision-making processes) and mutual respect are also discernible in these Summit texts.

IBSA and BRICS will continue to generate meaning within and without these forums through the production, and reproduction, of identities and interests facilitated by the significantly increased interaction between the member states, political elites, diplomats and bureaucracies and, to varying degrees, their respective civil societies. This is in line with Wendt's third mechanism for collective identity formation of strategic practice. These repetitive practices, reinforced by the perceptions of and interactions with non-IBSA and non-BRICS member states should serve to produce and reproduce a growing IBSA collective identity and an emerging BRICS collective identity.

2.4.2 Goal-oriented

Scholars of strategic partnership are in general agreement that these arrangements are goal-driven. For Anthony Seaboyer (as cited by Schmidt, 2010) clear and measurable common goals, concrete action plans, a high degree of consultation and coordination, a strong, joint strategic action and visible output are important criteria of strategic partnership against which its effectiveness can be measured. Grevi (2010, pp. 2-5) points out the importance of not only being goal-oriented but also ensuring that the partnership's goals are mutually beneficial. For his part, Blanco (n.d., p. 13) refers to strategic partnership as "cooperative goal oriented relationships". The thematic cooperation areas then become important in their own right within a strategic partnership delivering targets that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. These allow for effective evaluation of progress made (or not) towards the mutually agreed upon goals of the partnership.

It is important not to overstate the goal-orientated property of strategic partnership for two reasons: different states may interpret goals differently and, in addition, states may also have unofficial goals (a hidden agenda) not easily discernible. Though this does not detract from its being a goal-oriented initiative, the achievement of goals should not be misconstrued as the essence of strategic partnership but rather one of a number of discernible attributes.

Secondly, although the presence of goals assists in the evaluation of strategic partnership to determine its effectiveness in realizing targets, the focus on goals should not undermine the function of strategic partnership to position a state more broadly and in less concretely measurable ways. For instance, some states may derive a strategic geopolitical position from a particular strategic partnership to which they belong, or network of strategic partnerships, irrespective of the goals targeted. Such states may be perceived by other states and non-governmental entities as having an increased influence and leverage, which may serve to reinforce those states' influence and leverage in a reflexive manner. The resultant image may enhance a state's brand value

as an influential or strategic actor sufficiently to deem membership of the strategic partnership a success in itself, irrespective of whether the goals are met. A constructivist insight into the formation of state identity helps to illuminate this point more clearly. According to Hopf (1998) the two parts of a state's identity, Self and Other, are mutually constitutive in that both are needed to assess how identities operate in the mutual social construction of structure. He notes that a state's identity can be understood only relationally, where Other plays an essential role in constituting the Self's identity, and where the two work together in the production of identity. Therefore is it not sufficient for a state to label itself as either a "global power", an "emerging power" or an "emerging middle power", a "regional power" or indeed as "strategic" for it to be so. It must be recognized to be so by other external actors as the essential Other constituting the Self's identity. As Grevi (2010, p. 2) points out "partnerships do not become strategic by virtue of defining them as such". Thus the establishment of a strategic partnership, particularly at the minilateral level, can serve to reinforce a state's strategic geopolitical identity because it confers recognition upon and reinforces the image of that state's identity as strategic by the essential Other. Thus the presence, or actual achievement, of measurable goals may be secondary to the less tangible effects related to a state's standing through its constantly evolving identity and changing interests.

For example, South Africa is the only state in Africa that enjoys a strategic partnership with the EU. Irrespective of the goals targeted, both parties recognize the strategic value of enhanced relations with each another and, particularly in the case of South Africa, the partnership arguably serves to reinforce on a continuous basis its acknowledged global standing as a regional powerhouse. Similarly, in a relatively short period of time the EU has established strategic partnerships with all the other BRICS member states in what is, possibly, a forward-looking effort to maintain its own position as a global strategic actor in an evolving multipolar world order. This action by the EU arguably serves to reinforce a global image of the BRICS that tacitly recognizes that together and individually the BRICS member states are critical to the way in which

the global system is evolving and thus relations with these states could be a strategic imperative.

A goal-oriented approach in IBSA

IBSA is primarily a consultation path as reflected in its full name as the IBSA Dialogue Forum, with the implication that regular exchange at multiple levels on an ongoing basis to enhance coordination is set to become a norm internalized by its member states. There are both political and technical goals identified by this forum. The political goals are pursued, reviewed, discussed and, where necessary, refined during the process by the Heads of State and Government. While the numerous sectoral cooperation mechanisms are noted in the summit declarations, the technical goals within each sectoral mechanism are in fact developed, reviewed and implemented outside of the Summit process in the meetings of the respective mechanisms. It is the Foreign Ministers within the Trilateral Ministerial Commission with the assistance of the IBSA focal points that provide the political framework through which these various cooperation mechanisms interact with the political (Summit) process.

The political goal of IBSA is to contribute to "a fair and equitable world order" (First IBSA Summit, Joint Declaration, 2006, ¶8) where "people must come first in the formulation and implementation of public policy" (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2010, ¶6). Implicit in this over-arching goal is a commitment to "strengthening the global governance system" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2007, ¶8) through making it "more democratic, representative and legitimate" (IBSA Delhi Declaration, 2008, ¶6) by "increase(ing) participation of developing countries in the decision-making bodies of multilateral institutions" (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2010, ¶4). Working towards a fair and equitable world order, a supportive goal is "ensuring that sustainable development is achieved on a global scale, particularly in the developing world" (First IBSA Summit, 2006, ¶18) in order to order to pursue "the eradication of poverty through sustained and inclusive economic growth" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2007, ¶4). IBSA is also committed to "vigorously pursue the deepening of South-South

cooperation for sustainable development" through "further strengthening trilateral cooperation" (Tshwane Declaration, 2007, ¶4). Other political goals are explicitly noted such as the "complete elimination of all nuclear weapons within a specified timeframe, in a comprehensive, universal, non-discriminatory, verifiable and irreversible manner" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶42) and the successful conclusion of a "development oriented, balanced" (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2010, ¶18) Doha Development Round of trade talks within the WTO.

Integral to IBSA is the trilateral sectoral cooperation that takes place both at the inter-governmental level and between sections of civil societies. At the outset twelve inter-governmental sectoral Working Groups were established in the field of agriculture, culture, defense, education, energy, health, information society, trade and investment, social development, science and technology, tourism and transportation. In addition, two civil society forums were established: the IBSA Business Forum and the IBSA Academic Forum. These forums bring together the respective academic and business leaders from each country in dialogue in pursuit of information exchange, cooperation and knowledge-building. There are currently sixteen Working Groups and eight people-to-people fora. The additional Working Groups established are in the sectors of environment, human settlements, public administration and revenue administration. The additional civil society fora are in the areas of small business, local governance, editors, parliamentarians, women and youth. In order to address the challenge of IBSA Working Groups having a mixed track record in terms of implementation (Mokoena, 2007, p. 140), there is recognition within IBSA that the broad scope of work needs to be consolidated and streamlined in order to maximize the effectiveness of trilateral cooperation for the benefit of the people in each IBSA country. One proposal under evaluation is to cluster the work under IBSA, including the various Working Groups, in terms of the three mutually reinforcing sustainable development pillars incorporated into the 2002 Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) and which is recognized in the outcome document of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (known as Rio+20); economic development, social development and environmental protection (A. Sooklal, personal communication, August 7, 2013).

A goal-oriented approach in BRICS

As a platform for dialogue and exchange, the primary focus of BRICS is to discuss a wide-range of subjects and articulate common positions on those issues where there is consensus. These common positions are captured within the respective summit declarations issued after each Summit meeting. Like IBSA, BRICS is committed to pursuing a set of political, sectoral and technical goals across a broad spectrum and at multiple levels. Similar to IBSA, the practice within the BRICS Forum is to take stock of its political goals on an annual basis at the political level under summit conditions while the particular technical goals, contained within the Action Plan, are developed, reviewed, added to and modified on an ongoing basis outside the Summit process at official level and are largely autonomous from the Summit process.

The stated political goal of the BRICS Forum is to contribute "significantly to the development of humanity and establishing a more equitable and fair world" (BRICS Sanya Declaration, 2011, ¶3). In order to do this it is recognized that the BRICS Forum needs to develop into a "full-fledged mechanism of current and long-term coordination on a wide range of key issues of the world economy and politics" (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶2). Embedded within this over-arching goal to contribute "positively to global peace, stability, development and cooperation" (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶1) is a commitment to "to exploring new models and approaches towards more equitable development and inclusive global growth by emphasizing complementarities and building on (BRICS) respective economic strengths" (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶2). Supportive of the overarching goal of the BRICS Forum are other goals as follows: to co-operate "to strengthen multilateral approaches on issues pertaining to global peace and security" (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶27); to intensify cooperation "in economic, finance and trade matters, which will contribute to the long-term steady, sound and balanced growth of the world economy. (BRICS Sanya Declaration, 2011, ¶13); "to prioritize the G20 development agenda as a vital element of global economic stability and long-term sustainable growth and job

creation (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶8), to work towards "an open, transparent and rules-based multilateral trading system" (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶15); to "contribute to the global effort in dealing with climate change issues through sustainable and inclusive growth" (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶30); and "to contribute effectively to global food security and nutrition through improved agriculture production and productivity, transparency in markets and reducing excessive volatility in commodity prices" (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶41).

In contrast to IBSA, BRICS sectoral cooperation is limited to five key areas and conducted at ministerial level. These are in the areas of Finance, Trade, Health, Agriculture and the newly established mechanism in the Science and Technology sector (Action Plan, BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013). Specific goals for intra-BRICS cooperation are articulated within these mechanisms and rarely find expression outside these mechanisms other than in the joint statements issued by the ministers when deemed appropriate. However, more general BRICS positions on global issues relating to issues of particular concern to BRICS in the trade, food security, public health, the global financial and economic system, arrived at under ministerial guidance within the sectoral mechanism, are easily discernible in the text of the respective summit declarations. The sectoral mechanisms are largely autonomous from the BRICS Summit process but feed into it where deemed appropriate by the BRICS leaders.

BRICS technical cooperation is conducted differently from that in IBSA. Technical cooperation is organic, needs-driven and formulated around a particular issue rather than around a particular sector. Thus technical cooperation is issue-driven and the officials that attend the meetings in this regard are experts on the particular issue under discussion as opposed to generalists in the sector from the respective line function department. As opposed to IBSA, there is a strong plurilateral component in BRICS technical cooperation. The issues around which BRICS technical cooperation takes place are explicitly aligned to broader discussions that take place within multilateral fora at the global level. As a result, the majority of BRICS technical cooperation

meetings, with a couple of exceptions, take place on the margins of, or in preparation for, multilateral fora discussions. Thus separate and detailed joint statements are issued after these sectoral meetings in their own right as stand-alone documents. Sometimes these issues find expression in the Summit outcome document but are usually dealt with in broad terms leaving the technical detail to the respective joint statements by the sectoral mechanism. For instance the BRICS Health Ministers meeting is a plurilateral caucus and meets within the framework of the World Health Organization (WHO) to "discuss and coordinate positions on issues of common interest and identify issues for cooperation in global public health" (BRICS Health Ministers' meeting, 2011). The annual meeting of BRICS Ministers of Finance and Governors of Central Banks prior to G20 Summits similarly operate as a plurilateral mechanism that does not necessarily, though quite often does, feed directly into the Summit process. The meeting of BRICS Agricultural Ministers that convenes "to consider the issue of global food security and … address the problem of food production and hunger" (BRICS Agricultural Ministers Declaration, 2010) is another such example. These ministerial engagements operate as branches of the broader strategic partnership in their own right, feeding into the political dialogue (summit process) when and where deemed appropriate by the Heads of State and Government and are based upon the particular agenda of the Chair for that year. Functioning in this manner gives space to the member states to shape the content of discussions at multiple opportunities during the year across a broad spectrum of issues, most of which relate directly to issues on the international agenda.

The comprehensive Action Plan, which forms part of the annual Summit Declaration, is a veritable meeting schedule approved by the leaders for the year ahead and identifies the issues upon which BRICS will meet, and when, in a bid to further cooperation on that issue. Intra-BRICS cooperation rests on the assumption that "there is a storehouse of knowledge, know-how, capacities and best practices available in (BRICS) countries that … can (be) share(d) and on which … meaningful cooperation for the benefit of (BRICS) peoples" can be built (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶40). Currently technical cooperation in BRICS takes place in the following issue areas: between officials responsible for population, environment, climate change, sustainable

development, cooperatives, financial and fiscal authorities, urbanization, competition authorities, national statistics, economic and trade issues as well as judicial (magistrates) issues. Most of these discussions take place on the margins of the associated discussions that take place in the relevent multilateral fora. There is also an express intent for the diplomats from the respective BRICS countries to coordinate on issues that arise in the multilateral capitals of the world; New York (UN), Vienna (IAEA), Rome (FAO and WFP), Paris (UNESCO), Washington (IMF, WB), Nairobi (UNEP) and Geneva (UN associated organizations).

2.4.3 Informal with low commitment costs

Crucially, "informal" should not be misunderstood as lacking structure or not being sufficiently institutionalized. The first point is that instances of strategic partnership at the minilateral level demonstrate that they are often highly structured in terms of the reporting structure(s), meeting schedules and specifically outlined roles and responsibilities for each level of the partnership. These may range from summit level (Heads of State and Government) through to ministerial level, focal point/sherpa level (where applicable) and include senior officials and below.

Constructivist insights assist in making clear the second point. Institutionalization from a constructivist perspective does not take the form of more and more elaborate rules, but rather occurs through shared practices that constitute each state's identity. Accordingly, institutionalization can be said to have occurred where a certain degree of internalization by the parties to the strategic partnership, at either a bilateral or minilateral level, has taken place. "Internalization" is defined by Schimmelfenning (1998, p. 211) as the process of embedding the constitutive beliefs and practices of an international community (or the partners in a strategic partnership) in the domestic decision-making processes of the partner states. Thus a strategic partnership can be informal, lacking a secretariat with no underlying treaty/foundation document that

binds signatories to purpose and specific courses of action, while at the same time being highly structured and institutionalized in a constructivist sense.

The structure of IBSA

In the absence of a founding document, or an instrument of creation/accession, the Brasilia Declaration can be regarded as the institutional expression of the IBSA Dialogue Forum. It provides for a Summit meeting for Heads of State and Government as well as for political consultations on international agenda items at multiple levels from Head of State, to Ministerial level and also at the senior official level. It also establishes the Trilateral Ministerial Commission (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2003, ¶19) that is co-chaired by the respective foreign ministers. The revolving secretariat is coordinated by the respective Secretary in the Foreign Ministry of each country and referred to as the focal point. Consequently IBSA operates according to a focal point system. Beyond these structures IBSA has largely been left to develop its own character and personality through repetitive process rather than being driven by a rigid set of structural obligations. Although Summit meetings between leaders are held on a regular basis, there is no timetable for the hosting of these trilateral Summit meetings. Instead each Declaration acknowledges the country that will host the next Summit meeting but the decision of when to host is akin to a "gentleman's agreement" and assessed on a needs' basis. Thus the first IBSA Summit was held in 2006, three years after its creation, in order to allow IBSA to develop organically. Other Summits were held more often than not on an annual basis in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2011 respectively, although there is no statutory obligation to do so. An official at the DIRCO indicated that the predictability of these meetings was under discussion with one proposal being to hold IBSA Summit meetings bi-annually (N. Barnard, personal communication, August 8, 2013). The trilateral Ministerial Commission meets on an annual basis to review the progress made on the work of IBSA. The IBSA Ministers of Foreign Affairs also meet on the margins of the annual UN General Assembly (UNGA) conference held in September in New York in order to discuss issues on the multilateral agenda.

The structure of IBSA is best understood in terms of a three-track process (borrowing from the methodology used to analyze the structure of ASEAN) that operates at multiple levels of government and includes civil society. Track 1 refers to inter-governmental processes with the practice of diplomacy among government channels where official decisions are taken. Track 2 involves civil society groups, governmental organizations and individuals who work alongside and hand-in-hand with governments. Given the strong association between these civil society groups and government thinking, this track almost acts as a 'front' which enables governments to discuss controversial issues and to test new ideas without making official statements or binding commitments, and, if necessary, shift positions. Track 3 acts as a forum for civil society with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) who represent a particular idea or brand. Track 3 networks claim to represent communities and people who are largely marginalized from political power centers and unable to achieve positive change without outside assistance. This track tries to influence government policies indirectly by lobbying, also by generating pressure through the media. Third-track actors also organize and/or attend meetings as well as conferences to get access to Track 1 officials.

Track 1 processes include the summit process of Heads of State and Government as well as the Trilateral Commission meetings, Foreign Ministers' meeting and the sectoral Working Groups. In IBSA, Track 2 processes are conducted under the following structures: small business forum, the local governance forum, the parliamentarian forum, the women forum and the youth forum. Ostensibly civil society groups, the participants in these forums, are usually directly linked to government itself or to government-affiliated organizations. What is unique about IBSA is the space created for genuine Track 3 processes that, for the first time, bring together people outside of government from India, Brazil and South Africa for dialogue, knowledge exchange and networking under an international governmental framework. The business and academic forums are successful examples of the track 3 processes in IBSA. Both Track 2 and Track 3 processes are channeled into Track 1 processes through being represented at the Summit meeting and given an opportunity to report on

their activities (though this is not obligatory) and to make recommendations, where appropriate, to political leaders for further coordinated action in a particular area. The political impetus injected by IBSA into these interactions serves to ensure that they are prioritized within the respective business and academic communities in each country and thus provides a needed boost to these interactions.

The structure of BRICS

Prior to South Africa's accession, BRIC can be described as a loose mechanism. According to a Brazilian Embassy official at the time the mechanism was described in 2010 as a 'make-it-up-as-you-go-along' mechanism, where there are no rules or precedence to follow or to guide activities, save for that contained within the content of the Summit Statements. What is evident is that the mechanism did not have any legal standing, nor does it still, and instead was legitimised externally.

BRICS does not have a formal organizational structure with permanent secretariats, preferring instead the informality of a rotating secretariat aligning with the principal of rotation of the chair of each Forum on an annual basis. Thus each member state has a turn to operate as the secretariat of the Forum in the year coinciding with the member state's chair and is charged with the responsibility to convene all the meetings in the year of the chair. That state will host the Summit meeting as well as any other forum meetings unless otherwise agreed, have responsibility for all communication and coordination of the development of all documentation relating to the forum's activities in that year (not limited to the political activities but including the documentation relating to technical cooperation areas), as well as the archiving of all those documents.

Like IBSA, the evolution of BRIC into BRICS is better understood as a series of interlinked, mutually reinforcing processes that occur at multiple levels across a broad range of sectors and in particular issue-areas. The leaders of the BRIC countries at the First BRIC Summit in Yekaterinburg Russia issued a Joint Statement that included BRIC structural issues. In the absence of an instrument of accession or a founding

document, the First BRIC Joint Statement stated that the institutional basis for BRIC was the annual summits of BRIC leaders held on a rotational basis and the continued value of the meetings of BRIC Ministers of Foreign Affairs and BRIC Ministers of Finance and Central Bank' Chief Executives in preparation for the G20 and other relevant meetings. The second BRIC Summit was held on 15 April 2010 in Brasilia, Brazil. Repetitive practice over the years has meant that a "sherpa system"[22] is preferred to coordinate BRIC(S) activities and to prepare for the Summit while the BRIC(S) Foreign Ministers role on multilateral coordination, cooperation and possible collaboration. It was agreed to continue the meetings of Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors with a view to prepare for the G20 and other relevant meetings. Following the establishment of BRIC these meetings have concentrated especially on the global financial crisis and in particular the preparation for G20 meetings.

Coinciding with the inaugural participation of South Africa in the Third BRICS Summit, the development of BRICS took a decisive step forward with the evolution of the loosely structured and narrowly focused BRIC mechanism of cooperation into a more cohesive grouping known as the BRICS Forum. An incremental approach is used to steadily promote various processes of cooperation among the BRICS countries in order to achieve its goals by making the forum neither too large nor too broad. Since its inception, it is evident that there has been a strong wish on behalf of the BRICS members that its activities should not be driven on a summit-to-summit basis but that newly-established mechanisms for sectoral cooperation and technical issue-specific cooperation should continue their deliberations and activities throughout the year on an ongoing, needs-driven basis in order to increase collaboration, strengthen the exchange of information and faciliate learning expereinces on a broader range of issues. Steps to promote dialogue and cooperation among the member states in an "incremental, proactive, pragmatic, open and transparent way" were agreed upon (Second BRIC Summit Joint Statement, 2010).

The structure of BRICS can also be usefully understood according to the same three-track process as in IBSA. Like IBSA, Track 1 processes refers to the Summit process,

the five sectoral cooperation mechanisms conducted at ministerial level as well as the the technical cooperation. Track 2 processes include the following technical cooperation meetings: BRICS cooperatives, statistics, competition commissions and fiscal and financial authorities and Think Tanks. In the case of BRICS, the development of Track 3, people-to-people/civil society engagement processes, is slower to evolve than in IBSA. The BRICS Business Forum is arguably the only genuine Track 3 process within the BRICS framework at this stage though the BRICS Academic Forum/Think Tank Council presents an interesting nuance. The precursor of the BRICS Think Tank Council, which was established in 2013, was a far looser mechanism called a Think Tank Symposium that brought together both the Think Tanks and leading research institutions from each country on the sidelines of the annual Summit meetings from 2006-2012. During this period the symposium had the appearance of a Track 3 process though it was arguably firmly embedded in a Track 2 process because it was not an event open to all scholars and academics from BRICS member states. Instead it was a government-controlled event with the decision on the composition of the delegation representing each country residing with the relevant government authority.[23] It was this Think Tank symposium that served as a support for the BRICS political process and formulated suggestions for leaders of the BRICS countries in order that issues of concern are taken cognizance of at the summit meetings as well aiming to give a more concrete shape to cooperation among BRICS members. Held prior to BRICS Summits, the mechanism developed a text of recommendations, which was tabled at the BRICS Summit of leaders. These documents are remarkable for their close alignment to the outcomes of the Summit, its objectives and its core positions. The recommendations issued by this mechanism and the BRICS Summit Declarations in 2011 and 2012 reinforce one another arguably adding an important perception of civil society legitimacy (Track 3) to the main themes and outcomes of the BRICS Summit while masking its Track 2 process.

This process has however evolved. The Think Tank Symposium has evolved into the BRICS Think Tank Council (BTTC). The BTTC is a formal structure and its members include: the Observer Research Foundation (India), the China Centre for Contemporary

World Studies (China), the National Committee for BRICS Research (Russia), the Institute for Applied Economic Research (Brazil) and the Human Sciences Research Council (South Africa). What all these member institutions have in common, with one exception, is that they form part of the sending government's public machinery directly or are related to government in some manner with respect to its funding, location and or board of trustees/governors. The Observer Research Foundation is the exception, it being a wholly private establishment. With the establishment of the BTTC, there are now two streams of interaction on the academic front: the Think Tank process on the one hand, which is a Track 2 process because of its composition and the Academic Forum process on the other, which is a concerted effort to open up space for genuine civil society participation in an attempt to develop a Track 3 process. Where the BTTC is limited to its member institutions and its deliberations narrowed to the purpose of enhancing cooperation in research, knowledge sharing, capacity building and policy advice between think tanks in BRICS countries, the Academic Forum is more open with interested participants from an extended research community that includes the broad spectrum of what can be considered academic endeavor.

That being said, the BTTC maintains a strong influence on the Track 3 process of the Academic Forum. It is able to do this because it is BTTC that provides the platform for the exchange of ideas among researchers, academics and think tanks and is also responsible for convening the BRICS Academic Forum and importantly, its agenda. It is also the repository tasked to shape public opinion in BRICS countries in support of BRICS dialogue and cooperation. It would not be implausible to argue that the BTTC, firmly rooted in Track 2, and linked to the cooperation undertaken between BRICS statistical authorities, could possibly be used as an incubator for the development of a BRICS equivalent of an OECD-type institution with a similar mandate and research capabilities and capacity to give pro-active support to BRICS processes. This development would of course be contingent upon whether BRICS develops into a reformist or revisionist strategic partnership.

Despite the BRICS Business Forum and the Academic Forum it is unlikely that the breadth of Track 3 processes, similar to that within the IBSA framework, would be developed under the auspices of BRICS. For instance, even though there is an effort to have two streams within BRICS research cooperation in order to accommodate a Track 3 process, one in Track 2 and the other in Track 3, the participants in the BTTC (track 2) stream form an integral, if not the main component of the official delegation that participates in the Academic Forum stream. Far from being a genuine Track 3 process, the Academic Forum could more accurately be seen as a compromise reached between the BRICS member states, one that straddles Track 2 and 3 processes in what may be an experiment with Track 3 processes. The primary reason for the limited Track 3 processes may be because not all of the member states in BRICS have internalized the participatory and representivity norms imbued by states with a more democratic culture. With the three democratic countries of India, Brazil and South Africa, BRICS may be pushed in the direction of broadening genuine Track 3 processes but its success may depend upon two conditions: first the extent to which there exists independent civil society institutions in Russia and China to participate in these additional structures should they be established, and the extent to which the respective governments give these civil society institutions sufficient space to operate openly within the BRICS context.

2.4.4 Economic exchange

The economic motive as a property of strategic partnership has its roots in business studies and in this context relates to market access, cost-sharing and the pooling of resources, risk reduction and risk diversification, obtaining economies of scale and co-specialization. For Grevi (2012, p. 14) economics is the "backbone" of the agendas in strategic partnership, with trade and investment as important cornerstones. Accordingly, strategic partnership is notable for its ability to draw on the "wealth of talent and entrepreneurship (soft power) to pursue state priorities by bringing in business, NGOs and research networks" (p. 15). The multi-dimensional nature of

strategic partnership allows for a wider base for cooperation than other vectors of cooperation and could include non-state actors that have an essential role in international affairs via transnational business networks and civil society.

The economic dimension in IBSA and BRICS

The economic dimension in both IBSA and BRICS is a critical element of these two strategic partnerships and serves to deepen their utility beyond plurilateral coordination in multilateral fora. The economic dimension is also implicit in, and reinforced externally by others, in the repeated references to the member states of IBSA and BRICS as emerging markets. IBSA goes as far as setting intra-IBSA trade targets and time frames with a dedicated Trade and Investment Working Group, within Track 1 processes, established with the responsibility of promoting, strengthening and deepening intra-IBSA trade as well as tracking those relations. The intra-IBSA trade target of USD 10 billion by 2010 was achieved early, in 2009, while the second combined trade target is USD 25 billion in total IBSA trade by 2015, which, with current data, may be surpassed ahead of the target date (Davies, 2011).

The economic figures concerning the BRICS are more problematic. Much of the analysis concerns itself with BRICs and refers to Brazil, Russia, India and China. Few analysts use BRICS (including South Africa) in the statistical analysis in part because BRIC is the famed economic/financial construct and is not to be confused with the BRICS Forum. The Nomura Institute of Capital Markets and Research break with this trend and have used data from the IMF to analyze the BRICS as an economic entity, including South Africa, in terms of its share in global GDP, global trade and global foreign exchange reserves (Sekine, 2011, pp. 4-6).[24] Although BRICS has been reluctant to set specific trade targets, there is a concerted effort aimed at intensifying intra-BRICS trade under the auspices of the BRICS Trade Ministers meetings and supported at official level by the Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI). A step in this direction saw the BRICS Trade Ministers agree to work towards significantly improving intra-BRICS trade of USD230 billion in 2012 to

greater levels, with the media speculating a figure of USD500 billion by 2015 (Sharma, 2012). According to the former Indian Minister of Trade, Anand Sharma, this would be achieved by enhancing cooperation in the areas of customs, trade facilitation, investment promotion, Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) cooperation and trade date collection (2012). The BRICS Delhi Declaration (2012, ¶18) captures the agreement by leaders to "intensify trade and investment" though steers clear of specifying a target, recognizing instead the instruments that will facilitate this goal, notably the Master Agreement on Extending Credit Facility in Local Currency and the Multilateral letter of Credit Confirmation Facility Agreement between the development banks.

The presence of an IBSA Business Forum and a BRICS Business Forum bears testimony to the importance placed on economic exchange by both strategic partnerships. Operating within Track 3 processes, the business forums are broadly supportive of Track 1 processes and are importantly given opportunities to establish and strengthen intra-IBSA and intra-BRICS business networks on the sidelines of Summit meetings in pursuit of enhanced economic cooperation. A more detailed examination of the economic dimension within IBSA and BRICS, particularly South Africa's role therein, is provided in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 respectively.

2.4.5 Top-down, elite-driven process

In delineating this property of strategic partnership, Wilkins (2008, p. 373) draws his argument from an examination of the strategic partnership between Russia and China at the bilateral level where it is largely an elite-driven project and does not enjoy "deep public support in either country". This tendency, arguably, can be seen also in the choice of strategic partners, of the EU for instance. Such choices are often confusing not only to civil society within the EU but do also run the risk of undermining traditional relations with other states, a point made by Kay (2000), as well as raising unrealistic expectations as cautioned by Khandekar (2011). The EU and Canada have a strategic partnership but for both sides the relationship is not a priority.

For Husar, Maihold, Mair & Niedermeier (as cited by Schmidt, 2010), whereas there is merit in a strategic partnership between the EU and India, such partnerships with South Africa, Mexico and Brazil are less obvious. The case studies of Russia, China and the EU show strategic partnership to be a top-down, elite-driven process because in the realm of foreign policy development these states/entities leave relatively limited (if any) space for civil society participation. Similarly, in democratic societies the choice of strategic partner relates directly to the pre-emptive, forward-looking strategic dimension of a state's national policy, including its foreign policy (cross reference 2.4.6). Those decisions are the prerogative of the political elite and more often than not, especially in the case of one-party state democracies, are the prerogative of the ruling party in accordance with its strategic vision and the direction in which it aims to take the country.

Despite a top-down, elite-driven process evident in the initial stages of strategic partnership, the partnership requires validation from its domestic constituency, especially in the case of democratic societies, in order for it to be reinforced and strengthened as an enduring feature of a state's foreign policy in the long-term. Efforts that add social, cultural, scientific, educational, parliamentary and youth cooperation are in the words of Wilkins (2008, p. 374) "collaboration multipliers" serving to enhance understanding and respect between the states involved at diffused levels in a bid to build trust. This serves to deepen strategic partnership between and among its member states and, importantly, their populations. The internalization of the norms developed within the inter-subjective community of a strategic partnership at the minilateral level will occur more seamlessly where civil society is included as effective participants and indeed stakeholders in the partnership.

Process in IBSA

Certainly the establishment of IBSA was an elite-driven initiative spearheaded by the Heads of State and Government of South Africa in conjunction with Brazil and India. Lyal White (n.d., p. 5) recognizes the necessary presence of a political commitment at

the highest level when he argues that in the case of IBSA the presence of a top-down, political commitment is clear and was a necessity to finally create an (South) alignment capable of delivering over and above rhetoric.[25] As a result of ongoing consultations between the three countries at the highest level, the reins of control were almost immediately transferred to the respective Foreign Ministers who were tasked to drive the process, flesh out the parameters of the IBSA initiative and begin with its implementation. The Brasilia Declaration of 2003 captures the outcome of this trilateral meeting of Foreign Ministers and clearly delineates the Foreign Ministers as the repository for coordination, cooperation, collaboration, decision-making and implementation. It is the result of this structural particularity and the deliberate effort from the outset to ensure that IBSA is fully operational across Tracks 1, 2 and 3 that the decision making-process of IBSA quickly became a bottom-up, grass-roots driven process. Indeed it is the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in their deliberations within the Trilateral Ministerial Commission, through a bottom-up process, which ensures that major decisions are taken and conveyed to the Leaders for approval during the Summit if necessary.

In terms of political issues, it is at the level of IBSA Foreign Ministers that IBSA's common positions are conveyed in the form of Joint Statements issued on the margins of the annual UNGA meetings. IBSA Foreign Ministers have also issued joint press statements conveying IBSA's position with respect to the Middle East peace (April 2010 & August 2013) and Syria (August 2011) as well as having successfully driven a UNSC statement calling for an immediate halt to violence in Syria in August 2011. Reports from the sixteen Working Groups detailing the activities initiated and implemented by these groups, as well as from the IBSA Fund on Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (hereafter referred to as the IBSA Fund), are submitted to the Trilateral Commission for note to be taken thereof and in some instances to seek express political guidance on the way forward. Issues that require express political approval are sought and granted by the IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission.

Process in BRICS

Evidence of an elite-driven, top-down approach is also evident in the initial stages of the BRICS. However, unlike IBSA, this trend deepens in BRICS and is part of the way in which the forum is evolving. Russia, under President Vladimir Putin, initiated the first meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York in September 2006. Its outcome was the participants' reiteration of their interest in developing multifaceted, quadripartite cooperation. Since then, the BRIC Foreign Ministers have met annually on the fringes of the UNGA. Ministers of Finance and Governors of Central Banks of the BRIC countries have similarly met since 2008, prior to the G20 meetings, to formulate common strategies to deal with the global financial crisis and the reform of the global financial system. When Russian President Dmitry Medvedev visited Brazil at the end of 2008, he and President Lula da Silva of Brazil proposed holding the First BRIC Summit in Yekaterinburg, Russia, on 16 June 2009, back-to-back with SCO Summit, itself another instance of a strategic partnership at the mini-lateral level according to Wilkins. BRICS has attempted to obtain "buy-in" from broader civil society as demonstrated by the establishment of Track 2 processes and the experiment with Track 3 processes. However, irrespective of whether BRICS deepens its cooperation across the three tracks, the structure of BRICS perpetuates a decision-making process that is characteristically leader-driven.

In contrast to IBSA, the decision-making process in BRICS allows little room for a bottom-up approach and is characteristically leader-driven. The absence of a BRICS coordinating mechanism at an appropriate level, such as at ministerial level, perpetuates the elite-driven process in BRICS and has resulted in the development of a normative culture that centralizes the role of the Summit process, and also any other meetings of BRICS Leaders, in directing BRICS activities. Issues are brought directly to the Summit meeting for deliberation and decision. At the Summit meeting the leaders deliberate upon these matters and take joint decisions thereon. It is common practice for the Leaders to instruct the relevant BRICS mechanisms on their considered course of action and even advise of the reporting timetable for implementation. These

instructions are captured in the various Summit Declarations. The example of the work done in BRICS to establish the BRICS Development Bank demonstrates the direct role of the leaders in spearheading the decision-making process in the forum:

> "We have considered the possibility of setting up a new Development Bank for mobilizing resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies and developing countries, to supplement the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development. We direct our Finance Ministers to examine the feasibility and viability of such an initiative, set up a joint working group for further study, and report back to us by the next Summit" (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶13).

> "… Following the report from our Finance Ministers, we are satisfied that the establishment of a New Development Bank is feasible and viable. We have agreed to establish the New Development Bank" (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶9).

> "In June 2012, in our meeting in Los Cabos, we tasked our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to explore the construction of a financial safety net through the creation of a Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) amongst BRICS countries … We direct our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to continue working towards its establishment" (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶10)

> "We are grateful to our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors for the work undertaken on the New Development Bank and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement and direct them to negotiate and conclude the agreements which will establish them. We will review progress made in these two initiatives at our next meeting in September 2013" (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶11)

This normative culture in decision-making extends to the BRICS sectoral mechanisms that are conducted at Ministerial level as follows:

> "We appreciate the outcomes of the Second Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development at Chengdu, China in October 2011. We direct our Ministers to take this process forward with particular focus on the potential of cooperation amongst the BRICS to contribute effectively to global food security and nutrition through improved agriculture production and productivity, transparency in markets and reducing excessive volatility in commodity prices, thereby making a difference in the quality of lives of the people particularly in the developing world" (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶41)

> "Most of BRICS countries face a number of similar public health challenges, including universal access to health services, access to health technologies, including medicines, increasing costs and the growing burden of both communicable and non-communicable diseases. We direct that the BRICS Health Ministers meetings, of which the first was held in Beijing in July 2011, should henceforth be institutionalized in order to address these common challenges in the most cost-effective, equitable and sustainable manner" (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶42)

2.4.6 The presence of inherent rivalry

The presence of rivalry has been acknowledged by scholars but has not been sufficiently recognized as either an inherent property or indeed as a function of strategic partnership. Wilkins hints at a dimension of rivalry but does not develop the point to its end. He acknowledges that "strategic partnerships, like any other international alignment, are collective social enterprises and will evince both distinct properties and predictable behavioral patterns common to organizational groupings; *the delicate conversion of conflict into cooperation* (own emphasis), the mobilization of resources and coordination of effort that facilitate the joint survival of an organization and its members" (Wilkins, 2008, p. 363). Simply acknowledging all collective social enterprises, including in strategic partnership, evinces an inevitable element of rivalry does not go far enough. The element of inherent rivalry is a salient consideration, perhaps even a driving force to the establishment of strategic partnership. Grevi (2010, p. 9) similarly recognizes the dimension of inherent rivalry as integral to strategic partnership when he asserts that "cooperation of strategic partners can lead to win-win games and, conversely, such partners are those who could inflict most harm to one another were relations to turn sour". He goes further to emphasize this viewpoint by arguing that true strategic partnership, beyond those just in name, are those that "accompany current power shifts with a shift towards positive-sum and not zero-sum relations" as they are "pursued consistently over time and serve to keep the bar straight through the ups and downs of the respective relationships" (pp. 10-11).

Inherent rivalry deserves fuller attention as it relates directly to the 'strategic' dimension of strategic partnership. Business Theory is useful in highlighting this point.[4] According to business theorists Emanuela Todeva and David Knoke (2005, p. 128) the decision to align into arrangements of a strategic nature is driven less by retrospective rationalities than by strategic intentions, although this is not to discount the former entirely. Thus the decision toward strategic collaboration need not only be recognized as a responsive action, but fundamentally as a strategic intent, which aims at improving the future circumstances of the actors involved and the potential benefit to the partnership as a whole. In the business context the decision to partner in a strategic collaboration cannot

be determined in a rational way by the purpose itself, nor by the current environmental pressures that compel them to cooperation, "on the contrary, these factors merely help firms to construct post-facto justifications and rationalizations about their collaboration decision" (Todeva & Knoke, 2005, p. 129).

This rival/competitive dynamic is categorized as strategic because it locks competitors into cooperative ventures where partners share the risks and benefits resulting from their collective activity (Todeva & Knoke, 2005, p. 129). In business studies this dynamic comes under the framework of 'cooptition' theory. The Online Business Dictionary defines 'cooptition' as cooperative competition. According to another business theorist, Rouse (2013), cooptition occurs when actors interact with partial congruence of interests in order to reach a higher value creation if compared to the value created without interaction, and struggle to achieve competitive advantage. Competitive forces seen positively pressurize states in a strategic partnership to develop themselves, perhaps with the development of niche products and related niche markets; while cooperation, also related to development, is motivated more to gain access to resources, knowledge and skills available from the other partners (Kock, Bengtsson & Slotte-kock, n.d., p. 6). When harnessed together, both these competitive and cooperative forces work towards complementarity in partner choice as opposed to commonality (cross reference the discussion about complementary and common interests in 2.4.1). It is the complementary nature of the partners' strengths and weaknesses that combines in a strategic partnership: the convergent not identical interests and goals among the partners. It is here at the nexus of this competition/cooperation dynamic that we can a) grasp better the qualitative distinction of strategic partnership, b) understand how it functions as an effective instrument to navigate the a globalized environment and c) generate realistic expectations of these partnerships.

In accepting that the reality of global politics is inherently imbued with competitive and cooperative forces in either Hobbesian, Lockean or Kantian world orders, and given that states compete and cooperate (depending on the issue), often simultaneously, the challenge then is to reconcile these two interactions in order to avoid direct

confrontation and its damaging implications for socio-economic development as well as to promote mutually beneficial gain. Accordingly, one of several motives to enter a strategic partnership in an International Relations context is the cooperation of potential rivals or pre-empting competitors. The decision to align in a strategic partnership can be construed as forward-looking and designed to position the actor better in the future. It is fundamentally a pre-emptive action.

This point is arguably not lost on the EU in its consideration of prospective partners with whom to establish a strategic partnership. In defining which states are considered strategic to its interests, the EU notes "the strategic partner status is specifically intended to derive from the capacity of a country to exert a significant influence on global issues" (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). Neither is the theoretical element of strategic intention in strategic partnership lost on South Africa in its assessment of the BRIC emerging powers and some of the motivations cited for its bid for accession to this group. According to South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation among the motivations for entry into the BRIC group at the time were: the possibilities opened up by increased economic activity of the BRICs on the African continent registering an eightfold increase in BRIC-Africa trade between 2000 and 2008; the opportunity of a "dramatic global realignment" driven by the BRIC countries; "a powerful economic alliance of the four fast-growing nations, two of which have the biggest populations" in the world; and the possibilities offered for South Africa and other African countries as an "important avenue for trade and investment linkages, technology transfers and technical cooperation in a range of sector" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2010d). In practice however the challenge for strategic partnership, particularly at the minilateral level, is to demonstrate in the medium to long-term whether it can in fact live up to the theory in this regard and effectively manage the cooperative and competitive forces constructively.

Inherent rivalry in IBSA

Rivalry amongst India, Brazil and South Africa is largely limited to trade and commercial activities. The IBSA countries are not natural trading partners and on the whole produce similar products, compete for access to the same OECD markets and also compete for resources (Lechini, 2007). India's exports to Africa have not only increased in volume but have become, importantly, more diverse bringing it within the ambit of South Africa's swiftly growing value-added exports to Africa. In the period 2007-2012, India's exports to Africa included vehicles (recording an impressive 10% growth rate), cereals (9% growth) and pharmaceuticals (8% growth) while South Africa continued its impressive growth in value-added exports to Africa of machinery, vehicles as well as electrical and electronic equipment (Freemantle & Stevens, 2013, pp. 4–5). Although Brazil-Africa trade decreased in 2012/2013, largely as a result of the decrease in Brazil's imports of crude oil from Angola primarily, it remains prominent in soft commodity exports to Africa such as sugar, meat and cereals (Freemantle & Stevens, 2013, p. 6), which brings it firmly into the competitive realm of India on the African continent.

Trade is limited by persistent protectionist measures on the parts of all three countries *vis-a-vis* one another despite an intensification of trilateral engagement through the IBSA format. For instance, according to the WTO, of the four times that South Africa has been taken to the WTO with respect to a particular trade dispute, two of those cases were lodged by India and Brazil respectively and have yet to be resolved. In April 1999, India lodged a complaint at the WTO challenging South Africa's use of anti-dumping duties on certain pharmaceutical products from India. India alleged that South Africa initiated anti-dumping proceedings against the importation of ampicillin and amoxycillin of 250mg capsules from India. South Africa allegedly made a preliminary determination on 26 March 1997 that ampicillin and amoxycillin of 250mg and 500mg capsules, exported by M/S Randaxy Laboratories Ltd of India, were being dumped into the South African Customs Union (SACU) (World Trade Organization, 1999). This was allegedly followed by a recommendation to impose final duties on these products by the

South African Board of Tariffs and Trade (BTT), which was reported on 10 September 1997. In June 2012, Brazil took the first legal step at the WTO to challenge South Africa's use of anti-dumping duties on frozen fowl meat from Brazil. South Africa's International Trade Administration Commission (ITAC) allegedly imposed anti-dumping duties on frozen chickens and chicken meat imported by Brazil after investigating suspected dumping in 2008-2010 (World Trade Organization, 2012). These duties were imposed following a complaint by the South African Poultry Association (SAPA) on behalf of major producers of poultry products in the SACU, which claimed that the alleged dumped imports were causing material injury. With respect to India and Brazil, in April 2001 India brought a challenge against Brazil at the WTO for their imposition of anti-dumping duties on Jute bags and bags made of Jute yarn from India (World Trade Organization, 2001). A potential trade dispute between India and South Africa may be impending but has yet to reach the WTO. In January 2013, India voiced concern after South Africa suspended frozen boneless buffalo meat imports from India (as cited by Soule-Kohndou, 2013, p. 23). After granting market access to deboned frozen boneless buffalo meat by approving abattoir meat processing unit in January 2011, South Africa's then suspended imports in May 2011 owing to sanitary and animal disease risks.

Inherent Rivalry in BRICS

This section will not repeat the trade and commercial rivalry amongst the IBSA countries outlined above though they are applicable in an examination of the rivalry within the BRICS context, given the overlapping membership in the two forums. BRICS is often critiqued on the basis of the bilateral rivalries between its members, the most prominent of which is the Sino-Indian rivalry that spans the geopolitical, geostrategic and economic spheres. The ongoing territorial dispute, that includes several flashpoints along the long Himalayan border between India and China, and which erupted into a brief but full-scale war in October 1962, remains a sticking point for both sides. Exacerbating these territorial disputes is China's claims to the northeastern Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, which Beijing refers to as 'Southern Tibet' as well as

China's rule of Tibet and the fact that India hosts the Dalai Lama in exile. On both sides along the disputed border the trend is a steady build-up in military presence as well as the construction of strategic infrastructure such as road and rail networks, air bases and helipads ("Geopolitical rivalry and profound mistrust govern Sino-Indian relations, despite occasional cooperation," 2012). Energy and resource security are key elements driving Sino-Indian rivalry and this is evident not only in the territorial dispute between the two but are also drivers of their rivalry more broadly in the global arena. China's activities in the Indian Ocean, such as the building of maritime ports and strategic infrastructure networks provoked India's "Look East" policy, which arguably reflects a strategic decision to compete for influence in the wider Asia-Pacific region and implicitly refuse to cede Southeast Asia to China's sphere of influence ("Geopolitical rivalry and profound mistrust govern Sino-Indian relations, despite occasional cooperation," 2012). Sino-Chinese competition for energy and resources is also evident on the African continent. Two thirds of China's imports from Africa consists of crude oil while imports of crude oil accounts for a quarter of India's total trade with Africa (Freemantle & Stevens, 2013, pp. 3–4). Indian and Chinese companies compete vigorously for tenders in many African countries in the energy sector. The growing trade deficit India holds with China in their bilateral trade is a source of tension as Chinese-manufactured products find an easy passage into India while India struggles to gain access to the Chinese market for their pharmaceuticals and information technology (Davies, 2013). It could be argued that these rivalries are the primary reason why China backs a greater role for India in the UNSC but falls short of declaring its support for India's bid. Although China reportedly does not have a policy to obstruct or oppose India's efforts to get a seat in the UNSC it nevertheless vacillates on the issue, at one time seriously considering Pakistan for the position in what could be seen as a diplomatic provocation ("Will not oppose India's UNSC seat bid, says China," 2012).

There is growing unhappiness in Brazil about China's perceived artificial devaluation of its currency to boost its export competitiveness and growing Brazil-China rivalry on the African continent. At a seminar on the political and economic relations between Brazil and China it was noted that although bilateral trade has expanded in the last decade it

has been described as a 'mixed blessing' for Brazil (Mesquita, 2014). On the one hand China has boosted Brazil's commodity sector to become the country's top export destination and on the other hand the competition from China's manufacturing sector has led Brazil to establish barriers to protect its own manufacturing industry (Mesquita, 2014). Brazil and China are competitors in Africa in the energy sector with the size and pace of China's investment in Africa posing a challenge to Brazilian exporters. However, according to one blogger (Erquicia, 2013) Brazil has a cultural advantage over China in Africa being home to the world's second largest African population (after Nigeria) where more than 50% of Brazilians are of African descent and there is a sizable proportion of Africans that speak Brazil's official language.

Even Russia and China are locked into a complex relationship over the supply and price of natural resources. Russia favours high commodity prices whereas China, which is dependent on natural resources to power its economic development, is hurt by commodity price increases (Soko & Qobo, 2010). These rivalries lead Qobo (Qobo, 2010b) to argue that "it does not make sense for this group to exist in a structured form". South Africa's insistence on projecting itself as the 'gateway into Africa', where it is envisioned that external engagement with the continent be channeled through South Africa, is arguably a proactive cooperative strategy designed to harness the rivalries (both actual and potential) presented by emerging and traditional actors alike and promote South Africa and, by extension, Southern Africa's geostrategic position in the continent, while preventing the marginalization of African states' own activities and initiatives within the continent.

2.4.7 Strategic partnership as a tool to manage inherent rivalry

In recognizing inherent rivalry as a property of strategic partnership it is possible to have a theoretical understanding of how strategic partnership functions as a tool to manage that inherent rivalry. Business Studies' theorists Das and Bing-Sheng Teng (2001) argue that developing trust is crucial to overcoming competitive impulses.[5]

Strategic partnership, particularly at the minilateral level, is a diplomatic and political platform that similarly binds multiple partners into a relationship that preferences cooperation and dialogue at multiple levels. It acts as an incubator for the development of trust and reciprocity between partners through the gradual development of cooperative norms based on a non-hierarchical, equal partnership between and among the actors as well as for significantly increased engagement at multiple levels, particularly at the highest level of state. Trust and reciprocity norms are developed in partnerships over a period of time and, importantly, through repetition, which in turn allows rivalries to be managed in a constructive manner. One point of caution is relevant: it is not the argument here that strategic partnership acts as a forum for resolving long-standing geopolitical conflicts (over borders for instance) and other rivalries, although this would of course not be impossible. This would overstate the argument being made and also raises unrealistic expectations of this archetype of alignment. Instead strategic partnership locks rivals/competitors into a forum of trust that works to mitigate rival forces by emphasizing constructive and positive dialogue as well as by providing an important platform for its management (if not its resolution) through cooperation.

In this regard, it is appropriate to look more deeply into the perceived asymmetric characteristic evident in most instances of strategic partnership that have been studied to date. Blanco (n.d., pp. 24-26) refers to the EU-Russia strategic partnership, noting the asymmetry in development denoted no doubt by various development indices, as well as referring to the EU-Brazil strategic partnership, noting the asymmetry in trade relations. For Kay (2000, p. 16) asymmetry is implied when he demonstrates that strategic partnership can be used to "enhance primacy or balance against perceived threats". The stark asymmetries in the following strategic partnerships have been well-documented by scholars Kay (2000, pp. 17–19), in the case of US and Ukraine, as well as the partners of the US in the Middle East and with Turkey; also by Grevi (2008) between the EU and South Africa and the EU and China and the EU and Brazil. Some scholars identify asymmetry as an obstacle to the establishment of strategic partnership. Vahl (2001, p. 4) argues that the EU and Russia are not strategic partners at all because

a “prerequisite for a proper partnership is that it must be between generally similar parties of roughly equal size”. He goes on to conclude from this that the asymmetric nature of the relationship between the EU and Russia is “a considerable obstacle to the emergence of strategic partnership”. Asymmetry in BRICS has also been identified as an obstacle to a viable partnership. Many critiques of South Africa’s entry into BRICS hinged upon the incompatibility of South Africa in terms of its relative GDP size, its relatively small population size, its relatively minute economic clout on the global stage, the stark differences in trade and investment ratios, flows and potential, in its minimal global power status and influence and the comparably small size of its military capability.

The asymmetric relations evident in strategic partnership could be derived from the characteristic heteronomous relations among and between the actors involved. If we can recover the operation of heteronomy in inter-state relations, we might better understand asymmetry in strategic partnership. This is important if we are to shed light upon the nature of relations between states within a strategic partnership and thereby the possible limitations of that partnership in action.

Onuf’s discussion of heteronomy is useful here. According to Onuf (1989), if it is accepted that an anarchic structure does not necessarily describe the international system we live in (an accepted constructivist perspective), then the door to a third option in describing the international system is opened: neither hegemony nor hierarchy, but alternatively heteronomy. Onuf (1989, p. 221) argues that hetronomy is the “unacknowledged third paradigm of rule” it is “unnamed, unacknowledged, unimagined,” yet is intimated in any discussion of asymmetric interdependence and unequal exchange and sheds light on the disjuncture between the formal appearance of autonomy and the social reality of super- and sub-ordination in international politics. To date, no comprehensive theory of heteronomy has been developed as there is for hegemony or the less-often used hierarchy. Its development has limped along but more often than not by implication.

Immanuel Kant (as cited by Onuf, p. 212) uses heteronomy to refer to the condition of not having autonomy. Onuf (1989, p. 197) describes heteronomous relations as those characterizing situations of exchange among apparent equals i.e. all situations in International Relations (not necessarily limited to states) and as a result, it is heteronomy that is the actual background condition of rule against which episodes of hegemony and hierarchy are set. Heteronomous rule is unacknowledged because it is extremely paradoxical as it "obfuscate (es) … its own social reality" (1989, p. 212). Heteronomous relations always give the appearance of autonomy and equality among actors by virtue of reciprocal and formally symmetrical arrangement of states (1989, p. 214), while masking its function of perpetuating asymmetry. For example, the political notion of the sovereign equality of states enshrined in the United Nations Charter gives states the appearance of autonomy and equality but which masks the deeply asymmetric relations between states within the UN with five some states holding the power of the veto. Stated simply the paradox is this, "rules positing autonomy in relations ensure the asymmetry of those relations" (1989, p. 214). By obscuring the absence of autonomy heteronomous relations have the appearance of equality, classing together as they do societies/states under political notions of an economically developed core, a periphery or indeed notions of traditional powers and emerging powers but which, within these categories are in fact found to exhibit heteronomous relations. As Onuf (1989, p. 224) eloquently describes it, "the agents themselves resist acknowledging (this existence), both because asymmetries are disguised by the appearance of free choice and discounted in the name of (hegemonic) harmony". Hegemony and heteronomy can be interdependent and reinforcing practices where "hegemony legitimizes heteronomy, heteronomy provides the material basis for hegemony" although they remain analytically distinct (1989, p. 219).

Discerning asymmetry in strategic partnership through recognizing the operation of heteronomy provides us with an insight into the mutually reinforcing role (or its equally applicable opposite, mutually weakening role) of strategic partnership at the bilateral and, not impossibly, at the multilateral level. In this manner the limits of strategic partnership becomes clearer. From this perspective, the potential for pressure to be

exerted by some states on others within a particular minilateral strategic partnership when in the corridors of negotiation venues to adopt (or not) certain political positions, could be leveraged by threatening actions that may weaken or undermine the relationship at the bilateral or possibly at the multilateral level. Thus, the consequences of heteronomous relations, although giving the appearance of equality, are similar to those in conditions of hegemony or hierarchy. The end result is a deepening of asymmetrical relations.

2.5 Conclusion

This exercise has resulted in a notion of strategic partnership at the minilateral level that can be used as an appropriate framework of reference by which to account for some of the new, non-traditional types of international alignment in the 21st Century, such as IBSA and BRICS. It has been demonstrated that constructivist insights are effective in rescuing strategic partnership, the latest archetype of international alignment, from its problematic association with security in order to ensure that the concept embodies the broad spectrum of cooperation and is not conceptually limited to notions of security cooperation. Further, constructivist perspectives were used to contextualize strategic partnership within a value-neutral, content-neutral umbrella framework of international alignment within the broader International Relations discipline. So construed, it was demonstrated that IBSA and BRICS are better understood under such a model than if they were examined under alliance or coalition theory or indeed some other kind of plurilateral framework of reference. Both IBSA and BRICS were seen to exemplify the properties and functions of strategic partnership as they relate to an arrangement around a system principle, goal-oriented, informal with low commitment costs, salient economic exchange, a top-down elite-driven process and the presence of inherent rivalry.

More significantly, though, as instances of strategic partnership at the minilateral level, South Africa's dual membership of IBSA and BRICS can now be used as viable case

studies through which to examine, through comparison, the extent to which, and how, strategic partnership at the minilateral level impacts upon the GSP of its member states, if at all. In order to do so it is appropriate to examine firstly South Africa's foreign policy in terms of the six key priority areas identified by the DIRCO in conjunction with the ideational aspects of foreign policy and the diplomacy of Ubuntu in order to contextualize South Africa's alignment for identity in both the IBSA and BRICS forums.

Notes:

[17] In business studies the term "strategic alliance" is synonymous with "strategic partnership". The difference is merely semantics argues Wilkins, although "partnership" may have legal connotations and is therefore avoided in the business world. Therefore the business literature on "strategic alliance" is applicable to the concept of strategic partnership in the International Relations literature.

[18] The post, post-Cold War period is a term used by the author to describe the period beginning with the 21st Century, ie. the year 2000 onwards. It is differentiated from the post-Cold War period, being the immediate aftermath of the Cold War until 1999, corresponding to the author's view that the evolutionary process of change in the international system recognizes two distinct eras: the unipolar post-Cold War period and the post, post-Cold War period characterized by fluidity as it moves toward multipolarity.

[19] Steve Smith's (2000, p. 374) argument is that International Relations remains an American social science and that because positivism dominates in the USA, to such an extent that other epistemological positions remain peripheral, there is consequently a narrower set of questions that are seen as legitimate. This is in comparison to the United Kingdom, which, Smith argues, are more pluralistic and thus rather more likely to permit the development of an International Relations discipline relevant to the dominant global questions of the new millennium.

[20] For realists, anarchy is necessarily a "self help" system where central and collective authority are absent giving rise to the consequently competitive dynamics of the security dilemma and problem of collective action. Liberals on the other hand concede the causal powers of anarchic structure but argue that process can generate cooperation in an exogenously given "self-help" system.

[21] This refers to Wendt's argument that identity is comprised of two parts, "corporate identity" on the one hand and "social identity" on the other. According to Wendt (1994, p. 384) corporate identity is the intrinsic, self-organizing qualities that constitute actor individuality, the constituent individuals, physical resources and shared beliefs and institutions in virtue of which individuals function as a "we". Social identities are the sets of meanings that an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others, they are always in process during interaction, and often do exist in multiples.

[22] A Sherpa system is often used multilateral groups where the issues on the agenda are complex and overlapping in terms of scope, level (multilateral and bilateral) and line function government responsibility. The positions and solutions to these issues must necessarily show a positive national impact necessitating broad participation from several government departments where a good relationship among national bureaucracies is essential. A designated Sherpa is consequently most often a highly ranked bureaucrat able to bring together the different national bureaucracies in pursuit of implementation and charged with the responsibility of overseeing the co-ordination of the partnership in all its aspects, take part in all of the required international meetings in this regard and, importantly, prepare for the

Summit meeting, including the negotiation of the Summit Declaration. In some instances, a sous-Sherpa is appointed to assist the Sherpa. The most entrenched example of a Sherpa system is that which functions within the G8.

[23] Host of the BRICS Think Tank seminar in 2009 was the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA), a federal public foundation linked to the Strategic Affairs Secretariat of the Presidency. IPEA provides technical and institutional support to government action for the formulation and reformulation of public policies and development programs. Host of the seminar in 2010 was the China Centre for Contemporary World Studies and China Foundation for Peace and Development, linked to the Presidency and under Ministerial patronage. India broke this tradition in 2012 and was represented (also as host) by the Observer Research Foundation, a private, non-profit public policy Think Tank established in 1990. South Africa, like India, was represented on the Think Tank mechanism in 2011 and 2012 by a diverse array of independent scholars, academics and Think Tanks as well as government officials and former government leaders. In 2012, the former Deputy Minister of the DIRCO of South Africa, Mr Aziz Pahad, led South Africa's delegation to the Think Tank seminar in India.

[24] According to a report by the Nomura Institute of Capital Markets Research, based on IMF data, the BRICS share of global GDP increased from 13.7% in 2007 to 18% in 2010, its share of global trade increased from 12.6% in 2007 to 15.8% in 2010 and its share of global foreign exchange reserves increased from 37.2% in 2007 to 42.7% in 2010. This data is rare in that it refers to BRICS (including South Africa) as opposed to BRICs.

[25] The motivation for White's (n.d.) argument stems from a recognition of the fact that IBSA is by no means a first initiative in South-South cooperation and refers to the unfortunate fact that previous and, arguably current, attempts at South-South cooperation have resulted in amorphous alignments that has significantly detracted from efficacy, such as the G77 in the 1980s, the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic (ZPCSA) and the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR).

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CHAPTER THREE

OVERVIEW OF SOUTH AFRICA'S FOREIGN POLICY

An examination into the GSP of a particular state, and the extent to which it has been impacted upon, concerns the foreign policy of that state in its broadest sense. In particular, how a state leverages its foreign policy to develop, maintain and strengthen its strategic position in the international arena. This includes reference not only to the substantive elements of foreign policy but also importantly to the domestic context within which foreign policy is developed and functions. An analysis of GSP thus indirectly involves reference to the national interest of a state, the national objectives and priorities developed in pursuit of that national interest and which often function in a cross-cutting, mutually supportive manner across the different sectors, as well as to resource allocation, both financial and human. South Africa's membership of the respective strategic partnerships of IBSA and BRICS functions very clearly at the nexus of its domestic and foreign policy where the political, economic, social and cultural dimensions of its national policy (including its international policy) converge on the one hand, with multiple levels of engagements between: governments, business, non-governmental organizations and with civil society, on the other. Before turning to the two case studies of this research in order to test the central hypothesis of this study, it is appropriate to situate the analysis within the broader context of South Africa's foreign policy; a foreign policy that serves to maintain and where possible strengthen the GSP of the country.

This Chapter provides an overview of South Africa's foreign policy from the perspective of GSP, with particular reference to its domestic agenda. South Africa's foreign policy is contextualized within the broader national policy and is a reflection of

the state's identity(s) and thereby its national interest. Beginning with a definition of GSP, a three-stage analysis by which to measure the GSP of a state will be introduced, including the link between each stage of the analysis and the national interest. The next section will outline the theoretical and ideological underpinnings of foreign policy as this provides valuable insight into the multiple identities of the post-Apartheid state. The third section examines the inextricable link between the domestic and foreign dimensions of South Africa's national policy based upon a doctrine of national interest. This entails reference to both the material power relating to the "what" of national interest combined with the ideational power relating to the "how" and the spirit in which national interest is conceptualized and pursued. As a reflection of the national interest, South Africa's foreign policy is formulated within the context of the national priorities, strategic objectives and deliverable outcomes outlined by government during the electoral mandate 2009-2014 as well as with reference to state identity, including its values and principles. Following thereafter, the ideational power inherent in South Africa's foreign policy will be taken one step further with an examination of how this soft power is utilized by the DIRCO, through its "Diplomacy of Ubuntu", as a branding and marketing tool for South Africa's foreign policy and its diplomacy. The penultimate section of this Chapter is a factual presentation of the six pillars of South Africa's foreign policy and the particular objectives within each priority area drawn from primary source material.

3.1 Defining GSP

It is important at this stage to define what is meant by the GSP of a particular state. The academic literature on GSP in the study of International Relations is limited. This may be because the concept is self-evident and its definition, largely assumed. Miskimmon, O'Loughlin and Roselle (n.d., pp. 1-2) bring together theories of communication and studies of International Relations and examine the different gates, channels and platforms that states use to enhance their influence in the international system with reference the strategic narratives of political elites to shape the perceptions,

beliefs and behavior of domestic and international actors. Their analysis however seems to imply a limited definition of GSP, one that confines itself to measuring influence in the global arena, although they do not specifically address this issue. Stakelbeck Jnr (2005) used the concept with reference to China. He argued that GSP is a deliberate and well-coordinated policy action on the part of the Chinese Government used to accelerate the growth of its power and influence on the world stage. Thus GSP is a strategy to expand global influence and thereby power. Stakelbeck (2005) goes on to give an explicit definition of the concept of GSP as "the development and support of private and state—owned assets, governmental or military relationships, and business associations with foreign countries positioned at key global strategic points, either independently or in multi—country arrangements, for the purpose of accumulating information, influence, power and technological expertise". Thus GSP is seen as a means to achieving four distinct ends; information, influence, power and technological expertise. It requires a coordinated approach across the public and the private sectors of a state in collaboration *vis-à-vis* countries identified as occupying a strategic position at various points at the international level. Important in Stakelbeck's definition is the recognition that GSP can be achieved independently or in concert with other states, possibly although he does not specify, through an alignment similar to a strategic partnership at the minilateral level.

In part, this thesis accords with the definition proposed by Stakelbeck but differs in two important respects. Firstly, GSP is more effectively directed at achieving the national interest as encapsulated by Onuf's (1989, p. 277) three ultimate ends of state - "standing", "security" and "wealth" (cross reference the discussion in this regard in section 2.3.4) – as these permit a broader understanding of the ends of state than do Stakelbeck's limited four. Secondly, the term "strategic" in the concept of GSP signals strategic intent and as such is fundamentally a forward-looking calculation of interests for positioning in the future (cross reference the discussion in this regard in section 2.4.6). Thus, GSP is also about partnering with foreign countries *projected* to hold positions at key global points rather than limited to a focus on only those states that currently occupy such positions. For middle emerging powers such as South Africa,

whose strategy for change in the global system is directed at a qualitative shift in structure, substance and conduct of international politics over the long term, this nuance is pertinent to its alignment calculations.

Accordingly, GSP is measured by an assessment of three strengths instead of the two strengths proposed by Stakelbeck. The first strength, drawn from Miskimmon et al. (n.d.) and supported by Stakelbeck, is the degree to which a state can influence, shape perceptions, beliefs and behavior of international actors and thereby shape the international order, to pursue policy outcomes and enhance policy and political legitimacy. This strength aligns with the first of a state's ultimate ends, 'standing' and invokes what one well-placed South African diplomat calls the "prestige factor of foreign policy" (N. Barnard, personal communication, August 8, 2013). As this has been argued, a second strength by which to measure GSP should be recognized. That is the degree to which a state can carve a niche for itself on the international stage in order to realize its national priorities and objectives in the pursuit of both protecting and promoting its national interest. This measure aligns with the second of the state's ultimate ends, 'security'. The third and final strength by which to measure GSP, drawn from Stakelbeck (2005), is the degree to which a state can access the economic opportunities available for the positive gain of that state. This concerns the marketing of a state to position itself to gain from global capital investment flows, tourism, trade, and importantly, technology transfers. This third strength aligns with the third end of state, 'wealth'.

By linking the three strengths by which GSP is measured to the national interest, encapsulated within the three ultimate ends of state of standing, security and wealth, it is possible to show how the GSP of a country can be translated into specific outcomes for the domestic constituency. Therein lies the importance of GSP. Standing, security and wealth are a triad and as such they move together as a unit in correlation to one another. Thus a gain for one translates into a proportionate gain for the other two. This also works in reverse, where a loss in one translates into a loss for the other two in a proportionate manner. An increase in a state's global influence, its ability to shape

beliefs and perceptions at the global level is a positive gain for the standing of that state. A strengthened position in this area is an end in itself and also translates into gains for the other two ends of state, security and wealth. The results of which can be seen in a more intensive and positive media coverage initiative of that state at the international level, an increase in tourism figures which is a job-intensive growth sector, better trade links measured not only in terms of quantity but also importantly in terms of structure, increased investment and possibly even an increase in the number of prestige international events be they in the area of sport or conferences. These are a few examples but certainly not limited to these. Similarly, a strengthened ability of a state to carve a niche for its foreign policy in order to realize its national priorities and objectives at the global level is a positive gain for the security of the state understood in broad terms. A strengthened position in this area, besides being an end in itself, also translates into gains in the other areas of standing and wealth. A secure state, content within itself and one that enjoys a peaceful and constructive relationship with its immediate neighbors is a state that is able to direct its resources toward socio-economic concerns. This has a direct impact on the lives of the citizens of that state. Finally, a strengthened ability of a state in accessing economic opportunity at the global level has a positive impact on the wealth of that state. In a reinforcing manner such an impact also reflects positive gains for the other two ends of state being standing and security. Importantly, this would not only apply in the economic and financial sphere but also relate to the culture of that state, augmenting its brand image and attracting interest in its history, art, language and traditions.

There is no evidence that South Africa's foreign policy deliberately aims at GSP in the same way that Stakelbeck describes China's foreign policy. However, in order to pursue a reform-driven global agenda that seeks to move a marginalized African continent towards the center and address more equitably the systemic position of the Global South in the international order, some of the diplomatic vehicles in which South Africa participates by their nature and composition have served to strengthen the country's GSP. This is clear with South Africa's participation in the G20, the G8 Outreach 5 and as part of the enhanced engagements process under OECD auspices which have

strengthened the degree to which South Africa can bring to bear its influence at the international level.

3.2 Theoretical and ideological underpinnings of South Africa's foreign policy

Historically the territory of South Africa has always enjoyed a certain degree of strategic positioning, one that was recognized internationally but one that did not conform to the concept of GSP as we know it today and outlined above. Instead, this strategic position owed itself primarily to geographic location, being the long sea route around the Cape of Good Hope linking Europe to Asia. The territory, later known as the Cape, became an important stop-over as the half-way point to replenish water and food supplies on the shipping route to India used by the Dutch as early as 1652. In the early 19th Century the interrelated causes which drove Europeans toward a new wave of imperialism (known as neo-imperialism) such as growing economic competition as the industrial revolution spread, internal political stresses caused by industrialization, and rising international rivalries coincided with the discovery of diamonds and gold in the interior of the territory ("European imperial expansion in Africa", n.d.). The discovery of diamonds and gold enhanced the strategic position of the territory beyond its chance geographic position but still it fell short of today's conception of GSP. From one perspective it can be argued that Britain secured South Africa as a colony in recognition of the strategic economic position it now had for British business interests in the diamond and gold mining sectors, over and above its geographic position. Britain's recognition of the growing strategic position of South Africa during the two World Wars is evidenced by the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, Jan Smuts, being made part of the British Imperial war cabinet both in 1917 and again under Winston Churchill in 1939. The limited degree of influence that the Union of South Africa was able to bring to bear at the international level, through Jan Smuts, was consolidated in the various international roles he fulfilled. He was the only person to have signed the peace treaties ending the two World Wars, he played an important role at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, was a strong proponent of a League of Nations

and finally was one of the drafters of the Charter of the United Nations. It is not the argument here that the Union of South Africa, as a colony, had a GSP. Merely that the Union of South Africa enjoyed a certain degree of strategic positioning during this period, one that went beyond its relevance for the colonizer and was felt at the international level by other states.

As an independent Republic, South Africa was able to translate that degree of strategic positioning into a GSP in two of the areas by which GSP is measured: the ability to influence and shape beliefs as well as the ability to access economic opportunity. The strong commodities-base of the country strengthened its ability to access economic opportunity at the international level in some countries despite its Apartheid policies. Financially, South Africa provided the West with important commodities, such as gold and coal, and provided a market for Western products. Further, the unprecedented international influence South Africa had as a result of its abhorrent Apartheid policies, although pervasively negative, served to shape beliefs and international opinion against the country's racial policies which served to shine the light on racial policy and practices in other countries. During the Cold War in particular, South Africa was of strategic importance to the allied West in their fight against communism, and South African propaganda focused on this Western fear ("South Africa's foreign relations during Apartheid", n.d.). In addition, the country retained its strategic importance as a route to the East.

The abolition of Apartheid and the ushering in of a democratic dispensation for the first time in its history signaled a significant strengthening of South Africa's GSP in all three of the areas by which GSP is measured with the addition of a moral component. The country's unique historical experience in managing a peaceful transition to democracy in the years following the first democratic election in 1994, led by former President Nelson Mandela, gave South Africa a pre-eminent moral position in the international community that is well documented. Van der Westhuizen (2003, p. 11) traced the marketing brand power of what she calls "Mandelamania" noting that under Mandela "the 'new' South Africa enjoyed a degree of symbolic power that was unprecedented"

where very few states could "aspire to the kind of international projection and symbolic power South Africa possessed". As a discussion document of the ruling ANC party eloquently put it "we should not over-estimate ourselves as a small middle-income country. Neither should we ignore the relative influence we enjoy coming from our widely respected transition to democracy" (ANC, 1997). The importance of soft power coupled with a realistic assessment of the limits of its foreign policy in acting alone was recognized early on in the new democratic dispensation. South Africa enjoyed and used its privileged position among the nations of the world in shaping perceptions, beliefs and behavior on issues such as diverse as human rights, disarmament and a fairer, more transparent, development-focused international trading regime under WTO auspices.

Charting a new foreign policy was seen as a key element in the creation of a peaceful and prosperous new South Africa and was one aimed at taking the country into the new world order as a responsible global citizen. The central tenets of South Africa's post-Apartheid foreign policy are drawn from the Freedom Charter of 1955 as well as the Constitution, particularly the ideational components pertaining to values and principles. Barber (2005, p. 1095) notes that the ANC government has been more open than most other governments in setting out its principles and, more often than not, in trying to implement them. The unique history of the ruling ANC party in its anti-Apartheid struggle means that foreign policy in South Africa has a strong ideological foundation and is conducted in the spirit of a progressive internationalism. The ruling ANC (2012, p. 6), views progressive internationalism as "including a commitment to multilateralism, peaceful resolution of conflict, human rights, social justice, and the reform of the global political and economic order," and is the prism through which South Africa's role in international affairs is conducted. The Minister of International Relations described progressive internationalism as "the rejection of colonialism and other forms of oppression, the quest for the unity and economic, political and social renewal of Africa, the promotion and defense of the plight of the suffering masses and poor of the world as well as opposition to the structural inequality and abuse of power in the global system" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2010a). According to Nelson Mandela (1993, p. 88) human rights was to be the "guide that lights our foreign policy" and it

extended beyond political rights to include economic, social and environmental rights. In addition, foreign policy would be based on the principles of justice, respect for international law, negotiation towards peace rather than conflict, respect for diversity while cooperation among states should be based upon equity, mutual benefit and peaceful cooperation (Mandela, 1993, pp. 87-91).

From the outset the concerns and interests of Africa, particularly Southern Africa, was to be taken into account in foreign policy choices. Mandela (1993, p. 89) noted that "South Africa cannot escape its African destiny" and therefore Southern Africa was given special priority in the development of South Africa's foreign policy. These included a commitment to greater African unity, regional integration, including the development of regional structures for crisis prevention and management, an increase in intra-African trade as well as intra-African cooperation in regional construction, infrastructure and resource development projects. The concerns and interests of the African continent is a priority area that still continues today although more openly addressed in far less altruistic terms but in terms of the national interest. Minister Nkoana-Mashabane (2013) encapsulates it as follows, "South Africa's foreign policy contends that our national interests are better safeguarded by not just focusing on our own national interests, but broadly on the interests of our region and our continent" in a reformed global system. Mandela (1993, pp. 95-96) also outlined the primary components of South Africa's foreign economic policy, that they were to feed into the country's development strategy, which meant a focus on trade performance. This included the full integration of South Africa into the global trading regime, reciprocity in trading relations as well as the country's capacity to attract foreign investment. Strengthening of South-South ties "to help protect us against economic marginalization" (Mandela, 1993, P. 97) was also mentioned but only briefly.

Former President Thabo Mbeki is credited with "establishing and consolidating the organs of the post-Apartheid state" (Sidiropoulos, 2008, p. 108), including the development of a more substantive foreign policy agenda to underline South Africa's symbolic leadership in the world, one that necessarily had a global outlook. Nathan (as

cited by Barber, 2005, pp. 1087-1089) also credits Mbeki with amplifying a particular ideological approach during his Administration of which the core elements were democratic, Africanist and anti-imperialist. Despite the progressive erosion of South Africa's moral leadership in the post-Mandela period, the country's foreign policy has arguably been able to maintain its GSP. This is evident in its ability to shape perceptions and debates in the areas of peace and security particularly in Africa; on the development agenda; in the areas of nuclear non-proliferation; international trade; food security; and upon women, children and people living with disability. In addition, the fact that South Africa has been able to maintain its GSP also evidences it's ability to access economic gain with the increasing trajectory in its trade relations with other, particularly other Southern, states notably in Africa as well as in the growing foreign investment footprint in the country.

Scholars highlight two critiques in post-Apartheid South Africa's foreign policy, both of which have dogged foreign policy from the outset: first, the perceived gap between principle and practice and second, the perceived inconsistencies in the content of foreign policy. Dudley (2013) argues that these inconsistencies stem from the fact that South Africa champions the contradictory principles of national sovereignty and non-interference on the one hand and democracy and human rights on the other. Serrão and Bischoff (2009, p. 364) account for the ambiguity frequently highlighted in South Africa's post-Apartheid foreign policy by reference to a complex mix of multiple identities. These critiques are a marked trend and highlighted throughout this Chapter. The following section concerning the role of the domestic agenda, particularly the discussion on the national interest, is crafted in a way that addresses these particular critiques.

3.3 The role of the domestic agenda

The Director-General of the DIRCO, Jerry Matjila, pertinently states that as the primary department of government responsible for the implementation of South

Africa's foreign policy "DIRCO is mindful of the fact that its activities are inextricably linked to South Africa's domestic priorities, it cannot operate in a void" (Matjila, 2012). The domestic agenda, which is a reflection of the national interest, plays a central role in South African foreign policy (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2011, p.10). In some quarters it is perhaps self-evident that foreign policy must be linked to domestic policy for it to have any meaningful connection with either the national interest (*raison d'etre)* of the state or its domestic constituency. However its clear formulation and promotion in South Africa, as well as its link to the process of identifying, developing and articulating a cohesive national interest, is one of the challenges that successive post-Apartheid governments have publicly prioritized with varying degrees of success.

South African post-Apartheid foreign policy has been beleaguered by critique that it is not well understood by civil society and the public at large and that it could be better coordinated with other government departments to militate against what Naidoo (2012) calls a "schizophrenic" foreign policy. Bridgman (2002, p. 69) argues that South Africa's foreign policy is the area least open to public input and is set apart from national politics because there is no natural constituency for foreign policy. She argues that the link between decisions of foreign policy and voting patterns are often indirect (Bridgman, 2002, p. 74). At the same time the lack of substantive, well-informed and timely critical analysis from civil society on foreign policy upstream of its development is an ongoing challenge. Ironically, it is Landsberg (2010, p. 273), himself an eminent scholar on South African foreign policy, who identifies the same challenge within civil society by noting "that the non-state actor sector (in South Africa) has become very reactive and poorly organized and is thus not in a good position to influence foreign policy or the direction of the Republic's international relations." The severity of this challenge was exposed upon South Africa's accession to BRICS.

Within the first four months of South Africa's accession to BRICS (up until and including the Third BRICS Summit held in April 2011) a comprehensive examination of the commentary and analysis emanating from South African civil society through the

media reveals it to be pervasively negative. During this period, public debate confined itself to arguments both for and against the evolution of the BRIC into BRICS with South Africa's entry. The Jim O'Neill/Goldman Sachs coining of the "BRIC" as a financial concept featured prominently in the arguments of those who viewed the entry of South Africa negatively. The preoccupation with *post-facto* debates about the credibility of the country's membership of BRICS, at a crucial time when the government of South Africa required better support through the development of ideas on how best to utilize BRICS to further South Africa's foreign policy objectives, emphasized the extent of this challenge. It could be indicative of a deeper challenge: the lack of substantive engagement on the part of civil society with government on its alignment decisions and more broadly a lack of an effective public-private dialogue in line with a "team South Africa" approach to deliberations about how to better position the country strategically on the global stage.

As a consequence of the evident gap between foreign policy activity and public awareness, the DIRCO implemented a coordinated public diplomacy campaign aimed at promoting South Africa's membership of BRICS, highlighting the potential benefits and proactively responding to the critique in the media. The public diplomacy campaign was part of the build-up to South Africa's participation in its first BRICS Summit and was continued thereafter. Participation by other government departments, notably those involved in the various BRICS mechanisms such as Trade, Health, Economy and Agriculture contributed to what became a government-wide effort at shaping the domestic debate on BRICS and it has proved to be an ongoing activity. A review of the media articles and opinion pieces published after the Third BRICS Summit reveals the success of government's proactive public diplomacy campaign. The trend is markedly altered toward a more constructive, yet equally lively, discussion on how South Africa should position itself to leverage the opportunities available in BRICS in order to realize its foreign policy as well as to deliver upon South Africa's domestic agenda.

At the same time a concerted effort was being made by the Jacob Zuma administration to remedy perceived gaps in the Government's machinery: the absence of a national

planning capacity in government, the need to define the national interest more explicitly, and the imperative of bringing foreign policy closer to the South African populace by opening it up for public scrutiny and encouraging transparency. Two new ministries in the Presidency were created to address the first identified gap. These were the National Planning Commission and the Ministry for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation as well as Administration. The development of a White Paper concerning foreign policy that was clearly based on an articulated doctrine of national interest, and which highlighted the link to domestic policy, was a culmination of a process that aimed at remedying the second identified gap. As Landsberg (2010, p. 289) points out, there is nothing new in President Zuma's stating that he would pursue a national interest-driven foreign policy, one that steers clear of realist, power-based conceptions of national interest and understood in terms of a progressive internationalism driven by a new set of national interest imperative. However, Zuma's statement did have the advantage of good timing unlike that of his predecessors. It was, in 2009, a highly relevant declaration given the important role South Africa was to play as chair of the IBSA Dialogue Forum in 2011 and, especially, its accession to the BRICS Forum in 2010 and its subsequent chair of that Forum early in 2013. Finally, a public awareness campaign, under the DIRCO auspices, was conducted with a series of road shows undertaken by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation to civil society, academia and the public in general across the provinces of South Africa in order to bring foreign policy closer to the public to stimulate better-informed discussion and debate.

3.3.1 Foreign policy as a reflection of the national interest

The declaration by President Zuma (2009) to link foreign policy to a doctrine of national interest required the following of DIRCO: firstly, to articulate a cohesive national interest paradigm from a departmental perspective and expose the inter-relationship between values and the national interest;[26] secondly, to clarify the explicit links between the domestic and foreign policy arenas and thirdly, to reveal the

essential interplay between the framework within which policy is developed (ideology, historical experience, values and principles) on the one hand and the shifting national and international context (including constraints) on the other. Consequently, the public lecture delivered by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation at the University of Limpopo (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009) deliberately frames South Africa's foreign policy in terms of the national interest, as understood by DIRCO, from the outset:

> "National interests are by their nature multi-faceted. In the main, national interests refer to a country's goals and ambitions; they are about the state's survival and security, extending to its pursuit of wealth, economic growth and power. By their very nature, national interests find resonance in, and are informed, by our domestic agenda … Unlike realists, we do not believe that the international system in characterized by anarchy and that states have to hide behind the cover of their sovereignty and focus narrowly on the pursuit of their national interests. We believe that states can work together around a common global agenda and shared values for a better world"

The Minister's articulation of the DIRCO's perspective on national interest reveals a mixed-focus theoretical approach. It takes as its starting point realist preoccupations of state survival, security, economic well-being and power but importantly articulates a closer alignment to progressive internationalism with notions of a "common global agenda" and "shared values". Similarly, in another public lecture at the Tshwane University of Technology in Mpumalanga the Minister stated that "Our (South Africa's) approach to the practice of international relations … takes into account these various dimensions of foreign policy – that is: national interest, power, shared values, and common and collective interests" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2010). Apart from hinting at the theoretical foundations of South Africa's foreign policy, the Minister emphasizes the necessary distinction between objectives (state survival) and means (of which power is one). In the words of one South African Ambassador, "South Africa seeks to strengthen the state as an objective in line with its national interest but seeks not power to achieve this" (G. Maitland, personal communication, August 10, 2013).

This theme is carried through into the White Paper on Foreign Policy. In his presentation to the Heads of Mission in July 2011, the Director-General emphasized the inter-relationship of values and the national interest as being a key component of the White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy (Matjila, 2011). According to the

Minister of International Relations (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2010) South Africa's national interest "reflects our long-term goals and values, and what we consider to be our ongoing purpose as a nation". Values and the national interest can no more be separated than can the domestic policy agenda from the national interest. Both the values of the state and its domestic agenda are formulated in light of the national interest, in pursuit of the national interest and also simultaneously constitute the national interest. Within this context, the White Paper (2011, p. 10) expresses the national interest in terms of its enduring values, "national interest can thus be articulated as people-centered, including promoting the well-being, development and upliftment of its people; protecting the planet for future generations; and ensuring the prosperity of the country, its region and continent". The White Paper goes further to link the national interest with the values that constitute South Africa's state identity, "in pursuing our national interests, our decisions are informed by a desire for a just, humane and equitable world order of greater security, peace, dialogue and economic justice". Accordingly, there are two equally important elements to conceptions of the national interest in South Africa: first, the elements that constitute the national interest, which includes national priorities, its strategic objectives and its deliverable outcomes. These elements both comprise the national interest and are also indicative of it. Second, the context of state identity, informed by ideology, historical experience, values and principles and which similarly both constitutes the national interest and is indicative of it. This second element of the national interest also proves to be a useful tool for branding South Africa internationally and marketing that brand through different channels, in this case through foreign policy (cross reference section 3.3.2 for a detailed discussion in this regard). From the perspective of both the Minister and her department, the conception of the national interest in South Africa does not refer only to the "what" of national interest, its various elements that take the form of stated national priorities, strategic objectives and deliverable outcomes, but equally important is the "how" of national interest - the values and principles that ensure a people-centered, developmental approach both nationally and in international engagements.

For Qobo (2011) the White Paper on Foreign Policy is unwieldy and too broad. He argues that the DIRCO offers a "convoluted definition of the national interest," that

includes “almost everything under the sun” and makes “no meaningful connection between society and the rarefied foreign policy elite.” What Qobo does not allow for is the validity of a mixed theoretical approach underlying South Africa’s foreign policy. This approach is essential in a subtle foreign policy that aims at a qualitative change in the international system and therefore must at once capture the ideational components of that policy alongside the material components. It is imperative to appreciate the ideational power being encouraged in conceptions of the national interest, which is evident in foreign policy, in addition to the material power. Thus to have a firm grasp of the White Paper and the way in which it articulates South Africa’s foreign policy, the DIRCO’s perspective of the national interest and how foreign policy serves to advance that national interest, it is essential to a) articulate the component parts of what is a complex concept constituting a multifaceted national interest in light of and b) be cognizant of South Africa’s evolving state identity, including its values and principles.

The material (what) component

Beginning with the material component of national interest that comprises the “what” of national interest Chris Landsberg (2010) remains skeptical that the Jacob Zuma administration has been successful in its intention to articulate a doctrine of the national interest and to link it to foreign policy. He argues “a failure to make operational a national interest paradigm is a weakness long characterizing South African foreign policy” (Landsberg, 2010, p. 276) and that the challenge still remains “to define the national interest and articulate a coherent foreign policy” (p. 273). Landsberg proceeds to give a comprehensive picture of those elements of national and foreign policy that are indicative of a strong understanding, at least among the ruling political elite and in government, of what comprises the national interest from the Mandela Administration beginning in 1994 through to the Zuma Administration, but that it is nowhere explicitly defined nor articulated still seems to be problematic. For Landsberg (2010, p. 277) although South Africa’s international interaction must necessarily reflect national imperatives such as job creation and poverty alleviation, “a set of national aims or national strategic goals … is no substitute for a fully articulated and operationalized

national interest doctrine". The *National Development Plan 2030* (National Planning Commission, 2012, p. 236) similarly laments the lack of a comprehensive and clear national interest doctrine to guide South Africa's foreign policy. It recommends that part of the need to define national priorities to 2030, the DIRCO must articulate South Africa's national interest and its obligations to the global community as well as build a common understanding of these interests between government, the private sector and broader civil society (amongst others).

The heart of the debate about national interest in South Africa perhaps lies in the different conceptions of what the national interest is rather than in a disagreement over its content. Put simply, the content of the national interest is there indicated in every national priority, strategic objective and deliverable outcome but it is the way in which it is packaged and articulated that is debatably the point of contention. The question of the national interest, if indeed there is such a concept other than it being a political tool for political purposes, remains a challenge with which scholarship continues to wrestle. Nye (1999) points to it being a "slippery concept, used to describe as well as prescribe foreign policy". In government circles the concept presents less of a problem and does not perhaps invoke the same furrowed brows as it does in academic circles. Rigorous categorizations of what constitutes the national interest and the various typologies of the national interest, such as that demanded by Robinson (1969), is arguably not required for foreign policy to be coherent and are even less of a requirement for the successful formulation and implementation of foreign policy. What is required is an excellent understanding of the domestic policy agenda. This includes the national priorities, objectives and deliverable outcomes of the state, its values and its principles borne from its historical experience as well as the contextual framework: the global, continental and immediate regional environment.

Robinson's (1969) typology of the national interest, outlining six different types of national interest - primary, secondary, permanent, variable, general and specific interests and into which specific objectives are boxed - may well answer the "what" of national interest but it is more an exercise in explicit categorization, as a helpful tool for

comparative analysis, rather than as a strict requirement for policy formulation and implementation as demanded by Landsberg (2010). In addition, Robinson's typology is in keeping with the realist tradition and pertinently does not account for the role of values and principles that both constitute and are indicative of the national interest. Such a rigorous typology demanded of the national interest is perhaps a theoretical luxury but for practical, government purpose it needlessly raises expectations that government cannot fulfill in any manner that would be meaningful. Its utility as a tool of analysis cannot be disputed and it would of course be easier if governments would assist analysts by classifying that which constitutes its national interest into a neat list categorized into six fields. But the national interest, so construed, adds little substantive value to our understanding, much less our ability to predict, state behavior in the international arena primarily because it excludes two key factors; political prerogative and timing. Unlike Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, where the prioritization of needs is implicit in its hierarchical structure, political prerogative dictates how interests are prioritized by a state, when (timing) and for what reason (often by invoking other interests). Thus scrupulous definitions and categories that purport to lay out the priority of various interests by labeling them respectively as primary, secondary, permanent, variable, general and specific along the lines outlined by Robinson and proposed by Landsberg, do not in themselves indicate how government prioritizes various, sometimes competing, interests, given the understanding that not all of the interests can be realized at the same time.

It is not uncommon for a state to choose to waiver an interest, even a primary interest, on an issue under discussion in order to ensure gain on another interest that may not be as central to the survival of the nation state, but where the political prerogative prioritizes it in light of the prevailing environmental context. For instance, South Africa's decision to enter into the European Partnership Agreements (EPAs) in 2007 is an example of choosing to prioritize the general interest of strengthening regional integration in SACU and SADC over the primary interest of wealth creation, including economic growth and job creation domestically. South Africa was under no legal obligation to enter into the EPA negotiations as it already had the Trade, Development

and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA)[27] that governs trade relations with the EU (Department of Trade and Industry, 2008). Under the TDCA, the EU as a collective is South Africa's single most important trade and investment partner accounting for more than 26% of South Africa's total trade with the rest of the world and contributing directly to South Africa's primary interest of wealth creation. South Africa chose to join the SADC EPA negotiation process because of the detrimental impact the EPA implementation would have on regional trade integration processes. This was viewed against the background of SADC member states being a party to five separate negotiating configurations with the EU, each of which had different tariff-dismantling obligations, with different product coverage and different schedules for tariff reductions. The ability to influence how a state prioritizes its interests on a particular issue is critical leverage in diplomatic negotiations. In an interview with the Southern African Documentation and Cooperation Centre (SADOCC) in Vienna, South Africa's Trade Minister hinted at this when he pointed to undue pressure exerted by the EU on some of the weaker states in the SADC EPA negotiations saying that "very significant interests were at stake for the other countries in case they didn't sign (veiled reference to Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique who had initialed the interim agreement)…So, some have done so, but I don't think anybody thought that the agreement was good. It was just that some were more vulnerable than others. I think that's the reality" (Davies, 2009).

For all intents and purposes in a one-party state, it may theoretically be easier to meet Landsberg's demand to categorize the various interests that constitute the national interest of South Africa into primary, permanent and secondary interests. These are unlikely to change from election to election and by so doing distinguish these from variable, general and specific interests that may change depending upon the particular administration in power to reflect changes in style and degrees of emphasis. These interests also become clearer when discernable trends emerge over a period of time. Retrospective analysis reveals the environmental context that was prevalent when the political prerogative to prioritize one interest over another was used by the ruling political elite. In other words, political prerogative and timing in a country can be

predicted with varying degrees of success but is only ever fully understood when analyzed retrospectively.

For the formulation and implementation of policy in South Africa, as well as the government's service delivery requirements to its national constituency, it is sufficient for policy makers and those who implement that policy to understand national interest in its broadest sense as proposed by Nicholas Onuf (1989). This comprises standing, security and wealth into which the numerous other diverse ends of state can ultimately be categorized (cross reference section 2.3.4). The national priorities, strategic objectives and deliverable outcomes relate to the three ultimate ends of state, either directly or indirectly, immediately and in the long term. The priorities, objectives and outcomes are formulated with the central aims of government in mind: namely "eradicating poverty, developing its people and increasing prosperity not only in South Africa but also in the region and continent" (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2011, p. 12). Jacob Zuma (2012) further clarified this as South Africa's "triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality".

The 2009 national election manifesto of the ruling ANC party identified five national priorities for South Africa: the creation of decent work and sustainable livelihoods, education, health, the fight against crime as well as rural development (ANC, 2009, p. 6). These priorities are indicative of and constitute the national interest as they contribute to the realization of all three of Onuf's ultimate ends of statecraft. From these broad priority areas the Zuma Administration introduced the MSTF for the electoral mandate 2009-2014, a planning blueprint aimed to ensure that Government work in a coherent way in order to achieve the strategic agenda of government. The MSTF is a base document to guide government planning and the resource allocation process through the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). Reviewed annually in a mid-year Cabinet Lekgotla in light of new developments and experience in implementation, the MSTF was formulated to account for environmental context, particularly the effects of the global economic crises, which impacts upon the domestic vision for South Africa. From the MTSF, ten strategic priorities were identified which

find expression in twelve strategic deliverable outcomes for which each government cluster is responsible, bearing in mind that some clusters are responsible for the implementation of more than one outcome given the cross-cutting nature of some of the clusters. The twelve strategic outcomes of government are as follows (http://www.thepresidency.gov.za):

Outcome 1: Improved quality of basic education.
Outcome 2: A long and healthy life for all South Africans.
Outcome 3: All people in South Africa are and feel safe.
Outcome 4: Decent employment through inclusive economic growth.
Outcome 5: A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path.
Outcome 6: An efficient, competitive and responsive economic infrastructure network.
Outcome 7: Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities with food security for all.
Outcome 8: Sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life.
Outcome 9: A responsive, accountable, effective and efficient local government system.
Outcome 10: Environmental assets and natural resources which are well protected and continually enhanced.
Outcome 11: Create a better South Africa and contribute to a better and safer Africa and World.
Outcome 12: An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

The DIRCO falls within the International Cooperation, Trade and Security (ICTS) Cluster, and as such is responsible, in conjunction with the departments of trade and industry, defense, finance, state security, tourism, water and environmental affairs, to implement "Outcome 11 – *creating a better South Africa and contributing to a better and safer African in a better world*". Accordingly, the Director-General of the DIRCO opens the Strategic Plan of the department by explicit reference to the fact that the "strategic plan is informed by the five priority areas of government (that were identified in the ANC's election manifesto for 2009), the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and the twelve strategic outcomes, to which all government departments in South Africa subscribe and act upon" (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2012). Together the six key priority areas of South Africa's foreign policy work towards achieving Outcome 11 and thereby contribute directly to the government's delivery plan and the performance agreement entered into with the

President by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation. These performance agreements are designed to ensure that Ministers, with their departments, are accountable to the President, and open for public scrutiny, for achieving the deliverable outcome(s) under their portfolio.

The clearer articulation of government's policy formulation process under Jacob Zuma, from the MTSF process through to departmental priorities as well as the drawing of a direct link from the activities undertaken by DIRCO in pursuit of those priorities to domestic policy, is an achievement to be noted. It enhances government transparency and plays a crucial role in the monitoring and evaluation of government service delivery obligations to the public, in this case the DIRCO's service deliverables against which departmental performance is measured. Tom Wheeler (2011) recognizes that "this openness is very different to the way government operated during the presidency of Thabo Mbeki, where policy-making was concentrated in his Presidency" and remained a mysterious process to those outside (and often inside) government circles. Notwithstanding government's efforts towards transparency, it has yet to be determined whether an insistence on measurable (quantitative) results in the arena of foreign policy, accompanied by increasingly rigorous reporting requirements from civil servants for audit purposes and public scrutiny, has any significant impact on either the effectiveness of South Africa's foreign policy in achieving its priorities in the international arena or enhances the ability of the DIRCO to perform its core functions in service to the country. Nor does it address the argument made by Lesley Masters (2012, p. 37) that a multidimensional foreign policy should reflect a multi-stakeholder foreign policy decision-making process in recognition that "foreign policy … not only need(s) to be *for* the people…it will also have to be *by* the people".

The Ideational (how) component

With respect to the ideational elements of the national interest, and by extension the ideational elements evidenced in South Africa's foreign policy, it is imperative to

examine more closely South Africa's state identity (or in this case its multiple state identities). This includes an examination of the enduring values and principles inherent in South Africa's various state identities, with a particular focus on how they operate within a foreign policy that is a reflection of the national interest. It is important to recognize from the start that these identities in themselves also impose constraints upon the national interest and, by extension, upon foreign policy.

The roadshows undertaken by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation to the provinces of Limpopo and the Eastern Cape in 2009, followed by the Free State and Mpumalanga provinces in 2010, were used as platforms to raise public awareness about South Africa's foreign policy preoccupations and its implementation, to explain DIRCO's mandate and role therein as well as to "ensure that ordinary South Africans can link our country's domestic priorities to our Department's international engagement" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2010a). The explicit reference to the ideological underpinnings of foreign policy, including reference to its values and principles are a deliberate trend in the Minister's speeches during these roadshows pointing unambiguously to an identity-based explanation of foreign policy and recalls the ideological foundations of South Africa's foreign policy drawn from the Freedom Charter (cross-reference section 3.2). Together these ideological underpinnings as well as the values and principles espoused are indicative of the national interest and how it is pursued.

> "At every stage of the evolution of our country's foreign policy, we have always maintained that such foreign policy should be a mirror image of our domestic policy and therefore our national interests … As a liberation movement, the ANC has always considered itself part of the global contingent of progressive forces working for a better world in the spirit of the declaration in the Freedom Charter that: "There shall be peace and friendship!" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009a)

> "Our foreign policy should speak to the lives of ordinary women and men because our global engagements are informed by our values and domestic priorities as a country and people … We have to bear in mind that the ruling party, the ANC, is a former liberation movement that is grounded in a particular history, organizational culture, strategies and tactics, and an ideological outlook – all of which evolved over a period of almost a century." (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2009b)

> "South Africa's foreign policy is an integral part, or rather, an extension of our country's domestic policy and interests … By its very nature, our foreign policy reflects the rich tapestry of our international heritage. It also mirrors the long relationships that we have with the international community … The strategic perspective of our Foreign Policy is located in our history as a nation." (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2010b)

> "Our struggle for a better life at home is indeed intertwined with our struggle for a better Africa and a better world … It will be hard to have a full grasp of our foreign policy approach and behavior without an understanding of the ruling African National Congress's ideological perspective." (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2010a)

Merle Lipton (2009, p. 332) argues that assessing the mixture of interests, ideals and psychological factors that shape foreign policy in post-Apartheid South Africa requires examination if foreign policy, its decisions and its drivers are to be comprehensively understood. Further, in a seminar hosted by the Institute of Security Studies, Friedman (2011) argues that South Africa's foreign policy is perhaps more accurately studied in relation to identity, such as the notion of middle power identity (or more accurately, emerging middle power identity) rather than through traditional theories of International Relations. Adam Habib (2009, p. 144) agrees that, at least for second-generation analysis of South African foreign policy, it is less ideologically driven, where a middle/pivotal power status or, more accurately for Habib, regional power status, is a more useful analytic framework.

Identity-based understandings of South African foreign policy are particularly useful and operate on two levels: first at the domestic level, including historical experience and second, at the international level. At the domestic level, South Africa wrestles with a complex mix of multiple identities that, for Serrão and Bischoff (2009, p. 364), account for the ambiguity frequently highlighted in South Africa's post-Apartheid foreign policy better than do rationalist explanations. Even in the early post-Apartheid years, Jakki Cilliers (1999, p. 4) argued that South Africa's confusion in foreign policy springs, in part, from large internal disparities within the country that is the legacy of Apartheid. To unpack this complex mix of identities at play at the domestic level, it is important to view South Africa as a state in transition and the ruling party as a coalition, albeit a very powerful one. The ANC is more accurately an amalgamation of different ideological perspectives that came together under a single-goal alliance during Apartheid, namely the liberation of South Africa as opposed to a homogeneous grouping with a common perspective on and approach to national and international issues. This has become clearer in the latter post-Apartheid period as divisions within the ANC become more pronounced. Habib (2009, p. 145) argues that in general neo-realist perspectives cannot

account for foreign policy behavior in transitional societies because it ignores the impact of changing domestic values and the entrance of new political actors. Habib goes on to propose an examination of domestic preferences and how these are formulated through an analysis of interest groups, political parties, the legislature and the executive and which could also include business. It is not within the scope of this research study to examine the intricacies of the domestic identities at play in South Africa, although this is a pertinent exercise in itself. It is sufficient only to recognize these competing, and sometimes contradictory, identities exist and are also discernable in South Africa's state identity at the international level. The main focus of this section is the South African state's international identity(s).

Serrão and Bischoff (2009, p. 366) identify two tensions concerning the identity of the South African state in the international arena. The first tension is that the North shares a liberal democratic identity with South Africa but lacks identification with its African/Southern identity; while the South shares a radical democratic identity with South Africa but lacks a broad identification with its liberal democratic status. The result, they argue, is that South Africa has to balance these frequently mutually conflicting principles, which necessitates an ambiguity in the practice, not the theory, of its foreign policy. This is one of the areas where the contradictions in South Africa's foreign policy is apparent: where the DIRCO's key priority area to strengthen relations with formations in the North, for instance, is viewed as somewhat incompatible with the simultaneous strengthening of South-South cooperation and solidarity. Far from being contradictory, or pursuing one priority at the expense of the other in a zero sum assessment of what are complementary priorities, these two key priority areas embody the multiple identities of the South African state and show how they can be effectively harnessed to enhance South Africa's GSP as an emerging middle power.

The second contradiction, according to Serrão and Bischoff (2009, p. 366), lies within the general framework of foreign policy. They argue that because of its geo-economic and geopolitical setting South Africa pursues a radical foreign policy rather than a conservative status quo policy or one that maintains a freely liberal foreign policy. Thus

South Africa sees itself as a democratic developmental state, which is pluralist and solidarist rather than realist in orientation. But in agreeing to realist tenets such as upholding sovereignty and having strong liberal tenants as part of its liberal, democratic identity, conservative forces interested in the maintenance of the status quo are able to challenge South Africa's more democratic, solidarist or people-centered outlook. It is evident that these tensions are inherently embedded in South Africa's foreign policy and provide analysts who view foreign policy narrowly with material for severe critique. Acknowledging this tension, Notshulwana (2012) recognizes that South Africa's entry into the BRICS Forum "recasts the spotlight onto the nature and character of the country's national and strategic interests, a focus that originates from the complex nature of the relationship between BRICS countries and their strategic role in the global economy". Thus the initial polarized opinion among the South African public, and possibly even within government itself, on the accession of South Africa to BRICS could in some respect be attributed to a fear that the accession to BRICS marks a definite shift to a particular state identity at the expense of another: perceiving a preference for the South at the expense of its relations with the developed North in a 'winner-takes-all' depiction of foreign engagement. In a stinging rebuke of South Africa's accession to BRICS, Soko and Qobo (2011) argued that there was a crisis of identity in South African foreign policy and they called on South Africa to "ponder its foreign policy identity and strategic posture in a changing and complex global environment". But in practice the six key priority areas of the DIRCO, importantly coupled with the guiding values and principles of the state, are structured broadly so as to allow maximum expression for the inherent diversity of identities and interests contained therein. It is in the implementation of the six key priority areas, which operate on parallel tracks and in a mutually reinforcing manner, where the sophistication of South African diplomacy is most evident. It is here that the subtle balancing act of implementing the key priority areas simultaneously allows South Africa to use its multiple identities as leverage: maintaining a strategic global position that straddles the developed and developing world and carving out a niche for its particular brand of diplomacy on the global stage over the long term.

South Africa is confident in its identity as an African state inextricably linked to the African continent, a developmental state and part of the South/Southern axis. There is a high degree of recognition of Self in this external Other along the Wendt's identification continuum. Its foreign policy is reflective of and encourages this new, post-Apartheid conception of South African identity where, as Serrão and Bischoff (2009, p. 369) point out, the Other could also be viewed not as an external actor but rather its own Apartheid past. From their perspective the Apartheid "Other" looms large in South Africa's post-Apartheid identity, and indeed is necessary in the construction of a post-Apartheid state identity distinguishable in every way from the identities of the Apartheid state. The Apartheid "Other" enables foreign policy to define itself through the negation of its former self (negative identification) while at the same time reinforcing its new identity through recognizing and affirming the commonalities that exist in different "Others" that are external actors and where similar differences are assimilated in the construction of the self. In addition, through repetitive practice, this state identity is consolidated, where the characteristics serve to reinforce the state's new identity and the state's identity influences and shapes the characteristics of that identity in a reciprocal manner on an ongoing basis. Part of this new identity is its democratic status and commitment to the ideals of democracy, including human rights, as a way in which to separate itself distinctly from its "Other" Apartheid past. Importantly, its commitment to human rights is informed by the domestic context and the furtherance of domestic objectives rather than a blanket expression of universal support for human rights *per se* (Friedman, 2011).

It is also confident in its emerging middle power identity. According to Andrew Cooper (1997a, p. 4; 1997b, p. 7), traditional middle powers have a foreign policy based on an attachment to multilateral institutions and a collaborative world order and engage in objectively distinctive forms of activity to pursue multilateral solutions to vexing international issues. Cooper, Higgott and Nossal (1993, p. 19) go on to argue that middle powers also tend to embrace compromise positions in international disputes. Critical elements of middle powers are that they typically stand at a distance from major conflicts, have a sufficient degree of autonomy in relations with major powers, are

committed to orderliness and security in interstate relations and are able to facilitate orderly change in the world system. Nel, Taylor and van der Westhuizen further refine the concept of middle powers and develop a concept of emerging middle powers. They argue that emerging middle powers are differentiated from traditional middle powers by the inherent implications of their geographic location in the world, as part of the developing South (Nel, Taylor & van der Westhuizen, 2000, p. 47). For instance, an ambiguous relationship between the emerging middle power in the South and the United States as the main beneficiary and custodian of the current hegemonic world order is a distinct characteristic of an emerging middle power. Accordingly, the emerging middle power sometimes finds it necessary to oppose the hegemon and finds that it may have relatively little room for manoeuver than traditional middle powers. Further, the interests of middle powers of the South often conflict with those of the prevailing order because of the specific structural position the middle power occupies in the global division of labor or with the specific values embedded in the state-society complex of that country (Nel, Taylor & van der Westhuizen, 2000, p. 47). For this reason, Nel, Taylor and van der Westhuizen argue that middle powers of the South are reformist (and not transformative) actors, also with respect to the procedures and rules of multilateral institutions themselves (p. 46). Normally they do not question the fundamental set of norms and values embodied in these institutions or regimes but try only to achieve a better deal for themselves (and, on occasion, for the South as a whole) within these values and norms, unlike traditional middle powers. Schoeman (2000) argues that this is because emerging middle powers are also fundamentally regional powers with a stake in the current international system. As such, they are expected to play a role as regional peacekeepers, should support and promote acceptable rules and norms in terms of the way in which international politics and relations are conducted as well as have an important moral role as they are called upon to influence specific cases where large power influence is insufficient (Schoeman, 2000, p. 3). This regional role ensures that, unlike traditional middle powers, those in the developing world tend to be regionally dominant, which includes involvement and leadership in both independent and multilateral initiatives beyond the immediate regional domain (Nel, Taylor & van der Westhuizen, 2000, p. 47). The systemic role South Africa's plays in multilateral

institutions such as the G-20, UN, within the WTO and at the IAEA as well as its participation in strategic partnerships at the minilateral level, such as IBSA and BRICS, is evidence that the country embraces its emerging middle power identity.

Despite its position as an emerging middle power, South Africa's identity as a regional power, or hegemon, remains a particular challenge and results sometimes in ambiguity in its foreign policy towards its immediate region, SADC. There are a growing number of voices in South Africa that urge a leadership role and embrace a regional power identity as opposed to shying away from the concept of a hegemon. Qobo (2010a, p. 15) argues that there is a lack of appreciation of the complexity of the concept of hegemon in differentiating good (benign) from bad (aggressive) hegemons. Adam Habib (2009, p. 145) defines a regional hegemon as "a state which is part of a delineated region, is connected to it culturally, economically and politically, influences its identity and affairs, defines its security and aspires to provide it with leadership, including through its governance structures and acts as a representative and is recognized as such in regional and international quarters." Accordingly, South Africa could be seen as a regional hegemon that has a benign role in that it has the ability to create the rules that are attractive/acceptable to others. Simultaneously, it secures its own interests and facilitates "side payments" that may usher in a post hegemonic environment that will eventually make the hegemon less visible (Qobo, 2010, p. 15). Importantly the hegemon must be prepared to underwrite certain costs in the areas of security and economic development.

The implementation of South Africa's foreign policy, which is guided by the values and principles of the country and those outlined by the DIRCO, is a critical part of the ideational power promoted alongside the material components of foreign policy. Therefore it warrants a dedicated examination in a section of its own.

3.3.2 Values and principles in South Africa's foreign policy

The Freedom Charter and the 1996 Constitution of South Africa underpin the values and principles in South Africa's foreign policy. They serve both as an inspiration to and a guide for South Africa the country. They are what South Africa aspires to domestically and propagates internationally in the belief that "what it wishes for its people should be what it wishes for the citizens of the world" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2012). In a speech delivered at the University of Pretoria Nkoana-Mashabane (2012) said "South Africa's foreign policy is based on, and our conduct in international relations is informed by, the fundamental values and principles enshrined in our Constitution, notably human dignity, the achievement of equity, the advancement of human rights and freedoms, non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy and a respect for the rule of law". Not only do these values form part of the behavioral norms for South African society in general, but they are also mainstreamed through the six complementary key priority areas of the DIRCO. In line with the national trend of promulgating behavioral norms for society, the DIRCO has a set of values specifically formulated for its public service employees that concern conduct and behavior both within the organization and in engagements with external clients. These values are patriotism, loyalty, dedication, Ubuntu, equity, integrity and Batho Pele (Department of International Relations, 2012). These values have remained unchanged since 2000 and are in line with the broad values held in common with the public service, though the prioritization of each value may differ across the public service depending on their core mandate. At the heart of these values and principles lies Ubuntu.

The Diplomacy of Ubuntu

Mid-way through the term of office of Jacob Zuma, and presided over by Maite Nkoana-Mashabane in her capacity as Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, the concept of "the diplomacy of Ubuntu" was ushered in. According to the White Paper on South Africa's foreign policy the multifaceted, multicultural and

multiracial society of South Africa embraces the value of Ubuntu as a way of "defining who we are and how we relate to others" (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2011, p. 4). Ubuntu means "humanity" and the essential philosophy behind that value is that "we affirm our humanity when we affirm the humanity of others." The value of Ubuntu has played a major role in the forging of South African's national consciousness and in the process of its democratic transformation and nation building. It has been an enduring value within the DIRCO (and formerly the DFA) since 1994 and is specified in each of its successive strategic plans. As such, this value is a quintessential part of South Africa's domestic state identity, among other values, and is part of the concerted effort to break comprehensively with the identity of the Apartheid state. Within such an interconnected and interdependent world system, South Africa's preference for collaboration and cooperation with other states over competition is indicative of a worldview that is underpinned by a philosophy which states that it is only by the affirmation of the humanity of others that our own humanity can be affirmed. Partnership-building to address foreign policy issues is a logical consequence of the value of Ubuntu while at the same time that value is reinforced by those partnerships in a reciprocal manner. The White Paper clearly articulates how this value and the philosophy behind it is applied in foreign policy and the activities of the DIRCO,

> "This philosophy translates into an approach to international relations that respects all nations, peoples, and cultures. It recognizes that it is in our national interest to promote and support the positive development of others. Similarly, national security would therefore depend on the centrality of human security as a universal goal, based on the principle of Batho Pele (putting people first). In the modern world of globalization, a constant element is and has to be our common humanity. We therefore champion collaboration, cooperation and building partnerships over conflict. This recognition of our interconnectedness and interdependency, and the infusion of Ubuntu into the South African identity, shapes our foreign policy" (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2011)

The announcement of a diplomacy of Ubuntu comes with an indication of its dual function: first, it magnifies the enduring role of Ubuntu in both the formulation and implementation of South African foreign policy and second, its innovative use in the branding and marketing of South Africa's foreign policy contributes to the branding of South Africa's identity at the international level.

Qobo (2011) argued that a weakness of the White Paper lies in its reference to a diplomacy of Ubuntu which "fizzles out" after the introductory pages with "no solid ideas or compelling substance that define this new diplomacy". In his review of the White Paper, Wheeler (2011) does not even mention the announcement of a diplomacy of Ubuntu and consigns this value to insignificance by stating that the White Paper "trots out all the clichés, like Ubuntu … and Batho Pele". What both Qobo and Wheeler fail to appreciate is that the announcement of a diplomacy of Ubuntu comes within the context of what is a nationally coordinated effort to create a positive and compelling brand image for South Africa both domestically and internationally and in so doing, drive strategic opportunities in trade and tourism. Far from existing in a vacuum or merely being a "cliché", the diplomacy of Ubuntu has an important additional function as a branding and marketing strategy for the country and as in business there is a corresponding army of experts behind the process. This is part of the Government's ongoing effort to strengthen the country's GSP.

In a globalized world that evokes Cerny's competition state, states are obliged to position themselves as attractive markets for investment, tourism and reliable exports. The development of a brand and its successful marketing[28] serves to distinguish one state from the crowd of other states in a globalized world and to some extent forms the basis of a well-regarded reputation internationally. The role of culture in the construction of a brand, as an expression of national identity, is essential because "it is central to the development and acquisition of cognitive and emotional attachments towards countries as brands" (van der Westhuizen, 2003, p. 4). For van der Westhuizen culture is the irreplaceable projection of the national image and is therefore an accessible base of 'value-added' to promote a country's "net asset value" (p. 5). Anholt (2002) argues that culture embodies the national psyche but is the only enduring differentiation marker on the international stage "because it is uniquely linked to the country itself; it is reassuring because it links the country's past with its present; it is enriching because it deals with non-commercial activities; and it is dignifying because it shows the spiritual and intellectual of a country's people and institutions".

The recognition that an enduring brand image, beyond the persona of Nelson Mandela, was required if South Africa were to successfully market itself in a sustained manner was a preoccupation for Mbeki from his first administration. The result was BrandSouthAfrica, created in August 2002 in order to develop a positive and compelling brand and market South Africa through the BrandSouthAfrica campaign. It could be argued that the diplomacy of Ubuntu is DIRCO's response to the challenge outlined by Janis van der Westhuizen (2003, p. 3) for South Africa "to develop an innovative brand vision that transcends the constraints of generalized cognitive associations of the developing South" in order to succeed in marketing that brand internationally.

Van der Westhuizen recognizes two types of external marketing strategies for a brand to enable a state to heighten its global attraction by drawing on cultural distinctiveness and creativity. These are hallmark events such as world/regional sporting events, cultural festivals, or large-scale diplomatic conferences for benefit in the immediate to short term and cultural diffusion through more subtle means such as through popular culture such as music, cuisine, movies and publishing as a long-term sustainable strategy aimed at sustaining and enduring reputation (van der Westhuizen, 2003, p. 6). The branding of foreign policy and a values-oriented diplomacy is possibly another mechanism through which a state can subtly diffuse its signature brand to add to the effort at creating a sustaining and enduring reputation in the long term. It is within this context that the DIRCO has contributed to the branding of South Africa by utilizing the enduring value of Ubuntu as a distinctive and identifiable brand associated with South Africa's diplomatic practice, its foreign policy and, by extension, South Africa's national identity. The diplomacy of Ubuntu encapsulates the substance and spirit of South Africa's foreign policy, the values and principles upon which foreign policy rests as well as the spirit in which it is implemented. At the same time it promotes cultural distinctiveness in substance and approach and serves to differentiate South Africa and its foreign policy from the crowd of other states, NGOs and multinational corporations all jostling for strategic position in a contested international arena.

DIRCO's organizational structure underwent a transformation in its public diplomacy section under Minister Nkoana-Mashabane, which mirrored the expanded role of this section in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. The position of Head of Public Diplomacy was elevated from that of a Chief Director to a Deputy Director-General in 2010 with the hiring of government communications expert, Clayson Monyela. As a result the Public Diplomacy section has become an integral part of the decision-making process in the DIRCO at an appropriately high level and enables the department to address the question of branding and marketing upstream of the policy formulation process. This is an innovative step. The DIRCO's quarterly magazine, entitled "Ubuntu", as well as the internet-based radio station, provisionally called *Radio DIRCO,* form part of the coordinated rollout of this strategic branding and marketing campaign of South Africa's foreign policy and its diplomacy. With the announcement of a diplomacy of Ubuntu, the DIRCO has ushered in a vivid cultural and national image of the South African state in combination with an aspirational value with universal resonance. The diplomacy of Ubuntu propagates an ideational rather than a material power and therein lies its distinction.

The material and ideational components combine in South Africa's foreign policy to reflect the national interest. Reflexively, the synergy of material and ideational power in the South African national interest converge into what is a complex, multifaceted, multidimensional and diverse foreign policy with a global outlook. The six key priority areas of South Africa's foreign policy will be presented in the next section.

3.4 Complementary foreign policy priorities

In addition to the domestic policy context, South Africa conducts its foreign policy against the backdrop of an "ever-changing political and economic environment…characterized by major shifts in global political, economic, social and cultural dynamics" requiring the "realignment of new economic powers" (amongst other things) and a concomitant response that "speaks to our own foreign policy priorities" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2012b). The strategic outcome at which South Africa's

foreign policy is aimed endures from Mbeki through to Zuma. That is to contribute positively towards the achievement of South Africa's domestic policy thus contributing to a better and safer Africa as part of a better world. The essential elements of the respective key priority areas of South Africa's foreign policy have remained constant with one important emphasis; the addition of the SADC political and economic integration agenda as a sixth foreign policy priority. Under previous administrations SADC was encapsulated under the African Agenda priority area but this has been highlighted as a priority area in its own right signaling an added emphasis by the Zuma Administration toward accelerating South Africa's contribution to the realization of the regional integration plan in accordance with the amended Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).[29]

It is important to note that the African Agenda finds expression in the majority of South Africa's foreign policy activities, not only because it is in itself a pillar (priority) of foreign policy but also because it is leveraged through the other pillars. Thus the objectives of the African Agenda will find expression through the activities undertaken under the auspices of the other key priority areas of foreign policy. In practical terms this means that those issues within the African Agenda that could potentially dovetail with the other 'non-African' engagements South Africa has with different organizations, forums and at the bilateral level, may be placed on the agenda for discussion at the discretion of the Minister. For instance, the NEPAD and its objectives can be found on the G8 Africa Outreach Action Plan, where South Africa's G8 engagements ostensibly fall under the priority area of strengthening engagements with the North. NEPAD is also found on the BRICS agenda, which is primarily concerned with strengthening South-South cooperation, and it also finds expression in bilateral relations, particularly with East and Northern countries. Thus in some respects the six key foreign policy priority areas function to mutually reinforce one another in order to maintain, and possibly strengthen, South Africa's capacity for influence and its ability to access economic opportunities in pursuit of the domestic agenda.

The six key foreign policy priority areas as well as the respective objectives contained therein are outlined within the DIRCO's strategic plan 2009-2014 and 2012-2017 as follows:

3.4.1 Enhanced African Agenda and sustainable development

The central pillar of South Africa's foreign policy is based upon the premise that South Africa's destiny is intertwined with that of the broader continent. Africa is at the center of South Africa's foreign policy and its active engagement and support for continental processes to respond to and resolve crises, strengthen regional integration, significantly increase intra-African trade and champion sustainable development and opportunities in Africa remain at the core of the DIRCO's activities. Drawing from the belief that socio-economic development cannot take place without peace and stability, the government of South Africa is also of the view that socio-economic development is critical for addressing the root causes of conflict and instability (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2009). Within this key priority area the objectives are to:

- Play a leading role in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction.
- Participate in the strengthening of regional and continental integration, including strengthening of the AU and its structures and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).
- Revitalize the NEPAD as a strategy for economic development on the African continent, together with ongoing support for the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).
- Prioritize the socio-economic development of the continent by establishing a dedicated development agency to replace the African Renaissance Fund (ARF), which will inform and direct South Africa's development assistance framework.

3.4.2 Strengthened political and economic integration of SADC

Stemming from the view that the SADC remains critical for the economic development of the region and for South Africa's global competitiveness, it is necessary to accelerate the integration of the region; thus trade integration, infrastructure development and sector policy must be coordinated on the one hand while

simultaneously enhancing political cohesion through the alignment of interlinking and interconnected regional peace and security objectives, as well as strengthening governance and institutional capacity (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2012). This advances the African Agenda because an integrated SADC region forms part of the RECs that are the foundation for the African continent's socio-economic development plans and its envisioned political unity. Drawing from DIRCO's strategic plan 2012-2017, within this priority area the objectives are to:

- Contribute human and financial resources through SADC structures, initiatives, programmes and processes to strengthen political cohesion and stability.
- Contribute through SADC processes to create an enabling environment supportive of economic integration and the effective functioning of SACU.

3.4.3 Strengthened South-South relations

An enduring feature of South Africa's foreign policy, solidarity with the countries of the South and the agenda of the developing South is viewed as critical to advancing not only South Africa's own development needs but also that of Africa. Opportunities remain for South Africa to create political, economic and social convergence for the fight against poverty, underdevelopment and the marginalization of the South. Drawing from DIRCO's strategic plan 2012-2017, within this priority area the objectives are to:

- Contribute to the consolidation of relations amongst countries of the South, through the development of common positions and initiatives on political, economic and social issues.
- Engage identified organizations and formations of the South in order to promote the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other agreed International Development Goals (IDGs).

3.4.4 Strengthen relations with strategic formations of the North

Reinforcing its emerging middle power credentials as a bridge-builder, this key priority area enables South Africa to proactively enter into formations with Northern countries that breach the traditional North-South divide through sustained dialogue, such as the G-20, the G-8 Africa Outreach sessions, the G8 + 5, the OECD,

the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the South Africa-EU strategic partnership. The objective within this key priority area is to promote national priorities, the African Agenda and the Agenda of the South through dialogue and participation in Summits, ministerial and senior official meetings (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2012). It is in this arena where North meets South with a few countries from each hemisphere sitting around the discussion table, that some of the fiercest criticism is leveled at South Africa in purporting to be a *representative* of either Africa or the developing South.

3.4.5 Participation in the global system of governance

Within this priority area is where South Africa's commitment to multilateralism finds its most obvious home in the strong belief that multilateralism is an eventual good at which to aim. Participation in the global system of governance, notably the UN and its associate organizations, is aimed at enhancing international responsiveness to the needs of developing countries and Africa in particular through a reformed and strengthened rules-based multilateral system. The African Agenda is mainstreamed within this key priority area because where there are decisions of the AU and a consensus AU position towards issues on the international agenda adopted, South Africa uses these to guide its own position and thereby promotes the African chapter within the multilateral arena. Again, drawing from the DIRCO's strategic plan 2012-2017, within this priority area the objectives are to:

- Contribute to the peaceful resolution of international conflicts with the centrality of the UN Charter and the principles of international law.
- Contribute towards global peace and security, political and socio-economic stability, sustainable development and the promotion of human rights within a rules-based multilateral system through identified processes, debates and resolutions, according to agendas and schedules of multilateral institutions.
- Advocate the reform of global governance institutions and their secretariats to better address the needs of developing countries.
- Provision of legal services to Government with regard to all matters related to international law and international legal issues as well as the custodianship of the official treaty records.

3.4.6 Strengthened political and economic relations

Bilateral relations remain the foundation upon which other formations are built and will perhaps always be a strategic focus area for South Africa. South Africa uses its structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level engagements to reinforce and expand cooperation in the political, economic, social and security spheres for the purpose of contributing to national priorities. It is within this priority area that the domestic agenda finds concrete and measurable expression in partnership with other departments such as trade and industry, finance, and the many line function departments where relevant. Thus emphasis is placed on the strengthening of economic relations for the promotion of South Africa's trade, investment and tourism potential and opportunities. Bilateral agreements in various sectors such as economy, agriculture, science and technology, education, health, to name but a few, are important tools through which cooperation and the promotion of South Africa's national priorities are pursued. The African Agenda, particularly the NEPAD and its programs, finds expression within this priority area.

3.5 Conclusion

An enquiry into the GSP of a particular state is directly concerned with that state's foreign policy in its broadest sense; this includes both the material and ideational power inherent therein as well as the particular state identity, or set of state identities, it invokes. As a result, this Chapter concerned itself with an examination of the country's foreign policy holistically. South Africa's post-Apartheid foreign policy is rooted firmly in the national (domestic) agenda of the country and as such reflects the multiple state identities at play and the various national interests that spring from those identities. The articulation of a foreign policy based on a doctrine of national interest under the Zuma Administration draws together the theoretical and ideological foundations of South Africa's post-Apartheid foreign policy with the national priorities of Government, the subsequent MTSF and twelve deliverable outcomes as well as the six key priority areas of its foreign policy. Further than that, the three strengths by which GSP is measured

namely: influence, realization of national objectives (of which foreign policy objectives are part) and access to economic opportunity are also directed toward achieving Onuf's three ultimate ends of state where the national interest is categorized by standing, security and wealth. Whereby influence relates to standing, the realization of national objectives relates to security and access to economic opportunity relates to wealth. The complimentary and mutually supportive material and ideational components were shown to work together in South Africa's foreign policy to garner and maintain a useful GSP in pursuit of the national interest.

In pursuing multiple international roles simultaneously and having a global oriented outlook, the implementation of foreign policy in South Africa is necessarily a sophisticated, subtle and nuanced act of balancing. In the words of Serrao and Bischoff (2009, p. 374), "balancing foreign policy, and the sometimes mutually conflicting identities of the state, necessitates ambiguity in the practice, but not in the theory, of South Africa's post-Apartheid foreign policy". Nowhere is this more evident than in South Africa's membership of the respective strategic partnerships of IBSA and BRICS. Both of these forums function very clearly at the nexus of its domestic and foreign policy where the national interest reflected in its political, economic, social and cultural policies (including its international policy) converge on the one hand, with multiple levels of engagements between governments, business, non-governmental organizations and civil society, on the other.

More significantly, though, the articulation of South Africa's foreign policy in terms of its GSP provides a firm analytic basis for the comparative analysis to follow. GSP recalls the domestic agenda by evoking the national interest within which the six key foreign policy priorities of the Government are located. The three strengths with which to measure a state's GSP are applied equally with reference to the same variables across both case studies that follow, namely of South Africa's foreign policy, particularly its key priority areas. The foundation laid in this Chapter significantly reduces the risk of asymmetric comparison in the two case studies of this research. We will now turn to the

first case study, South Africa's membership of IBSA, in order to examine the extent to which this membership has impacted upon the country's GSP, if at all.

Notes:

[26] Contrary to that recommended in the *National Development Plan 2030*, it is not for one Government Department, in this case the DIRCO, to determine the national interest. This prerogative lies firmly within the political arena, in this case the Cabinet of South Africa comprising its president, its deputy president and its government ministers, for the people who gave them an electoral mandate to govern on their behalf for a limited period. The role of the DIRCO in assisting the cabinet to determine the national interest is to contribute its perspective from a foreign relations perspective, while other governments are similarly in a position to contribute perspectives on the matter from their technical viewpoints.

[27] The TDCA is the legal basis for overall relations between South Africa and the EU. The Agreement was signed in October 1999, reviewed in 2004 and underwent revision in 2007. It includes political dialogue, economic and development cooperation, other areas of cooperation and financial aspects of cooperation. In 2007, at South Africa's request, it was agreed to delink the two chapters on trade and trade related issues from the broader TDCA revision and conduct these negotiations under the SADC EPA process (refer to http://www.dfa.gov.za/foreign/saeubilateral/tdca.html for more information).

[28] Branding and marketing are closely related but distinct. Branding relates to the "what", being the product while marketing relates to "how". Accordingly, branding represents the manifestation of a set of aspirational values that are the result of distinct marketing strategies. Branding is the result of marketing consistency (refer to http://www.sadc.int/about-sadc/overview/strategic-pl/regional-indicative-strategic-development-plan/ for more information).

[29] The Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), approved by the SADC Summit in August 2003, is a comprehensive development and implementation framework guiding the Regional Integration agenda of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) over a period of fifteen years (2005-2020). The ultimate objective of the plan is to deepen integration in the region with a view to accelerate poverty eradication and the attainment of other economic and non-economic development goals. In light of challenges to meeting specified targets in the RISDP, the RISDP is undergoing a review (beginning 2012) with a view to amendment in order to reconfigure the SADC roadmap to guide the regional integration process aligned to realistic, measureable and deliverable milestones and time-lines.

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CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDY 1:

SOUTH AFRICA'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE IBSA DIALOGUE FORUM

The central research question of this thesis seeks to elucidate the extent to which, and how, strategic partnership at the minilateral level impacts upon the GSP of its member states, if at all. This is the first of two case studies that tests this assumption with reference to one of the latest instances of this type of international alignment: the IBSA Dialogue Forum. Thus the focus of this Chapter is to examine whether, if at all, membership of IBSA has impacted upon South Africa's GSP and if so, to what extent and how. The critical point of examination in this case study is not only to determine whether alignment in this strategic partnership at the minilateral level along with India and Brazil has served to strengthened the GSP of South Africa but also to identify the areas in which this is the case and how the alignment serves to do this. The result of this examination serves to answer the second research question of this thesis: what is it that IBSA is better suited to achieve without China and Russia (the two countries in BRICS but not in IBSA)?

The following case study is structured according to the three strengths by which the measure of a state's GSP is taken (cross reference section 3.1). South Africa's membership of IBSA will firstly be examined to determine the extent to which it has been able to use IBSA to bring to bear its influence and shape perceptions on the global stage. How this has taken place and in what respect will also be discussed. By virtue of its composition and its global agenda, IBSA operates at the global level. Thus the extent to which a member state can shape the formation of IBSA itself and its agenda will have

a direct impact in the global arena in which IBSA operates. The analysis will therefore examine the forum's origins, structure and function while highlighting the areas in which South Africa has influenced and shaped development of IBSA in these areas. The ability to project influence internationally enhances a state's GSP in a reflexive manner. This leads to the second area of focus, the agenda of IBSA. The agenda of IBSA will be examined with respect to the degree to which South Africa has been able to proactively carve a niche for itself in order to pursue its own national agenda, as reflected in its foreign policy priorities, through IBSA. Third, the impact of trilateral diplomacy in the multilateral arena and some of the sectoral cooperation areas of IBSA, i.e. within the IBSA Working Groups, will be examined in order to ascertain the degree to which this collaboration has impacted upon South Africa's ability to access the economic opportunities available both within IBSA and more broadly at the global level. This concerns the marketing of South Africa to position itself for gain from IBSA, particularly in terms of global capital investment flows, tourism, trade and, importantly, technology transfers. IBSA brings together a sizable portion of the world's consumer market with a combined population of 1.48 billion[30], as well as a combined GDP of USD 4.479 trillion[31] (World Bank, 2013). The extent to which IBSA, having brought together a market size of 1.47 billion consumers with a significant GDP, impacts upon South Africa's ability to influence, shape perceptions and beliefs at the global level, to carve out a niche in the global agenda through which it can realise its national priorities and to access economic gain has domestic implications for the country in terms of its national interest.

4.1 The impact of IBSA on South Africa's global influence

4.1.1 Origins

In identifying the differences between IBSA and BRICS a Counsellor at the Embassy of the Federative Republic of Brazil in South Africa, points firstly to the importance of examining the very different origins of the two forums and secondly, to the differences in the decision-making process whereby IBSA is primarily "a bottom-up

initiative operating on a horizontal cooperation axis rather than vertical" (G.S. Goffredo, personal communication, August 13, 2013). IBSA is a product of the environmental context at the time of its creation. The beginning of the 21st Century is marked by an evolutionary process of change in the international political system. The immediate post-Cold War period, dominated by the hegemonic power of the United States in Charles Krauthammer's (1990/1991) depicted "unipolar moment", progressively gave way to a period of fluidity and uncertainty of the post, post-Cold War period on its journey towards either multipolarity, unipolarity (possibly on the part of another state) or towards some other definitive structural system yet in the making. At around the same time documented shifts in global economic power and financial flows from the developed to the developing world reinforced the notion that the global political, economic and financial systems were evolving in a reinforcing manner.

As an emerging middle power, South Africa's foreign policy with its global outlook had to respond to the evolving international system of the early 21st Century. This system is characterized by an increasing divide between the developed North and the developing South, between center and periphery, and with the additional pressure of deepening inequality and poverty in large parts of the world. South Africa's response was to strengthen its commitment to multilateralism and multilateral processes through proactive participation therein. A former Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that the challenge for South Africa was "to be a positive force in support of the entrenchment of multilateralism; the reshaping of the international trading and financial regimes to support development; and the advocacy for global peace" (Dlamini Zuma, 2004). Since 1994, South Africa has joined, rejoined, or acceded to approximately forty-five intergovernmental organizations and multilateral treaties (Nel, Taylor & van der Westhuizen, 2000, p. 47). It has also committed itself seriously to the reform of the UN, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank and to the possibilities of South-South cooperation in the framework of the IOR-ARC and the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic. Chris Landsberg (2006, p. 2) characterized South Africa during this period as following a policy of assertive multilateralism with a

constant emphasis on the idea of ‘collective security’ and a ‘rules-based’ global order in which the UN remains the ultimate repository of global order.

At the first South Summit held in Havana, former President Thabo Mbeki (2000) articulated the view that the future of the world was dependent upon the active participation of the entire world’s people in their own political and economic futures. To achieve this proactive approach he argued that South-South cooperation activities should aim to encourage an extensive system of inter-state relations among the countries in the developing world in order to strengthen their collective capacity to represent themselves relative to the countries of the North. Mbeki (2000) said, "This should not simply be a matter of increasing our bargaining strength, it should also address the central issue of the elaboration of a word agenda for human centered development". The strong focus on South-South cooperation was, and still is, an enduring feature of South Africa’s foreign policy in pursuit of Mbeki’s ‘agenda of the South’. Under Mbeki, part of this approach was an emphasis on creating a strategic partnership between the industrialized North and the developing South based upon mutual responsibility and mutual accountability. He therefore encouraged a “constructive and purposeful relationship between ourselves and others in the North” (Mbeki, 2000). To end the “dialogue of the deaf”, South Africa made history by being the first country to invite the G7 and other industrialized countries to attend a Non Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit (Landsberg, 2006, p. 7).

Against this backdrop, Thabo Mbeki is credited with the idea of a G8 of the South, which was conceptualized between 1999 and 2000 and culminated in official letters to his counterparts in India, Brazil, China, Mexico, Nigeria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia (Matjila, 2007). The original idea was for a G8 of the South that would pursue an agenda for the South in order to develop a coordinated approach to globalization and to ensure that the developing South plays a more active and meaningful role in global institutions (Landsberg, 2006, p. 7). Mbeki openly promoted the idea of a G8 of the South as a potential counterweight to the powerful and dominant G8. The aim was to extract commitments from the industrialized North on issues of trade, debt eradication,

global social policy, aid and global power relations (Landsberg, 2006, p. 5). According to Landsberg (2006, p. 7) South Africa's foreign policy wanted to "fundamentally alter the relationship between Africa and the North, while stressing the relationship between Africa and the South".

In the absence of interest for the proposed G8 of the South by other developing states, India, Brazil and South Africa forged ahead with discussion on a trilateral arrangement. IBSA was seen as a natural consequence of a global discourse among developing nations concerning imbalances of center-periphery and thus IBSA was directed towards a shift in emphasis from traditional North-South economic/power axis to an evolutionary International Relations and the strengthening of intra-South ties. Although former president Lula de Silva is recognized for taking the first step to formalize IBSA, the Third IBSA Summit Declaration explicitly credits the origins of IBSA and the strengthening of South-South cooperation under IBSA auspices to Mbeki with the leaders extending their "gratitude to the sterling contribution of former President TM Mbeki of the Republic of South Africa in the formation and consolidation of IBSA and South-South cooperation in general" (IBSA New Delhi Declaration, 2008,¶3).

The geostrategic position and credentials of India and Brazil were considered an advantage for South Africa being as it was at the geographic center of these two emerging middle powers. At the time of the first IBSA Summit in 2006, India was a country of 1.1 billion people and, according to the World Bank of India (as cited by Matjila, 2007), had a GDP of US$ 806 billion. In a press briefing, South Africa's IBSA focal point Ambassador Jerry Matjila (2007) stated that India was a global player in terms of information and communication technology (ICT) and other global products and that this was seen as an economic opportunity for South Africa. Similarly, Brazil, as an emerging middle power had a staggering GDP of US$ 882 billion and an ever growing population of 186 million people (World Bank, 2005). According to Ambassador Matjila (2007), that Brazil had the second largest black population after Nigeria was also significant for South Africa. The notion of intensifying engagement and interaction with people of African origin throughout the world in a structured

manner was gathering momentum in South Africa at the time of the establishment of IBSA and eventually culminated in what became known as the African Diaspora process conducted under the auspices of the AU. A strategic partnership at the minilateral level that included Brazil therefore dovetailed with South Africa's African Agenda.

According to Sidiropoulos (2013, p. 185) the establishment of IBSA coincided with the blocking (or spoiling) power displayed by the Group of 20 agricultural countries (in which all three IBSA countries played an important role) at the Cancun ministerial of the WTO later that same year. No doubt the need for an alternative procedural approach in the conduct of inter-state relations, in addition to the substantive agenda, was further crystalized for these three countries as a result of their experience at the WTO. The 'how' of international discourse and interaction was seen as equally important to the 'what' under discussion. Born as it was within the context of hard negotiation and complex cross-policy bargaining, especially within the WTO, IBSA is fundamentally an alternative approach to address issues of global concern collectively around development, trade and global governance within the current international system.

South Africa participated in the first meeting of IBSA ministers of foreign affairs on 6 June 2003 in Brasilia and signed the Brasilia Declaration that laid the foundation for this innovative strategic partnership established at the mini-lateral level. The IBSA Brasilia Declaration (2003, ¶2) outlines the character of IBSA as being composed of "vibrant democracies, from three regions of the developing world, active on a global scale". This Declaration also lays out the agenda as follows: to strengthen the United Nations and its Security Council through reform (¶2), to coordinate positions and cooperate on issues that present a threat to international peace and security, including new threats to security (¶5), the environment (¶11 & ¶12), trade and investment (¶13 & ¶14), global economic and financial governance issues (¶15, ¶16 & ¶17). The core agenda of IBSA outlined above reflects the central concerns of South Africa's foreign policy from 1994 onwards relating to the key foreign policy priorities of the DIRCO (cross reference Chapter 3). South Africa's influence is also evident in the values and

principles of IBSA as many of these are also enshrined in South Africa's own national Constitution. The preamble of the constitution "establishes a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental Human Rights". There is a commitment stipulated to the rule of law (South Africa's Constitution, ¶1) which lays down societal norms pertaining to equality, rights and sustainable development (The Bill of Rights, ¶2). Similarly, the values and principles of IBSA are as follows: a commitment to participatory democracy and the values contained therein (¶1); the rule of International Law (¶3); coordination & cooperation to strengthen the voice of the developing world on issues on the global agenda (¶4, ¶5, ¶9 & ¶19) guided by the principles of social justice, equity and a commitment to an inclusive approach (¶6). IBSA is also dedicated to the elimination of all kinds of racial discrimination, to promoting gender equality and mainstreaming a gender perspective in public policies (¶7).

To apply a phrase used to describe Mbeki's second term in office, IBSA is an attempt to mark an experiment in a "business UNusual" approach to the way in which international politics is conducted. It is an approach that is led by the developing South to demand a fairer, more equitable and just international order and is a strong proponent of South-South Cooperation leading by example. IBSA today, ten years after its creation, remains firmly committed to pursuing its core agenda, including its global dimensions, in the spirit of the values and principles outlined in the IBSA Brasilia Declaration. As such IBSA's activities at the international level continue to reflect the strong influence of South Africa, together with its partners India and Brazil.

4.1.2 Structure and Function

In the absence of a founding document, or an instrument of creation/accession, the Brasilia Declaration can be regarded as the institutional expression of IBSA. It provides for a Summit meeting for Heads of State and Government and regular political consultations on international agenda items at multiple levels from Head of State, to Ministerial and also at the senior official level. It

establishes the Trilateral Ministerial Commission (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2003, ¶19) that is co-chaired by the respective foreign ministers. The revolving secretariat is coordinated by the respective secretary in the Foreign Ministry of each country. In the case of South Africa, the Director-General occupies this position while the Deputy Director-General: Asia and the Middle East occupies the position of IBSA focal point.

IBSA has largely been left to develop its own character and personality progressively rather than being driven by the leaders of the respective countries in a top-down approach. Indeed it is the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in their deliberations within the Trilateral Ministerial Commission, who ensure that major decisions are taken and conveyed to the Leaders for approval during the Summit. Although Summit meetings between Leaders are held on a regular basis, there is no rigid timetable for the hosting of these trilateral Summit meetings. Instead each Declaration acknowledges the country that will host the next Summit meeting but the decision of when to host is akin to a "gentleman's agreement" and assessed on a needs basis. Thus the first IBSA Summit was held in 2006, three years after its creation, in order to allow IBSA to develop organically. Other Summits are held more often than not on an annual basis in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2011 respectively, although there is no statutory obligation to do so. An official at the DIRCO indicated that the predictability of these meetings was under discussion with one proposal being to hold IBSA Summit meetings bi-annually. Steered by the Trilateral Ministerial Commission, which meets every year, the focus of IBSA is on: a) deepening the consultative process between and amongst the three to enhance common positions in multilateral fora, b) intensifying trilateral dialogue at all levels across several sectors, c) developing and implementing a broad program of action that is relevant to business, academia and to all other organs of civil society and finally d) constructing a new paradigm and philosophical grounding in the manner of shifting emphasis of the North-South trade access toward a South-South horizontal trade access (Dlamini Zuma, 2006).

South Africa's influence on the structural evolution of IBSA is most evident in the two Summits it hosted in October 2007 and October 2011, the Second and Fifth IBSA

Summits respectively. A strong focus for South Africa as host of the Second IBSA Summit was to gather momentum and to intensify discussion on trilateral maritime and aviation issues as well as on intra-IBSA economic exchanges, trade and investment and energy issues linked to climate change. As early as 2005 a RIS Think Tank report identified weak transport connectivity as one of the "strongest barriers to trade at present in IBSA" and recommended that IBSA governments "should try to remove the structural asymmetries in the air and maritime transportation sector, which are found to be quite significant and pose barriers to regional trade" (De, 2005, p. 17) According to South Africa's focal point at the time of the Second IBSA Summit the "maritime highway is an issue we are vigorously pursuing" from India to South Africa as a hub and back to Brazil (Matjila, 2007). With approximately 80% of the world's trade flows passing South African shores, the country is well aware of the potential, through IBSA, to reposition itself as the center-piece of such a maritime highway. Similarly, South Africa pushed hard to create an aviation hub from South Africa to India, given its strategic geographic location. The identified trilateral agreements in this area were signed under India's hosting of the Third IBSA Summit in 2012 as a result of the driving momentum initiated by South Africa. In terms of civil society engagements, South Africa presided over the launch of the first IBSA Parliamentary Forum as well as over the first IBSA Women's Forum. The IBSA Women's Forum initiative is a firm contribution by South Africa towards ensuring that the aspirations contained within the Brasilia Declaration, originally placed there by South Africa in accordance with its Constitution, be given concrete expression. In addition, with South Africa as Chair, the Summit agreed to the establishment of two new sectoral working groups in the area of Human Settlement Development and Environment & Climate Change.

South Africa's hosting of the Fifth IBSA Summit in October 2011, five months after attending its first BRICS Summit as a full member, was understood within the DIRCO as an opportunity to clearly delineate the two Forums as distinct entities with complementary agendas but which could operate on separate but parallel tracks. As a reflection of this, within the DIRCO's organizational structure, IBSA and BRICS are located in separate sections with a dedicated staff complement to each. Almost ten years

after its creation, South Africa continues to use its influence to shape IBSA. As Chair, South Africa played an important role in crafting the theme and agenda for the Summit discussion. The ideas that emanated from the Fifth Summit discussion, encapsulated in the 2011 IBSA Tshwane Declaration, laid the foundation for fresh thinking about IBSA and its continued relevance despite the creation of BRICS. These ideas also laid the foundation for preparations for the 10th anniversary of IBSA in 2013. The core message coming from IBSA under South Africa's Chair was the idea of democracy and development working together for a better life. In his opening address at the Summit, President Zuma outlined South Africa's view of a qualitatively distinct global role for IBSA, one that stands in stark contrast to BRICS and to the presence of China. He argued that "IBSA countries individually and collectively can make a contribution in helping the international community surmount these challenges" based upon a conviction that "countries can prosper and create a better life for their people when democracy and development work together" (Zuma, 2011).

The timing of this message through IBSA was pertinent, coming as it did in 2011. This was a year of profound global upheaval; specifically the continued effects of the global economic crisis that were sparked from a financial crisis in the developed North in 2008 as well as the political upheaval related to the "Arab spring" events that took place in North Africa and the Middle East. The IBSA Tshwane Summit Declaration (2013, ¶19) states that the basic pillar of IBSA is the shared vision that "democracy and development are mutually reinforcing and key to sustainable peace and security". In the same paragraph the leaders of IBSA then carve out a potential role for IBSA in this regard by stating that they are "willing to share, if requested, the democratic and inclusive development model of their societies with countries in transition to democracy". The offer of sharing and learning from IBSA's ongoing experience of development through democracy with other developing nations (a key pillar of South-South cooperation) is arguably a convincing vision in light of the economic trajectories of all three IBSA countries. Sidiropoulos (2013, p. 285) argues that this deliberate distancing of IBSA from the increasingly compelling Chinese model of development, where development happens at the expense of democracy, is a major departure point for

ensuring the relevance of IBSA in the global system. Jagannath Panda (2013, p. 299) agrees that IBSA's democratic ethos is what separates IBSA from other comparative forums such as the BRICS Forum. Kornegay (2011) goes beyond IBSA's democratic credentials by arguing that IBSA has a distinct geopolitical role to play by leveraging its unique geographic credentials to initiate a geostrategic maritime strategy based upon the IBSAMAR naval/maritime cooperation exercises that took place in May 2008. It is too early to speculate about the extent to which South Africa's vision will form part of the gradually developing strategic identity of IBSA. However a foundation has been laid and the sixth IBSA Summit that is scheduled to take place in 2014 under India's Chair will give the clearest indication of the extent to which South Africa's vision for IBSA going forward finds traction among its IBSA partners.

According to one South African Ambassador, perhaps the area in which the IBSA platform has served most clearly to amplify South Africa's global influence is in terms of the development agenda under UN auspices (G. Maitland, personal communication, August 10, 2013). This also includes its practical expression in country-specific socio-economic development initiatives implemented under the auspices of the IBSA Fund for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (hereafter referred to as the IBSA Fund). Vieira (2013, p. 293) argues that the IBSA Fund embodies IBSA's strategic effort at soft power influence in the developing world. The DIRCO's initiative to establish the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA) would appear to lend credence to Vieira's argument.[32] The approved business case for SADPA formally recognizes development cooperation as an instrument of foreign policy while the draft Partnership Fund for Development Bill explicitly identifies the key foreign policy priorities for South Africa's development cooperation (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2013).

Part of the evolution of the structure of IBSA was the creation of the IBSA Fund as a concrete expression of the new, alternative development paradigm and philosophical approach of IBSA. An approach that in many respects is a mirror of South Africa's development paradigm but for its focus beyond Africa. IBSA's development paradigm stands in contrast to the traditional donor-recipient, narrowly-focused, aid-driven

development paradigm advocated by the developed North. South Africa's development paradigm was born in the African context and is drawn from its vision of an African Renaissance, which is the political, economic and social renewal of Africa. These perspectives are pervasive also in the subsequent program of action, the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) framework, which gives practical effect to the African Renaissance vision as well as the African Platform for Development Effectiveness. Former President Thabo Mbeki explained the underlying vision of the African Renaissance and the NEPAD as follows:

> "We (South Africa) understood that a radically new and unprecedented paradigm change had to be made to achieve a decisive shift away from Africa's past of abject poverty, lack of infrastructure, absence of modern technology, poor human resource development and weak manufacturing industry … This paradigm shift is based on the basic proposition that the African development agenda has to be in the hands of Africans and that we must, in the first instance, act on the basis of self-reliance" (Mbeki, 2002).

As a developing country South Africa has had many years of first-hand experience of its own development trajectory, being at first a receiver of international aid in the immediate post-Apartheid era and then a provider of assistance in Africa as well as a proactive supporter of the African development agenda. It is committed to aligning its development cooperation to the African notions of development effectiveness and to the principles promoted in the various NEPAD documents. These include the importance of local ownership, capacity development, policy coherence, sustainability, self-reliance and use of Africa's own resources to spur development on the continent (Besharati, 2013, p. 36). In the guidelines of the IBSA Fund one can clearly distill these same principles of political autonomy, local ownership and self-reliance. These are also precisely the elements that make IBSA's approach to development cooperation unique and for which IBSA has been recognized and acknowledged by the international community as leaders in this field.[33] The main objective of the IBSA Fund is to benefit other developing countries, particularly Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and those states emerging from conflict but which are still in a period of Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD). The focus on PCRD countries is an implicit recognition on the part of IBSA that peace and development are mutually reinforcing, where the latter is difficult, if not impossible, in the absence of the former. Underlying South Africa's African Agenda is the conviction that instability and conflict frustrate

sustainable economic development. Consequently, South Africa's foreign policy focus *vis-à-vis* the African continent is to "continue to play a role in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction" (Department of International Relations & Cooperation, 2009).

Projects that contribute towards attaining the MDGs are prioritized in the IBSA Fund because these are the areas that are people-centered and where intervention is most effective in combating poverty and underdevelopment directly. Drawing from South Africa's development perspectives, the IBSA Fund underscores the importance of the capacity-building impact of its projects; favors local procurement in pursuit of self-reliance and ensures that the projects are replicable elsewhere; and promotes the use of Southern expertise in solidarity with other countries facing similar challenges. The IBSA Fund and its recipients importantly engage as development partners, facilitators and enablers rather than as 'teachers' because India, Brazil and South Africa too have similar development challenges (Vieira, 2013, p. 292). While the Fund has no conditionalities, key principles of the IBSA Fund are that cooperation projects should be need-driven as well as locally owned and managed to ensure sustainability and continuity of development outcomes on the ground (http://www.ibsa-trilateral.org/about-ibsa/ibsa-fund.). The issues of political autonomy and ownership of programs are fundamental principles and ensure that the Fund is defined as a development partnership rather than in terms of aid (Vieira, 2013, p. 293). Consequently, through IBSA, including the activities of the IBSA Fund, South Africa has been able to promote its perspectives on development on a global scale not limited to the African locale. South Africa's perspectives have been amplified by IBSA to an extent that has enhanced the country's global influence and ability to shape perceptions and beliefs on this issue.

Apart from the IBSA Fund and as a member of IBSA, South Africa is part of a core part of the developing world that has taken a driving seat in the global development agenda and in defining its priorities. The development discourse has shifted to look beyond only aid as a catalyst for development and to include, among others, a coherence of

international policies including trade, infrastructure development, investment, governance reform, capacity building and domestic revenue mobilization (Besharati, 2013, p. 8). South Africa is a strong driver of this perspective within relevant multilateral fora in which it participates. The result is the mainstreaming of South Africa's development perspective in many of the IBSA positions taken on diverse issues ranging from international financial, economic and trade issues to the social dimensions of globalization, climate change, intellectual property, information society, women and people living with disability as follows:

> "The leaders emphasized the importance of the G20 development agenda, with its focus on the contribution to sustainable growth in developing countries, especially in low income countries" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶12).
>
> "They underlined support for the global jobs pact … demonstrating the linkages between social progress, economic development and recovery from the (global economic) crisis" (IBSA Brasilisa Declaration, 2010, ¶7).
>
> "The leaders reiterated the importance of the development dimension of the (WTO Doha Development) Round and welcomed the strengthened engagement, solidarity and cooperation among developing countries in that process" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2007, ¶24).
>
> "The leaders reaffirmed that people must come first in the formulation and implementation of public policies, allowing for fair, equitable and sustainable development. They considered this issue a relevant priority in the context of an increasingly globalized world" (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2010, ¶6).
>
> "The leaders underscored the importance for urgent action on climate change… and the critical priority of sustainable development for developing countries" (IBSA New Delhi Declaration, 2008, ¶16).
>
> "The leaders underscored the importance of incorporating the development dimension in international discussions concerning intellectual property" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2007, ¶30).
>
> "The leaders reaffirmed their commitment to working together towards a people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society" (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2010, ¶15).
>
> "…noted that large number of persons with disabilities live in developing countries … support of national efforts to mainstream persons with disability in the development agenda, in particular for developing countries" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶71).

The mainstreaming of a development perspective in the particular areas of global economic recovery, intellectual property, information society and people living with disability means that, South Africa, along with its partners in IBSA, can be seen a norm

entrepreneur at the global level. These perspectives are increasingly incorporated into global decision-making processes within global institutions with global implications. Thus, within the G20, "development is a key element of our agenda for global recovery and investment for future growth" with explicit recognition that "development is a concern and duty to all G20 countries" (G20 2011, ¶69). South Africa, through IBSA, has been able to secure G20 recognition of the need to "strengthen the social dimension of globalization" (G20, 2011, ¶6). This is an explicit concern for South Africa and IBSA as reflected in successive IBSA Declarations. Similarly, the Tunis Agenda of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) recognizes that "internet governance, carried out according to the Geneva principles, is an essential element for a people-centered, inclusive, development-oriented and non-discriminatory Information Society" (WSIS, 2005, ¶31). The wording and spirit of this Agenda can be attributed to the leadership role of IBSA in promulgating this norm within the WSIS process.

Concerning intellectual property rights under the WIPO, South Africa's influence, in conjunction with its IBSA partners and combined with other like-minded countries, is notable in its objective to transform WIPO into an equitable, "balanced international intellectual property system that contextualizes Intellectual Property Rights in the larger framework of socio-economic development and views than, not as ends in themselves, but as a means of promoting innovation, growth and development in all countries through calibrated norm-setting, protection and enforcement, while facilitating the effective transfer of technology" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶50). IBSA's influential role in this regard is evidenced in the formal establishment of a development agenda in WIPO with the aim of placing development at the heart of the WIPO's work. The decision consisted of the adoption of a set of 45 Development Agenda recommendations and the establishment of a Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) (WIPO, n.d.). IBSA was also influential in the creation of the Development Agenda Group (DAG) in 2010 aimed at mainstreaming the 45 Development Agenda Recommendations into all areas of work at WIPO. Although there is still much to be done in implementing the 45 recommendations across all spectrums of WIPO, progress has been made in norm-setting activities. In particular the

signing of the Beijing Treaty on the Protection of Audiovisual Performances in June 2011 is considered to be the first truly "post-Development Agenda" treaty adopted at WIPO as it recognizes the importance of the 45 development recommendations in the preamble (WIPO, 2012). In addition, South Africa used its influence in the Africa Group within WIPO to gather support around a draft text proposal for reform of WIPO's governance so as to reflect the broad activities and other institutional developments in WIPO (WIPO, 2011). South Africa then successfully used the IBSA platform for coordination to generate DAG group support for the Africa Group proposal as the base text for further negotiation. South Africa's strategic use of its membership in IBSA to rally support within the DAG group was rewarding. DAG's opening statement at the WIPO General Assembly illustrates the extent to which the DAG supports this Africa group proposal by stating that "in the context of this new proposal (African Group proposal), we urge all delegations to constructively engage in a formal consultation process to devise a policy that will make WIPO activities more efficient, participative and transparent" (WIPO, 2013). In terms of the post-2015 Development Agenda, South Africa, along with its partners in IBSA, advocates the view that disability and inclusive development needs to be a crosscutting theme in the post-2015 Development Agenda. The extent to which IBSA's perspectives in this regard will be incorporated into the post-2015 Development Agenda has yet to be seen but the recent UN review report issued on this matter (United Nations, 2011) is certainly a step in the right direction.

4.2 Carving a niche for South Africa's foreign policy in IBSA

As a significant driver and founding member, South Africa was uniquely placed to carve a niche in IBSA's substantive agenda through which to pursue its key foreign policy priorities early on. Despite South Africa's participation in IBSA being firmly located within the context of its foreign policy priority to strengthen South-South relations, the multidimensional nature of IBSA enables the other priority areas of South Africa's foreign policy to find expression therein. That being said, South Africa has yet

to find an explict niche in IBSA through which to pursue two of the six foreign policy priorities: strengthened political and economic integration of SADC and strengthened relations with formations in the North. Where South Africa is able to pursue these two foreign policy priorities it is in a limited manner and usually only indirectly (see 4.2.5. and 4.2.6. respectively).

4.2.1 Enhancing the African Agenda and sustainable development through IBSA

South Africa has had success in ensuring that some of the objectives in its African Agenda find expression through IBSA. However, South Africa has had to be mindful of balancing the degree to which it pursues its African Agenda with other interests that more easily find a natural convergence with India and Brazil, such as strengthening South-South cooperation and participation in the global system of governance. India, Brazil and South Africa all face a common challenge of poverty and inequality within their own societies as well as the historical challenge, though to varying degrees, of persistent marginalization from the global political, economic and financial decision-making center. According to a DIRCO official, South Africa is aware that it needs to guard against potential sensitivity on the part of India and Brazil concerning the degree to which Africa is emphasized in IBSA over and above the other regions in the developing world.

To this end South Africa has crafted a strategic approach that a) capitalizes on the year in which it holds the IBSA Chair, with the concomitant freedom to determine the theme and agenda of the Summit Meeting, as well as b) prioritizing only those issues that are of primary concern to South African interests *vis-à-vis* Africa. Thus the niche created by South Africa for its African Agenda in IBSA is necessarily limited and is particularly dominant in the years in which it holds the Chair. This is in stark contrast to South Africa's approach to BRICS where there is far more diplomatic space created by South Africa, as the recognized gateway to Africa in BRICS, to pursue its African Agenda

vigorously (cross reference section 5.2.2) and outside the year in which it holds the Chair.

The extent of South Africa's success in carving a niche for its African Agenda within IBSA is largely limited to two areas: shaping IBSA's perspective with respect to some country-specific conflict issues that are of primary concern to South Africa such as Zimbabwe, Sudan, Madagascar and Libya and garnering recognition of and support for AU-led processes. On Zimbabwe it is possible to trace the evolution of IBSA's position as a result of South Africa's influence to garner support for the SADC mediation effort. This support is juxtaposed with the strong criticism of SADC's role from mainly Western states. Initially South Africa was able only to encourage its IBSA partners to:

> "(take) note of the positive progress of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) initiative to promote a negotiated political solution in Zimbabwe between the Government of Zimbabwe and the opposition party, under the facilitation of President Thabo Mbeki" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2007, ¶19).

In 2008, under India's Chair, South Africa was able to secure a stronger message from IBSA on the issue of Zimbabwe and secured explicit public support for the role played by former President Mebki, SADC and the AU in this regard:

> "The leaders congratulated the people of Zimbabwe for their agreement reached on 11 September 2008 in Harare on a government of national unity. They also paid tribute to former President TM Mbeki for his tireless mediation efforts on behalf of the Southern African Development Community and the AU. They also urged the parties to the agreement to fully implement it" (IBSA New Delhi Declaration, 2008, ¶40).

South Africa's position on states undergoing internal civil strife found expression through IBSA's stated positions on Madagascar in 2010 and on Libya in 2011. South Africa's traditional response to states undergoing internal conflict aligns with its own experience in peacefully steering the country through a period of transition from an authoritarian Apartheid state to a non-racial, non-sexist democratic dispensation. Based upon the success of its experience, South Africa strongly believes in its call to other states undergoing transition to establish an inclusive government of national unity as a transitional arrangement, such as was established in South Africa. The role of the transitional government is to navigate the period of uncertainty and facilitate the birth of

a new inclusive dispensation relatively peacefully. IBSA's perspective aligns with South Africa's viewpoint as follows:

> "The Leaders called for the establishment of a Transitional Government (in Madagascar) and the holding of all inclusive, transparent, free and fair elections as envisaged by the Maputo and Addis Ababa Agreements" (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2010, ¶37).

> "The Leaders called on those concerned to reach an agreement on an inclusive transitional government as soon as possible with a view to promoting national unity, reconciliation, democracy and reconstruction. The Leaders underlined the central role of the United Nations in post-conflict Libya and the contribution of the African Union can offer in this process" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶80).

The example of Sudan and the newly independent South Sudan, a core issue for South Africa, is another example of South Africa's success in shaping IBSA's perspective in this regard. In a press conference immediately prior to the creation of the newly independent state of South Sudan in July 2011, South Africa's foreign minister highlighted two important tenets of its position on Sudan and the newly independent South Sudan as follows:

> "It is important for South Africa to manage and maintain a consistent balance at the onset of the separation of South Sudan from the North. The balance would serve as an important indication of South Africa's continued commitment to enhancing relations with the Government of Sudan and new relations with the Government of South Sudan" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2011).

> "South Africa has consistently supported the work of the AUPD and continues to support the work of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel on Darfur (AUHIP) led by former President Thabo Mbeki" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2011).

Later that same year under South Africa's chair of the Fifth IBSA Summit, the IBSA countries discussed Sudan and South Sudan and the Summit Declaration reflects the outcome of those discussions. Demonstrably it is an outcome that aligns with the essential tenants of South Africa's foreign policy as outlined above:

> "The leaders expressed continued support for both Sudan and South Sudan and indicated that they will continue to support AU efforts regarding peace between the two countries as well as the post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts. They also emphasized the importance of close cooperation between both countries and the African Union High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan (AUHIP), led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki and pledged continued support for his work" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶88).

Perhaps the area of primary concern to South Africa and the area that it pursues consistently through IBSA, irrespective of which country holds the Chair, is in

reinforcing the central role of the African Union and African-led institutional processes on the continent, particularly those that concern socio-economic development. South Africa's success in pushing for an evolution in IBSA's position is noteworthy because not only did it gained recognition of and support for African-led processes but more importantly it succeeded in securing India and Brazil's commitment to adhere to the rules and regulations of the respective African Union structures. Successive Summit Declarations show the evolution in IBSA's position on this issue. In 2007, under its Chair of IBSA, South Africa's influence was limited to gaining India and Brazil's support for African processes in strengthening AU structures and recognition of the NEPAD as the key framework for socio-economic development in Africa as follows:

> "The leaders noted the progress being made on the African continent towards the achievement of peace, security, stability and development. They reaffirmed their determination to support these efforts while noting the inextricable link between peace and security on the one hand, and development on the other. They commended the efforts of the African Union and noted the ongoing work to strengthen its structures" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2007, ¶16).

> "The leaders reiterated their firm belief in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) a key framework for socio-economic development in Africa. They acknowledged that the Pan-African Infrastructure Development Fund will, as it evolves, help accelerate Africa's growth and development to meet the objectives as set out in the NEPAD. In this regard, the IBSA partners agreed to associate with the development of the fund in accordance with their respective rules and regulations" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2007, ¶17).

At the Third and Fourth Summits of 2008 and 2010, under the India and Brazil Chairs respectively, South Africa was able to refine IBSA's position in this regard and, through its influence, gain explicit recognition of the priority areas of the NEPAD and its location as an official AU structure. Both these issues were particular objectives of South Africa's African Agenda in those years, which were pursued successfully through IBSA as follows:

> "The leaders reiterated their firm support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the key African Union (AU) socio-economic programme for Africa. Recognizing the central role of infrastructural development in growth and development of Africa, they re-affirmed their continued support of the programme and agreed that further cooperation should continue to focus on NEPAD's identified priorities in this regard in such sectors as ICT, energy, water and sanitation and transport" (IBSA New Delhi Declaration, 2008, ¶37).

> "The Leaders welcomed the 2010 decision of the AU Assembly to further integrate the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) into the AU structures and the re-naming of the NEPAD Secretariat to the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA)" (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2010, ¶33).

> "The Leaders recognized that the further integration of NEPAD as well as the augmented mandate of the NPCA will promote a more holistic and coordinated approach to infrastructural development and in the growth and development of Africa, which will benefit the attainment of NEPAD's identified priorities in such sectors as ICT, energy, water and sanitation and transport" (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2010, ¶3).

However, the success of South Africa's approach concerning the African Agenda was most notable in the year of its Chair, 2011, where an unprecedented number of paragraphs were dominated by African issues and no fewer than four paragraphs dedicated to AU processes alone as follows:

> "The Leaders further welcomed the fact that Africa's most important partners are increasingly aligning their programmatic support as well as their projects with NEPAD principles and policies, and wit the decisions taken by NEPAD and AU structures" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶75).

> "…acknowledge that NEPAD has played an immense role in mobilizing the Africa continent to take the lead in the determination of its destiny. The Leaders noted that NEPAD, through the commitment of African leaders, and with the support of Africa's key partners, including IBSA, has an important role to play in developing the potential of Africa as a potential new global growth pole" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶76).

> "The Leaders welcomed the progress made by the eight NEPAD Champion states in their endeavours to implement the selected priority cross-border projects that will further integrate the regions of African and will contribute to improving intra-African trade" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶77).

> "The Leaders recognized the positive contribution that India and Brazil play in support of the AU in conjunction with NEPAD" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2001, ¶79).

There is an emerging trend discernable and one that was particularly evident in 2011. This trend shows South Africa to be progressively deepening the niche it has carved within IBSA through which is can pursue more overtly its African Agenda. South Africa's notable success in this endeavor within IBSA could be attributed merely to good timing; the fact that the three countries occupied seats on the UNSC at the same time in 2011 as well as the fact that South Africa was the host of the IBSA Summit in 2011, which enabled it as Chair to have unprecedented influence on the IBSA agenda for that year. Undoubtedly 2011 was an opportune year for South Africa to successfully amplify its voice and its influence, in conjunction with its IBSA partners, concerning issues on the global agenda, particularly as they relate to Africa. More than this though, it was also the year in which the first BRICS Summit (including South Africa) was held. Additional global attention was focused on IBSA as a result, primarily because of the overlapping membership. South Africa used this timing as an opportunity to encourage

a stronger Africa focus in IBSA, one that was previously a limited feature in the IBSA Summits. Membership of BRICS, and the proportionately stronger gains South Africa has been able to secure from BRICS with respect to activities and conduct on the continent, may arguably be an important catalyst for South Africa's greater assertion of its African Agenda through IBSA auspices. This strategic approach forms part of an ongoing process on the part of South Africa to encourage all emerging powers, increasingly those active on the African continent, to construct their relationships with Africa, and with particular African countries, as equal partners and on mutually beneficial terms.

4.2.2 Strengthening South-South relations through IBSA

By virtue of its composition alone, IBSA embodies strengthened South-South relations as all three members are firmly located within the Global South beyond their geographic location but more importantly in term of state identity at the international level. Given the reasons for which South Africa pursued the establishment of IBSA, its continued existence as a viable entity in the global arena is testimony to South Africa's ability not only to engage with organizations and formations of the South to further the MDGs and other IDGs but also to initiate such formations in pursuit of its foreign policy objective to strengthen South-South relations over the long term. Substantively, IBSA strengthens South-South relations by advocating South-South cooperation. IBSA's definition of South-South cooperation is outlined in the Brasilia Declaration (2010, ¶26) and the Tshwane Declaration (2011, ¶37 & ¶37) as: "a common endeavor of peoples and countries of the South, a partnership among equals, and must be guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit…South-South cooperation should not be seen as aid, nor should developing countries engaged in South-South cooperation be perceived as donors and recipients." From the outset South Africa's perspective was for IBSA to function beyond trilateral cooperation, itself a concrete example of South-South cooperation, and

provide a framework between Asian, South American and African developing countries around which broader South-South relations could grow and develop. The vision of using IBSA as a framework within which to stimulate broader engagement between Asia, South America and Africa, has yet to come to fruition. The regional groupings to which the three countries belong are to some extent an impediment for effective trans-continental cooperation under the framework of IBSA. This is primarily because of the somewhat uneasy relationship the three countries have with their respective regional groups. The extent to which India, Brazil and South Africa can by themselves within IBSA bring to the table a broader Asian, South American and African grouping in pursuit of strengthening South-South relations seems doubtful, although it has not yet been attempted.

Despite this, trilateral cooperation is progressing, but with mixed results, under the auspices of IBSA's sixteen Working Groups and people-to-people fora. The Working Groups are in the following sectors: Defense, Education, Health, Science and Technology, Trade and Investment, Agriculture, Social Development, Revenue Administration, Tourism, Human Settlements, Culture, Energy, Environment, Transport, Public Administration and Information Society. The following fora function in IBSA as part of the important trilateral civil society groups established to facilitate exchange among the people of the three countries: Academic Forum, Editors Forum, Business Forum, Parliamentary Forum, Local Governance Forum, Women's Forum as well as the Tri-Nation Summit on Small Business. Lyal White (n.d.) is among many scholars who note the "amorphous nature of South-South coalitions", which has traditionally "detracted from the effectiveness of previous South-South initiatives". The Working Groups and people-to-people fora represent an experiment of how, in concrete terms, to strengthen South-South cooperation beyond rhetoric. It is not the place here to detail the activities of each of these groups and forums nor to analyze the degree of success these entities have achieved in terms of implementing the agreements signed in this regard. It is sufficient to point out that although there are mixed results of the Working Groups, with some faring better then others, the presence of these structures provides a unique trilateral framework for engagement and activity where none before

existed. The IBSA Fund is yet another IBSA entity that epitomizes the strengthening of South-South relations in terms of development cooperation undertaken in third countries (cross reference section 4.1.2).

At the global level, South Africa, India and Brazil are united in their recognition and active promotion of the uniquely Southern credentials of IBSA as they relate to the key assumptions [34] of South-South cooperation. As Chair of IBSA, South Africa promulgated the need to give South-South cooperation a dedicated section within successive IBSA Summit Declarations. In this manner, South Africa, along with its partners, is able to amplify its conviction that strengthened South-South relations is a key area that is operational at the global level and critical for driving systemic change in the international arena. This section of the IBSA Declarations also serves to promote South Africa and IBSA's beliefs of the need to place inclusive development at the center of international activity in a bid to eradicate global poverty and inequality:

> "The leaders recommitted themselves to vigorously pursue the deepening of South-South cooperation for sustainable development" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2007, ¶4).
>
> "…imperative to strengthen the collective voice of the South, in order to assist in its development efforts" (IBSA New Delhi Declaration, 2008, ¶11).
>
> "the Leaders concurred that South-South cooperation is a particular and essential instrument for development" (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2010, ¶25).

In light of this, IBSA is able to credibly predicate its interaction with reference to solidarist claims. IBSA's claim to South-South Solidarity (SSS) however has its critics. Philip Nel and Ian Taylor (2013, p. 1093) interrogate the concept of SSS as "the self-imposed benchmark of IBSA" and undertake an evaluation of the forum according to this measure. Their conclusion that IBSA's foreign economic policies make the claim to SSS somewhat thin is a compelling one but stretches what is a useful argument, backed up by interesting quantitative data, too far. It is true that differences within the Global South have widened in recent years. But it is perhaps too early to judge whether this will impact upon the tradition of strong solidarity that has developed over many years, one that goes beyond formal trade and investment linkages and extends to political coordination within the G77 and cooperation frameworks such as the Buenos Aires Plan of Action on cooperation among developing countries (Ladd, 2010, p. 5). IBSA's

commitment to strengthening South-South relations, which includes the concepts of South-South cooperation and SSS, does not stand and fall based upon narrow trade policy considerations. This is particularly the case where the negative impact on neighboring LDC countries is, by Nel and Taylor's own admission, largely the unintended consequences of some of the economic policies of the respective IBSA countries and therefore amenable to amendment once identified. Thus, the extent to which their argument succeeds in undermining IBSA's South-South credentials as a whole is limited. Nel and Taylor do not take sufficient account of the strategic logic of socio-economic development and the interest-based solidarity that is the driving motivator for strengthening South-South relations, at least on the part of South Africa. In their conclusion they do note that IBSA appears to follow an instrumental solidarity that belies the qualitative difference of IBSA which, they argue, implies a special responsibility to favor LDCs in the spirit of South-South solidarity. However, as this research study has shown, the qualitative difference of IBSA lies in its form and function as a strategic partnership at the mini-lateral level rather than with reference to its particular agenda.

4.2.3 Participating in the global system of governance through IBSA

South Africa's foreign policy objective on reform of the global governance system comes within the broader key priority area to participate in the global governance system. Carpenter (2009, p. 7) notes that the focus is on Africa and the Global South as the departure points in the country's approach to the global system of governance. As a consequence, this foreign policy priority works toward the broader objective of increasing South Africa's participation in the economic, social and political systems of global governance through active participation in multilateral institutions.

IBSA has proved itself a useful diplomatic platform for dialogue and coordination of policy positions in order to give South Africa, and its partners, a stronger voice on issues of global governance in support of multilateralism. It also assists in its ability to build viable issue-based coalitions within international institutions where the respective

interests converge. The IBSA Summit Declarations are necessarily very long because there is a deliberate effort on the part of South Africa, and its IBSA partners, to publicly and clearly demonstrate active participation in global governance structures with an emphasis on those issues where IBSA coordinates its policy positions. The Summit declarations show that IBSA collaborates to differing degrees, depending upon the issue, in the UN and its Security Council when their term as non-permanent members coincide (as in 2011), as well as in other relevant international fora including the UN specialized agencies and groupings such as the G20, G25, WTO, WIPO, BASIC, BRICS and the G77 + China. In this approach, which makes the Summit Declarations somewhat laborious, IBSA coordination and cooperation is demonstrably aimed at proactive participation in the global governance system in its broadest sense and includes, but is not limited to, the issue of global governance reform.

Within the context of its key priority area to participate in the global governance system, the structure of the current global system forms an integral part of this foreign policy priority area and is seen by South Africa as being an obstacle to the full realization of this priority. It is evident that the current global governance system is becoming increasingly unfair because the system is unable to keep pace with changes in the global distribution of power. As a result, in its current structure, the system is unable to reflect the fact that the global environment has evolved since the end of World War Two. In his opening address at the Fifth IBSA Summit President Zuma (2013) contextualized South Africa and IBSA's common positions on the urgent and critical importance for transformation in the global governance system by arguing that the current configuration of global governance is skewed towards the developed North and that this is a structural constraint that continues to make the achievement of a better life difficult for the majority of the world's population. In this respect the complementary interests of India, Brazil and South Africa on the issue of reform find strong convergence, particularly in terms of UNSC reform. As a reflection of this strong convergence the IBSA Declarations spell out in considerable detail the joint positions of India, Brazil and South Africa on this reform as well as prescribing the actions needed to achieve this reform. According to South Africa's IBSA focal point the paragraph(s)

on UNSC reform is/are one of the easiest paragraphs in the Summit Declaration to craft (Dr A. Sooklal, personal communication, August 7, 2013). A well-placed Brazilian diplomat attributes this to the fact that the minimum common denominator on this issue is larger within IBSA than it is in BRICS (G.S. Goffredo, personal communication, August 13, 2013).

IBSA is perhaps most strongly associated with the dual objectives to pursue reform of the global system of governance, particularly UNSC reform, on the one hand while strengthening the rules-based multilateral system on the other in order to enhance international responsiveness to the needs of developing countries. Indeed such narrow views of IBSA have reform of global governance as the forum's primary purpose and sole aim. In her article on how to maintain a distinct role for IBSA in the years ahead and avoid it being "BRICked up", Sidiropoulos (2013, p. 286) argues that IBSA's purpose should have an overt political and global governance thrust in the years ahead and provide an alternative construct of the international institutional landscape. One reading of Flemes might find him in agreement with Sidiropoulos in that he too has noted that IBSA's soft balancing strategy aims at halting a lack of representation of the developing world in global governance (Flemes, 2007, p. 7). Similarly for Beri (2008, p. 816) the main thrust of IBSA is to equalize the political and economic architecture of the international system by developing a consolidated position of the South on issues related to global governance.

Certainly reform is an important aspect of IBSA's core agenda. But, while not incorrect, this depiction of IBSA is in some ways misleading. Reducing IBSA to a minilateral arrangement in pursuit of reform in the global governance system arguably loses sight of the other important elements of IBSA. As a strategic partnership at the minilateral level, IBSA is a qualitatively distinct arrangement that functions in a multifaceted manner on multiple fronts, at several levels simultaneously in order to ensure its continued relevance in a fluid international system. Consequently, centralizing the global reform agenda does not take adequate account of the trilateral cooperation that takes place in IBSA, including engagement at the level of civil society. In addition, it

places unrealistic expectations on a forum that is far more than a single time-bound purpose. As we have seen this kind of international alignment is arranged around a system principle rather than a purpose in order to ensure that it endures (cross reference section 2.4.1). Therefore in the event that the global reform agenda is realized this would not necessarily mean the dissolution of IBSA or indeed its redefinition. Similarly, the non-achievement of the global reform agenda would not be justification for an assessment of IBSA as having failed in its purpose. Further, the reform agenda being cast as the core of IBSA does not account for the fact that the three countries have complementary, not identical, interests that converge on the issue. This fact means that there is sufficient diplomatic space in which to cross-bargain with the possibility that the detail in the respective positions of India, Brazil and South Africa may diverge somewhat, even if the principle of reform is upheld. Acknowledging the broader agenda and function of IBSA in strengthening South Africa's participation in global governance institutions, including but going beyond the issue of reform, is therefore important and has direct implications for the expansion of IBSA.

There are those who argue that the issue of UNSC reform is in fact a challenge for IBSA rather than a point around which it can coalesce. This is because the three countries have complementary interests on the global reform agenda rather than identical interests. South Africa's position on UNSC reform is derived from and adheres to the common African position encapsulated by the Ezulwini Consensus while India and Brazil derive their positions from that of the G4 to which they belong, along with Japan and Germany. South Africa has hinted that it expects to be one of the countries from Africa to gain a permanent seat on a reformed UNSC and therefore there are those who consider the Ezulwini Consensus as a limitation on South Africa's objective. The differences between the G4 and Ezulwini positions have been used by those states with entrenched interests in the current UNSC system as a pretext for the non-achievement of the reform process.

The potential for IBSA to align itself more closely with the G4 position on the reform of the UNSC, through the possible accession of Japan to full membership of IBSA or

alternatively though a single-issue type of outreach cooperation mechanism such as an IBSA plus 1, would be unlikely given South Africa's commitment to the common African position on this issue. Notwithstanding, the fact of these complementary interests in IBSA on UNSC reform places IBSA in a unique position. It straddles the G4 and Ezulwini Consensus positions in such a way as to create sufficient diplomatic space to conduct useful discussion around the two perspectives and extend that discussion to other relevant states/groups. This process may already have begun. The G4's statement issued at the UNGA in September 2013 stated "the Ministers emphasized the importance to enhance dialogue and outreach with African countries on Security Council reform" (G4, 2013). It is possible that the G4's initiative to enhance dialogue and outreach with African countries on UNSC reform is the result of a strategic approach on the part of South Africa to leverage the bridging role IBSA could play. It may be possible to bring the core decision-making states in the G4 and the Ezulwini Consensus to the table for constructive discussion and make progress. It is no coincidence that following closely upon this statement, the Fifth IBSA Summit Declaration seems to support the utility of IBSA as a coalescing point on the issue of UNSC reform:

> "They discussed the G4 initiative of a draft resolution on expansion of the Security Council in both categories and improvement of its working methods. The initiative has been supported by a wide coalition of Member States, from all regional groups of the United Nations. Therefore, they expressed the view that such strong support should be considered as the basis for further discussion in the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations on the UNSC reform" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶8).

What is certain at this early stage is that there is a clear indication from the members of IBSA to use its complementary interests on UNSC reform as a strength from which to explore the possibility of a strategic approach towards the varying positions on UNSC reform, starting with those of the G4 and Ezulwini Consensus. It is too early to tell whether this initiative will progress, much less the degree to which it will succeed. Important indicators of progress may be contained in further G4 and IBSA Summit Declarations, particularly in 2014 and 2015.

4.2.4 Strengthening political and economic relations through IBSA

It has been shown that strategic partnership at the minilateral level is uniquely able to reinforce relations at the bilateral level (cross reference Chapter 2). Zelia Campbell points to a possible reason as to why this is so. Campbell (as cited in Stuenkel, 2014a) sees IBSA as a platform to "induce a climate whereby three culturally so different countries can get to know each other and, in the process, develop an atmosphere of mutual trust." In addition, it will be recalled that it is within this key priority area that South Africa drives its domestic agenda most directly with the countries it has relations with at the bilateral level (cross reference section 3.4.6). IBSA is an additional channel through which South Africa supports and, where necessary, boosts its domestic objectives by garnering the necessary political will to reinforce the central messages of its domestic policy at the highest level of state and government.

Before proceeding one word of caution is necessary; it is not the argument here that IBSA makes a direct impact on the relations South Africa enjoys with India and Brazil. The bilateral relationship South Africa enjoys with these two countries predates IBSA, is not dependent upon the success of IBSA and is unlikely to be negatively affected by IBSA. South Africa is particularly concerned to compartmentalize the different channels of engagement in order that issues on the bilateral agenda remain on that agenda and are not raised within the IBSA format and vice versa. According to an anonymous source, in the early days of IBSA South Africa's bilateral relations with Brazil were conducted through IBSA neglecting the formal Joint Commission responsible for bilateral relations. This placed an unnecessary strain on relations with Brazil at the bilateral level until a determined effort was made to correct this. One of the purposes of the state visit undertaken to South Africa by Brazil's Lula da Silva in July 2010 was to "give political impetus to the advancement and consolidation of our bilateral relations…especially on the importance of the Joint Commission and a more determined focus on the various aspects of our bilateral program" (Department of International Relations & Cooperation, 2010). Where there is a need to discuss the bilateral agenda, separate meetings are arranged and take place on the sidelines of the IBSA Summit in order to ensure that the

issues remain compartmentalized. IBSA can be seen as another layer of an increasingly dense network of political and diplomatic relations between the three countries and is used by South Africa in some instances to positively reinforce (though, pertinently, not drive) political and economic relations with India and Brazil. As a reflection of this IBSA is located within the DIRCO and has a staff complement that is separate from the bilateral activities. Thus within the DIRCO, the strengthening of political and economic relations or decline thereof falls firmly within the purview of bilateral relations and is dealt with primarily through the bilateral channel with a dedicated staff complement designated to this end. This is not the case for IBSA's sectoral cooperation (see below).

Apart from the Summit process, the sixteen Working Groups of IBSA are structures through which South Africa is able to reinforce its bilateral relations with India and Brazil on a sectoral basis. Within line-function government departments the section and staff complement, which works on IBSA is also responsible for relations with these countries at the bilateral level. The dual competencies of these sections within each of the relevant line-function government departments ensure harmonization in the objectives, which are pursued as a result of a coordinated approach. This approach significantly reduces the risk of pursuing contradictory objectives through the two channels of engagement. It ensures that South Africa's approach through IBSA conforms to the overall strategic objectives of the country towards India and Brazil, as identified by that particular government department on the issue within its competence. Importantly, the IBSA Working Groups are concerned with leveraging the complementarities within trilateral sectoral cooperation to initiate projects that are unique to IBSA. These do not replicate those programs that are already occurring at the bilateral level. In order to arrive at a particular IBSA program of action the three countries work from their own domestic policy perspective first and seek to promote the related objectives in this regard.

The example of the IBSA Working Group on Social Development is a case in point. South Africa leads this Working Group and according to a report issued by this Working Group South Africa presented its comprehensive social security system and its

Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Brazil presented its Zero Hunger Strategy framework and its Bolsa Família (family grant) program while India presented its Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Young (SGSY) self-employment program for the rural poor as well as India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) (Swanson-Jacobs, 2007). There is an inherent value in the reciprocal exchange of knowledge, information sharing and expertise in the area of social development given that all three countries face a similar challenge of persistent poverty and inequality. The benefit of sharing best practices on social development has been valuable in the development of South Africa's own policy vision concerning social development encapsulated in the National Development Plan 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2012, pp. 352-285) and supports its bilateral activities with India and Brazil in this instance.

The Working Group on Trade and Investment is another example of how South Africa uses the IBSA platform as an additional channel through which to reinforce, but not drive, its bilateral economic relations with India and Brazil. Trade is recognized as an instrument of industrial policy, the increase of which is an important objective of South Africa's bilateral relations with other countries, particularly India and Brazil as emerging middle powers. Starting from a negligible base, as neither Brazil nor India had relations with the Apartheid state, intra-IBSA imports and exports grew much faster in the decade preceding IBSA than did total IBSA imports and exports in the decade after IBSA was created (Woolfrey, 2013, p. 12). This could be attributed to the fact that during this period all three countries embarked upon a process of unilateral tariff-cutting and multilateral trade liberalization under the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). After the establishment of the IBSA Forum and the IBSA Working Group on Trade and Investment dedicated to accelerating trade and investment relations among the three countries, intra-IBSA trade increased further and in line with the trade targets set at Summit level. The first combined trade target was to reach USD 10 billion in total IBSA trade by 2010 and was achieved ahead of schedule in 2009 (Davies, 2011). The second combined trade target is USD 25 billion in total IBSA trade by 2015, which, with current data, may be surpassed ahead of the target date. The

achievement in reaching these trade targets on time may be attributed to the additional impetus injected by the IBSA Forum. This forum placed a sufficient amount of pressure on each state at the bilateral level to prioritize trade facilitation efforts amongst these three countries where previously none existed. Indeed, at the political level, IBSA leaders take credit for the growing intra-IBSA trade and refer to the importance of the IBSA Action Plan on Trade Facilitation for Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment as well as the IBSA Business Forum in this regard.

However, a deeper examination of intra-IBSA trade shows a more nuanced picture than this. Sean Woolfrey (2013) is the only scholar to examine the impact of the IBSA Forum on the trade relations between the three countries. He undertakes an in-depth analysis of intra-IBSA trade prior to the establishment of IBSA and then compares these figures to those after the establishment of IBSA. He also examines IBSA trade with traditional partners in the developed world such as the EU, the USA and Japan as well as IBSA trade with the developing world with countries such as China. Based upon figures from the Global Trade Atlas (WTA) database, Woolfrey (2013, pp. 15-16) reaches the following conclusions: first, there has been a significant increase in the absolute value of intra-IBSA trade since the establishment of the IBSA Forum; second, intra-IBSA trade has grown marginally faster than overall IBSA trade internationally; and third, IBSA countries are conducting proportionately more of their trade with one another now than before the establishment of the IBSA Forum. Importantly for Woolfrey (2013, p. 16) is that the data does not show, and cannot show, whether increased intra-IBSA trade has resulted from the establishment of the IBSA Forum. He argues that, if anything, the fact that IBSA trade with China has grown faster than intra-IBSA trade of the last decade of IBSA's existence (2003-2013), "suggests that gains in intra-IBSA trade may simply be part of a larger global trend towards South-South trade, a trend influenced by, *inter alia*, diverging economic growth performances between the countries of the developing South and the industrialized North" (Woolfrey, 2013, p. 16). This is a powerful argument and one that is echoed by Basada, Tok and Winters (2013) in their analysis of the impact of the BRICS Forum on intra-BRICS Forum (cross reference section 5.2.1).

However, if global trends are shifting towards South-South trade on a sustained basis over the long term and within the context of what seems to be a definitive shift in global economic and financial flows away from the developed North, then it arguably does not matter whether the IBSA Forum is the cause of increased intra-IBSA trade because intra-IBSA trade will in all likelihood continue to grow in line with this trend. Whether this sustained increase in intra-IBSA trade is a result of these global trends or the result of the IBSA Forum itself, although an interesting academic question, is certainly not germane to the overarching political and diplomatic argument for IBSA. Neither is it sufficient evidence to argue that the forum has failed based upon a misplaced expectation that IBSA should be driving intra-IBSA trade. Where IBSA does have a realistic role concerning trade, as Flemes (2007, p. 24) points out, is in the area of trade facilitation and the improvement of transport and infrastructure links. Soule-Kohndou (2013, p. 12) similarly views IBSA's utility as a "trade booster" in that it provides a platform to collectively meet and reduce the transaction costs of separate bilateral meetings. Carpenter (2009, p. 5) supports this perspective by stating that it is "IBSA's role not to direct or dictate trade, but to facilitate it." Thus, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is not inaccurate to argue that the significant growth in intra-IBSA trade since the establishment of the IBSA Forum results from a culmination of factors. One of these factors could be the IBSA Forum itself and the work done under the Trade and Investment Working Group to facilitate bilateral level initiatives in the area of trade.

4.2.5 Strengthening political and economic integration of SADC through IBSA

This is the foreign policy priority for which South Africa has yet to carve a niche within the IBSA. The extent to which South Africa is able to pursue in IBSA its objectives within the key priority area to strengthen the political and economic integration of SADC is limited to the economic context within which South Africa negotiates. For instance, South Africa needs to articulate and negotiate particular trade agreements as part of its regional bloc. Thus a potential IBSA FTA is dealt with within

the context of South Africa's objectives for the region, in consideration of SACU policy, and is assessed in terms of the degree to which such a proposal would align with and support the economic integration project of SADC.

The protracted negotiations around the creation of an IBSA FTA shows the limits of South Africa's success in carving a niche in IBSA for its foreign policy objectives in strengthening regional integration. According to Stuenkel (2014b) IBSA has notably been unable to make any progress towards an all-encompassing FTA agreement in the past ten years' of its existence, despite repeated calls at Summit level for its creation, as reflected in the IBSA Brasilia Declaration (2006, ¶45) and the IBSA New Delhi Declaration (2008, ¶34), and despite the regular meetings of representatives of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), MERCOSUR and India that have been organized by the IBSA Forum. Rather than pointing to IBSA's failure in this regard, it is perhaps more useful to examine what South Africa could do within IBSA to carve a niche for itself with respect to its objectives for its immediate region so as to overcome the technical obstacles that frustrate the creation of a MERCOSUR-SACU-India FTA. By doing this South Africa may create for itself sufficient negotiating space to enable it to demand and succeed in vigorous cross-bargaining on technical issues to ensure that such an FTA would truly benefit the SACU.

4.2.6 Strengthening relations with formations in the North through IBSA

At this stage the extent to which South Africa pursues its objectives within the key priority area to strengthen relations with formations of the North is limited. This is because South Africa's interactions with formations in the developed North such as the South Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, AGOA, G20, G8, OECD, the World Economic Forum (WEF) and in the TICAD process are largely conducted individually and with reference to the African context as part of the African Union. Its policy positions are informed by the applicable African Union and SADC policy positions rather than by those of IBSA. The fact that India, Brazil and South Africa are able to

coordinate and cooperate where they find themselves in the same outreach mechanism or dialogue with one or any of these Northern formations, such as the G8 + 5, as part of the group of "enhanced engagement" status countries with the OECD or indeed within the G20, is more a testimony to the like-mindedness of the three. This like-mindedness tends towards a natural convergence of interests that exists irrespective of IBSA rather than because of IBSA.

This is an important nuance to highlight because it has a crucial implication in the diplomatic arena. Politically the respective positions that South Africa, India and Brazil take within the above-mentioned formations, though to some extent coordinated, are not drawn into the IBSA context as exclusively IBSA positions. They permit other states and are often arrived at with the input from other states or indeed initiated by other states with the three countries in support. In addition, there is no obligation for IBSA to derive for themselves a common position going into these fora. Therefore all three states retain their autonomy and preserve sufficient diplomatic space for negotiation with other states in what is often a broader coalition of states while recognizing a natural kinship on some issues. In recognition of the diplomatic and political importance of labels, IBSA Summit Declarations rarely make explicit reference to formal IBSA positions. Instead they prefer to make issue-based statements upon which the three countries agree but which do not mean that they are IBSA positions particularly as they are caucused with other countries. The first and fifth Summit Declarations stand out as the two rare instances where the viewpoints each country took individually, within the G8 and the G20 respectively, in conjunction with other countries, were brought under IBSA auspices:

> "Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their support for the joint proposals made by Brazil, China, India, Mexico, the Republic of Congo and South Africa in the Position Paper released on the occasion of the recent G-8 Summit meeting in Russia" (IBSA Brasilia Declaration, 2006, ¶9).

> "As members of the G20, IBSA Countries reaffirmed their support for the Group as the premier forum for international economic cooperation. The Leaders stressed the importance of sustaining long-term capital flows to developing countries to stimulate investment, especially in infrastructure and called upon Multilateral Development Banks and Regional Development Banks to mobilize more resources and to find ways to expand their lending capacity to developing countries" (IBSA Tshwane Declaration, 2011, ¶11).

4.3 The impact of IBSA on South Africa's ability to access economic opportunity

The focus of this section looks beyond the economic potential in IBSA to isolate concrete areas in which membership of IBSA has made a discernable impact upon South Africa's ability to access the economic opportunity that is so often mentioned in articles concerning IBSA. It is not only the ability to more effectively access the economic potential available in its heightened relations with India and Brazil that is important for South Africa but also to make a positive impact upon the agenda, rules and decisions taken within global governance institutions in terms of trade and investment in order to secure its interests, the interests of Africa and the broader developing world. Flemes (2007, p. 16) recognizes this two-pronged utility of IBSA by arguing that the most important foreign policy instruments of IBSA are "entangling diplomacy" and "economic strengthening". The former being the use of rules and procedures of international institutions to influence the dominant state's foreign policy while the latter aims at a shift of relative economic power through trading blocs and other types of sector cooperation that increases economic growth while directing trade away from non-members. He goes on to argue that IBSA has the ability to determine aspects of the institutional agenda in which they participate, as evidenced in the decisive role they play in the G20, the WTO, the Doha Development Round as well as within the broader UN system of institutions, in order to influence emerging international norms in favor of their interests (Flemes, 2007, p. 17). Both instruments of IBSA have proved to be an opportunity for South Africa to better position itself in order ot access the global economic opportunity available through impacting upon the rules of global economic governance on the one hand and by engaging in trilateral sectoral cooperation on the other.

The coordination of India, Brazil and South Africa within the WTO on the cross-cutting issues of public health, trade and intellectual property is a case in point. In 2001, India, Brazil and South Africa played a central role in this regard by successfully lobbying for the acceptance of a waiver in the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement on Public Health, which stated that intellectual property should not

take precedence over public health (Du Preez, 2007, p. 57). This meant that compulsory licenses could be issued for any drugs that treat any disease that constitutes a severe health emergency in a country and that no royalties need be paid in such a case. This was recognized by IBSA as a positive step forward. The waiver however allows such countries to produce these drugs for domestic use only, which severely limits legal trade in these medicines. In the case of HIV/AIDS in South Africa the ban on trade in this regard negatively impacted upon the government's ability to fully realize its HIV/AIDS prevention strategy, which included the provision of affordable generic anti-retrovirals to its affected population. In 2003, using the HIV/AIDS crisis in the country, South Africa spearheaded IBSA's influence within the WTO's public health negotiations to introduce a "paragraph 6" waiver into the TRIPS Agreement on Public Health. This waiver made it possible for countries that suffer serious health crises to override international pharmaceutical patents by importing generic drugs from other countries under compulsory licenses (Du Preez, 2007). As one of the leading manufacturers of generic medicines, IBSA's efforts in the WTO in this regard enhanced South Africa's ability to access the economic opportunity available at the global level in the manufacture of and trade in generic medicines. This has a direct impact on domestic public health and access to affordable medication, particularly anti-retrovirals. The positive spins offs of this can be seen in the health of the domestic workforce, the number of people in the workforce, as well as in the area of research and development related to innovation. South Africa also finds IBSA to be a useful platform from which to augment its influence in the G20 on agricultural issues as well as in the NAMA 11 on non-agricultural issues.

IBSA's sectoral collaboration, under the auspices of the Working Groups, is another way in which IBSA aims at mutually reinforcing economic strength by synergizing their complementarities in the areas of industry, services, trade and technology through the sharing of expertise and best practice (Du Preez, 2007, p. 19). It is true that there is a great deal of knowledge-sharing, exchange of information and expertise as well as learning of best practice in specific issue areas conducted under the auspices of the Working Groups and people-to-people fora. Also, there is no doubt that these

discussions impact upon government thinking on its own domestic policies. Speaking to the IBSA Business Forum in 2011 South Africa's Minister of Trade and Industry pointed to IBSA's value in this regard,

> "As South Africa, we have learned an enormous amount in terms of our own policies on small business development from the relationship which we have in the tri-nation with NSIC of India and the Sebrae of Brazil. We follow very closely what you are all doing in terms of Industrial Policy. We study what you are doing, we learn from you and it help us enormously and we hope as well that we are able to contribute in terms of the development of your own policies as well" (Davies, 2011).

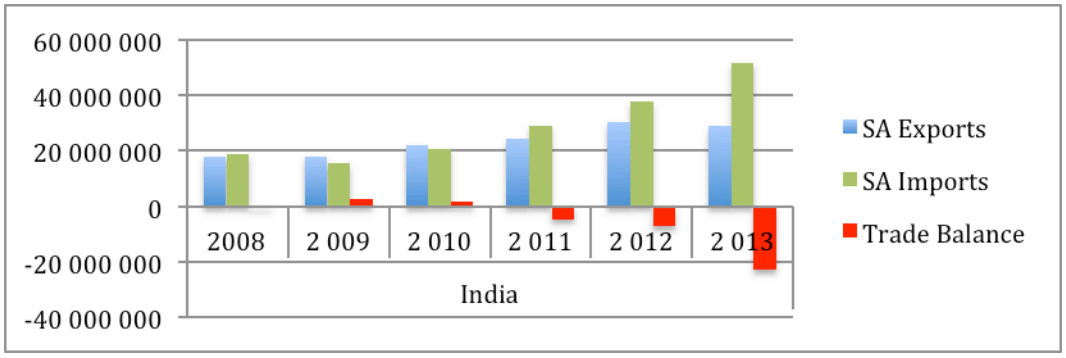
However, it is a challenge to isolate with sufficient certainty the particular threads of an IBSA discussion that have contributed to the refinement of domestic policy. In most instances it is difficult, if not impossible, to trace a particular refinement in the national economic policy back to its origins in IBSA.

An UNCTAD report on IBSA in 2006 noted that while the IBSA partnership is essentially based on the building blocs of bilateral economic relations amongst the three countries "it is equally important that it should not just be a sum of its parts but should harness the synergies and value added of a truly tripartite engagements…through trilateral agreements, undertaking and projects towards convergence, cooperation and collaboration" (Puri, 2007, p. 11). Reflecting this concern, agreements in fifteen of the sixteen areas of IBSA's sectoral cooperation have been signed, including one in the civil society Women's Forum. These agreements aim at furthering cooperation and collaboration amongst the IBSA countries and identifying IBSA projects and initiatives that are separate from bilateral initiatives but which draw on the synergies and complementarities in each country's domestic policy. Where the sectoral agreements are implementated, such as in the areas of Trade and Investment, Transport, as well as in Revenue Administration the Working Group's utility in opening up the economic opportunity in that sector is clearly evident.

As discussed earlier, the IBSA Action Plan on Trade Facilitation for Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment (2006) and the subsequent MOU (2008) in this regard has had a positive spin-off effect for South Africa's bilateral trade with India and Brazil respectively (cross reference 4.2.4.). Despite the three countries

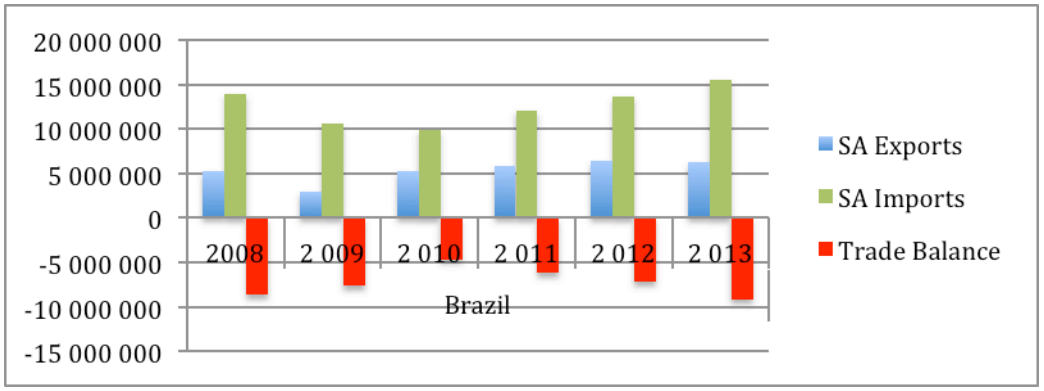
not being natural trading partners, South Africa's total trade with India registered an increase of 119% from R36 895 660 billion in 2008 to R80 844 176 billion in 2013 (see table 1); in the same period South Africa's trade with Brazil, although more moderate, showed a 13% increase from R19 287 020 billion to R 21 852 962 billion (see table 2). The persistent trade deficit South Africa has with its IBSA partners is a concern and shows that South Africa can do more in utilizing the economic opportunities available in the Indian and Brazilian markets.

Table 1: South Africa's bilateral trade with India



Source: Department of Trade & Industry, South Africa (as at 1 April 2014)

Table 2: South Africa's bilateral trade with Brazil



Source: Department of Trade & Industry, South Africa (as at 1 April 2014)

Within the Working Group on Revenue Administration, the IBSA Agreement on Customs and Tax Administration has brought together these functions of Government in order to enhance cooperation, exchange information, build capacity and share experiences (Agreement on Customs and Tax Administration, 2007). The

implementation of this agreement has benefited South Africa, particularly its revenue collection service through the knock-on effect it has upon the state's increased ability to contribute to its economic growth. In 2008, Brazil hosted an IBSA Risk Management seminar and India held IBSA seminars on customs valuation and transfer pricing. In 2011, South Africa hosted an IBSA Tax Evasion and Avoidance seminar as well as seminar for Customs Technical Experts for Information Exchange. This has led to a further agreement on the establishment of an IBSA Center for Exchange of Tax Information (IBSA CETI), the purpose of which is to supplement the ongoing work in identifying and curbing abusive tax avoidance transactions, arrangements and schemes (Memorandum of Understanding on the creation of IBSA CETI, 2010). The coordinated "real time" exchange of tax information as well as the sharing of best practices and technological improvements had made a positive impact upon the work of the South African Revenue Service (SARS) in its pursuit of tax collection.

Similarly, the Action Plan on Civil Aviation Projects (2008), which builds on the MOU (2005) in this regard, as well as the Action Plan on Maritime Projects (2008) provides a framework (consistent with the respective countries' domestic legislations) to enable interventions that will turn historical challenges in inter-connectivity into opportunities. Thus projects such as training in critical aviation skills, technology transfer in airspace and navigation systems as well as cooperation in maritime regulatory functions, data sharing, shipbuilding and repair, port development and port handling technology all contribute towards South Africa's ability to position itself more effectively to gain from the economic opportunities available in enhanced trilateral relations. The MOU on Merchant Shipping and Maritime Transport (2006) provides for the creation of a Maritime Liaison Committee responsible for the development of mutually beneficial relations between the respective shipping organizations and also for cooperation on the task of enhancing and stimulating the steady growth of maritime traffic. It also accords equal treatment of one another's vessels in ports with that of their own vessels. These provisions assist in opening up ease of access to India and Brazil and could reduce the associated costs of doing business with these countries. In terms of aviation, according to a DIRCO official, IBSA provided a useful framework for ACSA's recent airport

concessions in Brazil and India (N. Dikweni, personal communication, August 7, 2013). In February 2012 ACSA (in partnership with the Brazilian company Invepar) won a 20-year concession for the expansion, maintenance and operation of Guarulhos International Airport in São Paulo, Brazil ("ACSA consortium wins bid for Brazil's busiest airport", 2012). ACSA also has a 10% stake in a company that has a concession to manage Chatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai, India ("SA consortium wins India airport bid", 2006).

4.4 Evaluation and Interpretation

Using a three-stage analysis by which to measure a state's GSP, this Chapter examined the extent to which membership of IBSA impacts upon South Africa's GSP, the extent of the impact and the areas in which the impact is identifiable. Table 3 provides a summary of the findings.

These findings reveal that membership of IBSA has made a positive impact upon South Africa's GSP in all three areas by which GSP is measured. However, this impact is limited, often only to the diplomatic sphere, and discernable only in specific issue areas. These areas are: the global development discourse, South-South cooperation, global governance, global trade and investment, global democratic discourse, intra-IBSA trade and investment, intra-IBSA exchange of knowledge, skills and technology transfer as well as intra-IBSA tourism. Because the results of this case study are limited and discernable only in certain issue areas they appear to belie the validity of the central hypothesis of this thesis. Indeed, this case study cannot on its own respond to the argument that global market forces are a greater determinant of the ability of strategic partnership at the minilateral level to enhance a state's GSP. Based upon only one case study, the results yielded are therefore not sufficiently convincing to justify affirming the general hypothesis of this thesis that strategic partnership at the minilateral level enhances the GSP of its member states. Examination of another, comparative, case study in South Africa's membership of the BRICS Forum is required in order to probe

further the central hypothesis and shed light of the central research questions in this thesis.

Despite this, these results of this case study are important in two respects. First, by determining the extent of the impact of IBSA on South Africa's GSP and identifying the areas in which the greatest impact is discernable, this case study provides useful insight into how South Africa should seek to strengthen IBSA. Given the establishment of BRICS and coinciding with the 10th anniversary of IBSA, this has important policy implications for the Government of South Africa that seeks to maintain its dual membership of IBSA and BRICS on parallel but separate tracks. Second, the results are able to shed light on the second research question of this thesis which relates to what IBSA is better suited to achieve without the presence of China and Russia (the two other countries in BRICS). This has important implications for the future of IBSA.

Based on the findings in this case study South Africa should maintain and proactively seek to strengthen its membership of IBSA in close alignment with the areas identified herein that have made a discernable and positive impact upon South Africa's GSP. In this manner, South Africa will ensure the continued relevance of IBSA for the country's domestic agenda and by extension its national interest. It is also of particular importance given the external environmental context of an evolving globalized international system that is in a state of flux but moving towards a particular type of multipolarity. This is characterized as a networked world order of internal comparison whereby network powers alternately compete (in the positive sense) and cooperate with one another as a reflection of their over-riding concern for wealth (anything valued), the acquisition and possession thereof.

Table 3

Summary: The impact of membership of IBSA on South Africa's GSP		
	The Impact	The areas
The extent to which South Africa projects its influence on the global stage, shape global beliefs and perceptions Linked to "standing" as an end of state	Limited to certain niche areas	Global development discourse and agenda Global South discourse and agenda Global reform agenda Global discourse on democracy, with particular reference to societies in transition
The extent to which South Africa carves a niche through which to pursue its domestic agenda through its foreign policy priorities at the global level Linked to "security" as an end of state	Strong in two of the six foreign policy priority areas Limited Limited Limited Limited	South-South cooperation & Participation in global governance African Agenda Political and economic relations Political and economic integration of SADC Relations with formations of the North
The extent to which South Africa can access global economic opportunity Linked to "wealth" as an end of state	Strong Strong Limited but difficult to determine Limited Limited	Global discourse on trade and investment Knowledge exchange and skills transfer Intra-IBSA trade and investment Technology transfer Tourism

Accordingly, IBSA should work towards a) deepening and b) broadening its impact at the global systemic level in the areas of (in priority order): global development, South-South cooperation; the global discourse on democracy with particular reference to societies in transition as well as global discourse on political, economic (limited to trade and investment), social and environmental governance. In the first instance, IBSA could deepen its impact in these areas fulfilling the forum's unique capacity both as a result of its particular composition in membership and as an incubator for the development of norms and norm-setting agendas. IBSA is well placed to become a norm entrepreneur in these areas because the normative elements are already contained within IBSA as a fundamental to the shared values, principles and goals of the strategic partners. Part of deepening IBSA's impact in these areas at the global level would be to demonstrate the viability of the norms promulgated through practical application. The multidimensional and multifaceted nature of strategic partnership at the minilateral level that operates spherically means that IBSA is already organized to do this. Therefore the IBSA Fund should continue to function but with the addition of more projects that demonstrate the viability of the norms promulgated by the three countries and, where necessary, initiate an increase in the funds contributed by each country to the Fund in line with their capacity to do so. Also, the Working Groups and civil society forums should be streamlined thematically to correspond to the key areas outlined in Table 3. Cooperation should also be oriented towards demonstrating the viability of these norms in practice. Deepening the impact of IBSA at the systemic level in the key areas outlined requires a coordinated IBSA public diplomacy strategy that would both develop IBSA as a brand and market that brand internationally. This would include amplifying the work of the IBSA Fund as well as the Working Groups and civil society forums to draw the link between IBSA as a norm entrepreneur in the areas outlined with the viability of those norms in its practical application.

In the second instance, IBSA could consider broadening its impact in the areas outlined above by giving positive consideration to the expansion of IBSA. This could entail either the expansion of the strategic partnership itself or alternatively, expansion along the lines of issue-specific outreach mechanisms around the core IBSA group. An

expansion of the strategic partnership itself would need to maintain the core essentials of IBSA in terms of the system principle around which it is arranged, be goal oriented, maintain its informality with low commitments costs, prioritize economic exchange and acknowledge a certain amount of inherent rivalry within the group. And expanded IBSA may also be able to more credibly augment its influence on the global governance reform agenda, issues of human rights and respect for international law etc. There is no doubt that the addition of Turkey, Indonesia and Mexico would serve this purpose in the long-term. Alternatively, outreach mechanisms with other states could leverage IBSA as a platform for dialogue and coordination and cooperation for issue-specific alignments, starting with, but not limited to, the key areas in which IBSA already has an impact (at least from a South African perspective). BASIC (IBSA plus China) on global environmental issues is an example of the kind of outreach mechanism possible. To do this IBSA should proactively seek out strategic partners who themselves occupy, or are projected to occupy, key strategic positions on the various global discourses that relate to development, South-South cooperation, democracy and societies in transition as well as on political, economic (trade and investment), social and environmental governance. The normative elements contained within this type of outreach mechanism are the intended status, which the prospective partners hope to achieve by being considered strategic partners on a particular issue. Partnership-building in this manner could result in the development of issue-specific alignments that may potentially straddle the divide between North and South, developed and developing, emerging and lesser developed and act as viable bridge-builders between the various negotiating positions. Expansion construed along the lines of issue-specific outreach partners in this manner would mitigate the associated risks inherent in expansion of the strategic partnership itself. These risks include: the inherent difficulty of reaching consensus the greater the number of member states around the table, an inevitable loss of flexibility and maneuverability in the structure and function of the alignment as a direct result of an expanded membership, the challenge of scheduling meetings between a larger number of political principals whose diaries are already full as well as the possibility of the new configuration becoming viewed as a rival to BRICS. This latter risk would become particularly problematic in the event that an expanded IBSA inadvertently became

embroiled in the great power politics between the major powers that still occurs in the world today and paralyses the effective functioning of the UNSC; between the West, lead by the United States and Russia, primarily and China. The goal of achieving a qualitative shift in the structure, substance and conduct of international politics over the long-term requires a constructive partnership between traditional powers, with a stake in the current system, and emerging as well as middle emerging powers. It is therefore imperative that an expanded IBSA, either in the core category or by means of outreach mechanisms, strengthens its effectiveness as a qualitatively distinct archetype of international alignment; one that preserves its ability to move seamlessly among and between different states and competing agendas to create flexible coalitions that prioritizes results-oriented cooperation on complex issues on the global agenda in the interests of global stability and peace. It is an open question though as to whether there is sufficient political will in IBSA for an outreach mechanism approach to expansion as this would place a significant number of new demands on both the political principals and the respective bureaucracies in order to implement such as approach.

This case study is designed in a manner that highlights only that which would suit South Africa and in consideration of South Africa's interests. What the results of this research study do not show, and cannot show, are India and Brazil's views on how they would strengthen IBSA or the particular issue-areas these countries may want IBSA to pursue in light of their own interests.

Notes:

[30] According to populations figures of the World Bank 2013 in ranking order: India = 1.25 billion, Brazil = 200.4 million and South Africa = 52.9 million (http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL)

[31] According to World Bank figures 2013 in ranking order: Brazil = USD 2245.7 trillion, India = USD 1876.7 trillion and South Africa = USD 350.6 million (http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD)

[32] Since 2007 there has been discussion to formalize, rationalize, coordinate and provide structure to South Africa's development cooperation through the establishment of the South African International Development Agency (SAIDA), later modified to the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA). In December 2009 parliament approved an initial concept note and conceptual framework for SADPA. In April 2012 DIRCO submitted to the DPSA the SADPA business case; the draft Partnership

Bill; the proposed SADPA organizational structure; and the shared service agreement between the agency and DIRCO. The DPSA approved the proposal and prepared a proclamation for the establishment of the agency to be signed by the president and announced in the Government Gazette during the course of 2013 (at the time of writing this step has yet to be finalized).

[33] The IBSA Fund has achieved remarkable success on the ground. In recognition of the work it has carried out, it was honored with the UN South-South Partnership Award in 2006 and the UN's MDG award in 2010 for utilizing innovative approaches to share, replicate and upgrade successful development experiences for eradicating poverty and hunger in the world. In 2012, the IBSA Trust Fund received another tribute when it received the South-South Champions Award at the Global South-South Development Expo in Austria.

[34] According Moore (2012, pp. 7-8) some of the key assumptions of South-South cooperation include: the belief that trade between Southern states would be less exploitative than that between the South and the North (i.e. trade balances would favor developing countries, rather than those better off); and, the belief that economic interactions between states of the South would be more responsive to the development needs of the South (i.e. investments and aid would be channeled to productive sectors, and not only to social sectors of the economy, and goods would be exported at similar levels of industrial development, rather than the mismatch that prevailed between exports of the advanced economies and their less-developed destinations). Another key assumption arising from the time the 'South-South cooperation' slogan gained traction in the 1960s is that the less advanced economies could progress by de-linking from the advanced economies. Nel & Taylor (2013, p. 1091) argue that South-South cooperation reflects solidarity and as such implies: an element of common responsibility, it implies a mutual attitude of affective empathy flowing from a shared experience that involves common hardship, an attitude of compassionate reciprocity.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CASE STUDY 2:

SOUTH AFRICA'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE BRICS FORUM

As in the first case study, the second case study also interogates the central research question of the thesis by examining the extent to which, and how, strategic partnership at the minilateral level impacts upon the GSP of its member states, if at all. This second case study tests the underlying hypothesis of the research question with reference to the latest instance of this type of international alignment: the BRICS Forum. Although BRICS is still in its infancy, having completed only the first round of Summit meetings (2009 – 2013) there is sufficient information and data available to understand how the forum has impacted upon South Africa's GSP thus far. The focus of this Chapter is to examine whether membership of BRICS has impacted upon South Africa's GSP and if so, to what extent and how. As in the first case study, the critical point of examination in this second case study is not only to determine whether alignment in this strategic partnership at the minilateral level has served to strengthened the GSP of South Africa but also to identify the areas in which this is the case. The result serves to answer the other related research question of this thesis namely: what is it that China and Russia (the two countries not in IBSA) bring to the table in BRICS? This question has implications for the agenda of BRICS going forward.

The second case study is structured according to the same three-stage analysis of GSP (cross reference section 3.1) as with the first case study. First, South Africa's membership of BRICS will be examined to determine the extent to which it has been

able to use BRICS to bring to bear its influence and shape perceptions on the global stage, how and in what respect. By virtue of its composition, which includes Russia and China, two recognized global decision-makers and global agenda-setters by virtue of their respective permanent seats at the UNSC, BRICS operates at the global level with a focus on global agenda item issues and necessarily has a global impact. Thus the extent to which a member state can shape the formation of BRICS itself in terms of its structure, function and decision-making apparatus as well as its agenda has a direct impact at the international level by extension. The analysis will therefore look at the evolution of the BRICS Forum in terms of its origins, structure and function with a particular focus upon the role South Africa has played and the extent to which it is able to bring to bear its influence and shape perceptions on the development of the forum in certain areas. The ability to project influence internationally enhances a state's GSP in a reflexive manner. This leads to the second area of focus, the agenda of BRICS. The agenda of BRICS will be examined with respect to the degree to which South Africa has been able to proactively carve a niche for itself in order to pursue through BRICS its own national agenda, as reflected in its foreign policy priorities. Third, with reference to the multilateral arena and to the BRICS sectoral cooperation mechanisms, these will be examined for the degree to which cooperation has impacted upon South Africa's ability to access the economic opportunities available both within BRICS and more broadly at the global level. The extent to which BRICS impacts upon South Africa's GSP in these three areas necessarily has positive implications for the domestic constituency and the national interest.

5.1 The Impact of BRICS on South Africa's global influence

The establishment of what is today known as the BRICS Forum coincided with South Africa's accession in December 2010. Prior to South Africa's accession the BRIC mechanism, as it was then known, existed as a loose partnership essentially geared towards finding an agenda, creating a structure and determining how it would function. This section will examine BRICS both before and after South Africa's

accession in order to highlight the areas in which South Africa has made a discernable impact in terms of the forum's origins, structure and function thus augmenting its influence at the global level.

5.1.1 The BRIC mechanism prior to South Africa's accession

The origin of the BRICS Forum is traced back to the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) acronym coined by Jim O'Neill of Goldman Sachs (cross reference section 1.2). Thus the impetus for these particular states to come together in a diplomatic and political partnership essentially lies with an American-based global investment banking and securities firm rather than it being a deliberate decision by the member states themselves to partner with one another based upon the perception of commonality or even similarity. The fact that they were all trillion dollar economies would seem to have been sufficient to warrant a partnership. It is a fair point that on their own initiative Russia and China saw a sufficient convergence of interests to form the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2001, while India, Brazil and South Africa separately determined there to be sufficient similarity and convergence in interests to form a trilateral partnership under the auspices of IBSA in 2003. It would be too simplistic though to conclude from this that the BRIC mechanism was an unnatural partnership. Rather it could be indicative of changing attitudes towards international alignment more generally, their utility in an evolving multipolar world order and the shifting motivations that impact upon a state's decision to align. With one acronym, Goldman Sachs appeared to have succeeded in promoting a simple, powerful and ultimately irresistible narrative that summarized all the complex and exciting global changes investment bankers and policy analysts had observed for quite some time, yet hadn't been able to articulate clearly (Stuenkel, 2012). The political and diplomatic opportunity this acronym provided also proved irresistible.

Despite this BRIC was clearly more than an ad hoc quadrilateral political meeting of leaders from the emerging trillion dollar economies. This is because from its earliest stages it attempted to put in place the structures for the mechanisms' sustainability by

having a limited number of sectoral cooperation mechanisms and articulating an intention to strengthen this aspect of the partnership. These sectoral cooperation mechanisms in fact pre-dated the existence of the BRIC mechnism. Russia, under President Vladimir Putin, initiated the first meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York in September 2006, three years before the BRIC political leaders held their first Summit meeting (Ministry of External Affairs of India, 2011). The outcome of this meeting was that the four foreign ministers reiterated their interest in developing multifaceted, quadripartite cooperation. Since which time the BRIC Foreign Ministers have met annually on the fringes of the UNGA held each year in September to promote dialogue on UN-related issues. In addition, the cooperation mechanism between the BRICS Ministers of Finance and Governors of Central Banks has met since 2008, prior to the G20 meetings to formulate common strategies to deal with the global financial crisis and reform of the global financial system (BRIC Finance Ministers, 2008). The regular, documented meetings of these two BRIC cooperative mechanisms is indicative of a recognition, on the part of the BRICS leaders, of the potential to develop the mechanism into a more multidimensional, broad-based and goal-oriented partnership (cross reference section 2.4.2). Based upon the successful coordination established in the multilateral arena on global economic and financial issues within the G20, as well as upon useful dialogue on some global political issues, the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and President Lula da Silva of Brazil proposed holding the First BRIC Summit in Yekaterinburg, Russia on 16 June 2009. This was back-to-back with SCO Summit, itself another instance of a strategic partnership at the mini-lateral level. The second BRIC Summit was held in Brasilia, Brazil on 15 April 2010.

In the absence of a founding document or an instrument of accession it is still possible to delineate the broad contours of an agenda for the BRIC mechanism. These two summit statements show that global developments largely determined the agenda of BRIC and that BRIC responses reflected a convergence of interests in certain issue areas as well as a similar world-view. For instance, BRIC leaders were able to dialogue with one another on the global economic situation and development issues (Joint

Statement of the BRIC Countries' Leaders, 2009) as well as on issues on the international agenda (BRIC Joint Statement, 2010). The particular world-view of the BRIC member states and the principles for which they stand can also be identified as follows: "a more democratic and just multipolar world order based on the rule of international law, equality, mutual respect, cooperation, coordinated action and collective decisions making of all states" as well as support for "political and diplomatic efforts to peacefully resolve disputes in international relations" (Joint Statement of the BRIC Countries' Leaders, 2009, ¶12); the need for "corresponding transformation in global governance in all relevent areas" to reflect the major and swift changes in the world (BRIC Joint Statement, 2010, ¶1); a "strong commitment to multilateral diplomacy with the United Nations playing a central role in dealing with global challenges and threats" (BRIC Joint Statement, 2010, ¶4) and the championing of developing world perspectives on global issues through "increasing dialogue and cooperation within BRIC not only to serving common interests of emerging market economies and developing countries, but also to building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity" (Joint Statement of the BRIC Countries' Leaders, 2009, ¶15; BRIC Joint Statement, 2010, ¶5). It is also evident that the BRIC was primarily concerned with global economic and financial issues in a bid to reform the international economic architecture, characterized by the Bretton Woods Institutions, as well as international regulatory frameworks for finance, trade and development rather than on political global governance reform issues. Reference was also made to a few principles (cross reference 2.4.1) such as an "incremental, proactive, pragmatic, open and transparent" approach to steadily promoting cooperation among the BRIC countries in order to achieve its goals through neither making it too large nor too broad (Joint Statement of the BRIC Countries' Leaders, 2009, ¶15).

Since its inception, it is evident that there has been a strong desire on behalf of the BRIC members that its activities should not be driven on a summit-to-summit basis but that newly-established mechanisms for sectoral cooperation should continue their deliberations and activities throughout the year in order to increase collaboration, exchange of information and cooperation on a broader range of issues. In this regard

the meetings between BRIC Foreign Ministers to concentrate on multilateral coordination and cooperation would continue. There is no official meeting of Foreign Ministers held in preparation for the Summit. Instead a 'sherpa system' is used to coordinate activities (cross reference section 2.4.3 and note 6 in Chapter 2). The meetings of Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors, including with a view to prepare for the G20 and other relevant meetings, were also set to continue.

The Second BRIC Summit prioritized the identification of intra-BRIC sectoral initiatives as well as dialogue between think tanks, academics and business entrepreneurs. It was envisaged that these mechanisms would lay the groundwork for a BRIC public forum and help shape public opinion in BRIC countries to support the dialogue and cooperation envisaged within the mechanism. However, the extent to which these can be considered to be truly reflective of civil society (track 3 processes) is limited (cross reference section 2.4.3). The Second BRIC Joint Statement (2010, ¶17) acknowledged the creation of a standing Expert Working Group on Agriculture and Agrarian Development thus underlying the importance of a BRIC dialogue on global food security issues. It was agreed that meetings of BRIC Heads of National Statistical institutions would take place with a view to developing a BRIC statistical publication to be renewed on an annual basis (BRIC Joint Statement, 2010, ¶27 & ¶28). A first meeting of Development Banks was outlined (BRIC Joint Statement, 2010, ¶27). There is also reference to cooperation among judges in the Supreme Court in a Protocol of Intent as well as to a possible exchange programme for magistrates (BRIC Joint Statement, 2010, ¶27). The leaders agreed to continue the meetings of High Officials responsible for Security / Strategic Themes. New areas of cooperation in the fields of science and technology as well as in sport were also identified. The areas in which various sectoral mechanisms have been established are a clear indication of the areas in which BRIC members perceive that they have complementary interests that may converge in specific issue areas in these sectors. This commonality is deemed sufficient to warrant further exploration for cooperation.

5.1.2 The BRICS Forum after South Africa's accession

The impact of South Africa's accession to BRICS meant an evolution of the loose mechanism into a quintessentially 21st Century type of international alignment, a strategic partnership, albeit at the minilateral level. Despite this the confusion between the Goldman Sachs/Jim O'Neill BRIC economic construct with the political /diplomatic initiative initiated by Russia and Brazil six years later, persisted during South Africa's first years of membership as it was the only state not to have a commensurate GDP. Within the DIRCO, it was understood very early on that BRICS should be clearly distinguished from Jim O'Neill's economic construct if South Africa were to lead the domestic and international community toward a more constructive understanding of the forum and South Africa's participation therein (cross reference section 3.3). Thus with South Africa's accession, BRICS developed a larger structure and more comprehensive functioning as well as a broader scope in its agenda, all of which were designed to move the partnership forward from dialogue and discussion towards possible coordination and cooperation in much the same manner as IBSA. It can be argued that South Africa's accession, which established the presence of IBSA in BRICS, gave the three IBSA countries the necessary knowledge and experience required to take BRICS into the form of a strategic partnership at the minilateral level akin, but not identical, to IBSA. This perhaps explains why BRICS so rapidly began to look more and more like IBSA. The fact that the position of IBSA Focal Point and that of the BRICS sous-sherpa lies within the same office and person in DIRCO, at least in the early stages of the country's dual membership, ensures that the two forums are able to operate on separate but parallel tracks whilst mitigating the risk of duplication in substance and resources. South Africa's inclusion into BRICS provided the required influence and impetus to ensure that BRICS became an international alignment based upon far more than O'Neill's commonly shared characteristics of high economic growth and large market size. Stuenkel (2012) recognizes this when he notes "arguing that O'Neill's parameters are still decisive to the existence of the BRICS concept is intellectually limiting and amounts to agreeing that it is no longer useful".

The primary motivation for South Africa's seeking membership of BRIC was firmly rooted in the need to accelerate the objectives of the domestic agenda: the five priorities as they relate to the triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality. According to President Jacob Zuma (2012) "participation in BRICS is designed to help us achieve inclusive growth, sustainable development and a prosperous South Africa". His cabinet colleagues have separately contextualized the external environment within which the pursuit of the domestic agenda through BRICS takes place. South Africa's Minister for Agriculture notes "the current state of global affairs requires countries and states to form alliances with a myriad of partners for the advancement of its population and strategic goals" (Joemat-Pettersson, 2013). According to the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, "the incoming Administration of President Zuma in 2009 reviewed the global trends for economic growth and development and decided to pursue a closer relationship with the BRIC countries as the new growth poles for the global economy" (Ebrahim, 2013). While the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation put it more broadly saying that the "rationale for South Africa's approach (to BRIC) was in consideration of a matter of crucial importance to BRIC member states, namely the role of emerging economies in advancing the restructuring of the global political, economic and financial architecture into one that is more equitable, balanced and rests on the important pillar of multilateralism" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2011).

Successive DIRCO Strategic Plans have highlighted the economic element of South Africa's participation in BRICS and also reiterated the government's belief that the growth of the South African and African economies is increasingly linked to the rise of emerging economies in the South. South Africa's trade patterns reflect this trend. According to South Africa's Minister for Trade and Industry "the expansion of South Africa's trade and direct investment with the countries of the South, notably the BRIC countries, continues apace, with China and India at the forefront. Aggravated by the Eurozone crisis and demand contraction in Europe, the share of the EU in South Africa's total trade has declined from 36% in 2005 to 26.5% in 2011. By contrast, the

share of the BRIC countries in South Africa's total trade has increased from 10% in 2005 to 18.6% in 2011" ("BRICS 'a voice for emerging economies'", 2012).

Enhancing relations with these countries is arguably a natural consequence of statistics such as these. Particularly in light of the objectives of the NDP and the need to reach growth and employment targets through "seek(ing) outside investments, which complement our own resources, to expand our productive capacity and competitiveness … grow and diversify our exports with greater value added locally" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2014). Thus national interest considerations relating to 'security' and 'wealth', combined with an ideological commitment to progressive internationalism (cross reference section 3.2), came together within the context of an increasingly networked world order to drive a sufficient degree of recognition of South Africa's state identity (Self) in an external Other (BRIC) along the identification continuum to warrant seeking an alignment the BRIC.

The individual BRIC member states also had their reasons for accepting South Africa's application for membership. For Brazil, South Africa's accession was welcomed because of its economic relevance and its constructive political action as well as its commitment to issues concerning Africa and the international agenda ("Brazil welcomes South Africa's entry to BRIC", 2010). In the same statement Brazil further noted that the incorporation of South Africa "will expand the geographic representation of BRICS which is useful when issues at the international level, such as the reform of the financial system and democratizing global governance is of increasing focus". At the World Economic Forum held in Davos in January 2011, Russia's President mentioned South Africa's accession to BRICS and highlighted the need for new approaches to solving the world's problems and "new leadership alliances" such as BRICS (Medvedev, 2013). Russian hopes for South Africa to bring an African voice to the table, South Africa's economic weight in Africa and its extensive network system on the continent were flagged as additional assets. Other attributes must surely also include South Africa being the only African power in the G20 as well as the authoritative role South Africa plays in the NAM and G77. China also attaches great

importance to South Africa's position and role in international affairs and was of the view that the invitation to South Africa to join BRICS would enrich cooperation within the mechanism and make BRICS more representative of the developing world ("China praises SA's BRICS contribution", 2012). In his telephone call to South Africa's Minister for International Relations and Cooperation, the Foreign Minister of China at the time conveyed China's belief that South Africa's accession would promote the development of BRICS and enhance cooperation among emerging market economies (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2010). India's response to South Africa's accession was arguably the most muted of the four. The Prime Minister of India said that South Africa's presence will lend weight to BRICS and introduce the African perspective to the most pressing international issues of today ("BRICS countries need to further enhance coordination, 2011). Prime Minister Singh went on to say that BRICS can contribute to the development of Africa and articulate its priorities at international forums, which will benefit not just Africa but the entire world. India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr Anand Sharma, was more specific stating that "South Africa is the largest economy in Africa and its entry in the group will be an additional value. South Africa has an important role to play as it is a country rich in mineral resources. Its entry will help in pushing global issues like WTO and climate change where developed countries have a different view" (Kapoor, 2011).

These perspectives reveal that the primary reason for South Africa's inclusion into BRICS is its credentials as an African country combined with its not insignificant brand power (cross reference section 3.3.2). South Africa's influential leadership position on the continent, both politically and economically, coupled with its knowledge of and experience in the continent, its valuable networks and influence make it a stable gateway into the continent. The value of South Africa's ability to bring an essential African voice to the forum is recognized by the other BRICS members as a value in itself. This is unsurprising given South Africa's compelling strategic geographic location in, but at the foot of, the African continent and as the central pivot between the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans within the context of an increasingly politically unstable mega-region enveloping the Suez Canal (Stuenkel, 2012). According to Moore

(2012) South Africa represents BRICS' best opportunity to represent the interests of the least developed states on earth, those in Africa, including the specific interests related to trade, debt relief, investment and climate change. The self-imposed 'Africa rationale' of BRICS also suits South Africa's purposes both rhetorically and substantively. It opens the door for South Africa to push its own foreign policy agenda particularly, but not exclusively, its African Agenda, through BRICS. The onus is placed firmly upon the other BRICS member states to respond appropriately making it politically and diplomatically awkward to refuse outright. Successive BRICS declarations witness the success to which South Africa has leveraged its foreign policy objectives with respect to Africa (see section 5.2.2. for a more detailed discussion with examples). A self-imposed Africa rationale such as this is notably absent from IBSA.

One year after South Africa's accession to BRICS, Jim O'Neill was still emphatic that the country did not belong in the grouping. Prior to the Fourth BRICS Summit he weighed in on the debate, again calling into question South Africa's presence in this emerging economies' grouping by saying "It's just wrong. South Africa doesn't belong in BRICS" (as cited by Naidoo, 2012). He went further to underline his highly critical view of South Africa's position in the BRICS Forum saying "South Africa has too small an economy. There are not many similarities with the other four countries in terms of the numbers. In fact, South Africa's inclusion has somewhat weakened the group's power." O'Neill's critique belies a strong realist perspective, one that fails to account for the value South Africa's "soft" power and influence and the proportionate strength it gains when partnered with the "soft" power of other emerging powers. This includes the intrinsic value of strengthening the 'prestige factor' of foreign policy. In an increasingly networked world order, where a country's image and brand is conveyed in part through its foreign policy diplomacy, the 'prestige factor' relates directly to the domestic agenda and the national interest construed as 'standing' (cross reference section 3.1). It also has a utility in attracting economic gain for the country which relates to the ultimate end of state that concerns 'wealth' as identified in terms of tourism (numbers of tourists), culture, investments and sometimes, though perhaps less visibly, in the area of trade. As such, the prestige factor of BRICS in strengthening South Africa's influence and

augmenting its brand value at the global level is a valuable end in itself and amply justifies being an objective in its own right within the context of pursuing the national interest.

Although other BRICS member states are arguably leading economies at the global level with large populations (market size), it is worth articulating the unique attributes that South Africa's brings with it and which complement the BRICS Forum. South Africa's political attributes of having traversed the route from racial oppression to a democratic South Africa, through peaceful negotiations, is respected the world over. Fewer than twenty years ago, all the BRICS member states supported the liberation struggle in South Africa with the seeds of South-South cooperation being laid at the 1955 Bandung Conference, cementing Africa-Asia political and cultural ties formally. Thus, as far as South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation is concerned, cultivating relations with BRIC states is a natural consequence of an anti-imperialist solidarity because "some of the countries we characterize as emerging powers have been our fellow travellers as Africans in the struggle against colonialism" (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2010) and meets the demands of a progressive internationalist approach to the conduct of international relations. As we have seen the BRIC recognized the strategic priorities of South Africa in Africa and the predominance of its economy on the continent. South Africa's independent outlook on international issues whether it be on the reform of global institutions of governance or on issues of climate change or on the use of force have all earned South Africa respect and recognition internationally. South Africa shares similar concerns and complementary interests with other BRICS member states with regard to reform of the global governance systems, aspects of under-development, illiteracy, poverty, disease and access to markets thus making collaboration and cooperation on these issues valuable.

At an economic level, South Africa's positive attributes include, amongst others, its role as a major economic player in Africa; the relatively large-scale mineral and industrial output; its electricity generation capacity; its road, rail, ports and communication infrastructure; its sophisticated financial markets and service industries; its

manufacturing capacity; its membership of the G20 as well the country's level of industrialization. On the business front, BRICS member states, particularly China, are the largest new investors and trade partners into Africa with strong exponential growth potential for the future. Standard Bank economists Freemantle and Stevens (2013, p. 4) note that "the BRICS trade more with Africa than they do amongst themselves …(and) estimate that BRICS total trade with Africa reached USD340bn in 2012, representing a more than ten-fold increase over the course of a decade. Since 2007, during a period of relatively slow trade growth (for Africa, the BRICS and globally), BRICS-Africa trade has more than doubled", albeit dominated by China-Africa trade. South Africa is the third biggest investor into Africa within the BRICS grouping, after China and India. Significantly South Africa "punches above its weight" within BRICS-Africa trade. According to one estimate although South Africa accounts for just 2.5% of BRICS GDP, it is responsible for 11% of BRICS-Africa trade (Freemantle & Stevens, 2013, p. 5). In 2012, South Africa-Africa trade was 35% greater than Brazil-Africa trade and 200% greater than Russia-Africa trade (Freemantle & Stevens, 2013, p. 5). Persistently however Jim O'Neill (as cited by Naidoo, 2012) argued that the perspective of South Africa's pre-eminent position in the African continent is a "flawed" argument because "South Africa is already losing out on investment to other rising economic stars on the continent. Countries such as Nigeria carry more power now … South Africa can't claim any more, apart from its sound fiscal and financial systems, to be the superpower on the continent". O'Neill however misses the point. Of critical importance to the other BRICS partners is that South Africa presents much more diversified investment opportunities and a strong base for doing business on the African continent. Even though other African countries are estimated to outstrip South Africa's growth in years to come, South Africa's stability and sound financial markets offers a safe haven for investors across the world.

BRICS member states were sensitive to the damaging image created by Jim O'Neill whose criticism of South Africa seemed to expand to a criticism of the BRICS Forum itself before the important Fourth BRICS Summit meeting in India. It is highly probable that an effort was made by South Africa, with the support of the other BRICS members,

to engage Jim O'Neill on South Africa's intentions in BRICS in a bid to re-orientate his perspective towards a more constructive viewpoint. The change in O'Neill's tone merely one week after the Fourth BRICS Summit is startling in what can only be seen as a complete about-turn. He said "South Africa could more than justify its presence if it helped Africa to fulfill its remarkable potential" (O'Neill, 2012). In explanation for this shift O'Neill went on to explain that the BRIC acronym, as created in 2001, was to describe "those countries large enough today, or which might be large enough in the future, to be literally part of the "bric" or fabric of the modern global economy" and that "to be a true Bric nation, a country probably needs to be producing at least 5% of global gross domestic product (GDP)." He then qualified his assertion by saying that if "South Africa could also help to lead the rest of the continent to reach its own standards where these are high … by exploring cross-border expansion in trade and infrastructure, as well as considerable improvements in domestic productivity, South Africa will have more than justified its role as a Brics member" (O' Neill, 2012). Davies (2012) echoes this sentiment in his opinion that the 'S' in BRICS should acknowledge a broader participation where 'S' could stand for the SADC region rather than for South Africa alone. The evolution of Jim O'Neill's perspective on BRICS is indicative of a strengthening in South Africa's ability to influence and shape perceptions at the global level as a result of its BRICS membership. The degree to which this has assisted in shaping and advancing the global debate around BRICS in general, and South Africa's membership thereof in particular, is evidenced by the significant increase in the number of articles and publications that have been published on the BRICS Forum itself that includes South Africa.

Reflecting the impact of South Africa influence on the BRICS Forum, the joint statements issued after each summit were elevated, in diplomatic terms at least, to declarations.[35] These declarations are more comprehensive than the previous joint statements, reflecting the increasing scope of the Forum as well as the consolidation of the forum along the lines of the six properties of strategic partnership (cross reference section 2.4). They are remarkably similar in structure and format to those issued by IBSA, which could be indicative of the influence of South Africa together with its IBSA

partners India and Brazil in crafting the BRICS declarations, particularly the first BRICS Declaration known as the Sanya Declaration. Ironically, these declarations are also the best indication of divergent positions in particular issue areas. Other areas in which South Africa has had a direct impact on the development of BRICS, in terms of its structure and function which necessarily has a global impact, can be drawn from the motivations cited for its membership. Thus in line with its progressive internationalist ideology and the values and principles that underlie South Africa's foreign policy, the country is able to play a valuable political and diplomatic role as a bridge-builder on text negotiations through the development of consensus-language that builds trust among the partners in a manner that ensures that no partner loses face on a particular issue-area (see section 5.2.3. for a more detailed discussion and examples). South Africa's contribution of its perspectives on global peace and security issues, particularly those in Africa and which include human security considerations as well as on global economic and financial reform, are well documented. Similarly South Africa's influence in BRICS is discernable on discussion of international trade and development as well as on issues relating to intra-BRICS trade and investment, agriculture and health. Indeed the structure of the BRICS mechanisms under ministerial direction which function in parallel to the political process encapsulated by the Summit meeting (cross reference section 2.4.2) allows South Africa to inject considerable influence in these processes. They meet more often than the Summits and interact on an official basis far more regularly. BRICS interactions within these mechanisms in particular have an important global dimension in that they also provide an opportunity for collaboration and coordination within the multilateral institutions that deal with these sectors such as the WTO (trade), the FAO (agriculture) and the WHO (health).

For example, South Africa's input into the annual BRICS meeting of trade ministers has served to drive efforts at strengthening intra-BRICS trade and investment in a manner that has addressed South Africa's particular challenges. At ministerial level the focus of discussion is wide ranging and includes: global economic developments; WTO issues; cooperation in multilateral fora where trade and investment issues arise, such as the G20, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNIDO and WIPO; as well as intra-BRICS trade and

investment cooperation (BRICS Trade Ministers, 2013). The establishment of the Contact Group for Economic and Trade Issues at official level, also at the Third BRICS Summit, was institutionalized through the BRICS Trade and Investment Cooperation Framework, and agreed upon in South Africa at the Fifth BRICS Summit. Designed as a platform for exchange of policy perspectives and priorities, this cooperation mechanism lays an essential basis for enhanced coordination and cooperation among BRICS members on economic, trade and investment-related issues. According to the framework document, the group's work program includes: multilateral cooperation and coordination, promoting and facilitating trade and investment, innovation cooperation, Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) cooperation as well as cooperation on infrastructure and Industrial development (BRICS Trade and Investment Cooperation Framework, 2013). Under the leadership of the Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Rob Davies, South Africa made substantive contributions to discussions in the area of trade and investment, particularly on tariff barriers hampering intra-BRICS trade and its perspectives on beneficiation.

In the arena of agriculture in addition South Africa has effectively influenced the discussion with its perspectives and insights through active participation in the meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development as well as the BRICS Agricultural Cooperation Working Group (at official level). South Africa recognizes that food security is a significant challenge and key priority area for the African continent. According to South Africa's agricultural minister, Ms Joemat-Pettersson (2013), "our priority on the Continent and in South Africa is to promote sustainable agricultural and food production which will enable Africa to feed itself and the world". At the domestic level, the primary goal in the field of agriculture is "to improve the lives of the majority of our people, which requires that our programs are directed towards unemployment, food security and the reduction of poverty" (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012). Climate change, in particular the reduction of green house gas emissions, has been identified by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) as a major challenge to the realization of the department's primary goal with respect to food security (Department of Agriculture,

Forestry and Fisheries, 2012). According to an official in DAFF any plan for confronting the challenges of climate change must allow for mitigation options and a firm commitment to the adaptation of agriculture, including through conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture. As such, international programs on adaptation must provide support for urgent and immediate adaptation action, as well as for longer term action that builds resilience and must address: (i) the short term catastrophic events, such as floods, fires; (ii) medium term cyclical events, such as drought; (iii) longer term shifts in climate. A strong focus of the BRICS Agricultural mechanism is on global food security and related issues such as the world market and trading system in food and agricultural products (BRICS Agricultural Ministers Declaration, 2010), which dovetails with South Africa's domestic and international priorities. South Africa was nominated to coordinate the cooperative project that concerns the reduction of the negative impact of climate change on food security. As a result of South Africa's influence, the Action plan 2012-2016 for Agricultural Cooperation of BRICS Countries agreed to "carry out consultation and cooperation on adaptation to climate change in the field of agriculture and share technologies and information related to alternate source of food, fodder, fiber and energy in climate change prone dry areas" (BRICS Agricultural Action, 2011). The negative effects of climate change was elevated by South Africa within BRICS as the theme for South Africa's hosting of the third meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development in October 2013. In her opening address on this occasion South Africa's agricultural Minister, Ms Joemat-Petterson (2013), used the opportunity to highlight the plight of rural women in particular, saying that "with few exceptions rural women fare worse than rural men and urban men and women" in all of the MDG indicators. To this end South Africa's influence is discernable in the joint statement of this meeting as follows:

> "Acknowledged that climate change is one of the greatest challenges which adversely impacts agriculture and food security in all countries, particularly developing countries…" (BRICS Agricultural Action, 2011, ¶8).
>
> "Noted that in addressing food insecurity all efforts must be geared towards enhancing agricultural production and adaptability of agricultural systems to climate change, especially for smallholder farmers" (BRICS Agricultural Action, 2011, ¶9).
>
> "Agreed to cooperate in research, development and application of technologies that enable agriculture to adapt to the effects of climate change" (BRICS Agricultural Action, 2011, ¶10).

> "Reaffirmed our commitment to assist other developing countries in enhancing agricultural productivity, paying particular attention to smallholder farmers, women and youth to improve world food security" (BRICS Agricultural Action, 2011, ¶20).

In terms of the cooperation within the BRICS development bank mechanism, South Africa's influence is tangible despite the fact that the first meeting of the BRIC development banks was held prior to South Africa's accession to the forum. Originally a Russian initiative, South Africa saw potential in this mechanism to further the AU's infrastructure development plans for the continent in pursuit of its integration agenda (cross reference section 5.2.2.). BRICS is exactly the kind of partner to contribute to the AU's Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), of which South Africa is the Chair. Consequently, South Africa was well positioned to lobby hard within BRICS to insert its ideas concerning a potential BRICS development bank towards the infrastructure and sustainable development needs of the developing world based on their own and Africa's already identified needs in these areas. Its success in obtaining concrete support from the BRICS in this regard is evidenced not only in successive Summit declarations (cross-reference section 5.2.2. for a detailed discussion) but also within the proposed New Development Bank (NDB). The NDB established 2014 is expected to focus on providing funding for infrastructure and sustainable development initiatives in emerging and developing countries not limited to, but including, in Africa. An UNCTAD report (2014, p. 15) welcomed the NDB arguing that the "institution would be a complement, not a substitute, for existing financial institutions both in the public and the private sector" given the estimated shortfall of investment in infrastructure and more environmentally sustainable forms of development in developing and emerging countries of approximately USD 1 trillion annually. Although BRICS intends to make significant inroads in global development levels through the NDB it is far too early at this stage to argue that development is "the major common goal that can unite (BRICS) despite differences" as does Chen ("3 reasons the BRICS' New Development Bank matters", 2014). Unlike IBSA, that promulgates a unique and internationally recognized development paradigm and is being implemented through concrete projects in non-IBSA countries through the IBSA Fund, BRICS has yet to find a consensus position on development let alone a common approach. As pointed out in *The Economist* "lively democracies (India, Brazil and South

Africa) go about erecting (infrastructure and indeed development initiatives in general) differently to authoritarian regimes (Russia and China)" and these disparities may make it harder for BRICS to agree on basic principles, "like whom (other than themselves) to lend money, on what terms or what counts as sustainable development" ("An acronym with capital", 2014). The extent to which BRICS becomes a united voice capable of driving the global development agenda beyond development funding will depend largely upon the combined efforts and political wills of India, Brazil and South Africa. These countries would have to leverage their internationally recognized comparative advantage in this global issue area in order to influence Russia and China's perspectives, both substantively and in terms of execution, toward their vision.

BRICS has a voice on the global stage and is an influential entity on issues concerning the global economic and financial systems in particular. By virtue of its membership alone the BRICS Forum has served to move South Africa closer to the global economic and financial decision-making table, especially in light of the way it functions within the G20. The BRICS platform amplifies South Africa's perspectives and position on the global economic and financial system within the G20 and the world's trading system, through the WTO. This has a direct impact upon the reform of these systems to make them more beneficial to the needs of the developing world, including the needs of Africa, including South Africa.

5.2 Carving a niche for South Africa's foreign policy in BRICS

Over the course of South Africa's participation in three BRICS Summits, the Third (China, 2011), Fourth (India, 2012) and Fifth (South Africa, 2013), it is possible to trace the progressive development of what is now a targeted, measured and achievable BRICS strategy for South Africa. According to DIRCO officials, the comprehensive BRICS strategy document was approved by the Cabinet in the second half of 2012 prior to South Africa's hosting of the 5th BRICS Summit, in order to guide South Africa's substantive participation in the Forum and to meet domestic demands

that the benefits of membership be clearly linked to the domestic agenda, and the national interest by extension. The imperative to show the concrete benefits to the country, derived in the form of tangible deliverables in pursuit of the five priority areas outlined by Government, remains a core priority.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane's budget vote speech to parliament in 2012 gave the clearest indication of the likely elements of the BRICS Strategy Document which is classified as secret. According to the Minister, South Africa's participation in the BRICS Forum is premised upon three levels of engagement to ensure that membership contributes to the achievement of the six key foreign policy priority areas: nationally, where South Africa's national interests, particularly economic interests, are promoted; regionally, where South Africa promotes regional integration and the agenda of the African Union; and at a global level, where South Africa advocates a more inclusive global governance system and exhibits its commitment to multilateralism (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2012). These levels of activity correspond with the key priority areas of South Africa's foreign policy, with a certain degree of overlap. Each level of engagement, national, regional and global, will be examined hereunder with reference to its location within the key foreign policy priorities of the DIRCO in order to show how South Africa has creatively carved a niche for the realization of its foreign policy within the BRICS Forum. As the BRICS Forum operates on the global stage, the areas in which South African foreign policy priorities find resonance within BRICS enhances South Africa's ability to ensure that this niche penetrates and also extends into the global arena by extension.

5.2.1 South Africa's engagement with BRICS at the national level

DIRCO Key priority area: Strengthened bilateral political and economic relations

South Africa's engagement within BRICS takes place at the national level of engagement in pursuit of the domestic agenda. Although it is true that all six key foreign policy priority areas relate to the domestic agenda and reflect the national interest in different ways, within the DIRCO the details of the domestic agenda finds

their most clear expression through the key foreign policy priority area "strengthened bilateral political and economic relations" (cross reference section 3.4.6).

The BRICS Forum serves as an opportunity to increase contact among the member states at several levels, including at the highest level, and across numerous sectors also at the bilateral level. That BRICS is used to leverage bilateral relations is evident in the fact that on the sidelines of the annual BRICS Summits, provision is made for a series of separate bilateral meetings. These take place between the different Heads of State and Government and focus upon bilateral issues in particular. The result is an increased intensity in engagement between member states on bilateral issues. Thus, in addition to the structured bilateral mechanisms South Africa has with Brazil, India, Russia and China respectively, that take place at Ministerial level or below, it is now assured through BRICS that engagement at the highest level to discuss the bilateral agenda takes place on an annual basis. That the Chair of a BRICS Summit uses the opportunity of the Summit to host another member state for a state visit, itself a mechanism to intensify bilateral relations, is further evidence of the mutually reinforcing nature of strategic partnership at the bilateral level. China hosted Brazil's president, Ms Dilma Rousseff, for a state visit prior to the third BRICS Summit in April 2011 and India similarly used the occasion of the fourth BRICS Summit in March 2012 to host Ms Rousseff for a state visit. South Africa used the opportunity of the fifth BRICS Summit in 2013 to host the new Chinese Premier, Mr Xi Jinping, for a state visit immediately prior to the BRICS Summit.

The increased intensity in both the level and regularity of South Africa's diplomatic and political engagements at the bilateral level has impacted positively on its bilateral relations with other BRICS members by strengthening mutual understanding, respect and confidence with the concomitant effect of strengthening trust relations through familiarity. According to a DIRCO official the quantity and quality of resources allocated to the diplomatic Missions accredited to each of the BRICS member states has been boosted in line with the strategic status of these countries to South Africa. The additional staff complement at South Africa's Missions in BRICS countries has been

augmented by the presence of a Minister Plenipotentiary as is the case in South Africa's Missions in G8 countries. This is a position occupied by a senior civil servant and operates as a deputy Ambassador, including the associated privileges reserved for Ambassadorial level. In addition to the resources allocated to South Africa's missions in countries that belong to the G8, other government departments such as Trade and Industry, Agriculture, Military, Home Affairs among others have similarly boosted their resource allocation and presence in BRICS countries.

It is also within the key priority area to strengthen bilateral political and economic relations where the economic targets of the national agenda, such as those relating to employment creation in the area of infrastructure development, agriculture, mining, manufacturing, the "green" economy and tourism, as outlined in the NGP, are pursued.[36] Standard Bank estimates that in economic terms, the leap in importance of the BRICS has been most pronounced for South Africa. A decade ago trade with the BRIC economies accounted for just 5% of South Africa's total trade with the world while in 2012, this figure stood at 19% (Freemantle & Stevens, 2013). Considering exports alone provides a similarly robust portrait of rising BRICS ties. For example, South Africa's exports to its fellow BRICS economies increased by almost 17% in 2012, the fastest rate of export growth within the five member economies (Freemantle & Stevens, 2013). Trade with China, however, accounts for much of South Africa's increased trade with BRICS countries. This is hardly surprising, given that China accounts for around 55% of total BRICS GDP and is the world's largest trader, having usurped the United States in 2012. According to Freemantle and Stevens (2013) this trend aligns with the rising importance of China's economic weight within the group in general with China being the counterparty in 85% of intra-BRICS trade flows. According to one senior DIRCO official the Chinese economy is probably the driving force behind BRICS. Although, economic linkages through Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) between BRICS countries is limited and does not mirror the spectacular growth seen in terms of trade, South Africa shows the largest share of intra-BRICS FDI. According to UNCTAD one fifth of South Africa's outward investment stock was concentrated in other BRICS countries, mainly in China.

At this stage and in a similar manner to IBSA, trade and investment is secured and continues to be measured at the bilateral level. It is not yet clear how much of the current trade and investment figures can be attributed directly to BRICS membership, if any. Basada, Tok and Winters (2013) identify a similar challenge when analyzing the implications of the BRICS Forum on trade and investment patterns among the members. They note "it is difficult to determine if investments (and trade) are occurring as a result of participation in the BRICS group or would have occurred regardless" (Basada, Tok & Winters, 2013, p. 5). What they conclude is that there appears to be considerable interest in forging new investments with South Africa since its accession to BRICS. They evidence an immigration official who reported that in a period of just over a week after South Africa's accession to BRICS there was a 38% increase in enquiries from corporate clients and individuals requesting visas and information on obtaining work permits in BRICS nations (Basada, Tok & Winters, 2013, p. 5). It could be argued that for BRICS to make a measurable impact on intra-BRICS trade, not only in terms of quantity but, more importantly, in structure so as to ensure that it does not remain dominated by and dependent upon Chinese trade activity, some sort of pentalateral Trade Arrangement between MERCOSUR, SACU, India, China and Russia could be considered. The challenge in establishing an FTA between MERCOSUR, SADU and India (as experienced in IBSA), however, shows the difficulty in implementing such a proposal and would require considerable political will to initiate even a feasibility study in this regard. In the meantime, the economic success of South Africa's membership of the BRICS Forum is unlikely to be measured by the number of jobs created, the quantity of beneficiated material exported or the number of new investments made. Instead it will be measured by how the forum, as a group-set, is able to impact upon the macro socio-economic environment in such a way as to make it more condusive to increased trade and investment flows between BRICS member states (see section 5.3 for a more detailed discussion on intra-BRICS trade with examples).

5.2.2 South Africa's engagement with BRICS at the regional level

DIRCO key priority areas: The African Agenda and sustainable development, strengthened political and economic integration of SADC

The regional level of engagement in BRICS relates to two key priority areas: the African Agenda and sustainable development as well as "strengthened political and economic integration of SADC. Of the numerous objectives within these two key priority areas, the main ones that find expression through, and are included in, the agenda of BRICS are: the integration agenda of the SADC region, which speaks in turn to the integration agenda of the AU, with a particular focus on gaining support for the drivers of integration; Africa's socio-economic development and industrialization; and the peace and security agenda of the AU. From the very beginning the DIRCO has viewed BRICS as the formation with the economic assets (possessing the largest foreign reserve surpluses), and potential, to assist South Africa with implementing its African agenda goals. As chair of the BRICS in 2013, South Africa was able to explicitly orientate BRICS more firmly towards its own objectives for engagement at the regional level. Its choice of Summit theme directly invoked a BRICS-Africa development and industrialization partnership, in support of African solutions to the socio-economic development challenges on the continent.

The process of garnering BRICS support for the drivers of the African integration agenda is worth examining in some detail because it sheds light on how the BRICS function and on the opportunity South Africa took to influence the other members and gain support for its perspectives. Support for South Africa's regional objectives was reflected as early as the third BRICS Summit and was the first to include South Africa. The final declaration (BRICS Sanya Declaration, 2011, ¶25) noted BRICS "support for infrastructure development in Africa and its industrialization within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)". This could arguably be considered a major achievement for South Africa for four reasons. First, for the first time it publicly formalized BRICS support for infrastructure development in Africa, a key objective of the AU as well as for South Africa. Second, not only valuable as an end in itself, support for infrastructure development on the continent is also a key driver

of the regional and continental integration agenda. South Africa's efforts are proactively aimed at orientating BRICS towards those initiatives that support rather than undermine the continental integration agenda. Such support is valuable and is one that arguably stands in contrast to Africa's engagement with the EU under the auspices of the bi-annual Africa-EU Summit and principally within the contentious EPA negotiations (cross reference section 3.3.1). Third, BRICS gives explicit recognition for, and support to, the NEPAD as the socio-economic blueprint for the continent. This is perhaps somewhat of a political coup for South Africa in its efforts to reinforce and promote the NEPAD within the continent itself. Fourth and finally, South Africa's influence within in BRICS is augmented and reinforced reflexively through its ability to gain BRICS support for an African designed program for development (the NEPAD). Such a program incorporates bankable African-created solutions for its own development challenges. As a direct result of South Africa's participation at the third BRICS Summit, it is reasonable to expect that BRICS – Africa interaction going forward will be framed by the programs and projects of the African Union as contained within the NEPAD, one that is Africa-led (at least in its initial stages) and is oriented towards the drivers of economic growth on the continent.

South Africa built upon this success at the fourth BRICS Summit when it was able to bring BRICS leaders "to attach the highest importance to economic growth that supports development and stability in Africa" (BRICS Delhi Declaration, 2012, ¶36) and extend the limits of that support beyond infrastructure development. Thus the Delhi Declaration encapsulates the agreement of BRICS leaders to support initiatives that will assist economies to diversify and modernize "through infrastructure development, knowledge exchange, support for increased access to technology, enhanced capacity building and investment in human capital". Again this support was contextualized within the framework of the NEPAD thus reflexively reinforcing the African blueprint for inclusive development. Extracting express recognition and support for these issues by BRICS laid the foundation for the objectives South Africa's aimed to achieve with respect to the African Agenda and SADC for its Chair of the BRICS in 2013. Matters that were key priorities in terms of the agenda of the African Union were strategically

repositioned in the eThekwini Declaration under South Africa's Chair, in line with the summit theme. Accordingly, the issue of infrastructure development in Africa is raised in importance to paragraphs 3, 5, 9 and 12 of the eThekwini Declaration whereas these issues formerly occupied a single paragraph in previous declarations: paragraph 27 in the Sanya Declaration (2011) and paragraph 36 in the Delhi Declaration (2012) respectively. The elevation of African issues within the eThekwini Declaration for the first time displaced the traditional paragraphs on the international global economic and financial crisis from their pre-eminent position in all the previous summit declarations. In terms of imaging and branding for the BRICS Forum, this effectively broadened the Forum's traditional image associated with global economic and financial concerns to one strongly associated with socio-economic development concerns of the developing world particularly, though not limited to, the African continent. Whether this image of BRICS will endure largely depends upon the extent to which measures and mechanisms are put in place to establish a formal BRICS-Africa engagement on a sustainable basis in an equitable, transparent and mutually beneficial basis. The progress made on the creation, implementation and operation of the BRICS development bank will be an important test case in this regard.

It is not only the placement and number of paragraphs dedicated to African issues in the eThekwini Declaration that are indicative of South Africa's influence in BRICS. It is also the content of these paragraphs that reveals the depth of South Africa's diplomatic success in garnering BRICS support for its African Agenda and SADC foreign policy objectives. There is explicit recognition and support for Africa's integration processes (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶4) with the implication that BRICS activity on the continent, possibly also at the bilateral level, will endeavor to promote or facilitate rather than detract from broader integration efforts. It is not certain at this early stage if support for integration processes in Africa will find expression in and re-orientate the conduct of BRICS members in their bilateral relations with other African states. BRICS Declarations after all are not legally binding documents. However BRICS Declarations are akin to a gentleman's agreements and it is certainly the intention that the credibility of BRICS pronouncements be maintained through demonstrable action that is not

contrary to the positions and statements articulated in the BRICS Declarations. At the very least, in the case of an infringement, it is not unreasonable to expect that the infringing behavior be raised in the spirit of the BRICS strategic partnership and the extent to which the statements made by member states in BRICS can be taken as credible.

In terms of content there is also the recognition of the AU's lead in infrastructure development through explicit acknowledgment of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), the AU-NEPAD Africa Action Plan (2010-2015), the NEPAD Presidential Infrastructure Championing Initiative (NEPAD PICI) as well as the respective Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plans (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶5). This includes BRICS support for infrastructure development that is sustainable through specified measures such as stimulating infrastructure investment. Further, the establishment of a BRICS Development Bank (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶9) and the conclusion of two co-financing agreements (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶12) enable the BRICS to give concrete expression to its support for development including, though not limited to, the African continent.[37] And finally, for the first time, South Africa was able to obtain explicit BRICS acknowledgement for the central role of the AU and its Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) in conflict resolution in Africa (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶24). Given that the majority of issues on the agenda of the UNSC are located in Africa, part of South Africa's efforts to promote the African Agenda internationally has been focused on strengthening cooperation and coordination between the UNSC and the AUPSC. Although underpinned by a number of UNSC resolutions, more can be done in the area of coordination and collaboration between these two agencies. Obtaining a call from the BRICS on the UNSC to "enhance cooperation" in this regard may find valuable allies on the part of China and Russia in their UNSC deliberations as permanent members. It would not be unreasonable to expect that future UNSC resolutions on crisis in Africa, for instance on Sudan and South Sudan contain explicit support for the decisions of the AUPSC in these matters with the support of Russia and China.

5.2.3 South Africa's engagement with BRICS at the global level

DIRCO key priority areas: Strengthened South-South cooperation, participation in the global system of governance and strengthened relations with formations in the North

Within the DIRCO, membership of the BRICS falls under the auspices of the key priority area to strengthen South-South cooperation, participation in the global system of governance and, potentially could include strengthened relations with formations in the North. Minister Nkoana-Mashabane (2012) states that "the holding anchor of our South-South cooperation strategy is the BRICS partnership mechanism", in partnering with key countries of the South on global governance and reform issues. BRICS arguably may not sit comfortably as a South-South entity, depending on the definition used for a country to be considered part of the "Global South". Depending upon the definition of the South, Russia's credentials as a member of the G8, a permanent member of the UNSC as well as its accession status to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) may give it a global strategic position with vested interests in the current global political, if not economic, system that disqualifies it from being considered part of the South. Upon accession to BRICS, South Africa's Ambassador to Russia and former Minister of Trade and Industry under President Mbeki described BRICS as a bridge between the developed North and the developing South with the inclusion of Russia, a first world country (Mpahlwa, 2011). China too, through its permanent membership of the UNSC, could arguably be seen as a state that already enjoys a vested interest at least in the current global political system. With its current and improving global economic and financial profile in some areas *vis-à-vis* other states in the world, China holds the largest concentration of foreign reserves in the world,[38] China is arguably well on the way to moving from the periphery to the centre of the economic system. Candice Moore (2012) argues that to consider BRICS under the auspices of South-South cooperation requires stretching the limits of that concept because a) all BRICS members are implicated in the new "scramble for Africa", b) the "no-strings attached" approach to aid of China and to a lesser extent the other emerging donors on the continent may threaten the key development needs of

democracy and human rights on the continent and c) all the BRICS are dependent upon the economic health of the advanced industrialized countries and thus delinking will only ever be achieved to a limited extent. Notwithstanding the politicization of the different terms, developed and developing world, first and third world, it is clear that the BRICS operates from an alternative perspective to the dominant Western/Northern paradigm on issues that concern emerging market economies. By collapsing the assumptions of South-South cooperation with the definition of the developing world BRICS may well be able to make a positive impact in this area by giving a stronger voice to developing world concerns as a whole. This appears to suit both Russia and China as they are willing to adopt this perspective as a tactic to further their interests in the global arena.

South Africa follows a comprehensive approach to the issue of global governance and its reform, including the political, economic and social aspects thereof. The BRICS Forum is quite obviously not the sole diplomatic and political channel through which these issues are pursued nor, importantly, is it a sufficient channel on its own. The composition of BRICS and the balance of forces therein are such that it is arguably not conducive to the partnership's cohesion to vigorously pursue some issues of global governance reform. Thus a nuanced approach is required on the part of the South African diplomats who implement policy in order to maintain cohesion within the group. This approach is based on an in-depth understanding of the relative priority given to the different aspects of global governance reform in South Africa's foreign policy as well as identifying those areas that more naturally lend themselves to producing achievable results through cooperation and collaboration within the BRICS context.

For instance, it is unlikely that BRICS will spearhead the UN reform, including UNSC reform, debate as a specific outcome, but rather reforms in respect of the global financial architecture (of which the Bretton Woods Institutions are part). As permanent members of the Council, Russia and China have a vested interest in determining the

shape and pace of reform as well as those countries to be granted a seat around the table. It is on this issue that the strategic rivalries in BRICS (cross reference section 2.4.6) can be seen to act as centrifugal forces. China's historic resistance to rivals India and Japan as prospective member states is well documented, as is Russia's cautious approach to a reform that could well diminish its global power and influence depending upon the composition and manner of the reform process. It would be incorrect however to conclude from this that the issue of UN reform more broadly is not discussed at all. The nuances inherent in the broader BRICS negotiations around the development of the respective Summit Declarations are such that some issues, such as UN reform, are useful in the leverage they give other member states to gain support in another area judged to be a higher priority, not least because they advance cohesion within the partnership. India, Brazil and South Africa are to be credited with promoting their perspectives of a comprehensive approach to the global governance reform agenda. This approach emphasizes reform of the political institutions, even if, by common agreement, the resultant text on the issue is a compromise text and yields paragraph priority to those concerning reform of the economic and financial architecture.

The theme of the fourth BRICS Summit proposed by India as Chair concerned global stability, security and prosperity. Of the three BRICS Summits held, this was the summit where India, with strong support from Brazil and South Africa, drove most openly their complementary interests for a comprehensive reform of the current global governance institutions. For South Africa, as well as for India and Brazil, reform of the global economic and financial institutions goes hand in hand with reform of the political governance structures. The one cannot be pursued without the other. An analysis of the speeches delivered by the respective leaders of these three countries reveal their perspectives on this matter as follows:

> "BRICS countries must also work together to address deficiencies in global governance. Institutions of global political and economic governance created more than six decades ago have not kept pace with the changing world. While some progress has been made in international financial institutions, there is lack of movement on the political side. BRICS should speak with one voice on important issues such as the reform of the UN Security Council." (Singh, 2012)

> "We share with our BRICS partners the imperative need for the reform of global decision-making structures, in order to improve global governance. We single out, in particular, the comprehensive reform of the United Nations and international financial institutions. The purpose

is to make these structures more effective, efficient and representative." (Zuma, 2012)

"It is based on these principles we advocate the reform of political governance and the governance of international security. The presence of all the BRICS countries in the Security Council, in 2011, gave to this organization legitimacy and effectiveness unpublished." (Rousseff, 2012)

In contrast, Russia and China say nothing on this issue in the speeches they delivered at the plenary session at the fourth BRICS Summit, or for that matter at any other summit on this issue. Instead the leaders confine themselves to global economic and financial reform issues, a gentle reminder, that although BRICS member states have complementary interests on the global governance reform agenda, these do not converge in all the related issue-areas. The speeches made by the leaders of Russia and China at BRICS Summits are ample evidence that the primary focus is on economic and financial reform while being silent on political reform issues:

"I believe that the similarity of our vital interests is the reason for the success of the BRICS project. We are all interested in reforming the outdated global economic and financial system. This reform has been in progress for some time but today we have expressed our dissatisfaction with the pace at which it is proceeding, and this is reflected in the draft of our declaration." (President Medvedev, 2012)

"…push for the reform of global economic governance" (President Hu, 2012)

"They should strengthen the coordinating role of macroeconomic policies, reform international monetary and financial systems and promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation." (Premier Xi, 2013)

Thus despite a basic level of agreement on the broad outlines of the global reform agenda, sufficient to maintain cohesion within the group on the broader issue of reform, it is not enough to warrant pursuing the more difficult political elements constituting this agenda item. Comparing the three Summit Declarations on the matter of UN reform, including UNSC reform serves to underline this point. According to DIRCO officials at the time of the third BRICS Summit negotiating the paragraph on UN reform, including UNSC reform, was quite challenging. South Africa is credited with developing the compromise text by developing consensus-language around which all BRICS members could coalesce as follows:

"We express our strong commitment to multilateral diplomacy with the United Nations playing the central role in dealing with global challenges and threats. In this respect, we reaffirm the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council, with a view to making it more effective, efficient and representative, so that it can deal with today's global

> challenges more successfully. China and Russia reiterate the importance they attach to the status of India, Brazil and South Africa in international affairs, and understand and support their aspiration to play a greater role in the UN" (BRICS Sanya Declaration, 2011, ¶8).

That this issue has developed no further within BRICS over the fourth and fifth summits is obvious. The BRICS Delhi Declaration utilized the same paragraph in its entirety that was agreed to in Sanya, the only difference being the loss of ground on this issue in terms of its placement, down to paragraph 26 from paragraph 8 in Sanya. Similarly, in the eThekwini Declaration this issue occupied paragraph 20. The text does not differ in any substantive way from that agreed at Sanya and on UNSC reform, in particular, it echoes exactly the text used in the previous Declarations.

> "We reiterate our strong commitment to the United Nations (UN) as the foremost multilateral forum entrusted with bringing about hope, peace, order and sustainable development to the world. The UN enjoys universal membership and is at the centre of global governance and multilateralism. In this regard, we reaffirm the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council, with a view to making it more representative, effective and efficient, so that it can be more responsive to global challenges. In this regard, China and Russia reiterate the importance they attach to the status of Brazil, India and South Africa in international affairs and support their aspiration to play a greater role in the UN" (BRICS eThekwini Declaration, 2013, ¶20).

Consequently, although still on the agenda of BRICS, these comparisons show just how little movement there is in the discussions on the matter of global political governance reform. Both the substance and placement of UN reform in the three Summit Declarations is indicative of the relative priority of this issue as well as a possible indication of the balance of forces within the BRICS Forum, with Russia and China's sensitivities weighing more strongly than the pressure applied by South Africa, India and Brazil.

By contrast, the issue of global economic and financial reform is pursued vigorously. For many of the forum's detractors, global economic and financial reforms are the purpose of BRICS while the other issues and sectoral cooperation mechanisms are largely disregarded. Similarly the expectations of these commentators for the forum, as well as the measure of its success, are linked to the degree to which BRICS is able to bring about this kind of reform, particularly within the institutions of the Bretton Woods System. While this is a mistakenly limited view of the BRICS Forum (cross reference section 1.3), it is true that one of the primary issues of concern for the BRICS countries

is the current global economic and financial situation that resulted from the crisis which began in 2009, the implications with which the world still grapples. Through the G20, BRICS has a strong influence in promoting the voice and position of the developing world in finding a just, equitable and development-oriented solution for the global economy and its financial architecture. For now at least, BRICS uses its leverage in international affairs sparingly, collectively and decisively to best advance the rights of emerging economic powers in a non-confrontational way.

Successive summit declarations encapsulate the position of the BRICS Forum on these issues in a considerable amount of detail. This is indicative of the extent to which there is a good deal of convergence of interests on this issue. These paragraphs are traditionally located at the beginning of each Declaration immediately after the introductory paragraphs to signify their priority in BRICS; the eThekwini Declaration being the one exception prioritizing Africa instead. It is clear that BRICS take issue with the sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone and the damaging medium to long-term fiscal adjustments being made as a result. BRICS also takes issue with the actions undertaken by the developed North that result in excessive global liquidity and the increasing volatility in global capital flows and commodity prices. A common position within BRICS is to call for industrialized countries to develop responsible macro-economic and financial policies, curb global liquidity and undertake structural reforms. In addition BRICS calls for international financial regulatory oversight and reform, strengthened policy coordination and financial regulation and supervision as well as the sound development of global financial markets and banking systems. BRICS Summit Declarations also encapsulate the member states' perspectives on the need to reform the global financial architecture in order to give a greater voice to the developing world. Thus BRICS agreement on positions concerning quota and governance reforms in the IMF, promoting developing world candidates at the highest levels of the IMF and WB (particularly, the President of both institutions) as well as promoting a more integrated and even-handed surveillance framework in the IMF is evident. The failure of BRICS to nominate a consensus candidate for the Presidency of the IMF and World Bank during the elections in 2011 and 2012 respectively does not detract from the level of consensus

they share about the kind of candidate that would be appropriate. These are the positions that filter into BRICS deliberations at the G20, as well as through the deliberations held under within the BRICS sectoral mechanisms for economy and finance. Importantly, this flow of information also operates in reverse where positions agreed upon by Ministers of Finance and Economy at the sectoral level, as well as those positions agreed upon at the G20 are fed into the annual political discussions at the BRICS Summit. At every stage, South Africa's South Africa's reform-oriented view on global economic and financial challenges and its perspective on the solutions required - solutions that cut across the spectrum at the substantive and procedural level, including proposed paradigm shifts in values and principles, as well as in terms of the composition of the over-arching international economic and financial institutions - is echoed by the BRICS declarations. Given the inclusive and thorough way in which the consensus text for BRICS is developed it is highly unlikely that a particular paragraph will contradict outright a member state's national position and foreign policy perspective. Thus Summit declarations not only reflect South Africa's foreign policy but also incorporate, through negotiations, the positions and perspectives it holds on the issues under discussion.

At the global level of engagement with BRICS, South Africa's membership has also served to give strong impetus to the efforts already made in BRIC to shape the partnership firmly towards an inclusive development-oriented approach to global challenges. The first BRIC Joint Statement takes cognizance of its aspiration to use development "as a major vector in the change of paradigm of economic development" (Joint Statement of the BRIC Countries' Leaders, 2009, ¶7). Thus BRIC in its initial stages pronounced upon the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Official Development Assistance (ODA) approaches and the WTO Doha Development Round. Under Brazil's guidance the BRIC mechanism advocated the concept of sustainable development in the context of the environment and socio-economic development and the impact of climate change. South Africa is credited for using the opportunity of its Chair of BRICS to mainstream its inclusive development perspective in the following areas: within the statement concerning BRICS's world-view and vision for the global

order; the global governance architecture, global economic growth, poverty and hunger alleviation strategies, trade, climate change, post-MDG structure, SDG processes as well as within Africa's integration, industrialization and economic growth agendas.

5.3 The impact of BRICS on South Africa's ability to access economic opportunity

Much has been made of the potential economic benefits for South Africa in the BRICS. This section does not repeat those views by reiterating the potential that exists but instead focuses on how membership of BRICS has concretely impacted upon South Africa's ability to more effectively access the opportunity so evidently available. It may be too early however to obtain concrete data in terms of trade and investment or even tourism figures. In the absence of a pentalateral Trade Arrangement among the BRICS access to economic opportunity is still identified and measured at the bilateral level (cross reference section 5.2.1). It is therefore difficult to determine how much of the recorded increases can be attributed to BRICS membership or from that which inherently flows from the strategic partnerships South Africa enjoys with the respective BRICS countries at the bilateral level. What is possible however is to highlight the areas in which, even at this early stage, BRICS membership has been the catalyst for a variety of refinements in the implementation of policy on behalf of Government so that it can better position itself to leverage the strengthened economic platform with which BRICS provides South Africa. It should be noted that the scope in determining access to economic opportunity is not limited to that available only in other BRICS member states but applies more broadly at the international level and includes access to those opportunities available in non-BRICS states.

From a foreign policy perspective, the contribution that Foreign Service diplomats make to better position a state to access economic opportunity in the international arena relates to the relative success of a state's economic diplomacy strategy. Economic diplomacy is rather an imprecise term but most scholars agree that it is much broader

than diplomacy in the traditional sense as it operates on mutiple levels including both state and non-state actors and it includes Kastecki and Naray's (2007) commercial diplomacy[39] as a sub-set. The broadest definition of economic diplomacy is articulated by Kishan Rana (2007, p. 201) who sees it as a process by which countries "tackle the outside world, to maximize their national gains … it has bilateral, regional and multilateral dimensions, each of which is important". Berridge and James (2003, p. 91) posit that economic diplomacy is "concerned with economic policy questions, including the work of delegations to conferences" such as the WTO and includes "diplomacy that employs economic resources, either as rewards or sanctions, in pursuit of a particular foreign policy objective". Bayne and Woolcock (2007, p. 4) are more precise in their definition of the term by highlighting the international and domestic dimensions, where the former relates to the "rules of economic relations between states", in accordance with Berridge and James, and the latter obliges economic diplomacy "to go deep into domestic decision making" including, "policies relating to production, movement of exchange of goods, services, instruments (including ODA), money information and its regulation". Effective economic diplomacy requires understanding both the domestic political economy environment and the external negotiating environment, and the constraints of each. This requires a highly skilled diplomatic and technical staff to function at an elevated level in non-traditional spheres. Economic diplomacy is especially important for developing countries because "the rules of the game" shape domestic economic policy and the ability of states to access economic opportunity at the bilateral, regional and international levels.

The role of promoting the economic dimensions of national policy in the global arena has traditionally lain with the DTI, in terms of trade and investment promotion and South Africa's negotiations at the WTO, as well as with the Ministry of Finance, recently within the context of the G-20. The DIRCO's activities in this regard were traditionally circumscribed and pursued from the point of view of International Political Economy (IPE). Recognition of the need to capacitate the DIRCO, particularly its diplomatic missions abroad with its proportionately larger budget allocation than that of other government departments, to make a direct contribution to advancing the domestic

economic agenda coincides with former President Thabo Mbeki's second term in office (2004 – 2008) and certainly pre-dates the BRICS Forum. Mbeki's determination for South Africa's engagement with the international community to reflect its economic imperatives, including job creation and poverty alleviation (Sidiropoulos, 2008 p. 277), implied that the DIRCO had to ensure that it had the capacity and requisite skills to support this endeavor. According to Aziz Pahad (2004), a former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, "economic diplomacy is the order of the day." According to a parliamentary report of the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation (2013) DIRCO's prioritization of economic diplomacy has been approved "given its importance in South Africa's value-added exports and attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)" and that the focus for this would be "on skilling diplomats, including Heads of Mission, in the tools of economic diplomacy".

In 2008 DIRCO was requested to draft an Economic Diplomacy Strategic Framework (EDSF) in order to support South African missions, its embassies, consulates and high commissions abroad, in meeting the domestic priorities for growth and prosperity in the international environment. Designed in close cooperation with the DTI and guided by the government's national policies and programs such as the NGP, IPAP2 and the Trade, Policy and Strategy Framework (TPSF), the EDSF has three main priorities: trade and investment, tourism (regarded as a catalyst to economic development and job creation) as well as managing the image and brand of South Africa (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2012). South Africa's economic diplomacy strategy is pursued at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, including through United Nations, World Trade Organization, and G20 and within strategic partnerships in the forums of the European Union, IBSA and regional organizations such as the SADC. The nature of the BRICS Forum necessitates strong interdepartmental cooperation and collaboration particularly, on economic and financial issues. The demand placed upon South Africa to put aside interdepartmental rivalries and proactively use its membership in a coordinated manner to further the domestic economic agenda of the country was an important driving factor in finalizing the EDSF in 2012. Under the auspices of the EDSF an economic diplomacy training toolkit was developed as part of the extensive

training of diplomats to strengthen their capacity and professionalism to efficiently and effectively function in economic development particularly, but not exclusively, in other BRICS countries (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2012).

BRICS membership impacted positively upon South Africa's broader economic diplomacy strategy in that it provided the country with an additional platform through which to pursue its economic interests. According to the Rob Davies (REFERNCE), the Minister of Trade and Industry, BRICS is a crucial platform for South Africa in providing "important opportunities to build its domestic manufacturing base, enhance value-added exports, promote technology sharing, support small business development and expand trade and investment opportunities" and will be used as such. Being an integral part of a forum that brings together 40% of the world's population (potential for markets) and accounts for a 25% of global GDP in 2010 (up from 16% in 2000) has an inherent value (Ministries of Finance, Central Banks and Economic institutions of BRICS nations, n.d.). The immediate spin-offs are evident, even at this early stage, in terms of crucial knowledge and information accumulation for South African operatives in government as well as in civil society through its business and academic communities. The sectoral cooperation mechanisms oblige participants to use the BRICS channel for increased communication. The regularity with which they meet to exchange knowledge, information and the sharing of best practices as part of the cooperation between the member states strengthens understanding and builds trust between the member states. The BRICS Business Council, BRICS Academic Forum and BRICS Think Tank Council have broadened and deepened the channel of communication between the member states in the field of business, policy analysis and recommendation, as well as in tertiary education. Some time is required however before the results are felt of these interactions in terms of concrete projects and joint activities. However, because BRICS brings with it political will at the highest level there is a level of formality and obligation that inspires those within the sectoral mechanism to prioritize the implementation of BRICS related activities.

The important 'prestige factor' of being a member of BRICS and the knock-on effects this has had for the branding of South Africa at the international level has already been alluded to earlier (cross reference section 5.2.1). Brazil's ambassador to South Africa, Jose Vicente Pimentel, hinted at this with his comment that joining BRICS would give South Africa "enormous international exposure" ("New era as SA joins BRICS", 2011). Beyond prestige, although associated with it, BRICS membership gives South Africa the kind of media platform ordinarily afforded to more powerful countries in the global system. In terms of accessing economic gain, these attributes strengthen the soft power of South Africa and enable it to position itself more effectively to access economic opportunity. According to the sous-Sherpa for BRICS in the DIRCO the fifth BRICS Summit attracted 1200 accredited media personnel, 50% of whom were from non-BRICS countries (A. Sooklal, personal communication, August 7, 2013). For comparative purposes the COP-17 held in South Africa in 2011 had 1500 accredited media personnel (A. Sooklal, personal communication, August 7, 2013). That BRICS enjoys a similar level of media exposure and interest as a big international conference, such as that convened on climate change, is significant in itself and is indicative of an intense global interest not only in the forum itself but also in its member states. It could be argued that this kind of international exposure is beginning to change the traditional media coverage and image of South Africa in the minds of the global public from one that was more often associated with negative reports concerning crime, towards the emergence of a more balanced image of a country whose other attributes are often lost in the glare of what the media bosses decide is newsworthy. Further than this though, the implications of a heightened public profile is that BRICS has created a broader, though more intensive, diplomatic space in which South Africa can better position itself in respect of all three strengths by which GSP is measured. According to Dr Sooklal, BRICS is an additional item on the agendas of almost all the high-level structured engagements South Africa conducts with non-BRICS member states (A. Sooklal, personal communication, August 7, 2013). This level of additional diplomatic interest and scrutiny demands a highly-skilled diplomatic service supported by useful insights from the intelligence community to ensure the country's effective functioning at a higher level.

That BRICS countries were strategically important in their own right prior to the establishment of BRICS is undisputed. Indeed the status of the forum itself in the international arena is partly a direct result of the credentials conferred upon it by virtue of the respective status of each of its member states. But BRICS is increasingly carving out a unique identity for itself, as an entity in its own right, to an extent where membership of this forum is now able to confer certain credentials upon its member states in a reflexive manner. This phenomenon has precedence with the UNSC and the G8 as fine examples. The permanent members of the UNSC, the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France (hereafter referred to as the P5), are those that were the leading states in the international arena at the time of the Council's establishment. The Council reflected the world order at that time and gave the dominant states, the victors of the Second World War, an eminent position in the global decision-making body. The status enjoyed by the respective P5 member states at the time gave the infant UNSC credentials by virtue of the countries that were granted permanent membership. Reflexively, as the UNSC developed a distinct identity in its own right on crucial matters relating to global peace and security and given the P5's veto power on those issues, the Council itself imbues the P5 with credentials that directly contributes to the GSP of its member. It is considered an honor for a country to serve in the UNSC, even in the non-permanent category, and to be given a seat at the table as a permanent member would by itself be sufficient to boost a country's GSP. The association of great power status with the P5 is not insignificant. It is a point of argument for instance whether some P5 members such as Russia, Britain or France would enjoy quite such a GSP today in their own right were it not for their entrenched position as P5 members with a veto power over issues that include, but go beyond global peace and security, if the "mandate creep" of the UNSC is anything to go by. Similarly the G8 and the status it confers upon Russia, whose economic profile today arguably does not qualify it for G8 membership in its own right, nevertheless derives a certain amount of its GSP from membership of that grouping. The same is true in reverse. The relative decline in the systemic importance of the G8 in the evolving international system as compared to the

G20 for instance has implications for its member states which may find a concomitant decline in their GSP.

As the BRICS Forum develops a distinct identity so the forum itself will positively reinforce the credentials of its member states. This outcome has arguably already taken effect in the case of South Africa. It is undeniable that prior to BRICS membership, South Africa enjoyed a pre-eminent position in terms of regional analyses relating to Africa's economic outlook because of its relative strength in most areas under the economic and financial microscope. As part of BRICS, South Africa is now included in the high-profile global economic analyses, projections and calculations whereas these reports used to be done on the BRIC countries. The global analytic spotlight on BRICS serves to bring South Africa into the central frame of focus and necessarily at an international level. South Africa now also maintains BRICS statistics as a dedicated analytic bloc on the official webpages in this regard where there is none for IBSA.

5.4 Evaluation and Interpretation

Using the same three-stage analysis as in the first case study to measure a state's GSP, this Chapter examined the extent to which membership of BRICS impacts upon South Africa's GSP, the extent of the impact and the areas in which the impact is identifiable. Table 4 provides a summary of the findings.

These findings reveal that membership of BRICS made a positive impact upon South Africa's GSP in all three areas by which GSP is measured over the four years of its membership. The impact is shown to be more significant than that made by IBSA, cutting across the diplomatic, political, economic and social spheres, and is particularly strong in the following areas: foreign policy prestige and standing, the global economic and financial reform agenda, food security, global public health, the global discourse on trade and investment, the African Agenda, with a particular emphasis on the integration agenda of the continent and the drivers of that integration, to a limited extent in the area

of intra-BRICS trade and investment as well as in knowledge exchange, skills and technology transfer. Since BRICS is in its infancy there is a great deal of potential still to be actualized and many areas not yet operational. Further potential exists not only in the areas outlined above, but also in other areas such as funding for development through the NDB, insurance and reinsurance markets, cooperation between commercial banks as well as state-owned enterprises, South-South cooperation, as a bridge to building relations with formations in the North, science and technology cooperation as well as in terms of intra-BRICS tourism, academia and business. The way in which BRICS deals with the question of global political governance reform, global development issues beyond financing as well as the extent to which the forum can create innovative solutions for its member states to access the economic opportunity available within the grouping, will be important determinants for the continued contribution of the BRICS to South Africa's GSP over the long-term.

The results of this case study also shed light on the other research question of this thesis namely; what is it that Russia and China bring to the table in BRICS. Theoretically at least, a particular foreign policy objective has a greater of chance of succeeding when it is championed by one, or more, of the existing major global decision-making countries. Both Russia and China are global decision-makers who have a stake in the current international system both politically, through their permanent membership of the UNSC, and economically, as part of the G8 (in the case of Russia) and the sheer size of its economy (including its foreign reserves) and its population (in the case of China) as well as their more recent membership of the G20. As such, both are considered major global countries that occupy strategic points in the international system to the extent where their actions, and non-action, makes an impact on the structure and function of the system. As network powers, Russia and China are deeply embedded in the dense fabric of the international system and although to a certain extent they derive their respective powers from the current system they are still classified as emerging powers, at least economically. Their respective positions in the international system is arguably on the periphery on the central decision-making apparatus primarily because of their alternative worldview from the prevailing liberal democratic ethos and the consequent

differences in approach and style. As outsiders on the proverbial inside, Russia and China have the political will as well as the capacity to modify/change the global system into one that gives a stronger voice to their particular worldview, approach and style; one that can more effectively promote and further their interests internationally. The system principle around which BRICS is formed demands some sort of presence of states that can boast these kinds of attributes in order to ensure efficacy. These attributes combined means that Russia and China have both the requisite ability, capacity and political will to drive the evolution of the international system, to effect a vision of reform in accordance to an alternative worldview with other like-minded countries. A strategic partnership at the minilateral level that includes Russia and China, such as the BRICS, magnifies the interests of middle emerging powers such as South Africa on a global scale by leveraging their entrenched position as outsiders on the inside of global decision-making processes. Consequently, in terms of composition BRICS enjoys its optimal configuration bearing in mind the system principle around which it is arranged as well as the particular goals it has laid out for itself. Expansion of the core strategic partnership of BRICS is not recommended in the medium term. However, expansion may become a policy priority of the BRICS in the event that the fluid international system produces other policy networks of alignment that may evolve in a manner that justifies a strengthening of BRICS in order to maintain its credibility and effectiveness.

Table 4

Summary: The impact of membership of IBSA on South Africa's GSP		
	The Impact	**The areas**
1. The extent to which South Africa projects its influence on the global stage, shape global beliefs and perceptions **Linked to "standing" as an end of state**	Significant Potential	Prestige factor and standing Global economic and financial reform discourse Food security Global Public Health Funding for Development (through the New Development Bank)
2. The extent to which South Africa carves a niche through which to pursue its domestic agenda through its foreign policy priorities at the global level **Linked to "security" as an end of state**	Strong in four of the six foreign policy priority areas Limited but some potential Potential	African Agenda, Political and economic integration of SADC, Participation in global governance & Strengthened political and economic relations South-South cooperation Relations with formations of the North
3. The extent to which South Africa can access global economic opportunity **Linked to "wealth" as an end of state**	Strong Strong Limited Strong	Global discourse on trade and investment Knowledge exchange and skills transfer Intra-BRICS trade and investment Technology transfer

It can be argued that these attributes brought by Russia and China to BRICS have, at least for now, impacted upon IBSA negatively. There appears to be a distinct lack of appetite for IBSA at the moment despite the fact that each of its member states continues to emphasize its importance, rhetorically at least. One of the reasons for this is the full schedules of the political principals. This was in evidence by the profound difficulty in finding a mutually convenient opportunity to hold the sixth IBSA Summit. Originally scheduled for June 2013 to coincide with the 10th anniversary celebrations of IBSA's existence, it was postponed with no new date envisioned. But as IBSA has evolved into a grass roots, bottom-up driven process designed in the form of a strategic partnership at the minilateral level it should still be able to function as originally intentioned, as a platform for dialogue and coordination at multiple levels and across multiple sectors, irrespective of Summit meetings. That it does not do so is perhaps indicative of a deeper challenge than simple scheduling constraints and points to a lack of political will on the part of the principals. In the short term the lack of IBSA Summit meetings may play into China's strategic objective of making IBSA superfluous, as argued by Stuenkel (2013). However, the ability of the IBSA platform to survive the whims of political elites whose political interest tends to wax and wane depending on other considerations will ensure the forum's longevity as an enduring alignment.

As in the previous case study, this case study does not show nor can it show the views and perspectives of the other BRICS member states, Brazil, Russia, India and China. Further research could therefore be designed along the same lines as this one but using the respective memberships of the other BRICS countries as case studies. As well as contributing to our knowledge of strategic partnership at the minilateral level, such research would also provide essential information about how and the extent to which BRICS impacts upon the GSP of the other member states and also the areas in which this impact is discernable.

Notes:

[35] It has long been recognized in international practice that governments may agree on joint statements of policy or intention that do not establish legal obligations. This is a common means of announcing the results of diplomatic exchanges, stating common positions on policy issues, recording their intended

course of action on matters of mutual concern, or making political commitments to one another. These documents are sometimes referred to as non-binding agreements, gentleman's agreements, Joint Statements or Declarations. The title of the document is not determinative as to whether it establishes legal obligations, but rather the intent of the parties, as reflected in the language and context of the document, the circumstances of its conclusion, and the explanations given by the parties. For more information see http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/65728.pdf

[36] The New Growth Path is the driver of South Africa's job creation, the framework of which was released in December 2010. In his inaugural State of the Nation Address in 2009, President Jacob Zuma placed the creation of jobs at the center of economic policy, influencing investment attraction and job creation initiatives. The NGP aligns with the view that the creation of decent work, reducing inequality and defeating poverty can only happen through a new growth path founded on a restricting of the South African economy to improve its performance in terms of labor absorption as well as the composition and rate of growth. For additional information on the NGP refer to http://www.economic.gov.za/communications/51-publications/151-the-new-growth-path-framework

[37] Two agreements were concluded in 2013 under the auspices of the BRICS Inter-bank Finance Mechanism. First, the BRICS Multilateral Infrastructure Co-Financing Agreement for Africa paves the way for the establishment of co-financing arrangements for infrastructure projects across the African continent. Second, the BRICS Multilateral Cooperation and Co-Financing Agreement for Sustainable Development sets out to explore the establishment of bilateral agreements aimed at establishing cooperation and co-financing arrangements, specifically around sustainable development and green economy elements.

[38] Foreign exchange reserves, often taken as a yardstick to gauge a country's financial strength, are the foreign currency deposits and bonds held by central banks or monetary authorities. Forex reserves include a country's gold holdings and convertible foreign currencies held in its banks, including special drawing rights and exchange reserve balances, with the International Monetary Fund. China is ranked number 1 with US$ 3.31 trillion as at December 2012. For more IMF and World Bank data on international reserves see www.gfmag.com

[39] Using Kastecki and Naray's definition, commercial diplomacy is a service provided staff members of a diplomatic mission or trade and investement promotion agencies to the business community with the aim of developing "socially beneficial international business ventures". It includes promotion of outward and inwards trade and investment, dispute settlement, trade consultations as well as business support services. Kostecki M. & Naray O., "Commercial diplomacy and international business," The Netherlands Institute of International Relations, "Clingendael", 2007, P. 1.
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CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

This thesis has sought to examine the extent to which, and how, strategic partnership at the minilateral level impacts upon the GSP of its member states, if at all. South Africa's dual membership of IBSA and BRICS were used as the two case studies to test the hypothesis that strategic partnership at the minilateral level enhances the GSP of its member states. Because of the significant overlap in membership of IBSA and BRICS two related research questions arose; what it is that India, Brazil and South Africa are better suited to achieve through IBSA without China and Russia; and what it is that China and Russia (the two BRICS members not in IBSA) bring to the table.

Chapter two laid the framework of reference within which this research study was conducted. It took issue with generic conceptions of international alignment in the academic literature and demonstrated that the International Relations literature on alignment is largely dominated by rationalist-based securitized notion of how the global system operates. As such, it was argued that the International Relations discipline is challenged to account convincingly for the increasing number of new, non-traditional forms of international cooperation such as the G8, G20, IBSA and BRICS that do not have security as a *necessary* element of the cooperation (though it obviously does not preclude security from being one of many other elements of the partnership). This gap in the literature was subsequently filled by using constructivist perspectives on anarchy and world order to problematize security in generic conceptions of international alignment. Chapter two offered an alternative perspective of international alignment; one that conceived of alignment as a value-neutral and content-neutral umbrella concept

under which different types of alignment are subsumed. In an evolving multipolar world order characterized by an increasing number of qualitatively distinct international alignments such as strategic partnership, this was shown to be a necessary theoretical step if the evolution in alignments is to be more convincingly accounted for. Upon this basis, a different perspective on strategic partnership was proposed and one that differed substantively from the research done on to date on strategic partnership by other scholars. Thus strategic partnership, including at the minilateral level, was conceptualized as falling outside the traditional security lexicon within an overarching value-neutral, content-neutral framework of international alignment and therein laid its qualitative distinctiveness. Accordingly, it was argued that strategic partnership does not infer the presence of security in the traditional (military) sense as a *necessary* element of the partnership as is the case with alliances, coalitions and security communities. Thereafter, this research study advanced current understanding of strategic partnership at the minilateral level by categorizing IBSA and BRICS as the latest instances of this type of international alignment with reference to: their arrangement around a system principle, their goal-oriented approach within an informal structure with low commitment costs, their being a top-down, elite-driven process, at least in the formation stage and where economic exchange is a crucial element of the partnership. In a further contribution to the literature on strategic partnership a cross-disciplinary approach using insights from business theory were used to a) bring the presence of inherent rivalry from the margins of consideration to the forefront as a formal property of strategic partnership and b) acknowledge an additional function of strategic partnership; namely its use as a tool to manage inherent rivalry.

Having laid the foundation upon which the research for this thesis is based, Chapter three provided an overview of South Africa's foreign policy and how it related to GSP. In this regard, the discussion in Chapter three contributed to the current literature on GSP in two distinct ways. Firstly, it proposed a three-stage analysis by which to measure a state's GSP. Secondly, it revealed the link between GSP and the national interest understood along the lines of Onuf's (1989) three ultimate ends of state: standing, security and wealth. In this manner GSP is firmly anchored within the

domestic context of a state. Thus GSP can be translated into specific outcomes for the domestic constituency. This is a particularly important consideration for political elites in democratic societies that are accountable to the domestic constituency for its decisions, including its foreign policy decisions. The link between GSP and the national interest was demonstrated through an examination of South Africa's foreign policy agenda, which forms an integral part of its domestic agenda and as such, is a reflection of the national interest.

In the current academic literature, GSP is traditionally measured with reference to two strengths as identified by Stakelbeck (2005): the degree to which a state can influence, shape perceptions, beliefs and behavior of international actors and thereby shape the international order (linked to standing) as well as the degree to which a state can access the economic opportunities available for the positive gain of that state (linked to wealth). The link between GSP and the national interest however opens the door to a third stage of analysis namely, the degree to which a state can carve a niche for itself on the international stage in order to realize its national priorities and objectives in the pursuit of both protecting and promoting its national interest (linked to security). Importantly, the three-stage analysis captured both the substantive and ideational aspects of policy-making, particularly foreign policy-making, in the 21st Century and by extension these same aspects that are also embedded in national interest considerations.

The findings of the first case study, South Africa's membership of IBSA, were revealed in Chapter four. The results showed that membership of IBSA has made a positive impact upon South Africa's GSP in all three areas used to measure a state's GSP. However the extent of this impact is limited, largely to the diplomatic arena, and discernable in the following issue areas: the global development discourse, South-South cooperation, global governance, global trade and investment, global democratic discourse, intra-IBSA trade and investment, intra-IBSA exchange of knowledge, skills and technology transfer as well as intra-IBSA tourism. Upon the basis of only one case study, the results were deemed insufficient to make a conclusive judgment on the validity of the broader hypothesis that strategic partnership at the minilateral level

enhances a state's GSP. The addition of a comparable case study, South Africa's membership of BRICS examined in Chapter five, was deemed necessary. The results of Chapter five showed that in comparison to IBSA, membership of BRICS has also positively impacted upon South Africa's GSP in all three of the criteria used to measure a state's GSP. However, the impact is shown to be more significant than that made by IBSA, cutting across the diplomatic, political, economic and social spheres and is particularly strong in the following areas: foreign policy prestige and standing, the global economic and financial reform agenda, food security, global public health, the global discourse on trade and investment, the African Agenda, with a particular emphasis on the integration agenda of the continent and the drivers of that integration, to a limited extent in the area of intra-BRICS trade and investment as well as in knowledge exchange, skills and technology transfer.

The research design allows the results revealed by the two case studies to also shed light on the other two related research questions of this thesis; what it is that India, Brazil and South Africa are better suited to achieve through IBSA without China and Russia; and what it is that China and Russia (the two BRICS members not in IBSA) bring to the table? The findings in the first case study identified the particular issue areas in which membership of IBSA had made a positive impact on South Africa's GSP. By extension these are also the areas in which IBSA is better suited to achieve concrete results without Russia and China. These are in the areas of the global development discourse, South-South cooperation, global governance, global trade and investment and global democratic discourse. The findings in the second case study also identified the particular issue areas in which membership of BRICS had made a positive (though far stronger and more significant) impact on South Africa's GSP. These areas are: foreign policy prestige and standing, the global economic and financial reform agenda, food security, global public health, the global discourse on trade and investment and the African Agenda, with a particular emphasis on the integration agenda of the continent and the drivers of that integration. By extension, these are also the areas where the additional attributes brought to the table by Russia and China in BRICS are required in order to achieve concrete results at the global level. Chapter five detailed these

attributes as follows: their status as global decision-makers that have a stake in the current system and are beneficiaries of it but nevertheless remain on the periphery of the decision-makers table as a result of their particular worldview, governance systems, principles and value systems. As outsiders on the proverbial inside, Russia and China have the political will as well as the capacity to modify/change the global system into one that gives a stronger voice to their particular worldview, approach and style; one that can more effectively promote and further their interests internationally. These attributes combined means that Russia and China have both the requisite ability, capacity and political will to drive the evolution of the international system, to effect a vision of reform in accordance to an alternative worldview with other like-minded countries.

These results were arrived at using a combination of constructivist perspectives and case study methodology. The constructivist perspectives on world order, anarchy, state identity and interests permitted an alternative perspective of international alignment, strategic partnership and South Africa's foreign policy. While the case study methodology employed universalizing comparison for the purpose of testing the central hypothesis of this thesis, that membership of strategic partnership at the minilateral level enhances a state's GSP. Universalizing comparison was effective in this research study because it demonstrated the limits of the validity of the central hypothesis by revealing the underlying generalities an enabled a deeper understanding of the compared units, IBSA and BRICS, more clearly as their individuality was illuminated in a comparative light.

6.1 Beyond minilateralism's 'magic number': The imperative of composition

The findings of this research suggest that strategic partnership at the minilateral level may not in itself be sufficient to enhance the GSP of its member states by virtue of its unique purpose, structure or function. Nor is strategic partnership able to make an impact on the GSP of its member states merely because of its strategic,

forward-looking and pre-emptive intention. Given that IBSA and BRICS are both strategic partnerships at the minilateral level that are increasingly similar to one another an inescapable question arises; why is there a marked difference in the results of the two case studies? Why is it that despite the fact that South Africa's membership of IBSA has had a positive impact upon the country's GSP in all three areas under analysis it does so in a limited manner, often only diplomatically, and is confined to particular issue areas? Whereas South Africa's membership of BRICS, which has also had a positive impact upon the country's GSP in all three areas under analysis, does so in a more significant manner cutting across the diplomatic, political and economic spheres and registers a stronger impact in other issue areas. The findings of the two case studies shows that the answer to this question may lie in the composition of each alignment with India, Brazil and South Africa comprising IBSA on the one hand and Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa comprising BRICS on the other. Therefore, what this research study appears to suggest is that the degree to which a state's GSP is enhanced is not the consequence of the type of alignment it happens to be part of, in this case a strategic partnership, but determined instead by the particular composition of that minilateral alignment.

The interview process conducted during the course of this research study revealed that, from a diplomatic perspective at least, this question concerning the optimal configuration of a particular alignment is unimportant unless it is clarified further. Optimal configuration of the partnership in terms of what: in terms of the number of members, in terms of the particular states comprising the membership or in terms of its structure, function or purpose? As discussed in Chapter two, for Naím (2009) the optimal configuration of a particular minilateral alignment is determined by the "the smallest possible number of countries needed to have the largest possible impact on solving a particular problem". Not disputing Naím perspective, this research study shows that serious consideration should be given also to the composition of a minilateral alignment; to which particular states are (minimally) essential to achieving a particular identified mutually desired outcome. A smarter, more targeted approach to minilateral alignments may well rest not in a "magic number" but, more crucially, in its

composition. Thus the optimal configuration of a minilateral arrangement of states could be the smallest possible number of countries considered to be strategically imperative to the achievement of a particular (mutually) desired goal. In considering the composition of a particular minilateral alignment it requires an appreciation for the prospective state's GSP (both current and projected), its state identity and by extension the ideational and substantive aspects of its national interest, as well as its domestic policy (including foreign policy) objectives. These elements come together in what is essentially a strategic, forward-looking decision for alignment designed to mitigate both current and projected rivalries while enhancing a state's position *vis-à-vis* a particular desired outcome.

The question of the optimal configuration of a particular minilateral alignment is of interest to both scholars of International Relations and state policy makers alike. For scholars, the study of international alignment is an effective reference point from which to study the global system in which we live. This is because international alignments and their evolution are deemed reliable reflections of the global order and the system governing that order. This research has given insight into the way in which international alignments are evolving in support of multilateralism and might assist in answering the practical question of how many minilateral policy networks can be usefully possible in the evolving international system that requires profound reform. Taken together these two insights may point to the manner in which change in the international system might occur in a globalized and fluid 21st Century world order. In pursuit of stability and international harmony, global systemic change through reform requires a compact between those that have a stake in, and are beneficiaries of, the current international system on the one hand and those desiring a more inclusive, representative and legitimate system reflective of global diversity. One in which evolutionary change is driven by minilateral arrangements that each bind together particular states occupying strategic points in the global system or on particular global issues/challenges and without whom it would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve a result. These minilateral arrangements operate in support of multilateralism seen as an eventual good, as an end itself. Importantly, as IBSA and BRICS shows, strategic partnership at the

minilateral level need not be confined to the geographic proximity of its member states or be bound by traditional notions of developing or developed states; global powers, emerging powers, middle emerging powers or LCDs. Neither are these strategic partnerships limited by the different economic size, market size and resource capacities of its respective member states nor, indeed, by the different values and principles and rivalries of those members. The efficacy, and possibly success, of these minilateral alignments depends instead upon the particular states that are drawn together to comprise a partnership that is arranged a broadly agreed upon system principle in order to achieve a mutually desired goal(s).

In an increasingly networked world order, a focus on the composition of a minilateral alignment has particular value because it illuminates the underlying factors that assist in identifying which minilateral alignments have the potential to make a systemic impact from those that do not within the context of an increasing number of inter-state arrangements at the minilateral level. Such information has the potential to be valuable to policy-makers in particular. It would assist policy-makers in their assessment of prospective states for potential alignment against the need to achieve a particular outcome that aims at having a systemic impact at the global level. Such information may also assist policy-makers to determine how to effectively maintain its multiple memberships of different minilateral arrangements simultaneously, prioritize its respective memberships and allocate resources, both human and financial, accordingly.

The immediate practical implications of this are applicable to South African policy-makers in relation to the expansion debate of either or both IBSA and BRICS. As the two case studies showed, in its initial years BRICS has negatively impacted upon IBSA (cross reference section 5.4). However, the results highlighted that each forum in fact has particular competencies in different issue areas from one another. Thus each forum is better suited to achieving results in different areas because of the different compositional membership of each forum. Since BRICS enjoys its optimum configuration with respect to composition balanced against the system principle around which it is arranged, as argued in Chapter 5, expansion of the core BRICS strategic

partnership in the medium term was not recommended. Although it was argued that BRICS should not consider expansion of the core strategic partnership in the medium term, this conclusion was conditional upon the fluid international system and the other policy networks of alignment that may evolve. This is not the case with IBSA, as Chapter 4 concluded. It was argued that strengthening IBSA could occur in one of two ways: expansion of the core strategic partnership itself or, alternatively, maintaining the IBSA core but establishing issue-specific outreach partnerships. In both cases South Africa and its other partners in IBSA are required to assess and evaluate prospective states and make a determination of which particular states would be necessary in order to achieve concrete results in the issue areas within the purview of IBSA. This research study suggests that in order for South Africa to make this kind of assessment consideration should be given to the GSP of the prospective state or, alternatively, the strategic point the prospective states occupy either in the global system or on a particular global issue. This is reflective of a foreign policy that has a global outlook with objectives that have a direct bearing on the international system and the way in which it functions. In addition, along Wendt's (1994) identification continuum, the international identity of the prospective state should strongly recognize itself with one (in the case of outreach partnerships) or more (in the case of expansion to the core strategic partnership) of the identities present in IBSA. In terms of resource allocation the results of this research studies show that South Africa's should direct its IBSA/BRICS resources towards the particular issue areas in which each forum has a specific competence and in which they have the greatest chance of achieving the goals identified in each of these areas. In addition, given that IBSA is in its 10th year of existence while BRICS is still in its infancy, additional resources – particularly high-level political attention should be directed towards BRICS in the short term. Since IBSA has developed into a bottom-up, grass roots process, it should in the meantime continue in earnest with the quest to strengthen the forum under the guidance of the IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission supported by the IBSA focal points.

6.2 South Africa's strategic approach to international politics in the 21st Century

The findings in this research study enable us to better understand South Africa's strategic decision to first seek and then maintain its dual membership of IBSA and BRICS as *sui generis* entities on separate but parallel tracks in the medium to long term. This is significant because it provides insight into South Africa's strategic approach in international politics in the 21st Century; in particular how South Africa, as an emerging middle power, seeks to leverage its soft power in the international system through the intensification of its network power in order to ensure that the process of evolutionary change currently underway in the global system results in a qualitative shift in the structure, substance and conduct of international politics over the long term.

If Flemes's (2013, p. 1017) assessment of the evolving multipolarity of the 21st Century is correct then "global decision-making is increasingly a matter of bargaining and coordinating divergent national interests in different issue areas". Consequently it behooves South Africa to continue to pursue a strategic foreign policy approach that seeks to leverage its soft power globally through the densification of its international policy networks as both a means to achieving this but also as a valuable end in itself. Increasing the number of minilateral arrangements to which it belongs, with a particular focus on increasing the number of strategic partnerships at the minilateral level to which it belongs, should positively serve the country by proactively inserting it at the cross-roads of various overlapping foreign policy networks. As an emerging middle power that must act in coordination and collaboration with others in order to pursue its foreign policy objectives, the gains made in increasing South Africa's network power could well ensure that the country lies at the heart of a reformed world order to come.

It is important to acknowledge two risks that could jeopardize the success of South Africa's strategic approach to international politics. The first risk is that membership of multiple strategic partnerships at the minilateral level simultaneously may result in overstretch in the government's resources. It is a challenge to meet the demands of IBSA and BRICS alongside the relations South Africa already enjoys with each of these

countries at the bilateral level. This is particularly evident in the IBSA sectoral working groups and may also be a similar challenge that BRICS could face in the future as more cooperative mechanisms are operationalized in a broader number of sectors. A targeted approach and a clear understanding of how and for what each minilateral arrangement is used should mitigate this risk. However, this depends upon strong coordination at the political level, necessary "buy-in" from the relevant government departments as well as a highly skilled and trained professional bureaucratic and diplomatic apparatus that importantly maintains an apolitical perspective with respect to domestic politics. The second risk to South Africa's strategic approach to international politics in the century ahead is that it is increasingly linked to its leadership role in Africa. According to Sidiropolous (as cited by Kotch, 2014) that means South Africa "will have to play an even greater role in underwriting the stability and prosperity of its own neighborhood". In order to do this South Africa depends upon a growing economy that strengthens its GDP per capita, astute leadership at the highest levels in the country but also at management level in the bureaucratic machinery and crucially its continued legitimacy as a leader in the eyes of its neighbors as well as a pivotal state in the eyes of other societies.

6.3 Areas for further research

The research in this thesis illuminates three areas in which further research may be appropriate.

First, the central research question of this thesis that sought to determine the extent to which, and elucidate how, strategic partnership at the minilateral level impacts upon the GSP of its member states, requires further examination before a universal result in this regard can be proclaimed. Further research could therefore be designed along the same lines as this research study but far more broadly in order to examine the respective memberships of India and Brazil in IBSA and BRICS. As well as contributing to current knowledge of strategic partnership at the minilateral level, such research would also provide essential information concerning the ways in which IBSA could be

strengthened from the perspectives of India and Brazil respectively. It would also be important conduct similar research using Russia and China's respective memberships of BRICS in order to provide more information about how and the extent to which BRICS impacts upon the GSP of these dates and in what areas is this impact discernable. Perhaps the addition of a more pluralistic methodology, one that combines qualitative as well as quantitative methods, would strengthen this further research. Collating all the information from the five member states in this manner would provide a comprehensive overview of the particular foreign policy priorities for which these country uses either IBSA or BRICS as a platform to further its interests. Apart from this being valuable information in itself, such data might also be indicative of the balance of forces between the different member states in BRICS in particular. The significance of gaining an insight into the balance of forces within BRICS is twofold. Firstly, it provides an indication of the policy direction of the forum and secondly, it aids in the development of a realistic assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the forum, the opportunities available and the threats from both within and without. For scholars interested in determining whether BRICS is a revisionist or reformist force in the international system, accurately identifying the balance of forces within BRICS is an indispensible element of enquiry.

Second, the thesis highlights a gap in the International Relations literature that concerns current theories and frames of reference with respect to the subject of international alignment. Although this research study has made contributions that may assist in closing this gap in the literature there is nevertheless space available for the establishment of two distinct, but related, research programs. The first calls for constructivist scholars to develop a theory of international alignment from a constructivist perspective in order to augment what we know about alignment from rationalist-based perspectives. This would greatly assist in the development of constructivism as a theory in itself and may well rescue it from being merely a series of insights and perspectives that can be applied as an additional (not alternative) approach/method from which to explain state behavior and a state's foreign policy decisions. A second research program could be established in order to develop strategic

partnership, particularly at the minilateral level, as a comprehensive framework of reference akin, but not identical, to alliance theory and one that could become as dominant given that it is an alignment particular to the 21st Century. There is an opportunity here to comprehensively develop our understanding of strategic partnership from a constructivist perspective and in so doing build a mutually reinforcing relationship between our knowledge of strategic partnership on the one hand and our understanding of constructivism on the other in the same way that our knowledge of alliance theory is inextricably associated with rationalist-based theories of International Relations, particularly (neo)realist theories.

Third, the findings of this research study show that our knowledge of minilateralism, particularly how in the 21st Century minilateral alignments are evolving in support of multilateralism, is incomplete. More research is required into the phenomenon of minilateralism if we are to better understand the different types of minilateral alignments that exist in the world today, be able to categorize them more accurately and precisely as well as situate them within the broader context of an evolving global order. Further research in this respect is not only valuable as an end in itself but would also provide theoretical support from which policy-makers can draw valuable insights as they seek to find ways in which to interpret and impact upon the fluid international system.

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